



COVID-19 Forum – TAG Student Outcomes, Clubs & Volunteering 13.00, 23/06/20

Brianna Townes **(BT)** – Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild

Tom Quinn **(TQ)** – UOW Pulse

Tristram Keays **(TK)** - ActivateUTS

Samantha Trodden **(ST)** – University of Sydney Union

Caroline Crawford **(CC)** – University of Sydney Union

Srijana Ghorasaine **(SG)** – University of Sydney Union

Kiriti Mortha **(KM)** – University of Sydney Union

Holly Ruhle **(HR)** – Griffith University Campus Life

Shel McConachy **(SM)** – Deakin University Student Association

Elise Redmond **(ER)** – MONSU Peninsula

Jess McNamara **(JM)** – Bendigo Student Association

Brendan Cavanagh **(BC)** – Swinburne Student Life

Amelia Matthews **(AM)** – Swinburne Student Life

Sarah Luckman **(SL)** – Swinburne Student Life

Bridget Roache **(BR)** – Swinburne Student Life

Gabrielle Paton **(GP)** – Swinburne Student Life

Dee Jarrett **(DJ)** – University of Melbourne Student Union

Fiona Sanders **(FS)** – University of Melbourne Student Union

Chewy Fang **(CF)** – Melbourne Polytechnic

April Alexander **(AA)** – TAG

General

ST Situation on campus is evolving quickly. Expecting 50%-60% capacity for all S2, which has been pushed back to 24th August

JM No concrete plans from La Trobe as to when students will return to campus. Impacted on the Bundoora campus by current spike in Melbourne COVID cases, and on the Bendigo campus by renovations that were undertaken while students were absent.

The current amalgamation process of the various La Trobe student associations, and its currently unknown impact on resourcing and budgets moving forward are making it difficult to plan and strategize effectively.

Using the shutdown as an opportunity to get to know what the students want through surveys, and to use those findings to experiment with new models that may be effectively deployed in the new amalgamated organisation.

S2 lectures will primarily be online, which will result in most events and activity remaining online as well. There will be no S2 orientation on campus. Working with La Trobe Student Union to develop an online alternative cheaply.

TQ Students will not be returning for S2, other than for prac. This will result in only 6,000 students on campus which will in turn place financial pressure on UOW Pulse, and no funding for their clubs program for the rest of the year.

Concerned about what happens when JobKeeper ends, and what effect that may have on staff resourcing and motivation.

BC No formal timelines for staged return of staff to campus, depending on what services they provide. Events is last on that list.

SL Keeping staff motivated in the current WFH situation is becoming a challenge, particularly when you don't know what the next month will bring and managing those expectations.

HR University is aiming to be able to offer all students at least one (non-mandatory) on-campus engagement opportunity by mid-August.

AA The TAG National Comps are all underway online, with currently 200 submissions across the comps. Even the new writing comp is performing well.

The comps feature monthly prizes and incentives and are supported by socials campaigns by TAG, as well as our member organisations. Marketing collateral for all comps is available from the TAG website.

TAG Sponsorships and other external support is drying up as corporate partners suffer financially. The TAG National Comps are an ideal way of engaging students and encouraging them to create and enter content or a chance to win tangible prizes that are provided by TAG and the various competition sponsors. <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/student-outcomes/nationalcampuscompetitions/>

SM Deakin unlikely to have students return until T3, although that keeps changing.

Campus Committee is struggling with the absence of students on campus.

TK University is moving to bring some informal activity back on campus.

ER Monash has been hesitant to announcing return to campus plans. This is now also dependent on Victorian government's assessment of easing of restrictions in the light of the current Victorian spike in COVID cases.

University has developed an online COVID training for students and staff to complete before they are allowed to return to campus.

BT Challenged by the lack of information and the changing environment.

Events and Activities

- ST** Events will have to change significantly to meet COVID safe requirements.
- Will have to meet the demand for online virtual engagement because things are unlikely to return to what they were before.
- Developing a hybrid model for S2 events calendar, incorporating some in person activity, but also innovating in how to engage students online.
- JM** Food assistance program has successfully been conducted on campus.
- Held a very successful combined event with local Central Indigenous Victorian Final Festival.
- “Be Iso Active” wellness campaign also very successful, utilising MoveSpring app to create a club challenge. One club reported that they had made 648 engagements with other clubs in those three weeks which indicates its effectiveness as an engagement tool.
- Least successful activities are those that require students to post pictures of themselves or express an opinion. Appears that they are shy and that the idea of being showcased is off-putting.
- BC** No on-campus events for the rest of the year other than potentially their awards night at the end of the year. All else will remain online for the remainder of the year.
- The resources required to COVID-clean after every event make them impractical under current circumstances.
- ‘5K in May’ clubs initiative run by sports officers via Strava was successful with over 100 sign ups.
- SL** Greatest success when programs and events are student-driven and student-led, such as their Leadership and Alumni Panel in which students spoke about their leadership experiences
- Language Exchange and Tax Help programs have proven successful.
- HR** Virtual Market Day for online O Week, on a new website that provides a virtual schedule linked to various Zoom sessions that clubs may host.
- Some corporate sponsors have returned and are sponsoring sessions, e.g. bank hosting budgeting workshop, physio hosting workstation and stretching session, etc.
- Bounce-Back Week planned for week 1, featuring different virtual events. Health and Wellbeing Fair planned for week 4.
- Although they have pivoted to online engagement, not a lot of their partners have. This has put pressure on sponsorships and in-kind support to incentivize students, rather than a simple presentation.
- Virtual group fitness has been very successful and will continue to run even with the reopening of the gym on campus.

Virtual Fun Run replaced the traditional physical event. Although numbers were down, they still raised \$1,500 for charity.

Weekly Insta takeovers successful.

SM Hoping to run outdoor events on campus but believes that most students will be very cautious about events to begin with. Providing sanitizer, utilising social distancing collateral, and engaging “social distancing ambassadors” to ensure that everyone is complying.

Grab and Go stations will be deployed where students can grab freebies and information, and corporate partners can become involved, to encourage students to move through spaces rather than dwell.

Student-led online events and social chat sessions will continue to be offered throughout the rest of this and next year due to their popularity.

Regularly running social polls to guide the initiatives.

Online trivia and gaming sessions have been particularly successful, but Friday afternoon craft session was not. Student feedback is that they prefer music and relaxation sessions on a Friday afternoon rather than crafting. This reflects what they would normally be doing out in the real world on a Friday afternoon: chilling out.

FS Complying with university protocols regarding events and activities on campus, which are currently nil, but also aiding COVID-compliant club events off campus.

TK Panel events and live streams have been most successful. Netflix and collaborative viewing have been less successful. Trivia has been successful, primarily through Kahoot, but prize incentives have been reduced due to cheating concerns.

BT The university paperwork for approval to hold an event is onerous.

TAG TAG has sanitizer and sanitizer stand deals available for events when they return to campus: <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/contracts/sanitiser-gels-and-sanitiser-stand-offers-to-suit-/>

Orientation

KM Welcome Week will be online for S2.

BC Online orientation will be a challenge as this semester they will not have their usual level of input and control as to how it looks and what the student journey will be. Getting information from the university regarding this is difficult, which in turn makes it difficult to empower the teams involved and organise resources.

The appetite of students for an online orientation is unknown.

- HR** Mailing out a basic A6 O Week pack featuring a branded welcome, motivational postcard, bookmark, and sticker, so that students receive something tangible as well as the virtual program.
- DJ** Online orientation using platforms such as Zoom and Discord, as these provide the best channels for achieving what the students most want from orientation: making friends.
- ER** Online orientation 20th July – 2nd August. S2 commences 3rd August.
- BT** Looking at “matching” students before orientation, so that any facilitation of friendships is effectively targeted to like-minded students, who can then break out into Zoom rooms.
- TAG** The recent TAG Digital O Week webinar hosted by Mitch McBurnie from Arc @ UNSW has proven valuable and is available to download at <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/management-resources/resource-library/forum-notes/>

Clubs

- KM** S1 many clubs conducted AGMs and general administration online. Union is developing online resources to assist, including new modules on running events, online marketing, etc.

Transitioning all clubs and society streaming to their online club management system.

Developing an online COVID-safe clubs and societies event guidelines based on university and govt protocols, in student-accessible guidelines.

Welcome Week will be online for S2.

Clubs support for S2 will primarily be through in-kind support such as food, venue hire, etc, rather than money.

Surveyed clubs very early in the shutdown but didn’t receive much engagement from clubs at that point. However, the regular queries they receive are around managing online AGMs, administering elections, etc.
- TQ** Surveying clubs regarding their requirements for S2 but response has been slow due to exams, as well as their history of never really being vocal about such things. Key findings so far revolve around how to maintain members and how to engage online.

No funding available for clubs for the rest of the year, due to UOW Pulse’s financial situation. Nevertheless, has managed to launch a brand-new clubs website, which has been in demand for a few years and goes live in a few weeks.

Clubs have been seeking assistance in transitioning their executives for next year, considering that many of their first-year members have not had face to face experience with their clubs. Developing a handover how-to guide to assist and considering a Moodle online training guide for clubs for next year.

No restriction on clubs holding events on campus as long as they comply with their COVID-safe policy for club events: <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/resources/student-services-resources/UOW-PULSE-UniClubs-COVID-SAFE-Policy-19-Event-restrictions-guidlines.pdf>

- AM** Looking at developing an online module for clubs committee members regarding COVID-safe events on and off campus.
- Asking clubs to nominate a COVID representative to enforce social distancing and safety standards at events.
- Involving clubs in online O Week through Zoom sessions based on the various faculty days.
- Asking clubs to host short videos regarding their clubs for prospective members.
- Working to increase the efficiency of clubs finances in relation to dealing with small merchants for clubs resources, to reduce their administrative workload.
- SM** Running a seven-round Clubs Challenge that involves wacky challenges such as eating Ryvita.
- FS** Club AGMs and elections are challenging in terms of verifying attendance, particularly as that attendance is often a good measure of the viability of a club.
- Investigating online election models for club elections. Above Quota Elections tend to use OpaVote, and it appears scalable.
- Onboarding new clubs is also a challenge in the current environment.
- Approached to canvas students as to their interests, then connect them to related clubs specifically.
- Clubs were surveyed early on about what support they wanted, but UMSU has not surveyed the wider student population.
- TAG** Big Pulse is developing Big Pulse Lite for club elections. TAG members receive discounted fees on all elections through Big Pulse: <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/contracts/online-elections-with-big-pulse-with-tag-discount/>
- TK** Reengaging and reigniting clubs for their return to campus will be challenging as anecdotally there is burnout amongst them.
- ER** Many clubs have been disengaged and gone MIA, due to the uncertainty of planning, and the university's lack of answers.
- Trivia nights have been successful, run on Kahoot. Drop-in chat sessions have been unsuccessful.
- BT** 60%-70% of clubs have run at least one online event during the shutdown.
- Working to keep clubs engaged through regular check-ins, mentoring, marketing and assisting with the activation of club events.
- Thirty clubs participated in the Stress Less Week

TAG TAG has launched the Clubs Resources Toolkit to provide governance support for members to share with clubs. First three chapters are now complete and available,, and provide everything required to start up and successfully manage a club or society.
<https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/student-outcomes/clubs-societies-governance-toolkit/>

Volunteering

TQ Engagement has been stagnant, with some engaged and others switched off. S1 volunteers hours were down by 800. Have set tasks for volunteers to reach as milestones.

SL Current volunteers have exhibited high levels of engagement, but the challenge is in recruiting new volunteers.

Student Life social media channels have been saturated as all teams seek to engage students. This makes getting your message seen and heard a challenge.

SM Challenge in keeping volunteers engaged online. Currently running fortnightly online sessions to stay connected with them.

Looking to offer points to volunteers willing to step up and run an online session.

ER Still receiving volunteer sign-ups, which may be a sign that students are hoping that things may happen in S2. Looking to encourage some of these volunteers to run online events for online orientation.

Some volunteering opportunities exist in handing out free food to students, who are allowed to come to campus to collect it but must leave immediately after.

BT Partnered with Gold Coast Volunteering, for Cards With Connection. They collect cards made by students and deliver to at risk people in the community.

Check-ins and Chats through Henley Aged Care with residents at one of their Gold Coast aged care homes.

TAG Please send through details of staff involved with Volunteering to info@tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au so that we can include them in the Volunteer member directory on the TAG website. <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/student-outcomes/member-directory-volunteering/>

Online Engagement

CC Traditionally, successful engagement with students has been student-led, rather than by the Union, e.g. debating club leading the activity, not the union.

BC Difficult to say if diminishing engagement from students has been due to oversaturation or due to exam/study period or even online fatigue being a factor.

Online Talent Show was very successful, once again supporting the idea that student-driven content gets the engagement, particularly when students are also driving the social communication.

Effort vs Reward graph has been developed to measure the success of engagement.

SL Language Exchange and Tax Help have proven successful.

HR Virtual group fitness has been very successful and will continue to run even with the reopening of the gym on campus.

Student-led student experience videos have also been very popular, e.g. study hacks, study snacks, etc.

Have made a suite of downloadable resources available for students, eg flash card templates, mobile phone wallpaper, goal planners, recipes, etc.

Students not good at being involved in comps where they must create or post themselves.

A mix of soft and hard engagement works best, eg speed-friending as well as broadcasting content.

AM Difficult to engage students online. Surveying them shortly to gauge what they need expect from an online clubs and sport program.

SM Sunday afternoon self-care session was unsuccessful. Students are offline on the weekend. Currently Wednesday and Friday afternoons are their most popular online slots, but it keeps changing.

Book Club has a huge following.

DJ High engagement with their online advocacy campaigns. This engagement has flowed on to other UMSU activities and programs. Students are very appreciative of the role the union plays in their lives which is more than just fun activities, but to also amplify the student voice. The recent govt announcement to increase fees being a case in point.

ER Conducted some surveys at the start of COVID, students were more focused on their online learning issues not student engagement.

Challenge is to maintain relevance with students and transition it to online.

TAG TAG national comps are now all online and live, are a great opportunity to engage students in national programs: <http://listmail.bammail.com.au/t/r-9F65A507FF6DED092540EF23F30FEDED>

TAG Mentor Program:

Want to share your expertise to assist your colleagues and strengthen the sector, or want to benefit from the experience of colleagues who have been in the sector for many years?

<https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/for-members/tag-mentor-program/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TAGstudent>