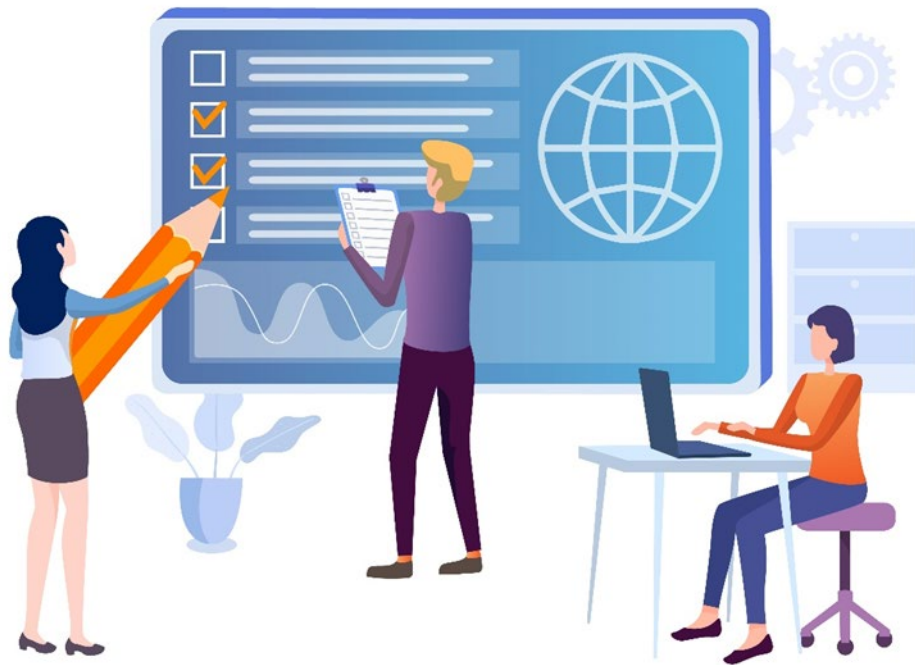# Thriving through COVID-19

Reflections from Tertiary Students with Disability

at a

National Online Forum

December 2020

Contents

Introduction

In May 2020 the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) was funded by a grant from the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment to respond to the impact of Covid-19 on the staff who teach and support students with disability in tertiary education.

In July, ADCET administered a scoping survey of these support and teaching staff and a report of the findings and recommendations was released in August 2020. In the staff survey, some reported that while various students struggled with the COVID disruptions, others coped really well. In response to this finding, the report authors made a recommendation to explore the critical success factors that enabled some students to thrive through the disruptions and on-line learning environments and look at how these might be taught or shared with other students. In response to this recommendation, a two-hour online student forum was held on 9th December to discover what enabled some students with disability to thrive in their studies during COVID-19 disruptions.

What is thriving?

Schreiner (2010) suggests that when you are thriving as a student you are able to function academically, individually and interpersonally through the highs & lows of study.[1]

As an online learner during COVID-19 this may have been evident by some of the following characteristics:

Academically
- Were motivated to learn and do the required course work
- Engaged and interested in their studies
- Able to keep up-to-date with on-line material (for example listening to lecturers, attending on-line workshop sessions)
- Put effort and time into completing assessments

Individually
- Generally had a positive outlook on life
- Mostly optimistic through the challenges
- Were able to persevere and keep going even if sometimes the progress was slow

Interpersonally
- Asked for assistance and help when needed
- Connected with other students

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[1] *Schreiner, L. (2010). The "Thriving Quotient': A new vision for student access, About Campus, 15(2), 2-10.*

Research approach and methods

Appreciative Inquiry[2] questions and format were used to guide forum participants. Appreciative Inquiry is a strengths-based approach that involves using a set of questions to discover what is working well in any given situation, dream or what might be possible if these positives were amplified and design ways to deliver more of what works well.

Our research question was: **What are the critical success factors, for students with disability, for thriving through the COVID-19 period?**

Thirty-two students with disability attended the two-hour online forum. The participants were from across Australia, with twenty-eight university students and four TAFE students.

In small groups of four, the student participants shared success stories, identified enabling factors, articulated hopes for the future, and designed prototypes to deliver ways to do more of what works well. The forum took place online using Zoom. The forum was highly interactive, with most of the discussions occurring in small breakout rooms of four students and one Research Assistant per each small group. Students were asked to allocate the roles of Task Master, Task Scribe, Task Reporter and Task Timer between them, so each student had a role to undertake.

The project was approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (reference H0023828).

The two-hour forum was divided into five activities. Each activity had clear instructions and set timings; the instructions were presented verbally during the forum and were also detailed in the forum workbook (see Appendix 1) which participants received electronically prior to the event.
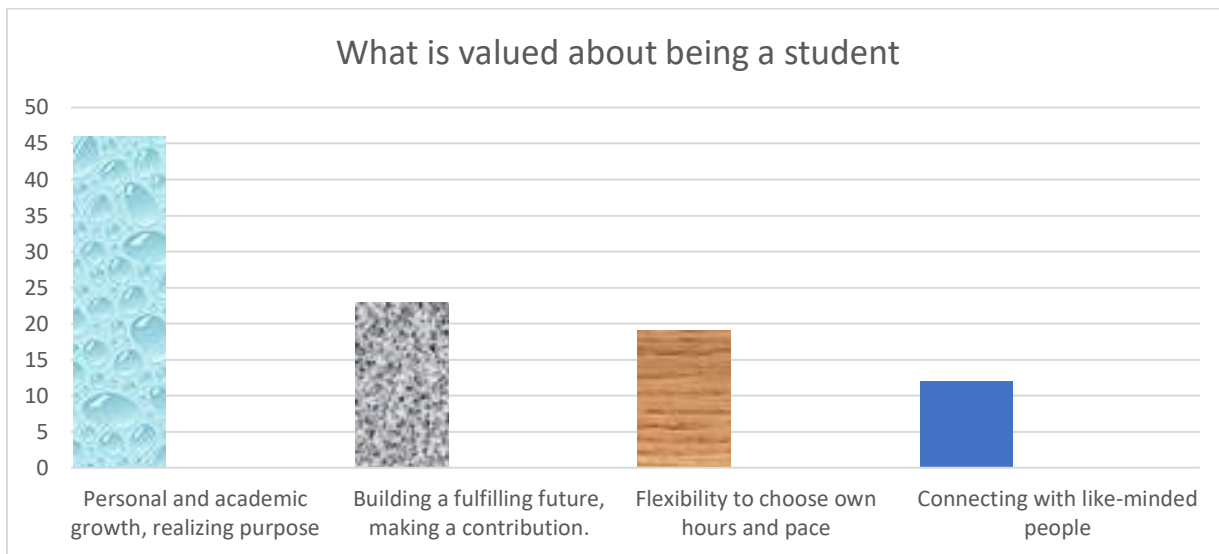
- **Activity 1 Icebreaker** - Students shared their responses to the question "What do you value about being a student?"

- **Activity 2 Sharing Stories** – Students shared an example of a time when they felt that they were thriving as a student through the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

- **Activity 3 Our Thriving Successes** – Students determined the top 5 themes about thriving as a student through COVID that emerged from their stories.

- **Activity 4 Building on Positive Themes** - Students were given a scenario that asked them to consider what information, advice and supports new students with disability might need to help them thrive through sudden and unexpected disruptions to campus learning.

- **Activity 5 Rapid Prototype Design** – Students developed one of the practical ideas from Activity 4 into a rapid prototype.

The Task Recorder from each group input the responses and output from each of the activities into an online survey. After the forum, the researchers undertook a thematic analysis of the student's responses to Activities 1, 2, 3 and 4 whereby data was grouped under key themes. This analysis is presented in the following pages, as well as the Rapid Prototype designs from Activity 5.

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[2] Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (2005). Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change.Berrett-Koehler Publishers: San Franscisco

What is valued about being a student?

In activity 1, students shared stories in their small groups about what they valued about being a student. From their responses, we found that students valued the opportunity for growth and gaining knowledge (46% of values mentioned), building a meaningful and fulfilling future (23%), providing a flexible lifestyle (19%), and connecting with others (12%).

What is valued about being a student

| Category	Value
Personal and academic growth, realizing purpose	46
Building a fulfilling future, making a contribution.	23
Flexibility to choose own hours and pace	19
Connecting with like-minded people	12

Thriving through COVID-19

In activity 2 in the forum, students were asked to focus on the times and experiences when they felt that they were doing well and thriving in some way in their studies. This doesn't mean that they never experienced difficulties or struggled. However, we were interested in the thriving moments, no matter how small or how seldom and asked each participant to share one story of a specific time when they were thriving as a student.

The following list is extracts from some of the stories shared:

- Allowed a time to slow down and not worry about things that are associated with the uni menial in normal day-to-day life.

- Thriving in own space at home in an area where comfortable and feeling safe.

- University reached out to students they anticipated might have additional needs and supports. This offered a sense of calm from the idea that the university was concerned with student's wellbeing.

- Realisation that this is all temporary and finding ways to drive and keep on track with their own learning.

- Promoted self-care measures such as jogging for social interaction and exercise.

- Thrived due to reduced travel time and distractions associated with on campus study. This allowed more functional time and flexibility in study times. A self-reward system assists in maintaining motivation and building good habits.

- Knowing the lecturers were "thrown in the deep end" too, were struggling along the way - able to forgive self by knowing the lecturers were asking us to forgive them (where lecturers struggled,

student felt empathy - plus this proved a "leveler" in this; student & lecturers were on same level of IT-struggle/new environment struggle); all saw human side of lecturers & each other, more patient & tolerant overall.

- Creating more equity and empathy showing academics and students alike were all trying to figure things out.

- I think it can be hard to remember that these perks [assessment extensions] are available to us in daily life. Online learning gave some us the opportunity to run back to basics and to evaluate what we need from our respective educations.
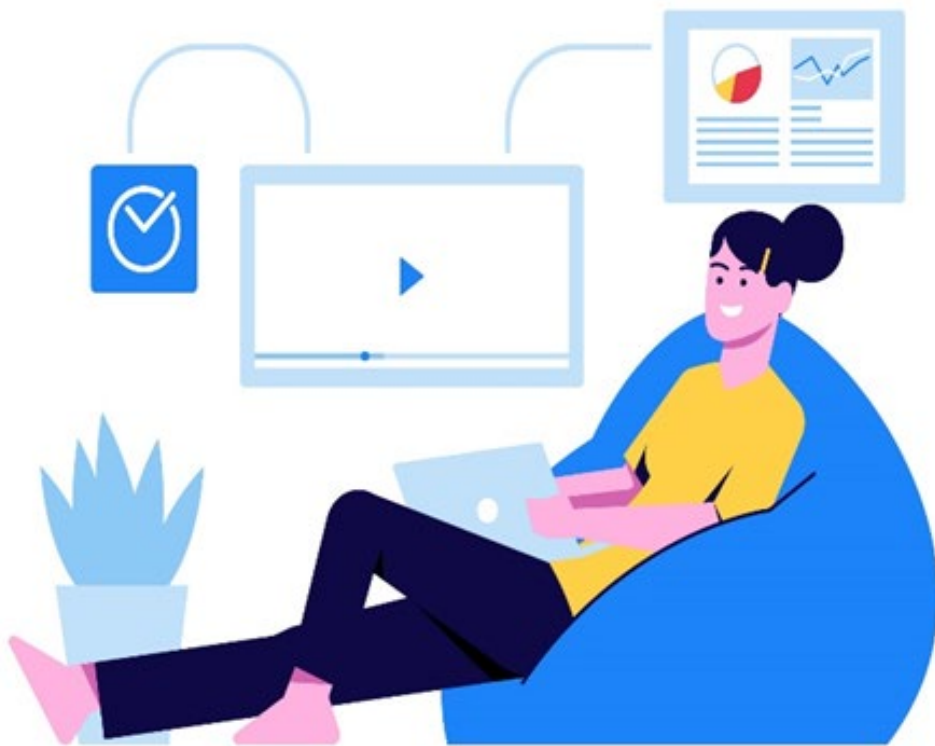
The enablers for student thriving

In activity 3, students were asked to identify the themes that emerged from their stories about thriving as a student through COVID-19 and decide on the top 5 themes. We found the key themes that students identified from the stories about student thriving through COVID could be grouped under three broad categories– personal, intrapersonal and system. Table 1 lists each enabler under the respective category.

Table 1: Identified enablers for Student Thriving through COVID.

Personal (from self)	Intrapersonal (from and with others)	Systemic (from systems)
• Self-advocacy • Self-awareness • Realistic expectations • Sense of unity between the challenges • Ability to learn in own environment • Perseverance and motivation • Consistency and passion • Initiative • Focusing on self-care • Self-drive • Having more freedom in studies • Flexibility in scheduling and study times • Less distractions than on-campus study • Allowed more time for self-care	• Support • Teacher and communication being key • Connectedness with peers was amplified through online study groups • Increased availability and additional academic support • Proactive engagement from the university for students with special needs • Social community • Very human experience, more understanding • Observe teachers learn new IT skills • Study groups online • Students mentor others • Connectedness • Quiet and small groups to study with in person • Knowing who to contact • Better supported by friends and family • Supports around you (be it family or IT) • More interaction with lecturer in different manner than previously taught • Knowing everyone was struggles – very particularly the lecturers – assisted us each to thrive • The equity created by everyone working from home & seeing them in their home space (sick husband on couch, pets interfering) • Realizing that lecturers are human too	• Technology access • Online classes and tutorials • Subsidized laptop/equipment to study from home • Online forum discussions removed fear of asking questions • Extensions, flexibility • Reduced travel time • More time to study due to less travel/working at home • Not having to be in a lecture room with 400 other people • Avoiding the stress of travelling to and from the institutions • Being able to utilize the pre-recorded lectures to our advantage • The stress free advantage of open book exams • The altered weighting/grading - adjusted learning styles & tolerance of being late re submitting assessments etc, aided thriving enormously

Dreams and Hopes about Generating Student Thriving

In activity 4, students were asked to share their hopes for how to generate student thriving by being asked to "*Imagine next year that the TAFE or Uni you attend decided that part of the induction process for all new students with disability would include information and advice to help them thrive through any sudden and unexpected disruptions to campus learning. As a student who has thrived through similar disruptions you have been asked to be involved in the design of this to provide information and advice*."

Participants discussed their responses to the scenario by considering the following questions:

i.   What do you think are the three most important things students need to know?;
ii.   What ways can this be given to the students (for example a resource, talk, content on webpage)?
iii.   What supports might help them to thrive?; and
iv.   What could your Uni or TAFE do differently to enable more students to thrive?

Following are the ideas that described by the groups in response to these questions.

i. The 3 most important things students need to know

The ideas that emerged about what students need to know can also be grouped (as per the enabling factors) into one of three categories – self, intrapersonal and systems.

Self
- Having realistic expectations given the circumstances
- Building the awareness that 'we are not alone'
- No pressure to get it right as everyone is learning
- Opportunity to go back to basics
- Staying actively involved in your studies
- Being aware of what support options (including peers) are available
- Knowing how to access information and who to connect with

Intrapersonal
- The need for peer connections that you can check in with
- Finding a lecturer to get feedback from
- How to connect with other students
- The importance of social support groups

Systems
- The availability and knowledge of online systems, basic uni/TAFE information, and support services
- Student support (e.g. scribe, tutorial support) available during and after class
- Technology support
- Extensions

ii. The ways to give this knowledge to students
- The participants provided a range of methods to provide this to students, including: during initial lectures; peer groups; videos with closed captions and scripts; fact sheets; web pages; social media; and clear step-by-step instructions with visual cues on how to use resources.
- There was also a suggestion that all content should be simple, concise, and straightforward to ensure ease of understanding.

iii. Supports that might help students thrive
- Study groups
- Mentors

- Check-ins in tutorials
- Personal communication so that students can make informed decisions
- Social groups to allow students to make personal connections within their class groups
- A phone call from a lecturer or tutor once or twice a semester
- Access to counselling services or mentors during the semester
- Staff who understand student needs - extra time for exams, access to extra resources, education to staff regarding mental health/disability
- An extended period of time for assignments and exams, more leeway on extensions
- Closed caption as a feature for tutorials and scripts that enable students to search terms. More Virtual Reality than paper based. E.g. in science you don't have to be worried about an experiment going wrong. Safer online environment (e.g. science experiment).
- Basics of university or study life, e.g. how to submit assignments, how to contact lecturers, how to apply for extensions, what support services are available, how they work and how to access them. Additionally, tips sheets on how to study better, self care, referencing, etc.
- YouTube video recommendations for setting up home office/study
- Establish groups of students with lots of different disabilities, to help create friendships, and with different weaknesses that complement each other at different times, and maybe have a regular meet up to catch up and foster those social networks

iv. What Unis or TAFE could do differently to enable more students to thrive

- Create more opportunities for students to connect online
- Find a way for students to evaluate the performance of their uni/TAFE (other than questionnaires/multiple choice)
- Give students the ability to handle PTSD by providing options to go into the university and study in person in small groups
- Handouts
- More diverse staff
- Longer extensions, more tutorial supports
- Evaluate what is needed for respective degrees
- Mentorship program for disability and a flagging system for everyone that has an EQAL plan, so students don't have to repeat themselves
- Give staff tech lessons, so they can help the students where needed
- Give staff more time to help students where necessary
- Provide more internal support measures to specific student groups (e.g. research students)
- Have a multi disabilities support group for friendships and support, particularly support for specific disability types
- Have weekly Friday night Zoom catch-up's for group assessments - or a quiz night, would be good to facilitate flow on from academic to social)
- Dedicated information source for students on how they could get assistance
- Provide a stronger awareness of all the resources available
- Stressing that lecturers are there to help
- Familiarising students with methods of studying
- Having an orientation day specifically for people with disabilities

Rapid Prototyping Designs

In activity 5, each group chose one practical idea from the previous session to develop into a Rapid Prototype Design, that is a model or approach that would make the ideas tangible and provide possibilities for implementation.

Following is the information on prototypes as provided by the participants. You can also read a summary and comparison of the designs on the Prototype Summary Table on pages 14 and 15.

1. Access My Way Free app

How Would It Work? Have an app where we can connect disability students with disability liaison officers. We can send photos of locked doors to officers to rectify issues or flag something, give a chance for students to connect to each other, educational information for lecturer and tutor to give links to different needs and disabilities.

Who does it? Applying for grants and organise student body to create the app. Maybe include medical, educational, physio, arts and psych students.

Next Steps? Consultant group solely include lived experiences and include compensation from the university.

2. Disability: Displaying Innovative Sensational Ability (DDISA)

How would it work? Online social gathering that shares experiences and network for support for each other and building awareness with students with disability (can involve food, drinks etc.) - could work as a university club, can be through chat rooms, having meet ups every month or fortnight, connect with as many universities as possible (allows for very big building scope for networking), can be through Discord, Facebook group or Slack.

Who does it? Primarily student run, having a few people nominate themselves and vote for the positions within the club, having parameters (in case there are some areas where they want us to avoid and include/standard procedures of establishing the group) provided by the uni and support from them.

What is the next step to make it happen? Liaising with the university to get their opinion on the idea and if they think it is viable, involve university unions and co-ops for support.

Why is it important? This will help everyone in their support, self-care, normalise and connect people together through shared experiences. We don't feel disadvantage and we will have a sense that we are part of the community.

3. Auto EQAL and mentor program

How would it work? Way to notify the uni/TAFE as part of the online enrollment process if students want their unit coordinators to know of their EQAL plans automatically and/or if they wish to make it known to the lecturers/tutors of their units for the semester.

Who does it? It would be created by admin/student services but it would be activated or triggered in enrollment by the student themselves.

Why is it important? To remove the stigma of sending it in each time you meet a new lecturer and when applying for the supports within your plan.

Mentor program for first-year students from a second or third year student to help them get the hang of the available accessibility supports at their institution.

Who does it? Equity would build the network of senior volunteer students and pair them with first-year students.

Why is it important? So students don't feel so isolated. Encouraging for new students.

What is the next step to make it happen? (both): Consensus would need to be reached amongst universities and academic institutions, and agreed upon to follow through and commit resources to activating both programs.

4. National Website

How would it work? National website with a program linked to every TAFE and university with the same information. Knowing it applies to all and can support everyone so students don't feel anxious about applying for and being supported in courses. A National Standard for Accessibility.

The program connects all the following thoughts:

- Need to make sure explanations are available to students about what is available
- Teachers should all need to be trained in accessible learning
- When we start the course, there should be more info about accessibility options available
- Induction courses at both TAFE and universities needs to include disability inclusion
- Make sure students/teachers both know what needs to be done from both ends
- Students should be enabled to have input on it
- Specialised accessibility feedback forms for each course
- Dedicated accessibility officer to be assigned to student complaints about teachers - someone safe for students to report to
- Location/group of people teachers can talk to about accessibility and inclusion
- Teacher training about specific needs for each student so they are taught how to accommodate for specific students
- Video or write up about stigma in the learning environment
- The community can be aware of barriers in the accessibility community

Who does it? ADCET funded by the government. The government needs to approve it and fund it.

Why is it important? Helps students have their best lives - inclusive, equality regardless of needs or barriers. This helps every student have the best opportunities.

5. Drop-In to Tech

How would it work? Drop-in technology support lessons with multi-modal tech support. This would be mandatory for staff, but voluntary for students.

Who does it? Run in house, but external providers can be brought in to help teach Teams and Zoom (and other relevant technologies). Step-by-step guides to be provided that allow everyone to gain useful tech skills.

Why is it important? Having a singular presentation structure for lectures can be useful to allow all classes and presentations to look the same, be presented similarly, and allow students to keep the 'routine' of the lectures the same online and offline.

What is the next step to make it happen? Tech skills classes are already available for most staff and students at education institutions, so we believe the implementation of this should not be too difficult. It really just needs the time and space and people to actually run the sessions. Built into

these tech presentation procedures, an anonymous feedback structure/'mailbox' can allow students to notify administration of staff that might need more help re tech skills. This does leave avenues for misuse/ abuse, but students can and will provide useful feedback, allowing admin to pinpoint where to focus support and professional learning.

The implementation of a complaints/ praise program, again, we do not feel is difficult. The follow through of collating and actioning the content of this feedback is slightly harder, but we feel it is vital to allow staff to successfully perform in their roles, and improve themselves as educators.

6. HERE FOR YOU or SUPPORTAL – and easy inclusion and access program

An email to be sent out to all students during orientation week or early semester which includes a summary of all support services, how to access them, tip sheets, and instructional videos sent out by a university staff member or a student mentor who is to remain with the student for the first year of their study, and who acts as an ongoing contact to resolve further questions. Include support services offered by the institution and external resources, plus where and how to access these resources. Upfront information on resources, such as disclosure of impairments. Tips sheets provided by both the university for university systems, and by students for more course-related tips.

How would it work? It would work via an app. With all students not knowing what assistance is available to you, some kind of app perhaps that works in a way that filters down to your needs (like when you're seeking Centrelink assistance, it asks 'Are you single' / 'Do you have children' etc, etc and as you click the buttons it narrows down to assistance AVAILABLE PRECISELY TO YOU.

Who does it? It would be designed by: students (who have needs but don't know what's available to them); plus an equity team (who knows what's available). It should start with a list of everything the university offers to students or/and perhaps an automated email that has a link to a forum of everything and branches out like a tree with each branch telling where you would get this help or that help (e.g. Need financial help? CLICK Advice or practical, CLICK Practical financial help is available via x and x and x and/or a video you can click of a student saying "When this happened, I did xxx - or got xxx assistance - or xxx was available to me". It could be advocated by the student guild, or a liaison between the guild and lecturers.

Who could make it happen? Is the guild or an access plus inclusion dept (like Murdoch), bearing in mind, this is for all students, not just disability students.

7. DO week: Disability Orientation week.

An orientation week called DO week: Disability Orientation week. With games, quizzes talks for employment, etc., specifically for people with disability, with uni/TAFE lecturers and volunteers. It would be at the institution and accessible online as well. Also, during the semester a session would be run once a fortnight like a Pass class but called: **Pads - Peer assisted disability session**, so people could touch base with a mentor and ask questions. There would be a Buddy System too, so people could have a buddy in a year or two higher than themselves who has a disability and can tell you how they got around certain issues and give general advice.

Next steps

Firstly, we want to acknowledge our appreciation for the energy, enthusiasm, and great ideas the student participants brought to the forum. It reinforced the value and power of engaging students with disability in co-design processes.

ADCET is keen to harness and build on the momentum generated by this from this forum and will:

- Look for alignments between these ideas and existing or proposed National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) projects
- Consider how to incorporate these ideas into existing or proposed projects.
- Link those participants who expressed an interest in keeping in contact with each other.
- Convene a follow up meeting(s) with those participants who expressed an interest in developing the ideas further.
- Promote the value of using student co-design processes in the development and implementation stages.

Prototype Summary Table

Design Name	How Would it Work?	Who Does It?	Why Is it Important?	What is the Next Step to make it happen?
1. Access My Way Free app	Have an app where we can connect disability students with disability liaison officers	Applying for grants and organise student body to create the app. Maybe include medical, educational, physio, arts and psych students.	Chance for students to connect to each other, educational information for lecturer and tutor to give links to different needs and disabilities	Consultant group solely include lived experiences and include compensation from the university
2. Disability: Displaying Innovative Sensational Ability (DDISA)	Online social gathering that shares experiences and network for support for each other. Could work like a university club through chat rooms, regular meet ups across many universities.	Primarily student run, having a few people nominate themselves and vote for the positions within the club.	This will help everyone in their support, self-care, normalise and connect people together through shared experiences. We don't feel disadvantage and we will have a sense that we are part of the community.	Liaising with the university to get their opinion on the idea and if they think it is viable, involve university unions and co-ops for support
3. Auto EQAL and mentor program	Way to notify as part of the online enrollment process if students want their unit coordinators to know of their equal plans automatically Mentor program for first-year students from a second/third-year student	Created by admin/student services and activated by the student Equity would build the network of senior volunteer students and pair them with first-year students	Remove the stigma of sending it in each time you meet a new lecturer or apply for the supports within your plan. Encouraging and less isolating for new students.	Consensus would need to be reached amongst universities and academic institutions and agreed upon to follow through to commit resources to activating both programs.
4. National Standard for Accessibility	National website with a program linked to every TAFE and university with the same	ADCET funded by the government.	Students don't feel anxious about seeking support when know it applies to all.	Build on existing ADCET content and resources

Design Name	How Would it Work?	Who Does It?	Why Is it Important?	What is the Next Step to make it happen?
Website	information and training about accessibility for students and staff.		Helps students have the best opportunity to live their best lives. Inclusive, equality regardless of needs or barriers.	
5. Drop-In to Tech	Drop-in Technology Support for staff and students. Step-by-step guides to allow everyone to gain useful tech skills. Feedback mechanism for students to notify staff may need more tech skills.	Run in house with external providers where required.	Consistent presentation structure allows student to keep the same 'routine' of lectures online and offline. Feedback will allow staff to improve and successfully perform as educators.	Build on existing technology skills classes so just needs time and space and people to run the sessions. Create feedback mailbox
6. HERE FOR YOU or SUPPORTAL	An easy inclusion and access App Upfront information and student mentor for first year	A guild or an Access + Inclusion department. Note it would be for r all students, not just disability students.	Filters down to the specific assistance available for specific needs.	Designed by students (who have needs but don't know what's available to them) + Equity team (who know what's available)
7. DO week: Disability Orientation week **8.Pads - Peer assisted disability session.**	Orientation specifically for students with disability with talks, games, & quizzes. On-campus and online. During the semester once a fortnight will be like a Pass class. Includes a buddy system/mentor	Uni staff and volunteers	Gain advice and support from experienced students with disability about how they got around certain issues	Build on existing programs to be create more disability specific supports, information and advice

"Student Forum-Thriving through COVID"

An online student forum

9th December 2020

Contents

Research Project

This forum is being organised and facilitated by Australian Disability Clearinghouse Education and Training (ADCET). ADCET's aims to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of students with disability or medical conditions in post-secondary education or training. It does this by providing and encouraging information sharing and the development of practical guidelines.

The forum is funded as a part of a grant provided to ADCET from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) to respond to the Impact of COVID-19.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you can contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 2975 (SSHREC) or email ss.ethics@utas.edu.au. You will need to quote H0023828.

Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for taking part in "Student Forum-Thriving through COVID", which is a national online student forum on thriving through COVID-19 disruptions.

You are participating in this forum as a student who was able to thrive (at least some of the time) during the COVID-19 pandemic. That is, despite the challenges of the sudden switch from on-campus to an online learning environment, dramatic changes to our social and economic systems that you were able to do well in your studies. This doesn't mean that you were able to thrive all the time but for some time at least you felt that you were thriving. And today we want to focus on those thriving moments.

We want to discover what enabled you to thrive during the disruptions. When did you feel that you were doing well with your studies? We want to hear about your moments of strength, and understand what these moments were like for you.

We hope to use the themes, ideas and hopes that are shared by you and other students today to inspire the development of new resources and/or approaches that can be used to assist other students with disability to thrive more often.

What is thriving?

When you are thriving as a student, you're able to function well across three areas – academically, personally, and interpersonally - as you go through the highs and lows of studying (Schreiner 2010).

As an on-line learner during COVID-19 this may have included:

Academically	You were motivated to learn
	You felt engaged and interested in your studies
	You were motivated to do the required course work
	You were able to keep up-to-date with on-line material (for example listening to lecturers, attending on-line workshop sessions)
	You put effort and time into completing assessments
Individually	You generally had a positive outlook on life
	You were mostly optimistic through the challenges
	You were able to persevere and keep going even if sometimes the progress was slow
Interpersonally	You asked for assistance and help when needed
	You connected with other students

Format of the Day

We are using a method called Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). This is a strengths-based approach that is based on the premise that we we learn little about what enables success by studying what goes wrong.

When we use Appreciative Inquiry, we focus on what is working well – our moments of strengths - and seek ways to expand and amplify these.

Appreciative Inquiry involves asking a set of questions to: -

- Discover what went well

- Look for the positive themes

- Dream of what might be possible if we did more of what works well

- Design ways to do more of what works well

Today, therefore, we will be asking questions and doing a lot of listening.   We will mostly be in small breakout rooms. We will return to the large group occasionally to explain a next step of the process and hear briefly from some groups.

You will be asked to allocate roles in your breakout room to help keep you on track, and you will also have a co-facilitator to assist you with the format of the day if you need it.

We hope you enjoy participating in the forum as you share your successes at thriving in your studies and hear from other students from across Australia.

Activity 1   Ice Breaker

You will be allocated to a breakout room with three other students.

This will be the group you work with during the forum.

Take it turns to answer the question: *What do you value about being a student?*

DISCOVER – What works well

Before you start your next activity please spend a few minutes allocating the following roles between members of your group.

- Task Master - To make sure everyone has the opportunity to talk and be listened to
- Task Scribe - To type the group notes in the online form
- Task Reporter – To report back to main group when required
- Task Timer - To keep the group on track with time limits

Task scribe to open the Online Fourm Activity workpages from the link provided in the Zoom chat.

Task Master please help your group to quickly decide on top 5 values that emerged from Activity 1.

Task scribe to enter into Activity 1 in Activity workpages.

Activity 2   Sharing stories of student thriving during COVID-19

Remember that thriving as a student during COVID-19 restrictions doesn't mean that you didn't also experience any difficult times or struggles at times.   But amongst these there would have been moments when you felt you were doing well and thriving in some way in your studies. No matter how small and seldom, we want you to only focus on one of these moments in this activity.

Task Master - please ask each person to share an example of a time when they were thriving as a student, and answer the questions provided.

- Can you give an example of a time when you felt you were thriving as a student through the disruptions caused by COVID-19? Be as specific as possible.
    - What was the situation?
    - What did you need to do?
    - What strong feelings did you experience?
    - Who or what helped you thrive?

Task Timer - you have 20 minutes for this activity.

Task Scribe – please complete the *Thriving Through COVID Student Online Forum Activity 2*.

Hit the Submit button when done.

Activity 3   Our Thriving Successes

Stay within your Breakout Room group.

Discuss the key themes that have emerged from your stories about thriving as a student through COVID-19.

Task Master - ask your group to decide on the top 5 key themes.

Task Scribe - type these 5 key themes into the *Thriving Through COVID Student Online Forum Activity3.* Hit the submit button when done.

Task Reporter - be prepared to share these with the larger group.

Task Timer - you have 5 minutes for this activity.

Our Dreams and Hopes about Student Thriving

A Future Scenario

Imagine next year that the TAFE or Uni you attend decided that part of the induction process for all new students with disability would include information and advice to help them thrive through any sudden and unexpected disruptions to campus learning.

As a student who has thrived through similar disruptions you have been asked to be involved in the design of this information and advice.

Activity 4   Building on our positive themes

You will be returned to your small breakout rooms

Task Master - read out the Future Scenario again, and then go around your group and ask everyone to give quick answers to the following questions

a) What do you think are the 3 most important things students need to know?
b) What ways can this be given to the students? (for example a resource, talk, content on webpage)?
c) What supports might help them to thrive?
d) What could your Uni or TAFE do differently to enable more students to thrive?

Task Scribe - note down ideas in the *Thriving Through COVID Student Online Forum Activity 4*

Task Reporter - be ready to relay some of this back to the large group

Task Timer - you have 10 minutes for this activity

Our Designs

Activity 5   Rapid Prototyping Design

Task Master ask the group to decide on one practical idea from the previous session that you want to develop.   For example, it might be a resource, a new way of working, content for a session, webpage, or a poster

Give your design a name.

Describe:

- How would it work?
- Why is it important?
- Who does it?
- What is the next step to make it happen?

Task Scribe - make notes on the *Thriving Through COVID Student Online Forum Activity 5.*

Task Timer - you have 20 minutes for this activity.

Task Reporter - be prepared to share the name of your design and a brief overview with the bigger group.

References

Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (2005). Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change.Berrett-Koehler Publishers: San Francisco.

Schreiner, L. (2010). The "Thriving Quotient': A new vision for student access, About Campus, 15(2), 2-10.

Thank you very much for your participation today.