



Ready, Set, Go.... An ECU partnership in action to increase retention and better equip first year nursing and midwifery students for university.

Key Words

Student Retention, Student Support, Academic Skills, Collaboration, Induction. Transition.

Abstract

Ready, Set, Go.... An ECU partnership in action to increase retention and better equip first year nursing and midwifery students for university. Maureen Buckingham * Learning Consultant, Centre for Learning and Teaching, Edith Cowan University. Email: m.buckingham@ecu.edu.au Ready, Set, Go – not Gone! ECU Nursing academics and Learning and Teaching professionals have joined forces to develop the program, Ready, Set, Go, to tackle the attrition of first year nursing and midwifery students as well as better equip and build connections with these students to keep them in the C33 course. The numbers of ECU undergraduate nursing students has steadily grown over the past decade and 2017 saw a record number of more than 600 students commence their degree in semester 1. This cohort is a mix of mature age, school leaver, and international students coming to ECU from various pathways. However, the attrition rates have also remained high. Some studies have suggested plausible strategies to improve attrition rates in tertiary nursing education include raising entry requirements, targeting communications to mature age students, and providing multi-level student support. The provision of and communication about student support is the cornerstone of this new induction program. Ready, Set, Go, sessions ran throughout the Orientation period prior to the start of semester 1 at both Joondalup and South West campuses. There also appears to be little recent research conducted into effective, valid and reliable student orientation programs preceding tertiary nursing and midwifery education. This is particularly evident in nursing or midwifery programs that are delivered predominantly online. A research project is being conducted in conjunction with the program to evaluate its success and impact on attrition rates. This presentation will provide an overview of the Ready, Set, Go program and the research project running alongside it. However, the key focus will be on the collaboration of the project team, the expertise brought to the table, the strengths and successes as well as the challenges and lessons learnt. Key words: Student Retention, Student Support, Academic Skills, Collaboration, Induction. Transition. *The project team consists of the following members: Rebecca Scriven, Learning Designer, Centre for Learning and Teaching, ECU Joondalup Elisabeth Jacob, Associate Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU Joondalup Carol Crevacore, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU Joondalup Gina Mata, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU Joondalup Carol Wang, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU Joondalup Sue Tencer, Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU SouthWest Deb Ireson, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, ECU SouthWest Dave Barrett, Research Assistant

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