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Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions

Final Report 2014

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http://studentengagementmaturitymodel.net/

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- Dr Jason Lodge and Professor Keithia Wilson (Griffith University); and
- Dr Claire Gardiner and Associate Professor Jillian Hamilton (QUT).

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List of acronyms used

ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd
AUSSE	Australasian Survey of Student Engagement
CEQ	Course Experience Questionnaire
FYE	First year experience
HEI	Higher education institutions
ISB	International Student Barometer
MM	Maturity Model
OLT	Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching
SESR	Student engagement, success and retention
UES	University Experience Survey

Executive summary

Student engagement is critical to student learning success, progression and retention and these factors are key indicators of learning and teaching quality in higher education. Higher education institutions are generally well served by internal corporate data and by sector surveys (such as the University Experience Survey (UES), International Student Barometer (ISB), Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) and Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)) about the student experience. However, no comparable source of data has existed about the institutional practices that lead to an engaging student experience.

Therefore the aim of this project was to establish and provide a holistic framework that would allow higher education institutions (HEIs) manage and improve their student engagement and retention strategies and programs. The framework and main project deliverable is a *Maturity Model* (MM) for *Student Engagement, Success and Retention* (SESR-MM).

The aim was accomplished by meeting the project's objectives, which were to:

- Design and develop a *SESR Maturity Model* (SESR-MM).
- Design and develop a *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit*.
- Pilot the SESR-MM through a series of *Case Studies* in each team member institution.
- Publish *Institutional Maturity Reports* (for institutions participating in the SESR Maturity Assessment) and publishing a sector *SESR Maturity Model Report* (consisting of the model, assessment findings and case studies) to share findings with the sector and enable other universities to consider the application of the SESR-MM within their context.

Queensland University of Technology, The University of Queensland and Griffith University cooperatively worked to establish the SESR-MM through four project stages: (1) developing the model through a synthesis of theoretical and empirical literature and SESR practice data in four institutions; (2) trialling the SESR-MM by using the framework to guide the collection of evidence about actual SESR practices; (3) developing and iteratively applying an assessment toolkit to determine the maturity of the institutional SESR practices; and (4) verifying the SESR-MM in terms of how well it accurately reflected current SESR practices, and how well it conveyed actionable information about desired SESR practices within the context of each individual institution's strategic direction and priorities, by developing a visual communication tool.

The key outputs of this project are:

- The verified SESR-MM, the main deliverable of the project, which is provided in this final report.
- The Sector SESR-MM Report (this report).
- The three institutional SESR-MMs developed to verify the SESR-MM that have been provided to the three project institutions in the form of the Institutional Maturity Reports, and are provided in this report in de-identified form.

- Project resources, including example SESR-MMs and the publications arising from the project, which are available on the project website at <www.studentengagementmaturitymodel.net>

The major project outcome is agreement from staff drawn from the eight institutions[1] which participated in the project in some way, that the SESR-MM is a useful and appropriate tool for guiding the strategic coordination, management, review and improvement of institutional SESR programs and practices.

The major recommendation arising from this project is to determine the impact of the SESR-MM in improving SESR practices by applying it in a number of institutions that have as a key aim the improvement of student engagement and the student experience. While this project has established and ascertained the potential usefulness of the SESR-MM it was beyond the scope of this project to determine the efficacy of the SESR-MM in changing institutional SESR practices, this is work that remains to be done. An expression of interest to investigate the impact of the SESR-MM in five institutions (QUT, UQ, ANU, JCU and Victoria University of Wellington) has been submitted for consideration to the Office for Learning and Teaching to continue this work.

[1] Project teams and participants were from QUT, UQ & Griffith. QUT, Griffith, UQ, UWA & JCU senior leaders constituted the Advisory Group. Prof Marnie Hughes Warrington (ANU) was the project evaluator. Dr Stephen Marshall - Victoria Uni of Wellington was the Expert Adviser to the project.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

The aim of this project was to establish the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model [SESR-MM] as a framework for transforming (monitoring, comparing, evaluating and improving) institutional programs and practices designed to enhance SESR in Australian universities.

The aim was accomplished through the objectives:

- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Model* (SESR-MM) by incorporating and extending the *first, second* and *third generation* conceptualisation, drawing on the theoretical and empirical literature, and synthesising data about perspectives on the key elements of SESR in higher education gathered through practitioner workshops;
- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit* to enable the status of SESR programs and practices to be mapped and reported within the SESR-MM framework;
- Piloting the SESR-MM through a series of *Case Studies* in each team member institution to determine the usefulness of the information and the SESR-MM in terms of enhancing SESR practices; and
- Publishing *Institutional Maturity Reports* (for institutions participating in the SESR Maturity Assessment) and publishing a sector *SESR Maturity Model Report* (consisting of the model, assessment findings and case studies) to share findings with the sector and enable other universities to consider the application of the SESR-MM within their context.

The project was based on the notion of continuous improvement and the importance of measurable teaching and learning performance outcomes. The project outcomes suggest that the SESR-MM framework and the activities associated with its use have the potential to positively transform the engagement, success and retention experiences of students in Australian universities.

Chapter 2: Overview of the literature

Background

In 2009, we began a review and synthesis of the empirical and theoretical Australasian First Year Experience (FYE) literature. It focussed on the trends in policies, programs and practices over the decade of 2000 to 2010 (Nelson, Clarke, Kift & Creagh, 2011). The literature was interpreted through the lens of First Year Curriculum Principles (Kift, 2009) and the lens of generational approaches to the first year experience (Wilson, 2009). Part of the rationale for this work was to advance the interpretation of an intentionally designed and enacted curriculum labelled *transition pedagogy* which manifested as "a university-wide sustainable, integrated, coordinated, curriculum-mediated transition framework" (Kift & Nelson, 2005, p. 232). Although the period under review finished in 2010, the processing and the writing of the story of the literature continued until it was published in 2011 and at that time, there were indications that a more sophisticated approach to research and practice was required to achieve the integrated whole-of-institution reform envisaged by the *transition pedagogy*.

The potential for the emergence of third generation approaches[2]—and hence transition pedagogies—foreshadowed by the increased occurrence of second generation approaches during the decade under review, did not eventuate. Researchers and institutions found that progression from second to third generation FYE initiatives in the main, stalled at the first generation co-curricular and second generation program-focused levels of good practice (Nelson & Clarke, 2013; Nelson, et al., 2011).

As useful as the generational classification of student experience is, attempts to operationalise *transition pedagogy* based on the generational approaches concept encountered problems because the concept has no rigorous theoretical base. It had been generated *post hoc* as an historical description of activities—it describes the past. Circa 2010-2011, in attempting to address this issue and drawing on earlier work (Nelson, Kift, Humphreys, & Harper, 2006), the potential of applying the concept of maturity modelling to tertiary student engagement behaviour was explored (Nelson & Clarke, 2011).

This project brings together the concepts of student engagement and maturity modelling. These two concepts are discussed briefly.

[2] A generational approach has been used primarily to conceptualise the first year experience and is detailed in *Using a maturity model to move student engagement practices beyond the generational approach* (Clarke, Stoodley & Nelson, 2013). Essentially, three generations are identified and explored: first generation focusing on co-curricular strategies around student support and engagement (for example, academic advising, orientation and peer mentoring activities); second generation approaches which are curriculum specific strategies for student engagement (and have also been interpreted as combining both curricular and co-curricular activities), and finally; third generation approaches whereby there is a coordinated and institutional strategic approach to FYE.

Student engagement

Student engagement is "increasingly understood to be important for higher education quality" (Australian Council for Educational Research [ACER], 2008, p. 1) and is regarded as a key factor in student achievement and retention (Kahu, 2013; Krause & Coates, 2008; Tinto, 2010) to the point where Trowler and Trowler (2010) claim that "the value of student engagement is no longer questioned" (p. 9). The notions of a successful student experience and student engagement appear inextricably inter-twined, or as Tinto (2006-2007) says succinctly and simply, "engagement matters" (p. 4).

There are a plethora of extant reviews of student engagement (e.g. Harvey, Drew & Smith, 2006; Nelson, Kift, & Clarke, 2012; Zepke & Leach, 2010) but of potentially greater utility is the recent critical analysis of the student engagement literature carried out by Kuha (2013). She identified four relatively distinct approaches to understanding the concept: Behavioural which emphasises student behaviours and teaching practices; psychological which views engagement as an internal psycho-social process with behavioural, cognitive and affective dimensions; socio-cultural which focuses on the impact of the broader social context on student experience; and, drawing these three strands together, holistic where institutions "engage the whole person" (Dall'Alba & Barnacle as cited in Kahu, p. 763). Each of the four perspectives "offers useful and relevant insights into this complex concept [but] each only tells part of the story. … It is widely acknowledged that a more comprehensive understanding of engagement is necessary" (Kahu, p. 765). She proposes an integrative model of engagement which, drawing on important elements of the other three strands, emphasises engagement as a variable and somewhat transient state, where students, teachers and institutions are situated in a socio-political context and an individual's state of engagement has affective, cognitive and behavioural attributes. That is "individual experience is embedded within the socio-cultural context and shown as influenced by the characteristics of the student and the institution" (p. 765).

Using a broad interpretation of curriculum, student engagement includes both the academic and non-academic activities of students' university experiences "likely to generate high quality learning" (ACER, 2008, p. 1). This means that strategies that promote engagement should be intentional and deliberate aspects of curriculum design and its enactment (Nelson, Smith, & Clarke, 2012). This is consistent with Kuh's description of engagement—what Kuha (2013) would label as behavioural—as "the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes ... and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities" (Kuh, 2001, 2003, 2009a cited in Trowler, 2010). This student-institution partnership is elaborated on by Zepke (2013) when, from Kahu's socio-cultural perspective, he describes three key areas for action, which emerged from an analysis of engagement frameworks: students' investment in their own learning; teacher and institutional support and; enabling external environments. In the context of this project, Kahu's analysis confirms the necessity of an integrated approach to the student, learning and teaching and institutional aspects required for engaging students.

Issues of student engagement, success and retention in higher education perennially attract attention as the pressures on institutional funding and learning and teaching performance measures increase. To address these issues, higher education institutions (HEIs) need quality data on students and institutions. In assessing the data available to HEIs, it is accepted that, as far as student experience data is concerned, HEIs are generally well catered for through the provision of corporate data (generated within institutions or collected by external agencies about the activities of their students). However, there is no comparable comprehensive approach to assessing the capability of institutions to design and manage student experiences. Maturity models offer that facility.

Maturity models

Maturity models (MMs) are used to assess the capabilities or maturity of organisational processes and "are widely used in process improvement" (Helgesson, Host & Wetns, 2012, p. 436). The MM concept has been well established in technological and non-educational settings since the early 1980s, for example, the *Software Process Maturity Framework* (Humphrey, 1989). Those models and their present-day counterparts, for example the *Capability Maturity Model Integrated* (Kulpa & Johnson, 2008), have characteristics that can be functionally and conveniently classified as *traditional.* As the scope and application of MMs has grown, they have diversified and taken on characteristics that could be classified as *emergent.* The application of MMs in a substantial way in education, particularly higher education, is a relatively recent phenomenon and the *e-Learning Maturity Model* (Marshall, 2010) is an example of an *emergent* model.

Within the context of HEIs being under pressure to maintain or increase student engagement, success and retention, it seems reasonable to assume that HEIs are organisations that implement a variety of policies and associated activities designed to promote student engagement, success and retention; and these policies and associated activities will vary in complexity, quality, explicitness and effectiveness, or, to use terms relevant to the maturity model literature, they will vary in *capability* and *maturity. Capability* is an indication of how well a process, set of processes or program of activities used by an organisation do what they are designed to do; while *maturity* is an indication of the collective impact of the capabilities on a given aspect of that organisation (Rosemann & de Bruin, 2005). *Maturity* is normative in the sense that an aspect can be 'more' or 'less' mature (Iversen, Nielsen & Norbjerg, 1999) and by becoming more mature, an organisation can *improve* or *evolve,* usually over time. If a *model* is defined as a 'theoretical representation that simulates the behaviour or activity of systems, processes or phenomena' (Theoretical model definition, n.d., para 1), then by ordering all of the theoretically possible incremental improvements into a continuum, it is possible to generate a *model* that summarises the maturity of the capabilities for that organisation—a *capability maturity model*. This represents a continuum of incremental improvements, evolving from a less to a more mature or effective level.

Some commentators (e.g. Becker, Niehaves, Pöppelbuß, & Simons, 2010) suggest that these 'increments' can be clustered into stages or levels where there is homogeneity within each level and a hierarchical sequence of levels where later or higher levels are superior to previous ones and more advanced levels of maturity are progressively attained. This interpretation is reflected in the *traditional* models and the maturity of the organisational

process is indicated by the most mature level. In contrast, other exponents of the maturity concept (e.g. Marshall, 2010), acknowledge that different functional units *within* an organisation could exhibit different levels of maturity because the *capabilities* of the strategies used to develop or implement a particular process or program may vary among the units. To avoid the hierarchical, sequential connotations of *level,* the term *dimension* is used to describe the clusters of capabilities. This interpretation is reflected in the *emergent* models and maturity is assessed holistically by taking into account the maturity of all the dimensions rather than just the highest level as in the *traditional* models.

This project is about the development and populating of an *emergent model,* the *Student Engagement, Success and Retention-Maturity Model* (SESR-MM).

Student engagement and maturity models

Thus far, the following ideas have emerged from the literature on student engagement and experiences:

- Student engagement is central to student success and retention.
- To complement and build on the generational approach to understanding student experience, what is required is a model that focuses explicitly on institutional capabilities.
- To actualise transition pedagogies, a more sophisticated approach to research and practice is required to achieve the integrated whole-of-institution reform envisaged by the *transition pedagogy* concept.
- A sophisticated exploration of the student engagement concept confirms the necessity of an integrated approach to the student, learning and teaching and institutional aspects.
- As far as student experience data is concerned, HEIs are generally well catered for with corporate data. However, there is no comparable comprehensive approach to assessing the capability of institutions to design and manage student experiences.

And from the literature on maturity models:

Maturity models can provide an adequate framework for institution-wide action, implementation and evaluation. This framework allows an assessment of *institutional capability* to initiate, plan, frame, manage and evaluate an entity such as institutional student engagement practices. The collective impact of the capabilities provides an indicator of *maturity*.

The institutional focus of the SESR-MM

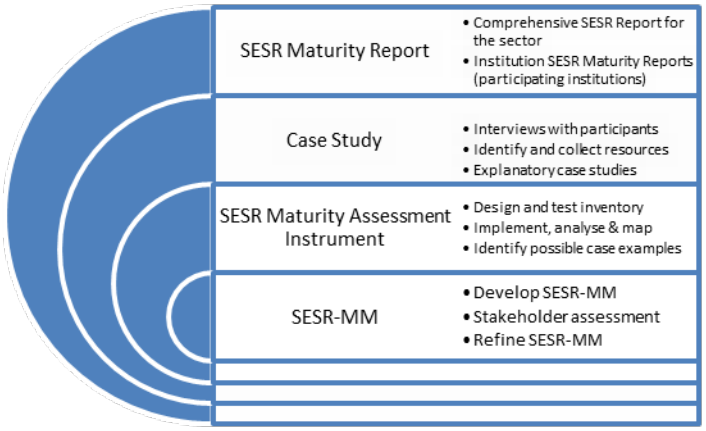
- is consistent with the essence of transition pedagogy; and
- enables a coordinated, institution-wide approach to the student experience;
- is future-focused providing a framework for action;
- highlights evaluation; and
- provides a common framework for sharing good student experience practice between institutions within a sector and possibly between sectors.

Acknowledging the criticality of student engagement in a successful student experience, we offer the development of the SESR-MM as a sophisticated vehicle that can build on the generational approach and achieve whole-of-institution of institutional capacity to initiate, plan, manage, evaluate and review institutional student engagement practices.

Chapter 3: Approach

The final Maturity Models for Student Engagement Success and Retention (SESR-MM) are the result of a four phase process of development, as illustrated in Figure 1.

- Phase 1: Development of the SESR-MM.
- Phase 2: Development of the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument.
- Phase 3: Institutional Case Study.
- Phase 4: Preparation of Maturity Reports.



Stage / Year 2
Phase 4: Participants & beneficiaries Advisory group, project team institutions & sector
Phase 3: Participants & beneficiaries Advisory group & project team institutions
Phase 2: Participants & beneficiaries Advisory group & project team institutions
Stage / Year 1
Phase 1: Participants & beneficiaries Advisory group & project team institutions

Figure 1 SESR MM Phases

The overall approach to the project was collaborative and involved the institutions of project team members.

The project management structure is presented in Figure 2. Queensland University of Technology (QUT) leads the project and provides the project co-leader and manager. The University of Queensland (UQ) and Griffith University (GU), who with QUT formed the project team, committed to contributing two members each to the project team:

- Dr Glyn Thomas and Mr Andrew Lee (UQ);
- Dr Jason Lodge and Professor Keithia Wilson (GU); and
- Associate Professor Jillian Hamilton and Dr Claire Gardiner (QUT).

The project was guided by an advisory group consisting of five senior academics from The University of Queensland (Associate Professor Gordon Joughin), Griffith University (Professor Alf Lizzio), QUT (Professor Suzi Vaughan), the University of Western Sydney (Professor Kerri-Lee Krause) and James Cook University (Professor Sally Kift); two expert advisers with experience in maturity modelling (Dr Stephen Marshall and Dr Geoff Mitchell);

and a critical friend and project evaluator (Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington). Members of the advisory group and the project team met at key points throughout the project to inform the project's direction and focus, and to assist with the evaluation process.

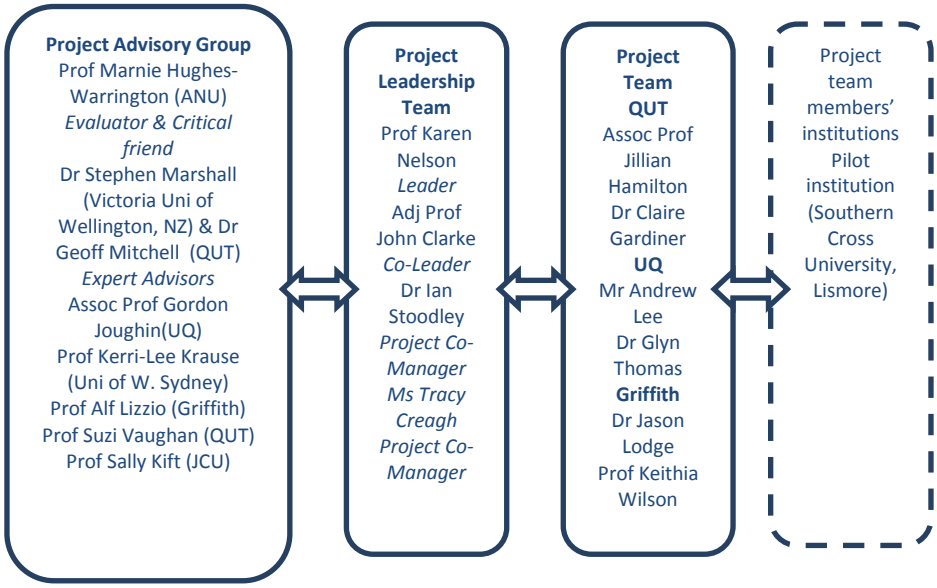


Figure 2 Project Management Structure

Phase 1: Developing the SESR-MM

The *SESR-MM* was iteratively developed through a combination of bottom up and top down processes. A series of workshops conducted in the three participating institutions (after being piloted in a fourth institution – Southern Cross University) identified current SESR practices. Concurrent examination of the theoretical and empirical literature developed a conceptual SESR-MM which was refined through analysis and synthesis with the data from the workshops.

The specific practices associated with the policies, programs and activities related to SESR constitute the content of the SESR-MM. This content was identified using the following process in which the model evolved from an *initial model* to an *interim model* and eventually to the current *working model* (Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley, & Creagh, 2013).

Development of an initial model

An extensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature associated with practices influencing SESR drew on the large body of national and international work reporting on the engagement, success and retention experiences of students in higher education. Details of the range and depth of the literature explored are available in Nelson et al. (2013, p. 33). A full list of the literature references is also available in Appendix A. The model derived from the literature consisted of 82 clusters of practices (e.g. *Alignment of objectives and assessment*).

Development of an interim model

A pilot workshop led to a revision of the *initial model*, based on the accounts of SESR practices identified by practitioners in a specifically designed workshop carried out in an east coast university in Australia. It was conducted *inductively* with participants grouping practices into clusters without reference to existing models. The pilot nature of this workshop provided the opportunity to trial workshop and evaluation procedures and to refine them for subsequent workshops. The participants produced 34 clusters (e.g. *Assessment*) which they synthesised from 416 practices (e.g. *Give timely feedback*). The authors integrated the *initial model* with this data to produce an *interim model.* The institutional data added nothing new to the 82 clusters identified in the literature, rather it embellished them by providing specific instances of the necessarily generic ideas in the literature. However, an advance on the *initial model* was the synthesis of the clusters into broader groupings and the 82 *processes* were coalesced into 10 *categories*.

Development of the current working model

Three institution-based workshops were conducted by the authors in three universities in Brisbane, Australia. The major procedural change based on the feedback from the pilot workshop was that these workshops were conducted *deductively* with practices being allocated by participants to an existing model.

The working model is now referred to as *A Maturity Model for Student Engagement, Success and Retention*.

Throughout the development phase, the institutional project teams were involved and consulted (e.g. by facilitating the data collection workshops). A summary of the institutional participants involved in model development appears as Appendix B.

Phase 2: Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument

This phase involved designing, testing, piloting, refining and administering the *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit.* The tool kit consists of:

- The working model version of the SESR-MM;
- A database to store and categorise information about institutional SESR practices;
- A description of the assessment process;
- A matrix for assigning the assessment scores; and
- A case study protocol to guide the conduct of the collection of evidence of institutional SESR practices (described below).

The purpose of the tool kit was to systematically collect and evaluate evidence of SESR practices across five dimensions of institutional planning and implementation (delivery, planning, framing, monitoring and optimisation). The process designed for administering the tool kit was also iterative and consisted of a series of activities to collect evidence about institutional SESR practices from: publically accessible documents, meetings with project

teams, a workshop with institutional practitioners, and follow-up interviews with key stakeholders to verify evidence already found and resolve outstanding evidence 'gaps' (A more detailed description of the assessment process and matrix are included as Appendix C).

Phase 3: Institutional Case Studies

This phase involved the project team piloting the SESR-MM by applying the Maturity Assessment Tool Kit to collect evidence of the SESR practices (as above).

Then the tool kit was used to assess the maturity of the practices - measured by *how well* the evidence of the actual practice represents the practice identified in the SESR framework. A case protocol was used to manage this process and to ensure consistency in approach. Each case study sought to collect qualitative information though the examination of records and documents, participant workshops, guided questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The case protocol is included as Appendix D.

The Case Study Protocol

The case study protocol guided the case studies conducted to apply the SESR-MM. The focus of the case studies was to ascertain the usefulness and sustainability of the SESR MM in higher education and to refine the SESR MM as it was applied. The purpose of the protocol is to facilitate methodological consistency wherever it is applied.
Therefore the case study protocol was designed to:

- ensure the a consistent collection of evidence of SESR practices across multiple institutions; and
- provide a blueprint for applying the SESR MM in other contexts.

After initial logistical preparations, the collection of SESR evidence for the case studies was conducted in four steps:

1. desktop audit;
2. project team consultation;
3. institutional workshop; and
4. individual interviews.

Step 1 was followed by Step 2, however the necessity and order of steps 3 and 4 were determined by each institution's context (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Case study data collection process

Details of the institutional participants who were involved in supplying evidence of SESR practices are included as Appendix B.

The complete case protocol is attached as Appendix D.

Assessment of capacity

On the basis of the collected evidence an assessment of capacity score was assigned to each of the practices in the MM.

To provide consistency:

- the notion of capacity was defined;
- a capacity scale was delineated; and
- capacity descriptors were described for each practice.

The QUT project team completed the assessment, which was subsequently reviewed by the institutional project team and advisory group members.

A brief summary of the process followed for assigning capacity scores to institutional student engagement, success and retention practices, appears below.

The maturity of the practices associated with each dimension is assessed using a four-point *capacity* scale:

- Little or no capacity to produce the identified practice.
- Some capacity to produce the identified practice.
- Considerable capacity to produce the identified practice.
- Complete or almost complete capacity to produce the identified practice.

In some instances no data was collected about a practice, for a variety of reasons which may include:

- The practice does not happen
- The evidence for the practice is inaccessible
- The practice has no concrete evidence to reveal that it happens
- Participants did not understand the practice description
- The evidence collection techniques were inadequate
- Assessment of that practice is not conducted by choice
- The practice is described so broadly that it is not possible to find evidence for it

The key question when assessing capacity is: *How well* does the evidence support the existence of that practice as interpreted in that dimension?

The concept of How well incorporates both the Reach of the practice (How much?) and the Alignment between the observed evidence and the practice as described in the model (How good?).

- The descriptors for *Reach* are:
    - In some subjects
    - In some programs/departments
    - In some faculties
    - Institution-wide
- The descriptors for *Alignment* are:
    - Minimal
    - Moderate
    - Substantial
    - Comprehensive
- *Alignment* includes:
    - Identification of the core concern – the core concern is accurately identified
    - Responsiveness to the core concern – the core concern is actually addressed
    - Substantiveness of response to the core concern – different facets of the core concern are accounted for and the response is more than simplistic

Note: It is not the impact or effectiveness or implementation of the practice that is being assessed but the *Reach* in the institution and *Alignment* to the model, indicated by the evidence.

Scoring

Capacity is assessed by examining the interaction between the *Reach* and *Alignment* attributes of the evidence, summarised in a matrix in Clarke, Nelson, Stoodley and Creagh (2013) and reproduced here for convenience as Figure 4.

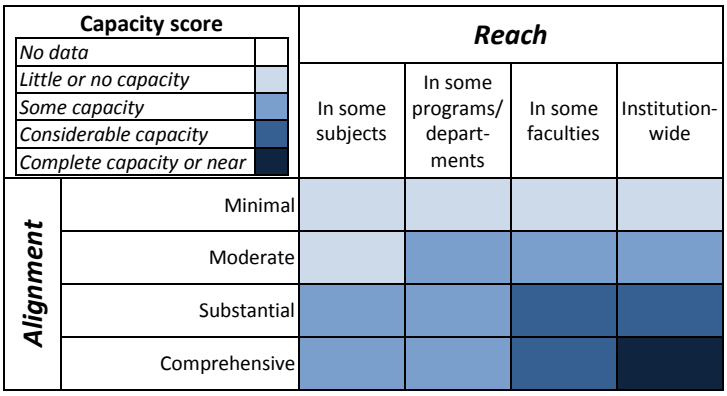


Figure 4 Assessment of capacity

The results of this process are not an exhaustive audit or score card for the institution of the maturity of its SESR maturity practices, rather it is a visual map to prompt reflection on alignment with institutional strategy and practices which may require further attention. This complex process is detailed further in Clarke et al. (2013) and summarised in Nelson et al. (2013). The Capacity Assessment document is attached as Appendix C.

Phase 4: Preparation of Maturity Reports

This was the consolidation phase of the project and involved the project team producing individual *Institution SESR-MM* and obtaining feedback on the illustrative nature and usefulness of the SESR-MM from project team and advisory group members before revising the SESR-MM as appropriate. The final institutional report which contains the Institution SESR-MM has been provided to each participating institution.

Chapter 4: Project Outcomes

The key deliverable is the SESR-MM and instances of it for each of the participating institutions. The practice-process-category hierarchical organisation of SESR practices permits both comprehensive (practice-level) and summary (process-level) visualisations of institutional SESR maturity.

Two process-level de-identified SESR-MMs for each institution are provided below.

The mapping of capacity scores against SESR processes are presented in two tables for each institution. These tables display the average scores of practices within the relevant processes

> Tables 'a' includes instances of no evidence when calculating the average
>
> Note: This version treats no evidence instances as equivalent to no capacity and reveals areas for action
>
> Tables 'b' does not include instances of no evidence when calculating the average
>
> Note: This version treats no evidence instances as inconclusive and represents current activity

The three complete institutional SESR-MMs, developed to verify the SESR-MM and provided to the three project institutions in the form of the Institutional Maturity Reports, follow each set of summary tables.

Instances of no evidence arise when no data has been collected about a practice, for a variety of reasons which may include:

- The practice does not happen
- The evidence for the practice is inaccessible
- The practice has no concrete evidence to reveal that it happens
- Participants did not understand the practice description
- The evidence collection techniques were inadequate
- Assessment of that practice is not conducted by choice
- The practice is described so broadly that it is not possible to find evidence for it

Institution A

Table 1a: Institution A - Maturity Model Summary including no data

Category	Process	Dimensions				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

- No data
- Little or no capacity
- Some capacity
- Considerable capacity
- Complete capacity

Table 1b: Institution A - Maturity Model Summary excluding no data

Category	Process	Dimensions				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

- No data
- Little or no capacity
- Some capacity
- Considerable capacity
- Complete capacity

Institution A: Student Engagement Success and Retention Maturity Model

Category	Process		Practice	Dimensions: Providing	Planning	Institutional framing	Monitoring	Optimising
Learning	Assessment	1	Assessment is designed to be student-centred					
		2	Feedback is provided to students about their assessment					
		3	Assessment is relevant					
	Curricula	4	Curricula (programs, courses & subjects) are designed for student progression					
		5	Curricula are enacted to encourage participation					
	Teaching Techniques	6	Students interact collaboratively with staff and peers					
		7	Teaching and learning simulates real world activities					
		8	Student-centred teaching is pursued					
		9	Technological tools are harnessed					
	Pedagogical Style	10	Enquiry-based learning is used					
		11	Work integrated learning methods are used					
		12	Work integrated learning is mediated by simulations or proxies for experience					
Supporting	Information about	13	Information is disseminated to students about subjects and programs					
		14	Information is disseminated to students about key milestones					
		15	Information is disseminated to students about student support services					
	Services & resources	16	Financial services are provided					
		17	Services are provided to enhance students' personal capabilities					
		18	Services are provided to enhance students' academic skills					
	People rich	19	Advice is provided to students locally and centrally					
		20	Advocacy for students is provided locally and centrally					
		21	Peer support for students is provided locally and centrally					
Belonging	Interaction	22	Explicitly and intentionally inclusive communication is used when interacting with students					
		23	Activities are provided which help students feel they belong					
		24	Opportunities are offered for students to engage with the professions/industry					
		25	There are social engagement opportunities for students					
	Inclusive activities	26	There are opportunities for students to develop cultural competence					
		27	There are activities that accommodate a diversity of student cohorts					
		28	There is engagement with the wider community					
		29	There is interaction with the institutional community					
	Identity development opportunities	30	Students develop their professional and student identity from interaction with experienced practitioners					
		31	There are leadership activities to develop personal and individual capacity in students					
		32	Student success is acknowledged, promoted and valued					
		33	Students develop their identity as part of a cohort with whom they share understandings					
Integrating	Academic literacies	34	Peer learning is embedded in the curriculum					
		35	Academic skills development is embedded in the curriculum					
		36	Academic and professional educators share the design and enactment of the curriculum					
	Personal literacies	37	Cohorts are fostered within the curricula					
		38	Cultural and social competence is cultivated within the curricula					
		39	Students develop personal attributes within the curricula					
		40	Students develop professional attributes within the curricula					
	Activities	41	The institution fosters partnerships between academic and professional staff teams					
		42	Transition is managed from pre-entry to graduation					
		43	Students are outreached to proactively throughout their enrolment					
		44	There are cross-institutional processes aimed at the development of shared understandings					
		45	There is student-initiated decision making and planning					
Resourcing	Staff development	46	There is academic staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		47	There is sessional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		48	There is professional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		49	Staff are resourced to develop students' professional skills					
		50	There is recognition and rewards for teaching excellence					
	Roles and responsibilities	51	There is technology for staff or students to support learning and teaching activities					
		52	There are defined roles responsible for student success					
		53	Staff workloads allow students to access staff					
	Evidence base	54	Corporate data is collected and made available					
		55	Information is shared about strategies					
		56	Initiatives and research in learning and teaching scholarship and projects are encouraged					
	Communication	57	Online and social media are used as a means of communication					
		58	There are well formulated communication procedures					
	Learning environments	59	There are spaces that enhance students' ability to learn					
		60	There are resources that enhance students' ability to learn					
		61	There are social spaces that attract and keep students, providing a favourable environment					
		62	Timetabling is in tune with student needs					
		63	Facilities are readily accessible to students and staff					

Capacity assesses the *Reach* of the practice and the *Alignment* between the observed evidence and the practice as described in the model.

The descriptors for *Reach* are:

- In some subjects
- In some programs/departments
- In some faculties
- Institution-wide

The descriptors for *Alignment* are:

- Minimal
- Moderate
- Substantial
- Comprehensive

Alignment includes:

- Identification of the core concern – the core concern is accurately identified
- Responsiveness to the core concern – the core concern is actually addressed
- Substantiveness of response to the core concern – different facets of the core concern are accounted for and the response is more than simplistic

Capacity score
No data
Little or no capacity
Some capacity
Considerable capacity
Complete capacity or near

Alignment \ Reach	In some subjects	In some programs/ depart-ments	In some faculties	Institution-wide
Minimal				
Moderate				
Substantial				
Comprehensive				

Institution B

Table 2a: Institution B - Maturity Model Summary including no data

Category	Process	Dimensions				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

Table 2b: Institution B - Maturity Model Summary excluding no data

Category	*Process*	*Dimensions*				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

Institution B: Student Engagement Success and Retention Maturity Model

Category	Process		Practice	Dimensions: Providing	Planning	Institutional framing	Monitoring	Optimising
Learning	Assessment	1	Assessment is designed to be student-centred					
		2	Feedback is provided to students about their assessment					
		3	Assessment is relevant					
	Curricula	4	Curricula (programs, courses & subjects) are designed for student progression					
		5	Curricula are enacted to encourage participation					
	Teaching Techniques	6	Students interact collaboratively with staff and peers					
		7	Teaching and learning simulates real world activities					
		8	Student-centred teaching is pursued					
		9	Technological tools are harnessed					
	Pedagogical Style	10	Enquiry-based learning is used					
		11	Work integrated learning methods are used					
		12	Work integrated learning is mediated by simulations or proxies for experience					
Supporting	Information about	13	Information is disseminated to students about subjects and programs					
		14	Information is disseminated to students about key milestones					
		15	Information is disseminated to students about student support services					
	Services & resources	16	Financial services are provided					
		17	Services are provided to enhance students' personal capabilities					
		18	Services are provided to enhance students' academic skills					
	People rich	19	Advice is provided to students locally and centrally					
		20	Advocacy for students is provided locally and centrally					
		21	Peer support for students is provided locally and centrally					
Belonging	Interaction	22	Explicitly and intentionally inclusive communication is used when interacting with students					
		23	Activities are provided which help students feel they belong					
		24	Opportunities are offered for students to engage with the professions/industry					
		25	There are social engagement opportunities for students					
	Inclusive activities	26	There are opportunities for students to develop cultural competence					
		27	There are activities that accommodate a diversity of student cohorts					
		28	There is engagement with the wider community					
		29	There is interaction with the institutional community					
	Identity development opportunities	30	Students develop their professional and student identity from interaction with experienced practitioners					
		31	There are leadership activities to develop personal and individual capacity in students					
		32	Student success is acknowledged, promoted and valued					
		33	Students develop their identity as part of a cohort with whom they share understandings					
Integrating	Academic literacies	34	Peer learning is embedded in the curriculum					
		35	Academic skills development is embedded in the curriculum					
		36	Academic and professional educators share the design and enactment of the curriculum					
	Personal literacies	37	Cohorts are fostered within the curricula					
		38	Cultural and social competence is cultivated within the curricula					
		39	Students develop personal attributes within the curricula					
		40	Students develop professional attributes within the curricula					
	Activities	41	The institution fosters partnerships between academic and professional staff teams					
		42	Transition is managed from pre-entry to graduation					
		43	Students are outreached to proactively throughout their enrolment					
		44	There are cross-institutional processes aimed at the development of shared understandings					
		45	There is student-initiated decision making and planning					
Resourcing	Staff development	46	There is academic staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		47	There is sessional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		48	There is professional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		49	Staff are resourced to develop students' professional skills					
		50	There is recognition and rewards for teaching excellence					
	Roles and responsibilities	51	There is technology for staff or students to support learning and teaching activities					
		52	There are defined roles responsible for student success					
		53	Staff workloads allow students to access staff					
	Evidence base	54	Corporate data is collected and made available					
		55	Information is shared about strategies					
		56	Initiatives and research in learning and teaching scholarship and projects are encouraged					
	Communication	57	Online and social media are used as a means of communication					
		58	There are well formulated communication procedures					
	Learning environments	59	There are spaces that enhance students' ability to learn					
		60	There are resources that enhance students' ability to learn					
		61	There are social spaces that attract and keep students, providing a favourable environment					
		62	Timetabling is in tune with student needs					
		63	Facilities are readily accessible to students and staff					

Capacity assesses the *Reach* of the practice and the *Alignment* between the observed evidence and the practice as described in the model.

The descriptors for *Reach* are:

- In some subjects
- In some programs/departments
- In some faculties
- Institution-wide

The descriptors for *Alignment* are:

- Minimal
- Moderate
- Substantial
- Comprehensive

Alignment includes:

- Identification of the core concern – the core concern is accurately identified
- Responsiveness to the core concern – the core concern is actually addressed
- Substantiveness of response to the core concern – different facets of the core concern are accounted for and the response is more than simplistic

Capacity score
No data
Little or no capacity
Some capacity
Considerable capacity
Complete capacity or near

Alignment \ Reach	In some subjects	In some programs/ depart-ments	In some faculties	Institution-wide
Minimal				
Moderate				
Substantial				
Comprehensive				

Institution C

Table 3a: Institution C - Maturity Model Summary including no data

Category	Process	Dimensions				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

- No data
- Little or no capacity
- Some capacity
- Considerable capacity
- Complete capacity

Table 3b: Institution C - Maturity Model Summary excluding no data

Category	*Process*	*Dimensions*				
		Providing	*Planning*	*Institutional framing*	*Monitoring*	*Optimising*
Learning	Assessment					
	Curricula					
	Teaching Techniques					
	Pedagogical Style					
Supporting	Information about					
	Services & resources					
	People rich					
Belonging	Interaction					
	Inclusive activities					
	Identity development opportunities					
Integrating	Academic literacies					
	Personal literacies					
	Activities					
Resourcing	Staff development					
	Roles and responsibilities					
	Evidence base					
	Communication					
	Learning environments					

Key:

- No data
- Little or no capacity
- Some capacity
- Considerable capacity
- Complete capacity

Institution C: Student Engagement Success and Retention Maturity Model

Category	Process		Practice	Dimensions: Providing	Planning	Institutional framing	Monitoring	Optimising
Learning	Assessment	1	Assessment is designed to be student-centred					
		2	Feedback is provided to students about their assessment					
		3	Assessment is relevant					
	Curricula	4	Curricula (programs, courses & subjects) are designed for student progression					
		5	Curricula are enacted to encourage participation					
	Teaching techniques	6	Students interact collaboratively with staff and peers					
		7	Teaching and learning simulates real world activities					
		8	Student-centred teaching is pursued					
		9	Technological tools are harnessed					
	Pedagogical style	10	Enquiry-based learning is used					
		11	Work integrated learning methods are used					
		12	Work integrated learning is mediated by simulations or proxies for experience					
Supporting	Information about	13	Information is disseminated to students about subjects and programs					
		14	Information is disseminated to students about key milestones					
		15	Information is disseminated to students about student support services					
	Services & resources	16	Financial services are provided					
		17	Services are provided to enhance students' personal capabilities					
		18	Services are provided to enhance students' academic skills					
	People with	19	Advice is provided to students locally and centrally					
		20	Advocacy for students is provided locally and centrally					
		21	Peer support for students is provided locally and centrally					
Belonging	Interaction	22	Explicitly and intentionally inclusive communication is used when interacting with students					
		23	Activities are provided which help students feel they belong					
		24	Opportunities are offered for students to engage with the professions/industry					
		25	There are social engagement opportunities for students					
	Inclusive activities	26	There are opportunities for students to develop cultural competence					
		27	There are activities that accommodate a diversity of student cohorts					
		28	There is engagement with the wider community					
		29	There is interaction with the institutional community					
	Identity development opportunities	30	Students develop their professional and student identity from interaction with experienced practitioners					
		31	There are leadership activities to develop personal and individual capacity in students					
		32	Student success is acknowledged, promoted and valued					
		33	Students develop their identity as part of a cohort with whom they share understandings					
Integrating	Academic threads	34	Peer learning is embedded in the curriculum					
		35	Academic skills development is embedded in the curriculum					
		36	Academic and professional educators share the design and enactment of the curriculum					
	Personal threads	37	Cohorts are fostered within the curricula					
		38	Cultural and social competence is cultivated within the curricula					
		39	Students develop personal attributes within the curricula					
		40	Students develop professional attributes within the curricula					
	Activities	41	The institution fosters partnerships between academic and professional staff teams					
		42	Transition is managed from pre-entry to graduation					
		43	Students are outreached to proactively throughout their enrolment					
		44	There are cross-institutional processes aimed at the development of shared understandings					
		45	There is student-initiated decision making and planning					
Resourcing	Staff development	46	There is academic staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		47	There is sessional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		48	There is professional staff development on how to be student-focussed					
		49	Staff are resourced to develop students' professional skills					
		50	There is recognition and rewards for teaching excellence					
	Roles and responsibilities	51	There is technology for staff or students to support learning and teaching activities					
		52	There are defined roles responsible for student success					
		53	Staff workloads allow students to access staff					
	Evidence base	54	Corporate data is collected and made available					
		55	Information is shared about strategies					
		56	Initiatives and research in learning and teaching scholarship and projects are encouraged					
	Communication	57	Online and social media are used as a means of communication					
		58	There are well formulated communication procedures					
	Learning environments	59	There are spaces that enhance students' ability to learn					
		60	There are resources that enhance students' ability to learn					
		61	There are social spaces that attract and keep students, providing a favourable environment					
		62	Timetabling is in tune with student needs					
		63	Facilities are readily accessible to students and staff					

Capacity assesses the *Reach* of the practice and the *Alignment* between the observed evidence and the practice as described in the model.

The descriptors for *Reach* are:

- In some subjects
- In some programs/departments
- In some faculties
- Institution-wide

The descriptors for *Alignment* are:

- Minimal
- Moderate
- Substantial
- Comprehensive

Alignment includes:

- Identification of the core concern – the core concern is accurately identified
- Responsiveness to the core concern – the core concern is actually addressed
- Substantiveness of response to the core concern – different facets of the core concern are accounted for and the response is more than simplistic

Capacity score
No data
Little or no capacity
Some capacity
Considerable capacity
Complete capacity or near

Alignment \ Reach	In some subjects	In some programs/ depart-ments	In some faculties	Institution-wide
Minimal				
Moderate				
Substantial				
Comprehensive				

Commentary

The following table is a thematic analysis of the feedback gathered from university staff and project team members during the model development and verification activities to establish the SESR-MM. New information arising from the final project event - *Findings Forum* - is included here, while the complete comments from that forum are also provided separately for clarity. Solicited and unsolicited comments, feedback, and critiques are organized below under five themes directly related to the project aim. Those themes are (1) usefulness of the SESR-MM, (2) ability of the institutional SESR-MM to represent context and practice, (3) communication of the SESR-MM, (4) challenges, and (5) suggestions.

Establishing Student Engagement Success and Retention Maturity Model	
Theme 1: Usefulness of the SESR-MM.	
*For **higher education institutions:***	▸ There is at this point an absence of a national framework to measure university student experiences (and therefore likely engagement, success etc.) While this is likely to be changed by international drivers in the next few/several years, the SESR is an interesting (and challenging) way of helping us become more student-focussed. ▸ The power of the magic carpet is that it has an academic/research grounding and is likely to be accepted as an underpinning mechanism for making sense of what can be a nebulous concept. ▸ Highlights common patterns at a macro-level between institutions – more evidence towards the left hand dimensions (providing, planning), less towards the right (monitoring and optimising), all have some low capacity practices, all have gaps in unexpected – but defensible areas, and all have areas of strength). ▸ The similarities and differences between institutions have potential / are interesting. ▸ Well researched in a consultative and collaborative manner, useful, self-explanatory.
*Strategic use **within institutions:***	▸ Input to strategic plan, funding allocation and resourcing. ▸ Better understanding of student retention as a holistic activity, not just a technical or short term deliverable. ▸ The categories provide a headline of how student-focused an institution might be. The relationship among these can also often indicate how reactive or proactive an institution might be in engaging with its students ▸ A way of highlighting areas for action/attention. ▸ Summary level tables [grids] are useful for the VC, knowing DVC was across the more detailed assessment. ▸ The combination of the summary and detailed views [grids] gives an evidence based picture of [engagement practices] at a macro level.
*For **process improvement:***	▸ Model facilitates institutional review and cascading reviews by faculties and central support areas to identify the extent to

	which institutional activities are mirrored or enacted in an integrated way. The gaps between intended and enacted can be identified and monitored for action. ▸ As an internal benchmarking tool - for process improvement within an institution; and sharing good practice. ▸ Provides context and measurements for student retention interventions
Promoting courageous ***conversations***	▸ "the most useful thing [about the SESR-MM] is that it is a conversation starter" ▸ It has promoted a useful conversation within our institution. ▸ Most useful application is a dialogue prompt. ▸ Great work - its best outcome is as a very good conversation starter around topics that are sometimes not discussed on the ground. ▸ Extremely valuable tool particularly for planning and staff discussions. ▸ Good discussion and engagement tool for decision makers. ▸ This provides the ability for directed and focused discussion. ▸ It looks very useful for stimulating discussion of our performance at the coal face as well as our relationship with institutional framing.
Potential *of the SESR-MM:*	▸ Useful and sophisticated. ▸ A useful tool. Easily understood and visually analysed. ▸ Pattern recognition is a possible use, e.g. rank ordering of dimensions. ▸ It works to create opportunities for better practice as well as better evidence gathering of such practices, by seeing where more effort is needed. ▸ The carpet allows particular aspects of the student engagement/experience to be located in a broader map, and help explain their importance/priority for the institution. ▸ To drive better collaborative practice in areas that need development and also to celebrate successes.
Theme 2: Ability of the institutional SESR-MM to represent context and practice.	
General ***perceptions****:*	▸ All of a sudden I feel so much more connected with the issues and have a grasp of the larger picture in an institutional context. ▸ The model appears to reflect the institutional context successfully in that it shows where there is a focus on local (school) processes (e.g. communication with students) compared with where there are central or shared processes (e.g. student enrolment). ▸ Our model looks OK to us. ▸ A smart design that all university staff can quickly understand the macro snapshot of an institution. ▸ Categories and processes are useful indicators ▸ The arrangement of the practices-processes-categories makes sense. ▸ The categories provide a good coverage of options in an

	understandable manner. ▸ The categorisation coupled with the dimensions is neat. ▸ Descriptions of practice, with evidence of examples, are particularly helpful as they are clear concise and allow staff from all areas to understand the areas of discussion/interrogation. ▸ The carpet when used over a time period will show practice improvements. ▸ The 'carpet' seems to make sense; the map [grid] seems to be mostly a correct indication of our practices and programs. ▸ Provides an indicative view of where the gaps may be either in delivery or measurement. ▸ Really interesting and comprehensive. ▸ It's useful... we had some questions about how you can have no evidence of a practice and yet be doing very well in that practice and/or be monitoring it... or indeed optimizing it... ▸ The groupings of the “greys” - [practices of similar capacity] - makes sense. ▸ All key areas appear to be represented by the practices detailed in the model. ▸ Some participants may find they do not have broad enough knowledge of the institutional practices to know if the model was complete or not.
Assessing the capacity *of practices(as indicated by the coloured grid) and consistency with institutional activities:*	▸ The areas of the grid showing gaps (no evidence of the practice) or low practice capacity highlight areas for institutional attention. ▸ For decentralized processes (e.g. L&T) where there is a need for general or common standards / policy; the evidence collected seems to be a correct reflection of what is happening. ▸ The [grid] for the integrating category seems to make sense and current practices are reflected well by the grid, e.g. - There are lots of extra-curricular activities but these are not necessarily integrated into curriculum. - Lack of shared activity around L&T practice has been made explicit. ▸ In the Resourcing category the assessment of academic and professional staff development seems reasonable, and it is correct that there is no policy about internal information sharing. ▸ The Resourcing category correctly shows that that social space is an area of emerging interest. ▸ In the Learning category – it seems easy to find evidence of technological tools being used. ▸ Visually clear but some clarification needed around we can be good at certain things but appear to have no evidence when we know in fact have that data. Need to make evidence more explicit to wider university context.

Interpreting capacity *of practices:^*	▸ The colour tiles are an excellent visual that allow me to see the depths of an issue. ▸ Can the quantity/quality share of the capacity scores be indicated? Could an icon be used? - understanding the quantity aspect is significant, as it changes how any change may be approached - red (low capacity) areas are hard to comment on without having quantity/quality detail associated with them ▸ In application grey cells (low capacity) could be considered as red cells (no evidence), because if evidence hasn't been obvious then it's a concern; however, a bit of a 'glass is half empty' approach, is good 'until proven otherwise' (though, a policy that is invisible is indeed not useful). ▸ Update Adequacy to show scope + alignment; allows institutional decision whether appropriate to context (present in final model). ▸ Is "adequacy" (capacity) equal to "fit for purpose"? ▸ Use "Alignment" consistently, remove "correspondence" (completed). ▸ Lack of evidence can LOOK like lack of actions.
Theme 3: Communication of the Institutional SESR-MM	
Reporting ***functionality*** *(All addressed in final version of model):*	▸ The density of information is stimulating but also quite intimidating. ▸ The visual representation is quite striking and really makes the areas of interest stand out in a manner that I have never seen before. ▸ Include summary report averaging including 'no evidence'; alternative labels: - Table 1 Summary of practice capacity for evidence discovered. - Table 2 Summary of practice capacity including practices where no evidence was discovered. ▸ Use 'no evidence' summary is preferable – it is a clearer representation. ▸ Have both summary maps: - zero averages - for presenting a case for action. - non zero averages - for presenting positive report of activity. ▸ Provide more extensive descriptions of practices in the report. ▸ It would be helpful to have some explanations of how the categories, processes and practices were defined and measured. ▸ Report needs to have a caveat re: what evidence was found. ▸ Change to less subjective language e.g. 'inadequate' -> little evidence found, and 'poor...' -> increasing in quality/quantity. ▸ Number practices for easy reference. ▸ Include the adequacy score grid from the overview as the key on the model; this shows the two axes and that the dark colour is difficult to achieve.

*Information **design**:**	▸ Use shading rather than traffic light system to capacity of practices. ▸ A graduated scale is more easily interpreted than a colour scale; ordinal versus nominal. - Grey is not equal to red, red is already a move in the right direction - Need to not loose 'red' constellations in saturation colouring - Some colours are close (orange + red); try solid black and white, then cross hatching o Hatching was subsequently trialled and rejected as unsuitable. - Move to black and white (B&W) representation – helps focus on maturity; no data is nearer to 'not adequate', B&W shows 'saturation' from left to right; some activity is better than none o B&W schema was subsequently trialled and rejected for general communication of the model but retained as necessary for publications requiring B&W text. ▸ Wider coloured columns.
Theme 4: Challenges	
*For **establishing** an institutional SESR-MM:*	▸ Identifying the objective evidence that the practice occurs, e.g. - in the Integrating category it may be hard to find evidence of planning for practices such as the practice "cohorts are fostered within curricula". - In the supporting category – team members were unaware of a specific policy on peer support, which was indicated by the evidence. - Some evidence may be subsumed in elements of existing policy. - Pedagogical styles, where there is not a common language or terminology, e.g. work integrated learning, or where an alternative term is used e.g. Internationalization of curriculum. - Cross-institutional partnerships – evidence may be represented by minutes of L&T committees, working groups and project teams. - Some evidence of practices e.g. feedback to students, will be stored locally and may not be readily discoverable. ▸ Lack of evidence in Optimising dimension (expected outcome): - Evidence may be found in committee structures, business intelligence systems (dashboards, student surveys). - Hidden data, undocumented processes, tacit knowledge. ▸ Planning dimension: - An atomistic approach to planning may miss evidence, as planning occurs and is stated in more macro-level terms. ▸ Valence: not all practices are of equal valence for SESR – e.g. If a practice is already provided adequately, is a policy needed?

*For **using** the SESR-MM:*	▸ Business intelligence perspective: - Need to provide information that is actionable - How do we stimulate reflective action, based on evidence? ▸ The challenge with the model is that it is highly sophisticated and a significant amount of time needs to be spent teaching how the model is used. Otherwise people will want to grab at results and jump straight to the conclusions. ▸ The complexity cannot be processed by managers who already bear a high cognitive load - Needs to be immediately relevant - Managers need a filtered version of the model - Need to explore emotional reactions - threat, unappreciated-ness, constraint of academic freedom - At what level could any particular practice be improved - Institutional, school, unit? - What can people do with this? ▸ MMs presume a homogeneous organisation, however academies are not. - **Response:** the emergent as opposed to traditional staged schema adopted for the SESR-MM somewhat addresses the notion of homogeneity.
Theme 5: Suggestions	
***Refinements** to the SESR-MM:*	▸ Include student-led associations and clubs appear in the model. ▸ Resourcing - staff development – place all the staff development practices together (completed). ▸ Considerations of information design and information organization. ▸ Consider other sources of evidence of practices in the future: e.g. a thematic analysis of student feedback, or a sample of actual communication between lecturers and students. ▸ Consider how agile the model is in being able to alter categories or incorporate new practices.
***Further** work or investigations:*	▸ Include more institutions. ▸ A conceptual model of the relationships between practices would be useful. ▸ It would be useful to look at intersections between them [categories - processes - practices] … ▸ Address the return on investment question (identify which practices are most effective for what purposes. ▸ Investigate factor analysis e.g. relational aspects and satisfaction, curriculum aspects and achievement. ▸ Provide guidance about which practices are more essential for SESR than others. ▸ Train people to do the assessment. ▸ Some guidelines with the iterative evidence collection process would be invaluable if a university was to commence using it. ▸ It would be interesting to see how eLearning maturity model maps to the student engagement model so direct links can be made between the two.

Notes
* The presentation of the practice capacity / institutional SESR maturity in the grid evolved from traffic light colours to monochromatic shading during the review of the model. This change was a result of developments in our own thinking, advice from the Expert Adviser; and feedback from project team members, the advisory group and the project evaluator. ^ There was a change in terminology from 'adequacy' to 'capacity' in response to these comments, reflection on the literature and further discussion with the project Expert Adviser.

"We went as far as we could go in terms of gathering evidence in this project."

Dissemination

Website

Project website: http://studentengagementmaturitymodel.net/

Forum

Student Engagement Findings Forum, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane - October 11, 2013

- Participant Information Kit
- Findings Forum GoSoapBox Summary

(these resources are available via the project website)

Case Studies (for the institutions only – no public access):

- The Griffith University Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model (SESR-MM) Report
- The Queensland University of Technology Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model (SESR-MM) Report
- The University of Queensland Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model (SESR-MM) Report

Commissioned Reports

Nelson, K., & Clarke, J. (2013). The First Year Experience: Looking back to inform the future. In *A review of higher education (Volume 1)*. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education 1*. . Commissioned manuscript in preparation.

Journal articles (accessed via the project website under 'project dissemination')

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). *A maturity model case study in higher education.* Manuscript in preparation.

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). *The development of a maturity model of student engagement in higher education.* Submitted for publication.

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). Using a maturity model to build on the generational approach to student engagement practices. *Higher Education Research and Development.* (In Press)

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., & Stoodley, I. (2013) An exploration of the maturity model concept as a vehicle for higher education institutions to assess their capability to address student engagement: a work in progress. *ergo, 3*(1), pp. 29-35.

Invited Presentations (accessed via the project website under 'project dissemination')

Nelson, K. (2013, November). Student engagement: what we know and the institutional implications for academic literacies. Invited presentation at The Australasian Council for Open, Distance and e-Learning (ACODE), in conjunction with the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) *ACODE 63: Exploring Student Voice in Online Education.* 7th November, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Nelson, K. (2013, November*).* Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions. Presented at *the Making a Real Difference: Learning and Teaching Grants Symposium*, 7th November, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.

Nelson, K. (2013, September). A maturity model approach to student engagement, success and retention. Invited keynote at the *Student Administration and Services Forum*, 12 September, Australian National University , Canberra, Australia

Nelson, K. (2013). Embedding university wide frameworks: Student learning engagement. *Student Retention and Success: whole of university approaches to effective intervention and transition*. 26th-27th of June, Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia

Conference papers (accessed via the project website under 'project dissemination')

Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Nelson, K. (2013, July). *Using a maturity model to move student engagement practices beyond the generational approach.* Paper presented at the 16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand.

Clarke, J., Nelson, K., & Stoodley, I. (2013, July). *The place of higher education institutions in assessing student engagement, success and retention: A maturity model to guide practice.* Paper presented at the HERDSA Conference, AUT University, Auckland, New Zealand.

Clarke, J., Nelson, K., & Stoodley, I. (2012, June). *The maturity model concept as framework for assessing the capability of higher education institutions to address student engagement, success and retention: New horizon or false dawn?* Paper presented at the 15th First Year in Higher Education Conference, Sofitel Brisbane Central, Brisbane, Australia.

Conference presentations (accessed via the project website under 'project dissemination')

Nelson, K. (2013, April). *Inclusive practices for student engagement*. Paper presented at the 3rd Annual Criterion International Education Strategy and Implementation Conference, Melbourne, Australia.

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., & Stoodley, I. (2012, September*). Moving beyond transition pedagogy: Maturity models and student engagement.* Paper presented at the 7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia.

Conference workshops (accessed via the project website under 'project dissemination')

Nelson, K., Clarke, J., & Stoodley, I. (2012, September). *Verifying a Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model (SESR-MM): A reality check of the model using data derived from three universities.* Workshop presented at the 7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia.

Chapter 5: Evaluation

Formative evaluation

The project was managed in accordance with the *QUT Project Management Framework* and directly informed by the *ALTC Project Evaluation Resource.* The project's formative evaluation processes included:

- Regular meetings (weekly) and ongoing monitoring of project management activities among the leadership team (project leaders and managers).
- Fourteen separate meetings with the project team members across the three institutions.
- Five separate meetings with the advisory group.
- Three separate meetings with the Expert Advisors
- Analysis of data and evidence collection workshops evaluation forms.
- Regular reporting back to all members (leadership team, project team, advisory group and project evaluator.
- Planned and ongoing engagement with the project evaluator around expectations and feedback.

Formative evaluation activities involving the project evaluator, Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington has included:

- Preliminary meeting with the project evaluator to ascertain interest in the project.
- Engagement with the project evaluator around progress and data collection (March, June and August 2012) with the development of the SESR-MMs (March and August, 2013)
- Focus group sessions with advisory group and project team at mid- and end of project.
- Engagement with the project evaluator and reporting around progress of activities (December 2011, April, June September 2012, March and August 2013)
- Inclusion of project evaluator in key advisory group meetings
- Inclusion of project evaluator in all advisory group and communication.

Appendix E provides a summary of the evaluation framework utilised for the project

Summative evaluation

A summative evaluation was completed by the project evaluator Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington from the Australian National University. The full report is located in Appendix F.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This project focused on issues of importance to both institutions and the wider community; the engagement, success and retention of students in higher education institutions. On one hand, parameters such as the rates of student success and retention are seen as key indicators of the quality of learning and teaching; while on the other, student engagement is "increasingly understood to be important for higher education quality" (ACER, 2008, p. 1). There are a plethora of extant reviews of student engagement (e.g., Harvey et al., 2006; Nelson et al., 2012; Zepke & Leach, 2010) but essentially engagement is regarded as essential for student achievement and retention (Krause & Coates, 2008; Tinto, 2010) with Trowler and Trowler (2010) claiming that "the value of student engagement is no longer questioned" (p. 9). Of potentially greater relevance to this project is the recent critical analysis of the student engagement literature by Kahu (2013). She proposes an integrative concept of engagement which emphasises individual engagement as being a variable and somewhat transient state with affective, cognitive and behavioural attributes. Thus "individual experience is embedded within the socio-cultural context and … [is] influenced by the characteristics of the student and the institution" (p. 765).

Maturity models (MMs) are used to assess the capabilities or maturity of organisational processes and are widely used in process improvement. The MM concept has been well established in technological and non-educational settings since the early 1980s, for example, the *Software Process Maturity Framework* (Humphrey, 1989) and the *Capability Maturity Model Integrated* (Kulpa & Johnson, 2008). The application of MMs in a substantial way in education, particularly higher education, is a relatively recent phenomenon and the *e-Learning Maturity Model* (eMM) (Marshall, 2010)[3] and the SESR-MM which builds on it, are examples of emergent models. The eMM has had extensive application and use to guide and improve digital learning strategies and practices in tertiary settings.

The aim and objectives of this project were *to establish and provide a holistic framework that would allow higher education institutions (HEIs) manage and improve their student engagement and retention strategies and programs*. The framework and main project deliverable were produced as a *Maturity Model* (MM) for *Student Engagement, Success and Retention* (SESR-MM). The three institutional SESR-MMs developed to verify the SESR-MM have been provided to the three project institutions in the form of the Institutional Maturity Reports, and provided in de-identified form in this report. Other resources, including example SESR-MMs and the publications arising from the project, are available on the project website at www.studentengagementmaturitymodel.net

The SESR-MM established by this project fills the gap in knowledge about institutional practices leading to student engagement, by providing a source of data in the form of an institutional framework for improving the quality of learning and teaching environments and hence student engagement. Furthermore, the SESR-MM established by this project is a sophisticated research-based tool for achieving the integrated whole-of-institution reform to student engagement, first envisaged by the *transition pedagogy* and described but not

[3] See the model, tools and publically available resources at http://www.utdc.vuw.ac.nz/research/emm/

realised by the descriptive approach to institutional practices contained in the *generational approach* (Nelson & Clarke, 2013).

The major project outcome of the project is agreement, from staff drawn from the eight institutions[4] which participated in the project in some way, that the SESR-MM is a useful and appropriate tool for guiding the strategic coordination, management, review and improvement of institutional SESR programs and practices. This suggests that the SESR-MM has the potential to positively transform the holistic—academic, social and personal—engagement experiences of students in Australian universities, and that the SESR-MM is a useful mechanism for sharing good practice and improving programs designed to enhance the student experience.

However, while this project established and ascertained the potential usefulness of the SESR-MM, it was beyond the scope of this project to determine the efficacy of the SESR-MM in changing institutional SESR practices. Further work is required to build on and extend the project reported here in order to determine the impact of the SESR-MM on improving SESR practices. The potential impact of the SESR-MM could be determined by applying the framework in situ to review/modify/improve/enhance existing SESR practices. Impact analysis will focus on investigating how individual HEIs apply the SESR-MM to guide institution-specific projects aimed at enhancing their students' experiences, and by making the knowledge and resources generated available throughout the Australasian HE sectors.

Five institutions (QUT, UQ, ANU, JCU and Victoria University of Wellington) have agreed to work collaboratively using the Garlick and Pryor (2004) action learning approach to benchmarking to deploy the SESR-MM to guide improvements to their institutional SESR practices. We intend to investigate the impact of the SESR-MM and an expression of interest has been submitted for consideration to the Office for Learning and Teaching to support this further work.

[4] Project teams and participants were from QUT, UQ & Griffith. QUT, Griffith, UQ, UWA & JCU senior leaders constituted the Advisory Group. Prof Marnie Hughes Warrington (ANU) was the project evaluator. Dr Stephen Marshall - Victoria Uni of Wellington was the Expert Adviser to the project.

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Appendix A: Sources of information on factors influencing student engagement

Listed below are the literature sources that have provided the theoretical and empirical bases used to generate the conceptualising of student engagement, success and retention. The list may appear to be relatively short but the vast majority are reviews and syntheses of extant literature. For example, Nelson, Clarke, Kift and Creagh (2011) critiqued 399 items of Australasian literature; Harvey, Drew and Smith (2006), 545 international items; and Zepke, and Leach (2010), 93 items from 10 countries, and so on.

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Plus: International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education, Volumes 1, 2 and 3.

Appendix B: Institutional Participation

Maturity Model Development Workshops

Phase 1: Developing the SESR-MM

Model development workshops were held in all three institutions during July and August 2012. The data collected contributed significantly to model development. Details of the participants in the institutional workshops were provided in the Institutional SESR-MM Reports.

A pilot workshop was conducted at Southern Cross University, Lismore, on 8th May 2012 which assisted in the development of the data collection workshops.

Workshops were held in the project institutions, as follows:

- The Queensland University of Technology workshop on 18th July
- The University of Queensland workshop on 3rd August
- The Griffith University workshop on 17th August

In total, 80 workshop participants offered over 1,000 practices related to student engagement, success and retention, which they grouped into 196 clusters.

Phase 1: Developing the SESR-MM **Model Development Workshops June, July, August, 2012**	
Institution	**Attendance**
Southern Cross University (pilot)	35
Griffith University	18
Queensland University of Technology	15
The University of Queensland	12

Phase 3: Institutional Case Studies - Evidence Collection

Evidence gathering workshops were held in two of the three institutions during May 2013. The 90 minute case study workshops helped identify evidence of retention processes and practices across the institutions, and the data collected contributed significantly to the overall identification of evidence of student engagement practices within the institutions. Participants were not asked about their own practices, rather the location of information about the institutional activities. Details of the participants in the institutional workshops were provided in the Institutional SESR-MM Reports.

Workshops were held in our partner institutions, as follows:

- The Queensland University of Technology workshop on 10th of May
- The University of Queensland workshop on 23rd of May
- Griffith University – no workshop, on advice of Griffith Project Team and Advisory Group members (individual interviews were considered to be of greater benefit than a workshop)

Individual interviews were undertaken with institutional staff in May and June to identify further evidence

Phase 3: Institutional Case Studies **Evidence Collection Workshop and interviews, May and June 2013**	
Institution	**Attendance/interviews**
Griffith University	5
Queensland University of Technology	26
The University of Queensland	17

Phase 4: Preparation of Maturity Reports.

The institutional maturity models developed as a result of the evidence gathering and capacity assessment processes were presented for discussion with the institutional project team members, including the institutional members of the Advisory Group. The purpose of these discussion sessions was to determine how well the data represented in the model reflected institutional programs and practices and to understand the potential usefulness of the Institutional SESR-MMs.

A findings forum (held on October 11, 2013) provided an opportunity for all staff who participated in the project and team members to consider the use of maturity modelling in higher education and specifically provided the institutional groups with an opportunity to consider the SESR-MM created for their institution. Participants were also invited to reflect on the SESR-MM and provide recommendations for further improvements to the model in order to optimise student engagement, success and retention programs and practices in higher education institutions. A total of 26 people (including the project team members) participated in the Forum.

Expert advisor to the project Dr Stephen Marshall (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) provided a keynote address on maturity modelling, drawing on over a decade of his experience developing and applying the eLearning Maturity Model. Professor Karen Nelson (project leader), provided an overview of the project. Project findings were presented for discussion, in institutional groups and feedback given to the project team. Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington (Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, ANU and project evaluator) was invited to offer closing remarks.[5] During the working session and the final discussion GoSoapBox was utilised to share responses to questions about the model (usefulness, usability and relevance in the institution).

[5] Unfortunately Prof Hughes-Warrington was not able to attend because of disruptions to flight schedules. A/Prof Gordon Joughin provided the closing comments.

Phase 4: Project Findings Forum **Dissemination of project findings, October 11 2013**	
Institution	**Attendance**
Griffith University	2
Queensland University of Technology	15
The University of Queensland	7
Other (project adviser)	1

Participants in each of the data and evidence collection workshops and subsequent interviews included a wide range of institutional staff, including:

- academic staff (lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors, professors);
- Assistant deans (teaching and learning);
- Heads of School; and discipline leaders.
- Co-ordinators of first year subjects;
- Professional staff (learning and teaching developers, curriculum consultants);
- Sessional staff representatives;
- Work-integrated learning co-ordinators;
- Senior managers of professional staff (including library staff and academic skills advisors);
- Managers and directors of student support areas (counselling, administration, careers and international student advisors);
- Directors and staff of institutional higher education research centres;
- Equity directors and equity staff

Appendix C: Assessing Capacity Overview

Introduction

This document summarises the process followed for assigning capacity scores to institutional student engagement, success and retention practices. It was applied to the Model of SESR developed in the SESR Project.

Higher Education Levels of Organisation

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are variously organised into a hierarchical structure of components. However, often the same level of component in different institutions is given different names. In this discussion, the generic terms in Table will be used.

Table 1 Generic terms for institutional levels of organisation

Level	Generic term	Description	Synonyms
1	Subject	A semester-long teaching activity	Unit, Course, Paper
2	Program	A collection of subjects leading to an award such as a Bachelor of Applied Science	Course
3	Department	A discipline-, curriculum- or professionally-based administrative unit	School
4	Faculty	An administrative cluster of Departments (or synonyms)	School
5	Institution	An administrative cluster of Faculties (or synonyms)	Central administration, University, Institute of Technology…
6	Tertiary Sector	The collection of post-secondary institutions	

Elements of Capacity

This is a discussion of indicators of the *capacity* of practices designed to engage students, which provides the basis for assessing the *maturity* or *institutional capability* in this area of operation.
The maturity of the practices associated with <u>each</u> dimension is assessed using a four-point *capacity* scale:

- Little or no capacity to produce the identified practice
- Some capacity to produce the identified practice
- Considerable capacity to produce the identified practice
- Complete or almost complete capacity to produce the identified practice

This complex process is detailed in Clarke, Nelson, Stoodley and Creagh (2013) but summarised in Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley and Creagh (2013). An updated summary is reproduced here.

- *No evidence:* In some instances no data has been collected about a practice, for a variety of reasons which may include:
    - The practice does not happen
    - The evidence for the practice is inaccessible
    - The practice has no concrete evidence to reveal that it happens
    - Participants did not understand the practice description
    - The evidence collection techniques were inadequate
    - Assessment of that practice is not conducted by choice
    - The practice is described so broadly that it is not possible to find evidence for it

The key question when assessing capacity is: *How well* does the evidence support the existence of that practice as interpreted in that dimension?

The concept of *How well* incorporates both the *Reach* of the practice (*How much*?) and the *Alignment* between the observed evidence and the practice as described in the model (*How good?*).

- The descriptors for *Reach* are:
  - In some subjects
  - In some programs/departments
  - In some faculties
  - Institution-wide
- The descriptors for *Alignment* are:
  - Minimal
  - Moderate
  - Substantial
  - Comprehensive
- *Alignment* includes:
  - Identification of the core concern – the core concern is accurately identified
  - Responsiveness to the core concern – the core concern is actually addressed
  - Substantiveness of response to the core concern – different facets of the core concern are accounted for and the response is more than simplistic

Note: It is not the impact or effectiveness or implementation of the practice that is being assessed but the *Reach* in the institution and *Alignment* to the model, indicated by the evidence.

Scoring

Capacity is assessed by examining the interaction between the *Reach* and *Alignment* attributes of the evidence, summarised in a matrix in Clarke, Nelson, Stoodley and Creagh (2013) and reproduced here for convenience as Figure 1.

Capacity score		***Reach***			
No data					
Little or no capacity		In some subjects	In some programs/ depart-ments	In some faculties	Institution-wide
Some capacity					
Considerable capacity					
Complete capacity or near					
Alignment	Minimal				
	Moderate				
	Substantial				
	Comprehensive				

Figure 1 Assessment of capacity

Conclusion

The results of this process are not meant to serve as an exhaustive audit or score card for the institution, rather to prompt reflection on areas which require priority attention.

Appendix D: Case Study Protocol

1. Introduction

1.1 Context of the protocol

This case protocol guides case studies conducted in application of the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model developed by the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) project *Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions* (Australian Office for Learning and Teaching Grant ID11-2056 2011-2013). The project and model will subsequently be referred to as the OLT SESR MM (Office for Learning and Teaching Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model) Project or Model.
The OLT SESR MM Project has to date:

- established a collaborative team comprising Griffith University (GU), Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and The University of Queensland (UQ);
- reviewed the literature concerning SESR and MMs;
- collected SESR practices in four higher education institutions; and
- synthesised the above into a MM which presents core processes of SESR and expresses them in five interpretations called dimensions.

1.2 Purpose of the case protocol

The purpose of the protocol is to facilitate methodological consistency wherever it is applied.

1.3 Aims of the case studies

The aims of the case studies are to:

- collect evidence for the evaluation of practice, as defined by the SESR MM;
- learn how the SESR MM may be applied in the tertiary sector; and
- refine the SESR MM.

The definition of case study used here is “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. xi, cited in Patton, 2002, p.297)

2. Case design

2.1 Case study design

The case study protocol is designed to respond to:

- the need to collect consistent evidence of SESR practices across multiple institutions; and
- the desire to provide a blueprint for applying the SESR MM, for use in other contexts.

2.2 Scope and units of analysis

The initial case studies are limited in scope to three institutions, which are part of the OLT SESR MM Project team. All similar case studies are limited to evidence relevant to the SESR MM.

The units of analysis are the institutional practices, which provide evidence of the existence and depth of processes as defined by the SESR MM.

2.3 Case study process

These case studies are Phase 3 of the OLT SESR MM Project. The preceding phases are the development of the maturity model and the creation of an assessment instrument. The following phase is the development of a comprehensive SESR MM Report.

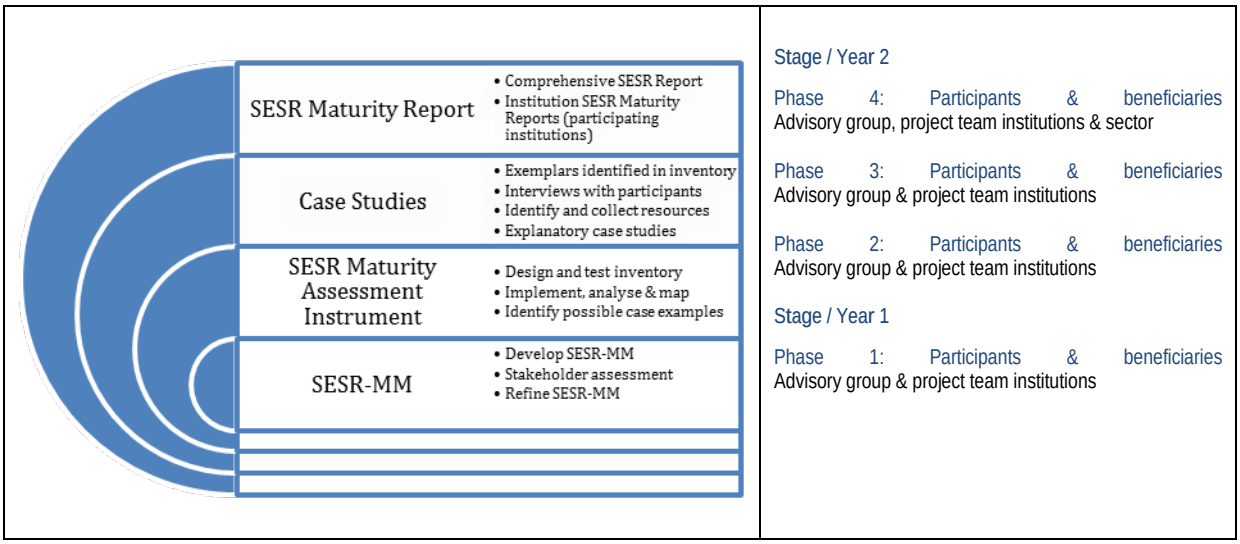

Figure 1 Project approach

After initial logistical preparations, the case studies will be conducted in four steps:

1. desktop audit;
2. project team consultation;
3. institutional workshop; and
4. individual interviews.

Steps One will be followed by Step Two, however the necessity and order of Steps Three and Four will be determined by each institutional context.

Figure 2 Case study data collection process

The first institution will serve as a learning and refinement experience for the project team.

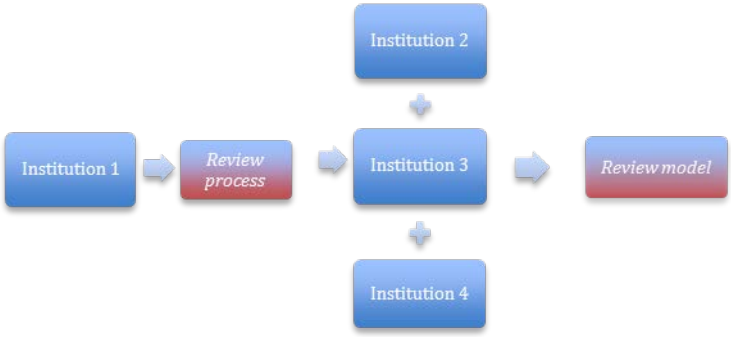

Figure 3 Case study flow chart

2.4 Research focus

The focus of the case studies is to ascertain the sustainability of the SESR MM across the tertiary sector and to refine the SESR MM as it is put to use.

2.5 Assumptions

In conducting these case studies, we are assuming:

- that the institutions studied will offer sufficient support for the studies to be completed;
- that key personnel will be identified who are willing and able to participate;
- that key personnel will be able to identify the sources of evidence needed to assess practices within the SESR-MM
- that the data collected will be comprehensive and an accurate representation of reality;
- that the assessment of maturity is consistent; and
- that sufficient evidence will be collected for the realisation of a meaningful assessment and report.

2.6 Critical success factors

The success of the case studies is dependent on:

- co-operation of the institutions which are included in the study; and
- the evidence collected being representative of institutional practice.

3. Project Management

3.1 Case study timeline

These case studies occur as Phase 3 of a wider project timeline.

Table 1 Case study timeline, in project timeline context

2011-2012	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Ethics	x				x	x		x				
MIA signed	x	x			x	x						
Staff employment	x											
Literature review	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Develop Model: (Phase 1)												
Identify Process Areas, Practices and Dimensions				x	x	x	x	x	x			
Pilot workshop								x				
Workshops								x		x	x	
Institutional feedback (workshop afternoon)								x		x	x	
Synthesise workshop data											x	x
Integrate data into model												x
Second round feedback (combined data)									x			x
Develop Assessment Instrument (Phase 2):												
Conceptualisation of instrument									x	x	x	x

2012-2013	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Literature review	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		
Institutional case studies:	*(Phase 3 prep.)*											
Develop case study plan/protocol	x	x										
Case ethics	x	x										
Contact institutions re case studies		x	x									
Develop Assessment Instrument (Phase 2 cont.)												
Articulate practices	x	x										
Interpret practices for dimensions		x	x									
Develop inventory of types of evidence			x	x								
Review Instrument				x								
Apply Assessment Instrument (Phase 3)												
Step 1 - Desktop audit					x	x	x	x				

Step 2 - Project Team consultation					x	x	x	x				
Step 3 - Institutional workshop						x	x	x				
Step 4 - Individual interviews						x	x	x	x			
Analyse Assessment Data												
Synthesise evidence and draw conclusions						x	x	x	x			
Deliver institutional feedback									x	x		
Institutional reports												
Develop reports, including context							x	x	x			
Discuss with participating institutions								x	x			
	SESR MM Maturity Report (Phase 4)											
Sector report								x	x	x	x	
Findings forum												x

3.2 Resources required

In order to successfully complete the case studies, the resource outlined in Table are required.

Table 2 Required resources

Category	Item	Notes
Equipment	Audio-recording device	Interviews
	Software	Data analysis and reporting
Evidence base	Interviews	
	Institutional documentation and artefacts	
Logistics	Institutional workspace	
	Catering	Institutional workshops
	Transport	
Personnel	Data collection and analysis skills	
	Leadership team	
	Project team	
	Institutional personnel	

3.3 Management of risk

Major and minor risks, with responses to them, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Risk management

Risk level	Description	Management
Major	Loss of institutional support	Start Case Study as soon as possible Continue with reduced number of Case Studies
	Loss of key personnel (Project Leadership team, Project Team and institutional personnel)	Finalise Case Studies in the least amount of time Find suitable replacement personnel
Minor	Logistical problems	Reschedule affected activities

4. Selecting case organisations

Institutions are included in the case studies if:

- they have an appropriate institutional profile i.e. they are attuned to and active in SESR activities, and have personnel committed to participating in a case study;
- they have indicated willingness to be part of the project as Project Team institutions;
- they are geographically co-located with other participating institutions; and
- they represent a balance of membership of university groupings (e.g. ATN, G8, IRU; see http://www.australianuniversities.com.au/directory/australian-university-groupings/).

These criteria satisfy qualitative research requirements identified by Patton (2002) who asserts that "purposeful samples should be judged according to the purpose and rationale of the study: Does the sampling strategy support the study's purpose?" (p. 245).

5. Formalising arrangements

Case study arrangements will be formalised by:

- contact and initial request to Project Team organisation, through the institution's Project Team member, including identification of other key contact personnel;
- familiarisation of the Project Team members with case study protocol;
- formal request for access and implementation of case study sent to appropriate institutional contact person; and
- continuing arrangements made through the respective Project Team members.

5.1 Identifying key personnel

Each participating institution has two Project Team members. They will identify key institutional personnel and facilitate contact with those personnel.

Key personnel are those who have access to relevant evidence.

5.2 Access to staff

The institutional key contact will facilitate access to key people in their institution, for workshop participation and individual interviews.

5.3 Briefing sessions

Orientation to the project and case study will form part of the introduction to institutional workshops and interviews.

5.4 Data sources

Data in the form of evidence of institutional processes will be gathered from two kinds of sources:

- Primary: Documents and artefacts
    - Websites
    - Brochures
    - Course outlines
    - Orientation material
    - Policy statements
    - Institutional reports
    - Student guild advertising
    - Institutional calendar
- Secondary: Personal interaction
    - Workshops
    - Interviews

The data gathered from personal interaction in workshops and interviews is useful to direct the team members to evidence of the practices in documents and artefacts. To be clear, this is not a study of experience but of evidence.

Data in the form of capacity scores will also be generated by project team members during the assessment process.

6. Evidence Collection

Data collection will gather evidence for institutional processes across the entire MM.

Ethical clearance will be obtained from the QUT Human Research Ethics Committee before any of the case studies begin. Permission will be obtained to examine internal institutional material and confidentiality will be respected. Workshop and interview participants will have opportunity to withdraw without penalty. Anonymity of participants' responses will be maintained.

Progress through the data collection stages will be iterative and lead to refined processes.

6.1 Step One – Desktop Audit

An audit of publicly available material will be conducted to identify evidence available in sources such as internet-based institutional documentation and artefacts, including websites, brochures, course outlines, orientation material, policy statements, institutional reports (working parties, committees, boards, VC reports, media releases), student guild advertising and the institutional calendar.

6.2 Step Two – Project Team Consultation

The Project Team members will be consulted to assist with:

- a review of Data Collection Step One results;
- the collection of additional data; and
- preparation for Data Collection Step Three (identifying workshop participants in the light of data gaps).

6.3 Step Three – Institutional workshop

An institutional workshop with the key personnel identified in Step Two will:

- reinforce outcomes of Data Collection Steps One and Two;
- explore gaps in the collected data; and
- prepare for Data Collection Step 4 (identifying individuals and sources to fill data gaps).

6.4 Step Four – Individual Interviews

Individuals will be interviewed, with a view to completing the evidence collection.

6.5 Review

A review of the data collection steps as a final opportunity to collect missing evidence.

7. Assessment

On the basis of the collected evidence an assessment of capacity score will be assigned to each of the practices in the MM.

To provide consistency:

- the notion of capacity will be defined;
- an capacity scale will be delineated; and
- capacity descriptions will be described for each practice.

Representatives of the Project Leadership Team will be responsible for completing this assessment.

8. Analysis

Analysis will be conducted on the evidence collected and the assessment assigned to the data.

8.1 Evidence analysis

Evidence collection (Section above) will be subjected to continuous review, for gaps. This will be achieved by looking at under-represented practices in the MM.

8.2 Assessment analysis

The assessment data (Section above) will be compiled and represented in an understandable form.

8.3 Conclusions

General observations of institutional strengths and guidance in the interpretation of the findings may be offered. However, no advice will be given concerning the institutional response to the findings.

9. Quality Assurance Principles

The conduct of the case studies will be measured against key principles for assessing their quality, identified by Nelson (2004) in the literature (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 1994).

Principle	Description	Application in this case study
Credibility: Are the findings 'true'?	Established by having the transcriptions and reports checked by those on whom the research has been done. Also built up through prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation and triangulation, exposure to peer review, search for negative instances that challenge emerging hypotheses.	- review by experienced academics and professionals - workshops review the findings and contribute practitioner experience - team analysis, requiring justification of inclusions - triangulation of practitioner experience and documentation - in depth exposure to the case context
Transferability: Are the findings applicable in other contexts?	Achieved by providing an in depth, rich description of the context or issue being studied, so that the reader can judge how applicable the findings are to other situations.	- reporting will provide an in-depth description of the context of the study, to provide a means of comparison with readers' contexts
Dependability: Are the findings consistent and repeatable?	Through explicit description of the data collection techniques, the methods and the decisions made during the project as well as the end product.	- techniques and decisions will be extensively described for case method and data collection decisions
Confirmability: Are the findings free of undue researcher bias?	Involves reflections about the process and method used as well as data triangulation and creating an audit trail.	- project team individual perspectives provide balance, Leadership Team, Project Team and Advisory Group - triangulation of evidence sources will be sought
Significance: Do the findings make an important contribution?	Must be unusual or of general public interest, the issues could be important nationally, theoretically or practically.	- this is a unique study - it is of interest to the sector - it will assist institutions respond to national policy
Completeness: Are the findings comprehensively described?	Explicit distinction between the case and its context, and description of the way evidence has been collected.	- reports will describe both the context and the case - the data collection process will be described in detail
Alternatives: Are differing explanations	Alternative interpretations or perspectives considered, based on the	- considering negative evidence - seeking institutional interpretations

considered?	findings.	- canvassing project team individual perspectives
Evidence: Are the findings empirically supported?	Sufficient and compelling evidence reported in a neutral and factual manner, with both supporting and challenging data.	- conclusions will be illustrated with examples - data will be represented in its completeness
Engagement: Are the findings presented in a way that faithfully and enticingly represents the data	Clear writing style used to entice the reader.	- faithful representation of the data - clear, succinct presentation - differentiates clearly between descriptions and interpretations - encourages institutions and the sector to reform

10. Reporting

10.1 Institutional feedback

At the conclusion of each institutional case, a report will be delivered of the findings to that institution. No comparisons will be made in this report to findings from other institutions. The institutional reports will not be distributed to a wider audience by the project team without explicit permission of the relevant institutional authorities.

10.2 SESR Maturity Model report

At the conclusion to the case studies, a wider report will be produced examining the process. The aim will be to review the usefulness of the maturity model applied to student engagement, success and retention. Only de-identified institutional data will be used for illustrative purposes in this wider report. Institutions, through their representative on the Project Team, will review this report before it is distributed.

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Appendix E: Project Evaluation Framework

Project Overview

The aim of this project was to establish the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model [SESR-MM] as a framework for transforming (monitoring, comparing, evaluating and improving) institutional programs and practices designed to enhance SESR in Australian universities.

The aim was accomplished through the objectives:

- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Model* (SESR-MM) by incorporating and extending the *first, second* and *third generation* conceptualisation, drawing on the theoretical and empirical literature, and synthesising data about perspectives on the key elements of SESR in higher education gathered through practitioner workshops;
- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit* to enable the status of SESR programs and practices to be mapped and reported within the SESR-MM framework;
- Piloting the SESR-MM through a series of *Case Studies* in each team member institution to determine the usefulness of the information and the SESR-MM in terms of enhancing SESR practices; and
- Publishing *Institutional Maturity Reports* (for institutions participating in the SESR Maturity Assessment), and publishing a sector *SESR Maturity Model Report* (consisting of the model, assessment findings and case studies) to share findings with the sector and enable other universities to consider the application of the SESR-MM within their context.

These objectives were accomplished through four phases:

- ***Phase 1*: Developing the SESR-MM**. The *SESR-MM* was iteratively developed through a combination of bottom up and top down processes. A series of workshops conducted in the three participating institutions (after being piloted in a fourth) identified current SESR practices. Concurrent examination of the theoretical and empirical literature developed a conceptual SESR-MM which was refined through analysis and synthesis with the data from the workshops.
- ***Phase 2*: Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument**. This phase involved designing, testing, piloting, refining and administering the *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit.* The tool kit was designed to collect and evaluate evidence of SESR practices across five dimensions of institutional planning and implementation (delivery, planning, framing, monitoring and optimisation). The process designed for administering the tool kit was also iterative and consisted of a series of activities to collect evidence about institutional SESR practices from publically accessible documents, meetings with project teams, a workshop with institutional practitioners, and follow-up interviews with key stakeholders to verify evidence already found and resolve outstanding evidence "gaps".
- ***Phase 3*: Institutional Case Studies.** This phase involved the project team piloting the SESR-MM by applying the Maturity Assessment Tool Kit to collect evidence of the SESR practices (as above). The tool kit was then used to assess the maturity of the practices - measured by *how well* the evidence of the actual practice represents the practice identified in the SESR framework. A case protocol was used to manage this process and to ensure consistency in approach across institutions.
- ***Phase 4*: Preparation of Maturity Reports**. This was the consolidation phase and involved the project team producing individual *Institution SESR-MM Reports* and obtaining feedback on the illustrative nature and usefulness of the SESR-MM from Project Team and Advisory Group members, before revising the SESR-MM as appropriate. The final institutional reports are being provided to each participating institution and a comprehensive report for the sector will be made publicly available describing the project and its deliverables and outcomes.

Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Framework	
Focus of Evaluation	The aim of this project is to establish the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model [SESR-MM] as a framework for transforming (monitoring, comparing, evaluating and improving) institutional programs and practices designed to enhance SESR in Australian universities.
Guiding Evaluation Questions	• Has the project aim been achieved? • Were project outcomes and deliverables delivered on time and within budget? • Has dissemination been effective?
Evaluation of Project outcomes	• Does the SESR-MM provide an enabling platform to transform SESR and create new paradigms for university practice? • What was the degree of critical reflection, review and enhancement of existing university processes and practices (in participating universities) related to project activities? • What examples now exist of increased awareness of the criticality of SESR and the importance of teaching and learning in enhancing success and retention?

Evaluation Questions

The table below contains the key evaluation questions related to each project objective and phase.

Four summary tables follow. These detailed tables contain a brief description of the key activities performed in that phase to achieve each objective, a description of how the activity/outcome was reviewed and how outcomes/deliverables were disseminated.

Objective/Phase	Key evaluation questions
1. Developing the SESR-MM.	Was the SESR-MM achieved and perceived as appropriate and useful as a process improvement tool for participating universities and to the sector?
2. Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument	How well did the participating institutions participate in the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument development? Was the instrument developed in a way to be informative and useful to participating institutions?
3. Institutional Case Studies.	Were examples of SESR practice at each maturity level and sharable SESR resources associated with good practice (e.g. assessment repositories) made available to the project? Was a comprehensive SESR Maturity Report, based on the survey and case data, produced for each participating institution?
4. Preparation of Maturity Reports.	Was the report based on the evidence collected from the Australasian university sector? Was the potential for the usefulness of using the SESR-MM in the sector explored?

Details by project phase/objective

- Phase 1: Developing the SESR-MM.
- Phase 2: Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument.
- Phase 3: Institutional Case Studies.
- Phase 4: Preparation of Maturity Reports.

Objective/Phase 1. Developing the SESR-MM.	• Was the SESR-MM achieved and perceived as appropriate and useful as a process improvement tool for participating universities and to the sector?	
Project activities	**Review of activity**	**Dissemination of activity**
• Literature analysis • 4 x institutional workshops – develop SESR-MM • 3 x institutional workshops - collect evidence of SESR practices • Findings forum.	• Project team and advisory group feedback positive • Participant observation of seminars/workshops / forums • Analysis of feedback/ suggestion forms	• Clarke, Nelson, & Stoodley. (2012). *First Year in Higher Education Conference*[6] • Nelson, Clarke, & Stoodley. (2013). *Ergo*[7] • Nelson, Clarke, & Stoodley. (2012). *7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference*[8] • Institutional workshops to heighten awareness of maturity modelling

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Objective/Phase 2. Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument	• How well did the participating institutions participate in the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument development? • Was the instrument developed in a way to be informative and useful to participating institutions?	
Project activities	**Review of activity**	**Dissemination of activity**
• Workshop attendance data • Refer to list of institutional project team meetings • Refer to advisory group meetings • Case study protocol	• Project reports to evaluator. • Project Team and Advisory Group meetings held regularly and feedback received. • Document describing the assessment process developed and reviewed by project team, institutional project team members and advisory group members.	• Clarke, Nelson, & Stoodley. (2013). *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia*[9] • Clarke, Stoodley, & Nelson. (2013). *16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference*[10] • Project Team meetings to inform key stakeholders of assessment elements and principles

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Objective/Phase 3. Institutional Case Studies.	• Were examples of SESR practice at each maturity level and sharable SESR resources associated with good practice (e.g. assessment repositories) made available to the project? • Was a comprehensive SESR Maturity Report, based on the survey and case data, produced for each participating institution?	
Project activities	**Review of activity**	**Dissemination of activity**
• Case protocols • Database of evidence collected for each participating institution.	• Presentation of initial SESR-MM to institutional project teams and working sessions with project team members, staff workshops and staff interviews for model 'sense-making' • Institutional reports issued by 3 November 2013 for endorsement.	• Workshops and interviews raised awareness of maturity modelling being applied in this way • Findings Forum held, with the three participating institutions in attendance • Case study paper in development • University of Newcastle requested participation as additional case study.

Objective/Phase 4. Preparation of Maturity Reports.	• Was the report based on the evidence collected from the Australasian university sector? • Was the potential for the usefulness of using the SESR-MM in the sector explored?	
Project activities	**Review**	**Dissemination**
• In consultation with institutional project team members drawing on rich insights of institutional context and priorities.	• By institutional project team members. • Findings forum data invited participants to assess the *SESR-MM* as being useful for describing SESR activities for the sector.	• OLT final report • Institutional reports for UQ, Griffith and QUT. • A sector level report based on the evidence generated and collected by the project. • Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley, & Creagh. (2 013). *Higher Education Research and Development*. (In Press)[11] • Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley, & Creagh. (2 013). Under review for *International Journal of Higher Education*[12]

[11] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). Using a maturity model to build on the generational approach to student engagement practices. *Higher Education Research and Development.* (In Press)

[12] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). *The development of a maturity model of student engagement in higher education.* (Under review for *International Journal of Higher Education*)

Appendix F: Evaluators Report

Evaluation Report

Establishing a framework for transforming student engagement, success and retention in higher education institutions.

October 2013

Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington
Australian National University

Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching Grant (ID11-2056 2011-2013)

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Project Overview

The primary aim of this project—which was led by QUT with Griffith University and The University of Queensland as partner institutions —was to establish the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model [SESR-MM] as a framework for transforming—monitoring, comparing, evaluating and improving—institutional programs and practices designed to enhance SESR in Australian universities.
This aim was to be accomplished through the objectives of:

- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Model* (SESR-MM) by incorporating and extending the *first, second* and *third generation* conceptualisation, drawing on the theoretical and empirical literature, and synthesising data about perspectives on the key elements of SESR in higher education gathered through practitioner workshops;
- Designing and developing a *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit* to enable the status of SESR programs and practices to be mapped and reported within the SESR-MM framework;
- Piloting the SESR-MM through a series of *Case Studies* in each team member institution to determine the usefulness of the information and the SESR-MM in terms of enhancing SESR practices; and
- Publishing *Institutional Maturity Reports* (for institutions participating in the SESR Maturity Assessment), and publishing a sector *SESR Maturity Model Report* (consisting of the model, assessment findings and case studies) to share findings with the sector and enable other universities to consider the application of the SESR-MM within their context.

These objectives were to be accomplished through four phases:

- ***Phase 1*: Developing the SESR-MM**. The *SESR-MM* was iteratively developed through a combination of bottom up and top down processes. A series of workshops conducted in the three participating institutions (after being piloted in a fourth) identified current SESR practices. Concurrent examination of the theoretical and empirical literature developed a conceptual SESR-MM which was refined through analysis and synthesis with the data from the workshops.
- ***Phase 2*: Developing the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument**. This phase involved designing, testing, piloting, refining and administering the *SESR Maturity Assessment Tool Kit.* The tool kit was designed to collect and evaluate evidence of SESR practices across five dimensions of institutional planning and implementation (delivery, planning, framing, monitoring and optimisation). The process designed for administering the tool kit was also iterative and consisted of a series of activities to collect evidence about institutional SESR practices from publically accessible documents, meetings with project teams, a workshop with institutional practitioners, and follow-up interviews with key stakeholders to verify evidence already found and resolve outstanding evidence "gaps".
- ***Phase 3*: Institutional Case Studies.** This phase involved the project team piloting the SESR-MM by applying the Maturity Assessment Tool Kit to collect evidence of the SESR practices (as above). The tool kit was then used to assess the maturity of the practices - measured by *how well* the evidence of the actual practice represents the practice identified in the SESR framework. A case protocol was used to manage this process and to ensure consistency in approach across institutions.

- ***Phase 4*: Preparation of Maturity Reports**. This was the consolidation phase and involved the project team producing individual *Institution SESR-MM Reports* and obtaining feedback on the illustrative nature and usefulness of the SESR-MM from Project Team and Advisory Group members, before revising the SESR-MM as appropriate. The final institutional reports are being provided to each participating institution and a comprehensive report for the sector will be made publicly available describing the project and its deliverables and outcomes.

Evaluation Framework

As part of the project application and documents, the following evaluation framework was proposed:

Evaluation Framework	
Focus of Evaluation	The aim of this project is to establish the Student Engagement, Success and Retention Maturity Model [SESR-MM] as a framework for transforming (monitoring, comparing, evaluating and improving) institutional programs and practices designed to enhance SESR in Australian universities.
Guiding Evaluation Questions	• Has the project aim been achieved? • Were project outcomes and deliverables delivered on time and within budget? • Has dissemination been effective?
Evaluation of Project outcomes	• Does the SESR-MM provide an enabling platform to transform SESR and create new paradigms for university practice? • What was the degree of critical reflection, review and enhancement of existing university processes and practices (in participating universities) related to project activities? • What examples now exist of increased awareness of the criticality of SESR and the importance of teaching and learning in enhancing success and retention?

This evaluation framework was developed in consultation with the project evaluator.

Evaluation of Achievement of Primary Aim and Subsidiary goals

The following tables present evidence against the evaluation questions, and a summary of the evaluator's appraisal.

Aim	• Was the SESR-MM achieved and perceived as appropriate and useful as a process improvement tool for participating universities and to the sector?	
Proposed Evidence for Evaluation		
Activities	**Review**	**Dissemination**
• Literature analysis • 4 x institutional workshops – develop SESR-MM • 3 x institutional workshops - collect evidence of SESR practices • Findings forum.	• Project team and advisory group feedback positive • Participant observation of seminars/workshops/ forums (see appendices A, B and C) • Analysis of feedback/ suggestion forms (see appendices A, B and C)	• Clarke, Nelson, & Stoodley. (2012). *First Year in Higher Education Conference*[13] • Nelson, Clarke, & Stoodley. (2013). *Ergo*[14] • Nelson, Clarke, & Stoodley. (2012). *7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference*[15] • Institutional workshops to heighten awareness of maturity modelling

Subsidiary Goal (Phase 2)	• How well did the participating institutions participate in the SESR Maturity Assessment Instrument development? • Was the instrument developed in a way to be informative and useful to participating institutions?	
Proposed Evidence		
Activities	**Review**	**Dissemination**
• Workshop attendance data • Refer to list of institutional project team meetings • Refer to advisory group meetings • Case study protocol	• Project reports to evaluator. • Project Team and Advisory Group meetings held regularly and feedback received. • Document describing	• Clarke, Nelson, & Stoodley. (2013). *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia*[16] • Clarke, Stoodley, & Nelson. (2013). *16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference*[17] • Project Team meetings to inform key stakeholders of assessment elements

[1] Clarke, J., Nelson, K., & Stoodley, Ian, D. (2012, June). The maturity model concept as framework for assessing the capability of higher education institutions to address student engagement, success and retention: new horizon or false dawn? In *First Year in Higher Education Conference 2012*, Sofitel Brisbane Central, Brisbane, QLD.

[2] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., & Stoodley, I. (2013). An exploration of the maturity model concept as a vehicle for higher education institutions to assess their capability to address student engagement : a work in progress. *Ergo*, *3*(1), pp. 29-35.

[3] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., & Stoodley, I. (2012, September). Moving beyond transition pedagogy: Maturity models and student engagement. In *7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference*, University of Adelaide. (Unpublished)

[4] Clarke, J., Nelson, K., & Stoodley, I. (2013, July). The place of higher education institutions in assessing student engagement, success and retention: a maturity model to guide practice. In *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia*, AUT University, Auckland.

[5] Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Nelson, K. (2013, July). Using a maturity model to move student engagement practices beyond the generational approach. In *16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference,* Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington.

	the assessment process developed and reviewed by project team, institutional project team members and advisory group members.	and principles

Subsidiary Goal (Phase 3)	• Were examples of SESR practice at each maturity level and sharable SESR resources associated with good practice (e.g. assessment repositories) made available to the project? • Was a comprehensive SESR Maturity Report, based on the survey and case data, produced for each participating institution?	
Proposed Evidence		
Activities	**Review**	**Dissemination**
• Case protocols • Database of evidence collected for each participating institution.	• Presentation of initial SESR-MM to institutional project teams and working sessions with project team members, staff workshops and staff interviews for model 'sense-making' • Institutional reports issued by 3 November 2013 for endorsement.	• Workshops and interviews raised awareness of maturity modelling being applied in this way • Findings Forum held, with the three participating institutions in attendance • Case study paper in development • University of Newcastle requested participation as additional case study.

Subsidiary Goal (Phase 4)	• Was the report based on the evidence collected from the Australasian university sector? • Was the potential for the usefulness of using the SESR-MM in the sector explored?	
Proposed Evidence		
Activities	**Review**	**Dissemination**
• In consultation with institutional project team members drawing on rich insights of institutional context and priorities.	• By institutional project team members. • Findings forum data invited participants to assess the *SESR-MM* as being useful for describing SESR activities for the sector.	• OLT final report • Institutional reports for UQ, Griffith and QUT • A sector level report based on the evidence generated and collected by the project • Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley, & Creagh. (2013) *Higher Education Research and Development*. (In Press)[18] • Nelson, Clarke, Stoodley, & Creagh. (2013) . Under review for *International Journal of Higher Education*[19]

[6] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). Using a maturity model to build on the generational approach to student engagement practices. *Higher Education Research and Development*. (In Press)

[7] Nelson, K., Clarke, J., Stoodley, I., & Creagh, T. (2013). *The development of a maturity model of student engagement in higher education.* (Under review for *International Journal of Higher Education*)

Evaluator's Summary

The Evaluator finds that the primary aim of the project was achieved. It is available for consultation at the project website.

The Evaluator finds an excellent base of evidence to conclude that all subsidiary goals were also achieved.

The Evaluator also finds several key factors that contributed to the successful achievement of the primary aim and subsidiary goals. These factors include:

- Regular meetings of the project team with the Evaluator (every 2 months) and steering group from the beginning, which were well supported by project document updates, critical path maps and reports on activities. This ensured that the team were provided with iterative feeback on their activities and able to further enhance the proposed outcomes of the project;
- Active and sustained contact with the institutions providing case studies, including proactive follow up with institutions that found some of the timelines challenging. This generated a strong collaborative feel to the project, ensuring that the collective wisdom of multiple institutions was garnered in the produced resources;
- Strong project management, as demonstrated in extensive and appropriate resources. Those resources included clear timelines, and use of traffic light ratings to make it easy for the evaluator and steering group to hone in on particular areas for discussion;
- Strong institutional support: documents produced highlighted strong involvement by senior management at QUT, ensuring that the activities undertaken were tied back to institutional strategies and given principled support.
- Diversity of skill set in the project team, which ensured that project activities, reports and documents reflected strong skills in analysis, synthesis, communication and consideration of feedback.

The Evaluator rates the effectiveness of this project, as judged by the formative and summative evidence, to be in the top 5% of the 20-30 OLT projects seen by the Evaluator, and commends the results to the OLT.

Appendix A: Maturity Model Development Workshops Phase 1

Maturity Model Development Workshops

Phase 1: Developing the SESR-MM

Description:

Model development workshops were held in all three institutions during July and August 2012. The data collected contributed significantly to model development.
A pilot workshop was conducted at Southern Cross University, Lismore, on 8th May 2012. An evaluation was requested of participants, from the perspective of both content and process, the feedback from which was analysed by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team also reviewed the workshop activities and outcomes. This pilot activity assisted in the development of the data collection workshops.

The workshop protocol was adjusted after the SCU (pilot) workshop and discussions with the Project Team in the 4th June 2012 meeting.
Difficulties became apparent through the SCU workshop, due to differing vocabularies which rendered problematic:

a. participants' efficient grouping of their processes into like clusters; and
b. the project team's interpretation of participants' conceptions when later considering their alignment with the theoretical model.

Each workshop included a formal evaluation to gather participant feedback on both the process and the impact of the workshop. Each workshop was followed by a Leadership Team debriefing and evaluation, at which time adjustments were made to the subsequent workshop process.
Workshops were held in the project institutions, as follows:

- The Queensland University of Technology workshop on 18th July
- The University of Queensland workshop on 3rd August
- The Griffith University workshop on 17th August

Workshop outcomes:

In total, 80 workshop participants offered over 1,000 practices related to student engagement, success and retention, which they grouped into 196 clusters.

Table 3 Workshop statistics

	SCU (Pilot)	QUT	UQ	GU	Total
Attendance	35	15	12	18	80
Clusters	82	28	54	32	196
Practices	416	284	173	228	1101

A sample of participants' practices is on the project blog (http://studentengagementmaturitymodel.net/?page_id=276).

During the three workshops we provided categories derived from the literature for participants to place the cluster of practices in, rather than expecting them to create categories of their own.
In every workshop participants were provided a means to add categories to the model, if their practices would not fit into the ones provided. No further new categories were suggested after the SCU workshop, indicating that the high level structure of the model had stabilized and was representative of practitioner practice.

Generic workshop session plan:

Activity	Notes	Time
Welcome and introduction by team	Maturity Models, context, what we will be doing	15 mins
Introductions in groups	Roles, snapshot of what you do about student engagement, success and retention	5 mins
Individual work	Writing on Post-its: What are you doing? (in order to promote student engagement, success and retention)	20 mins
Group work clustering	Place Post-its in clusters; Name the clusters	30 mins
Refreshments		20 mins
Group poster work	Place named Post-it clusters on the relevant posters on the walls, devise a new poster if needed; Report to whole group	60 mins
Individual prioritising	Indicate the three most important items with coloured dots	
Wrap up and evaluation	General conclusion by team; Evaluation	10 mins

Workshop evaluation data summary (SCU feedback not included):

Process	The process was		
	Useful	Not useful	Because ...
Explanation of the project	37	0	• Set scene • To understand the kind of input required • It set the context and able to take away copies of slides for future reference • We know what we are aiming at
Individual activity: Writing about specific practices aimed at student engagement, success and	37	0	• Think broadly about those activities in my area • Makes you think about each practice

Process	The process was		
	Useful	Not useful	Because ...
retention			• New ideas cropped up • Reminded me of what I do • Captures 'most' of the activities
Group activity: Clustering the practices and labelling the clusters	34	2	• Good to see other ideas and how they fit with mine • Thinking about what belongs together (hearing what others are doing) • To some extent useful - allows for explanation. • Process fell apart and decision and clusters were "streamrolled"
Group activity: Locating the clusters on the wall posters	31	3	• Bigger picture – the multiple ways they could fit • Made me self-reflect • Encouraged discussion and agreement • Impacted because the separation between process/category not fully clear • Pressure to go with what leader says may sway results
Individual activity: Choosing the most important practices/clusters	36	0	• Prioritising • Good to see your focus but hard • Brought focus back and allowed for individual input

The participant feedback indicated the relevance and usefulness of the workshops. Participants identified over 30 practices (some overlap likely) that they considered useful but had not heard of previously. Their comments on the evaluation form completed at the end of the workshop included:

- A great opportunity to raise ideas and self-reflect on practice.
- Great fertile ground to tap ideas for teaching.
- Very interesting and helpful, particularly the categories by knowing that practices are vital.
- Thanks for the workshop; I thought this was a valuable process.
- Useful
- Thank you for an enjoyable morning
- Good work
- Excellent and important work being done: thank you.

Appendix B: Maturity Model Development Workshops Phase 3

Maturity Model Development Workshops

Phase 3: Institutional Case Studies - Evidence Collection

Description:

Evidence gathering workshops were held in two of the three institutions during May 2013. The 90 minute case study workshops helped identify evidence of retention processes and practices across the institutions, and the data collected contributed significantly to the overall identification of evidence of student engagement practices within the institutions.
Participants were not asked about their own practices, rather the location of information about institutional activity. Project team members were then tasked to view this evidence, in order to understand the institutions' activities.
Each workshop was followed by a Leadership Team debriefing and evaluation, at which time adjustments were made to the subsequent case study protocol.
Workshops were held in our partner institutions, as follows:

- The Queensland University of Technology workshop on 10th of May
- The University of Queensland workshop on 23rd of May
- Griffith University – no workshop, on advice of Griffith Project Team and Advisory Group members (individual interviews were considered to be of greater benefit than a workshop)

Workshop outcomes:

In total, 27 participants contributed to the evidence collection activities by focusing on specific practices within the five categories. Participants self-selected practices they were familiar with and responses were then entered into the evidence collection database.

Generic workshop session plan:

Activity	Timing
Introduction to project	20 mins
Objectives of session	
Forming workgroups across categories	
Group work	60 mins
Cycle A	*15 mins (+5)*
Cycle B	*15 mins (+5)*
Cycle C	*15 mins (+5)*
Round up, including evaluation	10 mins

Workshop evaluation data summary:
QUT
There were 14 participants in the workshop and all completed the Workshop Survey. The survey consisted of eight forced-choice items with a "useful", "not useful" and "not applicable" response options—a fourth option, "no response" was added during the analysis—and two open-ended questions.

- Of the 112 possible responses, 95 (84.6%) were "useful". The four "not useful" responses were *Explanation of the workshop* (1), *Having to deal with three different processes in each 15 minute cycle* (1) and *The opportunity to discuss QUT processes that were unfamiliar to you* (2). The bulk of the "No response" choices came from two participants who tended to ignore the specific items in preference to general written comments.
- In the general items (1, 2 & 3), 38 out of a possible 42 responses were "useful" (90.5%) while in the items that focussed on specific workshop processes (4, 5, 6, 7 & 8), only 57 out of a possible 70 responses were "useful" (81.4%).

1.

Table 1 Summary of QUT evaluation feedback

Item		Useful	Not useful	Not applicable	No response	Total
1	Explanation of the Project	14				14
2	Explanation of the Workshop	12	1		1	14
3	The overall organisation of the Workshop	12			2	14
4	Having to deal with three different processes in each 15 minute cycle	11	1		2	14
5	The opportunity to choose who you worked with	11		1	2	14
6	The opportunity to choose the processes you wanted to think about	12			2	14
7	The opportunity to work with colleagues from an area different from yours	12		1	1	14
8	The opportunity to discuss QUT processes that were unfamiliar to you	11	2		1	14
Total		95	4	2	11	112
%		84.8	3.6	1.8	9.8	100.0

UQ

There were 14 participants in the workshop and 13 completed the Workshop Survey. The survey consisted of eight forced-choice items with a "useful", "not useful" and "not applicable" response options—a fourth option, "no response" was added during the analysis—and two open-ended questions.

- Of the 104 possible responses, 87 (83.7%) were "useful". The "not useful" responses were: *The opportunity to discuss QUT processes that were unfamiliar to you* (3); *The use of the 20 minute cycles* (2) (this item replaced *Having to deal with three different processes in each 15 minute cycle* used in the QUT workshop, as the format was reorganised); and *The opportunity to choose who you worked with* (1).
- In the general items (1, 2 & 3), 37 out of a possible 39 responses were "useful" (94.9%) while in the items that focussed on specific workshop processes (4, 5, 6, 7 & 8), only 50 out of a possible 65 responses were "useful" (76.9%).

Table 2 Summary of UQ evaluation feedback

Item		Useful	Not useful	Not applicable	No response	Total
1	Explanation of the Project	13				13
2	Explanation of the Workshop	13				13
3	The overall organisation of the Workshop	11			2	13
4	The use of the 20 minute cycles	10	2		1	13
5	The opportunity to choose who you worked with	8	1	3	1	13
6	The opportunity to choose the processes you wanted to think about	11			2	13
7	The opportunity to work with colleagues from an area different from yours	12			1	13
8	The opportunity to discuss QUT processes that were unfamiliar to you	9	3		1	13
Total		87	6	7	8	104
%		83.7	5.8	2.9	7.7	100.0

As with the QUT workshop, the evaluation of the UQ workshop by the 13 participants was overwhelmingly positive. Again, the small N makes definitive conclusions problematic but the very positive responses give considerable credibility to this conclusion. The UQ respondents had a greater spread of the 4 response options and this was accompanied by more comments explaining their choices.

Appendix C: SESR-MM Findings Forum

SESR-MM Findings Forum

Student Engagement Findings Forum: Summary of project outcomes (Phase 4)

Description:

The forum (held on October 11, 2013) provided an opportunity for all workshop participants over the life of the project and team members to consider the use of maturity modelling in higher education and specifically provided the institutional groups with an opportunity to consider the SESR-MM created for their institution. Participants were also invited to reflect on the SESR-MM and provide recommendations for further improvements to the model in order to optimise student engagement, success and retention programs and practices in higher education institutions. A total of 25 people (including the project team members) participated in the Forum.

Forum outcomes:

Expert advisor to the project Dr Stephen Marshall (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) provided a keynote address on maturity modelling, drawing on over a decade of his experience developing and applying the eLearning Maturity Model. Professor Karen Nelson (project leader), provided an overview of the project. Project findings were presented for discussion, in institutional groups and feedback given to the project team. Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington (Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, ANU and project evaluator) was invited to offer closing remarks. During the working session and the final discussion GoSoapBox was utilised to share responses to questions about the model (usefulness, usability and relevance in the institution).

Forum session plan:

Time	Activity
9:30am–10:15am	**Coffee and tea on arrival**
10:15am–10:25am	**Welcome**
10:25am–10:55am	**Keynote address: Maturity Modelling** Dr Stephen Marshall (Victoria University of Wellington, NZ)

Time	Activity
10:55am–11:25am	**Overview of the project** Professor Karen Nelson, project leader
11:25am–12:05pm	**Working session** Discussion of findings, in institutional groups
12:05pm–12:20pm	**Discussion and feedback**
12:20pm–12:30pm	**Closing comments** A/Professor Gordon Joughin

GoSoapBox activity:

During the working session participants were asked to address the following questions:

- What do you think of the SESR model itself (categories, process, practices)?
- What sort of actions could arise from the SESR-MM carpet?
- How do you think you could use the SESR-MM to enhance your area of responsibility?
- Which particular aspects of the model do you think provide the most useful information?
- How do you think you would go about using the SESR-MM in your institution?

The final GoSoapBox activity was a poll taken at the end of the session that asked:
Do you think the SESR MM could provide a useful framework for you in terms of your institutional role and responsibilities?
A total of 16 participants responded to this question and all responded 'Yes' (options: Yes, No, Unsure)

GoSoapBox Summary:

GoSoapBox Prompt	Theme	Responses
What do you think of the SESR model itself (categories, process, practices)?	Useful	• Useful and sophisticated • A useful tool. Easily understood and visually analysed.
	Good discussion tool	• Good discussion and engagement tool for decision makers. • Extremely valuable tool particularly for planning and staff discussions

GoSoapBox Prompt	Theme	Responses
	Model structure helpful	• Categories and processes are useful indicators • The categories provide a good coverage of options in an understandable manner.
	Meets a sector need	• There is at this point an absence of a national framework to measure university student experiences (and therefore likely engagement, success etc.)… the SESR is an interesting (and challenging) way of helping us become more student-focussed.
	Questions/extensions	• Visually clear but some clarification needed around we can be good at certain things but appear to have no evidence • The density of information is stimulating but also quite intimidating.
What sort of actions could arise from the SESR-MM carpet?	Strategic use	• Input to strategic plan, funding allocation and resourcing. • Quick reference to identify areas that meet or need improvement in meeting strategic goals and objectives. • Model facilitates institutional review and cascading reviews by faculties and central support areas to identify the extent to which institutional activities are mirrored or enacted in an integrated way.
	Helps visualise the situation	• All of a sudden I feel so much more connected with the issues and have a grasp of the larger picture in an institutional context. • The power of the magic carpet is that it has an academic/research grounding • It works to create opportunities for better practice… by seeing where more effort is needed.
	Identify areas for change	• This might be a useful tool to use within an institution - faculty by faculty. • Identify gaps, areas for improvement
How do you think you could use the SESR-MM to enhance your area of responsibility?	Motivate action	• It has never been as clear to me as now that we need to pay more attention to optimizing and monitoring. This will be two points that I will be able to arrange action on immediately. • A tool to engage staff in working towards continuous improvement.
	Guide action	• Provide context and measurements for student retention interventions. • In addition to continuous improvements principles, opportunities for gap analysis
	Gap analysis	• Provides an indicative view of where the gaps may be either in delivery or measurement. • Useful visual tool for gap analysis and planning for future focus of service and staff priorities
	Situate practices in wider context	• The carpet allows particular aspects of the student engagement/experience to be located in a broader map, and help explain their importance/priority for the institution.
	Stimulate discussion	• Useful for stimulating discussion at the course and unit level. • It looks very useful for stimulating discussion of our performance at the coal face as well as our relationship with institutional framing.
Which particular aspects of the model do	Model elements	• The categorisation coupled with the dimensions is neat.

GoSoapBox Prompt	Theme	Responses
you think provide the most useful information?		• Description of practice, with evidence of examples, are particularly helpful as they are clear concise and allow staff from all areas to understand the areas of discussion/interrogation. The carpet when used over a time period.
	Coloured tiles	• The colour tiles are an excellent visual that allow me to see the depths of an issue.
How do you think you would go about using the SESR-MM in your institution?	Presentation to managers	• I would like the model to be distributed to the various Unit managers for consideration, and then the process and ideas should be discussed regularly at management meetings.
	Presentation to staff	• To drive better collaborative practice in areas that need development and also to celebrate successes. Hopefully the ground level movement will help drive upwards the senior exec "buy-in" institution wide.
	Apply to sub-units	• It would be interesting to see this done at a faculty level to help identify specific areas for improvement • There is definite potential for the model across all levels of the institution.
Other questions and suggestions		• 4 x Is Stephen available to present the model to our VC Executive please? • 1 x Should we be engaging in a reality check with students as to whether they are aware of/receiving various levels of practice • 1 x Could we obtain soft copy of our institution findings with the descriptions of practice to help with dissemination? • 1 x Could you please circulate the participant kit electronically - Ta!

Forum evaluation data summary:

	Useful	%	Not Useful	%	No response	%
MATERIALS						
The *Participant Kit*	12	75.0%	0	0.0%	4	25.0%
The set of ppt slides summarising the findings for your institution	16	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PROCESSES						

	Useful	%	Not Useful	%	No response	%
Keynote Address on Maturity Modelling (Dr Stephen Marshall, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)	16	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Overview of the SESR-MM Project (Prof Karen Nelson, QUT)	16	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
The institution-based group discussion of the findings for your institution	14	87.5%	2	12.5%	0	0.0%
The *GoSoapBox* activity	16	100.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%
The whole group discussion and feedback session	13	81.3%	3	18.8%	0	0.0%
The Closing Comments (Prof Marnie Hughes-Warrington, ANU)	11	68.8%	0	0.0%	5	31.3%
The sequence of activities in the forum	15	93.8%	0	0.0%	1	6.3%

Summary of forum evaluation feedback:

MATERIALS	*3. PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS*		*INTERPRETATION OF COMMENTS*
The *Participant Kit* ***Useful [U]: 12/16, 75.0%***	• Allowed quick referral to the model. • Enough referral information.	• Explanatory material provided context.	• *Kit seen as useful and adequate*
The set of pp slides summarising the findings for your institution ***U: 16/16,100.0%***	• Useful for future reference and use. • Would prefer to have hard copy as well please so I can look at specific areas while answering questions on Soapbox.	• Easy to understand. A printout would also have been useful. • Well laid out and thought provoking. • Eye-opening.	• *Data well presented and seen as most useful in the Forum and in the future.* • *Understandable desire to have hard copy.*
PROCESSES			

Keynote Address on Maturity Modelling (Dr Stephen Marshall, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) ***U: 16/16,100.0%***	• Great to have the developmental background to the tool. • Excellent – roll him out across the sector! • Interesting comments about quality and preserving the core. • Excellent coverage of concepts. Well done. Stephen gave an excellent grounding for future research.	• Gave context and validity to process & outcomes. • Excellent foundation. • Understanding the application and usefulness of the model. • Provided clearer understanding of how the model was conceptualised & its application/limitations.	• *Obviously one of the highlights of the Forum* • *Provided participants with excellent context for interpreting and understanding the SESR-MM* • *A master stroke by the organisers!* ☺
Overview of the SESR-MM Project (Prof Karen Nelson, QUT) ***U: 16/16,100.0%***	• Easy to understand, yet is a complex concept. Thanks Karen! • Good overview and reminder.	• Explanatory.	• *Again, a well-received aspect of the Forum* • *Appreciation by participants of facilitating the understanding of a complex concept.*
The institution-based group discussion of the findings for your institution. ***U: 14/16, 87.5%***	• Technology made it easy. Great! • Wasn't a group discussion as such. • Didn't really happen.	• Made the process practical. • Increased awareness of identifying evidence and gaps in practice.	• *Somewhat mixed reaction to this element but* • *Still found to be useful by the vast majority of participants*
The GoSoapBox activity ***U: 16/16,100.0%***	• Great way to collect feedback • Fab! • Excellent tool.	• Gave a chance to think. • Make me think. • Great to reflect on thoughts of all member of the group.	• *The software package was extremely well received* • *"Forced" participants to think!*
The whole group discussion and feedback session ***U: 13/16, 81.3%***	• Inclusive and relaxed. • Great to share.	• Interesting discussion and debate.	• *Whole group discussion seemed to work well*
The Closing Comments (Prof Marnie Hughes-Warrington, ANU) ***Useful: 11/16, 68.8%***	• Stand-in Gordon was brilliant.		• *Unfortunately, the planned speaker was unable to attend due to air travel problems and almost .3 of the group did not respond to this item.* • *Stand-in speaker proved to be excellent.*
The sequence of activities in the forum ***U: 15/16,93.8%***	• Flowed well. Time flew. • Great agenda.		• *Agenda was well received*

GENERAL			
How could the Findings Forum be improved?	• Please provide a printed copy of the institution slides. • It would have been good to know who everyone was (i.e. what their role in SESR actually was).	• No suggestions – it was the best of all the events. Very clear and comprehensive. • Next steps.	
Any other comments?	• Thank you very much! • As I was not involved from the beginning, it was very interesting. However, it would have been useful to have known who the other participants were and to have had more group feedback. • Useful forum – collaboration with other universities has enables insight & evaluation of other environments' results to enhance understanding of ours. • Would like to know some details about process/lessons learnt/pitfalls or the iterative evidence collection activities for those wanting to implement.	• Great facilities; valuable sessio0n; great work! • Looking forward to thinking how to implement ???More people should have attended. Endemic problem in engaging students is actually first engaging ***STAFF!!!*** • Would really like soft [sic] copies of the documents to share with colleagues through an accessible overview and guide to aid with interrogating it would be helpful. • Provides a simplistic [sic] tool that overviews all aspects to student success. • Why not feedback on GoSoapBox? • Fantastic & extremely useful – a practical tool – love it!	***CONCLUSION*** *The comment "it was the best of all the events" seems to sum up the general very positive response to the Forum (and the project in general).*

Appendix D: Summary of Key Dissemination Activity

Key Dissemination Activity

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Oct 2011						Project Team Meeting, 12th of October	Weekly		
Nov 2011					Advisor Meeting 16th of November		Weekly		
Dec 2011						Project Team Meeting, 15th of December	Weekly		
Jan 2012							Weekly		
Feb 2012				Advisory Group Meeting, 23rd of February			Weekly		
Mar 2012						Project Team Meeting, 23rd of March	Weekly		

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Apr 2012							Weekly	Progress Report, 3rd of April	Interim Report 3rd of April
May 2012			Southern Cross University Pilot/Model Development Workshop, 8th of May, Lismore			Project Team Meeting, 31st of May	Weekly		
Jun 2012	*15th First Year in Higher Education Conference,* 26 – 29 June	QUT IS Presentation 7 June 2012				Project Team Meeting, 4th of June	Weekly	Progress Report 20th June	
Jul 2012	*Higher Education Managers Forum*, 24th of July, Sydney		QUT data collection workshop, 18th of July, Brisbane		Phone meeting with Expert Advisors, 27th of July		Weekly		

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Aug 2012			The University of Queensland data collection workshop, 3rd of August, Brisbane Griffith University data collection workshop, 17th of August, Brisbane				Fortnightly		
Sept 2012	*7th Educational Research Group of Adelaide Conference*, 19-21 September, University of Adelaide (1 paper and 1 workshop presentation)							Progress Report 3rd of September Teleconference 4th of September	
Oct 2012						Project Team Meeting, 11th of October	Weekly		Year 1 Report, 3rd of October
Nov 2012						Project Team Meeting, 22nd of November	Weekly		

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Dec 2012				Advisory Group Progress Report, 6th of December			Weekly		
Jan 2013							Weekly		
Feb 2013							Weekly		
Mar 2013				Advisory Group Meeting and Progress Report, 27th of March		Project Team Meeting, 11th of March	Weekly	Progress Report 14th of March	
Apr 2013	*The 3rd annual International Education Strategy & Implementation Conference*, 16th & 17th of April, Melbourne					Project Team Meeting, 18th of April	Weekly		

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
May 2013			The University of Queensland evidence collection workshop, 23rd of May, Brisbane QUT evidence collection workshop, 10th of May, Brisbane				Weekly		
Jun 2013	*Improving Student Retention and Success Criterion Conference* 26th-27th of June, Darling Harbour, Sydney						Weekly		

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Jul 2013	*Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia*, 1-4 July, AUT University, Auckland. *16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference*, 7-10 July, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington			Advisory Group Progress Report, 31st of July		Project Team Meeting, 31st of July	Weekly	Progress Report 21st of July	
Aug 2013						Project Team Meeting (QUT only), 12th of August Project Team Meeting (GU only), 23rd of August	Weekly	Progress Report 26th of August; Evaluator Meeting, 28th of August	

	Conference/Forum Presentations*	Invited Presentations*	MM Workshops	Advisory Group Meetings	Expert Advisor Meetings	Project Team Meetings (GU, QUT, UQ)	Project Leadership Meetings	Evaluation Activities/Meetings	OLT Reporting
Sep 2013				Advisory Group Progress Report 4th of September, Meeting, 11th of September		Project Team Meeting (QUT only), 2nd of September Project Team Meeting (GU only), 6th of September	Weekly		
Oct 2013	Student Engagement Findings Forum October 11, QUT, Brisbane						Weekly		
Nov 2013		Learning and Teaching Grants Symposium, 7th of November, QUT, Brisbane					Weekly		Final Report Part 1 & 2, 3rd of November

*also located at http://studentengagementmaturitymodel.net/?page_id=429