

Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention and Success (STARS) Conference
Melbourne, Australia
8 July 2019

Student experience 2038: Grand challenges ahead

Professor Kerri-Lee Krause PhD
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), La Trobe University

Context: In 2038, we will enrol first year students born in 2020. Those at uni now will be looking back on 15 years of post-university activity. It's time to take stock of lessons from the past and the grand challenges ahead.

3 big ideas in the form of questions

1. **Where have we been?** Student experience research and key themes
2. **Where are we going?** Grand challenges and opportunities
3. **What next?** Anchors in times of higher education change

1. Where have we been?

- Australian HE growth: 1949-2009 (Croucher et al, 2013).
- Tertiary participation rates: actual and projected scenario (Dawkins, Hurley, Noonan, 2019).
- Historical research on student experience in Australian HE (Krause, 2017)

2. Where are we going?

- What does the future hold? 10 Disruptors (Wilén, 2018)
- The 100-year life: designing a multi-stage life

Disrupted society	Disruptive diversity
Disrupted work	Disrupted careers
Disrupted industry	Disruptive skills
Disruptive leadership	Disrupted education
Women as disruptive leaders	Disrupted selves

FROM: A three-stage life with education first, employment second and then retirement - lockstep actions, certainty and predictability

TO: a multi-stage life with new milestones and turning point, numerous sequencing opportunities, shaped by individual preferences and circumstances

Consequences of this: profound

“to support those destined to live long lives, institutions must:

- I. incorporate new learning technologies and experiential learning
- II. break down boundaries between age groups
- III. think more deeply about ways to teach creativity, innovation, humanity and empathy
- IV. rapidly expand practical specialisms to ensure that education wins the race against technology” (Grattan & Scott, 2017).

- **Future of education and work: what's changing?**

“Instead of going to university to get a job, students will increasingly be going to a job to get a university degree”

The new path: ‘Going pro early’ (Busteed, 2019)

- **A postsecondary education ecosystem** is needed to support lifelong learning in the 100 year life.

3. What next?

- Beyond Gen Z ... Gen Alpha/Beta - 2020-2038 (see [McCrimble infographic](#) (“Gen Z and Gen Alpha Infographic Update”, 2019)
- Gen Alpha/Beta: Characteristics might include:
 - Adaptive
 - Agile
 - Ambidextrous mindset
 - Anxious, alienated
 - Antifragile

Three anchor points in times of change: What remains important to students after all this time?

1. Social connectedness, wellbeing
2. Self-regulated, personalised learning experiences
3. Social justice, equity and diversity

7 policy and practical implications

For student experience practitioners

1. Create holistic student experiences, services and environments
 - build student resilience and antifragility
 - social connectedness is key
 - provide integrated service models
2. Co-design communications with students as partners

For curriculum designers and academic staff

3. Design for synergistic learning
 - Move beyond the 'nexus' to 'synergies' for learning – infuse learning-teaching-research-workplace synergies in the curriculum
 - Consider wellbeing and antifragility as graduate attributes

For institutions

4. Cultivate a 100-year life perspective
5. Engage staff to engage students
6. Prepare for faster institutional planning cycles

For government

7. Innovate with ecosystemic approach to policy and funding

References:

- Busteed, B. (2019, April 4). This will be the biggest disruption in higher education. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com>
- Croucher, G., Marginson, S., Norton, A., & Wells, J. (Eds.). (2014). Making the unified system, *The Dawkins revolution: 25 years on*. Victoria: Melbourne University Press.
- Dawkins, P., Hurley, P., & Noonan, P. (2019). *Rethinking and revitalising tertiary education*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mitchellinstitute.org.au/papers/rethinking-and-revitalising-tertiary-education/>
- Dodd, T. (2019, May 28). Governments urged to act on tertiary decline. *The Australian*. Retrieved from <https://www.edministrate.com.au/tag/the-australian/>
- Gen Z and Gen Alpha infographic update. (2019). Retrieved from <https://mccrindle.com.au/insights/blogarchive/gen-z-and-gen-alpha-infographic-update/>
- Grattan, L., & Scott, A. (2017). *The hundred year life: Living and working in an age of longevity*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Krause, K. (2017). The Australian higher education student experience: A personal reflection on 15 years of research. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education*, 4, 53-78.
- Luckman, M., & Harvey, A. (2019, June 21). Three charts on: how uncapped university funding actually boosted Indigenous student numbers. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com>
- Neves, J. & Hillman, N. (2018, June). *Student academic experience survey 2019*. Retrieved from Advance HE & Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI): <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Student-Academic-Experience-Survey-2019.pdf>
- Orygen, The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, headspace, & National Youth Mental Health Foundation. (2019, April). *Submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health*. Retrieved from Orygen: <https://www.orygen.org.au/>
- Selingo, J. (2018). *The new generation of students: How colleges can recruit, teach and serve Gen Z*. Chronicle of Higher Education.
- Taleb, N. (2014). *Antifragile. Things that gain from disorder*. London: Penguin.
- Wilens, T. (2018). *Digital Disruption: The future of work, skills, leadership, education and careers in a digital world*. New York: Peter Lang.