

Concurrent Session D
Monday 12 September 2016
2:25pm – 3:15pm



Session 6
Delivery of Student Administration Services Standards at the
Australian Catholic University
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Nik Linnell joined the Australian Catholic University in September 2015 as the National Manager for Timetabling, Examinations and Results. He holds a Bachelors degree in Education with Honours from the University of Tasmania and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Queensland. After moving to Queensland in 2006 he worked in the newspaper industry for four years where he gained extensive experience in contact centre management before he joined the University of Queensland in 2011; first in their Student Centre before managing one of the University's schools.

His passion lays in process improvement using evidence based methods, stakeholder engagement and always aims for improving the student experience.

Students and internal stakeholders have an expectation that their requests to Student Administration are actioned in a timely and effective manner (Pitman 2000). Service standards lay out a set of agreed commitments about what, when and how specific amenities are provided. Within the broader conversation around deregulation of university fees across Australia, a strong commitment to service standards allows a university to differentiate itself in a very competitive market (Yeo 2008).

Across the tertiary education sector Student Administration sections increasingly offer a public set of service standards, the design of which is influenced significantly by the service industry (Abdullah 2006). This presentation will focus upon the Australian Catholic University's (ACU) journey towards implementing service standards by the Student Services Directorate (SSD). SSD at ACU encompasses the following three sections: Enrolments, Fees & Scholarships (EF&S), Timetabling, Exams and Results (TE&R), and Admissions. Service standards were introduced across ACU's professional staffing bodies in 2016 with a view to creating accountability, improving relationships between cognate sections and to ensure that the University's Mission was part of everyday workflows.

In designing SSD's Service Standards, the use of 'big data' was incorporated to build a quantitative component to the standards. In today's online world, students and staff access SSD's many and varied services through online portals and various IT systems. This access by SSD's stakeholders allows a picture to be built around quantitative factors such as average handle time, volume, chokepoints in workflow and trends in behaviour.

ACU's Student Services Directorate sought to have more than just a set of qualitative, hard to measure statements and put in place Service Standards which met the SMART goals framework with a view to service improvement. Providing students and other internal stakeholders clear expectations around service requests is expected to lower the number of enquires to all sections within SSD and improve the score on the annual satisfaction survey conducted across ACU.

