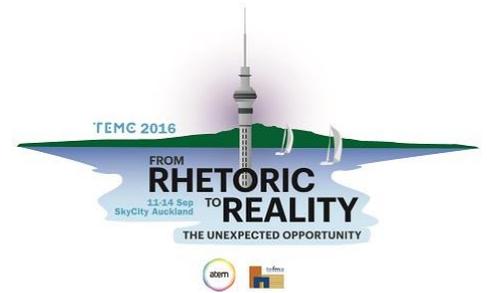


Concurrent Session H
Tuesday 13 September
2:45pm – 3:35pm

Session 3
The Policy/Project Nexus: Addressing an Old Problem in a New Way

Fiona Margetts

University of Southern Queensland



Fiona Margetts is a highly competent and solution-oriented manager with almost 20 years' experience in the higher education sector. Currently performing the role of Manager (Policy Services) at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), Fiona leads the deployment of the University's governance-level Policy and Procedure Framework through multiple streams of activity.

The Framework was an outcome of a three-year policy project to which Fiona was appointed as project manager at mid-point. In parallel with this Fiona completed a Masters in Project Management (specialising in leadership) and graduated in 2015 With Distinction. Also in 2015 Fiona received the Australian Institute of Project Management Queensland Project Manager of the Year Award.

Fiona's current focus is on building policy development and review capability across USQ and managing a process that delivers sound, relevant and compliant policy and procedure to meet the needs of the student and 'enable the business'.

The higher education sector is becoming increasingly dynamic, competitive and regulated. The policies of a university establish the standards of governance, academic quality and management that enable it to function in this environment. They are the means by which a university achieves strategy, ensures quality, mitigates risk and achieves compliance with its regulatory environment.

They are thus foundational to creating an environment that enables a university to provide students with a relevant learning experience, respond to innovation agendas, develop new knowledge and contribute to their local and broader communities.

Notoriously complex, yet immensely valuable, policy development and review inevitably receives varying levels of priority across the sector and within individual universities. This will, however, impact a university's capacity to respond to its changing regulatory environment and deliver and sustain quality outcomes.

Symptomatic of differing levels of assigned organisational priority, the policy environment at the University of Southern Queensland has varied over time. The legacy of these varying approaches is explored in this paper, along with the impact of a three-year policy refresh project, developed to establish a flexible and sustainable framework for the management of policy.