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Staff awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals at Australia's newest university: Professional learning implications

Assoc Prof Peter Kilgour¹, **Prof Maria Northcote¹**, Dr Jason Morton¹, Dr Jenna-Lee Lynn¹, Dr Adelle Faull¹

¹Avondale University, Cooranbong, Australia

Background/context. The establishment of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has impacted all aspects of society, including universities that have been identified for their propensity to transfer knowledge of SDGs, especially due to their capacity for research, professional learning and scholarship (Purcell et al., 2019; Waas et al., 2010).

The initiative/practice. The initiative, introduced to Australia's newest university, incorporated a research-informed learning program about the SDGs to improve staff understanding of societal and environmental sustainability, and their importance. Grounded in the type of capacity building approach advocated by the United Nations and the World Health Organisation (UN, 2023; WHO, 2023), this initiative has the potential to extend theories associated with capacity development to build the knowledge and skills associated with SDGs in a university context.

Methods of evaluative data collection and analysis. In this study, a descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted to determine the baseline perceptions of faculty, administration and professional staff related to the University's contribution to the SDGs. Informed by the findings of this survey, an awareness-raising professional learning program was developed that focused especially on providing educative information about the SDGs and how they are currently, or may potentially be, applied to various aspects of the University's activities.

Evidence of outcomes and effectiveness.

This study provides an example of how a grass roots program may be developed for educating university staff about the scope and nature of the SDGs, especially as they relate to the University's core business. While the application of the findings of this study were utilised to inform the development of a bespoke professional learning program for the University in which the study was conducted, the methodology of the study may be adopted by other universities aiming to increase their personnel's awareness and actions associated with the SDGs.

References.

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Who moved my cheese? The rise of artificial intelligence and the value of academic integrity

Dr Hilary Wheaton¹

¹RMIT, Melbourne, Australia

Background/context. The speed at which Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are improving means that the responsibility of higher education institutions is to build capability and ethical behaviour in our students to use these tools effectively as part of their learning and part of their profession. Jobs of the future will rely on workers who know how to appropriately use AI to improve productivity and quality, this is already happening in industries such as Law, Architecture, Publishing and Communications.

The initiative/practice. In the context of institutional graduate attributes that shape curriculum and academic integrity frameworks that enable educative and preventative strategies, there is the capacity to develop capabilities in educators and students to address the challenges and opportunities of ChatGPT and other AI. This is not simply about a shift in assessment design, but instead a shift in the learning experience that benefits all. Understanding the why, what and how of this shift in a practical manner is essential for higher education.

Methods of evaluative data collection and analysis. This session will introduce and contextualise the emergence of AI in the context of higher education with a focus on how it necessitates and enables a shift in curriculum and assessment practice. This will be done by taking established learning outcomes from various disciplines and creating a step-by-step recasting of the learning experience to establish a clear set of guidelines to help educators. This will also be anchored to institutional strategy and academic integrity.

Evidence of outcomes and effectiveness. Evidence of outcomes is demonstrated by the linkage to established institutional strategy and governance standards. This is also contextualised by research and current academic evaluation activities.