

# **A 2024 update: Developing a curriculum of success at UniSC and UniSQ**

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## **Abstract**

*In 2021, we presented a paper at the STARS conference titled 'Enhancing student success through an advising curriculum' (Picton, Jaquet and Bell, 2021). In this paper, we debuted the concept of an advising curriculum that emerged from a joint research project on academic student success advising at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) and the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ). This paper provides an update on how this work has progressed in the past three years across these two university partners and discusses its future state.*

## **Introduction**

In creating an Advising Curriculum (AC), we aimed to provide a structured and standards-based approach to embedding the development of students' skills and competencies that promote student success. In our original paper (Picton et al., 2021), we framed an AC within academic student success advising approaches, considering McIntosh's Principles of Advising (McIntosh, 2023) across transition and enabling, academic, wellbeing and employability domains (Calcagno et al., 2017). We offered the AC as a mechanism to develop pro-active, self-regulated and autonomous learners who participate emotionally, motivationally, and cognitively in the learning process. We synthesised multiple established and research-informed practices, such as curriculum design principles, student life cycles frameworks, graduate attributes and existing advising curricula from the United Kingdom and North America. Over the past three years, we, the authors have refined our conceptual understanding of the AC and how it could be implemented across our universities. We have been anticipating the potential recommendations of the Australian Universities Accord (2024) and considering where the AC might support these. Below we describe our progress and future plans.

## **Update: University of the Sunshine Coast**

The first iteration of the AC did not extend beyond the first year of university, so in 2021 the authors embarked on the next phase of development across the entirety of the student lifecycle in alignment with the concept of 'transition as becoming' (Gale and Parker, 2014). We recognised building competencies and skills that promote student success are enduring and as such, the AC needed to be fluid and adaptable to a dynamic and varied student experience. We had developed six key strands - connections, career identity, wellbeing, help-seeking, autonomy, and skills development, and extended the AC by separating outcomes of the AC from years of study to phases of development. This facilitated multiple entry points and increased personalisation spanning all years of study. In 2022, UniSC began a curriculum renewal process. A new curriculum framework was developed which includes the AC as a core element, ensuring all future curriculum development takes a holistic approach. Whilst staff working in professional student success spaces are comfortable applying the strands of the AC, further socialisation is required in academic spaces.

## Update: University of Southern Queensland

In 2022, UniSQ aligned its support for learning and student success advising functions within the new Students Portfolio. Guided by the UniSQ Education Plan 2022–2025, these teams aim to embed support for learning across the student lifecycle and to implement a university-wide approach to student success advising. Across 2023, the teams undertook professional development led by the authors and were supported to develop their own understanding of an AC responsive to the UniSQ student experience. A team of professional and academic staff operating in the third space collaborated to develop a proof of concept. This group built on the prior work of Picton et al. (2023) to develop the UniSQ Student Success Framework. This adaptation of the AC takes a developmental approach across three learning areas: wellbeing and belonging, learning and academic self-efficacy and career wellbeing, and embeds eight competencies from pre-access to advanced stages. It responds to the established need for learners to build wellbeing capabilities alongside more traditional academic literacies and professional skills. It will be further refined during implementation in 2024.

### Future state

The authors are preparing a conceptual manuscript for publication that will unpack the literature of student success and locate student success within a learning and teaching frame.

### Discussion

1. What knowledge, skill or competency development are core to your role?
2. What third space approaches is your institution embedding to support student success?
3. What strand would you add to a student success curriculum?

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