

The Right Student Experience: Is the Grass Greener? Support for the Student Experience in Ontario, Canada.

Kathryn Blyth, Donald Reid
Australian Catholic University

Kathryn Blyth commenced her role as Academic Registrar at ACU in 2011 having worked in the Australian higher education sector since 2004. Prior to migrating to Australia in 2004, Kathryn lived in several countries including 10 years in Japan, working with local community English programs as part of the JET Program, 4 Years at the JET Program head office (CLAIR) and 3 years at the New Zealand Embassy in immigration and consular roles. Kathryn has an MBA and completed the Master of Tertiary Education Management (MTEM) in 2011. Kathryn is an active ATEM member recently holding roles as Deputy Chair Professional Development and General Committee member for the NSW/ACT Regional Committee.

Donald Reid joined the staff of the Centre of Indigenous Education and Research as a Project Manager in 2011. He brings with him over 25 years of experience in the tertiary educational sector including field research in both Australia and Canada and extensive higher educational managerial expertise. His diverse background includes employment in Australia, Japan, Canada, China and New Zealand. Qualifications include a Master of Arts degree from the University of Alberta and an Honours Bachelor of Arts degree from Trent University in Canada. His experience includes domestic universities such as Australian Catholic University, Macquarie University, University of Technology Sydney, University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong and Central Queensland University (Sydney International Campus).

With the support of an ATEM grant, the opportunity arose to visit Canadian institutions to investigate student administration and student experience practices there. The visits focused on a three areas of interest. The first was to compare and contrast University student experience strategies including challenges and initiatives in the local context, models of service delivery, business and quality improvement initiatives, staff training for service points, and the use of performance measures.

The second area of interest was articulation and pathway models. The Canadian Province of Ontario has a well-established credit system for students to articulate from community college to university with guaranteed entry or credit for prior studies. The use of credit arrangements is explored from a strategic perspective as well as the practicalities for managing and administering credit arrangements.

The third area of investigation was to examine issues pertaining to transition, access and pathways specifically for First Nations' students. The presentation will cover initiatives utilized at Canadian institutions that support First Nations' students at University.