

Opening

Host: Welcome to the ASCILITE Wavelength podcast, I am your guest host, David Porter. In this episode, Michael Cowling chats with Sally Kift about teaching and learning scholarship and its value in an increasingly resource-constrained sector. Amanda White explores academic integrity in the first of a three-part series. Our students share their perspectives on institutional support services in this month's Student Voice Segment.

Segment 1: Michael Cowling interviews Sally Kift

Host: Sally Kift has had a long career in higher education and has a lengthy list of achievements. She is a Principle Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and President of the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows. She additionally holds a number of adjunct and visiting staff member appointments, including the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education in Western Australia. Michael Cowling caught up with Sally in September 2021 not long after the federal budget announcement to talk about what's needed to progress learning and teaching in higher education. Also, Campus Morning Mail, a daily higher education newsletter, features heavily in the conversation. If you are interested, you can check it out at campusmorningmail.com.au. Now over to Michael and Sally.

Michael: Yes, so welcome Sally and thanks for being here.

Sally: Thanks Michael for the invitation.

Michael: Not a problem at all, so let's start. Let's start with an easy one, right?

So, tell us a little bit about...we talked about that long career, but tell us a little bit about something that you're passionate about. Some sort of discipline project in learning and teaching, which is your area? Tell us a little bit about something that you're passionate about in that area.

Sally: All right, well you've probably got me on the discipline piece there. From a disciplined perspective, it would have to be probably the Law Discipline Scholars Project that I did under the auspices of which we had a national conversation with all branches of the legal profession and academy to try and develop a consensus around what law graduates should know, understand and be able to do as a result of their legal education. Across a number of disciplines, of which law was one, we developed threshold learning outcomes, and they've been quite influential, if I might say immodestly. But there's a real element of patient capital investment there because it doesn't happen overnight, but sort of 10 years down the track, we're really starting to see some traction there. If I was allowed to talk cross disciplinary, Michael, I'd say it would be the enormous privilege of being able to undertake the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellowship on the first-year experience, and that was funded back in the day when those sorts of things were actually funded and considered to be of importance. It was preceded for me by a period serving as a QUT's inaugural First-Year Experience Director, which the then Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic—that was, David Gardner—brought me into because he thought there must have been something in it because I've got the award. It led to Transition Pedagogy and the articulation of curriculum principles around which whole-of-institution efforts could coalesce for academic, professional and student partnerships to have good pedagogical times in the first year.

Michael: So awesome. You used the word pedagogy a lot, and that was a great two sets of examples, by the way, something very discipline specific, but also something cross disciplinary across the disciplines. So, talk to us a little bit about your philosophy when it comes to student learning, let's talk about your views on pedagogy and your pedagogy itself.

Sally: So, time's short, so I'll issue the longer winded promotion application version perhaps and give you and give you a shorter. One, I think when it all comes down to it, for me it's about clearing the path for learning for all students, whatever their background, experience or circumstances. So, what I'm trying to say is, I suppose, making it possible for all learners to engage with their studies, which of course needs to be well designed, organized, sequenced and supported and being able to access tailored just-in-time support when and if needed. Preferably, transition pedagogy would say embedded in the curriculum, but if not, are easily accessed and easily available.

Two things I'd add to that, if I can. I think that Peter Felten and Leo Lambert's articulation of relationship-rich education is quite foundational for us all. There should be inescapable opportunities and pathways, I think, for students that lead them into relationships with peers, staff, and the discipline, Leo Lambert says relationships are high stakes for students both in and out of uni, and it's hard to disagree. And then the second, which is actually the third thing, I might add to that is that I was thinking about Campus Morning Mail's piece this week. I curate that series for Steven Matchett in Campus Morning Mail, and this week is by Pranit Anand from QUT and the enabling educators. And he's talking about a philosophy of care for students. It's part of the relationship-rich piece, I think, and we know that it's often the little things that make all the difference to individual students and their lived experience of the educational conditions in which we put them. So, that philosophy of care, I think, is quite foundational and critical as well.

Michael: Wow, that's really interesting. I had a colleague years and years ago that talked about that idea of pushing things out of the way. You know the students walking along that road of higher education, and his argument was very similar to what you said, this idea about moving the obstacles out of the way. And I think that is really important. I remember that that would have been at least ten years ago, and I still remember him saying it. But I love the idea that you're saying that you're there's also a certain amount of...force is not the right word. I think that's a little bit strong, but definitely guidance involved as well. So, adding to what Paul said about moving things out of the way, I love that you're saying, well, you can also sort of guide them along the right pathway as well, and that that guidance should be for everybody. And there was an equity component there that I think you know, which I'm sure is it relates to your fellowship at NCSEHE and that idea that everybody should have those same opportunities.

But you mentioned a little bit earlier "back when those things were valued" in learning and teaching in higher education. Without getting too political...let's be a little careful, but without getting too political, you once said to me...and I remember this as well...that you're worried about the "learning and teaching soul of Australia" — "the pedagogical soul," I think is what you said. And in light of recent changes to policy and practice, and of course, we're recording this on the on the back of the government just recently having defunded the Australian Awards for University Teaching, for example in 2021. So, talk to me a little bit about your thoughts on that and your thoughts on maybe putting a positive spin on what we should be doing in learning and teaching?

Sally: So, I'm. I'm a lawyer by training I do black-capped thinking by default. I'm not good at positive spin. But I do worry endlessly about Australian higher education's pedagogical soul, about its good health and wellbeing.

There were some very happy years, I thought when there was a home for our higher education innovations when they could be regularly imagined, tested, disseminated, collaborated on, celebrated, and I thought, and I'm not quite sure when the peak was, it was probably around 2012 or so. I actually could see learning and teaching and research coming together and not being in competition for academics and our institutions.

But following the closure...so I can't do it, Michael...following the closure of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, and as was then it's iteration, is the Office for Learning and Teaching in 2016...so, we went from 88 million to 54 million to 28 million to 0. And someone's put that to me that that's sort of rounding errors in federal budget terms.

Those days when there was a joint effort around our academic enterprise that valued learning and teaching more broadly. I think those days are somewhat gone, and this is at a time when we need to be more innovative and cleverer and more theoretically informed about our practice, I think.

And the issue now is that we have the additional funding and financial precarity visited upon us by the Job-Ready Graduates Package, which has reduced funding per student overall, the fallen international student numbers and, as you said, the recent decision in the last federal budget to defund national teaching awards and the Learning and Teaching Repository, which houses all the open-access research that was done under the various iterations of the Office for Learning and Teaching.

So, while the research community talks about aspiring to have open-access resources, all of the work that was done by the Office of Learning and Teaching was always open access. It's just I worry about how we do the right thing by our students in our sector and now staff with endless job losses, course closures, sessional staff exploitation. And I've also been aware that a number of professional colleagues are having their centre or their units, like the equity units—reduced in numbers and closed. They're critical staff units.

So, I think we hear a lot about lobbying to claw back research funding, yeah, but I don't think we hear the same level of passion and advocacy about investing in enhancing the quality of the student experience and the innovation that's needed for learning and teaching.

Michael: Look, I couldn't agree more, and look if you were to ask me where is the peak? What was the peak? For me it would be when we renamed it to the Australian Learning and Teaching Council and that very much dovetails with what you've just been talking about the comparative between research and learning and teaching. And for me, at some point, we kind of went, well, if we've got an Australian Research Council—an ARC, then why don't we have an ALTC? To me, that was that that was the peak of where I think we finally got to that point where we went, well, to your point, that learning and teaching should be as important as a research. And then yeah, one could argue it. Maybe you went downhill from there, but again, let's try and stay positive.

So, we're kind of starting to talk a little bit about research and talk a little bit about scholarship, which is really good. I wrote, as you mentioned earlier, that you managed the Needed Now series for the Campus Morning Mail, which is this really big newsletter that goes around in higher education in Australia every day. Good on Steven for doing it every day, or at least every week day. And I read a piece just recently for that on the importance of scholarship, not only for researchers, but also for learning and teaching. And so how do you see research and scholarship and learning and teaching fitting together? You kind of suggested you think learning and teaching is the underdog? Yeah, but how do you think you see those things fitting together in Australia in the future?

Sally: OK, thank you. I suppose just a shout out to Steven Matchett in the first instance for the great service he does for the sector and for the opportunity that he's given us all in allowing good learning and teaching deeds to have a dissemination avenue in these times when it's difficult to get that sort of stuff out. And thank you for your piece, for that series, and as a National Teaching Award winner yourself, Michael, and congratulations to you on it. You know it's important that that those voices be heard and broadly heard.

The simple answer again, I suppose in the interest of time, is that innovation, research and development and learning and teaching should be a given. So, I know there's often a distinction made, and, unfortunately, it's probably sheeted back to Boyer with the scholarship of learning and teaching to be compared with the scholarship of discovery, but he did us a great service by even highlighting that there was such a thing as a scholarship of learning and teaching. But I would say, you know, we need to do R&D into L&T, so that's one way that it obviously fits.

It can't be the case that ours is the only industry that doesn't need to constantly iterate and improve and enhance, and you just need to look at the amazing work coming out of the CRADLE Assessment Centre at Deakin on assessment design. Look at the amazing equity research that comes out of the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education that you mentioned and out of the Latrobe Centre led by Andrew Harvey, out of the University of Newcastle centre led by Penny Jane Burke.

Every teacher, every academic should be reflecting on their practice and being facilitated to do so. It's actually our day job, and you wouldn't want that to be conducted in an uninformed, theoretically impoverished way. The tension, if I might be allowed to go there between research and learning and teaching, is real, and as we may have discussed in a non-positive way and is perhaps becoming heightened in more recent times and in funding-precarious circumstances.

Margaret Beerman wrote a great piece, and she's actually from CRADLE for the campus Morning Mail series. Again, this seems like to be a personal advertisement for Campus Morning Mail. She wrote a great piece for me last year and she estimated that there'd been about six Discovery Projects in the last five years, with a primary higher education focus funded to about \$2,000,000. In 2020, the total pool for Discovery funding was \$285 million and, in 2019, \$35 million. So, we got \$2 million for higher education discovery grants. \$35 million was provided for a single centre of excellence providing research to transform Australia's mining industry. So, hmm, I think would be the answer more broadly.

Michael: Look, I think the bit that I love best there is the L&T R&D. And you're right, I use the term scholarship of learning and teaching all the time, and it's great—the Boyer stuff in highlighting that there should be scholarship of learning and teaching. Maybe you're right, maybe we need to step a little bit beyond that and say, well, you know, it's research; it should be research and development in learning and teaching and pedagogy. Why? Every other industry has research and development? Why don't we? And yeah, to your point about funding, if we can call it research, we call it real research. Then, why can it not be funded by the ARC in the same way as any other research in mining or agriculture or health or allied health or any other area, but you know, I'm preaching to the converted. You know, you're not the person I need to convince, but love L&T R&D. I think that's a really interesting point.

So, let's get a little bit more practical, though, just sort of before we finish up. And as you've said, a couple of times—conscious of time. So before we finish up, being very practical and thinking a little bit about academics in the classroom and what they're doing in the classroom, what would be your practical advice to academics that aren't necessarily these learning and teaching R&D people that we've been talking about, but they feel passionate about improving their classroom experience, especially given all the stuff that's happened in the last year or so in terms of pushing us online and more reliance on technology as a teaching tool.

Sally: So, it's a good question, isn't it? And it's hard, and I don't underestimate the juggle that it is, and particularly now, because you're juggling everything, aren't you? Your personal, professional, online, face-to-face, you know, your own health and wellbeing in the circumstances of family home,

schooling...so many circumstances. But I suppose practical advice, and it was probably something that I wish I'd been told because I got all stressed and girlie swot about it. And I tried to do It originally was just relax into it. Be human. Humanize the experience, because as discussed, relationships matter, and it's about, I think, also an ethic of care. Students can tell whether you're interested and care about them. I suppose I'd also say and trying to be helpful, the education ecosystem that is the university environment is actually there to support, encourage, love and develop you. I think if you look in the right places and, even despite the current financial circumstances, this is your students, in particular, I think are your greatest allies, and there's a whole world of pedagogical mentors out there who are keen to support you especially in this, and I'm gonna say it, "Zoom Lander" environment. Look what I did there.

Yeah, I was on an assessment webinar last night, and it wasn't even last night. It was 5:00 PM. It was glorious. I'm listening to the fabulous, Sally Brown and the equally fabulous Kay Sambell, assessment gurus over there in the UK, sitting at my desk, being nourished by their wisdom and great work. You know, worse things could happen.

Michael: Let's see, I like that. I like that there's the positives to go along with those negatives, but I think that's great very positive, practical advice. You got to the positive eventually, Sally. I think that's some great practical advice to people about relaxing into what they do. The students are there to help you, but you're there to help the students, and the students are people too. I love all of that, and the idea that the university is not against you, at least, significant portions of the university, are probably not against you, and they want to see you succeed. I think that's some great positive advice.

I'm gonna finish on the one last question, right? which is a question that I ask people all of the time, right? Because I think this brings some creativity for people to think about. If you could wave a magic wand and you could change one thing about education tomorrow. So, this is your fairy godmother wish, right? This is you rub the lamp. The genie comes out of the bottle. He says, "you've got one wish." Whichever metaphor you'd like to use. What would you change? And you can narrow it down to Australian education if that helps you a little bit 'cause I know you're passionate about Australian education particularly.

Sally: So, I was going to give you my answer, but I suppose I'd start with, you know, wouldn't it be good if it was all funded properly? But anyway, ignoring that at the moment...

Michael: A big bucket of money. That's a good answer that I'll give you...

Sally: But It's a related answer, and it's an answer that we've already got too. The other one, I think, Michael in this chat, which I'm very much enjoying. Your listeners might enjoy it as much also. Wouldn't it be amazing if we had an ARC for learning and teaching? Right? To invest in education and lifelong learning across the lifespan for all citizens, learners, workers. Like our national productivity, prosperity, and equity, and put for all Australians and fan is actually dependent on it. Well wait, actually, I think it might. So, what we could do, the places we could go, or very doctor Seuss would be my metaphor, so that's what I that's what I would wish the genie to magic up for us — an ARC for learning and teaching, but funded, you know, at the pedagogical soul and took us forward.

Michael: An ARC for learning and teaching to fuel Australia's pedagogical soul, I love it. I love it, Sally. Indeed. And I often say, pour one out for the OLT and the ALTC at some points when I've had a couple of glasses of wine. So yeah, I think it's a I think that's awesome. Thank you so much. That's great.

Well look, as you've said, we're rapidly running out of time, and I don't want to keep you too long with all of those adjunct appointments and visiting fellowships and things like that. You must work 150-hour week, and I thank you so much for your time and for all of your insightful answers, I've really enjoyed it, and have a good week.

Sally: Thank you, Michael.

Michael: Thanks for being here.

Mid-Program Break

Announcer: This podcast is brought to you by ASCILITE and tell as the Technology Enhanced Learning Accreditation Standards. TELAS is a rigorously derived framework that recognizes quality online learning through a certification process. The standards for free. Find out how to get your course certified at www.TELAS.edu.au Now back to our podcast.

Segment 2: Interview with Kane Murdoch, Head of Student Conduct and Integrity at the University of New South Wales

Host: Welcome back to the ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast. Digitalisation and the gig economy have brought new possibilities for learning and ways of working. New methods of academic dishonesty and cheating, however, are unfortunate by-products of this innovation. This is the first in a three-part series in which Amanda White talks with experts at the coal face addressing contract cheating, academic integrity and how to help students avoid misconduct.

Amanda: I'm here with Kane Murdoch, and Kane is the Head of Student Conduct and Integrity at the University of New South Wales. Kane welcome.

Kane: Welcome, thanks very much for the invite. Nice to see you.

Amanda: Kane, tell us a bit about what your role actually entails as the Head of Student Conduct and Integrity.

Kane: So effectively we are a centralized unit within the university, and we handle all of the kind of serious concerns around misconduct. And that's, you know, academic behaviour. Otherwise, we also handle serious complaint investigations.

Amanda: And so do all cases come through you, or some cases get handled in your faculties and submitted to your level.

Kane: So, effectively there's a kind of line between serious and not as serious. Like, you know, cut-and-paste plagiarism is not as serious, and so those types of things are handled at faculty. Where there are serious things like, let's say contract cheating, is handled by my unit.

Amanda: Fantastic, all right, so since we're here on the ASCILITE Podcast, I wanted to ask if there was any piece of educational technology that you could have that would support academic integrity, what would it be?

Kane: There's probably several things, like, I'm very interested in I'm. I'm kind of known somewhat for investigating contract cheating, and so I can think of different things that we could use to analyse data, which we don't currently have. We have a kind of very surface level way of looking at metadata, in particular, and analysing, say, online behaviour in learning management systems. So, I'm actually kind of working on something along these lines, but it's um....yes...um

Amanda: Watch this space.

Kane: Yeah, that's right. So, something like that. But I also tend to think that if we could...like, we in academia have a tendency to kind of punish when a student fails to paraphrase properly or when they fail to cite properly. And we almost punish them after the fact, and I'd rather that we had, say, some piece of software where they could be in their writing and it could be giving them pointers along the way. You know, "Oh, are you sure that reference is correct? Or, this seems like an awful lot of text you've just pasted." You know, to kind of embed and just train those good habits, rather than punishing bad habits. I'd rather see something like that.

Amanda: I was on a website the other day, and I copied some text from—I think it might have been a regulation website—and when I pasted it into my Word document, it pasted the information, It put it in quotation marks, and then it actually put the reference of where it came from, and I thought I don't know how it did that—how it knew to do that.

Kane: I haven't seen Word do that.

Amanda: But I think there's something...it must be something copied into the website itself that when you copy and then paste, it just brought across all of this information. I really like the idea of proactively helping students, because then we're training them, rather than telling them information maybe once or in a pre-enrolment module, which you might not remember two months later or two semesters later.

Kane: When it gets disassociated from the ongoing work, you know it's, "Here. You've got to tick the check box that you did that unit at the start of your first year." But then when you're in the kind of dog days of the second semester and, you know, you're really stressed, and you've got like 4 assignments coming out. And then you do things, how you know how well do students actually kind of rethink back to that? Or do they just go? I mean, I'm relieves stress, I've gotta dump this block of text here. So, I think embedding things more in the practice of what they're doing where we just have a kind of tick and flick almost. Where it's like you, you should have known this, rather than we're gonna reiterate this to you, you know? Like, we don't expect students, we don't show them an equation and then just walk away and go, "You should have known this." You know, we train them. We give them practice questions, and so, I think we should do similar types of things with writing.

Amanda: And I think it's within curriculum. Embedding within curriculum is so important. As an academic who face-to-face-with students, I often talk about, "Here is the assessment. Here are the risk points where you might get into trouble—where there's a risk of an academic integrity breach." And so, I talked to my students about, "Oh well, we have to give a presentation. Can we have a presentation, and can you say the same thing as another student? Is that plagiarism?" And you know that I was like, "Oh, I don't know." Often when I talk to students, they will often say, "I didn't know that that was the case. I didn't know that I needed to acknowledge an image or that a design element that came from somewhere I would need to include an attribute."

How do you handle cases, or do you think that there's much in the way of detection for non-written plagiarism where there's copying?

Kane: Yeah, it's more difficult. Like, for example, you know the kind of Chegg-related explosion in exam misconduct. For example, that has happened in large part in you kind of STEM and in your type disciplines like accounting and actuarial studies.

Amanda: Yeah business.

Kane: The numbers and solutions based. So yeah, it's difficult. But again, like when there's multiple ways of, like, for instance, multiple ways of coding something, you know these things tend to show

up just as obviously, I think part of the issue is having the translation between, say, a computer science academic about what's wrong here, you know getting them to translate that for us in ways that we can put to the student is pretty difficult. So, it's a kind of ongoing process.

Amanda: Differences in areas of study are really interesting. My husband is a full-stack developer, and he said, "Look if we're stuck on something, we will look on GitHub, and if we find the code, we copy it. We put it into ours, and if it works, that's great. I might make a note of where it came from." We've talked to programmers before they were like, "Well in real life, we use code from all sorts of places."

Kane: And then students are kind of heavily punished for doing exactly the same thing. "Yeah, you must have got this off GitHub, and therefore, wack wack wack."

Amanda: Well by the time this podcast comes out, Kane will have given one of the keynotes at the Australian Academic Integrity Network Forum. Thanks very much, Kane.

Kane: Nice to see you, Amanda. Take care.

Segment 3: The Student Voice: Support Services

Sound effect: Phone ringing

Announcer: We spoke with students across Australasia about contemporary issues in tertiary education. This is what they said. This is the "Student Voice".

Welcome to this segment of the student voice, this week we asked students about what institutions can do to support them in their academic journey. This week we spoke with:

Gayani: Hi I'm Gayani, a doctoral student originally from Sri Lanka.

Zak: Zak, studying a Bachelor of Science Education in my third year with a Chemistry major.

Juliana: I am Juliana, a matured-aged post-grad student in education.

Host: Institutions offer a variety of support resources to students. Career, study, disability and mental health resources have become the standard across the tertiary landscape. The students shared with us the services that they felt were essential to assist students.

Gayani: Career development, resources, services that are pointing students to think about that career development early on in the degree. That would be an essential service to have within tertiary education institutions. Like, I think I keep going back to the idea that we need these... Like, we do these degrees engaging higher education for this, like, the better half of it is to get a career out of it say, you need to make student, start thinking about their career, provide resources to think a life ahead of a degree what's after so services that encourage students towards that direction I would say would be essential in any higher education institutions to make students ready for what life is afterwards.

Zak: At the end of the day, what you want is feedback, and in all my education subjects, that's the really important thing. If you're ever a teacher and you want to assess someone, you need to make sure the feedback is timely and detailed. You need to specify what they actually can improve upon what they did well at. The good classes and academics that I've had, they will actively reach out, not usually to one person, but in general, they'll say if you want to talk about it in detail feedback, contact me here, giving specific areas to do it.

At the end of the day, I think what's made me feel really supported—you know, when I'm facing something—is if I'll arrange a meeting or something, have a consult where they're actually...It's not just a feeling, like they're actually giving you the time of day. Like, it's not...Sometimes you have these experiences where you can almost see them, like, looking at the meeting time go down, like, they're just waiting for the 15-minute block to be gone so they can just move on with their day.

But the majority of the teachers that I have had have been, like, really, really excellent. They really do care. If you don't understand something, or you want further explanation, they will take the time to do it. And if they don't have the current resources, they'll say, yeah, I'll email you something. So I think it's...It's not even, like, going the extra mile. It's just doing the mile well—not to confuse the metaphor, but, you know yeah—taking the job seriously and actually caring, I think that's what makes people feel more supported.

Juliana: I think nowadays well being is one of the things that I put on the top list of services that students need. You know, counselling and people that can really help them maybe organizing their schedules—their agendas—because we've been going through a situation that we've never thought we would. So, everything is new for us, and finding people that can really help them—and I'll talk about this program that my institution has that is really good. It is called peer success coaching.

And they are just the students they know about all the services, and they tailor their help according to each situation. So, it's a little bit about those programs that I say, the services are there, but you don't know how to reach. Well, these guys reach you and say, “How can we help you?” And it can be from simple suggestion and referral to psychologists to only call, “I can help you with, you know, organizing your week program; Like, just let me know what you have to do for this week, and I'll help you just to build the best schedule.”

So this is...I wish this kind of services would be everywhere. It's just amazing the way they can support students in ways that students are not even expecting.

Gayani: Being an international student, international student resources are essential for Australian institutions, given that we have a huge market of international students coming into Australia for higher education, just so that it gives and opportunities to do for the students to ask questions as people who are not really familiar with how things happen in Australia. It is a different education system...like, yes, we are speaking English. Almost, there's a lot of preconceived idea of oh, it's just asking maths or science. No, but it's a new country, new system. I've come across students who don't have, even the basic concept...doesn't understand the basic concept of what Moodle could do. Because that is not something they used to. And, like, Australia is in a very privileged position where technology is embedded in learning before higher education. But in other countries outside of Australia, if you look at Asian countries, technology is not embedded as much in education. So, they come into Australia and they're, like, the first thing you would hear is “The subject outline is on the Moodle.” What does the Moodle do? Where does it sit? How do I access? So, someone to just run them through “This is the expectation. This is the standard. If you have questions, ask us.” That's the sort of resources to help international students are essential, I would say, in Australia in higher education institutions.

Host: Students further discussed the value of these services, particularly for students new to the university environment.

Juliana: When we start studying at a university, we see an environment totally different to the one that you were, when you were in school. So, sometimes the expectations are that we have teachers

behind to helping you with your time management and reminding you about some assignments and things that you have to do. And that doesn't really happen at university level.

So, I think that once you actually get to the University, it's like an amusement park right? You just feel like, wow, that's exactly what I want to be. But then you'll have some other things that you have to do. You have things that you have to accomplish. And sometimes you just find out...You found out that you need to accomplish things, and it's too late because it didn't until that last week when it was due.

So, it's a whole different world, and I think that working more on relying on, for example, computers to Moodle sites and they need to get know really well how to navigate. So, these kind of things are completely different to schools, and if you are not in that stage that you know where to find support or know who to ask to, it can be really overwhelming and it can be a challenge that some students just can't know how to cope with.

And, and, you know, just end up failing and having passes that they're not really used to. Because sometimes you do so well in school, and then you go to university and say, "What happened? I'm doing what I really love now, and what's going on?"

So, I think finding this path at the beginning is really challenging.

Juliana: Accessing services can be a bit tricky sometimes. So, for example, you can go through the website and look for the service, but then you don't know how to really access it. It happened a couple of times to me. So, I needed some kind of service, and I knew the service was there. But then how do I book my appointment with this person?

And in the end, it helped me, but I wonder if everyone is, like, willing to look for the place, looking for the right information to find the service. It takes a while sometimes according to the way some websites are organized. However, when the service is there, you actually get the service is just so amazing. It's really a high-quality kind of service.

And some of some of them that are used, for example, the library services and how to find some citations for my work. I couldn't find by myself, and the lady helped me and she got it in five seconds. I was like, oh, my God, what's wrong with me? But then it's just something that I don't master, and there is somebody else who does. So, yeah. It's been...it's a great service as well.

Gayani: I think the best piece of advice is treat international students as blank canvases. They know nothing. You can't go wrong if you treat them as they know nothing and start from scratch telling them, This is what Australian education does. This is what we expect. Where do you think you fit in?" Ask that question, "Where do you think you fit in? Where do you think your capabilities are?" and work from there to bring them to the standard that Australian education requires. 'Cause it's a very daunting journey—that first bit is very daunting, because most of the students just come by themselves and have never set foot in Australia in our example. There's a lot happening around other than university. For an institution, for a system that's already in place, education institutions could do a lot more than adding onto that pressure. And we are all educators in this setting. Why not treat them as blank canvases? Start educating them what is expected of these students, rather than expecting them to know...expecting them to have heard of "What is Moodle? What is subject outline? What is Turnitin?" Don't just assume students know.

Host: In all of our conversations with students, they mentioned the challenges of knowing what services are available. Between one-time information dumps at the beginning of their studies when

student attention is fractured at best to voluminous websites with buried resources, students aren't always aware of the supports available to them. Juliana lastly offers the following advice.

Juliana:

But recently, I got to know that at my institution they are offering a service that I wish I had when I was at the beginning of my studies in which people will actually reach you and say, how can I help you?

You know, so they can be, for example, students can be referred by subject coordinators, by the teachers, or even the learning analytics system. And then they just point to the right direction. So, for example, if we were having problems with citing, they can show, "Look, you can find this kind of service in this place."

Because what I initially feel is that universities have a range of programs and services offered. But it's not always that students know how to reach them. They don't know that the services are there. So, if there is no one to say, "These are the guys who can really help you." They just ended up not knowing. The services are there waiting for you, and you don't know. So, this is, this is one of the things that I really think universities should work a little bit more—like advertising the services, not only offering the services—because they are there already, but advertising that they do, have the services and how you can reach them.

Juliana: Not only accessing the services, but something that universities can do help can do to help should in some general is about consistency. I think there is a lack of consistency across faculties, and sometimes the schools. So, whatever you get in one faculty, you might not get in the other one, and it can be even the design of a Moodle site. So, if you are doing some work in two different faculties, you would probably feel a bit lost in from one faculty to the other. So, I think I'm not saying that we should have that one-fits-all kind of system. It's just like having some consistency so students know what's the minimal service they can expect it to have. And, for example, if you can get this service in this part of the website, the other services should be at the same place, so I know where to find and not hiding somewhere that no one will be able to find.

Closing

Host: And that's a wrap for this edition of the ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast. The ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast is produced by the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education.

Thanks to our segment producers Michael Cowling and Amanda White and our guests Sally Kift and Kane Murdoch and our students Gayani, Juliana and Zak.

Music for the podcast is produced and performed by Kevin MacLeod of Impompotech.com. Thank you for listening to the ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast. Find out more at ASCILITE.org.

Epilogue

Host: Hi, I'm David Porter, one of the producers of the ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast. I wanted to take a moment to invite you to be part of the podcast. We've designed the ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast to be community contributed. We invite academics, professionals and affiliates passionate about learning and teaching in tertiary education to pitch and produce podcast segments. If you are interested, we invite you visit ASCILITE.org and check out the Connect section for further details and submission guidelines. And we at ASCILITE want to thank you for listening. Stay tuned for next month's ASCILITE Wavelength Podcast.

