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Final Report: Evaluation of the In2Uni Program

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Final Report: Evaluation of the In2Uni Program

Abstract

This report is an evaluation of the University of Wollongong's In2Uni outreach program. The In2Uni Program, delivered at the University of Wollongong, is an outreach program that works with primary and secondary students from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds on the NSW South Coast. These programs take the form of student academic mentoring, parent/caregiver/community and teacher engagement seminars, and university transition workshops. In2Uni's focus is on building the skills and aspirations required to enter Higher Education.

Keywords

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FINAL REPORT EVALUATION OF THE IN2UNI PROGRAM

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & EARLY START RESEARCH INSTITUTE
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG**

REPORT PREPARED DECEMBER 2014

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UOW
AUSTRALIA



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Executive Summary

The In2Uni Program, delivered at the University of Wollongong, is an outreach program that works with primary and secondary students from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds on the NSW South Coast. These programs take the form of student academic mentoring, parent/caregiver/community and teacher engagement seminars, and university transition workshops. In2Uni's focus is on building the skills and aspirations required to enter Higher Education.

The focus of In2Uni activities is summed up by its vision statement being: "To lift educational aspirations, build academic capacity and encourage students to explore the possibilities and opportunities beyond school" (UOW 2014a).

The aims of In2Uni (2014a) are to:

1. Develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders;
2. Build aspirations of low SES communities and individuals towards Higher Education;
3. Build capacity to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education; and
4. Strengthen relationships with parents and local communities to build an awareness and knowledge about Higher Education.

In2Uni commenced in 2011 when the University of Wollongong (UOW), in partnership with the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) Illawarra and South East Region, established the schools outreach program. In its first year a total of 2,653 students were involved in the program. By 2013 this had risen to 3,642 students, with these students coming from sixty schools across the Bellambi to Eden region.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation team was commissioned in early 2014 by In2Uni to conduct this evaluation, with work commencing in late March. The evaluation was based on the overarching question:

How does the In2Uni Program engage students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, their parents/caregivers/community, teachers and school communities with Higher Education? To what extent is engagement achieved and in what ways is this achieved?

Five detailed questions were used to guide the process:

1. *Does the In2Uni program develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?*
2. *Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful/appropriate/transferrable awareness and knowledge about Higher Education?*
3. *Is a positive community response to Higher Education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?*
4. *Are aspirations of low SES students toward Higher Education being built by the In2Uni program?*
5. *Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education?*

Methodology

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, which enabled a close analysis of existing data sets collected by In2Uni (from 2011 – 2013); as well as commissioning a new study of In2Uni graduates (2014) and case study analyses of two sites where In2Uni operates. This new research involved the evaluation team engaging with a small cohort of previous In2Uni students who had since enrolled at UOW. Eight students with first-hand knowledge of the In2Uni program chose to participate in this research and were interviewed individually. Case studies of two participating schools were commissioned for this evaluation. These case studies comprised: in depth interviews with staff at the participating schools; analysis of In2Uni data pertaining to these two schools; and use of publically available data (such as MySchool) to provide contextual information on each school. Data analysis drew on the expertise of the evaluation team and included: data mapping to research questions; joint quantitative and qualitative data analysis; consultation with In2Uni staff; member checking by participating school teachers; and evaluation team meetings between March and December 2014.

Human Research Ethics Approval was sought for two components of the evaluation: (i) Quality Assurance data collected by In2Uni over the years of its operation (HREC HE14/375), and (ii) interviews with In2Uni students who completed a 2012/2013 *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* subject and secured enrolment at the University of Wollongong for 2014 (HREC HE14/278).

Summary of Findings

Findings have been grouped into five key areas/categories:

1. School Students
2. Stakeholders
3. Parents/Caregivers/Community
4. In2Uni Programs
5. University Mentors

A summary of key findings is provided below (detailed in Chapters Three to Eight).

1. School Students

- School students involved in In2Uni reported developing better understanding and knowledge of Higher Education and university life as a result of participation in In2Uni programs.
- Students across most In2Uni workshops/experiences reported after their In2Uni session, that they were confident they would attend university.
- Interviews with students participating in the *Year 12 Summer Master Class* indicated that the program was able to address specific anxieties, fears and concerns that they held and by doing so, improved their self-confidence and motivation.
- Students strongly disagreed that distance from university and the desire to enter the workforce instead of university were barriers to entering Higher Education.
- Students' own accounts suggested that In2Uni played an important role in encouraging them to consider Higher Education.
- Students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* and those in the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* cohort that were interviewed, indicated that their participation had contributed skills and knowledge that may lead to improved academic attainment.
- *Year 12 University Preparation Program* participants were aware of key aspects to assist them in transitioning from school to university, including knowledge of scholarships and alternatives to ATAR-based entry.

- Our case studies with two schools revealed examples of first-in-family students, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students who were likely to drop out of high school all of whom had secured places at university following successful experiences of In2Uni programs.

2. Stakeholders

- In2Uni builds strong, lasting relationships with participating schools.
- Our case studies with two schools showed that In2Uni is developing sustained relationships with schools, teachers and students, with positive feedback from those who have taken part in programs circulating organically within the school community.
- Our case studies with two schools also revealed a high level of praise for key In2Uni staff particularly in terms of their organisation, willingness to incorporate feedback and level of personal investment in program success.

3. Programs

- In2Uni offers a range of programs that engage school students from low socioeconomic backgrounds
- The programs form a series of workshops and experiences ranging in delivery from Year 6 (upper primary school in NSW) to Year 12 (the final year of secondary school in NSW).
- We note the student feedback regarding the positive impact of the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* and UOW's Early Admission initiative.

4. Parents/Caregivers/Community

- In2Uni connects with parents/caregivers/community via programs and events that help them to feel welcome at a university campus.
- Parents/caregivers/community feedback is highly supportive in relation to the influence of In2Uni on young people's knowledge and understanding.

5. University Mentors

- In2Uni offers a mentoring experience for University of Wollongong students that supports their engagement with local schools.
- In2Uni mentors were particularly noted for their potential to impact students' perceptions of the accessibility of Higher Education, largely due to their role modeling capabilities.

Recommendations

The recommendations provided by this evaluation fall into five key areas:

1. Information about In2Uni
2. In2Uni Programs and Activities
3. Work with Parents/Caregivers/Community
4. Work with Schools
5. Data Collection (Quality Assurance Processes)

1. Information about In2Uni

- Clarify workshop and experience day nomenclature and provide visual representation of the progression of In2Uni workshops/experiences.
- Consider the use of a Geo-coded map of schools participating in the In2Uni program.

2. In2Uni Programs and Activities

- Review career planning aspects of the programs.
- Expand student opportunities to visit and experience faculties as part of the *Year 6 Engagement Day*.
- Formalise and/or expand components of programs that explicitly address student anxieties and concerns about university.
- Target improvements in student knowledge of financial support, support services and Early Admission for the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* in 2015.

- Make explicit efforts to address students' fears and preconceived ideas of university as an alien environment.

3. Work with Parents/Caregivers/Community

- Consider providing more explicit information for parents/caregivers/community regarding the expectations and goals for their visit as part of the *Year 6 Engagement Day*. Parent/caregiver/community members should also be more involved in activities during their visit.

4. Work with Schools

- Explore options to expand forward planning of programs beyond twelve months.
- Reinstate In2Uni mentors as the main facilitators in school-based curricula programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Mentoring Experience*.
- Develop closer consultation with teachers on the design of curricula offerings.
- Develop a resource for teachers to use at schools that do not currently meet the criteria for entrance into the In2Uni program.

5. Data Collection (Quality Assurance Processes)

We recommend reviewing In2Uni data collection/Quality Assurance processes in order to better collect the range and depth of data required to accurately portray the outcomes of In2Uni programs. This includes:

- Individual school and cohort data.
- Improved student data collection regarding 'belonging' and 'partnership'.
- Elaborate and expand the data collection gauging students' experiences and attitudes both before and after workshops/programs.
- Ensure Quality Assurance data matches overall In2Uni program aims and specific workshop goals.

- Review data collection regarding student aspirations of Higher Education and outcomes.
- Review data collection regarding student perceptions of 'barriers' to Higher Education.
- Provide In2Uni participants with individual student identification numbers/codes for tracking over time.

One – Introduction

This report is an evaluation of the University of Wollongong's In2Uni outreach program. The evaluation was requested by In2Uni and funded for \$49,947 by the University of Wollongong (UOW) through the Higher Education Participation and Pathways Program (HEPPP). This research evaluation was conducted by a team of university researchers affiliated with the Early Start Research Institute and the School of Education in the Faculty of Social Sciences, UOW. The evaluation team comprised researchers with expertise in the application of qualitative and quantitative methodology in education, as well as a depth of experience in the analysis of access and participation in education.

In2Uni requested the evaluation and funding was provided via the HEPPP scheme. The evaluation framework was designed in consultation with In2Uni. Funding for the project commenced in March 2014. A copy of the evaluation proposal is provided in Appendix A.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation followed a set of questions that were determined in consultation with In2Uni. This consultation process was informed by an evaluation framework that had been developed internally by In2Uni (Appendix B). The evaluation questions are provided below:

Overarching Question for the Evaluation

How does the In2Uni Program engage students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, their parents/caregivers/community, teachers and school communities with Higher Education? To what extent is engagement achieved and in what ways is this achieved?

Detailed Evaluation Questions

1. *Does the In2Uni program develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?*

2. *Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful/appropriate/transferable awareness and knowledge about higher education?*
3. *Is a positive community response to higher education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?*
4. *Are aspirations of Low SES students toward higher education being built by the In2Uni program?*
5. *Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to higher education?*

Evaluation activities began in March 2014 and concluded in December 2014. Chapter One - *Introduction* details the background to the inception of the In2Uni outreach program and the activities that comprise it. Chapter Two – *Methodology* explains the steps taken in evaluating the program, including data collection and analyses. The findings of the evaluation are detailed over four chapters: Chapter Three – *Collaborations and Partnerships with Stakeholders*, Chapter Four – *Developing Awareness and Knowledge of Higher Education*, Chapter Five – *Community Response to Higher Education*, Chapter Six – *Building Aspirations* and Chapter Seven – *Navigating Higher Education Pathways*. The *Conclusions and Recommendations* chapter (Chapter Eight) highlights key findings and draws on the evaluation results and related literature, to provide ideas for the ongoing refinement of the In2Uni program.

“A student from a high socio-economic background is about three times more likely to attend university than a student from a low socio-economic background”.

Bradley 2008, p.7

Background

For much of the Twentieth Century, young white male students from middle class backgrounds dominated Higher Education in Australia. These students brought with them considerable capital in the form of linguistic competence, significant academic accomplishment at high school, knowledge of the cultural contexts of university, and the economic capital to support further study after high school. Whilst this began to change after World War II with more women and older students entering Higher Education, people from low socioeconomic and minority ethnic backgrounds continued to be underrepresented in terms of university participation for the next 60

years (Gale 2011; James 2002). James' report (2002) noted at that time that Australians from low socioeconomic backgrounds had 'roughly half the likelihood of participating in Higher Education as Australians from medium and high socioeconomic backgrounds' (p.ix), but it has since been suggested that the figure is now closer to one third (Bradley 2008). In 2008 the Bradley Review of Higher Education, titled *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System*, recommended action to increase the proportion of the population attaining a Higher Education qualification, as well as specific increases aimed at improving diversity including 'national targets ... for participation of low socio-economic status students ... and institution-specific targets for participation and performance' (p.xiii).

Figure 1 – The In2Uni Geographical Area



About In2Uni

The Partnership

In 2011 the University of Wollongong (UOW), in partnership with the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) Illawarra and South East Region, established the In2Uni schools outreach program to 'increase the access and participation rates of people from underrepresented backgrounds in Higher Education' (UOW 2013, p.3).

Aims

In 2014 the aims of In2Uni are to:

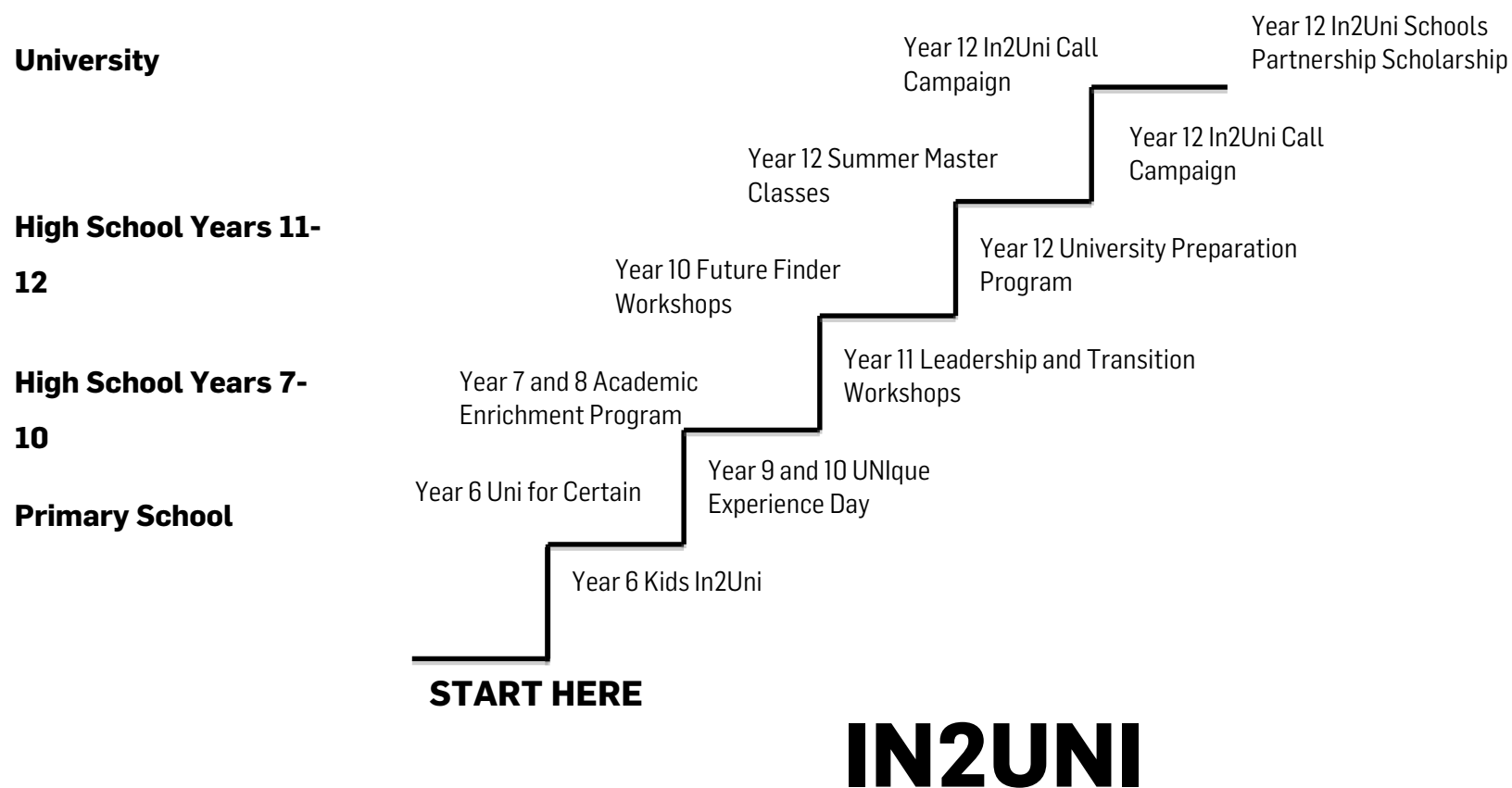
1. Develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders;
2. Build aspirations of low SES communities and individuals towards Higher Education;
3. Build capacity to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education; and
4. Strengthen relationships with parents and local communities to build an awareness and knowledge about Higher Education (p.1).

In 2011 a total of 2,653 students were involved in an In2Uni program. In 2013 this had risen to 3,642 students, with these students coming from sixty schools across the Bellambi to Eden region (see Figure 1 and Appendix C). These programs take the form of student academic mentoring, parent/caregiver/community and teacher engagement seminars, and university transition workshops which focus on building the skills required to enter Higher Education. These programs are explained in detail below.

In2Uni Programs

In 2014 the In2Uni outreach program consists of eight workshops/activities and two small-scale transition initiatives (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 – In2Uni Program Sequence



Year 6 Kids In2Uni

The *Year 6 Kids In2Uni* Program (previously known as the *Year 6 Engagement Program*) aims to start the conversation with students about Higher Education. It gives students the opportunity to experience university, interact with university students and staff, and think about why they might like to consider study beyond school. *Year 6 Kids In2Uni* is a five-week teacher-delivered module that links with the NSW Curriculum. The program involves a unit of work delivered by trained primary school teaching staff. As part of the program, students are involved in a visit to the University of Wollongong campuses. Students in the Wollongong area visit the Wollongong campus with their parents/caregivers/community and teachers, whilst students located on the far South Coast visit the Shoalhaven, Bega or Batemans Bay campuses.

Year 6 Uni For Certain

Year 6 Uni For Certain engages students in Year 6 who attend targeted schools in the Illawarra and Shellharbour regions. Students who show potential that is not yet realised and who need an extra push to harness their talents are invited to apply via their school. The program presents an opportunity that allows students to work in the company of like-minded learners and will encourage the student's aspirations, build independent learning and inspire creative thinking and problem solving skills.

Year 6 Uni For Certain students are able to access University Mentors, Academics and facilities, making this a unique program for schools, their students and parents/caregivers/community to engage with. Over 16 weeks students are engaged in problem based learning to develop their knowledge of sustainability and to enhance their technology skills. In addition to this, Year 7 students from Warilla High Schools are invited to engage as part of this program to act as leaders and bridge the transition for Year 6 students into high school.

Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program

Previously known as the *Year 7 to 10 Academic Mentoring Program*, the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* is a ten-week (one hour per week) program designed to provide students with an introduction to the language of Higher Education and to help them recognise the link between school and university. Conducted in Terms 2 and 3, the program provides students with the opportunity to

'taste' what it is like to study university style projects whilst still at school. Schools are invited to select from a series of teacher and mentor delivered modules that reflect the degrees offered at the University of Wollongong and are linked to the NSW Curriculum. Use the QR code for a video covering aspects of the program from 2012.



Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day

The *Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day* is an opportunity for Year 9 and 10 students to experience university life for a day. Students are invited to take part in Faculty-based Taster Sessions; Alumni Experience Workshops; and Information Sessions about university degrees, subject selection and making the transition to senior study.



Year 10 Future Finder Workshop

The ninety-minute *Year 10 Future Finder Workshop* allows students to explore their post-school options by talking through potential career and degree options with trained In2Uni mentors. It is held approximately two weeks before students make their subject selections for Years 11 and 12. This workshop aims to help students navigate pathways to their future career goals by discussing high school subject requirements, pathways towards their goals and also articulates support mechanisms

to help them to get there. The outcome of the workshop is a career plan that the students can take home with them.

Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshops

Previously known as the *Year 11 Study Skills Program*, the *Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshops* involves Year 11 students who are invited to take part in a workshop to assist them in preparing for their senior studies. The workshops are delivered in both half-day and full-day formats. Trained In2Uni Mentors help students develop skills in goal setting, essay writing, research, exam preparation and time management.

Year 12 University Preparation Program

Previously known as the *HSC Preparation Program*, the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* engages Year 12 students in a twenty-week program to assist them in preparing for the HSC and making post-school career decisions. The mentoring sessions are delivered in Terms 2 and 3 by trained In2Uni Mentors, who guide students through subject material, as well as providing mentoring around Higher Education admissions processes and career goals.

Year 12 Road to Success Workshops

The *Year 12 Road to Success Workshops* aim to provide students with the skills, information and knowledge to make informed decisions about their future. They are conducted after the Year 12 trial exams. Delivered by In2Uni Mentors, these ninety-minute workshops allow students to explore their post-school options by discussing potential career and degree options. These workshops familiarise students with Early Admissions, scholarship and alternative entry processes. Students finish the workshop by completing a career plan that they take home with them.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes

In 2013 and 2014 the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* consisted of *ARTS001: 'Belonging in the Community'* - a two week intensive university-level subject for Year 12 students during the January school holidays. Once accepted into the program, students are enrolled at the university and take part in lectures, tutorials and master classes. On completion of the subject, students have enhanced knowledge about the

theme of 'Belonging' relevant to the HSC and receive six credit points towards an Arts undergraduate program at UOW the following year. The *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* program has been expanded in 2015 to incorporate five different subjects across a range of UOW Faculties.

Transition to University Support

In2Uni offers two small-scale transition initiatives to assist students from In2Uni high schools as they begin study at UOW. The *In2Uni Schools Partnership Scholarship* provides \$1,000 to eligible students to assist them with the financial challenges of beginning university. In addition, the *In2Uni Call Campaign* is an initiative that sees trained *In2Uni* mentors calling students from In2Uni high schools. These calls take place just after the students receive their offers to attend UOW and focus on support services available to individual students, as well as scholarship and employment opportunities they may be eligible for. In 2015, the In2Uni team, in consultation with a steering committee, will implement a 'whole of university' approach to transition and support for equity students.

UOW Early Admission

Also known as 'Early Entry', UOW Early Admission (see QR code), is a competitive entry initiative that allows students with sufficient Year 11 and 12 results to receive an offer to study at UOW prior to the release of Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks (ATAR). The UOW Early Admission program is run by UniAdvice, but has strong linkages to the programs offered by In2Uni. Students apply online to the faculty hosting the degree/degrees they wish to study and provide details of their results. Faculties invite students to undertake a face-to-face interview with a two-person panel of trained academic and professional services staff. This panel assesses student merit according to predetermined criteria. Throughout this report there are numerous mentions of In2Uni students applying for and receiving 'Early Entry'. In2Uni students apply, and must demonstrate their academic attainment in the same way that any other student does. The Evaluation Team is aware of only one concession that guaranteed In2Uni students an Early Admission Interview. In 2014 one of the incentives to encourage high schools to successfully complete the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* and the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes*, was the guarantee that if they applied for Early Admission, they would be granted at least one



interview. In2Uni also provides information to faculties about students who have taken part in either the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* or *Year 12 University Preparation Program*. In 2014, In2Uni participants were brought to the attention of the Early Admission panel members via a pink sticker placed on the interviewee's application form. Regardless, students must still demonstrate sufficient academic attainment to be able to accept their position, with the official application guide noting: 'It is the expectation of UOW that you will maintain or exceed the level of academic performance indicated in your application and interview' (UOW 2014b, p.3).

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

This chapter provided a background to the In2Uni program and while it has not directly addressed specific evaluation questions, we have a number of recommendations derived from this high level analysis of the program:

Recommendations

1. **Clarify workshop and experience day nomenclature and provide visual representation of the progression of In2Uni workshops/experiences.** The names of several In2Uni workshops and/or experience days have changed over the four years of the program and over the same time period a number of workshops/experiences have been added or expanded. A visual representation, like we have supplied in Figure 2, would assist individuals such as teachers and parents/caregivers/community to understand the progression young people move through. The diagram should link to descriptions of each workshop/experience, including the main goal and its previous name.
2. **Geo-coded map of schools participating in the In2Uni program.** In2Uni has experienced substantial growth in the number of schools participating. In order to give interested parties an 'at a glance' perspective, we recommend In2Uni commission the production of a high-quality map of the Bellambi to Eden region, with In2Uni schools geo-coded onto the map and information about the school's demographics and In2Uni participation accessible via a mouse-over/roll-over function. In order to ensure the ongoing relevance of the

map we suggest it be produced in such a way that In2Uni staff can make minor additions themselves. Connecting with geographers within the university may highlight ways of using existing products, such as Google Maps, to deliver this in a cost effective way.

Two – Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological steps taken in the evaluation, including details of the data used, data analysis performed and ethical approvals.

Evaluation Questions

The five questions that guided this evaluation are:

1. Does the In2Uni program develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?
2. Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful/appropriate/transferable awareness and knowledge about Higher Education?
3. Is a positive community response to Higher Education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?
4. Are aspirations of low SES students toward Higher Education being built by the In2Uni program?
5. Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education?

Method

The evaluation used mixed-methods, which enabled a close analysis of the existing data sets collected by In2Uni as well as the commissioning of a new study of In2Uni graduates (supported by UOW HREC approval). This new research involved the evaluation team engaging a small cohort of In2Uni students who were now enrolled at UOW. Eight students with first-hand knowledge of the In2Uni program chose to participate in this research and were interviewed individually. Case studies of two participating schools were also commissioned for this evaluation. These case studies comprised: in depth interviews with staff at the participating schools; analysis of In2Uni data pertaining to these two schools; and use of publically available data (such as MySchool) to provide contextual information on each school.

Data analysis drew on the expertise of the evaluation team and included: data mapping to research questions; joint quantitative and qualitative data analysis; consultation with In2Uni staff; member checking by participating school teachers; and twelve evaluation team meetings between March and December 2014. A draft of the

Final Report was also provided to Ms. Kylie Austin, the UOW Outreach and Pathways Manager, for factual checking.

Research Ethics

Human Research Ethics Approval was sought for two components of the evaluation: (i) analysis of Quality Assurance data collected by In2Uni over the years of its operation (HREC HE14/375) and (ii) interviews with In2Uni students who had successfully completed the 2012/2013 *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* subject *ARTS001 – Belonging in the Community* and had gone on to secure enrolment at the University of Wollongong for 2014 (HREC HE14/278).

Document Review

In2Uni provided the evaluation team access to data sets collected between 2011 and 2013. A summary table of this data is provided below (see Figure 3).

This data included student, teacher and parent feedback collected via surveys which were distributed during In2Uni workshops and events. In 2011 and 2012 the majority of survey questions used by In2Uni were short answer. The team conducted a document review of these documents using interpretive analysis to identify key themes and outcomes. Each document was systematically and critically examined to gain insight into the In2Uni program and to respond to each of the evaluation questions. The process for reviewing feedback forms was iterative with student comments initially read and themes generated. These student feedback forms were later revisited in order to cross check student comments with those provided in our independent interviews with school staff. Further details of this process is provided in the data analysis section below. For 2013, In2Uni changed the instrument design and subsequently, the majority of questions used a Likert scale format. The descriptive analysis of these surveys is outlined below. We also reviewed In2Uni promotional materials such as the 2012 and 2013 Annual Reports and In2Uni web-based promotional material and resources.

Interviews

The evaluation team designed and conducted a series of interviews with key stakeholders and participants involved in In2Uni. The interviews were purposive and designed to augment the data supplied by In2Uni. We sought to access key

community stakeholder informants and also to access participants who had substantial experience of the In2Uni program. Community stakeholders included representatives of two High Schools that have been involved with In2Uni since the outreach program began. Due to the limited time available to plan, gain HREC consent and conduct interviews with In2Uni students - the evaluation team elected to focus on a single cohort of students who had completed In2Uni and had secured places to study at the University of Wollongong. These students had been participants in the 2012/2013 *Year 12 Summer Master Classes Program*, which consisted of completing the university subject *ARTS001 – 'Belonging in the Community'*. In2Uni was consulted about this choice and provided support to access students. These interviews provided insight on the experience of involvement with In2Uni, from the perspective of a cohort of students who had successfully transitioned through high school-based In2Uni programs and into the university's undergraduate programs.

A total of seventeen students were invited to participate in the evaluation, with eight indicating they were willing to be involved. Individual student interviews were conducted at the UOW Wollongong campus with these eight students, lasting between twenty and forty-five minutes. Three separate teacher interviews were conducted, with a total of twelve teachers. Due to teacher availability, four teachers participated in paired interviews (approximately 40 minutes duration) and six teachers participated in a focus group interview (approximately 45 minutes duration). (See the table below for details on the interviews). The team designed interview protocols and followed a semi-structured interview approach that facilitated sufficient flexibility for participants to outline and explain their responses. Interview questions were composed based on the evaluation questions (see Appendix D).

Figure 3 – Quality Assurance Data Provided by In2Uni For This Evaluation

	2011			2012			2013		
	Students	Parents	Teachers	Students	Parents	Teachers	Students	Parents	Teachers
Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Year 6 Uni For Certain				•			•		
Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program	•			•			•		
Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience	•		•	•			•		•
Year 11 Leadership and Transition Program	•		•	•			•		
Year 12 University Preparation Program	•		•				•		
Year 12 Summer Master Classes							⊙		

Note: Some programs have undergone naming changes between 2011 and 2014. These changes are noted in Chapter One.

Note: All quantitative data reported in this evaluation is taken from the most recent data (2013) unless explicitly identified as otherwise.

⊙ Note: 2014 *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* data was provided. It is excluded from this evaluation on the grounds that the project timeline did not allow for data from other 2014 workshops/experiences to be used.

Table 1 – In2Uni Evaluation Interview Participants

	Total Participants
Students (Individual Interviews)	8
Teachers (Paired Interviews)	4
Teachers (Focus Group Interview)	6

Observations

Informal observations were conducted by one member of the evaluation team at two In2Uni workshops held at local high schools. The other three members of the evaluation team conducted further informal observations during the Early Entry interview process at the University of Wollongong. These informal observations provided evaluation team members with the opportunity to have first-hand experience with In2Uni students who had completed programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*, *Year 12 University Preparation Program* and the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes*.

Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis of Quantitative Data

In2Uni supplied the evaluation team with the Quality Assurance data outlined in Figure 3 during April 2014. The quantitative analysis process began with one member of the evaluation team mapping individual survey questions to the evaluation questions with which they best aligned. A second member of the team then independently reviewed the mapping, noting suggested changes. These team members then reviewed the final map together, produced the final data maps (see Appendix E for an example), and made the decision to focus on 2013 data as a priority. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel, with percentage agree/disagree, mean and standard deviation noted. Survey findings were recorded according to the evaluation question they best addressed, as per the previously noted data maps. The evaluation team members again reviewed the mapping, this time in light of the findings and also reviewed particularly strong and weak statistical results. Following this, results were drafted into chapters and tables, with findings and their implications progressively reviewed by the entire evaluation team at subsequent team meetings.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Qualitative analysis began with members of the evaluation team reading interview transcripts and/or survey responses. Data analysis meetings were held by the evaluation team in order to share overall impressions of the data and to highlight and agree upon important foci and emerging themes for closer analysis. This process of discussion for consensus amongst the research team, tempered the dangers of subjectivity and bias of a single researcher in analysing and reporting on the dataset. Subsequent steps in the thematic analysis involved team members scanning transcripts for data that responded to the evaluation questions, manually coding passages in Microsoft Word and then transferring quotes and related notes into specific chapters within the report. Progressive scanning and coding continued over a period of two months as the evaluation team learnt more about In2Uni and began to consider the qualitative results alongside the quantitative data and findings.

A team member experienced in narrative analysis drew on the data collected with In2Uni graduates who attend UOW to develop two narrative vignettes for this evaluation report. These are available in Chapter Seven. The vignettes provide an opportunity to offer a rich description of the young person's experience, as described by that young person.

In the following five chapters, we present results from our quantitative and qualitative analyses. Each chapter focuses on a single evaluation question and concludes with an overall summary of findings for that chapter and several specific recommendations.

Three – Collaborations and Partnerships with Stakeholders

This chapter focuses on the research question: *‘Does the In2Uni program develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?’*. Community engagement has been a rising priority for universities across Australia in the last fifteen years, according to Garlick and Langworthy (2008), who note that this engagement is not only widely expected of universities as public institutions, but is a key means of achieving shared goals related to knowledge generation/exchange and societal improvement. Such engagement seems particularly important in regards to achieving the goals of strategically targeted university outreach activities, such as In2Uni. In support of such assertions, Gale et al.’s (2010, p.71) report for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, argues that collaboration between sectors and involvement of multiple stakeholders in design and implementation is a critical component of effective outreach programs targeted at low socioeconomic cohorts. Whilst the fact that In2Uni as a collaboration between UOW and the NSW DEC (the government department responsible for public schooling in NSW) is a promising start to collaboration, evaluating engagement with individuals in In2Uni’s target communities is essential to gauging and understanding program effectiveness. In this chapter we consider issues such as: the degree to which a range of In2Uni program offerings have involved such stakeholders as parents/caregivers/community, teachers, schools and students in outreach activities and whether this involvement has been sustained; the degree of engagement as signaled by participant evaluation and feedback; and whether In2Uni has left participants with feelings of ‘belonging’ at university.

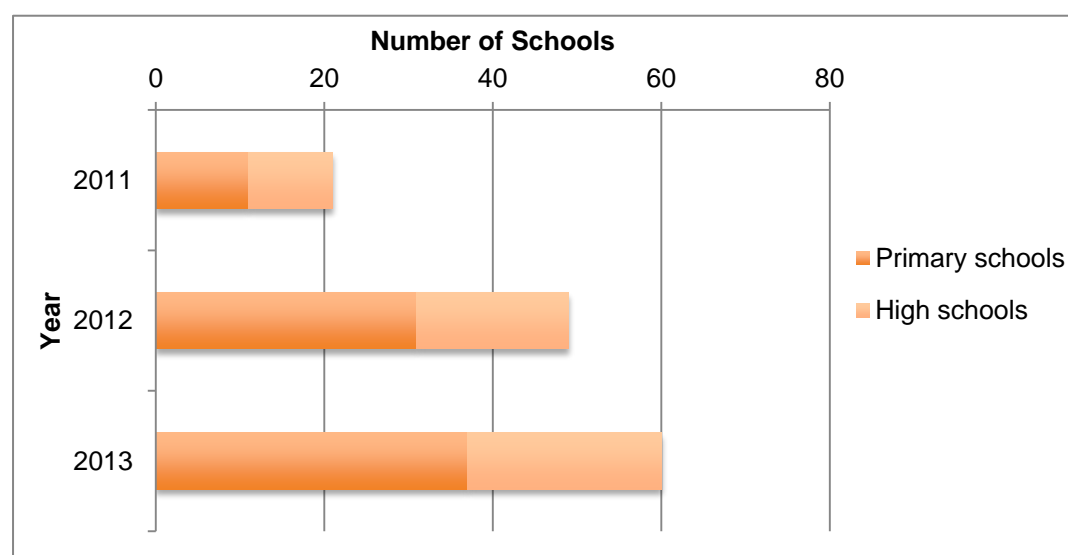
Participation and Partnership

For youth-targeted community outreach programs such as In2Uni, partnering with schools provides the potential for ongoing and educationally appropriate discussions about, and experiences of, Higher Education. Schools are also well placed to reinforce messages about the benefits of Higher Education, to advise students on Higher Education pathways and support services, and to partner with the university to access hard-to-reach and historically underrepresented populations.

The Participating Schools

In2Uni programs involve schools from Bellambi in the north, to Eden in the south - a distance of approximately 400 kilometers. In each of its first three years (2011 - 2013), In2Uni increased the number of schools participating in the programs from 11 primary schools and 10 high schools in 2011 to 37 primary schools and 23 high schools in 2013 (see Figure 2). Just as importantly, In2Uni has a 100% school retention rate over that time period. The steady rise in overall number of primary schools, from 11 to 37, may be particularly important insofar as literature from the USA suggests that successful outreach programs should begin aspiration and attainment-building activities for students prior to their teenage years (Swail 2000). Retention of schools is similarly important in relation to engagement, with recent research suggesting that outreach programs must build long-term partnerships with schools and school communities and sustained partnerships with students, parents/caregivers/community and teachers (Gale 2010) if they are to build Higher Education aspirations, capacities and knowledge in low socio-economic communities.

Figure 4 – Schools Participating in In2Uni Programs By Year



A key tenet of 'partnership' between a university, schools and the school community is that each party should stand to gain, in broad terms, from the strategic collaboration. In discussing In2Uni with school-based stakeholders and with tertiary students that had previously experienced In2Uni programs, we found evidence that

there are significant benefits to stakeholders as a result of participating in In2Uni programs. These benefits feed into three main areas:

- benefits for schools and school students
- benefits for In2Uni mentors
- benefits for UOW

Benefits for Schools and School Students

“For us now this is one of the biggest selling points that we have: our relationship with the uni and the outcomes that it's delivering”.

Glen Smart, Head Teacher-Welfare, Warilla High School

Being able to demonstrate strong academic outcomes for students is highly valued by many school executive teams as it addresses a range of characteristics often desired by parents/caregivers/community such as effective curriculum and pedagogy, quality teaching and clear links to post-schooling pathways (Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz 1995; Hayes et al. 2006). At Warilla High School, for example, staff spoke about their school benefiting from the relationship with In2Uni and UOW through improved student achievement and, in turn, through their ability to use these improved outcomes for students as evidence of the effectiveness of the school and its partnerships:

“When you look at the statistics, I think the second year I was here we had 10 kids go to uni. These last two years, we’ve had over 30 kids in through early entry and that’s largely due to this program”.

Michael Stanizzo, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School

A stronger connection with the university was also seen to bring a range of benefits for the school beyond those related to student performance, such as building relationships to improve staff professional development and facilitating research collaborations. Staff at both Warrawong and Warilla High Schools also noted that the In2Uni programs served a student welfare function at times, with each school able to point to specific examples of Year 12 students who would likely have dropped out of school, had their connection to the In2Uni program not provided support and a sense that university study was an achievable and worthwhile goal:

“...we have at least 4 kids in the Year 12 group who may not have made it through this year had it not been for the added support of the uni. Just because of their circumstances at home”.

Michael Stanizzo, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School

“... one of our students ... had really poor attendance and quite financially stressed ... also had lots of health problems – quite serious health problems ... we didn’t think that he would get through [high school] ... he’s actually been just offered early admission ... I think going to the University on the Wednesdays. Being involved – actually being on campus, that made the difference ...”.

Brenda Coursey, Careers Adviser, Warrawong High School

Benefits for In2Uni Mentors

“... you always see the passion in each of them for what they’re doing and how they’re helping ... keeping kids engaged with people that are passionate on the subjects ... I can’t say good enough things about the mentors and people in there”.

David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School

Mutual benefits arising from the partnership between the university and the wider school community also extended to the university students that worked in many of the In2Uni programs. Overall, school staff praised the training, preparation and dedication of the mentors. Indeed, staff at Warilla High School noted that some university mentors (university students paid to work in In2Uni programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*) had engaged students so effectively that the mentors were offered paid work at the school as School Learning Support Teachers. School staff explained that mentors, who were studying in diverse degrees such as teaching, law, medicine and the arts, stood to benefit in a range of aspects related to gaining experience in working professionally with the public and young people.

Benefits for UOW

School-based stakeholders also noted the potential benefits for UOW, emphasising the fact that In2Uni programs provide the university with sustained access to young

people from groups whom have previously not been well represented in tertiary education. This idea was expressed by numerous school staff:

“... you are picking up kids that would not usually be headed to uni at all”.

John Hamley, Principal, Warilla High School

“I think it’s provided access to communities you wouldn’t have had access to. I think you’re now in a situation where you’re able to access a low socioeconomic group to some extent – I’m not saying to a full extent but to an extent that you never would have had previously four years ago. I think that’s a step in the right direction”.

David Boscoscuro, Science teacher, Warrawong High School

“I’ve seen children sitting in on these programs ... I’ve gone in and said ‘I wonder what they’re sitting in there for? I didn’t think they would be thinking of, you know, Uni’. And now they’re in.

Amanda Andonovski, Assistant Careers Adviser, Warrawong High School

Whilst access to and enrolment of these young people is important in regards to the university achieving equity targets and more broadly, promoting the welfare of low-socioeconomic areas of the university community, UOW also stands to benefit in that it gets *first* access to some of the region’s high caliber candidates. As the preceding quote illustrates, high performing students with positive high school experiences of the university and its staff may be more inclined to choose UOW:

“... this year we have students that have been given early entry into courses with 90 and above ATARS. Previously they might have had a look elsewhere, but they have a strong bond with the university now. They’ve been on campus, they know people and I think that’s a real positive for the university and for us and those kids”.

Jenni Raison, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School

Collaboration and Belonging

Belonging at UOW

Ensuring students, parents/caregivers/community and teachers from low socioeconomic backgrounds feel welcome and comfortable at the university is an important part of creating positive partnerships. Data from the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*, *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* and *Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day* surveys consistently suggest that collaborative activities between

In2Uni and schools are well received by participants. For instance, approximately 40% of students who attended the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* brought a parent with them to the UOW campus. These parents/caregivers/community, many of whom were first time visitors to the campus, indicated that they felt welcome and that they belonged at the university (85.4% agree; see Table 2). Parents also indicated that they were comfortable returning to university, with only 8% agreeing with the statement 'I don't feel comfortable returning to the university to use any services that the university offers'. Teachers who visited the university as part of the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* agreed (100%) that the university visit provided students with positive role models. Though not directly asked about 'belonging', students in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* were asked if they learnt valuable subject knowledge as part of the tutorial sessions and if they looked forward to attending the workshops. In response to this, students agreed (69.4%) that they had learnt things about the subject they would not have learned without *In2Uni*, with fewer agreeing that they looked forward to attending *In2Uni* classes each week (Agree = 56.5%). The only direct question about 'belonging' in the 2013 survey data was asked in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* with students only slightly agreeing that they felt they belonged at the university (Agree = 47.9%).

Table 2 - Collaboration and Belonging

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Parents				
I felt welcome and that I belonged at the university (Year 6 Kids <i>In2Uni</i> Program)	262	4.13	0.74	85.4
I don't feel comfortable returning to the university to use any services that the university offers (Year 6 Kids <i>In2Uni</i> Program)	262	1.87	0.99	8.0
Teachers				
The university visit provided students with positive role models (Year 6 Kids <i>In2Uni</i> Program)	41	4.39	0.59	100.0
Students				
I have learnt things about the subject I would not have learned without <i>In2Uni</i> (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.74	0.82	69.4
I have looked forward to attending <i>In2Uni</i> classes each week (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.57	1.04	56.5
I feel that I would belong at university (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.49	0.98	47.9

Note. *%Agree* = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

The Importance of Belonging

“...the girl that I met in that program...is my best friend ever...we both struggled to actually get here and we actually supported each other”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

Connecting with people (Hoffman et al. 2003) and gaining a sense of familiarity with the physical environment (Strayhorn 2012) are two important aspects in contributing to a feeling of belonging within an institutional space such as a university. When asked ‘What did you like the most?’ in the qualitative comments from the 2011 *Leadership and Transition* workshops, 35 out of 182 students (19%) specifically noted that their favourite aspect was meeting new people, whilst a further 32 out of 182 (18%) indicated that touring the university and/or visiting particular university facilities was their highlight. Students who took part in the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* also noted their enjoyment of meeting new people. One student explained that she had lost a lot of friends during the latter years of high school as her university aspirations differed from those around her. For her, the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* connected her with like-minded peers and a new best friend. Students spoke of connecting with In2Uni staff, particularly mentors: “... you work with that particular mentor throughout the whole course and having their support ... built up that confidence in me”. Familiarity with the university campus and facilities were also frequently noted by *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* students as a key aspect in helping them feel comfortable at UOW. One student explained that showing friends around campus contributed to a feeling of belonging at university: “... when we first started Uni I’m like ‘I’ll show you the good coffee shops’ ... so that was cool to kind of get familiar with the Uni and yeah felt a part of it”. Another also noted feeling accustomed to the campus when she arrived to begin her degree and in the following quote explains that this comfort aided her transition from high school to university:

“... it definitely made me more comfortable and so within those four days I knew where I was going, I knew what I had to do. Even just little things like going to the library and knowing how to use the printer and it just makes everything so much easier when I actually got here”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

Here we have considered data pertaining to the question: ‘*Does the In2Uni program develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?*’. In their US-based evaluation of outreach programs, Gullatt and Jan (2003 p.6) assert that exemplary programs need to be strategic in the timing of their interventions and that this be coupled with a sustained relationship between the program, the school and the students involved. Consistent with these characteristics we found that In2Uni has:

- developed a series of workshops and experiences ranging from Year 6 to Year 12 (see Chapter One), a sustained relationship with partner schools and an engagement model that sees students connected to In2Uni activities throughout their schooling and is fulfilling important program goals related to partnership with schools and students;
- assisted schools in building positive community perceptions of ties between the school and UOW, and positive role modeling as a result of the presence of In2Uni student mentors in their schools;
- run events that made parent and teachers feel welcome and like they belonged on campus following their visits to the university; and that
- whilst available data suggests students benefitted from their involvement in In2Uni programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*, further student data would be required to better evaluate the benefits to students and the links to the In2Uni aims.

The findings above suggest that the In2Uni program is developing, fostering and sustaining mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders and based upon our findings the following recommendations are provided:

Recommendations

1. **Individual school and cohort data.** Both schools and In2Uni would benefit from being able to identify if/how In2Uni is impacting on students and cohort groups within individual schools. At the present time, quantitative data being collected for Quality Assurance purposes is not collected or analysed at the school level, but rather focuses on satisfaction at the program level. Aggregated data about the

attitudes and knowledge of particular cohort groups, such as those in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* at Warrawong High School or *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Program* at Warilla High School, would allow the relevant staff to plan ongoing conversations and activities that complement the In2Uni programs.

2. Improved student data collection around ‘belonging’ and ‘partnership’.

Neither ‘belonging’ nor students’ perceptions of how they benefit from being ‘partners’ is adequately assessed by current student surveys. Where students are asked about their satisfaction, such as the question ‘I looked forward to attending In2Uni classes every week’ - strong wording (‘look forward to’) may contribute to findings that are somewhat inconsistent with the other data (Agree = 56.5%). It is additionally recommended that any new data collection instruments/items be clearly linked to program and In2Uni outcomes (e.g., the previous question might ask about a ‘sense of belonging’ in the program and/or at the university, rather than whether students ‘look forward to’ the workshops). Specific suggestions for modifying survey questions are include in Appendix F.

Four – Developing Awareness and Knowledge of Higher Education

Whilst awareness and knowledge of Higher Education are not themselves likely to unwind negative attitudes or address material barriers to Higher Education for young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds, they have been frequently noted as a key part of the ‘demystification’ of university (Hatt et al. 2007). Such demystification is thought to involve, for example, the development of knowledge about the ‘upfront’ financial costs of university in comparison to those that are deferred, understanding of the various pathways to university, awareness of the structure and learning modalities of university subjects and knowledge of student support services and/or individuals who can assist students within the university (Gofen 2009; Saenz et al. 2007). Hatt (2007, p.273) notes that ‘awareness of the range of Higher Education opportunities underpins decisions about whether or not it is a realistic option for young people’. In responding to this we posed the question: *‘Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful, appropriate and transferable awareness and knowledge about Higher Education?’*.

Positive Early Experiences

First Experiences of UOW

Positive experiences and the development of useful knowledge about university may be particularly important in the case of younger students and their parents/caregivers/community, as researchers have consistently argued that outreach programs must do better at connecting earlier and maintaining relationships (James 2002). There is a range of data that suggests In2Uni has been successful in this regard. For instance, 80.5% of In2Uni’s youngest participants, 11 and 12 year olds taking part in the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*, agreed that the university visit gave them a better understanding of university life (see Table 3). Parents were similarly positive about the knowledge developed through their visit to the university, indicating that their visit familiarised them with the university (Agree = 77.8%) and increased their understanding of university studies (Agree = 71.7%). They also agreed (66.9%) that the taster session gave them an idea of what it was like to study at university.

Table 3 – Positive Early Experiences of University

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
The university visit gave me a better understanding of university life (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	639	4.03	0.84	80.5
Parents				
The visit familiarised me with the university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	3.95	0.76	77.8
The visit increased my understanding of university studies (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	3.93	0.85	71.7
The taster session gave me an idea of what it is like to study at university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	1.63	0.74	66.9

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Improving First Experiences for Everybody

In the qualitative responses to the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*, both parents and teachers indicated high levels of satisfaction with the program. Consistent with this, their suggestions for improvement indicated their desire for more and broader application of current In2Uni programs. Teachers focused on 'broadening' the experience, specifically requesting more 'taster sessions' to "broaden their options", and for students to visit multiple faculties: "experience several faculties", "more faculty demonstrations". A number of parents also requested more faculty visits: "maybe let them try out a couple of faculties", "more access to different faculties". Parents also requested information about study options: "more discussion of possibilities for study", "more information about what the uni offers". Parents variously requested a map of the university to help with navigation, a timetable of events, and a full tour of the university. Somewhat contrary to the idea of the tour were some parents' concerns (5/262) about the amount of walking involved in the day and wrote: "Less walking" and "Too much walking back and forth, have itinerary". There were also a small number of parents (4/262) who questioned the need for parents to be involved in the day at all. Parents wrote comments such as: "No need for parents presence to be compulsory as I am familiar with UOW and I did not gain anything", "Is it necessary that parents come?" and "More lessons for students, less need for parents to attend. Hard to get time off work". Other parents (4/262) focused more on improving the activities for parents, with comments such as "... there was little parent involvement". Whilst one requested that parents and students spend more time together during the day: "Putting parents with students throughout the day".

Understanding and Planning For Higher Education

Understanding aspects of Higher Education, such as what it means to be a student at university and what needs to be achieved at high school in order to enter university, are likely to be an important part of preparing students for post-school study (Reay, David & Ball 2005). Students across numerous In2Uni programs perceived that their understanding of Higher Education was improved through workshop participation. They were, however, largely neutral as to whether the awareness and understanding gained from the workshops had improved their self-perceived capacity to plan for Higher Education and a future career.

Familiarity with Higher Education and UOW

Looking first at improving knowledge, students taking part in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* agreed (65.7%) that participating in the In2Uni program had given them a better understanding of Higher Education (see Table 4). Similarly, students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* agreed that their visit to university gave them a better understanding of university life (Agree = 79%), as did students in the *Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day* (Agree = 81%). The latter students also agreed that the visit made it easier to imagine themselves at university (Agree = 78.2%). Teachers who visited as part of *Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day* program shared students' positive impression of the visit, strongly agreeing that the visit helped familiarise students with the university (Agree = 100%). When asked what they hoped to achieve by participating in an In2Uni program, 34% of the 152 students who participated in the 2012 *Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day* and 24% of the 1148 students taking part in the 2012 *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* indicated that improved understanding of university was their major goal in relation to program involvement.

Table 4 – Understanding Higher Education

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
Participating in the program has given me a better understanding of Higher Education (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.73	0.90	65.7
Participating in the program has given me a better understanding of Higher Education (Yr 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.85	0.92	79.0
Participating in the program has given me a better understanding of Higher Education (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	262	4.09	0.82	81.0
The visit made it easier to imagine myself at uni (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	262	4.04	0.86	78.2
Teachers				
The visit helped familiarise students with the uni (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	14	4.50	0.52	100.0

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Career Planning

In contrast to the strongly positive responses in regards to increased knowledge, student responses across workshops were mixed when asked whether the In2Uni programs contributed to improved capacity to career plan. Whilst students in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Mentoring Program* agreed (53.3%; see Table 5) that they were more familiar with the steps needed to achieve their career goals, they were generally less positive about whether they had learnt things about their future career options that they would not have learned without In2Uni (Agree = 47.6%). In the *Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day*, students agreed that the visit gave them information to think about their future (Agree = 77.8%), whilst students in the *Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshop* showed less agreement (Agree = 57.7%) and that after the workshop they were more familiar with the steps needed to achieve their career goals. Students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* agreed that the classes were useful in exploring what they would like to do after high school (Agree = 60.9%) and showed stronger agreement when asked if the In2Uni mentoring had helped them understand the steps needed to achieve their career goals (Agree = 67.1%).

Table 5 – Planning for Higher Education

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
I am more familiar with the steps I need to take to achieve my career goals (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.51	0.88	53.3
I have gained knowledge about my future career options that I would not have known without participating in In2Uni (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.36	0.82	47.6
The visit gave me information to think about my future (Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day)	262	4.09	0.87	77.8
After completing the workshop I am more familiar with the steps I need to take to achieve my career goals (Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshops)	261	3.63	0.82	57.8
I find In2Uni classes useful in exploring what I would like to do when I finish high school (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.44	0.88	60.9
The In2Uni Mentoring has helped me understand the steps I need to take to achieve my career goals (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.66	0.77	67.1
Participating in the program has given me a better understanding of Higher Education (Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day)	262	4.09	0.82	81.0
Participating in the program has given me a better understanding of Higher Education (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.85	0.92	79.0
The visit made it easier to imagine myself at university (Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day)	262	4.04	0.86	78.2
Teachers				
The visit helped familiarise students with the uni (Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day)	14	4.50	0.52	100.0

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Promoting Discussion About Higher Education

Ensuring students are supported by those around them in regards to their development of knowledge of Higher Education is an important part of connecting young people with university pathways – particularly for first-in-family students (Saenz et al. 2007). Both parents and teachers who visited the university as part of the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni* activities indicated that the event had provided an impetus to discuss future education possibilities with young people. Specifically, 82.4% of parents agreed that the university visit had encouraged them to further discuss career options with their child (see Table 6). In addition, 92.7% of participating teachers agreed that the university visit encouraged them to discuss career options

with their students. Teachers who visited as part of the *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day* responded similarly, with 92.9% agreeing that the visit had encouraged them to discuss career options with their students.

Table 6 – Promoting Discussion About Higher Education

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Parents				
This university visit has encouraged me to further discuss future education possibilities with my child (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	4.07	0.76	82.4
Teachers				
This university visit has encouraged me to further discuss future education possibilities with my students (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	41	4.27	0.59	92.7
This university visit has encouraged me to further discuss future education possibilities with my students (Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day)	14	4.14	0.54	92.9

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

The focus of this chapter was the question: '*Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful, appropriate and transferable awareness and knowledge about Higher Education?*'. Developing awareness and knowledge of Higher Education is an essential component of outreach programs geared towards increasing the participation of underserved groups (Saenz et al. 2007). In regards to this we found:

- young people surveyed across programs such as the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*, *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* and *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day*, indicated strongly that through involvement in the program they had developed better understandings and knowledge of Higher Education and university, including university life and what it is like to study at university;
- feedback from participating parents/caregivers/community and teachers in relation to young people's knowledge and understanding was highly supportive. Given these uniformly positive reactions, young people's neutral or mildly positive reactions to questions related to whether this knowledge increased their ability to plan for a career stands out all the more clearly as an

area for further attention within In2Uni programs, at school and in data collection;

- teachers and parents/caregivers/community asked that In2Uni expand the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni* activities, specifically suggesting broadening ‘faculty taster’ opportunities to encompass more areas of study. Parents/caregivers/community added a range of further suggestions including the distribution of maps and itineraries, improved activities for parents/caregivers/community and consideration of the amount of walking involved in the day; and that
- both parents/caregivers/community and teachers’ engagement with the university via In2Uni has led to transferable knowledge related to Higher Education as evidenced by data in Table 5.

The data indicates that parents/caregivers/community and local school communities are developing positive attitudes and intentions regarding awareness and knowledge of Higher Education, however, data is not currently available which would enable us to evaluate whether this is being transferred into practice. Based on the literature there is some evidence that as knowledge increases, conversations about Higher Education aspirations are more likely to happen (Saenz 2007), but data collection needs to be improved in this area. This recommendation and others are detailed below:

Recommendations

1. **Review career planning aspects of programs and surveys.** Given the highly positive assessment of In2Uni’s ability to deliver improved knowledge and understanding of Higher Education, the next step seems to be to work with schools to consider how this knowledge transfers to career planning – particularly for students at the secondary school level. Given the individualised nature of such conversations, In2Uni might consider how its programs can address more general planning steps and how it might help schools plan for more specialised conversations with students. In2Uni informed the evaluation team that they recognised this at the end of 2013 and in 2014 implemented the *Year 10 Future Finder Workshops* and *Year 12 Road to Success Workshops*.
2. **Expand student opportunities to visit and experience faculties as part of the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*.** Broadening younger students’ experience of university programs may be beneficial in both the demystification of university

and also in terms of aspiration building. Though the logistical challenges are considerable, given the volume of students and size of the university, parents/caregivers/community and teachers surveyed here have given In2Uni a strong mandate to work towards this goal. In2Uni have indicated that from 2014 onwards UOW Faculties have committed to delivering multiple taster sessions so that students can experience a variety of disciplines.

3. **Consider providing more explicit information for parents/caregivers/community regarding the expectations and goals for their visit as part of the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*.** Research has indicated that not having a significant 'other' in the family or community who can provide 'insider knowledge' about university is a major obstacle to university participation, but equally, family members may be unaware of how best to support those who wish to attend university (O'Shea in press). Programs such as In2Uni have a role to play in explicitly explaining how communities and families can assist in building educational capability and social capital amongst university attendees. Feedback from the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* suggests that In2Uni could improve engagement of parents/caregivers/community, starting by ensuring that they understand why it is important for them to visit the university and how they can support their children. In2Uni indicated they have taken steps towards this in 2014 by appointing a 'Parents Coordinator' and developing specific workshops and newsletters for parents/caregivers/community.
4. **Elaborate and expand the data collection gauging students' experiences and attitudes** Much of the In2Uni data which is related to knowledge and awareness of Higher Education is collected solely through post-workshop/experience surveys, which makes it difficult to evaluate improvement and attribution. Similarly, the lack of qualitative data means it is difficult to understand how or why programs are working. We recommend In2Uni adopt the strategic use of focus group or paired interviews with student participants (and their family members) to collect qualitative data after program implementation.
5. **Improve data collection and build sustained relationships with parents/caregivers/community and teachers through follow-up surveys and visits.** Consistent with recommendations from key strategic reviews, In2Uni is actively and successfully engaging with students as young as 11 and 12 years old (Gale 2010). Just as importantly, the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* sees parents/caregivers/community members visiting the university and developing important awareness and knowledge of Higher Education (Gale 2010), however,

there is currently little follow-up with parents/caregivers/community until Year 12, when some may return for a small portion of the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes*. We recommend In2Uni consider integrating a formal parent visit into the *Year 9 and 10 UNlque Experience Day* in order to sustain and enrich the relationship they began in Year 6. We also suggest a six month follow-up survey, to gauge the degree to which knowledge and awareness is transferring into conversations and career planning. As an incentive for parents/caregivers/community to participate, we suggest a 'response rate prize' be awarded to the school with the highest parent response rate (one primary school and one high school).

6. **Ensure Quality Assurance data matches overall In2Uni program aims and specific workshop goals.** It is important that survey questions match the aims and goals of the workshop/experience that students are participating in. We suggest In2Uni review the instruments they are using and ensure that the questions they are asking are relevant within the context of the specific workshop/experience in which they are being asked. Towards this end we have provided written advice (see Appendix F) and met with In2Uni staff to provide suggestions for 2015 data collection.

Five – Community Response to Higher Education

Engaging the broader community that informs and supports students is argued to be an important strategy for outreach programs as they attempt to increase the enrolment of individual students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Scull & Cuthill 2010). This chapter focuses on the question: *'Is a positive community response to Higher Education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?'*. Harvey-Beavis and Robinson (2000) assert that lack of appropriate support networks within families, schools, peers and the community are important factors in the low rates of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds enrolling in Higher Education. Others suggest that Higher Education is not part of the 'cultural world-view' of many young people (Scull & Cuthill 2010, p.161), in part because the individuals that comprise their social networks are themselves not familiar with, or cognisant of, tertiary education. Here we consider data that addresses the ability of In2Uni to engage and produce a response in the broader community, by presenting case studies of two high schools that have been part of In2Uni programs: Warilla High School and Warrawong High School. In each case study we begin by drawing on demographic data available via the *MySchool* website to provide contextual details regarding the school and its students. We then present data gathered via interviews with key staff from the school, which is presented in the form of a narrative, focusing on the key themes to arise from interviews and which speak to In2Uni's ability to incite a positive response in the school community.

About ICSEA

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was created by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to enable comparison between schools in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). ICSEA attempts to numerically represent the degree of educational advantage or disadvantage by taking into account family background factors (such as parent occupation) and school-level factors (such as geographical location). A score of 1000 is the mid-point, whilst scores below this represent degree of disadvantage and scores above represent the degree of advantage. For more information about ICSEA see the QR code above.



Case Study: Warilla High School

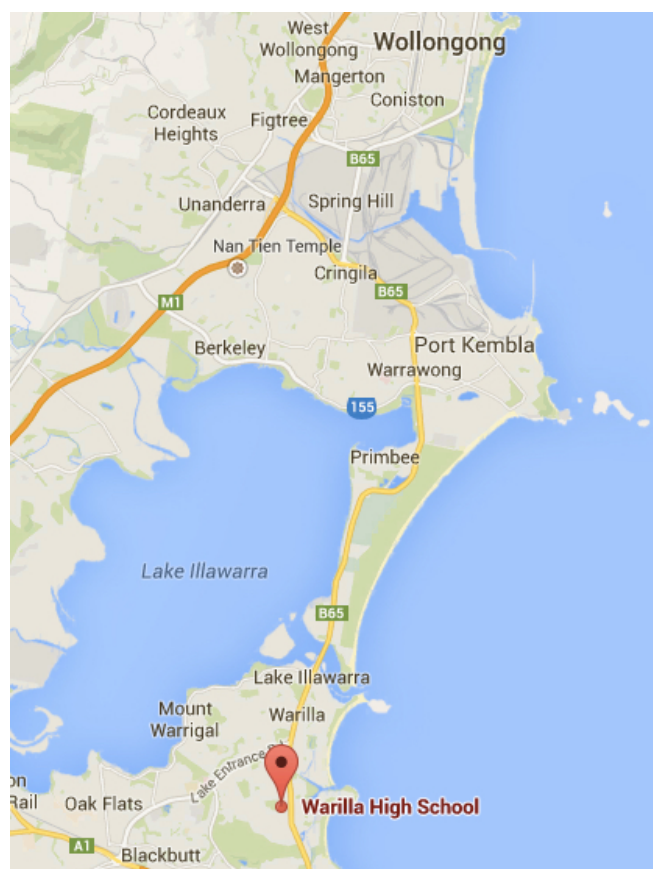
Background

Warilla High School is located in the suburb of Barrack Heights, 25 minutes south of the University of Wollongong. An ICSEA value of 957 suggests that Warilla High School experiences moderate levels of disadvantage, as measured by factors including parent occupation and educational levels; and school level factors such as geographic location and number of Indigenous students enrolled.

In 2011, the first year of the In2Uni program, Warilla High School did not meet the entrance criteria used by UOW to decide which schools would be eligible to participate. Then Head Teacher-Welfare, and now Deputy Principal, Michael Stanizzo heard about the program and set about making sure his school would become a partner school: “we couldn’t understand how our school, with our low socio-economic background didn’t qualify ... so we immediately began lobbying and full credit to the uni, we were in for 2012”. Since 2012, Warilla High School has participated in the full suite of In2Uni programs with school staff noting that teachers have been active in providing feedback designed to improve programs.

School Snapshot (MySchool 2014)

2013 Total Enrolments:	1143
School ICSEA Value:	957
Indigenous Students:	7%
LBOTE:	14%
Years Participating in In2Uni:	2012-2014



A Sustained Relationship

"The In2Uni program has rescued our school ... it's the first thing our Principal often mentions at parent information evenings, I'm constantly talking about it at year meetings and welfare meetings and so on ... we fly out flag with this In2Uni program because I haven't seen a better program in schools. A lot of programs pay lip service, but this delivers".

Michael Stanizzo, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School

Staff at Warilla High School spoke of their emphatic support for the In2Uni program, noting the positive impact it has had on their relationship with the university, with the community and for their students. Principal John Hambly spoke of the In2Uni program, complementing Warilla High's focus on "every kid ... being capable of excellence", particularly with regards to the ability of the program to "articulate pathways that benefit kids and contribute to the wider community". He described the relationship between the school and In2Uni as "proactive, engaged and sustained. It's one that we see as significant around the welfare practices of our kids". For current Head Teacher-Welfare, Glen Smart, the strength of the relationship has become a core feature of his promotion of the school. He commented:

"I live in the community ... I've got parents asking me about the school ... it's one of the first things I talk about. The pathways to university through the In2Uni program ... I can hand on heart say it's outstanding, why wouldn't you send your kids here?"

Glen Smart, Head Teacher-Welfare, Warilla High School

This sentiment was echoed by Deputy Principal Michael Stanizzo: "... this is one of the biggest selling points that we have: our relationship with the uni and the outcomes that it's delivering", and Deputy Principal Jenni Raison, who noted: "It's not a one-off, it's sustainable. The kids know we're committed to it and the community knows. Talking to parents we talk about this being a program that has delivered results". Mr Stanizzo further explained that the relationship between the school and In2Uni was particularly important because many of the parents in the area had not attended university and as such were largely unfamiliar with the academic focus and attainment required to gain entry. For him, In2Uni was assisting the school to build a reputation in the community for academic success that would rival what it already

had in areas like welfare and sport. According to Deputy Principal Jenni Raison, there were already examples of where In2Uni programs were helping the school move towards this goal:

“We’ve had students that may have previously bypassed us to go to selective schools ... and [now] the parents’ feedback is ... they understand that through Warilla High School and the University programs that we’re linked to there’ll be the pathway for their students to get where they want to go to”.

Jenni Raison, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School

According to Warilla High School teachers, the professionalism of the In2Uni staff was one of the most important factors in contributing to the productive and sustained relationship between the school and In2Uni. Kylie Austin, Shannon Archer and previous In2Uni manager, Tara Loty, were all praised by teachers - as were the In2Uni mentors. Teachers characterised senior In2Uni staff as approachable, well organised and highly receptive to requests, feedback and ideas. They were also praised for what teachers described as genuine interest and concern for the success of the programs and students:

“The programs are excellent, but the staff are outstanding. Kylie and Shannon are phenomenal ... their communication is outstanding. Their commitment ... it’s a genuine commitment, they genuinely want the best for the students and I’m sure they’re the same for all schools, but that’s what I’ve seen here”.

Glen Smart, Head Teacher-Welfare, Warilla High School

Knowledge and Aspirations

“The *Uni for Certain Program* has probably been a highlight for us ... we have kids going home and talking to their parents about university and what they might like to do because they’ve been into some faculties and had a taste and the parents are loving that, and we’re loving the fact that those conversations are happening in year 7”.

Glen Smart, Head Teacher-Welfare, Warilla High School

Staff at the school explained that their partnership with In2Uni had produced significant benefits for students in regards to i) knowledge and demystification of

Higher Education and ii) building university aspirations and confidence to undertake tertiary study. In regards to knowledge and demystification, Deputy Principal Michael Stanizzo explained that more than a third of the 1,200 students currently at the school now had some experience of the university - a number that he noted was significant because “[many of] the kids didn’t realise that they can visit the uni whenever they like. It was kind of taboo. Those barriers have been broken down through this process ... it’s certainly demystified uni”. The exposure to, and knowledge of, university has also helped encourage conversations about Higher Education and is building a culture of planning for Higher Education, as illustrated in the following quote: “I’m promoting some of the Learning Labs for (Years) 7 to 10 to kids and they’re keen to do it because they can see it’s that progression, it’s that exposure, it’s building the case for that early entry. So they can see the benefit” (Glen Smart, Head Teacher-Welfare, Warilla High School).



Outcomes

According to the teachers, the In2Uni program has contributed to substantial improvements in student attainment outcomes regarding university entry. Deputy Principal Michael Stanizzo quantified these improvements, noting “the second year I was here we had 10 kids go to uni. These last two years, we’ve had over 30 kids in through Early Entry and that’s largely due to this program”. For Deputy Principal

Jenni Raison, In2Uni was helping the school work towards greater equity for all students by improving access for underserved populations: “They’re going to be first in family to head to uni ... I can’t speak highly enough of In2Uni because it allows kids that would never have entertained uni to access it”. The impact of In2Uni in regards to making university attainable and eventually, a reality, for Warilla High School students was similarly summed up by Glen Smart: “These kids going to uni ... none of their family have been to uni, no one would have thought or been talking about uni for them ... it’s a phenomenal outcome”. The positive outcomes had also begun to touch other parts of the community, with Principal John Hambly recalling examples of two families where young people had been ‘first-in-family’ to enter Higher Education, only to have their parents follow suit as mature-aged entrants: “... so the kids are the pace-setters in terms of taking up that opportunity”. He also noted that the relationship with In2Uni is, in broad terms, fulfilling one of the schools most important functions:

“It goes to the heart of what schools are on about and that’s articulating pathways appropriate to student need and to the greater community good and I think that’s where it really sits with us”.

John Hambly, Principal, Warilla High School

The Future

“So if the program wasn’t funded at a Federal level – where are we? What do we do? How do we turn that around? They would be questions that we probably wouldn’t want to consider at this point”.

John Hambly, Principal, Warilla High School

The staff at Warilla High School had found the In2Uni staff approachable, receptive to feedback and highly organised. Specifically, teachers’ ideas for improvements to the programs focused on two more substantial areas. The first was for In2Uni to collaborate with schools to develop a 2 to 4 year ‘forward plan’. Though teachers recognised that budgeting uncertainties likely meant In2Uni was unable to look this far ahead, they offered a number of potential ‘up-sides’ including i) the ability for schools to ensure In2Uni units of work fit into the school’s scope and sequencing and thus minimise disruption and maximise impact and ii) improved opportunities for the school to complement In2Uni programs. Forward planning and mapping of programs

would allow the school to identify points where certain cohorts within the school would benefit from school-based efforts to improve their knowledge of, or planning for, university. Principal John Hambly also explained that the In2Uni programs had become so integrated within the school's student welfare strategies that there was some concern about the impact that any withdrawal of In2Uni funding would have on the school.

The second major suggestion offered by teachers was focused on In2Uni reinstating university-student mentors as the main teachers responsible for the delivery of the at-school programs, such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*. Deputy Principal Michael Stanizzo noted that recent changes to the organisation of these programs, resulting in In2Uni mentors teaching less, had made them more burdensome for his teachers and moreover, threatened to impact on one of the key functions of the program: building aspirations through the role-modeling provided by mentors close to the students' own age:

“... from my perspective, it doesn't have the same appeal to our kids if it's just their regular teacher. And I think there were some financial reasons for that, so it'd be good if the uni could take a look at that and put some more money into it to get it back to what it was”.

Michael Stanizzo, Deputy Principal, Warilla High School



Case Study: Warrawong High School

Background

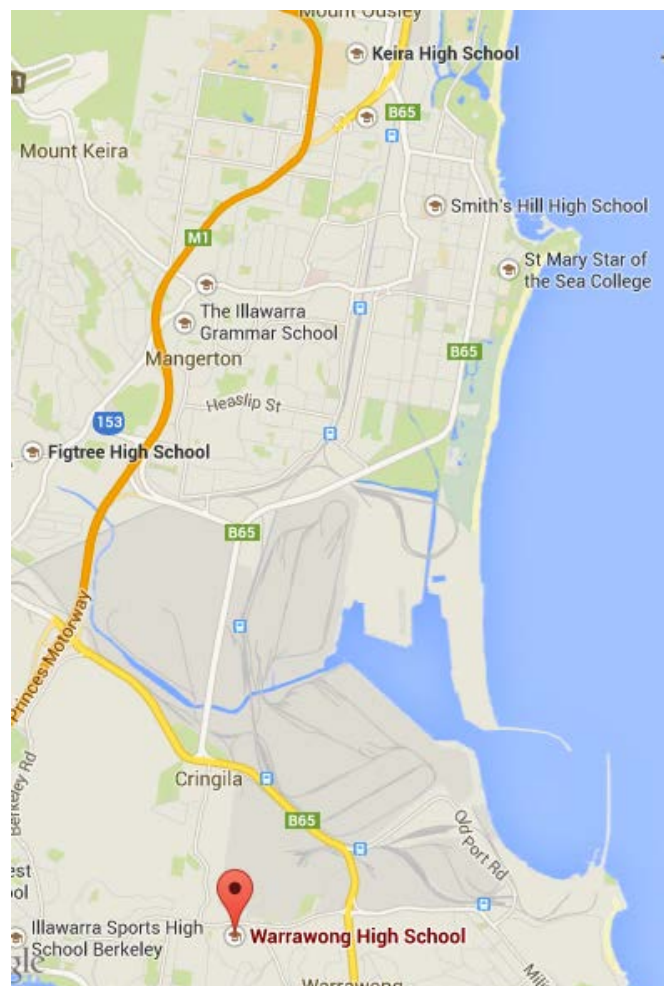
Warrawong High School is located in the suburb of Warrawong, 15 minutes south of the University of Wollongong. With an ICSEA value of 899 and 66% of students in the bottom quartile for 2013 (MySchool 2014), Warrawong High School is the most disadvantaged secondary school in the greater Illawarra. The Warrawong area (2502) was noted as one of the 40 most disadvantaged postcodes in Professor Tony Vinson's 'Dropping Off The Edge' report (Vinson 2007), suggesting that many students at the school are likely to be growing up in challenging situations and with limited experience of Higher Education.

Warrawong High School has been an In2Uni collaborator since the program's inaugural year in 2011, beginning with the *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day* and *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*, and adding the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* and *Year 12 Summer Master*

Classes as they were introduced. Careers Advisor, Brenda Coursey, summed up the school's high regard for the In2Uni program: "obviously we want the best for the students too and we see this as a wonderful opportunity for them to have that connection and to build their aspirations and their learning and their opportunities".

School Snapshot (MySchool 2014)

2013 Total Enrolments:	511
School ICSEA Value:	899
Indigenous Students:	8%
LBOTE:	56%
Years Participating in In2Uni:	2011-2014



A Sustained Relationship

Having been associated with the In2Uni program for each of its four years, Warrawong High School staff discussed how the relationship between the two had produced a range of benefits for the students, the school community and the university. The ongoing relationship between the university and the school was described by Head Teacher-Teaching and Learning, Sandra Horsley, as “rapport building”, with the ongoing collaboration building “strong bonds” and “building relationships ... [between the uni] and students”. This rapport benefits the university insofar as it “... provide(s) access to communities you wouldn’t have had access to. I think you’re now in a situation where you’re able to access a low socioeconomic group ... that you never would have had previously four years ago. I think that’s a step in the right direction.” (David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School). According to the teachers, further benefits accruing to the university via the relationship included reputation building for the university and high rates of local student retention: “Less than 1% would go elsewhere to other Universities because they see the access through UOW ... that’s part of the program” (Sandra Horsley, Head Teacher-Teaching and Learning, Warrawong High School).

As at Warilla High School, In2Uni mentors were provided as an example of the mutually beneficial nature of the school-university relationship. Staff noted that In2Uni mentors provide positive youth role models, which benefits school students; reflects positively on the university and its equity goals; and the mentors personally benefit from the experience of interacting with the public in a professional capacity: “Our students end up at UOW but then those students that went through the In2Uni program here at the high school become In2Uni mentors, then come [back] to this school” (Sandra Horsley, Head Teacher-Teaching and Learning, Warrawong High School). Importantly, staff at the school saw the ongoing nature of the relationship and particularly the positive student feedback as helping to aid students ‘buy in’ for other curricular and extra-curricular activities:

“I’ve seen the value in getting excursions or more contact with the University ... for example, I’ve taken a group of kids and we’ve gone to a chemistry lab over in the University which we never would have access to without the In2Uni program because we wouldn’t have had buy-in for the students to go ... It just plays on the imagination of a student and once you can play on their imagination ... and that expectation that they can get there, then they’re more inclined to do a program ... and I’ve found that the uptake of people going to those different events that I can organise has increased based on that program”.

David Boscoscuro, Science teacher, Warrawong High School

Knowledge and Aspirations

“... having that ability to access the mentors and tutors and In2Uni students and people there from the low socioeconomic area – that’s extremely important and ... I think if you lost that touch you’d lose a lot of the kids that have the ability to get in from this school”.

David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School

Teachers at Warrawong High School identified a range of important contributions that In2Uni programs had made in building knowledge and aspirations in students, particularly in regards to the influence ‘success stories’ had in portraying Higher Education as an obtainable goal. Teachers spoke of numerous students taking part in programs such as *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* and then returning to school to recommend it to friends and teachers: “... I think they see the value in it from past students doing it as well. So there’s been a lot of internal communication through past Year 12 students that have run the course. I know particularly we had a couple of students come back for a Science Day and they have spruiked the program as well” (David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School). Similarly, In2Uni mentors, particularly those who were alumni of the school, were said to have a strong effect in regards to inspiring students to consider Higher Education: “Kids see ‘oh so-and-so went to University. Oh yeah I could do that’” (Sandra Horsley, Head Teacher-Teaching and Learning, Warrawong High School). Having school students in direct contact with mentors was said to be highly important in getting strong student engagement in the programs, and for aspiration-building.

Teachers also identified visiting the university and, for more senior students, having a chance to learn and work the way university students do - as important processes in building students’ knowledge and aspirations with regard to Higher Education. Recent changes to the delivery of the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* saw it move from school-based delivery in 2013, to delivery at UOW in 2014. Teachers explained that whilst this change made it logistically more challenging for students, it had actually strengthened the impact of the program because students needed to be more motivated and self-sufficient in order to participate. Learning at the university, in a manner the same or very similar to the way university students do, was also said to be inspiring for students. Through programs such as the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes*, students were able to experience the challenge of working more

independently, in a less structured environment – a process which has also contributed to feeding aspiration as students received the positive reinforcement that comes with success in this mode of learning:

“... they discussed ... the program and how it wasn't unattainable for them to achieve even though it was at a University level. They discussed ... how they needed to work slightly different to a high school environment but really loved the actual challenge of self motivating which is – is a major thing for us to discuss that in schools and then not be able to deliver it because we're in such a structured environment”.

David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School

Student engagement was also bolstered by the opportunity to work independently in the school-based *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*.

“... the difference between them working in the classroom and being quite structured and these programs offering quite a lateral way of thinking for them ... student involvement and engagement was extremely high. I had kids in the hallway yelling out 'oh sir when do we have In2Uni next'? And they'd get in the classroom and even though they were only short periods [of] forty-five minutes on certain days - they'd come in straight away”.

Wesley Shaw, Visual Arts Teacher, Warrawong High School

Outcomes

Teachers noted significant positive outcomes resulting from the In2Uni program, particularly in areas such as Early Entry interviews and admission, but also entry into UOW College and further, in regards to retention and support of students in their initial year of university. The school's University admissions were described by teachers as generally improving each year with most students entering as 'first in family' enrollees: “... our numbers are increasing ... with the economic area that we're from and ... our students come from families where no one's gone to Uni. In some cases no one's finished high school. So, you know, these are big milestones for our school students” (Sandra Horsley, Head Teacher-Teaching and Learning, Warrawong High School). In the case of *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* students, teachers explained that all of the 2013/2014 attendees had been successful in gaining entry into UOW via the 2014 Early Admission process. One teacher also noted positive outcomes arising from the ongoing support that she perceived In2Uni students received upon entering university. The familiarity with people who could provide 'back up' in the event students had a problem was part of:

“... a support network ... a safety net for our students and ... she was very impressed with it ... felt well supported ... took some of that anxiety away from starting Uni ... It's sort of keeping them there”.

Amanda Andonovski, Assistant Careers Adviser, Warrawong High School

The Future

School staff spoke of their commitment to the In2Uni program, lauded the responsiveness and professionalism of In2Uni staff and noted that its evolution had so far been appropriate for their school and their students: “... a little tweak here and a little tweak there won't hurt the program as long as it still has that linkage with the University and allows access for the kids” (David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School). Teachers also commented that some aspects of the content and pedagogy in, for example, the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* required further refinement via consultation with teachers: “One of the things I found a little bit challenging was that quite a lot was packed into the program so ... I thought maybe closer consultation with Art teachers themselves ... just really trying to hone in on what the focus should be” (Wesley Shaw, Visual Arts Teacher, Warrawong High School). Teachers also noted that a small change such as moving the starting time for the university-delivered *University Preparation Program* classes from 1pm to 1.30pm would mean that students at Warrawong High School would miss one, rather than two periods – thus partially resolving a tension for some students who were concerned about missing classes each week. Nevertheless, overall the teachers felt the broader university-related outcomes were being met: “I still think the most powerful thing was the engagement because it's delivered from a University for a specialty and that was what the uptake was about, and if that was the aims and the objectives of it then I think it's reached that aims and objective” (David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School). The important role of mentors was emphasised, as it was at Warilla High School, with teachers clearly noting that the ongoing role of mentors in programs such as *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* is essential:

“I think that's the most important part of the program. You could give me the program and I deliver it and I wouldn't get the outcomes required to have the link to University. It would be another teacher delivered subject instead of a University linkage and if you want that outcome for our students, here particularly, you need to have that face-to-face value and the mentor”.

David Boscoscuro, Science Teacher, Warrawong High School

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

This chapter featured case studies of two schools through which we sought to answer the question: *'Is a positive community response to Higher Education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?'.* Engaging the community is a key aim of In2Uni. Literature suggests it may help to develop knowledge and interest in Higher Education in those individuals (parents, caregivers, relatives, teachers and school staff) that form support networks for young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Harvey-Beavis & Robinson 2000). This may in turn help to move Higher Education into the 'cultural world-view' of more young people (Scull & Cuthill 2010 p.161). In the case studies of two In2Uni high schools we found:

- In2Uni is developing sustained relationships with schools, teachers and students and positive feedback from those who have taken part in programs is being spread within the school community. In2Uni is also beginning to form a strategic alliance that schools can use to promote themselves within their communities;
- examples of In2Uni assisting students to improve their academic attainment and knowledge of Higher Education. Both Warilla High School and Warrawong High School teachers provided specific examples of first-in-family students, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students who were likely to drop out of high school, whom had secured places at university following successful experiences of In2Uni programs. Teachers saw that the university's improved potential to access these students and fulfill equity goals was a key benefit resulting from In2Uni;
- high levels of praise for key In2Uni staff, particularly in terms of their organisation, willingness to incorporate feedback and level of personal investment in program success;
- In2Uni mentors were noted for their important role modeling and for their potential to impact students' perceptions of the accessibility of Higher Education; and that
- teachers desired the forward planning that is possible if the university considers longer-term commitments to In2Uni, arguing that such planning could improve the school's ability to integrate In2Uni programs into their

curriculum and to complement In2Uni programs through more strategic school-based follow up.

It is evident from the two stakeholder case studies that In2Uni is forging productive relationships, as evidenced by their requests for further expansion of the program. In order to continue to build and extend these relationships we recommend:

Recommendations

1. **Explore options to expand forward planning of programs beyond twelve months.** Long term planning may improve schools' ability to integrate programs into their curriculum and to support In2Uni by complementing the program message with more strategic at-school follow-up. We recommend this initially be trialed on a small-scale basis to allow In2Uni to assess its potential.
2. **Reinstate In2Uni mentors as the main teachers in school-based curricula programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*.** Mentors were highly valued by schools, particularly for their ability to deliver important ideas about Higher Education to students who may not be as responsive to traditional authority figures such as teachers. Whilst we, like the teachers themselves, understand that the previous model of mentor-delivery was altered due to its expenses, we recommend In2Uni consider trialing alternative models for reinstating mentors in a major teaching capacity. In2Uni informs us that they have plans in place for 2015 that will address this recommendation.
3. **Closer consultation with teachers on the design of curricula offerings.** Whether mentors are the main instructors delivering a program (as noted above), or are co-delivering programs alongside teachers, pedagogical aspects of program delivery may be improved by more formalised consultation with teachers. In2Uni have invited twenty teachers to meet at the Wollongong campus in January 2015 and provide input via planning workshops. The teachers will be remunerated for their contributions and time.
4. **Develop a resource for teachers to use at schools that do not currently meet the criteria for entrance into the In2Uni program.** Whilst financial realities and agreements related to HEPPP funding mean that In2Uni cannot be directly involved with every school in the region, the development of an In2Uni Resource Kit may empower schools and teachers to actively discuss

Higher Education with more students. As teachers at the two case studies noted, such conversations are important for demystifying Higher Education and building aspirations and knowledge in school communities. In2Uni informs us that they have recently launched a new website that will serve as a resource for schools.

Six – Building Aspirations

‘Expectations, motivations and aspirations’ were noted as one of four major barriers in Gale’s (2010, p.5) review of improving Higher Education outcomes for students from low socioeconomic outcomes. In reviewing the literature from Australia, and indeed across OECD countries, Gale (2010, p.10) noted that ‘even if all the barriers of time, lack of proximity and academic achievement are removed’, many young people’s preconceived notion of further study is likely to restrict their ability to successfully access Higher Education. He also noted that ‘perceptions regarding the worth of Higher Education, and for whom it is best suited, play a large role in students’ choices to go on to further study’ (Gale 2010, p.10).

Parental education levels are ‘perhaps the most reliable predictor of educational aspirations of young people’, according to James (2002, p.xi), who notes that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds experience both actual barriers (such as cost and lack of knowledge), but they also ‘lack the various mechanisms of support and encouragement that might make going on to university seem relevant and attainable’ (2002, p.45). Aspirations are also said to be shaped by, and closely related to students’ perceptions of the availability and accessibility of Higher Education, with some arguing that students will adeptly read the conditions related to ‘supply and demand’ of university entry and ‘adjust their aspirations accordingly’ (Gale 2010, p.51). As such, part of building aspirations is about promoting Higher Education accessibility and ensuring students are confident in their ability to undertake Higher Education. Here we consider the question ‘*Are aspirations of low SES students toward Higher Education being built by the In2Uni program?*’.

Student Confidence to Attend University

Confident Students

Results from across a range of *In2Uni* strategies indicate students were confident that they would attend university in the future, however, it is unclear if/how *In2Uni* contributed to this confidence because of the wording of the survey question students responded to. 69.8% of the students involved in the *Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshop* agreed that they were confident they would attend university after high school (see Table 7). Similar results were found in the student surveys of both the *Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day*, with 74% agreeing, and

in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program* where 66.6% agreed. Given arguments that outreach programs have been too focused on students in the latter years of high school, at the expense of building aspirations in younger students (Gale 2010), it is promising to find that In2Uni's youngest participants shared similarly high aspirations to the older students. That is, 70% of students involved in the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* agreed that they were confident they would attend university after high school, with a similar number agreeing that after visiting the university it was easier for them to imagine themselves at university (Agree = 69.9%). Results were notably lower in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program*, with 50% of students agreeing they were confident they would attend university after finishing high school.

Table 7 – Student Confidence To Attend University

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
I am confident that I will attend university after I complete High School (Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshops)	261	4.00	1.04	69.8
I am confident that I will attend university after I complete High School (Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day)	262	4.12	0.96	74.0
I am confident that I will attend university after I complete High School (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	3.93	1.00	66.6
I am confident that I will attend university after I complete High School (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.60	1.13	50.0
The taster session gave me an idea of what it is like to study at university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	639	4.02	1.04	70.0
After visiting the uni, it is easy for me to imagine myself at University (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	639	3.91	0.99	69.9

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Building Confidence Through Summer Masters Classes

"... to be able to do a University subject in Year 12 was really like – I felt proud of myself and that was really hard for me – like that's not something I say very often. But I felt I got a really great mark and that and it made me think that 'I can do this'; 'I am smart enough to do University'".

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

Interviews with *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* students provided a range of qualitative evidence of students improving in confidence through their experiences in

the In2Uni program. Students spoke of their confidence being buoyed via the positive reinforcement that the In2Uni staff provided. One *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* student outlined the confidence she drew from In2Uni staff and the impact this had on her in regards to attainment aims:

“... when it came to like Year 11, that’s when I told you I started to pull my socks back up and I was like ‘I need help because my marks aren’t where they need to be right now’. And then I was – it was like that program was just sent to me, definitely changed my perception of my studies, encouraged me, motivated me. I spent most of my high school years being told I couldn’t study Law, which ... was really hard for me. But then with In2Uni everyone - no matter who it was, even if they didn’t know me it was like ‘No, you can do this. You will be able to do this’”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

Other students similarly drew confidence from the knowledge that they had successfully completed a first year university subject, whilst still in high school, and that this was an indication of their potential. This was illustrated by one student who said: “It felt like University was sort of more real like more attainable that I’d been there and I’d done it so I can come back and sort of do it again”. Another explained that her success in the *Year 12 Summer Master Class* fuelled her enthusiasm for university study and confidence to undertake it: “I hoped that I was going to go to Uni but I wouldn’t have had as much enthusiasm and as much confidence. Yeah it just made me a lot more confident that I could do it”. One student explained that her motivation was heightened and she felt a renewed sense of the purpose of study following her time in the *Year 12 Summer Master Class*: “The program made me more determined in Year 12 because ... then I knew I wanted to go to Uni so I had a purpose and I was driven to get a good mark and that to get in”.

In considering more closely how the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* built student confidence and motivation, student interviews suggest that experiences during the time on campus addressed issues causing anxiety or fear for them. These related to issues such as the size of the university and the difficulty in navigating it, feeling alone on campus, imagining teaching staff to be unapproachable, lack of self-confidence, and lack of familiarity with important facilities and services such as those in the library. Student quotes illustrating this are presented below:

“They basically – I had the perception that Uni would be by yourself, like all alone. It – but yeah it made me realise that you can – like you do have help if you need it and it’s very easy to find I think”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

"I suffer a bit of anxiety as well ... but it definitely made me more comfortable. So within those four days I knew where I was going, I knew what I had to do. Even just little things like going to the library and knowing how to use the printer and it just made everything so much easier when I actually got here".

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

"I think it tries to make students going from high school into Uni less scared or anxious about making that big shift because, you know, in high school when you graduate from high school you end 13 years of, you know - you have to get up in the morning; you have to put on your uniform; you go for six hours and then you come home. You know, with Uni you basically you have more flexibility about when you want to go, there's probably a bit more travel, you get to wear whenever you want ... more expectation ... instead of somebody trying to make you do all the work you have to set up your own discipline".

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

"I found Glenn Mitchell was really, really great and really approachable as well and that's something I didn't expect lecturers to be. I just thought they just sit up there and you were like really disconnected and he did his thing, you did yours. But no, he was really like – he came and sat with us in the library and went 'How are you going with your assignment' and he gave us help and kind of really believed in us".

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

Barriers to University

When questioned about a number of specific barriers, often cited in the literature as significantly impacting the aspirations of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, results indicated students tended not to perceive these barriers as unassailable. In regards to distance, students across five workshops were asked if they felt they would not attend university because of distance. In response, 86.8% of students involved in the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* were either neutral or disagreed with this statement, 93.8% were either neutral or disagreed in the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*, 85.9% were neutral or disagreed in the *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day*, 98.8% of students in the *Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshop* were neutral or disagreed and 94.5% disagreed that they wouldn't attend because of distance in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* (see Table 8). Across the same four workshops students largely disagreed that they would rather work than attend university, with students in the *Year 11 Leadership*

and Transition Program showing the strongest negative attitudes to this statement (Neutral or Disagree = 91.5%). Students in the other four programs showed similar, albeit somewhat less strong, responses. Specifically, 78.6% of students in the Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program were neutral or disagreed that they would rather work than attend university, while 82.9% of students in the Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program, 84.9% of students in the Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day and 82.4% were similarly neutral or in disagreement with this proposition in the Year 12 University Preparation Program.

Table 8 – Barriers To University

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Not Agree</i>
Students				
I am unlikely to attend university as it is too far from home (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	639	2.06	1.16	86.8
I am unlikely to attend university as it is too far from home (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	1.93	0.96	93.8
I am unlikely to attend university as it is too far from home (Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day)	262	2.02	1.23	85.9
I am unlikely to attend university as it is too far from home (Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshop)	261	1.61	0.74	98.8
I am unlikely to attend university as it is too far from home (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	1.84	0.93	94.5
I would rather work and earn money than attend uni (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	639	2.52	1.27	78.6
I would rather work and earn money than attend uni (Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program)	586	2.63	1.03	82.9
I would rather work and earn money than attend uni (Year 9 and 10 UNIQUE Experience Day)	262	2.45	1.10	84.9
I would rather work and earn money than attend uni (Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshop)	261	2.32	0.95	91.5
I would rather work and earn money than attend uni (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	2.59	1.13	82.4

Note. %Not Agree = 'neutral', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the associated statement.

Parent and Teacher Perceptions of Student Aspiration

Parents and teachers alike provided highly positive assessments of the impact of In2Uni programs on students' aspirations in relation to Higher Education. Parents visiting the university as part of the Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program agreed that the visit to university had the potential to encourage students and parents to consider

university (Agree = 90.4%; see Table 9). Moreover, 74.2% of those parents felt that their child's perceptions of university changed in a positive way after their visit to UOW. Teachers who attended the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program* alongside parents and students also strongly agreed that the university visit had the potential to encourage students to consider university (Agree = 100%), with a similarly high percentage agreeing that their students' perceptions of university had been changed in a positive way after their visit to UOW (Agree = 92.1%) and that the visit allowed students to imagine themselves at university (Agree = 85.4%). Teachers' strong assessment of the positive impact that In2Uni strategies were likely to have on students continued throughout the *Year 9-10 UNiQue Experience Day* data where 100% of teachers agreed that the visit had the potential to encourage students to consider university and that the visit allowed students to imagine themselves at university, while 84.6% agreed that students' perceptions of university were changed in a positive way.

Table 9 – Parent and Teacher Perceptions of Student Aspiration

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Parents				
This university visit has the potential to encourage students and parents to consider university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	4.23	0.66	90.4
My child's perceptions of university were changed in a positive way following our visit to UOW (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	262	3.87	0.78	74.2
Teachers				
This university visit has the potential to encourage students and parents to consider university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	41	4.56	0.50	100.0
The students perceptions of university were changed in a positive way (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	41	4.18	0.56	92.1
This visit has allowed students to imagine themselves at university (Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program)	41	4.20	0.68	85.4
This university visit has the potential to encourage students and parents to consider university (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	14	4.71	0.47	100.0
The students perceptions of university were changed in a positive way (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	14	4.08	0.64	84.6
This visit has allowed students to imagine themselves at university (Year 9 and 10 UNiQue Experience Day)	14	4.36	0.50	100.0

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

This chapter provided data in response to the question: '*Are aspirations of low SES students toward Higher Education being built by the In2Uni program?*'. Expectations, motivations and aspirations are important factors in influencing the take-up of Higher Education in students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Research has suggested that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds 'benefit from a greater likelihood of believing that university will result in desirable career outcomes, and from stronger perceptions of parental and teacher encouragement' (James 2002, p.46). The promotion of the accessibility of Higher Education is also important if students are to understand further study as a realistic and viable option for them. Through our evaluation activities we found:

- students across most In2Uni workshops/experiences were confident that they would attend university. Results showing that roughly 70% of students across a range of age groups were confident that they would attend university after high school, suggest that students have developed aspirations in relation to Higher Education. In its current form, the quantitative data does not allow us to report whether this confidence can be attributed to In2Uni. As such, data collection needs to be altered to better understand how and why students have these aspirations;
- interviews with students participating in the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes Program* indicated that the program was able to address specific anxieties, fears and concerns they held, and by doing so improved their perceptions of self-confidence and motivation. For some students these improvements were also said to sharpen focus and determination upon return to school for their final year.
- students strongly disagreed that distance from university and the desire to enter the workforce instead of university were barriers to entering Higher Education. Whilst distance has been often noted as a major barrier to entering Higher Education (Gale 2010), previous Australian work indicates that distance alone is not likely to be a significant barrier, but rather the barrier is realised as distance works together with factors such as socioeconomic status, rurality and indigeneity (Alloway & Dalley-Trim 2009; James 1999).

Given the available evidence, we believe In2Uni is fostering confidence and building aspirations in students. A key to this seems to lie in the program's ability to increase knowledge and address fears and anxieties, with qualitative data arguing that the product of which is university as a more familiar and inviting destination. In order to further improve in this area we recommend:

Recommendations

- 1. Incorporate 'building student confidence' into the In2Uni vision statement.** According to the vision statement, In2Uni aims to 'raise aspirations, awareness and attainment for individuals to Higher Education and employment from all backgrounds' (UOW 2014a). For many students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Higher Education remains a significant risk and a step outside of what is comfortable and familiar (James 2001). Lack of confidence in one's capacity to attain strong results at high school, or to meet academic demands at university, can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Formalising the work In2Uni already seems to be doing regarding building student confidence, by incorporating it into the vision statement, would help ensure this important area becomes a program focus and is well evaluated.
- 2. Review data collection around student aspirations and confidence regarding Higher Education.** Whilst data on student aspirations in relation to Higher Education are overwhelmingly positive, there is little in the current data collection to explain student perceptions. Targeted qualitative data collection could help explain, for example, why students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* were roughly 20% less likely to believe that they would attend university than students in the *Year 6 Kids In2Uni Program*, *Year 7 and 8 Academic Enrichment Program*, *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day* and *Year 11 Leadership and Transition Workshops*.
- 3. Review data collection around student perceptions of 'barriers' to Higher Education.** Current instruments require a range of changes to better assess student perceptions of barriers to Higher Education. Presently the only question that alludes to 'financial' barriers asks students whether they would rather work than study. We would argue that this presents work and study as if they are dichotomous, when research suggests that most university students are also 'workers' (Vickers et al. 2003). It also perhaps

misses the key financial issue identified in research with students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, which is, lack of knowledge of their right to defer the bulk of university costs until after they complete their degree and are earning above a certain threshold (James 2010). Likewise, whilst gauging student perceptions of the effect of distance are justified by previous research in the area, we suggest it needs to be complemented with questions about other barriers (academic attainment, upfront/deferred costs, time, fear and social class). Given the limited time that students have to complete surveys whilst visiting the university for events such as *Year 9 and 10 UNique Experience Day*, we recommend that barrier questions be asked in pre-event surveys. We suggest the following intervals between asking these questions: Year 6, *Year 9 and 10*, and then Year 12.

- 4. Formalise/expand components of programs that explicitly address student anxieties and concerns about university.** Feedback from the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* indicates the program successfully allayed many students' fears about the university and Higher Education more broadly. Similar work may be performed in other programs and perhaps before students reach Year 12, especially in relation to broader areas such as navigating the university, financial costs, the approachability of staff, or seeking support services.

Seven – Navigating Higher Education Pathways

Ensuring more disadvantaged students have access to Higher Education requires the provision of programs that effectively improve academic attainment at school and the creation of appropriately targeted pathways to transition students from school outreach programs to Higher Education (James 2002). In regards to programs aiming to improve academic attainment, literature from the USA has noted that the lack of rigorous internal data collection and evaluation has made the impact of programs of real-world outcomes difficult to ascertain. In reviewing the literature on early models of US-based outreach programs, Gullat and Jan (2003, p.2) noted that, 'very little is known about the actual impact of pre-collegiate academic development programs in increasing the number of students entering college, and even less is known about which specific program components are effectively assisting students to enter college'. In this chapter we argue that In2Uni attainment programs are improving student readiness for Higher Education and that In2Uni is ideally placed to start improving data collection in this area. This chapter also looks at Quality Assurance data and data from interviews with In2Uni students to consider the degree to which appropriate Higher Education pathways have been built and promoted – and whether students are able to access them. We then provide two detailed student vignettes that use students' own accounts to illustrate the pathways that they took to navigate through high school, into In2Uni programs and ultimately, into undergraduate programs at UOW. The evaluation question guiding the chapter is: '*Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education?*'.

Building Attainment and Utilising Pathways

Given the relative infancy of alternative entry programs for high school students, academic attainment remains vital for students wishing to enter university. Several In2Uni programs have aims which focus on improving student attainment in students nearing the completion of high school. Chief amongst these is the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* (UPP) and to a lesser degree, the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes*. Whilst improved attainment has an overall function of better preparing students for Higher Education, in the case of In2Uni, it also prepares them to better

connect with UOW's Early Entry scheme. The *Year 12 University Preparation Program* focuses on improving the performance of students who have been identified by schools as holding tertiary aspirations, but lacking the school performance to support these aspirations. At the completion of their program, 76.7% of students agreed (see Table 9) that that would be able to utilise the knowledge and skills learnt in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* when studying at home. There was similar agreement when asked if they found mentoring useful in assisting with study skills (Agree = 76.4%) and if they would be able to use skills gained through mentoring when they go to university (Agree = 76.1%).

Table 10 – Student Perceptions of UPP Impact on Attainment

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
I will utilise the skills and knowledge I have learnt during In2Uni classes when studying at home (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.97	0.91	76.7
I found mentoring useful in assisting with study skills (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.81	0.93	76.4
The skills that I have gained through In2Uni Mentoring I will be able to use when I go to university (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.92	0.86	76.1

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* also responded largely positively on a range of questions which related to knowledge and utilisation of pathways and services for transitioning from high school to university. Students agreed (67.1%; see Table 10) that the mentoring had helped them understand the steps needed to achieve their career goals but just as importantly, they were confident that if they did not achieve their desired ATAR, they would still find a way to achieve their career goals (Agree = 76.4%). They were slightly less confident of their awareness of the types of scholarships available to them (Agree = 64.8%) and of their ability to overcome any obstacles that might arise in their education journey (Agree = 66.2%). Items asking about students' knowledge of support services (Agree = 45.8%) and financial support (Agree = 52.8%) were met with more or less neutral responses from students, suggesting room for some improvement in this area. Likewise 46.0% of students agreed that they felt confident in applying for Early Admission to the University of Wollongong, again suggesting some scope for improved intervention by In2Uni.

Table 11 – UPP Student Perception of Transitioning to University

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>%Agree</i>
Students				
The In2Uni Mentoring has helped me understand the steps I need to take to achieve my career goals (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.66	0.77	67.1
I feel confident that if I don't achieve my desired ATAR that I will still find a way to achieve my career goals (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.99	0.99	76.4
I am aware of the types of scholarships that I can apply for when I start university (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.72	0.87	64.8
I am confident that if any obstacles arise in my education journey that I can overcome them (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.86	0.80	66.2
I feel confident that I understand how to access financial support once I come to university (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.54	0.90	52.8
I know of support services that are available once I start at university (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.36	1.00	45.8
I felt confident in applying for 'Early Admission' to the University of Wollongong (Year 12 University Preparation Program)	74	3.38	1.18	46.0

Note. %Agree = 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the associated statement.

Whilst the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* target a different audience, generally those whose grades are on-track for university entrance, they too contribute to improving student performance in the final year of schooling. Interviews with students who had participated in a *Year 12 Summer Master Class* provided a number of examples of how they perceived In2Uni as improving their academic attainment by covering areas such as developing study skills, improving essay writing, enhancing creative writing skills and augmenting public speaking ability:

“... it was focused on “Belonging” - the English program and they would just give us a skillset. They had HSC markers come in and talk to us which was so so – like a huge advantage for us ... they told us about skills and they gave us the tools to apply those skills to actually achieve those kind of really good marks. So the program was hugely beneficial to my studies but it was a lot more than that as you can see”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

“... even just essay writing – that just – the four days helped me and I could like write an essay within a day – like at high school. And it just gave me skills that I could actually use at high school and I became a lot more independent – like I didn’t have to rely on the teachers or other people”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

“One thing it really helped me with is public speaking. Like I’m more confident since I’ve done that program. I think that was probably the most nervous I’ve been for public speaking when I felt like I did well in it then everything else kind of flowed from there out of being more involved in public speaking and things like that. That was probably the main thing for me”.

Year 12 Summer Master Classes Student

In the remainder of the chapter we present two narratives that illustrate the pathways students took to Higher Education and the role the In2Uni program played. The cases draw on students’ own accounts of their lives, as provided through detailed interviews. The names of the students have been changed and certain key demographic details omitted in order to protect the confidentiality of the students involved.

Andrea’s Story

Background

So where do I begin ... well my family is Greek, they were born in Greece and came over here. My oldest brother works as a fitness instructor and my middle brother is doing University at the moment. And my parents, well my mum basically stays at home but she did used to make dresses and my father, he works at Steel Co (pseudonym). My uncles all work there and my great grandparents also worked there as well.

Both my parents left school early, Mum wanted to go to Uni and that – she tried to, she went back to high school but she wasn’t able to finish Year 12. My father didn’t finish Year 10 because he went straight into Steel Co. Dad doesn’t really like education very much because he’s always had a problem with it like I have to help him with spelling and everything. But my mother, because she’s always wanted to do uni I invited her to the uni and we actually went – we asked to get into a lecture and a tutorial and she got to participate for the first time.

Choosing University...

So my brothers and that like my parents always looked at me – because they're an older generation they thought *'You're just a woman. You're going to stay at home'*. But I always had dreams of going to uni however my mum believed that I wouldn't get there. She said that I wouldn't have enough motivation or education or the skills to get into uni. I heard this all through high school. Dad thinks that I should have still done like the normal girl thing – become a hairdresser or a cook or something – do some training work because he's done that his entire life.

Because of the negativity in my life I've always thought I couldn't go anywhere. And to have the In2Uni course help me get into uni it really changed me and changed my parent's point of views. I was in the top English class and my teacher believed that I could get into uni. That's why he gave me the In2Uni course to try out. He said my motivation; my skills and everything would go far in uni. My teacher offered it to the class and like of course I was going to my friends like *'Oh should we go in it?'*. But all my friends said no: *'I'm not going to waste something on the holidays'*. I'm like *'It's got to do with uni. I might as well take that leap'*. And I did.

It was a great opportunity. Like no matter what your circumstance. If you want to try to get into uni it's the best way to do it and to experience that sort of piece of the pie. In2Uni showed people what the uni had to offer. Like the sort of experience that you would never think of, like a lot of people at school just thought: *'Oh it's just going to be like high school. Everyone is just going to be at a desk and it's just going to be the same thing'*. But when you get into uni it's so different. You have so many choices and the thing about picking a field as well is so interesting because you're not like school any more – it's not like – it's all narrowed down.

Changes

I was getting a lot of rude behaviour from teachers. I had a lot of neglectful feelings but the In2Uni program really did open my eyes to what I would actually want to do.

That English teacher kept me going, saying like that program might lead to something else. He was like *'you can get there'* and he was like trying to help me out, trying to be positive and that. And like all the people that I met at the In2Uni program were trying to help me get in. A lot of these people were trying to make me positive thinking *'you deserve uni'* they were saying that because of my experience at high school. The neglect and the rude behaviour that some teachers were doing, it was

really pushing me down to not do as good as I could but like at uni you felt alive and that – you're meant to be there.

During Year 12, my marks were not great and my HSC trial results were not the best but then the In2Uni team called me up in Term 3 and started talking to me and said 'we want you at uni'. They started saying like what I needed to do and how I would get there. And they said apply for Early Entry and that and I said 'well my marks are completely really bad like I won't get in' but I was like I might as well do it. I just did it. I proved those teachers wrong. And it was just amazing feeling to have most of the HSC off my back to have everything off my back because I got the earliest offer out of anyone.

The people in In2Uni have taught me is get out there and do what you love and that's why now in my first semester I joined a student association and now I'm the executive and the content creator and I basically write about all the different things on the website. Also, I am the first girl to get into uni in my family and I want to show that women can get into uni. I'm going into a field where basically men have taken over. I'm in a group where I'm the first female to be a part of the group. I want to show everyone that women can push through and do things just like men do.

Joel's Story

Background

I was born in a regional town on the coast and moved here to attend a local high school. My dad, he came from a remote country town and he currently works in juvenile justice so he goes to court and basically takes people to their cells and things like that so he's involved a bit with that and he left in Year 11 at his school. Mum went through all the way to Year 12. She was born in Sydney but now she's not working at the moment, she's worked before. I have a brother – a younger brother - so I am the first in my family to come to university. I am in the first year of a Law degree.

Choosing university

At home, I think I was kind of expected to go to university like I think they knew that I wanted to go. But yeah so I was the first one in my immediate family to go to university. My parents and I discussed career options and then they sort of said to do this you need to go to uni and this is sort of what you need to do. Yeah a little bit of

that. I wanted to be a journalist and Mum was kind of talking about that and journalism and things and then I kind of swayed towards law and since my dad is kind of involved in the justice system he was more involved from that side.

University wasn't really discussed that much at school though, to be honest. Like I think we were just sort of – we weren't thinking that far into the future we were kind of just thinking about each year as it came or sort of junior school, senior school and university being separate sort of things. Yeah my friends - they just talked about jobs but they didn't really say like '*I want to go to uni to do this*' – they just kind of generally talked about work. I think university was first mentioned towards the end of Year 10, probably as I was choosing my subjects because some courses have prerequisites. It was around then that we started to talk about university in school, I think we got a subject selection night or something and we might have talked about it then. The careers advisor was pretty good. We also went to a careers expo in Year 10 and the University was there and I found out a bit more about it then. So Year 10 was when I started to sort of understand it a bit better.

I remember in Year 11 we talked about careers and different options and it was sort of like a Q and A thing and I remember them [In2Uni mentors] coming to our classes a bit and yeah – I remember a couple of them went to our school – like I recognised them as students and they asked who wanted to participate in In2Uni and so I signed up. The first sessions the mentors talked about what uni was like and people asking questions about uni lifestyle and they answered things about that – not too much not like how hard you have to work more just about how uni is like the lifestyle and uni culture I guess – it all sounded pretty cool.

Changes

I did the summer master class and that was good, we had different speakers coming in to talk about different things. I found the speakers interesting and how we sort of had something either to read or to look up before you went in there and we talked about it. I found it pretty good. Yeah it was pretty accurate in sort of the tutorial environment that we got – it's kind of like tutorials now. The classes also helped me with is public speaking. Like I'm more confident since I've done that program. I think that was probably the most nervous I've been for public speaking when I felt like I did well in it, then everything else kind of flowed from there out of being more involved in public speaking and things like that. That was probably the main thing for me.

I was also a bit surprised about the size of the university. I had only been there for a day in Year 10 and so coming back to do a two week master class was a very different experience. I didn't know there was so much, like it was almost like a mini town to me. I had just thought of it in terms of like education, you go there. But so many other things like cafes and different things – and clubs and all that sort of stuff was yeah – pretty exciting to me. Because I didn't really know the extent of it. Socially it was a good experience to mix with all these different people like from different cultures. I made some good friends and two of them are doing Law. And I met them through the program and also my mentors were good. Yeah I still occasionally see them they remember me and things which is good. Yeah because it shows that they care. So I found that good.

After I finished and I went back to school, it felt like university was sort of more real like more attainable. I'd been there and I'd done it so I could come back and sort of do it again. Yeah I didn't really change my approach to high school work but it felt like it was more real and that I could get there. So yeah, I knew more about university so it was good that way. Then I had my Early Entry interview and I was nervous, but I felt better prepared as well. I got through on Early Entry and I was very happy. I was really happy that I just got in and it like – obviously I still tried hard in my HSC but it was just good to know I was in.

Overall, In2Uni made me think like a hundred percent like *'I'm going to go to uni this is what I want to do'* – even though I already wanted to do it and it helped me sort of to understand that a bit better. It focused me, made me think *'okay this is what do I want to do'* and look up a bit more about the courses and things. Also, my family now knows more about university and I think it will help my brother when he goes – like he's planning to go at the moment. So yeah so if he goes here or to another uni he will have a bit more knowledge as well.

Chapter Summary: Findings and Recommendations

Findings

This chapter has been focused on the question: *'Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to Higher Education?'*. Improving student academic attainment at school and developing appropriate pathways to Higher Education are important steps in providing more equitable access for under-represented groups. Previous literature has noted that improving internal data on participants' real-world outcomes such as university applications, enrolments and completions – would

assist in evaluating how effectively outreach programs are meeting one of their key goals. Here we have drawn on available data and found:

- students in the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* and those in the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* cohort that we interviewed indicated that their participation had contributed skills and knowledge that may lead to improved academic attainment;
- positive indications that *Year 12 University Preparation Program* participants were aware of key aspects to assist them in transitioning from school to university, including knowledge of scholarships and alternatives to ATAR-based entry. Student responses also showed that the program had assisted them to better understand the steps involved in career planning;
- students' own accounts suggest that In2Uni played an important role in putting them on the path to Higher Education. In particular their stories note the impact of the *Year 12 Summer Master Classes* and later, UOW's Early Admission initiative in ensuring their ambitions were realised.

Despite the program's relative infancy, there is evidence suggesting that In2Uni students are developing skills and knowledge to aid them in successfully navigating pathways to Higher Education. In order to continue to produce and expand these outcomes we have outlined a number of recommendations below.

Recommendations

1. **Use individual student identification numbers/codes for In2Uni participants for the purposes of tracking changes in attitudes and opinions over the course of the program.** At the present time, In2Uni's capacity to analyse program effectiveness is hindered by the inability to track individual students over time. The introduction of identification numbers/codes which students use in all their interactions with In2Uni would allow for the analysis of how individual student responses change over time and for mapping against real-world outcomes such as university applications, workshop attendance and workshop completion.
2. **Improve data collection around real-world outcomes for participants.** Available data suggests In2Uni is helping students build the aspirations and attainment participants need to access Higher Education. Whilst Australian privacy legislation presents notable barriers, the collection of available data

related to participants' Higher Education applications, enrolments and completions would greatly assist in objectively evaluating whether the program is achieving one of its key goals. We suggest consulting with other organisations that use tracking for direction in this area.

3. **Target improvements in student knowledge of financial support, support services and Early Admission for the Year 12 University Preparation Program in 2015.** Survey data suggested particular weakness in these areas. Targeted intervention is recommended in order to ensure that this lack of knowledge/confidence does not depress aspirations or dissuade individuals from Higher Education pathways.
4. **Make explicit efforts to address students' fears and preconceived ideas of university as an alien environment.** Qualitative findings highlighted student fears related to the size of the university and feelings of being alone. Previous research (McMahon et al. 2014) has similarly noted the concerns students from under-presented backgrounds hold in relation to the university as alien, uninviting and not a place that would welcome people like them. Whilst qualitative data already suggests In2Uni is taking positive steps to demystify university, further explicit consideration of this area is recommended. For example, if pre-event surveys for *Year 6 Kids In2Uni* were issued to students with sufficient lead-time, In2Uni would be able identify specific fears and plan to address these when students visit a UOW campus.

Eight – Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

This chapter addresses the overarching question that framed this evaluation:

How does the In2Uni Program engage students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, their parents/caregivers/community, teachers and school communities with Higher Education? To what extent is engagement achieved and in what ways is this achieved?

The results of this evaluation of the In2Uni program indicate that this equity and social inclusion program is successfully accessing and engaging young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds across the south coast region of New South Wales. This large geographic area extends from Eden on the far south coast of NSW to Bellambi, just north of Wollongong City.

How Does the In2Uni Program Engage Students from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds, their Parents/Caregivers/Community, Teachers and School Communities?

In2Uni has established a diverse suite of programs that target students of various ages and at a range of educational levels. These programs are inclusive of engagement with parents/caregivers/community and families with activities that incorporate visits to university campuses. Importantly, In2Uni has demonstrated a strategic and proactive approach to seeking out collaborative working relationships with a range of stakeholders including teachers, principals, community members and policy makers. As the case studies in this evaluation report demonstrate, these relationships are particularly valued by members of the school community and in2Uni should be recognised and commended for working so closely with schools in the region. It is evident that these relationships are pivotal to the success of the In2Uni program in engaging students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

To What Extent is Engagement Achieved?

This evaluation has documented a number of findings that show the extent of this engagement. In summary, in 2013 (the most recent year of data used for the purpose of this evaluation) 3,642 students, from 2,653 in 2011, were involved in the In2Uni program. This number of students is taken from across the South Coast area and in 2013, this included individual activities with approximately sixty schools (both high school and primary school). In2Uni engages an iterative cycle of activities (see Figure 2) that provides repeated opportunities for this engagement.

The figures attest to the number of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds who have the opportunity to engage in In2Uni programs, although the figures alone do not reveal the depth of that engagement. Our analysis of data for the question, *'Are parents/caregivers/community and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful/ appropriate/transferable awareness and knowledge about Higher Education?'* (Chapter Four) suggests the suite of programs that are provided by In2Uni are making positive contributions. Here we have noted that In2Uni has developed a series of workshops and experiences ranging from Year 6 to Year 12. In2Uni has built sustained relationships with partner schools and an engagement model that sees students connected to In2Uni activities throughout their schooling. Data reviewed in this evaluation shows In2Uni is fulfilling important program goals related to partnership with schools and students.

In What Ways is Engagement Achieved?

Engagement is achieved by In2Uni through the use of what could be described as a 'diversity of programs' strategy. We note that this range of programs enables In2Uni to cater to a number of students at multiple entry points. For example, primary school-aged students are able to participate in these access programs, as are high school students at a number of points in their high school careers. This diversity of programs means that students can be engaged appropriately, depending on need. Chapter One provides a summary overview of the range of programs provided by In2Uni and highlights how this program adopts a 'stepped approach' to engaging young people with Higher Education. This is in itself noteworthy as each of the programs is characterised by increased exposure to the university environment matched to the year level of the student. As participants move through their school career so too do the range, type and depth of exposure to the university environment also increase.

Updates from 2014

During this evaluation, conducted between March-November 2014, new data on In2Uni has become available. Due to the parameters of our evaluation (which focused on data obtained up to 2013), this data has not been described in the preceding chapters.

The 2014 University Preparation Program

At the beginning of 2014, 268 students were chosen from across schools in the Illawarra South East Region to participate in the *University Participation Program* (UPP). The students were chosen as they had high university aspirations, but as at the end of Year 11 were not on track to receive the results to gain university entry.

During the 2014 academic year, UOW students and staff have worked with these 268 students, providing tutoring on a weekly basis in the subject areas in which they were struggling. Importantly, this included mentoring and transition support towards Higher Education. The In2Uni high school students who completed the *UPP* were guaranteed an interview at the Early Admission to university event, held toward the end of each academic year at UOW. The interview process is competitive, with all applicants required to submit an application and present to an interview conducted by academic members of the appropriate School/Faculty of the applicant (for example, School of Education academics interviewed applicants to their school).

In2Uni has reported that:

92.9% of students who completed the UPP and received a guaranteed interview for Early Admission, successfully received a place at UOW through Early Admission.

These 2014 outcomes are indicative of the ‘engagement effect’ that In2Uni programs can have – where students that may have ‘slipped through the education opportunity net’ are recognised and supported to engage in educational opportunities in Higher Education.

A Word on our Data Sources

Our findings are somewhat restricted by the amount and type of data available. For example, it is not possible for us to report on the outcomes of In2Uni in terms of the

number of university places that have been secured by participants, or if this may have had flow-on positive effects for family members, such as encouraging parent/caregiver participation in further education. We acknowledge that in developing and delivering an effective educational inclusion program, it can be challenging to put in place program design and delivery, as well as data collection and evaluation mechanisms. Given the now strong position of In2Uni we have made a number of recommendations concerning data collection (see the recommendations below).

The recommendations provided by this evaluation fall into five key areas:

- 1. Information about In2Uni**
- 2. In2Uni Programs and Activities**
- 3. Work with Parents/Caregivers/Community**
- 4. Work with Schools**
- 5. Data Collection (Quality Assurance Processes)**

Recommendations

A summary of the recommendations made in each of the chapters is provided below. This summary has been organised into the respective areas.

1. Information about In2Uni

- Clarify workshop and experience day nomenclature and provide visual representation of the progression of In2Uni workshops/experiences.
- Consider the use of a Geo-coded map of schools participating in the In2Uni program.

2. In2Uni Programs and Activities

- Review career planning aspects of the programs.
- Expand student opportunities to visit and experience faculties as part of *Year 6 Engagement Day*.

- Formalise and/or expand components of programs that explicitly address student anxieties and concerns about university.
- Target improvements in student knowledge of financial support, support services and Early Admission for the *Year 12 University Preparation Program* in 2015.
- Make explicit efforts to address students' fears and preconceived ideas of university as an alien environment.

3. Work with Parents/Caregivers/Community

- Consider providing more explicit information for parents/caregivers/community regarding the expectations and goals for their visit as part of *Year 6 Engagement Day*. Parent/caregiver/community members should also be more involved in activities during their visit.

4. Work with Schools

- Explore options to expand forward planning of programs beyond twelve months.
- Reinstate In2Uni mentors as the main teachers in school-based curricula programs such as the *Year 7 and 8 Academic Mentoring Experience*.
- Develop closer consultation with teachers on the design of curricula offerings.
- Develop a resource for teachers to use at schools that do not currently meet the criteria for entrance into the In2Uni program.

5. Data Collection (Quality Assurance Processes)

We recommend reviewing In2Uni data collection/Quality Assurance processes in order to better collect the range and depth of data required to accurately portray the outcomes of In2Uni programs. This includes:

- Individual school and cohort data.
- Improved student data collection regarding 'belonging' and 'partnership'.
- Elaborate and expand the data collection gauging students' experiences and attitudes both before and after workshops/programs.

- Ensure Quality Assurance data matches overall In2Uni program aims and specific workshop goals.
- Review data collection regarding student aspirations of Higher Education and outcomes.
- Review data collection around student perceptions of 'barriers' to Higher Education.
- Provide In2Uni participants with individual student identification numbers/codes for tracking over time.

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Ten - Appendices

Appendix A – In2Uni Evaluation Proposal

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) Application Form 2014

Project - Working Title	Evaluation of In2Uni
Project Contact	Valerie Harwood & Sarah O'Shea
Contact Telephone	4221 5618
Organisational Unit(s) involved in project	Associate Professor Valerie Harwood, Dr Sarah O'Shea, Dr Steven Howard, Dr Ken Cliff Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wollongong
Brief description of Project	<p>The project will draw on existing and new data sets in order to evaluate the In2Uni initiative at University of Wollongong. Developed in 2011, the program represents a collective response to a number of government policies including the Bradley Review, COAG agreements such as low socio-economic schools as communities and also, low SES national partnerships to increase the percentages of students participating in higher education. The proposed project will measure the impact of this program over the last three years and also, engage in data collection during 2014.</p> <p>The project will complete the following tasks: - Collate the various data sources collected on the In2Uni data from 2011-2013. - Merge quantitative data and conduct various comparative analyses of data for example - across years and age groups - Thematically code qualitative data collected via surveys and focus group interviews from 2011-2014 - Conduct observations and interviews of the program in 2014 - Investigate the educational futures of former In2Uni participants who have moved into the higher education environment - Write up findings in a report for the relevant In2Uni stakeholders</p>

Project outcomes for evaluation	1. Evaluate the In2Uni program for its outcomes in engaging and building aspirations of LSES communities towards Higher Education
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Which UOW Social Inclusion Principles and Priorities are addressed by this project?	Principle 1: Socially Responsible in Partnership; Principle 4: Evidence-based, Sustainable and Proactive
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How will this project benefit LSES students at UOW?	<p>This project will evaluate the In2Uni Low Socio Economic Status Outreach program operated by the University of Wollongong (UOW). This will be the first in-depth evaluation research conducted on In2Uni. In2Uni is a unique partnership between UOW, the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) and the Catholic Education Office (CEO). The program has been operating for three years, with 3642 students accessed in the 2013 school year. The project will directly benefit LSES students by enabling UOW In2Uni and partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * identify successes and strengths of the In2Uni Program * analyse the strategies and processes that contribute to In2Uni successes * Identify and analyse any areas of improvement * Provide expert feedback and recommendations on the In2Uni program and on the evaluation and reporting frameworks used by In2Uni.
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Budget Breakdown	See attached.
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Associate Dean (Education), Executive Dean or Unit Manager	<p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Faculty/Unit Name - Click here to enter text.</p> <p>Date: ____/____/____</p>
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Email completed application form in PDF format to Anne Snowball, annem@uow.edu.au by 28/02/2014

Appendix B – List of Schools involved in In2Uni in 2013

Low SES Schools Outreach (In2Uni) Evaluation Framework - 2014

Project: In2Uni Program					
Aim: The In2Uni Program aims to engage students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, their parents, teachers and school communities with higher education. The In2Uni Program aims to build and foster positive relationships with all key stakeholders to encourage a positive community response to higher education.					
Objectives: The In2Uni Program aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholdersBuild aspirations of low SES students toward higher educationBuild capacity to successfully navigate pathways to higher educationStrengthen relationships with parents and local school communities to build an awareness and knowledge about higher education					
Outcome Measure: UOW Social Inclusion Scorecard: Level of student engagement with activities and positive community response.					
Methodology: The data collection and evaluation of the In2Uni Program will be underpinned by a mixed methods approach to program evaluation, with the data collection tools being informed by current social inclusion literature. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantitative data will detail the number of students who engaged with specific activities offered by the In2Uni Program each year. The data will reflect engagement by school, gender, sociocultural demographic (first in family, indigenous).Qualitative data will detail feedback provided by students, parents and teachers regarding their quality of engagement with the In2Uni Program.					
Data Collection: The data that will be collected will be specific to the activities that the In2Uni Program offers to school students, their parents and teachers.					
Activity	Audience	Purpose	Quantitative Data Process	Qualitative Data Process	Outcome
Kids In2Uni	Primary School Students Parents Teachers	To build positive connections with Higher Education	No. of students, parents and teachers who attended each event (in total and broken down by school).	Completion of a post 'event' qualitative survey to glean student, parent and teacher responses to the event (i.e. favourite activity, improvements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To report on the number of participants at an eventTo report responses to provide an indication of engagement with the In2Uni Program
Uni For Certain	Year 6 Students Teachers		Completion of a post 'event' quantitative anonymous survey to measure their level of engagement with the In2Uni Program. Data collected will also include demographic information (sociocultural background, gender, school).		
Year 10 UNique Experience Day	Year 10 Students Teachers				
Year 10 Future Finder Workshop					

Year 7 & 8 Academic Enrichment Program	Year 7 & 8 Students Teachers	To build positive connections with Higher Education	<p>No. of students who participated in the program (in total and broken down by school).</p> <p>Completion of a post 'program' quantitative anonymous survey to measure their level of engagement with the In2Uni Program. Data collected will also include demographic information (sociocultural background, gender, school).</p>	<p>Completion of a post 'program' qualitative survey by students and teachers to glean student and teacher responses to the event (i.e. favourite activity, improvements)</p> <p>60 Minute Partnership Interview with teachers to discuss outcomes and feedback at the conclusion of each year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report on the number of participants involved in mentoring • To report responses to provide an indication of engagement with the In2Uni Program • To feed into the In2Uni Program's continuous improvement cycle.
Year 11 Study Skills Program	Year 11 Students Teachers	To build positive connections with Higher Education	<p>Collection of First Name, Last Name, DOB, Gender and School through registration for student tracking.</p> <p>No. of students who participated in the program (in total and broken down by school).</p> <p>Completion of a post 'program' quantitative survey to measure their level of engagement with the In2Uni Program. These surveys will not be anonymous and student's first names, last names and dates of birth will be requested. Data collected will also include demographic information (sociocultural background, gender, school).</p>	<p>Completion of a post 'program' qualitative survey by students and teachers to glean student and teacher responses to the event (i.e. favourite activity, improvements)</p> <p>60 Minute Partnership Interview to discuss outcomes and feedback at the conclusion of each year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report on the number of participants involved in workshops • To track the participants into higher education • To report responses to provide an indication of engagement with the In2Uni Program • To feed into the In2Uni Program's continuous improvement cycle.
Year 12 University Preparation Program	Year 12 Students Teachers	To build positive connections with Higher Education and increase access into higher education.	<p>Collection of First Name, Last Name, DOB, Gender and School through registration for student tracking.</p>	<p>Completion of a post 'program' qualitative survey by students and teachers to glean student and teacher responses to the event (i.e. favourite activity, improvements)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report on the number of participants involved in workshops • To track the participants into higher education • To report responses to provide an indication of engagement with the In2Uni Program • To feed into the In2Uni Program's continuous improvement cycle.
Year 12 Road to Success Workshops			<p>No. of students who participated in the program (in total and broken down by school).</p>	<p>60 Minute Partnership Interview to discuss outcomes and feedback at the conclusion of each year.</p>	
Summer Master Classes-ARTS001			<p>Completion of a post 'program' quantitative survey to measure their level of engagement with the In2Uni</p>		

			Program. These surveys will not be anonymous and student's first names, last names and dates of birth will be requested. Data collected will also include demographic information (sociocultural background, gender, school).		Program's continuous improvement cycle.
In2Uni Call Campaign & Transition into UOW	Year 12 Students who applied to UOW	To provide a smooth transition into higher education by providing tangible links between In2Uni and UOW's support services.	Collection of First Name, Last Name, DOB, Gender and School through UAC Offers. Applications, offers and acceptances will also be recorded.	Qualitative comments provided through call sheets and student responses to email.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure the number of applications to UOW from In2Uni Schools • Measure the number of offers made to In2Uni school students to UOW • Measure the number of acceptances into UOW of In2Uni High School Students. • Measure the number of contacts made with UOW Support Services.
<p>Data Analysis: Data will be analysed in the following ways:</p> <p><i>Quantitative Data:</i> Quantitative data will be utilised to demonstrate the number of students engaging with the In2Uni Program and umbrella of activities. Comparative analysis will be utilised to demonstrate differences in the numbers of participants engaging with In2Uni:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across years (i.e. 2011, 2012, 2013 etc.) • Across individual activities • Across Schools <p>Surveys – Quantitative data will be collected through a likert scale, from which statistics will be drawn from the anonymous survey data. This data will be utilised to inform generalised statistics of the impact of the In2Uni Program to feed into In2Uni's continuous improvement planning cycle.</p> <p><i>Qualitative Data:</i></p> <p>Interviews - Qualitative Data from interviews with key teaching staff will be categorised using a thematic approach to data analysis. Key themes that emerge from the interviews will be identified and fed into In2Uni's continuous improvement planning cycle.</p> <p>Data Tracking: Students will be tracked from Year 11 onwards through the In2Uni database and will be compared with data from the UAC and UOW student database to identify any students who have matriculated into university.</p>					
Ethical Considerations: Data collected from students under the age of 18 years will have parental consent through In2Uni Consent Forms.					
Outcome: The above information will be compiled into an Annual Report for stakeholders at the end of each year, and will also be provided to university executive staff to report on the outcomes of the program, aligned with the social inclusion scorecard.					

Appendix C – List of Schools involved in In2Uni in 2013

Primary Schools

Albion Park Rail Public School	Barrack Heights Public School
Berkeley Public School	Bellambi Public School
Bega Valley Public School	Berkeley West Public School
Coniston Public School	Bomaderry Public School
Culburra Public School	Cringila Public School
Jervis Bay Public School	Greenwell Point Public School
Koonawarra Public School	Kemblawarra Public School
Lake Illawarra South Public School	Lake Heights Public School
Moruya Public School	Mogo Public School
Nowra East Public School	Mount Warrigal Public School
Port Kembla Public School	Nowra Public School
Sanctuary Point Public School	Primbee Public School
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School	Russell Vale Public School
Tarrawanna Public School	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School
Warilla North Public School	Sussex Inlet Primary School
Warrawong Public School	St Pius Catholic Primary School
Wollongong West Public School	Warilla Public School
Woonona Public School	Windang Public School
Woonona East Public School	

High Schools

Albion Park High School	Batemans Bay High School
Bomaderry High School	Bega High School
Corrimal High School	Carroll College
Eden Marine High School	Dapto High School
Kanahooka High School	Five Islands Secondary College
Lumen Christi High School	Lake Illawarra High School
Moss Vale High School	Moruya High School
Nowra High School	Narooma High School
Shoalhaven High School	Oak Flats High School
St Peter's Anglican College	St John the Evangelist high School
Vincentia High School	Ulladulla High School
Warrawong High School	Warilla High School
Woonona High School	Sapphire Coast Anglican College

Appendix D – Case Study Interview Questions

Case study Schools – Interview Questions

Background

1. How long have you been involved with In2Uni?
2. What programs have you taken part in?
3. Who gets involved? In what capacity/extent/role?

Benefits/Relationship

4. Can you describe your relationship with In2Uni?
5. What do you think your school gets out of In2Uni (and does this filter into the community) Practical examples?
6. What do you think the wider community gets out of In2Uni and this relationship? Practical examples? (e.g. parents for Year 6 Visit Day)
7. What's your perception of the partnership with UoW. Do you feel the school is a valued partner? Are you consulted?
8. What does UOW get out of the collaboration with your school?

Students and Outcomes

9. Have you or other people at school followed up on conversations about university with students? Do you talk about it? How do you talk about it? Amongst staff? How do students receive this?
10. Does In2Uni engage students over time – are we retaining their involvement?
11. Any stories which illustrate In2Uni at work in your school?
12. Can you tell us about outcomes –any specific student stories?

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities

13. What do you see as the key strengths of In2Uni
14. What would you improve about In2Uni?
15. What's your feeling about the feedback mechanisms that are currently in place? Is there any improvement required?

In2Uni Quantitative Data Mapping Exercise – 2013 Data

Program Key:

Year6ED – Year 6 Engagement Program

7-10AM – Years 7-10 Academic Mentoring Program

9&10Unique – Years 9-10 UNIQUE Experience Day

11SK – Year 11 Leadership & Transition workshops

12HSC – Year 12 HSC Preparation Program

12ARTS001 – Year 12 Summer Master Classes

Note: Numbers below correspond with survey questions in the original In2Uni Quality Assurance surveys which were supplied to the evaluation team.

Program	Yr6ED student survey	Yr6ED teacher survey	Yr6ED parent survey	7-10 AM student survey	9&10 UNIQUE student survey	9&10 UNIQUE teacher survey	11 SK student survey	12 HSC student survey	12 ARTS 001 post survey
1. Does the In2Uni programme develop, foster and sustain mutually beneficial collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders?		1	4	1, 5, 9		1	1, 5, 6, 9, 11	1, 5, 10, 18, 36	1, 5, 10, 18, 36
2. Are parents and local school communities involved in In2Uni developing useful / appropriate / transferable awareness and knowledge about higher education?	1, 2	2, 7, 10	2, 6, 7,	10	1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 12	1, 2, 7	1, 2, 6, 10	17, 24, 32, 37	17, 20, 22, 24, 27, 32, 36, 37
3. Is a positive community response to higher education occurring amongst In2Uni stakeholders?	4	1, 11, 12	1, 3, 9	1, 2, 11	2	1, 3, 9, 11	5, 10, 11	7, 12, 20, 22	7, 12, 20, 22
4. Are aspirations of Low SES students toward higher education being built by the In2Uni programme?	4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12	3, 9, 12	1, 3, 8	4, 6, 8, 13	4, 5, 8, 11	3, 4, 9, 12	4, 8, 13	4, 8, 13, 21, 22	4, 8, 13, 21, 22
5. Are In2Uni participants able to successfully navigate pathways to higher education?								26, 30	26, 30, 32

Appendix F – Suggestions For Survey Modifications

Suggestions for In2Uni Survey Modification

Discussed With In2Uni Team - October 9th 2014

1. Participant ID – to track attendance, progress, outcomes

Participant ID (please write, using format detailed below):

*First letter of given name, Day of Birth, Second Letter of Surname, Number of Siblings, First Letter of Name of High School. Example: Wilma Vialle, 18 June, 4 siblings, Prospect High School = **W18I4P***

2. Core set of questions asked across all workshops, asked of parents, teachers and students (with only minor variations in phrasing, if absolutely necessary)
 - a. Ensure core questions are aligned to In2Uni's aims and are important to ask at each program (e.g., you would expect change in patterns of responding). Ensure parallel questions asked of students, parents and educators, where comparison would be interesting
 - b. Other important, less central, questions can be asked at less-regular intervals
 - c. Complement these with workshop/program-specific questions aligned with the expected outcomes of the specific program (see also #3)
 - d. Have subset of questions assessed prior to workshop and then full survey after (brief, but allows evaluation of improvement as a result of participation – e.g., 'how likely am I to attend university?' when asked before and after allows you to answer 'how much more likely are they to attend university as a result of this workshop?'). Conversely, albeit less powerful, phrase questions as evaluating the extent to which change is perceived as a result of the program (e.g., 'I'm likely to attend university' becomes 'I'm now *more* likely to attend university' – evaluates the extent to which those in attendance are already highly motivated to attend university)
3. All questions a combination of workshop outcomes and In2Uni outcomes
 - a. Add questions to collect data about outcomes for which there is currently little data

- b. Modify questions to aims of workshop: If aimed at fostering knowledge or study skills, minimise questions on university experience and engagement, etc.
 - c. Remove questions not aligned with In2Uni and/or workshop outcomes (every question should serve a purpose aligned with those outcomes)
 - d. Consider how broad or specific questioning should be (e.g., if interested in barriers to entry, ask about full suite of barriers or a general question – at present only two are asked about)
- 4. Response categories – at least 5-point response scale (consider 7-point, to ensure sufficient sensitivity to change over the course of the In2Uni program)
- 5. Need outcome measures – applications to university, acceptances to university, early entry interviews, admission to university, completion of university
- 6. What demographics to capture. Their postcode for SEIFA? Age?
- 7. No need for faces for response categories (typically for younger children)
- 8. Rephrasing some questions
 - a. No double-barreled
 - b. No leading questions
 - c. Minimise 'extreme' situations (e.g., 'were not useful')
- 9. Adding one reversed question per survey for validity checking
- 10. Shift qualitative to end of survey and ensure sufficient space
- 11. Potential to add a qualitative component (optional, on a subset)
- 12. Consider either: (a) collecting a subset of data before each workshop and then the full set of questions after (to evaluate change – this is a stronger option); or (b) phrase questions as evaluating the extent to which change is perceived as a result of the program (e.g., 'I'm likely to attend university' is not the same as 'I'm now *more* likely to attend university' – could be that those in attendance are already highly motivated to attend uni).

