ACSES Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success

Curtin University

Equity Frontiers Trial Protocol

The impact of a school-selected Year 11-12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments: a pragmatic cluster randomised trial

Table of Contents

1. Trial overview 3
2. Background and objective 4
   - Background 4
   - Initiative 5
   - Objectives 7
3. Trial design 8
   - Outcomes 8
   - Trial design 8
   - Detailed trial process 9
   - Participants 14
   - Participant withdrawal criteria and procedures 15
4. Data management and statistical analysis 16
   - Sample inclusion/exclusion 16
   - Sample Cleaning 16
   - Statistical methods 17
   - Data management 20
5. Publication 21
6. References 22
7. Appendices 23
   - Recruitment materials 23
     - 7.1.1. Recruitment email to schools to participate 23
     - 7.1.2. Recruitment email to schools: Confirmation after allocation 24
     - 7.1.3. Parent notification form 25
     - 7.1.4. Recruitment: Schools for Sense-Making session 25
     - 7.1.5. Recruitment: University WP teams for Sense-Making session 27
   - Data collection instruments 28
     - 7.2.1. Data collection: Baseline assessment Assembly Discussion Guide 29

7.2.2. Data collection: Baseline assessment / Questionnaire for students 30
7.2.3. Data collection: Post Workshop assessment 32
7.2.4. Data collection: Follow up Questionnaire and script 33
7.2.5. Data collection: Sense-Making Session Discussion Guide 35
7.2.7. Interview distress protocol: Follow up questionnaire 38
7.3 Implementation fidelity checklists 40
7.3.1. Year 12 Financial Special Access workshop 40
7.3.2. Year 11 Career Mapping 41
7.3.3. Year 11 Financial Literacy 42
7.3.4. Year 11 Pathways 43
7.3.5. Year 11 Study Skills 44
7.3.5. Year 11 Wellbeing 45
7.3.6. Course guides 47



1. Trial overview

Trial title:	The impact of a school-selected Year 11-12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments: a pragmatic cluster randomised trial.		
Trial start date:	December 2025	**Trial end date:**	April 2027
Principal Investigator name (and protocol authors):	**Nathan Coffey**, Patricia Vermillion Peirce, Jason Ferris, Vera Gin, Jessica Foster, Michelle Zervos		
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Sponsor	Deakin University & Swinburne University		
Trial summary	The study examines the light touch, informational outreach, by providing university "course guides" for Year 11 and 12 secondary students and compares this with more comprehensive Widening Participation (WP) activities for this same cohort of students. The course guides are selected by each school, encompassing a variety of different subject areas relevant to study at each university. The course guides are existing marketing materials developed for schools by each university. The WP activity targets underrepresented schools through university–school partnerships, allows flexible selection of workshops addressing their students' barriers to higher education, and delivers content through near-peer mentors. The offered workshops are tailored to students' barriers, selected in partnership with schools, addressing academic, financial, and structural challenges relevant to their students. It is expected that the WP activity will result in greater outcomes, demonstrated through improved knowledge, self-efficacy and motivation for Year 11 and 12 students leading to increased aspirations, tertiary application, and enrolment rates, particularly amongst those who may not have considered higher education otherwise. This study uses a pragmatic, randomised trial approach. The pragmatic design treats schools' choices around workshop content, timing, and delivery mode as integral to the intervention, recognising that variation in exposure reflects the real-world implementation of WP.		



	Eligible state schools are drawn from existing university partnerships, spanning those with no WP engagement for Year 11 and 12 students. These schools are stratified by prior outreach engagement to Year 10 students, and the school-level historical tertiary application rates, and randomly allocated, as clusters, to receive either the WP workshops or university course guides. Data is captured through a longitudinal student-level survey tracking individual outcomes over time. The impact analysis will compare outcomes between students in WP and course guide group-schools, adjusting for baseline characteristics to improve precision.
Funding (total, and funding sources)	$ 393,766 (Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success, Curtin University)
Ethics approval (grantor, date, reference ID)	Deakin University Human Research ethics approval (23 Feb 2026): 2025/HE001143 Swinburne University reciprocal ethics approval (13 March 2026): 20269474-23747

2. Background and objective

Background

One Australian study in Queensland, although correlational, suggests that the more extensive schools engaged in widening participation (WP) activities, the more likely the students were to apply to tertiary education (Zacharias et al., 2018). More broadly, impact evaluations conducted overseas suggest that the effects of outreach interventions on tertiary enrolment vary widely, depending on intensity, relevance, and mode of delivery. Programs offering light-touch or generic information have achieved modest effects on tertiary enrolments (2–4 percentage points), whereas more comprehensive interventions addressing multiple student barriers have shown much larger impacts, ranging from 2 to 14 percentage points (Bettinger et al., 2012; Bos et al., 2012; Oreopoulos & Ford, 2016; Barr & Castleman, 2018; Carrell & Sacerdote, 2017; Bettinger & Evans, 2019). These studies and associated effects are promising; however, they're all based on international populations. To date, there has yet been no impact evaluation of WP outreach interventions in Victoria, or even Australia.

This proposed study would build upon these international findings outlined in the literature review but provide a Victorian context by evaluating a WP model used by many universities in Victoria. The study examines the light touch, informational outreach, and compares this with the comprehensive outreach activities by offering multiple forms of support tailored to students' barriers. Moreover, the approach doesn't rely on expensive, one-on-one mentoring but rather provides a suite of materials and workshops, selected in partnership with schools, addressing academic, financial, and structural challenges relevant to their students. It is also



sensitive to intersectionality. It is also sensitive to intersectionality and relevant to multiple equity groups (e.g., low-SES, First in Family, regional).

Despite promising international evidence, there remains a lack of robust evaluation of this often adopted WP approach in the Australian context, particularly for senior secondary students. This evidence gap is significant, as schools are sometimes reluctant to prioritise WP for this cohort due to competing academic demands and limited Australian evidence of measurable equity benefits. Moreover, Year 11 and 12 students are typically time-poor, underscoring the need for interventions that are both targeted and demonstrably effective. With policy shifts on the horizon in Australia's approach to outreach, it is also crucial that universities understand how to deliver WP activities efficiently and for maximum impact. This study aims to address these evidence gaps by evaluating the impact of a flexible, school-selected WP program on students' aspirations, knowledge, and ultimately, their applications to and enrolments in tertiary education.

Initiative

Two "initiatives" will be delivered in parallel as part of the Trial, with schools being randomly assigned into one or the other initiative.

The first initiative is the receipt of the **course guide** for a variety of different subject areas, and about each university (Deakin and Swinburne). These are existing marketing materials developed for schools by each institution. For schools allocated to this group, the equity practitioner works with the school to identify the relevant materials that they are most interested in, from the catalogue of materials, and these will be posted to each university. We will ask that these be shared with their students, but this will be the responsibility of the school to make these available (as per usual practice).[1] The course guides provided will be the latest available for use by University Marketing teams.

The second initiative is the **WP activities**. Schools allocated to this **group** work with equity practitioners to select and schedule the most relevant workshops for their school, maintaining the school's choice according to their students' needs. More specifically, the **WP group** schools receive an outline of available WP workshops, and they are provided with an opportunity to select either an on-campus experience day (Year 11 students only) or in-school workshops (Year 11 and/or Year 12 students). Schools indicate which workshops they wish their students to attend and the potential dates. These workshops on offer, with each amounting to one hour each, and co-facilitated by the equity team and an employed university mentor (per standard WP practice at each university), are as follows:

Table 1: WP Workshops

Workshop	Facilitators cover the following topics:
Study skills	Information about • study techniques • time management strategies • exam preparation tips
Wellbeing	Information about

[1] As per the implementation fidelity checklist (c.f. Appendix 7.4.6), the team confirms if these books are made available or have been shared with students.



Workshop	Facilitators cover the following topics:
	• understanding wellbeing (e.g. importance of sleep and nutrition) • strategies to manage stress (e.g. mindfulness techniques) • strategies to maintain physical and mental wellbeing
Financial literacy	Information about • managing personal finances • budgeting effectively, including saving and spending • planning for the costs of life beyond schools • setting goals
Career mapping	Student self-investigation, using handouts for students to: • identify a career, and find a job on the internet • identify the skills they need, and determine if this is a growth area • identify what they have to study towards this career
Pathways	Using case studies: • alternative pathways into higher education (e.g. no ATAR, experience, transferring) • course guides
Financial support and special access *(in school option only, for Year 12)*	Information about: • The eligibility criteria and process for applying for Equity Schemes • The costs to study at university • Financial supports available, including: the Australian Government Financial Assistance (HELP loans and CSP), and merit, academic and equity scholarships that may be available to them at the university.

All selected workshops are made available to all Year 11 and 12 students, with schools endorsing whole class cohorts. The total number of student attendees will be recorded as the workshops are delivered.

Schools may also select whether to have these workshops delivered on campus or in their school (Year 11) or in school (Year 12). On-campus days typically involve three to five workshop sessions delivered in one day, while in-school workshops can be delivered in one or multiple sessions on dates chosen by the school. An implementation fidelity checklist will be used to confirm that each workshop delivered the core elements from the theory of change (mentor, school-choice, student centred), and to capture variability in delivery for a qualitative assessment.

The equity practitioner coordinates logistics with the school; secures student mentors to support delivery, ensures all mentors have a valid WWCC and trains these individuals; and confirms final arrangements.

For on-campus days, schools obtain parental consent to attend the excursion, organise transport and staff supervision, and invoice Deakin or Swinburne Universities for bus and casual relief teacher (CRT) costs. For schools that select the on-campus option for workshops, they will also be responsible for obtaining consent from parents for their



attendance on the excursion. This is obtained by the school through their preferred consent channel, which is often an online management system. For in-school workshops, schools notify students, and sessions are delivered either in class or as opt-in lunchtime activities. The trial covers transport and CRT costs (up to $430 per staff member for up to 3 staff members at each activity).

Objectives

Initiative objectives

The WP activities aim to increase university applications among students from equity backgrounds. It does this by reaching equity students (via targeting educationally disadvantaged schools), addressing their psychosocial and structural barriers (via the support topics and school-directed approach), and building students' awareness, confidence, and motivation for higher education through their student-centred support (via the student-centred delivery). These core elements of the WP model are expected to lead to higher rates of tertiary applications and ultimately lead to higher rates of enrolment in higher education.

Trial objectives

The objective of the study is to evaluate the impact of school-directed WP workshops, delivered via university-school partnerships with near-peer mentoring, on tertiary aspirations (among Year 11-12 students) and university applications and enrolments (among Year 12 students) over and above the group receiving course guides. Further, it examines the impact of the school-directed WP workshops specifically among students with low initial higher education orientation (i.e. those that may otherwise be considering higher education as an option) among schools with greater disadvantage in Victoria.

The study specifically tests the hypothesis that, compared to course guides only, flexible WP workshops improve students' knowledge, self-efficacy, and motivation, leading to higher aspirations, and ultimately applications, and enrolments in higher education, especially for students who may not have otherwise considered higher education as an option. The Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) are listed below.

KEQ 1: What is the impact of school-selected Year 11-12 outreach program on Year 11-12 tertiary aspirations?

KEQ 2: What is the impact of school-selected Year 11-12 outreach program on Year 12 application/enrolment rates?

KEQ 3: What is the differential impact on low initial-orientation students?

For the WP group only, the secondary Evaluation Questions (EQs) are:

EQ 1: Does self-efficacy mediate intention to apply to higher education?

EQ 2: Does near-peer mentor trustworthiness predict motivation/applications?

EQ 3: Do in-school vs. on-campus modes differentially affect aspirations/intention to apply to higher education?



3. Trial design

Outcomes

The study three primary outcomes are:

1. Tertiary aspirations (Year 11 in 2026)

Measure: Student response to the five-point Likert-like item "I want to go to university or TAFE after I complete my secondary studies', scored 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Instrument: Student-level telephone survey.

Approach: Students who consented at baseline, will be asked this question at baseline (in 2026) and will be contacted again (2027) to complete a follow-up, telephone survey.

2. Tertiary applications (Year 12 in 2026)

Measure: Percentage of Year 12 students aspiring to higher education, indicating "yes" to the statement "Have you submitted a tertiary application?"

Instrument: Student-level telephone survey.

Approach: Students who consented at baseline (in 2026) will be contacted in 2027 (the following year) to complete a follow-up, telephone survey.

3. Tertiary enrolments (Year 12 in 2026)

Measure: Percentage of Year 12 students aspiring to higher education, indicating "yes" to the statement "Did you accept an offer of enrolment?"

Instrument: Student-level telephone survey

Approach: Students who consented at baseline (in 2026) will be contacted in 2027 to complete a follow-up, telephone survey.

Trial design

This is a pragmatic two-arm parallel cluster-randomised controlled trial, with randomisation at the school (cluster) level in a 1:1 ratio to intervention (school-directed WP workshops) or control (university course guides). Schools are stratified by (1) prior Year 10 outreach participation, in 2024 (yes/no) and (2) historical tertiary application rates (below/above study-group average[2]), resulting in four strata. Schools within each stratum, for each university, are randomly ordered and allocated to one of the two trial arms. Student level baseline characteristics are also included as covariates to improve precision in the analysis.

Bias is minimised via concealed allocation until schools confirm their enrolment, and through survey follow-up undertaken by an independent agency. All outcomes will be analysed using mixed-effects regression models with fixed effects for treatment group and the baseline

[2] The study group average for the percentage of VCE students applying for tertiary places through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) in 2025 was 45%. For context, the Victorian state average in 2025 was 62%.



measure of the outcome, and random intercepts at the school level to account for clustering. Binary outcomes will be analysed using logistic mixed-effects models, and the 5-point Likert outcome will be analysed using a linear mixed-effects model. Random slopes will not be included. Blinding of participants, schools, or deliverers is not feasible due to intervention nature.

Detailed trial process

School selection, invitation and uptake (March-July 2026)

The inclusion criteria for the study are state schools with an ICSEA value less than 1032 (the Victorian state average), representing greater disadvantage, and have existing relationships with Deakin or Swinburne Universities,[3] and located within one hour of either university's campuses. The existing relationship is where the school had taken up WP offering by either of these universities in recent years, but their uptake has focused on WP for student cohorts in Years 10 or younger (rather than in their Year 11 or 12 cohorts). The team also invites schools that have not traditionally engaged with WP activities in senior years, provided they are willing to offer Year 11–12 students the opportunity to participate in WP activities or receive course guides. Rural and regional schools outside the one-hour radius will not be included given logistical reasons, limiting external validity to comparable metropolitan and peri-urban schools.

The Victorian Department of Education is provided a list of the schools that meet these criteria (*n*=44) so they can formally approve our initial engagements through a Research in Schools and Early Childhood Settings (RISEC) application. In addition to the approval from the Department of Education (via the RISEC), ethics approval will be obtained, along with reciprocal ethics approval.

With the necessary permissions sought and granted, schools are invited to participate in the trial and briefed on trial requirements and expectations. We expect 32 schools to agree to participate, yielding approximately 5120 Year 12 students (approximately 160 students per school), of whom about 50% (n = 2560) are anticipated to have a low initial orientation toward higher education (the "priority students"). Similar numbers are expected among Year 11 students.

Randomisation and school confirmation (June-July 2025)

Schools interested in taking part are stratified by (1) Year 10 outreach participation in 2024 (yes vs. no), and (2) historical tertiary application rates (e.g. below vs above the study-group average of the percentage of the schools' Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre tertiary application rates). Within each of the four strata, schools will be randomly allocated in a 1:1 ratio to the intervention or control group using block randomisation to ensure balance between arms." Allocation will be done on a 1:1 ratio into the WP group vs. Course Guides group, allocating the first 32 schools into one of the two groups. This sampling strategy strengthens credibility by balancing key school-level factors and ensuring sufficient power for subgroup analyses.

Following randomisation, schools are informed of allocation to either (a) the WP group, or (b) the course guide group. The school's designated person of authority (i.e. school principal or

[3] The study is not sufficiently powered to assess differences between universities, as this is not the intention of the evaluation to examine between university differences.



deputy principal) will be asked to confirm their interest in taking part in the study (c.f. see attached, “Recruitment email – school confirmation”).

Upon confirmation, schools in the WP group then work with equity practitioners to select and schedule the most relevant workshops for their school. This step preserves the pragmatic design of WP while maintaining choice for schools. More specifically, the WP group schools will receive an outline of available outreach workshops and will be provided with an opportunity to select either an on-campus experience day or in-school workshops. Schools indicate which workshops they wish to offer, and potential dates. These workshops on offer with each amounting to one hour each, are co-facilitated by the equity team and an employed university mentor (per standard WP practice at each university).

Schools select whether to have these workshops delivered on campus or at their school. On-campus days typically involve three to five workshop sessions delivered in one day, while in-school workshops can be delivered in one or multiple sessions on dates chosen by the school. All selected workshops are made available to all Year 11 and 12 students, with schools endorsing whole class cohorts. The equity practitioner coordinates logistics with the school; secures student mentors to support delivery, ensures all have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and trains these individuals; and confirms final arrangements with the school. For on-campus days, schools obtain parental consent to attend the excursion, organise transport and staff supervision, and invoice Deakin or Swinburne University for bus and casual relief teacher (CRT) costs. For in-school workshops, schools notify students, and sessions are delivered either in class or as opt-in lunchtime activities. The trial covers transport and CRT costs (up to $430 per staff member for up to 3 staff members at each activity).

The course guide schools are sent course guides for a variety of different subject areas, and about each university (Deakin and Swinburne). These are existing marketing materials developed for schools by each institution. The equity practitioner works with the school to identify the relevant materials that they are most interested in, from the catalogue of materials, and these will be posted to each university. We ask that these be shared with their students, but this will be the responsibility of the school to make these available (as per usual practice). The course guides provided will be the latest available for use by the University Marketing teams.

Parent consent to the study (June 2026)

All schools contact the families of Year 11 and 12 students and allow the parents the opportunity to consent for their child to participate in the study. It is expected that schools will use the existing school communication portals, using the communication provided (c.f. Appendix 7.1.3, Notification to Parents) and participant information sheet (c.f. Appendix 7.3). Any parent or caregiver that choses to opt their child out of the study will be told prior to the organised student assembly (c.f. step below).

Irrespective of whether or not there is student consent to take part in the study, all students will have the opportunity to participate in the workshop activities. For on-campus workshops parents/guardians are still required to consent to the excursion, and for those who do not those students will not attend. This is in accordance with school excursion policies.

Student-level consent and baseline questionnaire (July 2026)



The equity practitioners, alongside trialist, will visit each of the 32 schools, and introduce the study to Year 11–12 students at participating schools. The team ask schools to organise a brief assembly at a time that they recommend for their students. During this introduction, the team distribute the booklets, with a blank cover page, and on the inside of this stapled booklet will include: the Plain Language Statement and consent form (students), and the baseline questionnaire. A highlighter mark on the front page of the booklet is used to identify those students who had parents opt them out of the study, and these will be distributed by school staff to these specific students. This allows all students to participate alongside their peers, allowing them to equitably take part in all activities as well as not 'stand out' and result in embarrassment amongst these students; Rather the discrete highlighter mark identifies these students to the research team so their information is not collected as part of the process.

During this assembly, the equity and trial team go over the participant information sheet and consent form, using the script (c.f. Appendix 7.2.1, Assembly Discussion guide), and students in Years 11 and 12 are invited to consent. We expect to include only those students in the study who consent and whose parents have consented.

Of those who consent, contact information (phone number) is collected at baseline to support follow-up survey administration. To protect anonymity, student responses are linked using an anonymous code (day and month of birth as a four-digit number + first three letters of surname). This code is the first survey question at each data collection point.

We will then ask those students who consent to take part in the study to complete the brief baseline questionnaire within their booklet which estimates students' initial orientation toward higher education on a five-point Likert scale. The survey asks students demographic/background items (e.g., current year level, stream of study as VCE, VM, VTEC).

These forms are collected at the end of the assembly by two members of the research team, collecting forms from those that do not have the visible highlighter mark on the front page (i.e. parents' consent), and only from students who consented to participate, unless students want to submit their questionnaires (these will be removed and securely destroyed prior to electronic data collation). Others who do not consent are permitted to take their copies with them.

The decision to have all students present in the initial data collection assembly was made to avoid singling out individuals who are not participating. By implementing the discrete highlighter mark to identify students who have opted out, we create the perception of equal participation while ensuring compliance with consent requirements. Only data from students with completed consent are retained, and all results from non-consenting participants are securely destroyed (if the student wishes to hand in their booklet).

Data collation and variable construction (July-August 2026)

Data collected at each site are first collated by the equity team, ensuring that only students who provided consent and a phone number are counted, giving the total number of students who consented at each school. Following the surveys, responses are manually entered into Qualtrics. For each record, the student's anonymous code is entered first, followed by the school code, and then the survey responses according to the defined coding framework:

- Year group: 11 = 11; 12 = 12



- Binary responses: No = 0; Yes = 1
- Likert scale responses: Strongly disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neither agree nor disagree = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly agree = 5
- Phone number: 10-digit code

If a student ticked between two adjacent points on a Likert item, the response is coded to the point closer to “neither”/3 to maintain consistency, treating ambiguous responses as more neutral. If a student ticks between Yes and No response items, the response is coded to the point closer to the visual circle. Where a response could not be categorised according to the coding framework, it is noted as missing (MI). Blank cells are left only where no response was provided.

Upon collation of the baseline data, Rasch analysis will be conducted using RUMM2030, with a pre-specified threshold of item fit greater than p = 0.05 to guide item retention. The functioning of each item’s response categories will be examined to ensure ordered thresholds; where thresholds are disordered, response categories will be merged and fit retested. Internal consistency will be assessed using the Person Separation Index (PSI), with values greater than 0.7 considered acceptable for group-level analyses. Differential item functioning (DIF) will be tested by year group.

If a valid unidimensional Rasch scale cannot be identified, exploratory factor analysis will be conducted to derive a scale score suitable for regression and subgroup analyses. The final scale score will be documented and used in all analyses requiring the orientation measure.

Initiative delivery (August - December 2026)

The two universities deliver according to this Common Practice Model developed between them, and as described in the initiative section above.

Follow up survey (January 2027)

This stage begins with a briefing with the independent research company and the broader research team, going over the protocol and the Interview Distress Protocol (c.f. Appendix 7.2.6), to ensure alignment with the prescribed process.

Students who consented at baseline (in 2026) are contacted in 2027 to complete a follow-up questionnaire. Participation continues to be voluntary, and students retain the right to withdraw at any time including retrospectively withdrawing their information (up to the point of analysis).

All interviews are conducted by trained interviewers who have experience with conducting research with adolescents and are skilled in adolescent communication. These interviewers are trained and supported by senior members of their research team, with valid Working With Children Checks, and key members of the research team who have significant experience delivering support to secondary schools (named Deakin and Swinburne University staff).

Responses are linked to baseline data using the anonymised code (day and month of birth as a four-digit number + first three letters of surname), ensuring privacy while enabling longitudinal analysis. This code is replaced with the accompanying system-generated code before the data are shared and included in a separate file from the responses.

The follow-up survey instrument includes no more than 20 questions:



- for Year 11 students (in 2026), re-administer the baseline survey items related to "orientation towards higher education", as well as ask a student about aspirations towards higher education.
- for Year 12 students (in 2026), ask behavioural questions (yes/no) to understand students' tertiary pathway engagement: e.g. submission of any tertiary application, receipt of any tertiary offer, and acceptance of any offer of enrolment. These measures are collected independently of those delivering WP activities, via a research-based CATI agency, reducing the risk of bias.

The longitudinal design, linking baseline and the follow-up questionnaire at the individual level, allows the evaluation to track changes in orientation and behaviour over time. This approach attempts to strengthen causal inference (over simple cross-sectional designs) by controlling for pre-existing differences in student characteristics and reducing potential bias from confounders.

Analysis (February-March 2027)

The analysis will use data from both baseline and follow-up student surveys. In all analyses, we will estimate the overall average treatment effect for students across schools rather than school-specific effects.

For KEQ1 (aspirations), baseline and follow-up survey data will be analysed using linear mixed-effects regression models, with student aspirations as the dependent variable. Models will include treatment status (WP group vs. course guide group) as the primary predictor, baseline 'orientation' score as a covariate, and random intercepts at the school level to account for clustering inherent in the trial design. This approach allows us to estimate the average treatment effect on changes in student aspirations while controlling for baseline differences and school-level variation.

For KEQ2 (applications and enrolments), the primary outcome is the proportion of Year 12 students submitting VTAC applications and enrolling, with "receiving offers" as a moderator (or intermediate factor) that will be assessed separately to determine how it influences the pathway from application to enrolment. These binary outcomes will be analysed using mixed-effects logistic regression, with fixed effects for treatment status (WP group vs. course guide group) and random intercepts for schools to account for clustering. Marginal effects will be reported to give interpretable percentage point differences in application and enrolment rates between arms. This approach will provide a rigorous estimate of the outreach program's causal impact, leveraging the randomised design to reduce bias.

For KEQ3 (differential effects), analyses will include the baseline orientation score as a covariate, and an interaction term between treatment status and orientation score will be tested to assess whether intervention effects vary according to students' initial readiness for higher education. This allows us to formally test whether treatment effects differ by students' initial readiness for higher education. Subgroup analyses will also be reported, providing estimates of the intervention effect separately for priority students (low orientation to higher education) and non-priority students. Priority students will be defined using the distribution of the orientation score, with the primary threshold set at the lowest quartile to identify students with comparatively low orientation to higher education while maintaining sufficient sample sizes for stable estimates. Sensitivity analyses will explore alternative thresholds, including a median split of the orientation score, to assess whether findings are robust to different definitions of low orientation.



We will also use the post-workshop questionnaires to explore the relationships between variables when answering EQ1 – EQ3. Post-workshop self-efficacy and facilitator relatability will be included as continuous predictors in regression models predicting student intention to apply to tertiary education. Delivery mode (in-school vs. on-campus) will be included as a categorical predictor in separate models predicting post-workshop self-efficacy and intention to apply.

Reporting (April 2027)

At the conclusion of the randomised trial, a final sense-making workshop is held with participating schools and separately, the Widening Participation Network (WPN). The WPN includes equity practitioners delivering WP across the state of Victoria. This forum provides an opportunity for practitioners, schools, and researchers to engage with preliminary results, share experiences of program delivery, and reflect on the findings in light of local contexts. By creating space for dialogue, the workshop helps surface insights into why particular outcomes emerged, as well as identify practical considerations for strengthening future WP initiatives. This participatory dissemination process strengthens the translation of trial findings into practice, enabling institutions to refine their outreach delivery and allocate limited resources to approaches with the greatest demonstrated impact.

The WPN and all participating schools are invited to one (of two) hybrid events, with each delivered either online (via MS Teams) or at Deakin Downtown: one event is delivered with the WPN university teams, and the other event includes those schools that participated in the study. We invite these groups, using email (c.f. Appendix 7.1.4 and 7.1.5, recruitment email to schools and universities, to a 'sense-making workshop'), using email to invite those schools that participated in the study to learn about the results and make sense of these. We attach the information sheet for the sense-making session within the email, as well as the consent form. As per the sense-making discussion guide, the results are presented to the participants, and they are asked to contextualise the findings and identify potential next steps to better meet the needs of the older students in schools with higher populations of lower socio-economic status students.

A full trial report is then submitted to ACSES, following their established reporting templates and quality standards.

Participants

The research population comes from schools, and notably state schools below ICSEA (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage) of 1032, providing for Years 11 and 12 students, with existing relationships with Deakin or Swinburne Universities (i.e. providing Deakin or Swinburne WP to their younger year groups), and located within one hour of either university's campuses. We also invite schools that are willing to offer Year 11–12 students the opportunity to participate in WP activities or receive course guides. This ensures feasibility while including a range of engagement contexts.

Schools are not invited to take part if they are:

- Above an ICSEA of 1032, representing a greater advantage.
- Do not provide for Year 11 or 12 students or have enrolments in these years in 2026.
- Rural and regional schools outside the one-hour radius will not be included.
- Do not have existing relationships (i.e. WP provided by Deakin or Swinburne University in other year groups).



- Any school that doesn't consent to take part.

For students within these schools, all Year 11 and 12 students are invited to take part in the study. This includes only those students who are 16 years or older.

We ask to exclude any Year 11 or 12 students whose parents or guardians do not consent to their child's participation in the study, and/or any student who does not consent to take part in the study.

Estimated effect size and power

International research suggests that the effects of outreach interventions on tertiary enrolment vary widely, depending on intensity, relevance, and mode of delivery. Programs offering light-touch or generic information have achieved modest effects (2–4 percentage points), whereas more comprehensive interventions addressing multiple student barriers have shown much larger impacts, up to 14 percentage points (Bettinger et al., 2012; Bos et al., 2012; Oreopoulos & Ford, 2016; Barr & Castleman, 2018; Carrell & Sacerdote, 2017; Bettinger & Evans, 2019). Given that the outreach model under evaluation in this trial addresses a suite of common student-level barriers and is delivered in a flexible and locally relevant format via trusted near-peer mentors, we anticipate an effect size toward the higher end of that spectrum.

For this study, we assumed a 9-percentage point increase in tertiary application rates as our primary effect size estimate. We further estimated that approximately 50% of students in the course guide group schools apply to tertiary places (the average within schools with an ICSEA less than 1032) and theorise 59% of students in the WP schools apply for tertiary places. An a priori power analysis ($\alpha = 0.05$, 80% power) was conducted in G*Power for an individually randomised design, with sample size subsequently inflated to account for clustering using an ICC of 0.01 and an average cluster size of approximately 400 students per school (design effect of 5). We require 2391 students to detect an effect size of 9%, and 1455 students to detect effect sizes of 11.5% or greater. These are realistic effect sizes for the full population and priority sample, respectively, given other studies have found more comprehensive interventions addressing multiple student barriers have achieved up to 14% increases in enrolment (which we assume to be similar to application rates) (c.f. Bettinger et al., 2012; Bos et al., 2012; Oreopoulos & Ford, 2016; Barr & Castleman, 2018; Carrell & Sacerdote, 2017; Bettinger & Evans, 2019). We are therefore sufficiently powered to detect a 9% (or greater) increase in enrolments (KEQ2). We expect similar effects for our other outcomes (e.g. aspirations, applications) in KEQ1 and KEQ2, and therefore the study is sufficiently powered to detect all primary outcomes for the full populations and priority samples of Year 11 and Year 12 students.

Participant withdrawal criteria and procedures

All participants will be informed that their participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time without explanation or penalty. This includes schools, parents/caregivers, and students.

School withdrawal

Schools may withdraw organisational consent at any time prior to or during data collection. If a school withdraws, no further recruitment or data collection will occur at that site. Any identifiable data contributed by that school (e.g. aggregated student responses not yet de-



identified) will be securely destroyed. For withdrawal after data have been de-identified and aggregated for analysis, removal is no longer possible.

Schools will only be replaced up to the point of randomisation.

Parent and student withdrawal

Parents or caregivers may opt their child out of participation at any stage by informing the school or research team. If notification is received before data collection, the student will be excluded from participation. If received after data collection, any identifiable student data will be removed and destroyed where possible. For withdrawal after data have been de-identified and aggregated for analysis, removal may no longer be possible.

Students may decline to participate at baseline, skip any questions, or withdraw at any point, including during post-workshop or follow-up surveys, without disadvantage. For withdrawal during data collection, any incomplete or identifiable data (e.g. paper questionnaires or interview records) will be destroyed, using the linking data noted above. For withdrawal after data have been de-identified and aggregated for analysis, removal may no longer be possible.

Withdrawal is not expected to adversely affect the study or participants, as the project involves minimal risk and voluntary participation at each stage. The research team will maintain a secure record of withdrawal requests to ensure no further contact is made.

Students who withdraw are not replaced.

4. Data management and statistical analysis

Sample inclusion/exclusion

Recruitment will close at 32 schools, yielding approximately 5120 Year 12 students (approximately 160 students per school), of whom about 50% (n=2560) are anticipated to have a low initial orientation toward higher education (the priority sample). Similar numbers are expected among Year 11 students. We expect to include only those students in the study who consent and whose parents have not opted them out of the study. We anticipated during planning that approximately 75% of students in each of Year 11 and Year 12 will consent; this baseline sample will form the analytic population for the study.

We anticipate that approximately 65% of Year 12 students who consented at baseline will complete the follow-up survey, yielding an estimated 2880 Year 12 participants, including 1440 in the priority sample (again, with similar numbers among Year 11 students). Analyses will follow an intention-to-treat approach at the cluster level, whereby all consenting students in participating schools will be analysed according to their school's assigned treatment condition. Non-consent or parental opt-outs (approximately 25% prior to the baseline), follow-up non-response (approximately 35% attrition among baseline participants) will be reported.

Sample Cleaning

Ensuring data integrity is a critical component of the trial. The following steps outline how the sample will be cleaned, addressing missing, unused, and spurious data.



All collected data will be reviewed for missing entries at both the individual and variable levels. Missing data points will be identified during data entry and cleaning to flag incomplete or uncategorizable records. If outcome data are missing for some participants, the primary analysis will assume data are “Missing At Random” (MAR) and all available observations will contribute to the mixed effects model. Sensitivity analyses will explore complete-case approaches and imputation (including extreme-case scenarios) to assess the robustness of results to potential biases due to missingness. The proportion and pattern of missing data will be described and reported.

Spurious data, or entries that appear inaccurate, will be identified through:

- Logical consistency checks, including verifying that responses align with expected ranges and the coding framework (e.g., valid Likert points, yes/no coding, numeric fields).
- Outlier detection, using statistical methods such as Z-scores and interquartile ranges (IQR) to flag extreme or improbable values.
- Duplicate assessment, reviewing data to detect repeated submissions or duplicate records and removing these as needed.
- Ambiguous responses, such as ticking between two adjacent Likert points, will be recoded to the lower category according to pre-specified rules; responses that cannot be categorised will be recorded as missing (MI).

Quality assurance measures

- A random subset of the entered data (e.g., 10%) will be independently checked by a senior staff member for accuracy and consistency.
- Errors or inconsistencies identified during these checks will be documented, corrected, and reported back to the data entry staff to improve future accuracy.
- Data collection tools include validation checks, where possible, to minimise entry errors (e.g., preventing invalid ranges, empty fields, or out-of-range numeric entries).

Statistical methods

Key Evaluation Questions

Statistical analyses are conducted after the data are collated, cleaned and assessed for quality, after the full dataset is available – baseline, follow up, and workshop data. All analyses will use two-tailed statistical tests with statistical significance assessed at $\alpha = 0.05$. The study is powered at 0.8 to detect an effect size of 9% (full sample) or 11.5% (priority subsample) increases in applications and enrolments. Prior to analysis, the analysis pipeline (data and coding errors, modelling errors) will be tested using a scrambled school-level treatment indicator.

Analyses will follow an intention-to-treat (ITT) approach, whereby students and schools will be analysed according to their assigned treatment condition regardless of the level of participation in the initiative. Primary analyses will be conducted using complete case data for the relevant outcomes and covariates.

To understand the initiative effects on student aspirations to higher education (KEQ1), the model diagnostics will include:

- Residuals: assessing normality and homoscedasticity through inspection of residual plots.



- Random effects: examining the distribution of school-level random intercepts and identifying extreme values.
- Influence: assessing the impact of individual students or schools on overall estimates using Cook's distance and leverage measures.
- Multicollinearity: examining variance inflation factors (VIF) to ensure no high collinearity between covariates. If covariates are highly correlated, such as initial orientation and aspirations to higher education, the degree of multicollinearity will be assessed using VIF thresholds (e.g., VIF > 5). Where substantial multicollinearity is detected, alternative model specifications will be explored, likely retaining the covariate most theoretically relevant to the outcome (initial aspirations).
- Model fit: using AIC/BIC comparisons and examining marginal and conditional R^2 values.

For KEQ1, a linear mixed effect model is used to estimate the effect of treatment on student aspirations to higher education, adjusting for two stratification variables used in randomisation (fixed effect): Year 10 outreach participation in 2024 (yes vs. no), and (2) historical tertiary application rates (e.g. below vs above the study-group average of the percentage of the schools' Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre tertiary application rates). The primary predictor for all analyses is allocation, treated as a fixed effect along with the student's baseline orientation score and baseline aspiration score. The school is included as a random intercept to account for clustering. The model is specified below.

$$Y_{ij} = \beta 0 + \beta 1\ \text{Allocation}_j + \beta 2\ \text{BaselineOrientation}_{ij} + \beta 3\ \text{BaselineAspiration}_{ij} + \beta 4\ \text{Y10PrevOutreach}_j + \beta 5\ \text{Tertiaryapp}_j + u_j + \epsilon_{ij}$$

Where:

- Yij = student aspiration score at follow up.
- Allocationj = 1 if WP Activity, 0 if Course Guides
- BaselineOrientation ij = Student's baseline orientation score
- BaselineAspiration ij = student's baseline aspiration score
- Y10PrevOutreachj = 1 if school Year 10 students received previous outreach in 2024, 0 if not
- Tertiaryappj = 1 if each school's historical VTAC tertiary application rate in 2025 is above study-group average, 0 if not
- u_j= school-level random intercept
- ϵ_{ij}= student-level residual

Two variables, notably baseline orientation and baseline aspirations to higher education, may be highly correlated. Their association will therefore be assessed during the pre-treatment analysis using the appropriate correlation measure and variance inflation factors (VIFs) when included in the proposed model. If substantial multicollinearity is identified (e.g., VIF > 5), the two variables will not be included simultaneously in the primary model. Baseline aspirations to higher education will be retained in preference to baseline orientation because it has the more direct theoretical relationship with the primary outcomes of tertiary applications and enrolments.

In sensitivity analyses, the school-level, continuous application rate may be used to explore whether using the full scale improves precision or alters the estimated treatment effect.

To understand the initiative effects on application and enrolment (KEQ2), model diagnostics assess similar characteristics to KEQ1, but with the following focus:



- residuals, examining Pearson or deviance residuals to detect poorly fitted observations
- model fit, using log-likelihood, AIC/BIC and conditional residual plots.

A mixed-effects logistic regression model is used to estimate the odds of submitting an application to any tertiary institution, and separately, the odds of enrolment in higher education, with the trial arm as the main predictor.

As above, the model adjusts for two stratification variables used in randomisation (fixed effect): Year 10 outreach participation in 2024 (yes vs. no), and (2) historical tertiary application rates (e.g. below vs above the study-group average of the percentage of the schools' VTAC tertiary application rates). School is included as a random intercept to account for clustering, and baseline orientation score is included as a student-level covariate.

The model is specified as:

$$\text{Logit}(p_{ij}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Allocation}_j + \beta_2 \text{BaselineOrientation}_{ij} + \beta_3 \text{BaselineAspiration}_{ij} + \beta_4 \text{PrevOutreach}_j + \beta_5 \text{Tertiaryapp}_j + u_j$$

Where:

- p_{ij} = probability that student i in school j applies to / enrols in higher education
- Allocationj = 1 if WP Activity, 0 if Course Guides
- BaselineOrientation ij = Student's baseline orientation score (baseline covariate)
- BaselineAspiration ij = student's baseline aspiration score (baseline covariate)
- PrevOutreachj = 1 if school Year 10 students received previous outreach in 2024, 0 if not
- Tertiaryappj = 1 if each school's historical VTAC tertiary application rate in 2025 is above study-group average, 0 if not
- u_j= school-level random intercept

For KEQ3, this model is extended to include an interaction term between allocation and baseline orientation score. This allows formal testing of whether the treatment effect varies according to students' initial orientation toward higher education. The association between baseline orientation score and the outcome will initially be assumed to be linear and will be assessed during model diagnostics. Where there is evidence of substantial non-linearity, an alternative specification will be considered and documented prior to analysis of the actual treatment effect.

Secondary analyses

Exploratory analyses will be used to test the elements of the theory of change. Specifically, regression models will examine the associations between (1) students' self-efficacy, (2) perceived youth ambassador trustworthiness, and intention to apply to university. A composite self-efficacy score will be created from three items assessing students' confidence in their ability to succeed in higher education. Similarly, a composite youth ambassador trustworthiness score will be created from two items examining the ambassador's relatability and the perceived reliability of their advice. Prior to scale construction, internal consistency will be assessed using Cronbach's alpha and item–total correlations. Where internal consistency is acceptable (<= 0.70), composite scores will be calculated as the mean of the relevant items.

Linear regression models will then be used to examine whether self-efficacy and perceived youth ambassador trustworthiness predict students' intention to apply to university. To



address EQ3, examining how delivery mode influences students' intention to apply to university, delivery mode will be included as a predictor in the regression model predicting application intention.

In the models above, baseline orientation will be included as a covariate to account for potential differences in the characteristics of students attending workshops.

Additional analyses

Subgroup analyses are also reported to estimate the intervention effect separately for priority students (low orientation to higher education) and non-priority students. Priority students are defined using the distribution of the baseline orientation score, with the primary threshold set at the lowest quartile, identifying students with comparatively low orientation while maintaining sufficient sample sizes for stable estimates.

Sensitivity analyses will explore other thresholds, such as a median split of the orientation score, to assess whether findings are robust to different definitions of low orientation.

Data management

Physical data (the baseline questionnaires and post-workshop questionnaires) will be stored in a locked cupboard at Deakin University. These will only be accessible by the Deakin University WP team.

Digital data will only be accessible through the university's password-protected digital portals. The project will store all data in RDS software, accessible only to the project team. Data are kept for 15 years after participants reach the age of 18, with the systems at Deakin University automatically deleting this data. The data are deleted after this required timeframe automatically by the RDS software.

Deakin University will remain the data custodians of all related project data; however, we agree to share data relating to the project with only project team members. The Grant Agreement from Curtin University (formed by the Head Agreement with the Commonwealth Government) does note that IP and Project Material will vest in Curtin, with Deakin retaining a permanent and free worldwide non-exclusive license to "use, adapt and exploit the project materials for any purpose". To ensure protection from identification, we will regenerate a unique study ID (from the codes used for tracking – i.e. first letters of their names and birth month/day) so that even the original derived code is no longer retained, and to further protect individuals from reidentification.

TWK Research collect the follow up questionnaire via phone. The data is saved internally at TWK in a specific job/project folder with limited staff access. All data collected shall be identifiable and linked to a project by a unique identifier [number or other system]. Received data (source) is placed in the appropriate received folder in the job Folder. Working copies of sample are kept in Working folders. Output is placed in the appropriate Data Processing folder in the job Folder.

All primary company and customer data reside on servers located at the Global Switch data centre in Australia. This Tier IV+ facility provides a secure, resilient, and certified environment for our primary infrastructure. This certified environment ensures that TWK's primary data is protected by industry-leading standards for physical security, access control, and environmental management.



Within TWK, all data is saved internally at TWK in a specific job/project folder with limited staff access and with the following protocols:

- All data collected shall be identifiable and linked to a project by a unique identifier [number or other system]
- Received data (source) is placed in the appropriate received folder in the job Folder.
- Working copies of sample are kept in working folders
- Output is placed in the appropriate Data Processing folder in the job folder

Outside of TWK, all primary company and customer data resides on servers located at the Global Switch data centre at 400 Harris Street, Ultimo, NSW. This Tier IV+ facility provides a secure, resilient, and certified environment for our primary infrastructure.

This certified environment ensures that TWK's primary data is protected by industry-leading standards for physical security, access control, and environmental management.

Quality control and quality assurance

The total number of entries in the dataset is compared against the total number of consenting students submitted by each school. If discrepancies are identified, the data entry team will review the original survey forms to locate missing entries or correct errors.

A senior staff member will independently verify a random 10% of entries for accuracy at the end of each day; any coding errors, inconsistencies, or misalignments with the coding framework will be documented and corrected, with feedback provided to the data entry staff to prevent recurrence. Any coding errors are noted, reported and further instructions will be provided to the data entry person.

Attrition analyses will assess whether loss to follow-up differs between treatment groups and whether baseline characteristics predict missing outcomes. Sensitivity analyses will be conducted to assess the robustness of findings to missing data using extreme case assumptions, whereby missing outcomes are alternatively imputed as all positive or all negative outcomes.

5. Publication

Findings will be disseminated in accessible formats, including to the following groups:

- Victorian Widening Participation Network: Presentation of key findings, including equity-focused results and implications for school-directed WP program design and delivery.
- Participating schools: Summary presentation of findings

Further, the work will be shared through:

- A final report uploaded to ACSES Trials Registry (an open access repository of equity-focussed trials)
- Presentations at national conferences
- Peer-reviewed and sector-targeted publications



6. References

Barr, A., & Castleman, B. (2018). An Engine of Economic Opportunity: Intensive Advising, College Success, and Social Mobility. Texas A&M University Working Paper.

Bettinger, E. P., Long, B. T., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The role of application assistance and information in college decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA experiment. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3), 1205–1242.

Bettinger, E.P., Evans, B.J. (2019). College guidance for All: A randomised experiment in Pre-College Advising. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 0(0), 1-21. College Guidance for All: A Randomized Experiment in Pre-College Advising

Bos, Johannes M., Berman, Jacqueline, Kane, Thomas J., & Tseng, Fannie M. (2012). The Impacts of SOURCE: A Program to Support College Enrolment through Near-Peer, Low-Cost Student Advising. Paper presented at the *Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) 2012 Fall Research Conference*, Baltimore, MD.

Carrell, S.E. & Sacerdote, B. (2017). Why Do College-Going Interventions Work? *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 2017, 9(3), 124-151.

Oreopoulos, P., & Ford, R. (2016). Keeping College Options Open: A Field Experiment to Help All High School Seniors Through the College Application Process (NBER Working Paper No. 22320). National Bureau of Economic Research



7. Appendices

Recruitment materials

7.1.1. Recruitment email to schools to participate

Subject: Help Shape the Future of Student Pathways – Invitation to Join a University-Led Study

Dear [Principal/School Partnership Contact],

We're reaching out to invite your school to be part of an exciting research study led by Deakin University and Swinburne University.

This study explores how different types of outreach activities can support Year 11 and 12 students in planning for their future and accessing higher education. Your school's involvement would make a valuable contribution to improving equity and opportunity for students across Australia.

What's involved?

Participating schools will be randomly placed into one of two groups:

- Group A: Your students can take part in a series of engaging, university-led workshops—either at your school or on campus (your choice).
- All costs are covered, including casual relief teacher support and travel.
- Group B: Your students will receive course guides and information materials to support their study planning.
- All costs are covered.

Every school plays a vital role in helping us understand which activities best support students on their journey to tertiary study.

What we ask from your school:

- Host a 15-minute student assembly/class early in 2026, for the research team to explain the study and help consenting students to complete a short survey.
- Help share information with parents and caregivers, and manage their consent.
- For Group A schools: work with our university equity team to schedule and plan the workshops.

We've attached the plain language statement that outlines everything you need to know, including time commitments and how the results will be used.

If your school is interested in participating, simply reply to this email and we'll be in touch to confirm next steps.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to support your students and contribute to important research that strengthens access to higher education.

Warm regards,

[Name]



[Position]

[Contact Information]

7.1.2. Recruitment email to schools: Confirmation after allocation

Subject: Help Shape the Future of Student Pathways – Confirmation to Join a University Led Study

Title of study: The impact of a school-selected Year 11–12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments.

Principle Investigators: Nathan Coffey, Vera Gin, Jessica Foster, Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce

Dear [Principal/School Partnership Contact],

Thank you for your interest in taking part in the study, namely "The impact of a school selected Year 11–12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments" We're reaching out to confirm that your school has been allocated the following support for your Year 11 and 12 students this year.

<Team to select one of the below, as relevant to the school's random allocation>

- Group A: Your students will take part in a series of engaging, university-led workshops—either at your school or on campus (your choice).
- All costs are covered, including casual relief teacher support and travel.
- Group B: Your students will receive course guides and information materials to support their study planning.
- All costs are covered

Every school plays a vital role in helping us understand which activities best support

students on their journey to tertiary study.

What we ask from your school:

- Host a 15-minute student assembly/class early in 2026, and during this session, support students to complete short survey.
- Help share information with parents and caregivers, and manage their consent.
- For Group A schools: Work with our university equity team to schedule and plan the workshops (e.g. workshop selection, parental consent, timing and travel logistics, organising casual relief workers). The options of workshop are provided as an attachment.
- For Group B schools: Work with our university equity team to identify the relevant course guides and information materials that will help your Year 11 and 12 students. The available course guides will be discussed with you.

We've attached the plain language statement again, which outlines everything you need to know, including time commitments and how the results will be used.

If your school remains interested in participating, simply reply to this email and we'll be in touch to confirm next steps.

Warm regards,



[Name]

[Position]

[Contact Information]

7.1.3. Parent notification form

Subject: Opportunity for your child to participate in a University Research Study

Our school has been invited to take part in a research study run by Deakin University, and Swinburne University of Technology. This study has received Deakin University ethics approval.

The study aims to understand how different university outreach activities for Year 11 and 12 students, either workshops or course guides, support students' path towards further study.

Students in Years 11 and 12 will be invited to complete short questionnaires in early 2026 and again in early 2027. The questions ask about higher education goals and actions, as well as preparedness, knowledge and beliefs about higher education.

Participation is voluntary. We are asking if you consent for your child to take part, or not, by completing the attached consent form.

Students whose parents opt them out will not be included in the study. As we want them to benefit from the outreach activity provided, they will be invited to participate in all activities with their peers but will not submit the questionnaires.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Nathan Coffey on nathan.c@deakin.edu.au

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

- The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125
- Telephone: 9251 7129
- Email: research-ethics@deakin.edu.au
- Please quote project number 2025/HE001143. Please see attached information sheet for further information.

7.1.4. Recruitment: Schools for Sense-Making session

Title of study: The impact of a school-selected Year 11–12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments.

Principle Investigators: Nathan Coffey, Vera Gin, Jessica Foster, Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce

Dear _____

You are invited to take part in a sense-making focus group that forms part of this study. This session aims to share preliminary findings from the research and to give school staff an opportunity to discuss and interpret the results together.



Your participation is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to take part will have no impact on your relationship with ACSES, Deakin University or your university.

What is the study about?

This study looks at how well current Widening Participation (WP) initiatives support Year 11 and 12 students, especially those in schools like yours. These students often have less access to practical knowledge about university, such as what it costs, what support is available, and what career opportunities it can lead to.

Senior secondary students are usually hard to reach because schools focus heavily on VCE study time, so we know less about whether WP activities at this stage actually help shape their aspirations, university applications, or enrolments. This trial aimed to understand whether WP makes a meaningful difference for these students and how universities and schools can best use their resources to improve equity.

The findings will help universities, policymakers, and schools decide what to keep, what to scale, and what to change in WP programs for Year 11 and 12 students.

Purpose of the sense-making session

This focus group will help the research team understand how the findings align with your experiences and perspectives as school staff supporting Year 11 and 12 students.

During the session, we will discuss three key questions:

- Is there anything that surprises you from these findings?
- Are there any findings that don't make sense to you?
- What could the university do to help these students the most?

Who is doing the study?

This study is being conducted by:

- Nathan Coffey, Jess Foster and Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce, Deakin University
- Vera Gin, Swinburne University

This study has received Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG) approval (reference number: 2025/HE001200)

Session details

The session will take place online and in-person at Deakin Downtown, on <insert>. The link to join this presentation and discussion is here: <insert>.

What participation involves

The sense-making focus group will last approximately 60–90 minutes. Discussion will occur in a group setting, facilitated by the research team. Notes will be taken during the session. and no names will be attached to comments in any analysis or reporting. You are welcome to attend and listen without contributing if you prefer.

What should I do next?

If you wish to participate in the sense-making session, please read the full study details in the Plain Language Statement, complete the attached consent form and return it to the



research team. If you do not wish to participate, you can ignore this invitation or contact the team to opt out at any time.

Contact information:

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you can contact the Principal Investigators Nathan Coffey at nathan.c@deakin.edu.au, or Vera Gin vgin@swinburne.edu.au, or Patricia Vermillion Peirce at p.vermillionpeirce@deakin.edu.au

Complaints:

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number [2025/HE001200]. This study has received Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG) approval (reference number: 2025/HE001200)

7.1.5. Recruitment: University WP teams for Sense-Making session

Title of study: The impact of a school-selected Year 11–12 outreach program on tertiary applications and enrolments.

Principle Investigators: Nathan Coffey, Vera Gin, Jessica Foster, Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce

Dear _____,

You are invited to take part in a sense-making focus group that forms part of this study. This session aims to share preliminary findings from the research and to give university staff an opportunity to discuss and interpret the results together.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. Choosing not to take part will have no impact on your relationship with ACSES, Deakin University or your university.

What is the study about?

This study looked at how well current Widening Participation (WP) initiatives support Year 11 and 12 students, especially those in schools with lower ICSEA. These students often have less access to practical knowledge about university, such as what it costs, what support is available, and what career opportunities it can lead to.

Senior secondary students are usually hard to reach because schools focus heavily on VCE study time, so we know less about whether WP activities at this stage actually help shape their aspirations, university applications, or enrolments. This trial aimed to understand whether WP makes a meaningful difference for these students and how universities and schools can best use their resources to improve equity.

The findings will help universities, policymakers, and schools decide what to keep, what to scale, and what to change in WP programs for Year 11 and 12 students.

Purpose of the sense-making session

This focus group will help the research team understand how the findings align with your experiences and perspectives as university staff engaged in widening participation activities.



During the session, we will discuss three key questions:

- Is there anything that surprises you from these findings?
- Are there any findings that don't make sense to you?
- What could the university do to help these students the most?

Who is doing the study?

This study is being conducted by:

- Nathan Coffey, Jess Foster and Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce, Deakin University
- Vera Gin, Swinburne University

This study has received Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG) approval (reference number: 2025/HE001200)

Session details

The session will take place online and in-person at Deakin Downtown, on <insert day and time>. The link to join this presentation and discussion is here: <insert link>.

What participation involves

The sense-making focus group will last approximately 60–90 minutes. Discussion will occur in a group setting, facilitated by the research team. Notes will be taken during the session. and no names will be attached to comments in any analysis or reporting. You are welcome to attend and listen without contributing if you prefer.

What should I do next?

If you wish to participate in the sense-making session, please read the full study details in the Plain Language Statement, complete the attached consent form and return it to the research team. If you do not wish to participate, you can ignore this invitation or contact the team to opt out at any time.

Contact information:

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you can contact the Principal Investigators Nathan Coffey at nathan.c@deakin.edu.au, or Vera Gin vgin@swinburne.edu.au, or Patricia Vermillion Peirce at p.vermillionpeirce@deakin.edu.au

Complaints:

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Human Research Ethics Office, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number [2025/HE001200].

This study has received Human Ethics Advisory Group (HEAG) approval (reference number: 2025/HE001200)

Data collection instruments



7.2.1. Data collection: Baseline assessment Assembly Discussion Guide

Welcome and introduction

Good morning/afternoon everyone, and thank you for joining us.

We're from Deakin and Swinburne Universities. Today we're here to tell you about a research study that your school is part of. The study looks at whether outreach programs, things like university workshops or experience days, help students like you to learn more about your future study options.

We're visiting all 32 schools that are part of this project, and today we'll explain what the study involves, what your choices are, and what happens next.

About the study

This study is about understanding how activities that schools run with universities, like information sessions or experience days, or even course guides, can help students plan their future study or career pathways.

We're asking all Year 11 and 12 students to take part because your views are really important. What we learn from this research will help schools and universities improve how they support students to reach their goals after school.

What participation involves

If you choose to take part: - -

- You'll complete a short questionnaire today. It takes about 5 minutes, and you'll be asked about your current study plans and what you know about university.
- We'll contact you again early in 2027 for a short follow-up survey (about 10 minutes).

You don't have to prepare anything, and you can skip any question you don't want to answer.

Voluntary participation and confidentiality

Taking part is completely your choice. You can say yes or no today.

You can change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Your teachers won't know your individual answers, or even if you agreed to take part.

All your responses are confidential and stored securely.

You'll see on your form that we ask for part of your birth date and the first couple of letters of your surname - this is just so we can match your two surveys – the one from today and the one next year. We won't use your name.

What to do now

You've all been given a Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form in your booklet. Please take a few minutes to read it through. We'll stay here while you do in case you have any questions.

How to consent



If you're happy to take part, tick the box that says "I agree to take part." If you are, turn your page and complete the remaining questions.

If you'd prefer not to take part, tick the box that says "I do not wish to take part." You don't have to complete the remaining questions.

There are two additional questions, asking if you are ok that we share your responses (no names or other identifying information, like your phone number) to others for their ethical research purposes.

If you're happy to have your anonymised responses shared, tick the box that says "I want my de-identified responses to be used again in future research."

If you'd prefer not for us to share this, tick the box that says "I do not want my de identified responses to be used in any other research.

If you are happy to answer the questions, turn your page and complete the remaining questions.

When you're done, close your books and please hand your form back to us.

Before we finish, are there any questions?

You can also contact the researchers listed on the information sheet, or talk to your teacher later if you think of something after this session.

Thank you all for your time and for listening so carefully.

Notes for research team

1. Maintain a neutral tone. participation must not be encouraged or discouraged.

2. Check for understanding

3. Allow quiet reading time for students before they complete the consent form.

4. Make sure that the coloured or coded forms (for students opted out by parents) are distributed only by school staff.

5. Collect the forms at the end.

7.2.2. Data collection: Baseline assessment / Questionnaire for students

Participant information sheet

<to insert the PLS and consent form for students>

Questionnaire

Before you begin, it's important to emphasise:

Your privacy. Your answers are confidential. You will complete the survey on your own, and you'll hand it in after closing the booklet, so no one, including teachers, other students, or the research team, will see your responses as you submit it. Your name will not be written anywhere on the survey. The information you provide will only be linked to a code, not to your identity.



Your choice. Completing this survey is completely voluntary. You can choose to skip any question or stop at any time. Students who don't complete the survey will still take part in all school activities, so no one will know who did or didn't participate.

Your experiences and beliefs. Some students might feel confident about these topics and others might not - that's totally normal. Just answer in the way that feels most true for you.

Your beliefs matter. Thank you for helping us understand your experience and goals.

If you would like to participate, turn the page and complete the short questionnaire.

1. What is your birthday and month as a four digit number (12 August is '1208'): _____
2. What is the first two letters of your last name? _____
3. What is the name of your secondary school? _____
4. What is your current year group
   ___Year 11
   ___Year 12
5. What is your current stream of study (tick all that apply)
   ___VCE
   ___VM
   ___VTEC
6. Please indicate how much you disagree/agree with each statement below, by circling the appropriate response to each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I want to go to university or TAFE after I complete my secondary studies.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
b. I know what subjects I need to study at school to get into a university or TAFE course that may interest me.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
c. I keep up with my school work so I have the grades needed for university or TAFE.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
d. I know I could find a way to fund my higher education studies if I wanted to attend	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
e. I feel that I would "fit in" at university or TAFE.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
f. I believe I am the kind of person who could succeed at university or TAFE.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree



7. So we can follow up with you in 2027, and ask you similar types of questions again, please provide your phone number* here:

_____

*This phone number will be provided to an independent research company to ring you in early 2027 and ask you similar questions in a very short questionnaire. This phone number will not be used for any other purpose.

7.2.3. Data collection: Post Workshop assessment

Participant information sheet

You've just completed a university outreach workshop. We'd like to ask you a few quick questions to find out what you thought and what you learned.

By filling in this form, you agree for your answers to be used (anonymously) in the research study led by Deakin and Swinburne Universities.

Your responses will help us understand how these workshops supported students towards higher education. You can skip any question you don't want to answer.

Your answers will be linked to your other questionnaire responses using a short code (part of your birth date and the first couple of letters in your surname) instead of your name.

Thank you for taking part!

Post-workshop questionnaire

1. What is your birth day and month as a four digit number (12 August is '1208')____
2. What is the first two letters of your last name? _____
3. What is the name of your secondary school? _____
4. Please indicate how much you disagree with each of the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am confident that I could handle the challenges of studying at university or TAFE.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
b. I can find ways to overcome obstacles that might stop me from applying or enrolling.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree



c. If I work hard enough, I can succeed at university or TAFE.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
d. The youth ambassador(s) seemed like a person/people I could relate to.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
e. I believe the youth ambassador(s) gave honest and reliable advice about higher education.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
f. I will apply to university when I finish Year 12.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

Workshop Participation

5. Was your workshop session delivered in your school or on a university campus?

___ school

___ university campus

6. What was the focus of your session?

_____

7.2.4. Data collection: Follow up Questionnaire and script

Opening script:

Hello, my name is [interviewer name], and I'm calling from TWK Research on behalf of Deakin, Swinburne and Curtin Universities. You took part in a short student survey at your school in 2026 about university plans and goals. Do you remember that?

If yes, continue.

If no, "That's okay. I can remind you briefly. It was part of a study looking at how school outreach programs help students towards higher education."

If they want more information about the study, please provide responses according to the PLS for students <see PLS - students>.

Confirm consent:

Before we begin, I just need to confirm. Do you still agree to take part in a short follow-up survey today? It will take about 5 minutes. Your answers are confidential to the research team, and you can stop at any time.

If "yes", continue.



If “no”, thank them and end call.

Survey introduction:

I’ll ask you a few questions about your study plans and, if you’re in Year 12, whether you’ve applied for or enrolled in any tertiary courses. There are no right or wrong answers; we just want to understand students’ experiences.

So I know what questions to ask you, can you confirm what year you were last year

If Year 11, ask “all students” and “Year 11 students” questions only

If Year 12, ask “all students” and “Year 12 students” questions only

All students

Unique ID for tracking student responses

What is your birth day and month as a four digit number (12 August is ‘1208’)

What is the first two letters of your last name?

What is/was the name of your secondary school in 2026?

Year 11 students only

“I’m going to say a few statements to you. For each statement, please say how much you agree or disagree as one of five responses: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

NOTE: If they say “disagree”, confirm if they “strongly disagree” or “disagree”. If they say “agree”, ask them to confirm if they “strongly agree” or “agree”.

I want to go to university or TAFE after I complete my secondary studies.

I know what subjects I need to study at school to get into a university or TAFE course that may interest me.

I keep up with my schoolwork so I have the grades needed for university.

I know I could find a way to fund my higher education studies if I wanted to attend

I have talked to a teacher or career adviser about going to university or TAFE.

I have asked my family or friends about university or TAFE options.

I have looked at university websites or brochures to learn about courses.

I know how to apply to university or TAFE when/if the time comes.

I will apply to either university or TAFE.

I believe I am the kind of person who could succeed at university or TAFE.

I feel that I would “fit in” at university or TAFE.

Year 12 students only

Applications and enrolment in higher education

Have you submitted a tertiary application?” (yes/no)



If yes, did you receive an offer of a place at university?" (yes/no)

If yes, did you accept an offer of enrolment?" (yes/no)

Closing script:

That's all the questions I have. Thank you for your time, we really appreciate your help.
If you'd like to learn more about the study or have questions, you can contact <name> at Deakin University (phone number).

7.2.5. Data collection: Sense-Making Session Discussion Guide

Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for joining us today.

Summary of approach and purpose of the study

We undertook a study to understand how effective the Widening Participation (WP) model has been in supporting senior year students (Year 11 and 12) from more disadvantaged schools in Victoria to apply for higher education.

Purpose of the sense-making session

The purpose of the sense-making session is to share the results with all schools that participated in the study, and universities that deliver WP in Victoria, and who may be interested in learning about the evaluation results. We also want to provide an opportunity for schools and university WP teams to offer insights as to the reasons for the specific findings (what do these findings mean to you?).

How any shared information will be used

We are not recording the session, nor are we recording who takes part. We will summarise the insights shared as part of our discussion, and these (anonymised) points will be summarised in the final report.

Provide an opportunity to ask any questions

Does anyone have any questions before we begin?

Sense-making guide

WP activities

Schools were allocated to one of two activities.

- *Group B was allocated to receive course guides from the university.*
- *Group A was provided outreach, and offered a range of different options. These were about:*
  - *Study skills (e.g. information about study techniques, time management strategies, and exam preparation tips)*
  - *Wellbeing (e.g. understanding wellbeing, strategies to manage stress, physical and mental wellbeing)*
  - *Financial literacy (e.g. managing personal finances, budgeting, planning for costs beyond schools, and setting goals)*



- *Career mapping (e.g. self-investigation to identify a career, and skills needed, and the study needed to get there)*
- *Pathway planning, using case studies to understand alterative pathways to higher education*
- *Financial support and special access scheme (e.g. eligibility criteria, costs of university)*

Study design

Interested schools were randomised into two groups: one group that will receive the WP activity ("WP group"), and the other group that will receive course guides for their Year 12 students ("course guide group"). We collected information from students, tracking their initial orientation towards higher education (in a baseline survey) to measuring short term mindset changes (in post workshop questionnaires) to tertiary aspirations and applications (in a follow up survey a year later). We compared the results between those that received the WP activity, with those that received the Course Guides.

Study findings

<TBC>

Questions to Group

We'd like to ask you:

Is there anything that surprises you from these findings?

Are there any findings that don't make sense to you?

What about the context of these schools or university WP provision could have influenced these results?

What could the university to help these students the most?

7.2.6. Interview distress protocol: Assembly / baseline questionnaire

Training and Qualifications of Interviewers

All sessions will be conducted by the research team in collaboration with school staff (e.g., counsellors or wellbeing officers).

Team members must have:

- Experience working with adolescents (16–18 years).
- Skills in active listening, empathy, and group facilitation.
- Awareness of mandatory reporting obligations (e.g., suspected abuse, self-harm, or harm to others).

Staff will receive a study-specific briefing, including:

- Indicators of distress in a group context
- Escalation procedures for mild, moderate, or severe distress

Monitoring for Distress

Observed during assembly/workshops through:



- Statements or behaviors showing distress such as verbal expressions of worry, crying, withdrawal)
- Verbal disclosure of self-harm thoughts or intentions to harm others
- Verbal disclosure of fear or danger related to participation
- Signs may also include body language changes, such as slumping, fidgeting, avoidance, hesitation, or tone of voice changes.

Steps if Distress is Detected

1. Mild or Expected Distress

- Pause the session briefly if possible.
- Offer reassurance and remind all students participation is voluntary.
- Students can choose to continue, take a break, or step out.
- Document incident in a distress log on Deakin University's secure site and folder.

2. Moderate Distress, where there is no Imminent Danger

- Engage the student individually with supportive dialogue.
- Offer contact information for support services, such as the school counsellor, or Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Allow the student to leave the room or session if desired.
- Document incident; notify school staff for follow-up.

3. Severe Distress with Imminent Risk: If the student expresses self-harm intent or danger

- Ensure immediate safety:
    - Student may contact a parent/guardian or school counsellor directly.
    - If imminent risk, call emergency services (000).
- Notify study lead immediately.
- Research team documents actions confidentially.

Documentation and Follow-Up

- Any distress incident will be logged confidentially, using the attached protocol form.

Confidentiality

- Only authorised staff will access distress logs, and information will be shared only as required for safety purposes (e.g., with management staff).

Interview distress protocol log

Phone number: _____

Date / Time of distress incident: _____

Indications of Distress	Follow-Up Actions for Interviewer	Participant Responses / Behaviours (Notes)	Safety Concern? (Y/N)	Actions taken
Student expresses anxiety, frustration, or repeated negative self-talk about academic	• Pause the session if possible; offer reassurance • Remind student participation is voluntary;			



performance or future plans	• Offer break, or opt out			
Student appears withdrawn, tearful, or upset beyond expected levels	Engage individually; offer supportive dialogue • provide contact info for school counsellor / Kids Helpline • Allow break or exit			
Student expresses thoughts of self harm or suicidal ideation	• Immediately assess urgency • connects with school staff and/or parent/guardian • if imminent risk, contact emergency services (000) • Notify study lead			
Student indicates they ay be in danger if someone finds out about their participation or responses	• Ensure safety via confidentiality • Connect with safe adult (school staff / parent)			

7.2.7. Interview distress protocol: Follow up questionnaire

Training and Qualifications of Interviewers

All interviews will be conducted by trained staff from the independent research agency. Interviewers must have:

- Experience conducting research with adolescents (16–18 years).
- Skills in adolescent communication, active listening, and rapport-building.
- Awareness of mandatory reporting obligations (e.g., suspected abuse, self-harm, or harm to others).

Interviewers will receive a briefing specific to this study, including role-playing potential scenarios, indicators of distress, and escalation procedures.

Monitoring for Distress

Interviewers will observe for potential indications of emotional distress beyond what is expected for the survey:

- Statements or behaviors indicating the interview is too stressful, e.g., repeated expressions of anxiety, frustration, or crying
- Statements suggesting self-harm or suicidal thoughts.
- Statements indicating the student may be in danger if others knew about their participation or responses.



During phone interviews, these signs may appear as tone of voice changes, prolonged pauses, agitation, or verbal expressions of worry, shame, or fear.

Steps if Distress is Detected

1. Mild or Expected Distress: If the student exhibits stress within the expected range for the topic:

- Interviewer pauses, offers reassurance, and reminds the student that participation is voluntary.
- The student can choose to: continue, take a short break, or stop the interview.
- Interviewer notes the incident in a secure log.

2. Moderate Distress, where there is no Imminent Danger: If distress appears significant but there is no immediate risk:

- Interviewer engages in supportive dialogue to help the student regroup.
- Interviewer provides contact information for support services: Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Interview is paused or terminated as needed; student's choice is respected.

3. Severe Distress with Imminent Risk: If the student expresses self-harm intent, or danger:

- Interviewer ensures the student's immediate safety by:
    a. Encouraging contact with a parent, or trusted school staff member.
    b. Contacting emergency services if necessary (000).
- Interviewer documents the incident confidentially and notifies the study lead.

Documentation and Follow-Up

- Any distress incident will be logged confidentially, using the attached protocol forms.

Confidentiality

- Only authorised staff will access distress logs, and information will be shared only as required for safety purposes (e.g., with management staff).

Interview distress protocol log

Phone number: _____

Date / Time of call: _____

Indications of Distress	Follow-Up Actions for Interviewer	Participant Responses / Behaviours (Notes)	Safety Concern? (Y/N)	Actions taken
Student expresses anxiety, frustration, or repeated negative self-talk about academic performance or future plans	• Pause the session if possible; offer reassurance • Remind student participation is voluntary; ask if they wish to continue, take a break, or stop			
Student appears withdrawn, tearful, or upset	• Pause; offer supportive dialogue			



beyond expected levels	• check if students wants to continue or stop • provide contact ifo for support services (Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800)			
Student expresses thoughts of self harm or suicidal ideation	• Immediately assess urgency • encourage student to contact parent/guardian or trusted school staff • if imminent risk, contact emergency services; notify study lead			
Student indicates they may be in danger if someone finds out about their participation or responses	• Ensure safety via confidentiality • check if student wants to continue or stop • encourage contacting safe person			

7.3 Implementation fidelity checklists

7.3.1. Year 12 Financial Special Access workshop

School Name:	
Date of Year 12 workshop:	

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

		Confirm
Planning		
1.1.	School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 12 students	☐
1.2.	School invited all Year 12 students to participate	☐
Delivery team		
2.1.	Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.2.	Mentors, with lived experience with financial support/special access and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.3.	Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery		
3.1.	Workshop(s) delivered in-school, in-person, to the Year 12 cohort or groups of Year 12 students.	☐
3.2.	The Year 12 students include those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.3.	All consenting Year 12 students present on the day attended the session.	☐

3.4.	Workshop used slides agreed between Deakin and Swinburne to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.5.	Content coverage: Equity scheme eligibility	☐
3.6.	Content coverage: higher education application process	☐
3.7.	Content coverage: financial supports including HELP loans, CSP, and the different merit, academic and equity scholarships available	☐
3.8.	Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about financial support, special access and the higher education application process	☐
Workshop tailoring		
3.9.	Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.10.	Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form		
4.1.	Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.2.	Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.

7.3.2. Year 11 Career Mapping

School Name:	
Date of Year 11 workshop:	
Delivery location (circle one)	**In School** **On Campus**

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

		Confirm
Planning		
1.3.	School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 11 students	☐
1.4.	School leadership selected this delivery location (in school vs. on campus) as relevant to their Year 11 students	☐
1.5.	School invited all Year 11 students to participate	☐
Delivery team		
2.4.	Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.5.	Mentors, with lived experience with mapping career pathways and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.6.	Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery		

3.11.	Workshop(s) delivered in-person, within a computer lab, to the Year 11 cohort or groups of Year 11 students.	☐
3.12.	The Year 11 students included those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.13.	All consenting Year 11 students present on the day attended the session.	☐
3.14.	Workshop used Deakin slides to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.15.	Task coverage: students identify a career, and find a job on the internet	☐
3.16.	Task coverage: students identify the skills they need for this career, and determine if this is a growth area	☐
3.17.	Task coverage: students identify what they have to study towards this career	
3.18.	Task coverage: costs for university courses relevant to the career	
3.19.	Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about career pathways	☐
Workshop tailoring		
3.20.	Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.21.	Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form		
4.3.	Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.4.	Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.

7.3.3. Year 11 Financial Literacy

School Name:	
Date of Year 12 workshop:	
Delivery location (circle one)	**In School** **On Campus**

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

		Confirm
Planning		
1.6.	School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 11 students	☐
1.7.	School leadership selected this delivery location (in school vs. on campus) as relevant to their Year 11 students	☐

1.8.	School invited all Year 11 students to participate	☐
Delivery team		
2.7.	Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.8.	Mentors, with lived experience with managing / financial literacy and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.9.	Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery		
3.22.	Workshop(s) delivered in-person, to the Year 11 cohort or groups of Year 11 students.	☐
3.23.	The Year 11 students included those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.24.	All consenting Year 11 students present on the day attended the session.	☐
3.25.	Workshop used slides agreed between Deakin and Swinburne to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.26.	Content coverage: budgeting effectively, including saving and spending now and in the future	☐
3.27.	Content coverage: understanding the costs of life beyond schools (using scenarios)	☐
3.28.	Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about financial literacy	☐
Workshop tailoring		
3.29.	Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.30.	Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form		
4.5.	Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.6.	Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.

7.3.4. Year 11 Pathways

School Name:	
Date of Year 12 workshop:	
Delivery location (circle one)	**In School** **On Campus**

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

		Confirm
Planning		

1.9.	School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 11 students	☐
1.10.	School leadership selected this delivery location (in school vs. on campus) as relevant to their Year 11 students	☐
1.11.	School invited all Year 11 students to participate	☐
Delivery team		
2.10.	Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.11.	Mentors, with lived experience with alternative pathways into higher education and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.12.	Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery		
3.31.	Workshop(s) delivered in-person, to the Year 11 cohort or groups of Year 11 students.	☐
3.32.	The Year 11 students included those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.33.	All consenting Year 11 students present on the day attended the session.	☐
3.34.	Workshop used slides agreed between Deakin and Swinburne to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.35.	Content coverage: range of alternative pathways into higher education, including ATAR, non-ATAR, experience, transferring, early pathways (dual-sector)	☐
3.36.	Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about pathways into higher education	☐
Workshop tailoring		
3.37.	Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.38.	Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form		
4.7.	Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.8.	Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.

7.3.5. Year 11 Study Skills

School Name:	
Date of Year 11 workshop:	
Delivery location (circle one)	**In School** **On Campus**

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

	Confirm
Planning	
1.12. School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 11 students	☐
1.13. School leadership selected this delivery location (in school vs. on campus) as relevant to their Year 11 students	☐
1.14. School invited all Year 11 students to participate	☐
Delivery team	
2.13. Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.14. Mentors, with lived experience with building study skills and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.15. Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery	
3.39. Workshop(s) delivered in-person, to the Year 11 cohort or groups of Year 11 students.	☐
3.40. The Year 11 students included those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.41. All consenting Year 11 students present on the day attended the session.	☐
3.42. Workshop used Swinburne slides (or modified slides to match these) to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.43. Content coverage: study techniques	☐
3.44. Content coverage: time management strategies	☐
3.45. Content coverage: exam preparation tips	☐
3.46. Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about study skills	☐
Workshop tailoring	
3.47. Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.48. Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form	
4.9. Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.10. Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.

7.3.5. Year 11 Wellbeing

School Name:



Date of Year 12 workshop:	
Delivery location (circle one)	**In School** **On Campus**

Please confirm the following elements of the workshop:

		Confirm
Planning		
1.15.	School leadership selected this workshop as relevant for their Year 11 students	☐
1.16.	School leadership selected this delivery location (in school vs. on campus) as relevant to their Year 11 students	☐
1.17.	School invited all Year 11 students to participate	☐
Delivery team		
2.16.	Outreach delivered by equity teams (Deakin and Swinburne) with experience in delivering WP to senior secondary students	☐
2.17.	Mentors, with lived experience with managing wellbeing and similar backgrounds to students, supported facilitation	☐
2.18.	Mentors received training on outreach topic and facilitation skills	☐
Workshop delivery		
3.49.	Workshop(s) delivered in-person, to the Year 11 cohort or groups of Year 11 students.	☐
3.50.	The Year 11 students included those expected to follow a higher education pathway, as well as those not expected to follow this pathway.	☐
3.51.	All consenting Year 11 students present on the day attended the session.	☐
3.52.	Workshop used slides agreed between Deakin and Swinburne to ensure consistent coverage of core topics.	☐
3.53.	Content coverage: meaning and importance of wellbeing, including the importance of sleep and nutrition	☐
3.54.	Content coverage: strategies to manage stress, including techniques such as mindfulness	☐
3.55.	Content coverage: strategies to maintain physical and mental wellbeing	☐
3.56.	Facilitators invited and addressed students' questions about pathways into higher education	☐
Workshop tailoring		
3.57.	Facilitator(s) responded to specific student queries during the workshop	☐
3.58.	Facilitator(s) confirmed whether all student questions are answered, or provide information on how to access further support	☐
Workshop evaluation form		
4.11.	Evaluation forms provided to all students in attendance	☐
4.12.	Evaluation workshop forms collected from students who consent to provide this information	☐

Modifications: Please indicate if any modifications were made to the workshop.



7.3.6. Course guides

School Name:	
Date of meeting/email to identify course guides:	

Please confirm the following for those receiving course guides:

		Confirm
Planning		
1.1.	School leadership or career counsellors selected this course guides most relevant to their student needs	☐
1.2.	Course guides sent, and receipt of guides confirmed by school leadership or career counsellors	☐
1.3.	School leadership or career counsellors confirmed that they have shared the course guides with students, or made them available for all.	☐
1.4.	Please indicate which courses/subjects that the school has identified as important for their students:	