

Centre for English Teaching Specialization

Academic Skills for University Success

Example Project Proposal: Two

Stage 1 – Identify a real-world problem to be solved

List 5 communities

- University
- Early career teachers
- Squash players
- International students
- Techno/House DJ

Select 2 Communities

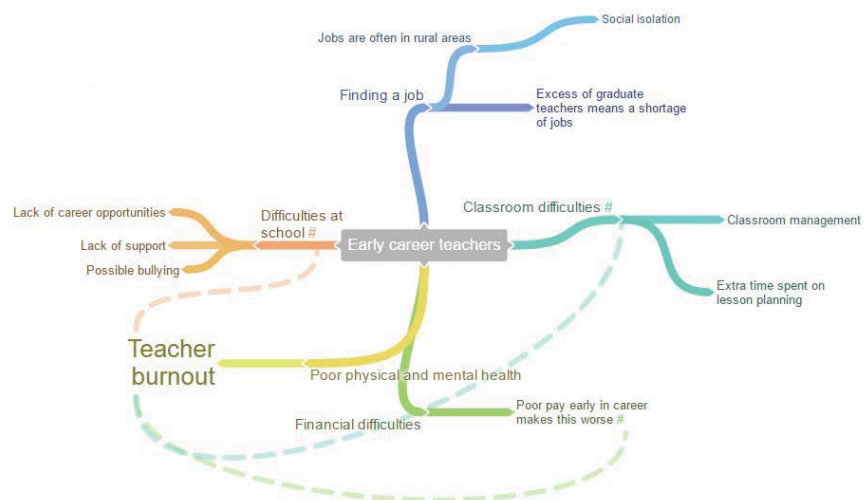
- Early career teachers
- University of Sydney

Identify areas of interest

- Online/digital literacy
- Blogging
- Student behaviour management
- Mentoring
- Baking

Identify possible issues: Mind Map

- Early Career Teachers



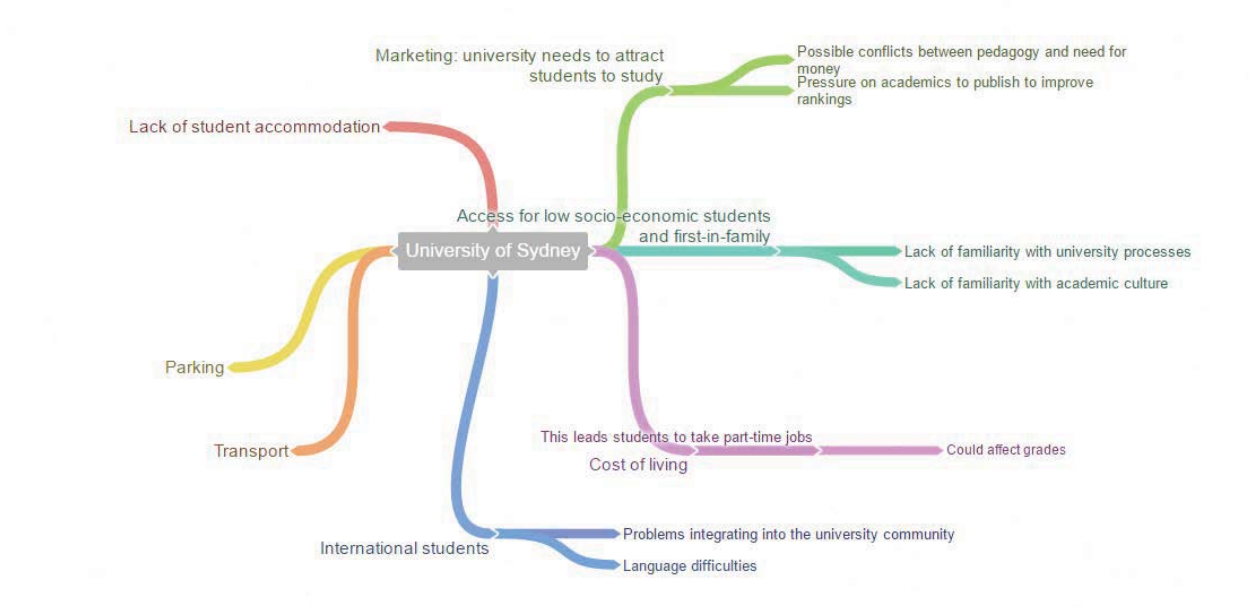
(made using Coggle: coggle.it)

Centre for English Teaching Specialization

Academic Skills for University Success

Example Project Proposal: Two

b. The University of Sydney



(made using Coggle: coggle.it)

Issues:

- a. Burnout
 - a. Burnout can happen at varying points in a teacher's career, but might be more common early on. Burnout is caused by many different factors, such as classroom difficulties, difficulties in the workplace, lack of career opportunities etc.
- b. Loss of social relationships
 - a. Loss of social relationships can happen to early career teachers for two different reasons: they may have moved to a rural area for work, or the work load is too high and they are unable to maintain relationships.

Bring the ideas together/Choose one to focus on:

- a. Burnout

Summarise the issue:

- a. Community: early career teachers in NSW
- b. Interest or expertise in the community: I am a graduate in Education in the early part of my career, and know many early career teachers.
- c. Issue/s: Early career teachers suffer from higher than normal rates of burnout.

Centre for English Teaching Specialization

Academic Skills for University Success

Example Project Proposal: Two

Brainstorm causes & effects

Causes

- a. Low pay: teachers are already relatively lowly paid compared to other professions, and as early career teachers are at an early point in their careers they are on the lowest rungs of the pay ladder.
- b. Difficult workloads: teachers already have heavy workloads involving classes, lesson planning, marking, and attending meetings. This workload is often heavier for early career teachers as they take longer at tasks such as lesson planning and marking.
- c. Lack of classroom management skills: due to a lack of experience and practical knowledge early career teachers lack classroom management skills. This can be compounded by the fact that early career teachers frequently teach students who are more likely to act out in class.
- d. Lack of collegial support: early career teachers lack the support networks within the profession that more senior teachers might have.
- e. Physical, social and emotional isolation: This can occur due to some of the causes listed above – long working hours and a lack of collegial support in particular can contribute to this. In addition, many early career teachers must take jobs in rural areas in order to find work, which also leads to isolation.

Effects

- f. Poor physical and mental health: this can lead to increased absenteeism and presenteeism, as well as extended periods of leave.
- g. Teacher shortages: the problems above often lead to early career teachers leaving the profession early, and may also possibly deter students from entering the profession at all, leading to teacher shortages.
- h. Teacher burnout: even if teachers stay in the profession many of the issues outlined can cause teacher burnout.
- i. Impaired job performance: many of the issues that early career teachers face can lead to them not caring about their job or engaging in cynical compliance with duties.
- j. Physical, social and emotional isolation: The causes listed earlier can create or compound the conditions that lead to physical, social and emotional isolation.

Problem Statement:

- a. **Teacher burnout amongst early career educators is caused by the significant amounts of stress arising from lesson planning and classroom management**