

Partnership in Action

Stories and lived experiences of Student-Staff Partnerships at UQ in 2019





Acknowledgement of Country

Artwork: A Guidance in Time created by Quandamooka artists Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow for The University of Queensland Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

Student-Staff Partnerships 2019

At a glance

The Student-Staff Partnerships program is creating a cultural transformation at UQ whereby students and staff connect as partners, collaborators and consultants on projects and in governance groups that seek to enhance the student experience.

This widespread adoption of the partnership ethos has empowered students and staff from diverse backgrounds and challenged power imbalances that exist between students and staff. Key to this program is the recognition and appreciation that students bring valuable, yet distinct, skills and expertise to the University.

The Student-Staff Partnerships program has three different, but complimentary, sub-programs: Partnership Projects, Student Representation and Student Voice. Below is a snapshot of the key achievements of the program as a whole in 2019, including key figures and statistics.

“Key to this program is the recognition and appreciation that students bring valuable, yet distinct, skills and expertise to the University”

29.3%

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
INVOLVED IN PROJECTS



176

PARTNERSHIP
PROJECTS

36%

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
INVOLVED IN STUDENT REPS



59%

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
INVOLVED IN STUDENT
VOICE ACTIVITIES

PROMOTED PROGRAM AT

7+

EXTERNAL EVENTS AND
CONFERENCES



649

STUDENT PARTNER
ENGAGEMENTS



1066

STUDENTS PROVIDED
THEIR VOICE IN STUDENT
VOICE INITIATIVES



532

STAFF PARTNER
ENGAGEMENTS



1 in 3

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES
RECRUITED THROUGH
PROGRAM

Feature Story

ITS Advisory Group

IT Services Division

Jack Mason (staff partner, IT Services)

Students are at the heart of everything we do, and it's important that they play a part in shaping UQ's digital environment. To give students a voice and a role in this process, Information Technology Services (ITS) and the Student-Staff Partnerships team developed the Digital Environment Student Advisory Group. The group consisted of 10 diverse students from a range of faculties, who met with ITS fortnightly and undertook their own research within the UQ student community.

The advisory group helped ITS gain valuable feedback on a variety of projects at different phases of implementation. The processes developed and the lessons learned working with students will help inform future decision-making and serve as a blueprint for additional student

engagement initiatives within ITS.

It's tempting to make assumptions when thinking about services for students, because most of us were students at one point in time. However, the student landscape is always changing, and so are their needs, expectations and challenges. Working closely with students helped ITS better understand their audience, have empathy for their journeys, and identify how to better support them.

This initiative also created opportunities for students to learn and grow their skillsets. The student representatives reported the following benefits:

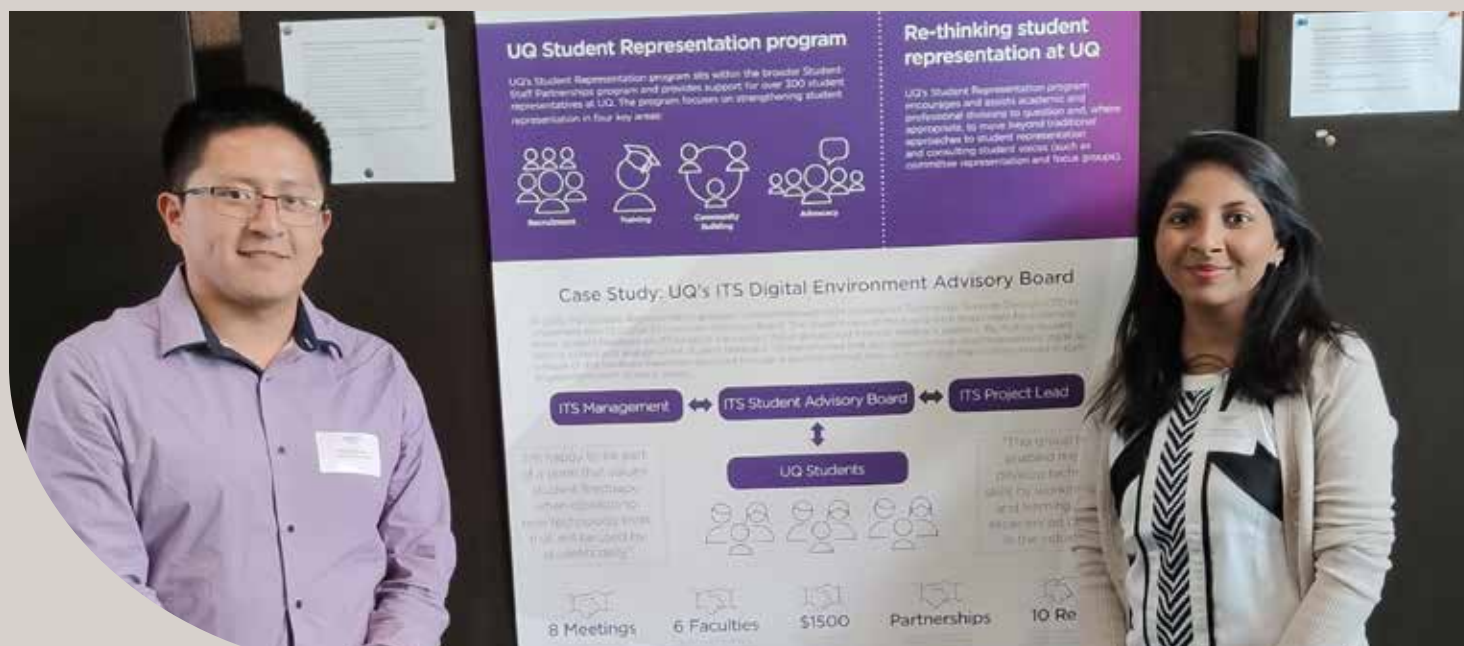
- Increased understanding of the processes, challenges and effort involved in delivering software solutions to students.
- Experience implementing various

research techniques (e.g. focus groups and surveys) and learning how to increase audience participation.

- Improved time and priority management.
- Experience adapting to changing plans.
- Experience with tools typically used in enterprise environments (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Slack and Zoom).
- Increased confidence and communication skills.

Overall, the students indicated that they enjoyed working in a diverse and multidisciplinary group which genuinely wanted to use student feedback to improve UQ's services.

“The student landscape is always changing, and so are their needs, expectations and challenges”



Jose Escobar & Rheaa Thulasi Manoharan, both student representatives on the ITS Digital Environment Advisory Board, presenting at the Student Voice Australia Symposium, October 2019

ENHANCING STUDENTS' DIGITAL EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

James Forde, Julie Peries, Jack Mason, Rheaa Thulasi Manoharan, Jose Ernesto Escobar Lema & Sarah Jeffrey

UQ Student Representation program

UQ's Student Representation program sits within the broader Student-Staff Partnerships program and provides support for over 300 student representatives at UQ. The program focuses on strengthening student representation in four key areas:



Recruitment



Training



Community Building



Advocacy

Re-thinking student representation at UQ

UQ's Student Representation program encourages and assists academic and professional divisions to question and, where appropriate, to move beyond traditional approaches to student representation and consulting student voices (such as committee representation and focus groups).

Case Study: UQ's ITS Digital Environment Advisory Board

In 2019, the Student Representation program collaborated with UQ's Information Technology Services Division (ITS) to implement the ITS Digital Environment Advisory Board. The student reps of this board were responsible for collecting wider student feedback on ITS projects via surveys, focus groups and informal feedback sessions. By inviting student reps to collect and analyse wider student feedback, ITS has ensured that any suggestions or recommendations made as a result of this feedback have been provided through a student-centred lens – a crucial step that is often missed in staff engagements with student voices.

ITS Management

ITS Student Advisory Board

ITS Project Lead

UQ Students



"I'm happy to be part of a team that values student feedback when developing new technology tools that will be used by students daily."

"This group has enabled me to develop technical skills by working with and learning from experienced players in the industry."



8 Meetings

THE ADVISORY BOARD MET ONCE A FORTNIGHT FOR 16 WEEKS



6 Faculties

STUDENTS RECRUITED FROM ALL 6 FACULTIES INCLUDING DOMESTIC, INTERNATIONAL, UNDERGRAD & POSTGRAD STUDENTS



\$1500

\$1500 GRANTS OFFERED TO ALL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES



Partnerships

STUDENTS AND STAFF WORKED IN PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER TANGIBLE AND PRACTICAL OUTCOMES



10 Reps

10 STUDENT REPS WERE CHOSEN TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Students collaborated on the following projects

UQ SPACES:

A mobile app that allows students to find study spaces on campus

STUDENT SERVICES WEBSITE:

The group helped redesign this essential website, to make it easier for students to navigate

FUTURE PROJECTS:

The group were approached by other divisions for their guidance on future projects

