

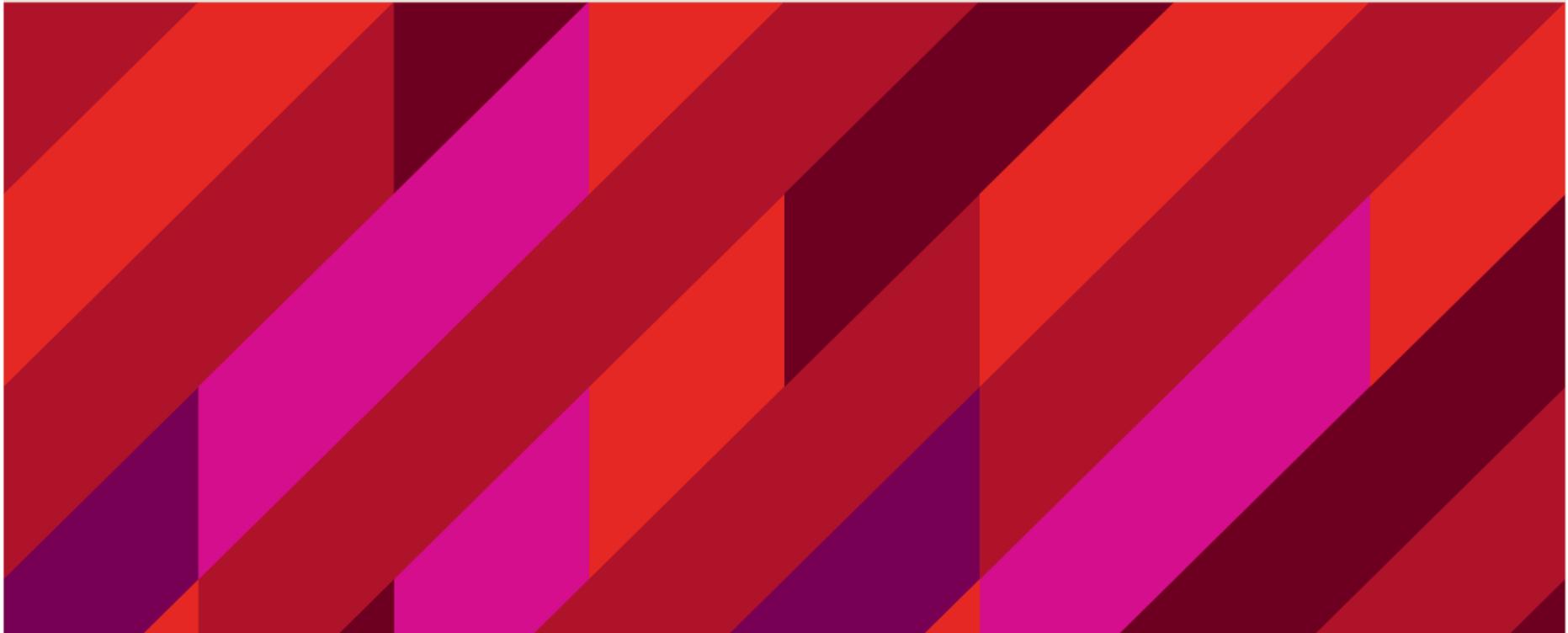


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Pathway Programs: Effective Responses to Common and Contextual Challenges

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Pathway programs provide an alternative university entry option for many local and international students who are unable to access higher education by traditional channels

Nomenclature

**University
pathway
programs
(Percival et al.,
2016)**

**Enabling
programs
(Andrewartha &
Harvey, 2014)**

**Bridging
programs (Ellis,
Cooper &
Sawyer, 2001)**

**Direct entry
programs
(Agosti &
Hicklin, 2001)**

**Sub-bachelor
programs
(Pitman et al.,
2016)**

**Foundation
programs
(Klinger &
Murray, 2011)**

Pathway Programs: A Global Perspective



2015- English-speaking countries offered over 90% of these types of programs (around 60% UK, 16% in Oceania and 12% in North America)

English medium of instruction degree programs more than tripled in Continental Europe since 2008; demand for university pathway programs will grow in that region (Study Portals & Cambridge English, 2015)

Pathway Programs: A Global Perspective

Turnover and Offerings



2016- University pathway program sector had a \$1.4 billion turnover (Neghina, 2016)



2,200 courses for students seeking access to studies within higher education institutions listed by Study Portals (2007-2017)

Three Factors Leading to Growth of Pathway Program Sector (Brett and Pitman, 2018)



1. **Global trend towards increasing levels of participation in higher education**



2. **Increasing mobility of students**



3. **Local political and socio-cultural factors including national approaches to education system design**



1- Global Trend towards Increasing Levels of Participation in Higher Education



(Marginson, 2016)

- **State policies favouring expansion respond to**
 - **Political factors**
 - **Economic demand and the need for higher-skilled labour**
 - **Social demand for higher education**

**Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley et al., 2008)
and Driving Innovation, Fairness and Excellence in Australian
Higher Education (Australian Government 2016)**

- **World system explanations (OECD and UNESCO)**

2- Increasing Mobility of Students

Numbers and Destinations

- **1999 to 2013 Students enrolled outside of their country of citizenship doubled from 2 to 4 million (UNESCO, 2016)**
By 2025 projected to double again to 8 million (Woodfield, 2010)
- **2014 United States of America, the United Kingdom and Australia attracted around 35% of all internationally-mobile students (UNESCO, 2016)**
France, Russia, Germany, Canada, China, Japan and Italy complete the top ten destinations (Brett and Pitman, 2018)

Increasing Mobility of Students

Factors Underlying Number Growth

- 1. Globalisation and internationalisation: prioritising diversity of staff and students as a key performance measure; building educational capacity and enhancing quality**
- 2. International students populate graduate science programs (Jenkins & Pell, 2006; Datson, 2016)**
- 3. Economic demand for high skilled labour un-met by domestic supply**
- 4. Regional higher education hubs in pursuit of economic development, global relevance and engagement with students seeking an international education experience (Knight, 2011)**

3- Local Political and Socio-cultural Factors

Pathway Programs: Responses to Contextual Needs



-
- **Governmental policies that aim to foster social inclusion by addressing issues of equity and access (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009; Bergman, 2016; Smit, 2012)**
 - through specific equity frameworks: Australia
 - through gender focused initiatives: Qatar and South Africa
 - 4.3 million non-traditional students aged over 24 in 15 high income countries by 2030 (Choudaha and van Rest, 2018)
 - **Nations with a colonial past place increasing importance on pathways programs for students from First Nation or Indigenous populations: Canada and New Zealand**

Local Political and Socio-cultural Factors

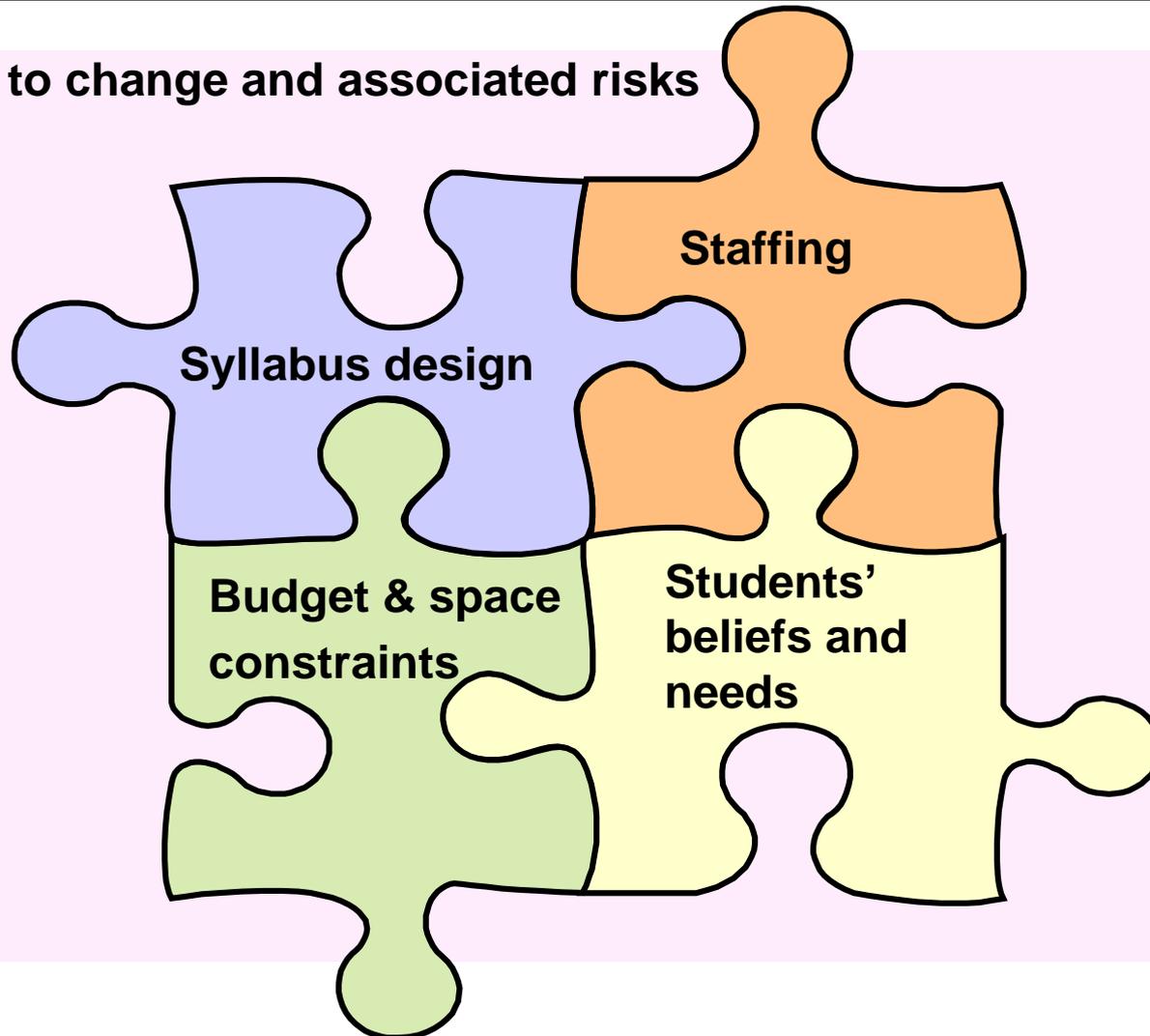
Pathway Programs: Responses to Contextual Needs



- **Scrutiny of the academic language and learning (ALL) preparedness of international students by local authorities (Fenton-Smith & Humphreys, 2015; Green & Agosti, 2011)**
- **Address government-mandated changes to English as a medium of instruction**
- **Perception by course providers of an opportunity for economic growth (Altbach & Knight, 2007)**
- **Economic pull factors: the United Kingdom, Australia and Qatar**
- **Internationalisation of higher education**

Common Challenges for Pathway Programs

Resistance to change and associated risks



Common Challenges for Pathway Programs (continued)

Syllabus Design

1. Student needs diagnosis 
2. Syllabus design to address students' needs 
3. Embedding specific academic literacies practices and expectations in the curriculum (scaffolding the analysis of discipline-specific genres, related text types -purpose, structure, production conventions, power and distance, identity- and assessment tasks) (Paltridge, 2006)  

Common Challenges for Pathway Programs (continued)

Syllabus Design

4. **Developing students' awareness of the need to advance academic knowledge through analysis and evaluation as steps of critical thinking and well-developed research skills (Lea, 2004)**



5. **Incorporating study support needs as well as recognising students' own beliefs about those needs (Hallett, 2013; Velliariis & Breen, 2014)**



6. **Fostering preparedness to engage with the relevant academic discourse community (Gee, 2008; Lea, 2004; Wingate, 2006)**



Common Challenges for Pathway Programs

Staffing

- 1. Finding teaching staff capable of catering for non-traditional students; academic literacies experts**
- 2. Need to bridge the gap between these specialists and content focussed lecturers**
- 3. Lack of support for academics who are not allocated time within their workloads to focus on academic literacies development**
- 4. Tutor turnover**

(Agosti & Bernat, 2008; Chanock, Horton, Reedman & Stephenson, 2012; Magyar, McAvoy & Forstner, 2011)

Common Challenges for Pathway Programs (continued)

Budget and space constraints

Leading to limited availability of resources (Kift, 2009; Thies, Wallis, Turner & Wishart, 2014)

Students' Beliefs and Needs

1. Academic integration



Reluctance to engage with skills that they need to develop (socio-pragmatic, discourse, linguistic, study, critical thinking and research skills)

Perception that discipline-specific content is more important than academic literacies skills (Goldingay, Hitch, Carrington, Nipperess & Rosario, 2016)

Common Challenges for Pathway Programs (continued)

Students' Beliefs and Needs

2. Social interaction



Emotional and welfare needs



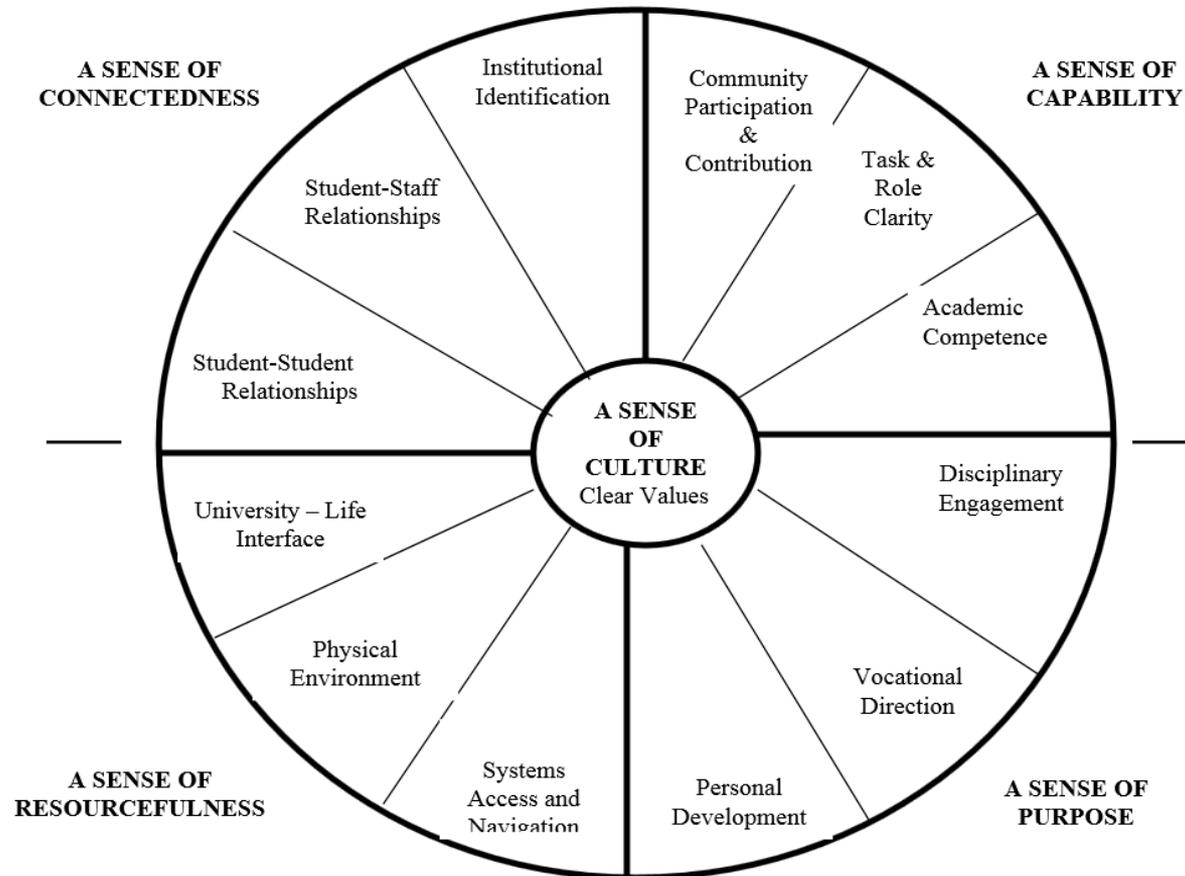
Lizzio (2006) presents:

- A useful conceptualisation of five areas of perceived students' needs
- A checklist could be used as a self-auditing tool

Common Challenges for Pathway Programs



(cont.) Pastoral Care “The five senses of successful transition” (Lizzio, 2006, p.3)



Common Challenges for Pathway Programs (cont.)

Resistance to change and associated risks

- **Staff and students**
 - Past practices**
 - Internationalisation**
 - Resources sharing**
 - Quality issues**
 - Strongly held values about partnership with a private institution**
- **Broad Institutional Level: Change Management**

Discussion - Reflection

- **Are you planning on embarking on the development of a pathway program? What challenges do you foresee within your particular context? How would you overcome them?**
- **Are you already delivering a pathway program? What challenges did you encounter within your particular context? How did you overcome them?**

Effective Responses to Challenges

King and Owens (2018) Flinders University, Australia

Challenges Facing Students from Refugee Backgrounds

- **Disrupted schooling (Bonfiglio, 2010)**
- **English language and literacy skills**
- **Traumatic personal histories (death of family members, destruction of personal property, physical violence, child soldiers (Betancourt, Borisova, de la Soudiere, & Williamson, 2011))**

- **These factors may affect concentration, social adjustment and academic achievement (Grant & Francis, 2011)**

Effective Responses to Challenges

King and Owens (2018) Flinders University, Australia

- **Ongoing interplay between the different cultural worlds they occupy**
- **Help-seeking behaviours are strongly influenced by students' cultural patterns of interaction (African cultural norm of needing to 'save face')**
- **Learning style preference which is person-to-person**
- **Peers source of support (networks often limited to fellow African students)**

Effective Responses to Challenges



King and Owens (2018) Flinders University, Australia

Educators to provide constructive feedback to build trust and rapport

Homework Program run by Masters of Teaching students to support African high school students from refugee backgrounds (Vickers, 2007). Established by Western Sydney University +Western Sydney high schools + the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation

School students received practical homework support

University students developed valuable and critical cultural awareness

Effective Responses to Challenges

King and Owens (2018) Flinders University, Australia



Western Sydney University collaborated with African community leaders

Involved knowledgeable individuals from various organisations:

Australian Migrant Resource Centre

Australian Refugee Association

Government Multicultural Department

New Arrivals Programs

Department of Education

Effective Responses to Challenges



King and Owens (2018) Flinders University, Australia

Ensure that educational institutions create a culture of inclusivity → the African Students Association of Flinders University; group associations and connectedness are critical for African collectivist culture (Triandis, 1995)

Family and community are pivotal in the lives of African youth → universities could establish 'experience days'

Cultural awareness training for academic staff as providers of cultural mentoring for African students → Getting through the red tape

Academic support to address African students' learning needs → Referencing and plagiarism

Effective Responses to Challenges

Macquarie University (2015)



‘LEAP’ – Learning, Education, Aspiration, Participation

Mentoring program for high school students from refugee backgrounds within 10 high schools in West and South West Sydney

University students as volunteer mentors to build students’ knowledge of higher education

(Kirby and Dempster, 2018)

Underrepresentation of Black African graduates in South Africa particularly in STEM, especially women

Foundation Programs: Discipline specific modules, academic literacies and 'life skills' courses

Initially funded by the private sector or by tertiary institutions (Rollnick, 2010)

Government funding led to a closer integration of the foundation programs and regular curricula → 'extended curriculum' programs (DoE, 2006)

Effective Responses to Challenges
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
(Kirby and Dempster, 2018)



Two extended curriculum frameworks:

Foundation stream: Foundation courses in their first year of study and articulation into regular, mainstream programs

Augmented stream: complete foundation and regular courses simultaneously in their first year of study, the proportion of the former declining sharply in their second year

Students must have attended a 'disadvantaged school'

Effective Responses to Challenges
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
(Kirby and Dempster, 2018)



Resource-intensive model of small group teaching (by staff dedicated only to the foundation modules)

Curricular content in each foundation module provides learning opportunities that engage students with scientific practices and leads to the development of scientific literacy in the laboratory, tutorials and fieldtrips

Inadequate government funding resulted in UKZN incurring considerable cost given the resource intensive framework of the program

Deep institutional commitment to improving equity of access

Effective Responses to Challenges

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
(Kirby and Dempster, 2018)



The Foundation and Augmented Programs include:

- **A mandatory counselling component (customised life skills education, assistance in managing the financial, psychosocial and academic demands of university life)**
- **A comprehensive academic monitoring system that facilitates timely remedial intervention**
- **A voluntary comprehensive wellness program (individual counselling services and academic career counselling)**
- **Academic literacies modules specific to the discourse of scientific disciplines (the academic demands of EMI)**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada

(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)



- **Opened in 2006; the first public-private partnership international university Pathway in North America**
- **Over 2,700 students from over 60 countries**
- **Consistently positive student outcomes (average 92% progression rate)**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)

(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)



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- **Students' need social interaction and academic integration**
- **FIC is their anchor point as they develop a sense of belonging to the SFU community through:**

—orientation
sessions

—peer-support
programs

—health services

—student
accommodation

—student advising

—recreation

—counseling

—access to
libraries

—administrative
services

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)
(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)

- **“Culture shock” → Canada’s cultural characteristics; how to physically navigate their way around campus and the city**
- **Airport pick up**
- **Assistance in obtaining housing**
- **Food shopping help**
- **Referral to the appropriate service that they require and help e.g. non-urgent trip to the medical clinic**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)
(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)



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- **Staff members extensively trained on cultural expectations: social and academic practices are explicitly shared (ice breakers, small talk training and body language)**
- **Rules for gaining access to popular programs to facilitate understanding by Pathway students**
- **Technological literacy skills workshops and tutorials ensure students can access library services, online resources, email instructors, and submit assignments, while still learning basic keyboarding skills**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)

(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)

- **Program content includes some topics viewed as taboo or inappropriate by some international students. Peer-led health promotion programs (diet, exercise, relationships, and sexuality) encourage frank dialogue about personal experiences and concerns**
- **Solid network with other students → supportive friendships and meaningful connections**
- **Access to a “hang out space” for a mix of pathway and uni students → opportunities for domestic students to interact with international students**
- **FIC adopts as many of SFU’s policies as possible so pathway students are already familiar with the SFU policies when they move to mainstream programs**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)
(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)



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Change Management

- **Discussions and a thorough consultation process to understand the reasons for change, express views on whether a Pathway is an appropriate and effective strategy for change**
- **Active engagement with the university's governance processes**
- **A member of the university's senior leadership team as a liaison between the College and the University community; was familiar with University academic programs and facilitated the coordination of the Pathway programs to the degree programs**

Effective Responses to Challenges

Fraser International College, Vancouver, Canada (cont.)
(Rahilly and Hudson, 2018)



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Clear explanations regarding:

- **Awareness of national and international trends in international student mobility**
- **Benefits to domestic students and student learning**
- **Social and economic benefits of internationalisation**
- **Need for additional resources and academic and administrative staff to meet students' needs effectively**

Conclusion:

Adopt a 'Glo-na-cal' approach (Marginson, 2004)

Global Perspective

- **Global forces will continue to shape the evolution of pathways programs**
- **The effects of forcible displacement will continue into the future. As countries like Australia continue to provide refugees with a 'second chance', it is imperative that we learn more about how we can support them to gain social and economic mobility through participation in education and employment**

Conclusion:

Adopt a 'Glo-na-cal' approach (Marginson, 2004)



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National and Local Perspective

- **Pathway programs constitute localised responses to needs related to and shaped by the social, cultural and political fields in which they function**
- **The varying degrees of success that they achieve will depend on the power struggles that take place in those fields and on how these programs are positioned within those fields (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)**
- **This makes it difficult to make valid generalisations regarding features that will make university pathway programs a successful response in different contexts**



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Thanks!

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