

# Role of the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator

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<b>TRIM document</b>	2016/7006123
<b>Description</b>	This policy describes the role and responsibilities of the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator

## Related documents

[Role of the Head of School](#)

[Role Statement Program Director](#)

[Role Statement Course Convenor](#)

Role of the Student Success Advisor

[\[Broad Role Statement for the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator\]](#) [\[Broad Role Context\]](#) [\[Appointment of the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator\]](#) [\[Responsibilities\]](#) [\[Professional Learning\]](#)

## 1. BROAD ROLE STATEMENT FOR THE FIRST YEAR/COMMENCING STUDENT COORDINATOR

First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators (FYC/CSC) are key academic members of School/Department/Program Student Success and Retention Teams. First Year Coordinators are responsible for managing the experience of commencing students in their first year of study, while Commencing Student Coordinators are responsible for managing, in particular programs, the experience of commencing students who start their studies in both their first year, and the first trimester of their second year. The Program Director has overall responsibility for program quality and the commencing student experience. First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators work under the direction of the Head of School/Department or delegate towards the shared goal of designing and delivering an effective and satisfying learning experience for commencing undergraduate students at both course and program levels.

## 2. BROAD ROLE CONTEXT

The First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator (FYC/CSC) role should be understood within the broader context of the strategic performance expectations of Griffith Schools/Departments and programs to facilitate the success and retention of our students. The University requires Griffith Schools/Departments systematically and proactively implement activities that facilitate student success in their programs of study.

*Schools will:*

### **Build a Student-Centred Success Culture**

Coordinate the overall commencing student learning environment to enhance program and cross-course coherence, align curricular and co-curricular elements, and develop a consistent student centred educational experience and culture.

### **Create an Effective Orientation and Transition Experience**

Provide an evidence-based and success-focused academic orientation and transition program which enables commencing students to engage, learn and persist with their university studies.

### **Ensure Quality Curriculum Development**

Embed curriculum and assessment design within and across commencing student courses to purposefully enhance the transition of commencing students and their engagement with and learning in their program of study, and their confident progression to further study.

### **Implement Strategic Student Advising**

In conjunction with the Student Success Advisor, provide a coordinated program of academic advising to support students' participation/attendance, performance on early assessment, academic recovery from early under-performance on assessment and timely and active outreach to students at-risk of disengaging or discontinuing their studies.

*These key strategic activities will be informed by a practice framework that emphasises:*

#### **Engaged Formal Leadership**

Active leadership by staff in formal academic leadership roles (e.g., Heads of School/Department, Program Directors) in sponsoring and supporting the overall strategy and clearly identifying and co-ordinating the respective roles and responsibilities of all those involved in achieving student success.

#### **Collaborative Team Work**

Collaborative partnerships between key academic, administrative and professional staff (e.g., Program Directors, Course Convenors, teachers/tutors, Administration Officers, Student Success Advisors, Learning Advisors, Curriculum Consultants, Blended Learning Advisors).

#### **Evidence-based Practice**

Systematic analysis of data from a range of sources relevant to the goals and challenges of the degree program to monitor and inform the development of appropriate action plans to support student success and retention.

#### **Lifecycle Approach**

A whole-of-degree lifecycle approach to facilitating student engagement, persistence and progression and to ensuring a coherent learning experience across the degree program.

*Within this strategic framework the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator (FYC/CSC):*

Works collaboratively with academic and professional staff to develop, implement and evaluate the commencing student experience component of the School/Department Student Success and Retention Plans, to achieve the strategic performance expectations and key strategic objectives of the School with respect to commencing students, as outlined above.

Develops, implements and evaluates strategy and priorities for each Group under the oversight of the relevant Dean (Learning & Teaching). First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators also function as a network within the context of their University Group (Health, AEL, GBS, and Sciences).

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## **3. APPOINTMENT OF THE FIRST YEAR/COMMENCING STUDENT COORDINATOR**

A First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator, who is a member of academic staff, is to be appointed to each undergraduate program or a cluster of related programs. In selecting academic staff for the role of First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator, consideration should be given to the staff member's ability and interest in undertaking a leadership role in learning and teaching, their capacity to appropriately fulfil the responsibilities of the role, and their motivation to further develop capability in curriculum and assessment design and learning and teaching quality improvement.

The appointment of a First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator should be for a minimum of two years. The First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator is to be recommended by the Head of School/Department in July each year, after consultation with the relevant Program Director(s) and Dean (Learning and Teaching), through the relevant Dean (Academic) to the Group Pro Vice Chancellor for appointment for the next academic year. These appointments will be communicated by

a standing item on Group Board agendas and communicated to Academic Services by the Group Academic Services Officer (ASO). Academic Services holds the authoritative list of First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators.

The Program Director, in the case of programs with small enrolments, may undertake both the Program Director and the First Year/Commencing Student Coordinator roles concurrently. In the case of programs that are multi-campus there may be campus specific First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators across cognate programs.

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## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators in each Program may achieve the outcomes required of the role in different ways, appropriate to their discipline and program context and the strategic priorities endorsed by their Head of School/Department. Working under the direction of the Head of School/Department or delegate, and as members of a collaborative team, the responsibilities of First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators will include:

### 4.1 Facilitating the First Year/Commencing Student Learning Environment

Facilitate collaborative discussion and planning around the shared goal of providing an effective and satisfying learning experience for commencing students at both course and program levels.

Work in partnership with the Student Success Advisor in their School/Department/Program.

### 4.2 Facilitating Curriculum Improvement

Work with the Program Director and Head of School/Department to ensure that the curriculum relating to commencing students contributes to a coherent learning experience across the degree lifecycle, and to implement Griffith's approach to the commencing student experience and curriculum.

Working with the Program Director and Head of School/Department to 'bring together' Course Convenors and Teaching Teams to collaboratively review relevant curriculum and assessment design, and recommend and implement improvement plans.

### 4.3 Planning Student Advising Strategy

Work with the relevant Student Success Advisor to coordinate School/Department/program co-curricular processes targeting engagement, success and retention of commencing and supporting students at-risk of disengaging or discontinuing their studies

Liaise with Student Success Advisors and relevant Course Convenors about the needs and expectations of commencing students in the program and the level and type of support and advisement to be provided.

### 4.4 Leading Academic Orientation and Transition

Coordinate a School/Department/Program academic orientation and transition program which enables commencing students to engage, learn and persist with their university studies.

Liaise with Course Convenors to ensure the inclusion within commencing courses of activities which build cohorts and increase opportunities for students to interact with peers and staff.

### 4.5 Coordinating Evaluation of the Commencing Student Experience

Working with the Program Director and Head of School/Department to coordinate the data-based review and evaluation of the commencing experience in their School/Department/Program and 'bring together' staff, students and other stakeholders to collaboratively consider the available data, to inform the development and implementation of appropriate improvement plans.

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## **5. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

First Year/Commencing Student Coordinators will participate in role-relevant workshops and professional development activities, share ideas on good practice, keep abreast of best practice regarding the commencing student experience, actively monitor the outcomes of their roles, and develop and implement appropriate improvement plans.