Why a Learn2Learn approach?

If we accept that “Learning takes place through the active behaviour of the student; it is what he does that he learns, not what the teacher does” – Ralph W. Tyler (1949), then we need to consider that empowering students to become independent learners would provide a higher basis of learning capabilities for skilled lecturers to build upon. Essentially scaffolding the learning model as well as the content.

Students are generally entering University with little or no self-directed learning and study resilience skills (known as Self-Regulated Learning). Without these skills students are dependent upon the lecturer and academic support staff to provide the learning structure as well as the content to be taught. The absence of these underlying study resilience skills leaves the students vulnerable to “giving up” and deciding to attrite when their existing study approach fails to work in the Higher Education environment. With attrition being a significant and complex problem in Higher Education, the development of independent Self-Regulated Learning skills in students should form part of the multi-faceted approach to addressing student retention.

Research and Learning Design

Research was undertaken into self-regulated learning (Niemi, Neve, & Virtanen, 2003; Steiner, 2016; Vaughan & Schoeefel, 2019; Zimmerman, 2003); brain function and change (Brodia et al., 2016; Owee, 2006; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Seaton, 2018), effective study strategies (Niemi et al., 2003; Steiner, 2016; Vaughan & Schoeefel, 2019); socio-emotional intelligence (Bandura, 1997; Ciencross, Elsom, Westacott, & Stieer-Hunt, 2019; Kahu & Nelson, 2018) as well as personal and social capabilities (Katz & Miller, 2013) such as those required for group work.

This research was combined with the anecdotal feedback from both the peer mentors and their mentees to ensure the program was targeting the needs the students themselves identified. The result was Learn2Learn, a six-module interactive, online program that utilises multiple media to actively demonstrate effective learning strategies with a focus on transitioning as becoming rather than just an induction or identity (Cale & Parker, 2014). Videos are also used to create an interpersonal relationship with the facilitator by sharing her vulnerability and positioning her as the guide rather than the expert.

Learn2Learn: Developing Self-Regulated Learning skills in new University students

Tanya Rutherford - tanya@learngrowbecome.com

The Self Regulated Framework adopted:

Research and Learning Design

Research was undertaken into self-regulated learning (Niemi, Neve, & Virtanen, 2003; Steiner, 2016; Vaughan & Schoeefel, 2019; Zimmerman, 2003); brain function and change (Brodia et al., 2016; Owee, 2006; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Seaton, 2018), effective study strategies (Niemi et al., 2003; Steiner, 2016; Vaughan & Schoeefel, 2019); socio-emotional intelligence (Bandura, 1997; Ciencross, Elsom, Westacott, & Stieer-Hunt, 2019; Kahu & Nelson, 2018) as well as personal and social capabilities (Katz & Miller, 2013) such as those required for group work.

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The significant issue of student retention (% completions vs % dropout)

2010 commencing students (after 9 years)

Themes from feedback across multiple pilots

- Improved confidence and self-efficacy
- Improved mental well-being
- Improved time management and productivity
- Enabled positive response to feedback
- Enabled positive (growth) mindset shift across life
- Increased knowledge retention across terms
- Utilised more effective study practices
- Increased sense of belonging
- Greater clarity and sense of purpose
- Improved grades
  “I wish I had this when I started”

Implications

Learn2Learn programs compliment and support existing programs designed to prepare students for University by developing the skills strategies and mindset to be confident, resilient and effective learners – bridging the gap between personal circumstances and academic skill development.

Implementing such programs in conjunction with peer mentoring enhances the sense of belonging and engagement, as well as normalising support relationships within the Institution.

Given existing research suggests that self-efficacy, growth mindset, confidence and belonging have a significant impact on retention, it is likely that such programs will have an ongoing positive impact on student retention.
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Learning to Learn: Developing Self-Regulated Learning skills in new University students

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The significant issue of student retention (% completions vs % dropout)

2010 commencing students (after 9 years)
Active Learning (behavioural/ socio-environmental)
- strategies
- persistence
- choice
- help-seeking
- creating positive learning environment

The Self Regulated Framework adopted:

Phase 1- Forethought:
- Goal Setting/ Planning
- Defining Tasks

Phase 2- Performance/ Volition Control:
- Creating, choosing and applying situational Learning Strategies

Phase 3- Self Reflection against personal learning Goal
- Monitoring and Reflecting on the Learning Process

Meta Cognition (awareness of/ knowledge of self)

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)

Motivation
- self efficacy
- self motivation
- personal/ emotional attributes
- intrinsic task interest
- intrinsic/ extrinsic

Implications

Learn2Learn programs complement the University’s learning and teaching for University by developing the skills of self-regulated learners - bridging the gap between learners and the expert.

Implementing such programs could result in increased sense of belonging and engagement, as well as improved academic outcomes.
Research and Learning Design

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