

# **Recentering Student Success: From Access to Achievement to Rightful Success**

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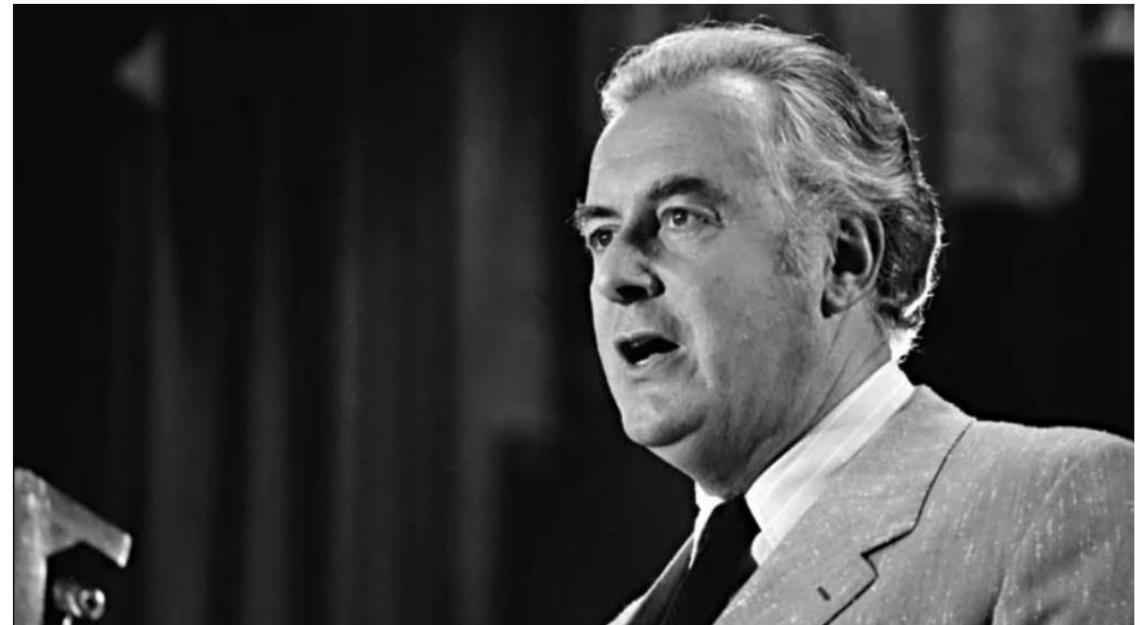


# Acknowledgement Of Country

I acknowledge the people and lands of the Djabugay and Yidinji Custodians of this land. I pay my respects to the Elders, past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.



“We are all diminished when any of us are denied proper education. The nation is the poorer - a poorer economy, a poorer civilisation, because of this human and national waste.”

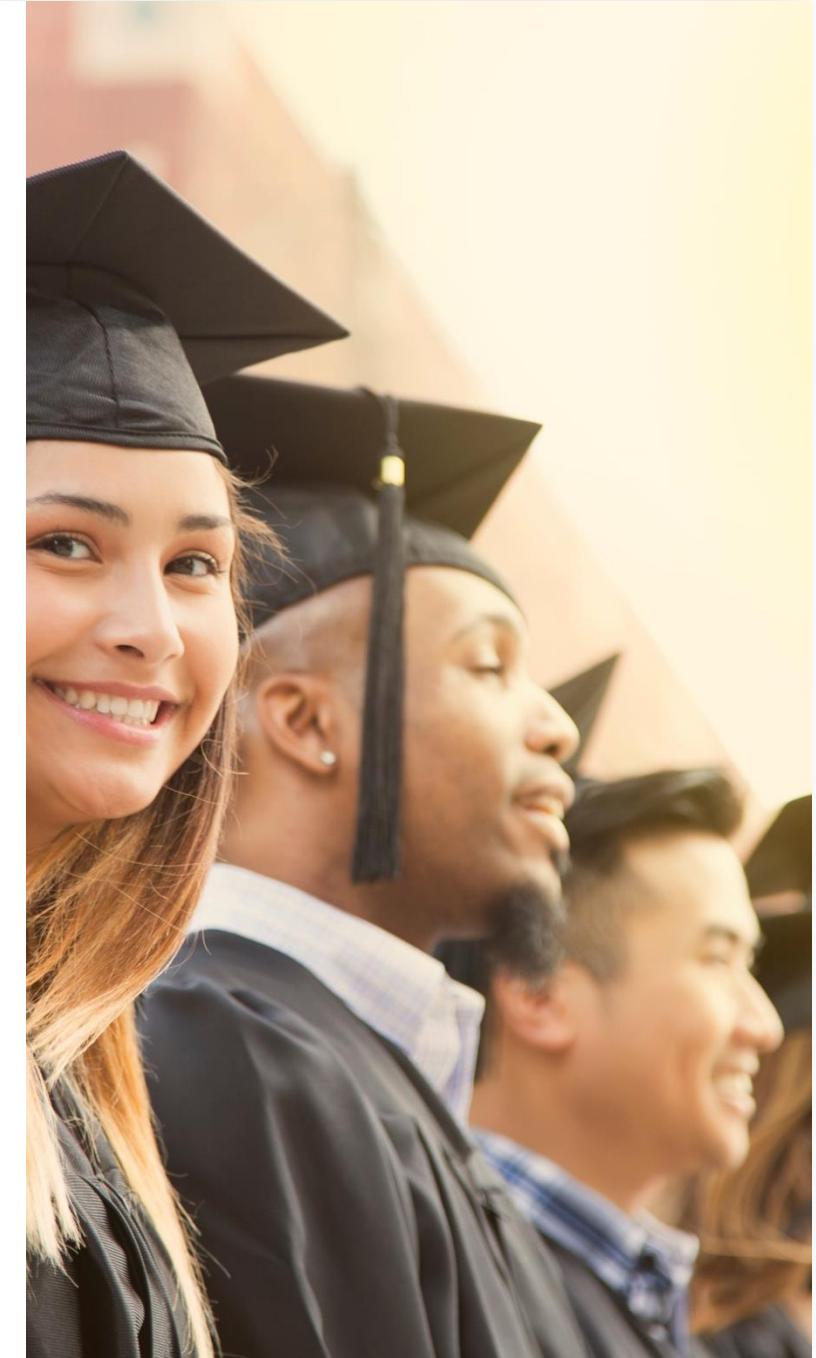


1969 POLICY SPEECH BY GOUGH WHITLAM

# The Higher Education Success Factor (HESF) as an Evidence-Based Implementation Tool

## Introduction: The Evolution of Student Success

- The Australian Universities Accord represents a paradigm shift in conceptualising student success
- **Access → Achievement → Rightful Success**
- HESF provides the evidence-based framework to operationalize this evolution
- Moving to 80% tertiary attainment by 2050 requires systematic implementation



# Key Findings from the HESF framework

## The critical factors include:

- Social environment (institutional support, inclusive policies)
- Physical environment (facilities, housing, safety)
- Health and economic wellbeing (financial stability, mental/physical health)
- Individual characteristics (motivation, resilience)

### 2. Based on surveys of 2,528 Australian graduates (2018-2022)

- The research identified that health and well-being are the most significant factors influencing completion rates, followed by individual characteristics and economic conditions.
- 3. Among university graduates, Indigenous students' economic challenges were identified as a critical barrier, underscoring the need for targeted support that addresses both financial and non-financial factors.
- Website: <https://ridlapps.com.au/sem/>

# The Student Success Paradigm Shift

## Historical Student Success Approaches:

### Access Era

Focus on enrolment numbers with limited attention to outcomes

### Achievement Era

Emphasis on completion metrics without equity consideration

### Rightful Success Era

Holistic approach addressing systemic barriers

## The Accord's Vision for Rightful Success:

*"Australia should grow the tertiary education system and improve skills through attainment targets and increased equity, meeting student needs and enabling fit-for-purpose research"*

# HESF: Enabling Rightful Success Through Evidence-Based Implementation

## Rightful Success Core Principles:

- 1. Equitable Participation:** Evidence-based approaches to achieve population parity
- 2. Holistic Support:** Research-validated comprehensive student support mechanisms
- 3. Culturally Responsive Practice:** Evidence-informed approaches to cultural or educative safety
- 4. Systems Transformation:** Data-driven institutional change strategies
- 5. Outcomes Equity:** Evidence-based interventions for equitable graduate outcomes

## Grounded in Multiple Evidence Sources:



# HESF Evidence Integration: Lessons from Indigenous Health Research

## Applying Indigenous Health Research Trends:

- **Shift from Deficit to Strength/Rights-Based Approaches:** Research shows better outcomes
- **Community-Led Implementation:** Evidence of increased effectiveness
- **Cultural Safety Implementation Strategies:** Research-validated approaches
- **Two-Eyed Seeing Implementation Model:** Empirically supported knowledge integration

## Evidence-Based Implementation Strategies:

- **Cultural Safety Assessment Tools:** Validated measurement instruments
- **Strength/Rights Based Intervention Protocols:** Evidence-informed support approaches
- **Community Partnership Impact Framework:** Structured engagement methodologies
- **Knowledge Integration Measurement:** Empirical assessment of knowledge recognition

# HESF Funding Model: Evidence-Based Resource Allocation for Rightful Success

## Needs-Based Funding Methodology:

- **Equity Support Cost Evidence:** Research on actual costs of supporting diverse students
- **Regional Delivery Evidence Base:** Data on additional costs in regional contexts
- **Implementation Infrastructure Assessment:** Measuring capacity requirements
- **Success-Linked Funding Formula:** Evidence- based incentive structures

### Accord Evidence:

*"The Review recommended a needs-based system that covers the costs of providing courses, taking into account the higher costs of educating equity groups and providing regional education"*

# HESF Student Support Framework: Evidence for Comprehensive Success

## Research-Validated Support Components:

**Financial Support**  
**Evidence:** Impact data on different support approaches

**Academic Support Effectiveness:**  
Research on intervention timing and methods

**Well-being Support Integration:**  
Evidence on comprehensive support models

**Career Development**  
**Evidence:** Research on employment outcome interventions

**Implementation Support System:**

**Support Coordination**  
**Evidence:** Research on integrated service delivery

**Early Intervention**  
**Research:** Data on identification and response protocols

**Differentiated Support Evidence:**  
Research on customising for diverse needs

**Placement Support**  
**Research:** Evidence on effective work-integrated learning

# HESF Measurement: Evidence-Based Success Indicators

## Rightful Success Metrics:

-  **Participation Equity Measures:** Research-validated parity indicators
-  **Student Experience Assessment:** Evidence-based measurement instruments
-  **Progress Milestone Tracking:** Research on critical progression points
-  **Post-Graduation Outcome Measures:** Validated long-term success indicators

## Data Infrastructure for Evidence Generation:

-  **Longitudinal Tracking System:** Research-informed long-term monitoring
-  **Multi-level Analysis Framework:** Evidence on institutional and system factors
-  **Implementation-Outcomes Correlation:** Linking practices to equitable results
-  **Predictive Analytics Models:** Evidence-based early identification

# HESF Implementation for First Nations Student Rightful Success

## Evidence-Based Implementation Strategies:

- **Self-Determination Implementation Framework:** Research on authentic leadership
- **Cultural or 'Good' Governance Models:** Evidence on effective decision-making structures
- **Indigenous Knowledges/perspectives Integration:** Research on curriculum and teaching approaches
- **Community Benefit Assessment:** Validated impact measurement tools

## Measuring Implementation Effectiveness:

- **Cultural Responsiveness Implementation Metrics:** Beyond traditional outcomes
- **Community Engagement Quality Measures:** Evidence-based partnership assessment
- **Indigenous Student Journey Model:** Research on culturally-grounded support
- **Knowledge Recognition Assessment:** Measuring respect for Indigenous knowledge

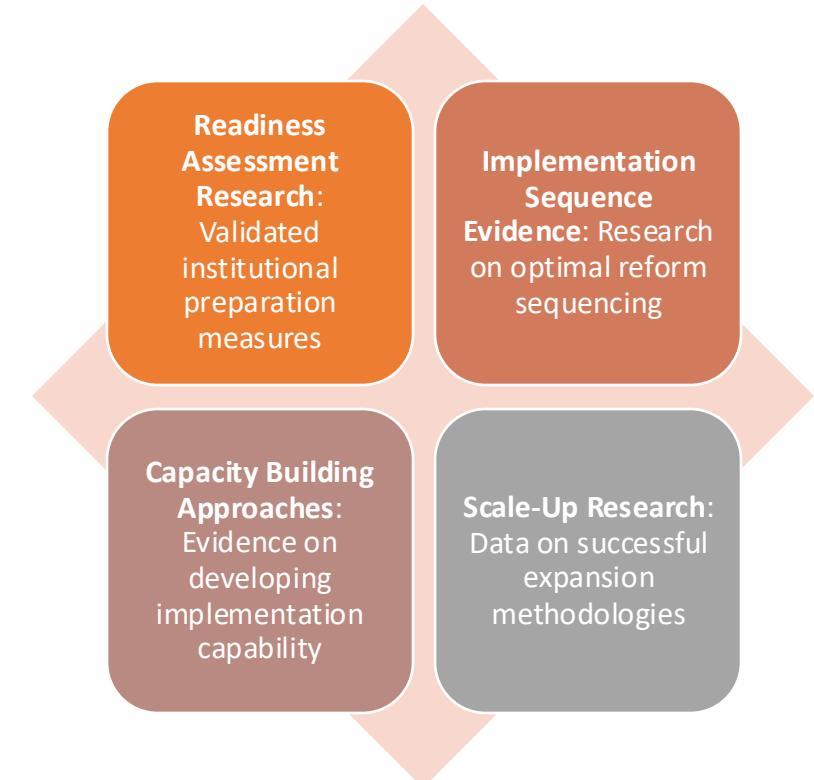


# HESF for Achieving 80% Attainment With Equity

## Evidence-Based Growth Strategy:

- **Equity Pipeline Research:** Evidence on pathways from school to tertiary education
- **Barrier Removal Evidence:** Research on overcoming participation obstacles
- **Regional Capacity Building:** Evidence-based approaches to regional delivery
- **Lifelong Learning Research:** Data on supporting diverse age groups

## Implementation Staging Evidence:



# **The HESF Rightful Success Implementation Pathway**

## **Stage 1: Evidence-Based Foundation (2024-2026)**

- Establishing baseline equity metrics using validated instruments
- Building implementation capacity based on research evidence
- Developing data infrastructure informed by implementation research
- Creating communities of practice around evidence-based strategies

## **Stage 2: Equity-Focused Implementation (2026-2030)**

- Scaling evidence-based interventions for equity groups
- Implementing research-validated support frameworks
- Applying data-driven continuous improvement cycles
- Building evidence through implementation research

# Conclusion: HESF as the Engine of Rightful Success

## Recentering Student Success Through Evidence:

HESF transforms the concept of student success from access to rightful success

Provides evidence-based frameworks that operationalise the Accord's vision

Creates accountability through validated measurement of equity outcomes

Ensures implementation fidelity through research-informed approaches

## Next Steps in Building the Evidence Base:

Developing an implementation research agenda to further refine HESF

Creating institutional "rightful success laboratories" to test innovations

Establishing a clearinghouse for evidence-based rightful success practices

Building capacity for evidence-based implementation across the sector

# References

- Australian Universities Accord Final Report (2024)
- Krahe, M. A., Hall, K. K., Anderson, P. J., & Shannon, C. (2023). Mapping the knowledge structure and trends in Australian Indigenous health and wellbeing research from 2003 to 2022: a scientometric analysis.
- Pham, T. D., Baeza Penă, A., Xing, C., Blue, L. E., Anderson, P. J., & Chappell, R. (2025). Measuring social determinants influencing Australian university students' completion: confirmatory factor analysis. *Frontiers in Education*, 10, Article 1568521. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1568521>