



Patterns of Success: Who Does Best?

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ABSTRACT

A team of UNITEC researchers have been investigating parameters which affect student success, including age, gender, ethnicity, educational background, motivation and study process. The most significant results are presented in the poster and the process is described in a separate contributed paper.

1. Introduction

UNITEC Institute of Technology in Auckland is the second largest provider of computing qualifications in New Zealand. Students may obtain certificates (five or ten months full time), diplomas (two years full time), bachelors degrees (three years full time), postgraduate diplomas (one year full time), or masters degrees (two years full time). The mix of students is very varied, ranging from some with no formal school qualifications to others with several postgraduate qualifications. A high proportion (more than a third) are recent immigrants for whom English is not their first language. Many use the qualifications as a staircase, beginning with a certificate, moving on to a diploma or degree, and even to a postgraduate qualification

2. The PASS Project

Since (very) late last century, a research team at UNITEC Institute of Technology has been working on the PASS project, endeavouring to identify Parameters

which Affect Student Success, both on our computing programmes and in the workplace after graduating. Four related strands are being investigated :

- ◆ is there any correlation between personal factors (age, ethnicity, gender, motivation and study process) and success on the programmes?
- ◆ is there any correlation between academic background (general, English and mathematics) and success on the programmes?
- ◆ what aspects of programme structure, course delivery and support do students believe help/hinder them in their studies?
- ◆ what knowledge, skills and attributes of the graduates do employers and the graduates themselves find of greatest value in the workplace?

3. Conclusion

Nearly 1500 student files have been examined to establish each student's age, gender, ethnicity, educational background before enrolling, and performance on our programmes (certificate, diploma or degree). Correlations between the different variables have been computed and some interesting conclusions have been reached. The most significant results are presented in the poster and the process is described in a separate contributed paper.