



CC Support: Putting the Students First

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Proceedings of the 15th Annual NACCQ, Hamilton New Zealand July, 2002

ABSTRACT

In this paper the planning and implementation of a support system for the Certificate in Computing (CC) is described. The authors are keen to find out if providing support for CC will improve retention rates in the certificate program as CC is an important pathway into the computing degree (BCS). Selection criteria for support staff included: experience with teaching CC students, empathy with students needing support, knowledge of enrolment procedures, and academic commitment to students entering tertiary studies at level three. The CC support (CCS) team provided help with: recognition (as opposed to solution) of problems, a referral service, reassurance, academic matters and enrolment procedures.

Training for CC support was provided by the counselling service before the beginning of semester to clarify boundary setting for the CCS team members. Resourcing and setting up CCS was carefully planned before the start of semester.

An intensive support program ran for the first four weeks of semester while CC students were settling into their first introduction to tertiary studies. However, lunchtime sessions with the CCS team were held throughout the semester. Staff expectations prior to the beginning of semester were that (1) CCS would improve the retention rate; and (2) it would make staff availability more transparent. Data was gathered during the semester with a pre-planned data template. (Table 1)

Results of CCS will be displayed at the conference on completion of the semester.

Keywords: Computer Education, Support, Certificate level

Table 1

CCSupport Project Data Template

Support Given Number _____

Support Person _____

Date.../.../....

Time of Day ____.

Length of Session _____

No of Visits _____

Issues

Resolutions

