

# UNLOCKING STUDENT POTENTIAL WITH INCLUSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES

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**SUBTHEME:** Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Student wellbeing is closely linked to engagement and academic success, particularly in Mathematics and Statistics where students may lack confidence and feel outside their comfort zones. This presentation offers practical, evidence-based strategies that have been used to foster inclusion and support student academic success and wellbeing, empowering them to reach their full potential!

It introduces UNSW's Healthy Universities Initiative (HUI, established in 2018) which focuses on curricular approaches to student academic success and wellbeing. HUI is grounded in the Dual Continua Model of Psychological Health (Keyes, 2002), which distinguishes between psychiatric disorders and psychological wellbeing, and emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive learning environment for all students. It adopts the evidence-based Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000) to facilitate identification of strategies that support the psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness/belonging, and thus wellbeing.

Using SDT as a guiding framework, the presentation highlights how educators can develop or refine simple, effective approaches to meet students' core psychological needs of belonging, competence, and autonomy, leading to increased student success and thus wellbeing.

The presentation which will focus on a compulsory Statistics course for Arts and Business students as a case study will show that by applying general wellbeing-supportive approaches, as well as tailored strategies to address specific issues – the “checkpoint” method of lab assessment, and optional hybrid weekly support classes – students experienced success, in some cases for the first time in their study of Mathematics and Statistics. Student feedback indicated that they appreciated the assistance available in support classes and that the labs encouraged them to engage with the course material and stay on task and provided them with immediate feedback and a supportive learning environment. The collaborative and supportive classroom environment established was also beneficial for tutors who were motivated to actively engage with students, and to work together to deepen their understanding of content and explore effective ways to explain key concepts to students.

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