

# **Analysis of multi-year AUSSE data to inform universities' strategic decisions**

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The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE, see e.g. Coates, 2010) has been administered in Australian and New Zealand universities for a number of years by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). The survey has approximately 100 items, which load onto various scales and student outcome measures. The student engagement scales (e.g., Academic Challenge, Active Learning, etc.) have received the most attention in the literature and media. However, there are many more items on the survey that can be explored, making AUSSE results a rich source of information for university strategic planning and decision-making. In our experience however, the raw AUSSE data provided by ACER are seldom analysed further by institutions in New Zealand. Here we present some of the analyses done on three years of AUSSE data as were provided to our institution by ACER. Using a combination of basic statistical tests as well as prediction tool such as classification trees, we are able to answer a series of institutional research questions that help inform strategic decision-making regarding (resource allocation for) teaching and learning at the University. In particular, we make use of the item 'departure intention' for first year students in order to inform strategies to increase student retention. Our results, hence, demonstrate how institutions participating in AUSSE may make a greater use of the data. We provide a series of statistical tools and guidelines to encourage others to use the AUSSE data to inform teaching and learning policy in their own institutions.