
Sue Heggie, Auckland University of Technology

“The Woolf Fisher First-in-Family AUT Scholarship was established in 2014 by the Woolf Fisher Trust to ‘break the cycle’ and encourage students from families with no history of degree level study and for whom university study is a challenge for family for financial and/or cultural reasons to enable them to participate in university education.”

As Scholarship Support Coordinator, one of my tasks is to closely monitor smaller cohorts of at-risk students. In doing so, the Woolf Fisher students annually complete a report for the Trust regarding health and well-being, community activities, academic progress, highlights, and challenges. This is a pictorial and text archive of their personal journeys at university and beyond.

These stories serve three purposes:
- Students reflect on their past performance, plan for their future, and share these reflections with Woolf Fisher cohorts. They show their appreciation to the Trust.
- Students in the cohorts share experiences, events and professional development thereby developing a close-knit, supportive community that also contributes to their well-being.
- The Trust feel a strong connection to the students because of their stories and in this way AUT cements the relationship and strengthens the Trust’s financial and community commitment.

The stories inspire other students to apply for scholarships and are an authentic marketing tool. The results speak for themselves – evidence will be provided to support this.

Learning outcomes
- Narratives as a tool to contribute to scholar success
- Narratives as a tool for genuine connection to scholarship donors
- Narratives as a tool for marketing authenticity

Presenter
Sue Heggie, Auckland University of Technology

Sue Heggie is currently AUT’s Scholarship Coordinator for undergraduate scholars. Prior to this she was Director of School Partnerships, AUT. She has also been the Manager of Student Recruitment at the University of Auckland and has a background in secondary teaching where she held HOD English roles and was Deputy Principal at Kaikorai Valley High School. Her philosophy is that individual narratives and community connections make the difference between flourishing and failure.