Sessional Academic Success

Associate Professor Jillian Hamilton (PhD)
Associate Director, Academic:
Sessional Development
Queensland University of Technology

jg.hamilton@qut.edu.au
Sessional Academic Success (SAS) is...

A centrally co-ordinated, multi-faculty program that provides:

- contextually specific,
- on the ground,
- and just in time

support, training and advice to inexperienced Sessional staff by experienced peers to help ensure their academic success.
it came about because ... 

Formal training @ QUT is well established and SAP, SCAD is successful but

- *is generic (in diverse contexts)*
- *and contained, in the moment*
- *is linear*
Your good practice

Suggest one statement

a shift in the model...

- flexible
- unfolding
- affording agency
- and creativity
- bespoke
unfolding…
trusting…
acknowledging …
distributed
grounded ...

curriculum that engages students in learning

access to support

sense of belonging

on success

Tinto
Programs that engage staff in learning

- Academic Development (4 sessions + online)
- SCAD – career mentoring programs

Access to support

Sense of belonging

Student Success and Retention program (QUT) (with reference to Tinto)
distributed ...
distributed ...
The role of the SASA ...

To help promote

- confidence,
- competence,
- support
- and a sense of belonging

amongst Sessional staff
The role of the SASA ...

To help promote

• confidence,
• competence,
• support
• and a sense of belonging
amongst Sessional staff
focused ...

Programs that engage staff in learning

access to support

sense of belonging

on success

faculty by faculty
The role of the SASA ...

Just in time forums, communities of practice, marking parties

Welcomes Practice tutorials Facebook

‘Safe’ Sessional Academic Advice
Peer to Peer
Mentoring
Development
Community building activities
Communities of practice

Welcomes Face to face Awards
challenges...

Issues raised by Sessional staff (training, support)
Complexity
Agency to enact within faculties
Perceptions of role in faculties
  - Subject co-ordinators,
  - Study co-ordinators,
  - Admin
What does success look like?

Different in every faculty
Different to other development
there was a solid guidance structure in place at the beginning of the program that required us to be quite specific with our goals, and I think that was enough. It was then great that we were trusted to follow through with that.

Evidence of success
Evidence of success

Programs that engage staff in learning

- Sense of belonging
- Timely local focal
- Access to support

The more individuals feel supported and aware of the resources at their disposal, the more invested they become in their role (and potentially the higher their job satisfaction), which can potentially result in better learning outcomes for students.

I think it's a good opportunity to develop leadership and communication skills.

Local support, governed and supported at a University-wide level, is exactly what Sessional staff want and need. Their needs are different by faculty and school... they need someone local they can rely upon to help them when the solution to their problems is not apparent.