

Environmental Scan

1. Institution:

Charles Sturt University, Bathurst.

2. Contact Person (and contact details):

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3. Name of Program/Initiative

3.1 URL: www.csu.edu.au/student/studylink

3.2 Start Date/Duration: The STUDY LINK program has run continuously since 1999.

4. Brief outline of program

The STUDY LINK program offers a suite of short, self paced enabling subjects that are available by distance education. The subjects have been designed to address a considerable variety of topics and they have been found appropriate to meet the needs of first time university students. All materials are provided (usually online) within the scope of the program. The various STUDY LINK subjects are structured to involve between 15 and 40 hours of study; in most cases students work through the assessments at their own pace. All students have ongoing access to a subject coordinator who facilitates their progress through the subject and who can be contacted for assistance.

5. Purpose/Aims

The purpose of the STUDY LINK program is to enable students to make a seamless transition into university study, regardless of their background and entry level competence.

6. Breadth of program

The program is managed within the scope of activities under the auspices of the Dean of Studies, Academic support, and coexists with a number of other initiatives intended to enhance the progress of undergraduate students. The full range of 15 subjects is available to students at any stage of their transition into tertiary study from pre-entry to their final year; all subjects are accessible to students across the university. The availability of subjects is such that students can access most on a continuing basis throughout the year.

7. Category (please select all that apply and provide explanation where necessary)

Category	Y?	Explanation
Policy		
Curriculum	yes	In a number of instances STUDY LINK subjects do address specific curriculum issues. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory statistics for Social Sciences • Developing skills for Information Technology • Transition to Nursing Studies
Program	Yes	STUDY LINK is considered by CSU to be a self contained program with a suite of specifically designed and Senate approved subjects.
Other (please specify) Generic	Yes	In the majority the content of STUDY LINK subjects is considered generic to a range of discipline areas offered at CSU. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to University Study • Introduction to Learning Online • Writing at University

8. Outcomes

8.1 Uptake: enrolment to date – (since 1999) = 30 883
(2011) = 1 689

8.2 Evaluation(s) conducted to date – (formal) – and details of findings:

Formal evaluation of the STUDY LINK program was conducted in 2008 by Professor Andrys Onsman, Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, Monash University.

A segment of the Review and Evaluation Summary states:

- Both staff and students believe the program is successful – and the completion rates support that belief. The STUDY LINK subjects undoubtedly provide the students with a sound basis for undergraduate study (Onsman, 2008: p. 66).

8.3 Evidence of success:

- CSU Vice Chancellor’s Award for Programs that Enhance Learning, 2008.
- Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Award for University Teaching, 2009.

8.4 Evaluation(s) planned (and dates for this/these):

Evaluation of subject SSS022 Writing at University is ongoing (2011) across two CSU campuses, Bathurst and Wagga Wagga.

8.5 Major challenges:

Funding for provision of enabling subjects to an uncapped number of students in 2012.

8.6 Other (Please specify):

9. Publications/Reports (including links to those publically available)

Professor Onsman's (2008) report is available at:

http://www.csu.edu.au/distance-education/CSU_STUDYLINK_Evaluation.pdf