



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

### STARS focus on student success, wellbeing and mental health

Students Transitions Achievement Retention and Success ([STARS](#)) is hosting its annual conference for higher education educators in collaboration with the Australasian Mental Health and Higher Education Collaboration (AMHHEC) from 3 to 5 July at the Sofitel Brisbane.

STARS 2023 is an excellent opportunity for more than 300 university educators and students to discuss and promote good practices, emerging initiatives and ideas that enhance the student experience and learning success.

President of the Australian Learning & Teaching Fellows (ALTF) Professor Sally Kift is one of two keynote speakers. Taking a wide view, her address reported on current higher education challenges, tensions and opportunities in what Minister of Education Jason Clare calls the “year of big ideas”.

During her address using the STARS themes as a framework, Professor Kift asked whether our current conceptualisations of what it means to receive a higher education are fit for modern purpose in a massified higher education sector.

The second keynote speaker is Professor Gregor Kennedy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Professor of Higher Education at Melbourne University. Gregor’s research is focused on technology in education and he will ask some probing questions about whether technology is making university education impersonal and transactional and provide advice about how to address these challenges.

These questions are timely as the Albanese Government’s review of Australia’s higher education system – the first in more than a decade – was announced late last year.

Professor Mary O’Kane AC leads the review and released the Australian Universities Accord Discussion Paper in February. Following extensive consultation, the Panel’s interim report is anticipated to be released on 19 July.

This year, STARS has teamed with [AMHHEC](#), a multidisciplinary collaborative initiated at James Cook University committed to strengthening the mental health and wellness of students and staff in the higher education sector.

AMHHEC brings an emphasis on wellbeing and mental health into the mix of critical issues highlighted in recent years, most dramatically during the COVID pandemic, as priority areas of concern when promoting student health and success at university.

For more information contact:  
STARS 2023 Event Manager Jason Thomas  
Email: [mail@unistars.org](mailto:mail@unistars.org) Phone: 0412 170 001  
Website: <https://jasonthomasevents.com/>