A MODEL OF FIVE AREAS OR ‘SENSES’ OF STUDENT SUCCESS
(Lizzio, 2006)

(a) Capability
Students who are better prepared for the roles and tasks of university study
(‘learning ready’) tend to have greater early academic success and are
consequently more satisfied and persistent with their studies. A student’s sense
of capability depends on how well they understand what is expected of them in
the student role, their mastery of basic academic skills and their level of
commitment to contributing to their learning community. We can help develop a
sense of capability by clarifying and negotiating expectations, providing entry-
level development of academic skills and engaging students as active members
of a learning community.

(b) Connectedness
Students with stronger connections are more likely to be successful learners,
effective colleagues and happy people. A student’s sense of connectedness
depends on the quality of relationships with peers, with staff and their feelings of
identification or affiliation with their School or University. We can help develop
connectedness by providing opportunities for students to form good working
relationships with their fellow students and with staff and encouraging them to
get involved with the university.

(c) Purpose
Students with a clear sense of purpose are not only more likely to find their
study rewarding, but also to be more committed and persistent when the work
gets challenging. A student’s sense of purpose depends on their sense of
vocation, their engagement with their discipline of study and their capacity to set
personal goals. We can help develop a sense of purpose by providing
opportunities for students to be as clear as they possibly can about their reasons
for going to university and their choice of degree, to see the relevance of their
course of study and to systematically develop their strengths and talents.

(d) Resourcefulness
Successful students not only know how to study but also how to proactively
manage the challenges of their whole university experience. A student’s sense of
resourcefulness depends on their ability to navigate the university system to get
the help and information they need, their willingness to speak up if they have a
problem, and an ability to balance their work, life and study commitments. We
can help students to be more resourceful by providing clear and accessible roles,
procedures and resources and encouraging timely help-seeking behaviour.
(e) Academic Culture
Successful students know the value of learning ‘how things are done’ and what is important or valued in new culture. A student’s sense of cultural competence depends on their appreciation of the core values and ethical principles of the university and how these will inform their approaches to study and working relationships with fellow staff and students. We can help students by clearly answering the question: ‘what is a university?’