

## Why first-year matters

A successful start in international higher education for students is enhanced by good preparation and accessing dedicated programs.

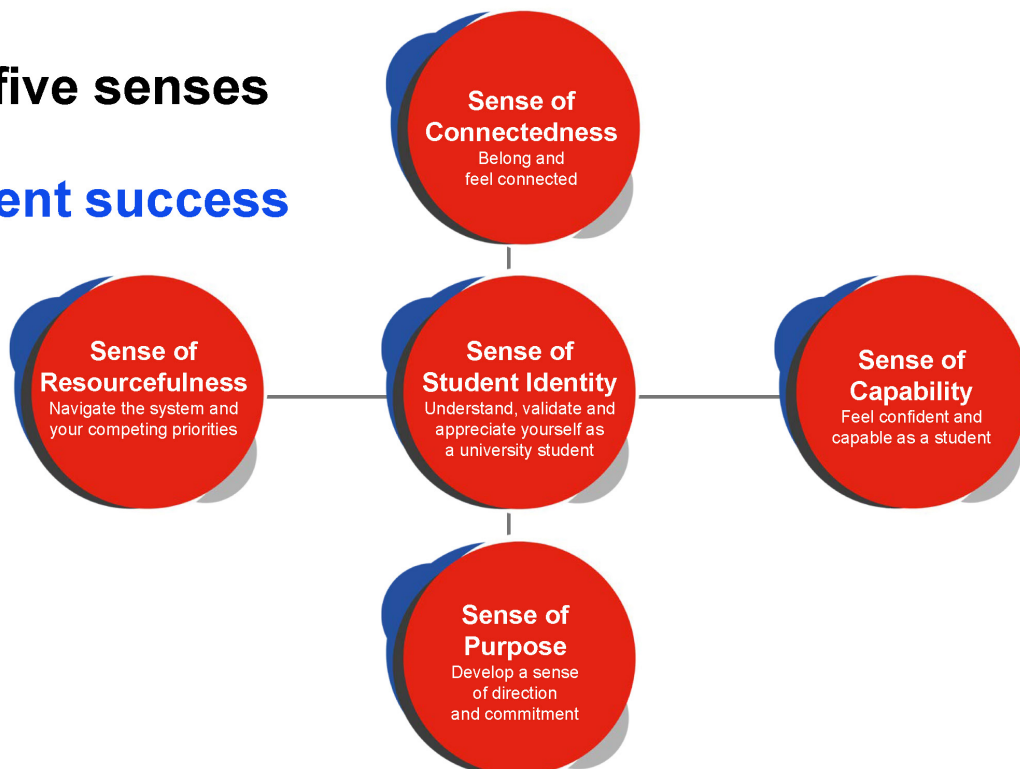
According to a Dutch study, students are successful in their first year if they have positive interactions with their learning environment including teachers and during class time rather than if they achieved a high-grade point average during high school. Universities and higher education institutions should also help students develop self-management skills including time management, help seeking behaviour and goal setting.

“Commencing higher education involves a major transition for all students, particularly those moving internationally to study for the first time,” said Ms Susan Sherringham, Program Manager – UTS Foundation Studies, UTS Insearch.

“Not only must students acclimatise to a new style of education - they are learning in a second language, adjusting to a new educational system and all while learning to live in new city, away from parents and friends for the first time. I have great admiration for these students.” she said.

There is a significant body of research examining what helps first year students succeed in their transition from school to higher education and university. A recent study of 1700 students at eight Australian universities identified several strategies to improve student retention rates. The researchers found that those students who thrived in their first year at university developed a sense of belonging, made friends with peers, were engaged intellectually and had support that helped reduce the stress of their studies.

## The five senses of student success



Lizzio (2011)