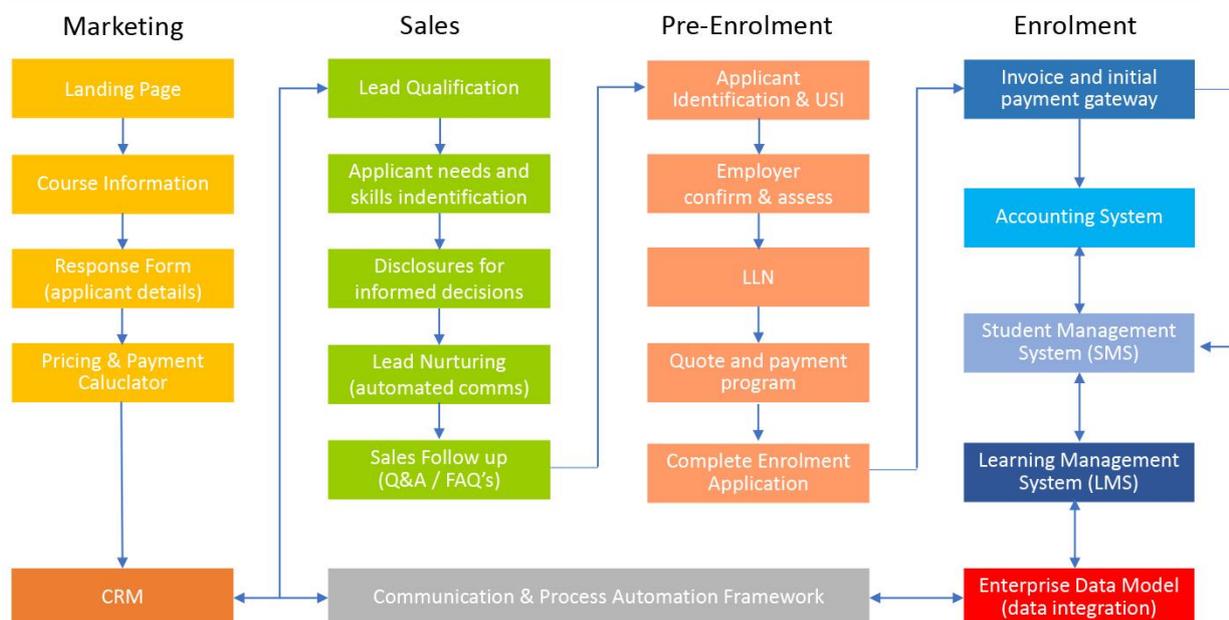# Opportunities to optimise the student experience

CompanyHQ:

Executive Summary

RTO performance is measured by the student experience. A framework to enhance the student experience:

☑ supports quality outcomes,   ☑ increases enrolment referrals &   ☑ improves revenue efficiency

- A connected student experience requires a framework of people, process and technology that removes the disconnect of manual data administration and information silos.

- A student experience framework is necessary because consistent manual execution and/or automation, require efficient processes, quality tools and easily accessible reference materials (knowledge base).

- Once established, the student experience framework will strengthen the organisation's operational infrastructure, freeing more resources and supporting training and assessment.

- A structured framework improves sales and marketing processes and performance.

- Automation presents massive opportunities to reduce administration costs, while removing friction from many interactions.

- It is important for a training institution to have an ongoing dialogue with students that is supportive of, but independent to the trainer relationship.

CompanyHQ: Student Lifecycle Automation Template

Marketing	Sales	Pre-Enrolment	Enrolment
Landing Page	Lead Qualification	Applicant Identification & USI	Invoice and initial payment gateway
Course Information	Applicant needs and skills indentification	Employer confirm & assess	Accounting System
Response Form (applicant details)	Disclosures for informed decisions	LLN	Student Management System (SMS)
Pricing & Payment Caluclator	Lead Nurturing (automated comms)	Quote and payment program	Learning Management System (LMS)
CRM	Sales Follow up (Q&A / FAQ's)	Complete Enrolment Application	Enterprise Data Model (data integration)

Communication & Process Automation Framework

Manage the Full Student Lifecycle
Strengthen relationships as students move through recruitment, onboarding, instruction and alumni phases.
Gain a unified lifecycle view that benefits both students and your organisation.

Mapping the student experience

Registered training organisations are under constant pressure to demonstrate performance and value. The measures for performance are built around creating a quality student experience.

Between the lines, the guidelines for ASQA's five phases of the student experience, focus around preventing rip-offs; providing accurate information, allowing informed decisions, assessing and supporting a student's needs. Complying with the requirements is a good start, but it doesn't guarantee a quality student experience.

A quality experience will always come down to how well you understand each students' needs and whether you are willing or capable of delivering on their expectations.

The opportunity to automate the student experience proposes a student experience framework, that supports all the touch-points of the student lifecycle, outside or in support of, training & assessment.

Once established, the student experience framework will strengthen the organisation's operational infrastructure, freeing resources to support training delivery while ensuring appropriate assessment tools and practices are activated. A worthy ambition!

A student experience framework is necessary because consistent manual execution and/or automation, require efficient processes, quality tools and easily accessible reference materials.

a quality student experience will always come down to how well you understand each student's needs,
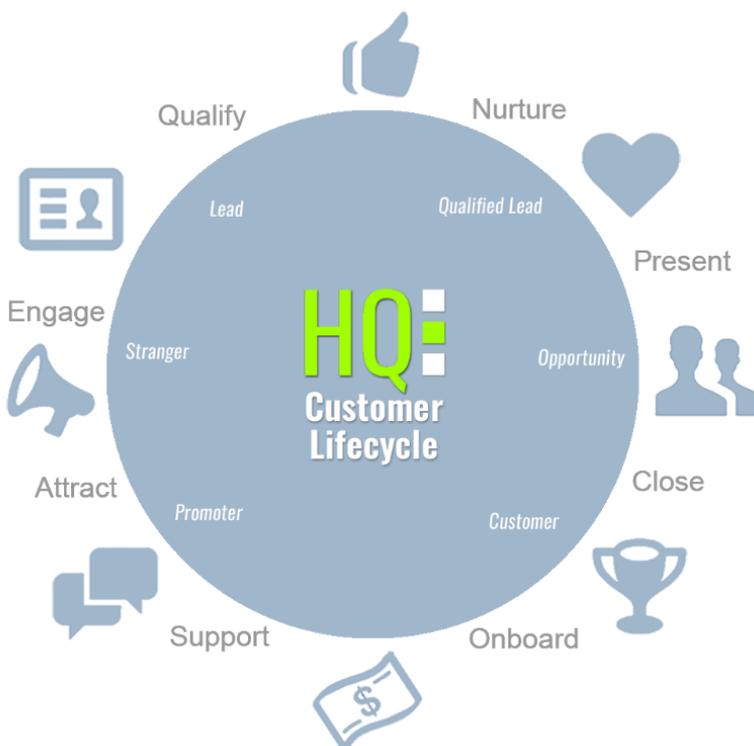
Sales Marketing view of the customer (student) lifecycle

Student acquisition, onboarding & support are administratively intensive. Taking a student-centric approach ensures each part of the process contributes to a quality experience.

Streamlining the process to improve the student experience, also improves revenue efficiency by reducing friction and cost at each touchpoint.
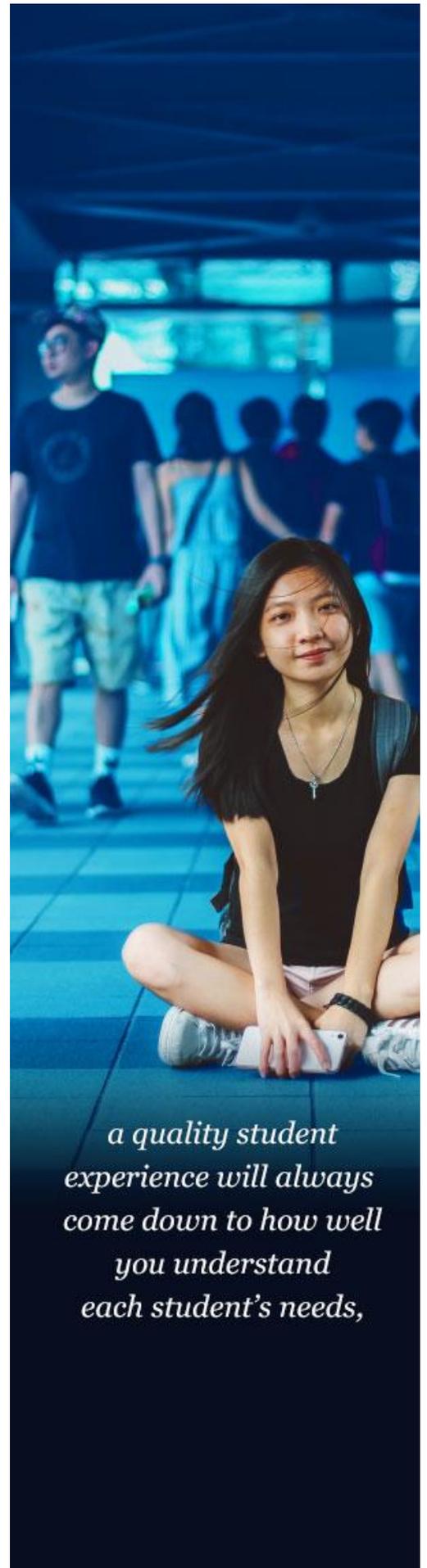
Managing the full student lifecycle

At first glance, the offer of automating the student lifecycle might present a service standard or relationship that sounds . . . cold, or perhaps uncaring. It is anything but.

In many cases automation presents the first viable opportunity to actually introduce an individually crafted student experience – beyond the student / trainer relationship.

The benefits of open dialogue are not diminished by when or how a communication is constructed. Value is all about context. Does it relate to where I am at right now? Is it delivered via my preferred channel? Does it support my needs and journey?

In considering what constitutes a good relationship, think about your neighbour for a minute. Bound by proximity and a common interest in amenity and harmony. A good relationship is based around appropriate avenues for open dialogue – when needed. You know you can always knock on their front door, but if given the choice you'd often opt for a less direct, more efficient interaction.

Surveys published by Zendesk show that two thirds (67%) of customers prefer self-service over speaking to a company representative. Seventy five percent (75%) feel self-service is a convenient way to address customer service issues, and ninety one percent (91%) said they would use an online knowledge base if it were available and tailored to their needs.

Promoting engagement and supporting progression

There are specific compliance requirements in the Standards that specify: *"the students' needs are assessed by the RTO and appropriate educational and support services are provided to enable student progression".*

However, the vision of aiding student progression has merit, beyond simply meeting compliance standards. Providing a searchable knowledge base to provide access and respond to student's information needs, presents an effective first step to an enhanced student experience.
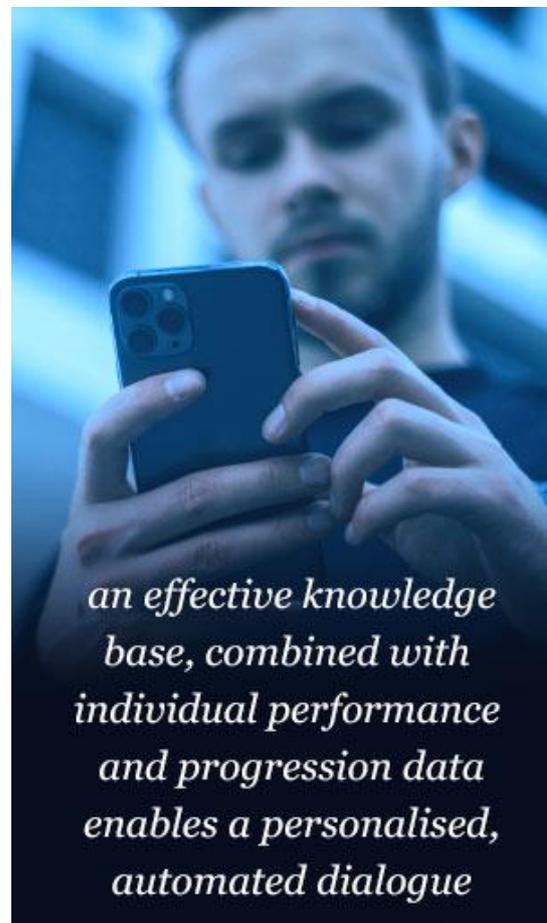
The business case for driving or supporting student progression, would highlight that funded course payments are linked to progression. Also, direct claims for student payments typically cannot be made beyond $1,500 in advance of the training delivered. Promoting engagement and driving progression is good practice, but in cases where the student determines the pace of learning, it is a commercial imperative.

An effective knowledge base combined with individual performance and progression data, enables a personalised, automated dialogue to drive student engagement. Communication can be via the student's preferred channel which might include email, text or social messenger.

Student needs tend to have a rhythm, based how the student is performing and what stage of the course the student is or should be at. An automated dialogue can easily reference live performance data and mirror what a trainer might address, if a weekly or fortnightly one-on-one were viable.

Where required, a student might also go online to book an appointment to speak directly with a trainer or student services representative. Such facility provides a high standard of support access. It is an achievable standard if efficiently scheduled and delivered via video meeting, online chat or phone conference.

It is important for a training institution to have an ongoing dialogue with students that is supportive of, but independent to the trainer relationship. In addition to prompting or guiding student engagement, a "student services" style dialogue can be used to elicit qualitative feedback, which might assist in monitoring performance and ensuring continuous improvement of the RTO's training and assessment strategy and practice.

an effective knowledge base, combined with individual performance and progression data enables a personalised, automated dialogue

Student Enrolment & Onboarding

Sales, marketing and student enrolment have detailed requirements necessary to meet the Standards as well as eligibility for specific funding. Student acquisition and enrolment are the life-blood of a viable training organisation.
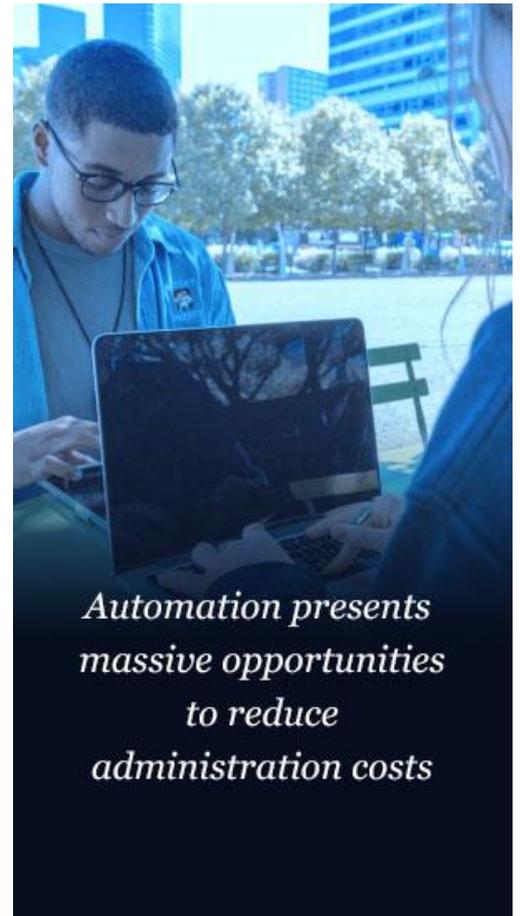
Beyond essential compliance, the primary driver to create a framework to enhance the student experience is that it supports quality outcomes, increases referrals & improves revenue efficiency.

A structured framework also improves sales processes and performance. From the first hello, right through enrolment and on past graduation, best practice is to deliver a connected student experience. A seamless journey where potential points of friction are removed or streamlined as much as possible.

Automation presents massive opportunities to reduce administration costs, while removing friction from many interactions. Automation can assist in supporting engagement, through the provision of contextual feedback and information, prompting or aiding the completion of tasks in an appropriate sequence.

The requirements for student onboarding and support can vary greatly between RTO's. The level of customisation required to streamline the process, requires integration across systems as well as a level of functionality not natively present in most student management or learning management systems (SMS or LMS).

A connected student experience requires a framework of people, process and technology that removes the disconnect of manual data administration and information silos. Training institutions today require quality, efficiency and compliance. An investment in optimising the student experience is an investment in revenue efficiency and performance infrastructure.

Automation presents massive opportunities to reduce administration costs