

TOP PROFESSIONAL VOICES IN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



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Jason is the Engaged Learning Coordinator for the Faculty of Engineering and IT at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). He began his journey into student engagement during his undergraduate years working as a U:PASS Leader where he found meaning in the impact he had on his peers' success. Now, he drives student growth and success in his faculty by delivering experiences that help students feel seen and empowered to engage in opportunities beyond the classroom.



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How did your personal and professional journey lead you to your current role in student engagement?

In my third year of a Business degree at UTS, I was surrounded by classmates talking about Big 4 firms and graduate roles. That career path didn't appeal to me, and around that time I became a U:PASS Leader. Facilitating sessions where several of my peers passed their subject was incredibly rewarding — but when the program ended, I felt a real sense of loss. I remember sitting in my manager's office saying I didn't want a 9–5 corporate job and thinking, "How great would it be if I could work at uni for a year until I figure things out?"

Months later, I saw a student engagement role advertised and took it, expecting it to be temporary. Instead, it became a year-long role where I designed initiatives that reminded me of the impact I'd felt during U:PASS. Then COVID hit, my supervisor left, and I suddenly had to step up. It wasn't easy, but that challenge pushed me to grow into the coordinator role I eventually secured permanently.

I've been here ever since, working to drive student engagement and success in my faculty — and that feeling of making a difference for students is still what motivates me today.



Presentation at the UTS iSupport Program Awards Ceremony.



Presentation at the 2025 Engineering and IT Undergraduate Welcome.

Could you tell us about a specific project or initiative you led that significantly boosted student engagement?

I lead the UTS Tech Festival (Tech Fest), an annual two-week celebration of more than 30 student engagement events including showcases, hackathons, competitions, and more. Tech Fest reimagines the student experience — shifting it from classes and assessments to opportunities for purpose, connection, and community.

We launched Tech Fest in 2022 with just a handful of showcases where students presented projects to friends and family, **attracting over 1,500 attendees**. By 2025, the festival had grown exponentially: nine showcases featured more than **800 student presenters, 200 students were recognised with certificates and trophies**, and over **9,000 registrations** came from students, staff, alumni, industry professionals, families, high schools, and the public.

The culture shift is clear. Students now approach us to showcase their projects at Tech Fest — a sign they see their learning as purposeful beyond the classroom. They're developing confidence, a stronger sense of purpose, and the empowerment to pursue opportunities that enhance their personal and professional success.

What motivates you to continue working in student engagement?

Working in this area has shown me the value of connection and the impact I can have on a student's learning journey. Designing and delivering engagement initiatives creates opportunities for students to grow, build self-confidence, and discover what they're capable of. For me, it only took one step to set off a series of events that changed the direction of my life. What motivates me now is creating those same moments for others — giving students the chance to tap into their potential and watching them transform.

I've seen this firsthand. One student ambassador I worked with began shy and timid, but over the years, she grew into a confident leader of her own team. Another time, a student approached me after an event, shook my hand, and shared how much winning an award meant to him. His gratitude was unforgettable, and moments like these remind me why this work matters.



A Note from the Founder

What Jason is doing within the FEIT is taking an 'engineering degree' to a whole new level with iMentor, Tech Fest and more! Plus, he's got a killer personal brand and his entrepreneurial spirit shines in all he does, as well as his 'side hustle.'

What makes it even more rewarding is doing this alongside passionate colleagues and students. From late-night preparations and shared pizza to the joy of seeing events delivered successfully, these are the moments that stay with me.

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Group photo at the 2025 Engineering and IT First Year Meet Up.