



## **Indigenous Education Strategic Development Working Group**

### **MEETING 01/2004**

Minutes of meeting (01/2004) of the Indigenous Education Strategic Development Working Group held at 9:30 a.m. on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2004 in the Western Tower Room, Main Quadrangle.

#### **In Attendance:**

Professor Judyth Sachs (Chair), Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning)  
Professor John Hearn, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)  
Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences and Technology  
Professor Hal Kendig for Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Health Sciences  
Associate Professor Peter McCallum, for Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Ms Sarah Heesom, Senior Solicitor, Director, Staff and Student Equal Opportunity  
Ms Janet Mooney, Director Koori Centre  
Associate Professor Diana G Day, Koori Centre  
Dr Freidoon Khavarpour, Yooroang Garang School of Indigenous Health Studies  
Ms Sue Page, Yooroang Garang School of Indigenous Health Studies  
Dr Michael Paton, Faculty of Economics and Business  
Ms Nabila Sadek, taking minutes

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### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

The Chair welcomed the members to the first meeting of the Working Group. She indicated that this group was established to coordinate and move forward various Indigenous Education issues. The Group would also provide 'intelligence' and information to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). It would cover academic, intellectual and strategic advice to the area of Equity. The Indigenous Employment strategy, managing the interaction with Unions and responding to enterprise bargaining were separate issues and would have other working groups. Nevertheless, reports on these activities would be communicated to this group.

Members introduced themselves and briefed the Group on their background.

### **2. Apologies & Membership**

#### **Apologies**

Ms Lynette Riley-Mundine apologies were noted. Ms Ros Field, Ms Sharon Lyons-Sequeira was unable to attend.

#### **Membership**

The Chair welcomed ideas on membership and there was a lively discussion which resulted in the following outcomes:

- The Group agreed that it was essential to have the Chair of Academic Board, Professor John Carter and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Employee Relations) Professor Michael Fry on this Group. The involvement of the PVC (Employee Relations) in this Group would facilitate the communication between this Group and enterprise bargaining.
- Members agreed on the importance of including staff more related to sensitive Indigenous issues who would convey the staff's point of view. It was agreed to invite Dr Col James to join the Group.

### **3. Indigenous Education Strategy 2005-2007**

The Chair referred members to the Indigenous Education Strategy 2005-2007 circulated to Members before the meeting. She explained that this document was originally required by DEST and that it would only provide the basis for the development of the Indigenous strategy in the University. In her research on Indigenous strategy in this University and elsewhere, she noticed that there were some gaps in relation to some of the issues that we were supposed to be dealing within the institution so she made the following modifications.

- In dot point 2 she added some words from the original document "recruitment", "academic performance and graduation rates and "especially in programs where there have been no Indigenous students". The issue "where there have been no Indigenous students" was something that Science Faculty in particular was starting to address but should be addressed across the whole University.
- Dot points 7 and 8 were new additions. Given the International nature of the University and the Global marketing in which we were operating, this issue of intercultural understanding was quiet fundamental not only to the Indigenous strategy but to the international strategy as well.  
In number 7 she noted the efforts within the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's (Academic) portfolio, especially as these relate to internationalising the curriculum. To this end, a strategy for intercultural understanding and culture differences that incorporates both the internationalization strategy and the Indigenous strategy would be investigated.
- In dot point 8 the need to develop some strategic partnerships with various Aboriginal and Torres Islanders organisations and individuals would be a priority. Given the location of the University, we needed to have some sort of relationship with our local Indigenous community.

There was intensive discussion on the document and its limitations:

- The document was a response to a government request which was restricted by the number of pages and the required information.
- It was the only strategy for Indigenous Education in the University of Sydney and was just a way to start off the Group's discussion and that the next stage would be moving forward to a more planning approach.
- A lot of areas of improvements were required across the whole strategy.
- Under Section 3 they used to have target of students but disappeared since Helen Ross left.

Members agreed on:

- The added objectives and that the eight points under section plan 1 would provide the basis for strategic planning as it related to the strategic planning for the University's Indigenous strategies.
- The document required reconceptualising towards more strategic ends and could be used as part of the development of the University Strategic Planning process.
- Clear targets needed to be identified.
- This was an opportunity to build on past experiences learning and to extend that across the University so we could move in a corporate sense rather than in a fragmented sense.

### **Audit for the Review of the Indigenous Strategy:**

The Chair indicated that she was conducting an audit of indigenous activities across the University as these relate to teaching, research and community activities.

The audit would provide the Group with useful information and would give an indication of their achievements, aspirations, areas of improvement and areas for rethinking their strategies.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) briefed the Group on his discussion with the Chair and said that he recognized what was achieved but with more support, strategic and yearly review to the action approach progress, it could be better delivered. He welcomed the Group's comments and indicated that the Group should move to an action plan agenda this year for 2005. Bearing in mind the visibility, resources and priorities, he suggested that each member would think of 2 or 3 actions, which the Group could take to make a difference and generate a list for next year.

*Action: All*

He pointed out the following issues:

1. Within the international community there was a great deal of interest in health and the development of Indigenous people.
2. He recently met with State Government officials to discuss means of working better between the University and the State to deliver more effectively. Although they had a lot going on in terms of the professions but one of the things that came out was linking with the community and to be more outward looking which the government would resource. The intension was that we should have more intellectual properties with the community.

The University had recently won the International Centre of Excellence in Sports Sciences, and we could make sure that in that program we have access and support for Indigenous participation which could translate through out Redfern. We could use our existing resources and look at different facets of life again from an intellectual as well as the physical perspective.

3. The appointment of a Senior Professor in the Indigenous area had to be across the University and this required realistic expectations and support. A Professor at that level in each of the Colleges as well as the Institutional level would also be beneficial.

#### **4. Terms of Reference and Purpose of the Working Group**

The Chair referred Members to the Terms of Reference which she had briefly discussed earlier with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and welcomed the Group's comments and input.

The Working Group reviewed the Terms of Reference and it was suggested by the Chair that Associate Professor Diana Day would put forward a further dot point component including Indigenous staff.

*Action: Associate Professor Diana Day to draft and send to the Chair*

Members identified the importance of having a fully planned action plan as an essential role for this Group. They agreed that the Terms of Reference should include "to develop or to deliver annual action cross institution action plan, as it relates to Indigenous and related issues to implement and monitor the plan".

*Adopted*

#### **5. Next Steps**

Collate the information as it relates to the audit and establish a database.

Develop a plan that starts to rationalise these guidelines and put in some performance indicators and we will require some resources too.

#### **6. Any other business**

This Working Group should have an active role and should discuss the follow up goals for 2005. Members agreed to have a small workshop before the end of this year.

*Action: Ms N Sadek to circulate possible dates for a workshop*

Members were invited to prepare three actions to be considered in the workshop.

*Action: All*

Meeting dates - The Group agreed on the suggested dates but the Chair suggested another meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February.

*Adopted*

The meeting concluded at 10:45 am