

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT
2005-2007 TRIENNIUM**

SECTION 1

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

The University of Sydney remains committed to the empowerment and self-determination of Indigenous Australian people through education. The specific strategies for Indigenous education are:

- 1: To improve access and participation to all academic programs of the University of Sydney for Indigenous Australians.**
- 2: To improve recruitment retention rates, academic performance and graduation rates and successful outcomes for Indigenous Australian students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, especially in programs where there have been fees or no Indigenous students.**
- 3: To provide curricula and modes of course delivery which are informed by current research and the needs of Indigenous Australian communities.**
- 4: To recognise and promote understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures.**
- 5: To develop research activities by Indigenous Australian staff and students, especially research which responds to the needs of Indigenous Australian communities.**
- 6: To develop the staffing profile of Indigenous academic and general staff of the University.**
- 7: To promote and facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of scholarship in teaching and research concerning Indigenous peoples and culture.**
- 8: Develop and maintain partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait organisations and individuals.**

This vision is embedded in the University of Sydney Strategic Plan 1999-2004 which states in Major Goal Number 2 – (Diversity, Access and Equity) – that the University “will continue to provide access to tertiary study and appropriate support for students from a diversity of backgrounds”. Under this goal the University seeks to “encourage and support the participation and success of Indigenous Australian students by increasing opportunities for them to participate in the University as students, educators, administrators and researchers and by providing mechanisms to ensure successful outcomes”. The 2004-2008 Strategic Plan for the University’s College of Health Sciences has given a high priority to “addressing health inequalities in Australia, particularly the poor health status of Indigenous Australians”.

SECTION 2

ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY GOALS AND PLANS FOR 2005-2007 PLAN

1. To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in educational decision-making.

The University of Sydney actively supports Indigenous educational decision-making. It has established the Koori Centre to advance the University's quality assurance program in teaching and learning, and its public reporting to the University and wider community. Yooroang Garang is a School in the Faculty of Health Science providing a full range of enabling, undergraduate and postgraduate programs in Aboriginal Health for Indigenous students and support for Indigenous students enrolled in health sciences programs at the Cumberland campus. Indigenous personnel have major responsibilities for both the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang. There are several other Departments and Faculties throughout the University that have employed Indigenous personnel to advise on the programs and assist Indigenous students, such as the Department of Public Health, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Nursing and the Department of Rural Health in Broken Hill, and the Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit.

The Koori Centre supports a Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, which is chaired by the Director and draws membership from Yooroang Garang as well as other Faculties within the University. The University has established a Policy Advisory Group with Indigenous and non-Indigenous membership. The Director of the Koori Centre is a member of the Academic Board and Indigenous personnel are representatives on a wide range of committees.

The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang each support their own research committees, and the Koori Centre has published guidelines for undertaking Indigenous research. Indigenous staff are supported in developing their academic and administrative skills. The University runs a range of training and development programs through the Staff Development Office.

2. To increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in education and training.

Indigenous staff are employed in specific areas of academia and administration in various Faculties and Departments across the University. The Koori Centre has an excellent working rapport with these Indigenous staff, particularly those employed within Yooroang Garang (School of Health Sciences), Faculty of Nursing, Faculty of Medicine (Public Health), Faculty of Economics and the Equal Employment Office. The Koori Centre employs the largest group of Indigenous personnel within the University and ensures communication and consultation with other Indigenous staff for various aspects of core business.

The University employed an Indigenous officer through its Equal Opportunity Unit to develop an 'Indigenous Australian Employment Strategy', this will ensure an increase in Indigenous administrative personnel across the University. In addition, Indigenous graduates and senior Indigenous undergraduate students are employed as mentors and tutors for new students within the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) and Support programs offered at the Koori Centre and Yooroang

Garang. The College of Health Sciences 2004-2008 Strategic Plan has identified an increase in Indigenous academic staff as one measure of success of the plan.

3. To ensure equitable access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to education and training services.

Mechanisms for consultation with Indigenous people have two facets – internal consultation between University management and Indigenous staff and students, and external consultation between the University and the wider Indigenous community.

The University of Sydney consults widely with Aboriginal professional and community groups. Faculties and programs actively consult with organisations such as: the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG); the Aboriginal Medical Service; NSW Aboriginal Education Council; NSW Department of Education Science and Training; NSW Board of Studies and Aboriginal Units in the NSW Department of Education and Training; the NSW Health Department; Westmead Hospital; Orange Base Hospital; North Area Health Service

The University delivers a number of block-mode programs for Indigenous students in the area of education and health at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang also offer alternative pathways into University through several specific Tertiary Preparation Courses designed to encourage Indigenous student enrolment in all areas of the University. The Cadigal Program is an access and support program designed to assist mature aged and recent school leaver Indigenous applicants and offers a modified entry for UAC applicants.

In addition, the University holds: an annual HSC Enrichment Camp, Courses and Careers Days, Koori Youth Access Programs, Rural Entry Scheme and assists in negotiations for (at risk students), special admission in to Summer School and Continuing Education Programs.

4. To ensure participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in education and training services.

The University of Sydney provides academic support in the following ways: An Academic Skills Program with a reduced load component if required; ATAS tutorial assistance; and a dedicated counsellor. Additionally, it has resource facilities such as: tutorial rooms both in the institution and within the residential accommodation for block-mode students, computer labs with in the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang, and to labs in individual Faculties. Computer access has also been negotiated at rural NSW TAFE's for students in block-mode programs. An Indigenous Studies Research Library is housed at the Koori Centre and block-mode Tertiary Preparation Courses students have access to borrowing privileges in the University Library. Special borrowing rights for the block-mode program have also been negotiated at the Health Sciences Campus. Indigenous student scholarships are provided through the University Research Office as well as Indigenous specific scholarships from the Chancellor's Committee. There is also the Charles Perkins Award, and some \$300,000 worth of Indigenous scholarships offered annually to students within the three Colleges, as part of their commitment to meeting the guidelines of the Indigenous Support Allocation each year. In addition, Indigenous students have access to all support programs provided to mainstream students.

The Koori Centre in partnership with the Faculty of Education and Social Work, runs a Bachelor of Education (Aboriginal Studies: Secondary) for block-mode

Indigenous students. The Faculty of Education and Social Work has a Core Aboriginal subject in its Primary Teacher Education Program. The University provides funding to each of the three Colleges under its 'Indigenous Support Funding Scheme'; this initiative draws on funds above and beyond the Indigenous Support funding from DEST. Each of the Colleges is required to negotiate with Indigenous Centres and Units in providing better support for Indigenous students. A new initiative of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is an audit of Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum in each of its Faculties. The Faculty of Education and Social Work have completed the audit of Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum and over the coming years all Faculties within the College will receive funding specifically to undertake this initiative.

Indigenous students enrolled in the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Aboriginal Health & Community Development) at Yooroang Garang, are able to enrol in an Honours program and the School also offers postgraduate Certificate and Masters level research and course work programs in Aboriginal Health and Community Development. One of the priorities in the College of Health Sciences 2004-2008 Strategic Plan is to improve opportunities for Indigenous Australians to engage in health sciences education and research, and to strengthen basic professional education for Indigenous students.

5. To ensure equity and appropriate achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Both the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang perform a range of activities directed at achieving equity of outcomes for Indigenous students. These include provision of academic support, personal support such as counselling and advocacy for students in University procedures such as Show Cause, Illness and Misadventure. The Centres have established committees to monitor student performance in order to identify students at risk of failure, so that appropriate measures can be taken to ensure success.

The Academic Board has a rolling process of quality audits which involve faculties preparing a self-assessment review, including reporting on equity outcomes. This self-assessment is then tested through an intensive set of interviews culminating in a report which identifies strengths and areas for improvement and is subsequently followed up and acted upon.

6. To promote, maintain and support the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies culture and language to all Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang actively pursue initiatives to increase and enhance Indigenous participation and learning in higher education. For instance, important initiatives have been set in motion to enhance the learning experience of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, (which includes a growing cohort of international students) by means of promoting awareness of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives in 'mainstream' courses. In some cases this takes the form of Centre staff teaching core Indigenous-specific units of study. In addition, staff supply curriculum advice and consultation and/or give lectures and seminars within mainstream courses where academic staff, Departments and Faculties have requested more Indigenous content and input. The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang have an innovative and open mindset regarding the role of mainstream academics. Such teaching is not seen as the exclusive territory of Indigenous staff, but more a

willingness to work with other academics towards the Indigenising of curricula in all University disciplines. This inclusive, integrating approach is part of a long-term 'cross-referencing' strategy towards building a holistic learning environment, incorporating Indigenous learning, knowledge and perspectives, which in turn supports and encourages Indigenous students and ultimately enhances their overall satisfaction with the institution.

The Koori Centre teaches core Aboriginal studies subjects in the Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Work, and Nursing, and lectures across a wide range of disciplines. Yooroang Garang offers elective units of study in Indigenous health within other undergraduate programs such as Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy and the generic Behavioural and Biomedical Sciences programs. This ensures that appropriate cultural perspectives of health are presented.

The Koori Centre has initiated a generic cross-cultural package which is widely used by various Faculties and Departments across the university including the International Student Services Office and University Security. Recently the Koori Centre has worked with the Institute for Teaching and Learning to establish a cross-cultural workshop available to staff from across the University to learn more about Indigenous culture, knowledge and history.

The University of Sydney ensures that students have an understanding of and respect for Indigenous tradition and contemporary cultures by maintaining a high profile for Indigenous education within the University community.

SECTION 3

EXPENDITURE OF INDIGENOUS SUPPORT FUNDING

Funds for Teaching and Research

Funding for teaching and research is distributed via the main University funding model. Five areas involved in Indigenous education receive funding in this way, either directly or indirectly. They are the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang, both of which teach Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, and provide support to Indigenous students; the Faculty of Nursing, that has recently introduced a Bachelor of Nursing (Indigenous Australian Health) and two teaching units within the Faculty of Medicine, the Department of Rural Health, and the Australian Centre for Indigenous Health Promotion, each of which offer a course available only to Indigenous students, and funding is at the discretion of the Dean of Medicine.

All load taught by the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is included in the model. In 2003 a total of \$650K was distributed in this way to the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang, and reflected the decrease in Indigenous load. The amount allocated to the Medicine units was in total approximately \$200K.

Funds for Support Activities

Distribution of funding for support activities is shared between the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang and takes place outside the funding model. It takes into account:

- Support activities (based on the number of Indigenous students). The DEST support funding is distributed on this basis. Funding from this source was \$1,219K in 2003;
- Other support activities e.g. community outreach programs, ad hoc teaching in other programs based on actual cost data as supplied by the Centres. Funds under this heading are negotiated each year. In 2003 the amount distributed was \$993K.

Funds for Colleges

Additional earmarked funding (\$3,000 per Indigenous EFTSU, for student load **not** generated in either of the two Indigenous Education Centres) is distributed each year to the three Colleges into which the academic elements of the University are divided. The purpose of aggregating these funds to College level (rather than Department or Faculty) is to provide a sufficiently large pool to provide some substantial benefit to Indigenous students. These funds are available to be spent on:

- curriculum development (academic);
- cultural awareness;
- financial support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.

These funds must be spent in consultation with the Head of either the Koori Centre or Yooroang Garang. In 2003 a total of \$418K was distributed via this mechanism.

Total funding for Indigenous education in 2003

Using the mechanisms described above, the University has allocated a total of approximately \$3,480K for Indigenous education in 2003. Beyond this, the University will receive a total of \$366K under the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS), shared between the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang, and \$1,086K under the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Strategy (IESIP) for mixed-mode away-from-base activities, shared between the four teaching units referred to above. With the exception of the IESIP funding going to the Faculty of Medicine teaching units (\$193K), all of this money is either under the direct control of the Heads of the Indigenous Education Centres, or is to be spent in consultation with those Heads. The University charges no overheads to these Centres.

Funding for teaching and research and for support for the Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang are allocated as a one-line budget, expenditure in these areas is monitored through the University's regular budgetary processes.

INCOME	
Indigenous Support Funding	\$ 4,660,246
Other funds (List major sources)	\$123,530
Total Income	\$4,783,776
EXPENDITURE	
Operating costs, including salaries, for Indigenous support services	\$4,411,989
Higher education provider overheads	\$371,787
Other (list major items)	\$
Total Expenditure	\$4,783,776

SECTION 4

HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER'S INFORMATION

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