

**UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY  
INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT 2007**

**SECTION 1: OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION**

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

- 1: To recognise and promote understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures.**
- 2: To improve access and participation to all academic programs of the University of Sydney for Indigenous Australians.**
- 3: To improve retention rates and successful outcomes for Indigenous Australian students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.**
- 4: To provide curricula and modes of course delivery which are informed by current research and the needs of Indigenous Australian communities.**
- 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 ensure that Indigenous issues and knowledge are included in the core University goals of Learning and Teaching, Research and Community Engagement and in all activities.**

This vision is embedded in the University of Sydney Strategic Directions 2006-2010. The University has four core areas: Research and Innovation; Learning and Teaching; Student Experience and Community Engagement which are underpinned by five Values:

- *Responsibility and service through leadership in the community*
- *Quality and sustainability in meeting the needs of stakeholders*
- *Merit, equity and diversity in our student body*
- *Integrity, professionalism and collegiality in our staff*
- *Lifelong relationships and friendships with our alumni*

The following documents reflect the University's commitment to meeting its ongoing responsibilities for promoting and supporting Indigenous education:

Reconciliation Statement:

[http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/governance/indigenous\\_docs/reconciliation\\_statement.pdf](http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/governance/indigenous_docs/reconciliation_statement.pdf)

Indigenous Employment Strategy:

[http://www.usyd.edu.au/eo/indig\\_employ/index.shtml](http://www.usyd.edu.au/eo/indig_employ/index.shtml)

The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/governance/ieac.shtml>

## **SECTION 2: ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY (AEP) GOALS IN 2007 AND PLANS FOR FUTURE YEARS**

### **GOAL 1: Establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decision-making**

The University of Sydney has established a range of strategies to ensure the effective participation in educational decision making by Indigenous staff, students and communities.

These opportunities for participation 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 Indigenous professional and community groups such as: the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group; the Aboriginal Medical Service; Aboriginal Legal Service, NSW Aboriginal Education Council; Federal Department of Education Science and Training; the 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 Aboriginal Housing Company, Redfern and Broomalli Arts Cooperation.

At an internal level, The University continues to actively support Indigenous perspectives and input into educational decision-making. The Director of the Koori Centre is the Chair of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, and members of the Academic Board and Indigenous personnel are representatives on a wide range of university, government and community education committees.

Also The University has established an Indigenous Education Advisory Committee with representation from Indigenous centres, staff and students. The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee oversees, identifies aims and priorities in Aboriginal education at the University. It is chaired by the Acting Deputy Provost, (Learning and Teaching) Pro Vice-Chancellor with membership drawn from key Indigenous and non Indigenous staff across all faculties and relevant government agencies in NSW.

Throughout 2007 discussions at the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee focused on a review of Indigenous support services based on the idea of forming a new entity. The Deputy Provost, (Learning and Teaching) Pro Vice-Chancellor with the support of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, has now resolved to review current provision for Indigenous education and educational support services within the Institution, with a view to developing University-wide strategy that aligns with the National priorities as specified by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council. A Review Panel will be formed to do this and will comprise three external academics with extensive experience in Indigenous education. The review will be conducted in second semester 2008 with a view to implementing recommendations in 2009.

The Koori Centre continues to advance the University's quality assurance program in learning and teaching, and its public reporting to the University and wider community. The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang (on the Cumberland Campus) provide student support and a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs for Indigenous and non Indigenous students. Indigenous personnel have major responsibilities for the Koori Centre.

The Koori Centre and Yooroang Garang (the Centres) currently each support their own research communities and research seminars. Indigenous academic staff are supported to undertake higher degrees and apply for research grants and The University supports academic and administrative professional development. The University also provides a diversity of

training and professional development programs through the Institute for Teaching and Learning and SydneyPeople Sydney Learning.

## **GOAL 2: Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed in education and training**

Indigenous staff are employed in academia and administration in various faculties and departments across the University. The University, through its Enterprise Bargaining process supports the Indigenisation of the Centres. The Koori Centre employs the largest group of Indigenous personnel within the University; of the 9 administrative staff 6 are Indigenous and of the 12 academic staff 9 are Indigenous, there is also an Indigenous Research Fellow attached to the Centre while Yooroang Garang employs 2 Indigenous academic staff and one administrative staff member. The Koori Centre and the SydneyPeople Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit ensure ongoing communication and consultation with other Indigenous staff across the University.

The University has an Indigenous officer in its SydneyPeople Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit who administers its 'Indigenous Australian Employment Strategy'. This position has responsibility for employment of Indigenous administrative personnel across the University e.g. liaising with faculties, identifying employment opportunities, cadetships, apprenticeships and traineeships. In addition, Indigenous graduates and undergraduate students are employed as faculty tutors, research assistants, mentors and tutors within the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) and Support Programs offered at the Centres. In 2008 the Koori Centre has also employed an ex graduate as an Associate Lecturer in a trainee position.

Departments and faculties throughout the University have employed Indigenous personnel to advise on courses and assist Indigenous students.

Significantly, it is proposed that a position for Professor of Indigenous Studies will be re-advertised after the University Review of Indigenous Education is completed. It is anticipated that this position be a cross-university position where the emphasis is on developing and coordinating research and making links with government and with various Indigenous communities.

## **GOAL 3: Ensure equitable access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to education and training services**

The University has a range of programs to ensure equitable access for Indigenous students living in rural and remote regions.

Firstly, the University delivers a number of intensive Away-from-Base Programs for Indigenous students in the areas of education and health:

- Diploma of Education (Aboriginal)
- Bachelor (Secondary: Aboriginal Studies)
- Masters of Indigenous Languages and Education
- Aboriginal Health Science Preparatory Program.
- Diploma in Indigenous Primary Health
- Aboriginal Health Science Preparatory Program.
- Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Health Promotion
- Graduate Diploma in Health Science (Substance Abuse)
- Graduate Diploma in Health Science (Indigenous Community Health)
- Bachelor of Health Sciences (Aboriginal Health & Community Development)Pass Degree

- Bachelor of Health Sciences (Aboriginal Health & Community Development) Honours Degree

Secondly, the University conducts the Gadigal Special Entry Program which is an access and support program designed to assist Indigenous mature age and school leaver perspective students by offering a modified entry for these applicants through the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC). The University encourages full faculty support for students entering tertiary study through the Gadigal Program and had set a target of 5% of all local student enrolments. This goal has been aggressively pursued in the Faculty of Veterinary Science who has undertaken modifications to their course structure to enable Indigenous students to study with a reduced load.

#### **GOAL 4: Ensure participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in education and training**

Increasing participation of Indigenous students at The University of Sydney includes those activities directed to recruitment and support.

In terms of recruitment The University conducts Courses and Careers Days and Koori Youth Access Programs. In addition to these, the Koori Centre has a designated Schools, Community Liaison and Marketing Officer who implements an annual Marketing and Recruitment Strategic Plan. To promote its programs more widely, the University has two websites; the *Future Indigenous Student* website which provides prospective students with information on subject choice, cultural safety and support staff and faculties which are available throughout their study. The *My Uni Indigenous Student Portal* is for enrolled students to access University-wide information which is only relevant to Indigenous students.

This year the University continued to support the AIME program which is designed to increase participation of Indigenous secondary students in tertiary study. In 2008 AIME began a second site for its operations at the Faculty of Health Science Cumberland campus. At the time of writing negotiations were underway between the University and AIME for one inclusive AIME Project at the University in regard to further in-kind and financial support into the future.

See <http://www.aimementoring.com/>

Once Indigenous students enter the University they are supported in their participation by the following academic support: an Academic Skills induction Program coupled with ongoing support for Gadigal Special Entry students with a reduced load component; ITAS tutorial assistance; and staff mentoring for students. Additionally, the Centres foster a culturally safe environment where students are encouraged to speak with staff about any concerns they might have academic or personal (issues of racism are dealt with via the Heads of Centres) students can also access the University's Counselling Service. The Centres also provide resource facilities such as common rooms, tutorial rooms, dedicated computer laboratories and an Indigenous Studies Research Library is housed at the Koori Centre.

Indigenous student scholarships are provided through the University Research Office as well as Indigenous specific scholarships from the Chancellor's Committee, the Charles Perkins Award, and in 2007 \$230,000 worth of Indigenous scholarships issued to students as part of the University's 'Indigenous Support Allocation' in 2008 this was increase to \$375,000. The University residential colleges also support scholarships for Indigenous students. The University supports Klub Koori (a University of Sydney student organisation) in its voluntary mentoring 'Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience' (AIME) initiative.

## **GOAL 5: Ensure equitable and appropriate achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**

Within The University the Centres perform a range of activities directed toward achieving equity of outcomes for Indigenous students. These include provision of reduced load enrolment options, informal and formal academic support, personal support such as counselling and advocacy for students in University procedures pertaining to student progression. The establishment and development of committees to monitor and evaluate student performance and identify students at risk, is also conducted through the faculties and the Centres. In 2007 the University undertook initiatives that further explored ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students could achieve appropriate and equitable educational outcomes through the leadership of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee: See Priorities and recruitment below:

- [http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/governance/indigenous\\_docs/indigenous\\_priorities\\_2007\\_2010.pdf](http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/governance/indigenous_docs/indigenous_priorities_2007_2010.pdf)
- [http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/quality/indig\\_recruitment.shtml](http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/quality/indig_recruitment.shtml)

## **GOAL 6: Promote, maintain and support the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, cultures and languages to all Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.**

In 2007 and 2008, The University continued to promote, maintain and support the teaching of Indigenous Australian studies through existing centres and faculties and also through the establishment of new initiatives and projects. Since 2005, The Koori Centre has taught units of study as part of the University's Summer School each year. In 2007/8 partnership with the Murrumbidgee Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-op and Many Rivers Aboriginal Language Centre the Koori Centre hosted the Summer School for Gamilaraay, Gumbaynggirr and Wiradjuri Languages, which was fully supported by NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and DCITA. As part of the Lingfest 2008, which will be hosted by The University of Sydney, the Indigenous languages Institute Lingfest will run for 3 days providing a useful forum for a wide range of people working in the area of the revival and maintenance of Australian Indigenous languages.

There is a concerted effort to ensure that professional undergraduate and postgraduate programs include material on Indigenous issues hence ensuring a skilled workforce able to make improvements these relevant areas. For example in the Faculty of Health Sciences there are core and elective units of Indigenous health in the undergraduate Bachelor of Health Science, cultural competency modules for use in all undergraduate health programs, a proposed major stream in the Bachelor of Health Sciences, and an Indigenous Health Stream in the Masters of Health Sciences.

An audit was conducted of interactions between the Koori Centre and the Faculty of Education and Social Work with reference to the teaching and learning of Aboriginal Studies/Perspectives in the Faculty and through research. The audit produced a report based on interviews with 42 Indigenous and non Indigenous persons, predominantly staff from both parties, and the mapping of curricula across undergraduate and graduate teaching programs. Eight sets of recommendations were made and in 2007 the Faculty of Education and Social Work employed a project officer to oversee the implementation of these recommendations.

## SECTION 3 EXPENDITURE OF INDIGENOUS SUPPORT PROGRAM GRANT

### Indigenous Support Program grant report 2007

| <b>INCOME for Indigenous higher education purposes</b> |   |                    |
|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>Indigenous Support Program (ISP) 2007 grant only</b>   | <b>\$1,243,000</b> |
| 1 b  | Unspent 2006 ISP funds, carryover must be agreed with DEEWR.  | \$Nil              |
| 2  | Did you receive an Away From Base (AFB) 2007 allocation?  | Y                  |
| 3  | Did you receive an Indigenous Tertiary Assistance Scheme Tertiary Tuition (ITAS TT) 2007 allocation?  | Y                  |
| 4  | Did you receive a Structured Training and Employment Project (STEP) 2007 allocation?  | N                  |
| 5  | Did you receive any funding through Commonwealth Scholarships in 2007?  | Y                  |
| 6  | Did you receive any funding through the National Indigenous Cadetship Project?  | Y                  |
| 7  | Did you receive any DEEWR Wage Assistance in 2007?  | Y                  |
| 8  | Did you receive any funding for Indigenous Access Scholarships in 2007?   | N                  |
| 8 b  | If Yes, how many Indigenous Access Scholarships were undertaken in 2007?  | N/A                |
| 9  | Donations, or philanthropic sourced funds – Excluding any funding from Australian Government sources, committed to Indigenous higher education in 2007 (please list major sources). | \$135,700          |
| 10   | Mainstream income and student Grants– Excluding any funding from Australian Government sources.   | \$1,468,606        |
| 11   | <b>Total INCOME (total income of fields 1, 1b, 9 &amp; 10 above– all funds for Indigenous Education Purposes).</b>  | <b>\$2,847,306</b> |
| 12   | <b>Amount of Indigenous Support Program (ISP) grant (from Item 1 above) directly provided to the Indigenous support/education centre (where one exists)</b>                         | <b>\$1,243,000</b> |

|      |   |                    |
|------|---|--------------------|
|      | <b>EXPENDITURE of Indigenous Support Program (ISP) 2007 grant only (from Item 1)</b>  |                    |
| 13 a | Operating costs, including salaries, for Indigenous support services  | \$1,243,000        |
| 13 b | Capital Items – list any major items purchased for Indigenous student/staff use only and briefly describe how they were committed to Indigenous Education – (i.e. new computers located and used in the ISU). | \$Nil              |
| 13 c | Higher education provider overheads   | \$Nil              |
| 13 d | Other Indigenous Support Program expenditure (please list major items publications and program costs).  | \$Nil              |
| 13 e | <b>Total EXPENDITURE of ISP income (total of 13a-d)</b>   | <b>\$1,243,000</b> |

|           |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
| <b>14</b> | <b>Expenditure of other non- Australian Government funds (from Items 9 &amp;10 above) committed to Indigenous higher education in 2007 (please list major items)</b> | <b>\$1,604,306<br/>See attached spreadsheets</b> |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Total EXPENDITURE (total of 13e and 14)</b>   | <b>\$2,847,306</b>                               |

#### SECTION 4 HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER'S CONTACT INFORMATION

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## **SECTION 5 PUBLICATION OF THE STATEMENT**

The Indigenous Education Statement is published on the University of Sydney website at:  
[http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/planning/indig\\_edu.shtml](http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/planning/indig_edu.shtml)