



Reconciliation
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE RAP

Walking Together

UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTHERN
QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



Reconciliation
Action Plan
2015–2017



On the issue of Reconciliation: writer, poet and proud Kooma man

Dr Herb Wharton had this to say:

"When two people have been fighting or have fallen out with each other then they can take a number of paths. Some involve negative outcomes – they can continue the fight, bear a grudge, get resentful, or develop mutual hatred. These responses cause damage and bitterness. The better path is if the two people decide to seek reconciliation – to speak with each other, to listen to each other's stories, and to come to understand each other's beliefs and points of view. Reconciliation based on mutual respect and mutual understanding allows the damage and bitterness to heal and provides a road for both people to walk together.

It requires honesty, too. Bad things that happened in the past may not be able to be forgotten or forgiven, but they can be acknowledged with genuine regret and understood with a view to ensuring that these bad things do not occur again."

**Dr Herb Wharton HonDLitt, USQ
Kooma man from Cunnamulla**

Walking Together



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge and honour the Giabal and Jarowair peoples of the Toowoomba area; the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul peoples of Springfield and Ipswich areas; the Butchulla peoples of Fraser Coast and Maryborough areas; and the Kambuwal peoples of Stanthorpe area as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where the University of Southern Queensland is located.

Further, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and future. We celebrate the continuous living cultures of First Australians and acknowledge the important contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have in Australian society.

The University respects and acknowledges our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, Elders and visitors who come from many nations across Australia.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

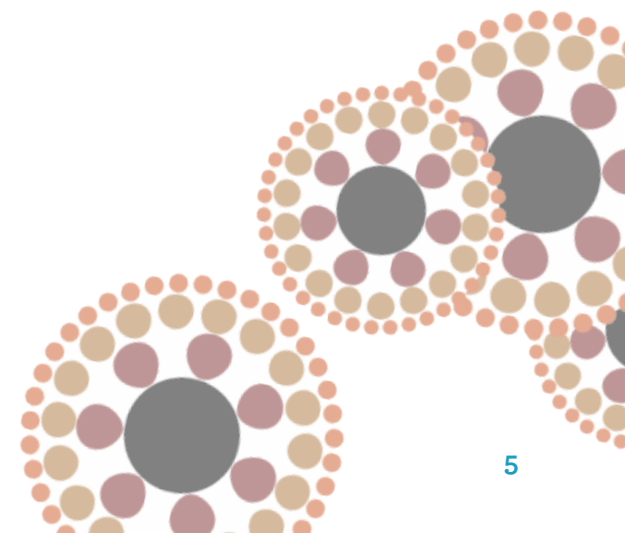
In developing this document, the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has sought to use culturally appropriate terminology and terms acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at all times as a sign of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

It should be noted that in USQ policy, the terms 'Aboriginal' and/or 'Torres Strait Islander' peoples are favoured to describe Australia's First Peoples; but the use of 'Indigenous Australians' (inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) or 'First Australians' is also acceptable. The terms should be capitalised. In addition, the words "Indigenous" and

"Aboriginal" are adjectives; they cannot be used in isolation and require a suitable noun: for example, Aboriginal peoples, Aboriginal Australians, Indigenous peoples, and so on.

In terms of acknowledging the preferred term which identifies the "country" to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples belong, it is noted that in many cases conflicting terminology exists, including with regard to spelling and punctuation. In these cases, every effort has been made to identify the term most acceptable to the communities concerned.

USQ welcomes feedback on what is considered acceptable and unacceptable in the use of language. For contact details, please refer to the back cover of this document.





MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRESIDENT

The USQ Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) commits USQ to a range of actions and goals in support of achieving Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. It is a document that acknowledges the truths of the past and looks to a better future based on opportunity, connectedness and empowerment.


Appreciating the need for Reconciliation is itself a recognition that a major thread of Australian history has been represented by a state of conflict between Australia's First Peoples and those who have arrived since the time of The First Fleet. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples this conflict has involved dispossession, dislocation, murder and innumerable injustices. It is only in more recent times that the wrongs incurred have been acknowledged by white Australia and steps have been taken to try and put things right.

While acts such as the overwhelming 'yes' vote in the 1967 referendum that saw First Australians included for the first time in the national census, the Mabo High Court decision in 1992 that recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land rights, and Prime Minister Rudd's apologies to The Stolen Generations in 2008 all represent important landmarks, there is still much to be done.

The outcomes of racist policies in Australia persist through significant disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in areas of health, education, employment and overall quality of life. Too many Australians are unaware of the implications and outcomes of past history, and pockets of racism persist.

USQ is able to make important contributions to supporting Reconciliation through its core businesses of learning & teaching, research and outreach. Engaging with communities to increase awareness about education and its benefits, providing multiple pathways into higher education study, improving educational and employment outcomes through personalised learning, undertaking research that is of relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and supporting the voices and stories of Australia's First Peoples being heard, are all important elements of USQ's RAP.

USQ must provide a safe, non-threatening and welcoming place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and engage meaningfully with local communities as a basis for open dialogue and the formation of meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships.



USQ also plays an important role as a corporate citizen in contributing to public dialogue, saying 'no' to racism, explaining the importance of proactive strategies to address the continued disadvantage experienced as a result of past policies, and promoting a greater understanding of the richness and inherent value of the cultures and knowledge of Australia's First Peoples.

The USQ RAP has been developed in consultation with Elders from the communities that USQ serves and with the support of Reconciliation Australia. The Plan has also been informed by wide input from the USQ community. I thank the USQ RAP Working Group for its excellent work in bringing the USQ RAP to fruition.

Reconciliation is ultimately a contract between individuals involving mutual understanding and mutual respect; an acceptance of a way to move forward by walking together. Its realisation will see an equitable Australia where the special place of First Peoples is acknowledged and the legacies of the longest continuing living cultures on earth are widely understood and celebrated. It is my hope that the USQ RAP will contribute in a very real way to this vision for Australia being realised.

Professor Jan Thomas
Vice-Chancellor and President



USQ RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN: WALKING TOGETHER

Our vision

Through learning and teaching, research and community engagement activities, our vision for Reconciliation is to support an Australia:

- where equity exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in all areas including education and employment attainment, life expectancy and quality of life; and
- where all Australians will acknowledge and celebrate the unique place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our society.

Our vision for Reconciliation is underpinned by the following principles and values:

- Reconciliation is everyone's business and a shared responsibility;
- Reconciliation requires an acknowledgement and shared understanding of the legacy of colonisation in perpetuating a history of trauma and grief for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that this legacy is associated with continued and persistent social vulnerability for many of Australia's First Peoples;

- Reconciliation must be built on mutual respect and mutual understanding;
- Reconciliation is nurtured by the promotion of dialogue, constructive engagement and an environment of mutual trust;
- Reconciliation must be underpinned by:
 - › the principles of social justice – ensuring that every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and people of the broader Australian community have choices about how to live and the means to make those choices. Social justice also means recognising the distinctive rights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold as the original peoples of this land, including the right to a distinct status and culture. These rights are specified in the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* that is officially supported by Australia;
 - › the principles of equity – an understanding that proactive strategies are needed to support individuals to overcome the ongoing impact of disparity caused by past policies and practices that have served to treat Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples unfairly;

- › a process of healing – a willingness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians to improve relationships impacted negatively by injustice and prejudice; and,
- Reconciliation is best served by the University adopting a coordinated and appropriately resourced institution-wide Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) informed by a consultation process that is inclusive of employees, students and the community.

Reconciliation supports an Australian community that is an inclusive society united under shared and agreed values but is also mature enough to maintain, celebrate and benefit from its rich diversity.

USQ's core values of 'respect for the individual' and 'social responsibility' are fundamental to our desire to maintain productive, trusting and mutually beneficial partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians; and our core values of 'excellence, innovation and creativity' underpin the University's approach to supporting Reconciliation.

Our University

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) is a regionally-headquartered public university with multiple diverse campuses and hubs in both regional and outer-metropolitan areas of Queensland. The University also has a large off-campus education program operating nationally and off-shore. Through our diverse operational locations and broad range of activities in learning, teaching, research and outreach, USQ serves the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and engages with communities as part of our everyday operations.

As a major public institution, USQ has a significant role to play in supporting the national Reconciliation effort through education, innovation, engagement and corporate citizenship. Our focus is on concrete actions that make a real difference to Reconciliation efforts both at our University and in the wider community.

The USQ mission is to enable broad participation in higher education and to make significant contributions to research and community development. Our principal contributions to the community occur through supporting an inclusive society, contributing to nation building, and progressing regional wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are key stakeholder groups of the University and we commit to using our resources for the conduct of activities that contribute to better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in the following ways:

- by providing opportunities and pathways for students and employees to increase participation and more fully realise individual life goals and aspirations;

- by assisting to preserve and improve the understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures in all of its forms;
- by supporting culturally appropriate research acknowledged by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as being of benefit and value, and that contributes to an improved understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures by other Australians; and,
- by serving as a role model for Reconciliation by promoting through example a more informed and inclusive society that values difference.

USQ employs a large and diverse workforce across a number of geographic locations. The average headcount for USQ in 2014 was just over 1,500 employees (excluding casuals) representing just under 1,400 FTE (full-time equivalents). USQ staff numbers have generally grown on average in the order of 2.5% per annum.

In 2014, USQ employed 29 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, representing just over 25 FTE (full-time equivalent staff members). This comprised 22 professional staff and 7 full-time academic staff – the latter being less than for the previous year following a restructuring of the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research, and prior to rehiring to fill vacancies left by retiring staff.

Some 80% of both current academic and professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are employed at the USQ Toowoomba campus.

Our RAP

The development of a USQ RAP was identified as a priority by USQ Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Jan Thomas early in her administration. The USQ RAP builds on a long-standing commitment and several decades of activity by the University to improving higher education and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The University is also committed to supporting and implementing recommendations of the 'Behrendt' Report¹ released in 2012 and complying with the Universities Australia Indigenous Cultural Competency Framework².

While our RAP does not represent USQ's first steps on the journey towards supporting Reconciliation, it serves to define a point of demarcation where errors and injustices of the past are openly acknowledged and a conscious commitment is given to:

- moving forward through learning from the past;
- supporting the recognition of the special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australian society as this nation's First Peoples; and,
- contributing to closing the disparity between First Peoples and the broader Australian community on the inequities currently experienced.

1. Final Report of the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Chair M. Behrendt (2012): <http://www.industry.gov.au/HigherEducation/IndigenousHigherEducation/ReviewOfIndigenousHigherEducation/Pages/default.aspx>

2. <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/uni-participation-quality/Indigenous-Higher-Education/Indigenous-Cultural-Compet>

Our RAP is intended to be both practical and aspirational, and USQ is committed to its promotion and regular review. We will be publicly accountable for our performance through regular public reporting and in our compliance with the quality assurance and endorsement process with Reconciliation Australia.

The USQ Vice-Chancellor and President, together with the executive management team, champions the RAP internally and provides strong advocacy for Reconciliation within the wider community.

The commitment to developing our inaugural RAP serves to communicate a strong message that progressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation and success across the University is a core institutional priority.

As principal champion of the RAP process, the Vice-Chancellor and President established a RAP Working Group in 2013 to coordinate and drive its development. This Working Group consisted of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff from across the institution, as well as student and external representatives.

Specifically, the Working Group's membership included three USQ Directors from Student Services & Social Justice, Learning and Teaching, and Marketing and Student Attraction; a team leader from USQ Springfield; the President of the Indigenous Students Association; a Human Resources Officer; two lecturers specialising in Indigenous Studies and Curriculum; a Coordinator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Development; the Widening Participation (Indigenous Community Engagement) Officer; a Senior Executive Officer in the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President; and the Executive Officer, Social Justice Commission, Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba.

The RAP process has been guided by the Vice-Chancellor's Committee and the Social Justice Strategy Board in collaboration with Reconciliation Australia, the Vice-Chancellor's Elders and Valued Persons Advisory Board and USQ Fraser Coast's BATEC – Bualum Jarl-Bah Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Committee. Members of the community who have made a significant contribution to USQ through their involvement in the Vice-Chancellor's Elders and Valued Persons Advisory Board are Ian Wheeler, Mal Collinge, Lurlene Henderson, Tina Longford, Bethel Mabo, Richard (Darby) McCarthy, Dr Mark Copland, and Wayne Fossey; and the BATEC are Aunty Irene McBride, Aunty Jan Williams, Auntie Harriet Veal, Uncle Glen Miller, Ian Wheeler, Aunty Narelle Griffin, Joyce Bonner, Leeann Ritchie, Lesa Stagg, Aunty Marj Speedy, Les Rav, Valerie Mathews and Kiam Beezley. The draft RAP also underwent a broad community consultation process utilising focus groups and forums to shape early drafts of the USQ RAP and seeking feedback on drafts via broad consultation and the collection of feedback through a range of channels – including through social media, online, a dedicated email address, paper-based forms and by interview. All feedback provided was carefully considered and widely incorporated in to the final RAP document.

Active processes of consultation and engagement have, and continue to be, an enriching experience for the University where relationships have been enhanced and new partnerships formed with key members of our communities.

Our RAP serves to describe how the University supports Reconciliation through planned actions, the allocation of resources and the timely measurement of outcomes.

The responsibility for driving, implementing, monitoring and reporting on the RAP is with the USQ Social Justice Strategy Board.

Our Journey to Date

USQ's RAP development is building on several decades of experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and employment. The development of the USQ RAP has therefore been facilitated by and built on policies and practices that the University has developed and implemented over this extended period.

This strong track record has served to ensure that our University can approach the development of a RAP from a position of considerable strength and experience.

In particular:

- USQ is a strong performer in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, rating in the top 10 of Australian universities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student access and participation in higher education studies, and noted in particular for our contributions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nursing;
- The University has conducted outreach programs to schools to encourage and support university attendance and offered a preparatory program specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for over two decades. These programs include strong engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and communities across southern and south-west Queensland;
- Through the work of the University's College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research located across multiple campuses, USQ has provided encouragement and assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and played an active role through participation in community-

based initiatives wherever possible. Representatives of the College offer and provide academic programs including the Indigenous Higher Education and Pathways Program (IHEPP); and support, advice and consultation to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of the region and the broader community;

- For over a decade USQ's Department of Nursing has had an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nursing academic lecturing position and implemented highly successful targeted student recruitment and attainment strategies, referred to as USQ's Helping Hands program;
- USQ has been required to report annually to the Commonwealth on its performance in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education and employment. In addition, a commitment to negotiated strategies and targets in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and employment were required to be included in the *2014-16 Mission-based Compact* between the Commonwealth of Australia and USQ signed in 2013;
- The USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy commenced in 2006. It incorporates strategies to increase employment and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as informed by the *National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy* and *The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols are promoted and used by employees for Acknowledgement of Country which is practiced routinely at the opening of events and for Welcome to Country by Elders of the Traditional Custodians or approved representatives at major events;

- The Olga Miller Memorial Gardens at USQ Fraser Coast and the Gumbi Gumbi Cultural Gardens at USQ Toowoomba highlight the University's commitment to developing a better understanding of local Aboriginal heritage, and acknowledging the cultures and contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to Australia; and,
- For National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week 2014, USQ Fraser Coast campus was awarded a Community NAIDOC Award in the Business/Organisation category – recognising: *"a business/organisation whose values embrace cultural differences, promoting best practices that offer inclusion to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People."* At the same ceremony, USQ Human Services student Ms Dimity Shillingsworth was awarded the NAIDOC Award for Female Young Leader of the Year 2014.

USQ staff and Student Representative Committee members join USQ student Dimity Shillingsworth and USQ Fraser Coast Campus Executive Manager Brett Langabeer holding the 2014 NAIDOC Awards.



The following pages highlight a selection of USQ's activities and achievements in the areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, employment and engagement in the period immediately prior to the USQ RAP development.

Helping improve educational aspirations and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians



USQ's successful Dream Aspire Reach Experience (DARE) Secondary School Student Mentoring Program serves as a strategy for raising the educational aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students in our region. Over 90 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students and 25 USQ undergraduate mentors converged on the Sunshine Coast in September 2013 for an intensive weekend component of DARE's 16-week program. The event was held again in 2014.



The Indigenous Connections event was held in Toowoomba and Springfield in 2013. It saw 822 students from more than 20 schools participate in this event aimed at encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to embrace and sustain tertiary education. The event was held again in 2014.



Another of USQ's successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outreach programs is the Safe Sistas Program – here providing laptop computers to female students at St George to promote students' engagement with education.

Enhancing the intercultural skills of USQ employees



Personalised learning requires USQ employees to be in tune with the needs of students. Here USQ Springfield staff attend a program at the Ngutana-Lui Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Studies Centre at Inala to improve their knowledge and understanding of local First Australian peoples' cultures. This positions staff to better support the growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolling at USQ Springfield.

Improving opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and researchers



The USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy provides a basis for improved opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including USQ employees to access and pursue academic careers, and for the University to conduct research relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Pictured are Professor Don Gorman, USQ School of Health, Nursing and Midwifery with USQ's first Indigenous Nursing PhD graduate, Gooreng Gooreng woman Dr Odette Best.

Improving engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities



Building on the precedent set by the Olga Miller Memorial Garden at USQ Fraser Coast, the establishment of the Gumbi Gumbi Cultural Gardens in 2013 at USQ Toowoomba has boosted USQ's capacity to effectively engage with local communities. Here USQ Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Jan Thomas walks with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land rights pioneer Aunty Bonita Mabo through the Gardens at the time of opening in 2013.

OUR ACTIONS AND TARGETS 2015 – 2017

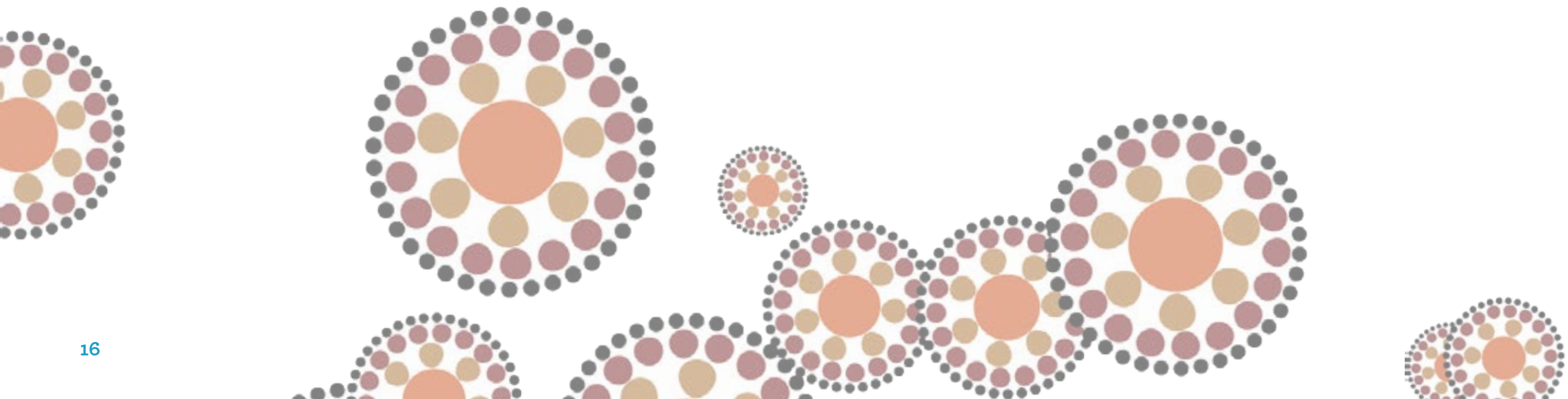
RELATIONSHIPS

In support of its mission, USQ is committed to building mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships based on respect, trust and understanding with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the USQ community.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
1.1 USQ RAP Working Group actively monitors RAP developments, including implementation of actions and tracking progress.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Party meets six (6) times per year to oversee drive and monitor USQ RAP actions, and report regularly to the Social Justice Strategy Board.
1.2 Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build stronger relationships with the local community through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	DVC (Students & Communities)	27 May–3 June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to a minimum of four (4) annual NRW events to be held across USQ's locations. Develop and communicate a program of NRW events on each USQ campus. Encourage all USQ employees to participate in at least one event during NRW. Access NRW toolkit and register events via Reconciliation Australia website.
1.3 USQ to deliver and promote educational and aspirational programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.	DVC (Students & Communities)	May 2015 December 2015 September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USQ will continue to participate in events such as Young Indigenous Leadership Day. Investigate and develop a plan to sponsor an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership award. Develop and implement a plan to deliver educational and aspirational programs such as featured seminars, events and/or exhibitions at USQ.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
1.4 Recognise members of the USQ community who support and contribute to Reconciliation initiatives.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to present the annual Alumnus of the Year – Indigenous Service Award as part of the annual USQ Alumni Awards.
		July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the introduction of a new award – USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alumnus of the Year.
1.5 USQ to enhance relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations, local Elders and committees to assist in providing strategic advice on cultural issues and engagement.	Vice-Chancellor & President	January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue engagement with and effective operations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The Vice-Chancellor's Elders and Valued Persons Advisory Committee – meeting at least 3 x per year; and › BATEC – Buallum Jarl-Bah Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Committee – active at USQ Fraser Coast – meeting 6 x per year.
	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue regular engagement with Ngutana-Lui Indigenous Cultural Centre at Inala by USQ Springfield.
	Vice-Chancellor & President, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to maintain partnerships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations and government departments in areas of health, education and welfare.
		January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to participate in and formalise support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Capacity Building Network.
		January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain USQ's commitment to the Australian Human Rights Commission 'Racism: It Stops with Me' campaign through a three year schedule of anti-racism activities.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to host an annual community summit at USQ Fraser Coast on a theme developed in partnership with the Butchulla community.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
1.6 Ensure active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in USQ institutional decision-making, planning processes and documentation development.	Vice-Chancellor & President	January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage representation by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees on Committees and Boards covering the full range of USQ activities – with representation assured in situations where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation is required or desirable.
		January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to be part of USQ Boards and Committees where possible.
		January 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at USQ meetings and forums.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage and support the USQ Indigenous Students Association.
		July 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in education are invited to provide input into all institutional planning processes.
		September 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are recognised and represented in planning documentation.



RESPECT

USQ believes it is an important part of Australia's identity to acknowledge and respect the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and this lies at the core of all USQ undertakings.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
2.1 Engage USQ employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures and achievements.	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence training to key groups, including executive and senior managers, supervisors of trainees, supervisors of research higher degree students, teaching staff and frontline service staff.
	Director (Human Resources)	November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and develop a plan to provide USQ employees with additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learning opportunities and resources.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a link to Reconciliation Australia's "Share our Pride" that is widely accessible by employees.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure greater promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures achieved through art, interpretive signage and other communications across all campuses and hubs.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a comprehensive Cultural Competency Framework that is built on strong relationships and collaboratively implemented by key stakeholders across USQ; and is aligned with the Universities Australia Indigenous Cultural Competency Framework.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cross Cultural Awareness Program across all campuses.



Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
2.2 Engage USQ students in cultural learning opportunities to increase their knowledge, cultural understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and achievements.	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a link to Reconciliation Australia “Share our Pride” that is widely accessible by students from USQ’s website.
		December 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to provide USQ students with additional cultural learning opportunities and resources.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide Indigenous Health and Cross Cultural Care Course for all undergraduate nursing students.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to broaden and strengthen Indigenous studies programs for offer at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide broader opportunities for pre-service teacher placements at schools serving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
2.3 Encourage all USQ employees to use established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country to ensure there is a shared meaning behind the two ceremonies.	DVC (Students & Communities)	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country at all USQ community events.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to routinely invite an appropriate Traditional Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country at significant USQ events.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USQ Senior Leadership to personally reply to a Welcome to Country each time it is delivered at USQ official events.
	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Policy and Procedures document.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Policy and Procedures to USQ employees via intranet, public website and booklet to ensure that the significance of the Protocols is understood by employees and followed.
		February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the inclusion of the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols into relevant policies and procedures across the University, as appropriate.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
2.4 Support USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage with their cultures and communities through NAIDOC Week events.	Vice-Chancellor & President, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, DVC (Students & Communities), DVC (Research & Innovation), DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	1 st Sunday – 2 nd Sunday in July 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support all USQ staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events in the local community. • Maintain regular engagement with local NAIDOC Week Committees to discuss and develop mutually beneficial opportunities.
2.5 USQ to continue to show respect, appreciation and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to acknowledge and celebrate significant dates through events conducted at USQ and/or through support and participation in community celebrations.
		January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to fly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at or adjacent to all USQ campuses.
		January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to make available a USQ cultural sash that identifies heritage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff to wear at graduations and formal academic ceremonies.
		May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and communicate a calendar of events and dates of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as part of the USQ Events Calendar.
	Vice-Chancellor & President	January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all USQ documents are written in ways which are culturally sensitive.
	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources in the USQ Library collection.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
2.6 Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogy and learning across the curriculum at USQ.	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific educational concerns into inclusive learning & teaching frameworks with advice and input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff and communities.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the online repository of support materials for USQ employees concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander perspectives in the curriculum.
		June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement Program Approval processes that require reporting of details for where and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and pedagogy are included in the curriculum.
	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a strategy to ensure relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is delivered into core disciplines.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the inclusion of Professional and Cultural Competence into USQ's Graduate Attributes.
2.7 USQ to increase the visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary cultures as a basis for improving understanding of First Australian peoples.	DVC (Students & Communities)	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly feature positive media stories on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, employees, research and communities in USQ media output – both internally and externally.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise the Gumby Gumby Cultural Gardens as a focus for active engagement and learning & teaching.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission artwork from local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artists for use on USQ's website and publications.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and enhance the capacity for USQ to use its public website as a basis for improving community understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.
	Executive Director (Campus Services)	January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the Olga Miller Memorial Garden at USQ Fraser Coast through the addition of a virtual tour.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elements are featured in the landscape design at all USQ campuses where possible.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imagery and artwork in prominent areas at all USQ campuses, where possible. (Ensuring artist and story of artwork is acknowledged).

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
2.8 USQ to play a leadership role in promoting cultural competence and understanding in the broader community.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USQ will host at least one public forum per year at each campus which promotes broader understanding of First Australian peoples' perspectives and knowledges; including forums that specifically target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.
		June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support visits by local school and community groups to the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-themed Gardens on each campus.
		September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a public website for community viewing to collect and communicate First Australian peoples stories and knowledges as a community resource for cultural learnings.



OPPORTUNITIES

USQ continues to build an organisational culture that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive, and which creates opportunities through learning, teaching, research and community engagement activities for participation and success by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

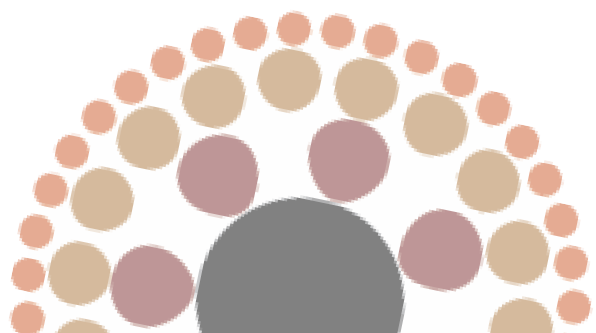
Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.1 USQ to continue and maintain support to the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research to enhance successful learning & teaching outcomes.	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the implementation of the outcomes of the Review of the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research completed in 2014 to provide the College with strategies, resources and an institutional context that underpins and sustains its ongoing future success.
		April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the role of the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research as a point of reference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues at USQ is communicated across all campuses.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USQ to expand undergraduate course offerings through the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research to further increase opportunities for students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff.



Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.2 Increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed as academic and professional employees.	Director (Human Resources)	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network and encourage participation by staff in external networks.
		June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise all identified positions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media such as Koori Mail.
		September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review HR policies and procedures to ensure that barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are addressed.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and promote the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy through the HR website, promotional brochures, attendance at Employment Expos, community meetings, USQ News and media releases.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the provision of additional traineeship opportunities available through the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship program.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the development of strategies to support faculties and sections providing trainees with further employment on completion of the traineeship program.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a business case to support the development of a three-year HR recruitment strategy for the objectives of the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › an emphasis given to the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff across the University; › consideration given to additional Identified positions; › strategies to enhance the progression and placement of trainees developed and implemented; and, › a view to reducing dependency on traineeships so that level parity is achieved.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and provide work experience opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.3 Professional development training for all USQ academic employees (and where relevant, professional employees) in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogy and perspectives.	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › systematic and regular training for academic employees in relevant professional development events; › peer review and peer learning with incorporated perspectives and pedagogy in courses; and, › cultural competency training for all supervisors of Research Higher Degree (RHD) students.
3.4 Enhance career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander USQ employees.	Director (Human Resources)	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote the HR Professional Development program that is available to all employees.
		January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly promote professional development opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and students through USQ social media and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network.
		June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure regular participation by USQ HR at Indigenous Employment and Career Expos to promote employment opportunities available at USQ.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop HR recruitment principles to assist trainees with the transition into fixed-term or continuing positions upon completion of the program.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement with support from managers and HR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › a career pathway map for future and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees; › an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early-Career Academic Program; and, › leadership KPIs.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.5 USQ to increase and promote awareness of higher education study opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, school students and communities and the benefits of higher education study.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff are supported to participate in outreach and engagement activities to promote access and participation to study at USQ.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide outreach initiatives and activities aimed at key target groups of Years 9-12, school leavers and young adults, and mature aged women and men.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure mentoring and campus experience initiatives that raise awareness and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to consider the benefits of higher education.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to conduct annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Experience days.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to produce and disseminate materials targeting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students that promote higher education awareness; including Deadly Study Assistance brochure showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' study journeys across all campuses.



Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.6 Increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at USQ.	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and develop a plan to expand the USQ Helping Hands Program.
		June 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USQ will continue to provide multiple access pathways into higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › giving an emphasis in the AUSTEPnet program to recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from TAFE; and, › providing multiple preparatory pathways targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including the provision of an Indigenous Higher Education Preparatory Program; and ensuring access to USQ's Tertiary Preparation Program for students studying by distance who are unable to enrol through Indigenous Higher Education Pathways Program (IHEPP) and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in custody.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to optimise the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolling in IHEPP for each enrolment round.
	DVC (Students & Communities)	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly improve the completion and transfer rates of the IHEPP program over 2013 levels through increased academic and pastoral support and reviewing IHEPP design and delivery.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USQ commits to increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student completions.
		May 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni profiles as important role models in marketing and promotional activities.
		August 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source industry and community partners to expand and promote targeted scholarships programs.
		September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to train Student Relationship Officers (SROs) on effective engagement with prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.7 Improve academic progression for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at USQ.	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain as a key operational principle Recommendations 10 and 11 of the Behrendt Report involving a whole-of-university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success where faculties and mainstream support services have primary responsibility for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, backed up by an empowered and appropriately resourced College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research.
		June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate student performance data more rigorously to understand factors influencing student performance as a basis for informing improved support to students.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Indigenous Student Support Fund and mentoring programs through the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support services and the pre-enrolment enabling program IHEPP.
		September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the government-supported and HEPPP funded project to develop a simulated closed online learning environment, ensure project is available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with limited or no online access.
	DVC (Students & Communities)	December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and improve information dissemination and awareness of services through targeted campaigns.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage and support students who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander to voluntarily disclose origin as a basis to identify and ensure appropriately resourced services can be provided.
		January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote and provide access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for USQ's extensive suite of mainstream learning and student support strategies.
	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to enhance the USQ Murri Meet Up Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Peer Mentoring Program.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
3.8 Implement the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy.	DVC (Research & Innovation)	July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a <i>USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy</i>³ to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › support USQ's involvement in research of relevance and interest to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; › support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff into successful participation in research training programs; and, › ensure that USQ adopts sound and appropriate research practices that are both robust and culturally sensitive.
		September 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a plan to adopt targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher degree research students enrolling and graduating from USQ as per the <i>USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy</i>.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refresh the <i>USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy</i> to align it with the University's 2016-2019 strategic planning cycle.
3.9 USQ will identify strategies to ensure equal opportunity regarding procurement of products from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Executive Director (Finance and People Capability)	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a clause is added to internal procurement policy/procedure reinforcing that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and providers are to be treated on an equal opportunity basis.
		June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement strategies to support and expedite the procurement process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers.
		December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review procurement policies to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander companies, individuals and businesses can apply for USQ contracts on an equal opportunity basis.
		December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate becoming a member of Supply Nation.

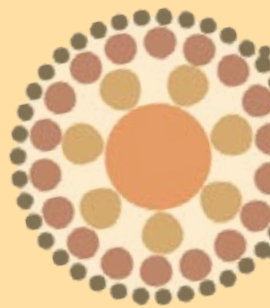
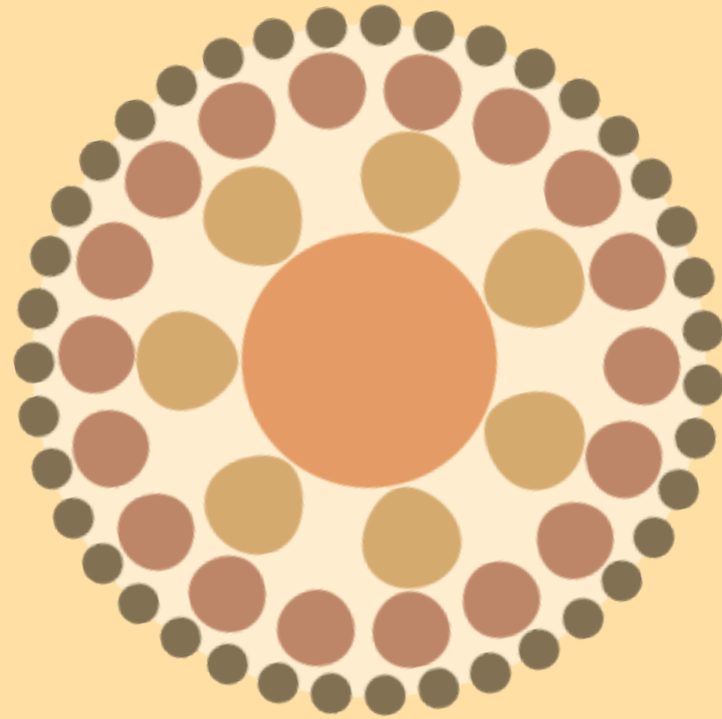
³ At the time of writing, the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy is under development through the Office of the DVC (Research & Innovation).

ACCOUNTABILITY: TRACKING AND REPORTING

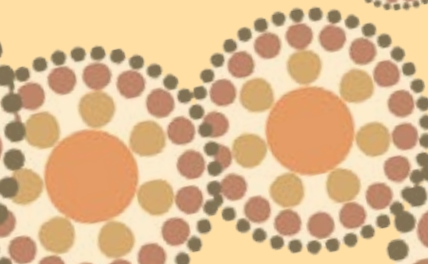
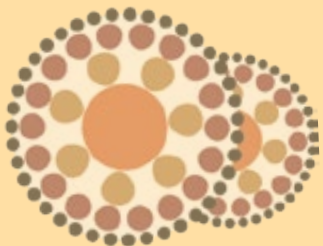
As a socially responsible organisation, USQ will engage all stakeholders in the annual review and reporting to Reconciliation Australia, and remain open and accountable for the progress made against our RAP.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
4.1 USQ to ensure awareness and encourage the commitment of USQ employees to the USQ RAP.	Vice-Chancellor & President	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A formal launch of the USQ RAP undertaken.
	DVC (Students & Communities)	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to increase awareness of the USQ RAP through an appropriately resourced travelling road-show and other internal communication strategies.
	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO	June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to increase awareness and understanding of the USQ RAP included as a consideration in Learning & Teaching Services induction and professional development programs.
4.2 Assignment of responsibility for promoting, driving, monitoring and reporting the implementation of the USQ RAP to the USQ Social Justice Strategy Board.	DVC (Students & Communities)	January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan for RAP achievements and learnings regularly shared through internal and external communication.
		March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure progress on the USQ RAP is a standing agenda item for the Social Justice Strategy Board.
		March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Social Justice Strategy Board maintains a working party to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> drive and facilitate the implementation of the USQ RAP; and, regularly monitor and report on progress towards the achievement of the USQ RAP's Measurable Targets.
		March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Justice Strategy Board to report annually to Vice-Chancellor's Committee (VCC) on the progress in achievement of the USQ RAP outcomes.
		March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the USQ RAP Working Group regularly network with other local organisations with an active RAP as a basis for knowledge sharing and quality improvement.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Targets
4.3 Assurance that USQ fully meets its reporting and public accountability obligations with regard to the RAP.	DVC (Students & Communities)	Submit by 30 th September 2015 and 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire is completed and submitted to Reconciliation Australia annually. • Relevant planning and reporting documentation made available via the USQ public website and hardcopies of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › USQ RAP; › annual USQ Indigenous Education Statements; › USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy; and, › USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols.
4.4 Refresh and update USQ RAP at the conclusion of the current RAP planning cycle.	DVC (Students & Communities)	December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The USQ RAP 2018-2020 - developed in consultation with the University community and in line with the USQ Strategic Plan, and based on learnings, achievements and challenges from the previous RAP and forward to Reconciliation Australia for review.



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