



USQ Multicultural Action Plan | 2017 - 2019



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Introduction

Multiculturalism reaches to the very heart of USQ's vision and values. As stated in the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020, our vision is to excel within a global context with aspirations of providing leadership in higher education learning experiences geared to a diverse student constituency. Additionally, one of our key values concerns respect and valuing the diversity of people, cultures and ideas within USQ's community.

Creating a culture that values diversity and respect for all students and staff has been a priority for our University. We have a long-standing commitment to supporting the cultural diversity that has become a feature of our regions and communities and that has brought so many benefits.

USQ continues to celebrate the richness and vibrancy of our cultural and ethnic heritages that resonates through our community. Diversity is recognised as forming a strong foundation for innovation. Through our understandings of others we are able to promote research, learning, and knowledge in support of peace, friendship and acceptance.

The USQ Multicultural Action Plan (USQ MAP) aligns with the goals and objectives articulated in the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The purpose of the USQ MAP is to drive actions and initiatives designed to support the University achieving the Key Goals identified in this Plan. Underpinning these Key Goals is a commitment to ensure that USQ delivers culturally responsive services that meet the needs of our students, staff and the communities that we serve.

The USQ MAP is a living document that highlights actions and outcomes. The responsibility for achieving the Plan lies with the entire University community.

Our University

USQ is a vibrant regional institution with over 28,000 students enrolled in our programs throughout Australia and overseas. USQ strongly supports, values, and respects the wide variety of cultural identities, languages, and beliefs represented within the University and its communities.

At USQ, we are proud of our diversity. In 2016:

- our current staff were born in 66 different countries
- 15 per cent of our student population are international students who come from 87 different countries
- 119 different languages are spoken by our (Australian and international) students.

USQ endeavours to provide a safe learning environment where all students and staff can openly share ideas and respectfully express their opinions - regardless of their cultural identity or religious affiliation. By acknowledging and respecting our diversity, we are able to strengthen our collaborative research efforts, optimise USQ's teaching and learning experience, and create a sense of belonging for all of our staff and students.

At USQ we aim to:

- reinforce USQ leadership in multiculturalism within the Australian higher education system and overseas
- contribute to the unique identity of USQ by developing innovative programs on multiculturalism
- involve the University and local communities in multiculturalism through delivery of specific, community oriented programs
- develop closer cooperation between the governments and non-government organisations at local, state and national level in the area of multiculturalism
- support the building of a strong culture of multiculturalism through student recruitment, innovation in learning and teaching and internationalisation
- contribute towards internationalisation of the University
- enable broad participation in higher education through learning, employment, research and community partnerships and specifically address structural and systemic inequalities in education and employment, and
- promote the concept of multiculturalism and its benefits in practice.

Principles: Multicultural Queensland Charter

USQ is committed to delivering culturally responsive services that meet the needs of our students, staff and the communities we serve through the actions of the USQ MAP as well as the goals and objectives outlined in the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

Our approach will be guided by the principles outlined in the Multicultural Queensland Charter established in The Multicultural Recognition Act 2016. These principles have been adapted specifically for the USQ community:

- A shared commitment to University staff, students and stakeholders fosters a strong and unified community.
- University staff and students come from many diverse backgrounds and have worked, and continue to work, together to build a prosperous, fair and harmonious university environment.
- University staff and students are able to express and celebrate, in a lawful way, their cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.
- Equal rights and responsibilities under the law and equitable access to the services provided or funded by the University for staff and students helps build a fair community.
- A commitment to mutual respect, fair treatment and valuing the diversity of peoples in the University community fosters a caring, safe and inclusive community.
- The creation of opportunities that encourage the full participation of people from diverse backgrounds in the cultural, economic, academic and social life of the University helps build a prosperous community.
- Sustained, respectful and inclusive engagements between all staff, students, community groups and the University are a basis for mutual understanding.
- A unified and harmonious University community promotes a sense of belonging and builds community confidence and resilience.

Explanation of Terms

CALD – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

NGO - Non-Government Organisation

MMSA – Multicultural and Multilingual Student's Association

MSN - Multicultural Staff Network

Key Goals

The following Key Goals have been adapted from the Queensland Cultural Diversity Action Plan* and complement USQ's strategic directions:

1. Language independence;
2. Education participation and attainment;
3. Economic independence;
4. Community participation.

The Actions identified under each of the Key Goals in the USQ MAP are aligned with the objectives and related strategies in the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

The alignment to the related strategies is reflected in the Key Goals tables using the codes below:

USQ Strategic Plan: Overarching Goal	Objectives	Related Strategies
<p>Education: USQ successfully blends access with excellence and is a leading university for student experience and graduate outcomes.</p>	<p>Broaden higher education attainment and social impact that makes a difference to communities.</p>	<p>ED1.1 – Expand and enhance educational pathways into higher education to meet diverse needs and circumstances. ED1.2 – Consolidate and build USQ's positioning in existing markets and explore new markets. ED1.3 – Support students from a diverse range of backgrounds and locations to succeed and excel. ED1.4 – Develop in students the confidence and disposition to make a difference for a better, more prosperous and just society. ED1.5 – Drive social development through transformative accessible education.</p>
	<p>Demonstrate leadership and innovation in the quality of the student experience.</p>	<p>ED2.1 – Develop educational and student support models, principles and standards to inform and improve practice. ED2.2 – Build on our diversity and create opportunities for students, staff and our communities to connect globally.</p>
	<p>Enhance our global standing as a source of graduates who excel in the workplace and develop as leaders.</p>	<p>ED3.1 – Integrate and make explicit cross-cultural competencies across all undergraduate programs.</p>

<p>Research:</p> <p>USQ is internationally recognised for high impact research in our areas of research focus.</p>	<p>Enhance our national and international standing for high quality, focused and engaged research that makes a difference to communities.</p>	<p>RE1.1 – Continue, through targeted investment, to build a focused and distinct program in fundamental and applied research that draws on expertise across disciplines, attracts world-class researchers and delivers impact through addressing global productivity and sustainability challenges.</p> <p>RE1.2 – Optimise impact by ensuring alignment with state, national and international industry and government priorities in key focus areas; and through responsive and managed business and communication processes.</p>
	<p>Build our reputation for research training that produces innovators and entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>RE2.1 – Strategically expand the range of scholarships and financial support available for both domestic and international HDR students; targeting support to build capacity and outcomes in key research priority areas.</p>
<p>Enterprise:</p> <p>USQ is a socially responsible and well managed enterprise with a work culture that promotes high performance and is reflective of our values.</p>	<p>Be an employer of choice.</p>	<p>EN1.1 – Refresh our recruitment and talent management strategies and frameworks to enhance our commitment to productivity, diversity, equity and opportunity across our workforce.</p> <p>EN1.2 – Promote positive well-being and manage risk using a multidimensional view of wellness which builds a safe and supportive workplace and learning environment where all individuals are valued and treated fairly and equitably.</p>
	<p>Continue to build a profile as an organisation that is a responsible corporate citizen and a business partner of choice.</p>	<p>EN2.1 – Operate ethically and manage resources in a socially responsible manner.</p>
	<p>Manage our physical and digital infrastructure and systems for a successful and sustainable enterprise.</p>	<p>EN3.1 – Mature our global capacity and strategically build the business in other locations.</p>

1. Language independence

USQ recognises the importance of English language proficiency to enable people to fully participate in the wider community. Being able to communicate effectively in English and having access to language support is essential for equality of opportunity and maximising student effectiveness with their academic studies.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Offer English language and short-term training programs for students from non-English speaking backgrounds.	ED1.1 ED1.3 ED1.5	SDVC	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English award and English proficiency programs available for students to prepare them for entry into award programs, enhance career prospects, and improve written and spoken English.
Continue to develop, promote and deliver English language learning support programs.	ED1.3 ED2.1	DVC (AS)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English language learning support programs available to students at all campuses and online, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication skills - Meet-up for success (peer assisted learning provided by students who speak another language) - Academic Success Planner (online resource to assist with English language proficiency)
Deliver 'Chat with the Locals' program	ED1.4 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Chat with the Locals Program' implemented across all campuses. Community organisation participation in the program.
Enhance and maintain the USQ Register of Languages interpreting/translation services and increase number of staff volunteers	ED1.3 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of the Register of Languages increased across all campuses. Number of registered volunteers increased. Access to interpreting/translation services improved.
Provision of facilities to conduct language and cultural activities	ED1.3 ED1.5 EN2.1	Executive Director, Campus Services	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities made available through bookings to accommodate language and cultural programs. Bookings coordinated with Campus Services.
Develop a register of diverse cultural skills of USQ CALD staff to be utilised for the benefit of the USQ community.	ED1.3 ED2.1 RE1.2 EN3.1	Director HR, Director (SEAL)	May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural skills register published and maintained. Support and advice available to staff and students.

2. Education participation and attainment

USQ provides access and support to a diverse student constituency, supporting the attainment of a higher education student profile that better reflects the profile of broader society and empowering individuals to reach their own educational potential.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Continue to develop and maintain the MMSA as a basis for CALD students providing mutual support for their academic studies, while reducing feelings of isolation.	ED1.3 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMSA meetings held a minimum of three times per year with University support; with a focus on assisting CALD students with their academic needs.
Recruit and support the MMSA Coordinator with development of academic support programs in addition to social activities aimed at diminishing feelings of isolation.	ED1.3 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMSA Coordinator appointed. Academic support program/s and social activities developed and delivered.
Promote and commence implementation of a Global Engagement Plan that supports the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020.	ED1.2 ED1.3 ED1.5 ED2.1 ED2.2 EN1.1	DVC (S&C)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Engagement Plan endorsed with strategies focussing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * internationalisation of the curriculum * global citizenship skills and knowledge for a global environment * student mobility strategies * staff mobility and overseas exchanges * reward systems for academic staff achievements overseas * providing opportunities for international students to mix with students from other cultures and gain a better understanding and appreciation of Australian society and culture. * Providing and encouraging Study Abroad options for Australian students.
Support and maintain the Multicultural Staff Network (MSN).	ED1.3 ED2.1 EN1.2	Director (SEAL)	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSN meetings promoted, organised and conducted annually. Culturally relevant academic and/ or non-academic programs developed and delivered. MSN and its activities effectively promoted and supported. MSN membership increased.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Promote pathways to education for CALD people including youth, high school and mature aged students.	ED1.1 ED1.2 ED2.2	Exec Director, Marketing & Student Attraction	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional materials created and distributed, encouraging CALD people to participate in programs that increase awareness of higher education and promote pathways to education at USQ. Information sessions promoting pathways to education planned and delivered.
Continue providing opportunities to gain international experience and intercultural skills by offering Study Abroad and Exchange Programs.	ED1.5 ED2.2	DVC (S&C)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in number of students involved in these programs.
Continue to attract students from around the world to study with USQ, both on-campus and online.	ED1.1 ED1.2 ED2.2	DVC (S&C)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build a robust international presence at all campuses and online in line with strategy. Planned recruitment and retention strategies in place that target students from CALD backgrounds.
Enhance and provide an orientation program for international students, both on-campus and online.	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program delivered across all campuses. Increase student participation in program.
Develop and implement cultural awareness programs for both staff and students.	ED1.3 ED2.1 ED3.1 RE1.1 EN1.1 EN1.2 EN3.1	SDVC, DVC (S&C), Director HR	June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural awareness programs developed and delivered. Cultural competence of staff and students steadily improving.
Continue to offer academic programs with specialisations relating to cultural diversity challenges (for example, Multicultural Education, Contemporary International Studies, International Business, International Relations)	ED1.2 ED1.4 ED1.5	SDVC	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate and postgraduate award programs available that enhance knowledge and skills in cross-cultural interaction.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Enhance and provide support services to assist students from refugee backgrounds to participate in and attain higher education.	ED1.3 ED2.1	SDVC	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance and advice provided on wide range of issues to refugee-background students and other CALD students across the Open Access College and USQ Faculties. Refugee students referred to access mainstream USQ or non-USQ support. Research undertaken on strategies to improve education and life outcomes for refugee-background and CALD students at universities. Advice provided to domestic CALD students interested in pathways offered by the Open Access College. Active liaison undertaken with community support groups representing CALD people. Community training opportunities, job opportunities and events promoted to USQ CALD students. Processes and procedures developed to assist in student transition through the various phases of their learning journey.
Improve the representation of staff from diverse cultural/linguistic backgrounds in both academic and professional positions.	RE1.1 RE1.2 EN1.1 EN3.1	Director HR	July 2019	CALD staff profile comes to more closely resemble the CALD profile of broader Australian society.
Facilitate Multi-Faith services to students and staff with guidance and resources to foster their needs in meaningful and practical ways.	ED1.3 ED2.1 EN1.2	DVC (S&C), Director (SS & SJ)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant faith related programs, both USQ and community focus, developed and delivered. Community faith related contacts developed and maintained. The needs of USQ's Multi-Faith communities are met.
Continue developing and maintaining a network of USQ Education Partners in Australia and overseas to provide administrative and instructional services to international students who are enrolled online or externally.	ED1.2 ED1.3 ED1.5 ED2.1 EN3.1	DVC (S&C), Exec Director (USQ International and Development)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USQ Education Partners in place and providing support to online international students.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Continue to promote and provide extra-curricular activities for international students that facilitate friendships and familiarity with the university environment.	ED1.3 ED2.1	Director (SEAL)	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social, cultural and sporting activities developed, promoted and delivered during orientation and throughout the academic year to provide opportunities for students to meet new people and make the most of their university experience.
Refine and provide appropriate specialist support services to international and domestic CALD students to ensure they have the necessary knowledge of University facilities, services, policies and procedures and an opportunity to create a study environment conducive to successful study.	ED1.2 ED1.3 ED2.1 ED2.2	Exec Director (USQ International and Development)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased recruitment of international and domestic CALD students through word-of-mouth endorsements. The development of a range of promotional materials. Efficient administration of application and enrolment processes. Welcome transportation provided for students to Toowoomba. The provision of a range of effective orientation information. Support provided for efficient processing of immigration, visa and passport requirements. Students assisted with Medibank enrolment. Referral processes in place to support services. Arrangement of temporary accommodation provided where needed.
Monitor trends in student cohorts to include the developing needs of new international students.	ED1.3 ED2.1	Exec Director (USQ International and Development, Director (SEAL)	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports available, identifying student countries of origin, used to assist in determining the need for appropriate support programs. Support programs developed to assist international students in settling in to university life.
Continue to develop and improve capacity to deliver disability and mental health support services to students and staff with disabilities from CALD backgrounds.	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1	Director (SS & SJ), Director HR	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and delivery of disability or mental health programs for CALD students and staff. CALD students and staff provided with disability support/services. Mental health programs developed specifically designed with cultural relevance.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
<p>Maintain a suite of policies that serve to ensure that students have an equal opportunity to succeed at study.</p>	<p>ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1</p>	<p>DVC (S&C)</p>	<p>January 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures implemented and promoted that ensure equal opportunity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Equity in Education Policy and Procedure * Student Advice, Student Welfare and Pastoral Support Policy and Procedure * Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure * Student Code of Conduct Policy * Student Complaint and Appeal Policy
<p>Develop and improve provision of USQ academic support information in languages other than English for CALD student cohorts with significant numbers.</p>	<p>ED1.3 ED2.1</p>	<p>SDVC, DVC (S&C)</p>	<p>January 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic support information about USQ is translated into other languages and made available on USQ website.

3. Economic independence

To provide support services that enhance the economic independence for students and staff and facilitate a diverse workforce.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Provide CALD students with Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities.	ED1.3 ED2.1	SDVC, DVC (S&C), Director (SS&SJ)	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities for CALD students embedded in course work or voluntary placements through the Industry Experience Program.
Develop and promote on-line information webpages that provide students and staff with information on services available other than academic support, such as transportation, health, finances, employment, etc.	ED1.3 ED2.1 EN1.1	Exec Director (USQ International and Development	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General information webpage included as a link from the Multicultural webpage.
Provide additional self-catered accommodation facilities on the Toowoomba campus.	ED1.3 ED2.1 ED2.2	DVC (S&C), Exec Director Campus Services	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing facilities modified and aligned with a multicultural student body.
Review and implement policies that provide equal opportunity for staff in the workplace.	EN1.1 EN1.2 EN2.1	Director HR	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies are implemented and promoted on University website including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Employee Equity and Diversity Policy * Code of Conduct Policy * Employee Complaints and grievances Policy * Multiculturalism Policy.
Continue to provide a range of staff benefits including financial, career development, healthy living and exclusive discounts	EN1.2	Director HR	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits available to employees and actively promoted.
Review and recognise achievement in equity and diversity by awarding an annual staff award	EN1.1	Director HR	September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff award implemented and promoted with applicant details available on the University website.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Enhance and deliver programs to assist CALD and international students to obtain employment or advice on careers.	ED1.3 ED2.1	Director (SS & SJ)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs delivered for International students to assist them in gaining employment.
Continue to offer a variety of scholarships to financially assist CALD and international students to participate in study at USQ.	ED1.2 ED1.3 ED1.5 ED2.1 ED2.2 RE2.1	DVC S&C	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of scholarships offered and granted.
Encourage staff to undertake further education by providing study assistance.	EN1.1	Director HR	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study assistance available to staff, including financial assistance and time release.

4. Community participation

Community participation is essential to create a sense of belonging and provide enhanced opportunities to participate in our economy as well as create a better life for our culturally diverse students and staff.

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Continue to deliver culturally relevant programs for students and staff to include community for the purpose of students/civic engagement (students connecting with community).	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1 ED2.2 EN1.2	DVC (S&C), Director (SEAL)	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver annually USQ Harmony Day and other cultural and national day activities at USQ across all campuses. Increased student/staff participation in programs. Examples include: USQ Harmony Day; India and PNG Independence days; and China's Mid-Autumn Festival. Improved engagement with CALD communities and organisations.
Attend and continue to support the community Cultural Diversity Network (CDN). This Network has membership of Government agencies (Local, State and Federal), NGOs' and regional community members.	ED2.1 ED2.2	Director (SEAL)	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular attendance by appropriate USQ representatives at community and government programs, meetings and activities multicultural related.
Encourage CALD student participation in community activities such as 'Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival' and 'Carnival of Flowers'.	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1 ED2.2	Director (SEAL)	May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of USQ participation in community multicultural events undertaken. Increased USQ student/staff participation encouraged.
Monitor opportunities to submit culturally related government grant applications at State and Federal levels.	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED2.1 ED2.2	Director (SEAL)	August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of multicultural grant application/s

Actions	Related Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframes	Predicted Outcomes
Review Multiculturalism Policy, referring to the Multicultural Queensland Charter (established under the Multicultural Recognition Act 2016)	ED1.3 ED1.4 ED1.5 ED2.1 ED2.2 EN1.1	DVC (S&C), VCC	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review completed and policy promoted on USQ website.
Enhance relationships with NGOs, local community organisations and Government at State, Federal and Local levels. Working collaboratively to build cultural community capacity.	ED1.3 ED1.5 ED2.2 RE1.2 EN1.2	VCC	January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued community and government engagement through the further development of networks. Plan, develop and deliver joint program/s with community, NGOs and or government.

* The Key Goals outlined in this document have been adapted and reproduced from the Queensland Cultural Diversity Action Plan, 2014. The State of Queensland (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs).



