

Indigenous Student Success Program

UNE 2020 PERFORMANCE REPORT

20 MAY 2021



une
University of
New England



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The following UNE Directorates, Business Units, Service Areas and Controlled Entities of the University of New England contributed to this statement:

- Academic Quality Directorate
- Business Intelligence Services (BIS)
- Corporate Intelligence Unit (CIU)
- Estate & Built Environment (EBE)
- Financial Performance and Analytical Services (FPAS)
- Governance and University Secretariat
- Education Futures
- Office of Advancement, Communications and Events
- Oorala Aboriginal Centre
- Strategic Communications and Media
- People and Culture
- Student Success
- University Library
- UNE Life
- UNE Partnerships

The following UNE Academic Faculties and Schools also contributed to this statement:

- ❖ Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education (HASSE) including:
 - School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
 - School of Education
- ❖ Faculty of Medicine and Health (M&H) including:
 - School of Psychology
 - School of Health
 - School of Rural Medicine
- ❖ Faculty of Science, Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL) including:
 - School of Law
 - UNE Business School
 - School of Science and Technology
 - School of Environmental and Rural Science

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP) is a Federal Government funding initiative that provides supplementary funding to universities to help Indigenous students take on university study and achieve successful outcomes (Full details of the Program are available online at: [ISSP Program](#)). ISSP Grants are especially focused to support Indigenous students who are financially disadvantaged and/or from remote and regional areas. Each Australian university receives ISSP funding based on enrolments, progression rates and course completions of Indigenous students. A special loading also recognises the additional costs associated with assisting Indigenous students from regional and remote areas.

As an obligation of receipt of this funding, Universities are required to provide an annual Performance Report (PR) and Financial Acquittal (FA). This Performance Report is expected to include key performance data for the preceding calendar year, as well as outline the key strategies of governance, education and employment used by the University for improving the access, participation, retention and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

This document and associated financial acquittal reports the performance data and strategic options taken by UNE in 2020 to support current and future Indigenous students achieve success. It is not an exhaustive statement of all UNEs efforts but rather it is a summary of the key activities undertaken in support of our Indigenous students. The key functions of the report are to:

- To demonstrate that annual ISSP funding amounts received by UNE have been used according to the relevant Act (*Higher Education Support Act, 2003*) and guidelines (*Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017*) and
- To describe additional supports the university is committing to lifting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes, given the supplementary nature of ISSP.

DOCUMENT PROTOCOLS

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Indigenous Student Success Program - 2020 Financial Acquittal. A statement of review and endorsement by the Indigenous Governance mechanism, in operation throughout 2020 at UNE, commences on page 42 of this document. The UNE ISSP-2020 Financial Acquittal is included at pages 43-45 of this document.

Official certification of the University of New England ISSP-2020 Performance Report and the ISSP-2020 Financial Acquittal is included at page 46 of this document.

DOCUMENT DATA DISCLAIMER

Key Indigenous student data in this report were downloaded from dashboards with the Power BI "Business Intelligence Course Monitoring App" and/or the "Business Intelligence Enrolments and Load App" between the 26 March and 12 April 2021. The data in the dashboards available within Business Intelligence Services Apps, are predominately, updated through the UNE Data Warehouse on a nightly basis and therefore may differ slightly from what is reflected in this report.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	3
Document Purpose	4
Document Protocols	4
Document Data Disclaimer	4
Contents	5
List of Tables	7
List of Figures	7
1. Enrolments (Access)	8
1.1. Strategies to improve access	8
1.2. The Oorala Aboriginal Centre and Indigenous student access to higher education.....	9
1.3 Bridging and enabling courses.....	9
1.3.1 Additional enabling strategies.....	10
1.4 Scholarships.....	11
1.4.1 Indigenous Commonwealth Equity Scholarships	11
1.4.2 Targeted ISSP-funded undergraduate scholarship support	11
1.4.3 Non-ISSP funded undergraduate scholarship support	11
1.5 Support for indigenous postgraduate scholarship at UNE	13
1.6 Community Engagement and Outreach activities.....	14
1.6.1 Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP)	14
1.6.2 UNE Partnerships	15
1.7 Indigenous student Enrolment Numbers and Equivalent Full time student loads (EFTSL).	20
1.7.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enrolments 2020	20
1.7.2 Total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Load 2020.....	20
1.7.3 Commencing and Continuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Trends 2016-2020.....	21
1.7.4 On-Campus versus Off-Campus/Online Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Cohorts 2016-2020.....	21
2. Progression (access and outcomes)	23
2.1 Strategies for Improved Student success rates and Reterntion.....	23
2.1.1 Integrated Student Engagement and COVID-19 Adaptation.....	23
2.1.1a UNE's Student Relationship Management System (SRM)	23
2.1.1b Personal Retention and Engagement Program (PREP)	23
2.1.1c. Online Learning Live – Stage 3 of the Alternate Indigenous Student Pathways Review Project (Oorala –PRP).....	24
2.1.1d.Improving Indigenous Success at UNE.	24
2.1.1e. Oorala Outdoor Learning Precinct -Stage 1 Concept Plan.....	24
2.2 Student outcomes - success and retention	25
2.2.1 Student Progress Rate – Student Success	25
2.3 Tutorial and other assistance provided	26
2.3.1 Targeted Tutorial Assistance Program.....	26
2.4 Size of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre	26
2.5 Cultural competence – curriculum	26

2.5.1 Oorala Aboriginal Centre	26
2.5.2 Faculty based measures to increase Indigenous content in the curriculum.	27
2.6 Cultural competence of staff and cultural safety of students	30
2.6.1 Cultural Competence of Staff	30
2.6.2 Cultural Safety of Students	30
3. Completions	32
3.1 Rise and Fall of Completions	32
3.1.1 Outcomes	32
3.1.2 Strategies connecting graduates with employment (both within and outside the institution)	32
3.1.3 Strategies to monitor student outcomes after graduation	32
4. Regional and Remote Students	34
4.1 Scholarship Support for Regional and Remote Indigenous Students	34
4.2 The rise and fall of EFTSL For students From Remote and Regional Areas	34
5. Working with Vulnerable People Requirement	36
5.1 Statement of Compliance with Section 35A.....	36
5.2 Other Compliance Processes	36
6. Eligibility requirements	37
6.1 UNE Indigenous Education Strategy 2019-2021	37
6.1.1 Implementation of strategies and targets	37
6.1.2 Indigenous Education Statements	38
6.1.3 Reconciliation Action Plan	38
6.2 UNE Indigenous Workforce Strategy 2019-2023 (IWFS)	39
6.2.1 UNE 2019-2023 IWFS - Support for development of current Indigenous Employees	39
6.2.2 UNE 2019-2023 IWFS – Increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous people at UNE.	39
6.2.3 Recruitment of Indigenous person to Senior Executive Position at UNE.	39
6.2.4 UNE Indigenous Workforce data.....	39
6.3 UNE Indigenous Governance Mechanism	41
6.3a UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee (UNEIEC)	41
6.3b Additional Involvement of Indigenous staff in decision making including curriculum evaluation and review	41
6.3.1 Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism	42
Attachment B2: ISSP 2020 Financial Aquittal	43
UNE ISSP 2020 Certification	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of UNE Bridging and Enabling Courses and their uptake by Indigenous students in 2020.....	9
Table 2: ISSP supported scholarships (Breakdown of 2020 payments).	11
Table 3: Donor Scholarships awarded to UNE Indigenous undergraduate students in 2020.....	12
Table 4: Repeat Donor Scholarship funding provided to Indigenous undergraduates at UNE in 2020.	12
Table 5: Additional awards/prizes given to Indigenous undergraduate students at UNE in 2020.....	12
Table 6: Value of Scholarships and Stipends awarded to UNE Indigenous Higher Degree Research Students in 2020.	13
Table 7: Indigenous Student Support and Community Outreach Activities provided by the UNE Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2020.17	
Table 8: Summary of additional Indigenous Community Engagement and Outreach Activities of UNE in 2020.	19
Table 9: Comparison of the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Domestic Student Progress Rate Percent (SPR%) at UNE, 2016-2020.	25
Table 10: Targeted Tutorial Assistance (TTA) provided (2020 breakdown).....	26
Table 11: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous staff employed in the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2020.....	26
Table 12: The units of study offered and administered by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2016-2020.....	27
Table 13: UNE Courses in which the Units of study offered by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre have been incorporated.	27
Table 14: Course Completions by Indigenous Students at UNE 2016-2020.....	32
Table 15: UNE 2020 Graduate Survey (GOS) Responses to Key Grouped Questions	33
Table 16: Scholarship data for remote and regional students.	34
Table 17: Study Load (EFTSL) of Indigenous students studying at UNE in 2020 by their location.	34
Table 18: Working with Vulnerable People Checklist 2020.	36
Table 19: UNE Indigenous Workforce Data (2020 breakdown).	40

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Indigenous High School Student Attendance at Oorala Youth Program Activities 2016-2020.....	15
Figure 2: Total Indigenous Student Enrolment at UNE for the period January 2016 to December 2020.	20
Figure 3: Total Indigenous Student Load (EFTSL) at UNE for the period January 2016-December 2020	20
Figure 4: Commencing and Continuing Indigenous Student EFTSL as proportion of Total Indigenous EFTSL at UNE for the period 2016-2020.	21
Figure 5: Difference in Total EFTSL borne each year by Commencing and Continuing Indigenous Students at UNE for the period 2016-2020.	21
Figure 6: On Campus and Online Indigenous Student Study Load as proportion of total Indigenous EFTSL, UNE 2016-2020.....	22
Figure 7: Comparison of Indigenous Student Progress Rate Percentage and Non-Indigenous Student Progress Rate Percentage at UNE (for the period 2015-2020).	25
Figure 8: Progress Rate Index by Course Enrolment Type for Indigenous Students studying at UNE 2016-2020.	25
Figure 9: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Regional and/or remote Australia for the 5-year period 2016-2020.	35
Figure 10: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Inner Regional and Outer Regional Australia for the 5-year period 2016-2020.	35
Figure 11: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Remote and Very Remote Australia for the 5-year period 2016-2020.	35
Figure 12: Excerpt from Statement of Minimum Standards for Online Learning, UNE 2020.....	37

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1. ENROLMENTS (ACCESS)

1.1. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS

“The University of New England respects and acknowledges that its people, programs and facilities are built on land, and surrounded by a sense of belonging, both ancient and contemporary, of the world's oldest living culture. In doing so, UNE values and respects Indigenous knowledge systems as a vital part of the knowledge capital of Australia.”¹

In 2020 unparalleled environmental conditions including extreme drought, extensive bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic created a unique set of disruptive challenges for the University of New England (UNE). Key to the successful negotiation of these challenges by UNE has been the adaptability and resilience of its staff and students, and the regional communities to which it is bound. One measure of this resilience in 2020 – for which UNE is appreciative and proud – is that despite the disruption to normal academic programs brought about by COVID-19 restrictions, the number of Indigenous student enrolments remained largely unchanged from the previous record high enrolment of 2019.

The ability of UNE to continue to engage and attract Indigenous students in a year of crises and uncertainty reflects the long and sustained record of the Institution and its work to improve higher education and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians. Throughout 2020, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre played a crucial role in enabling the adaptation of our Indigenous students to the rapid changes in teaching and learning brought about by COVID-19 restrictions. Founded at UNE in 1986, Oorala is an integral and enduring part of the University's ongoing commitment to improve the access to - and outcomes for - Indigenous students in higher education. This 'whole of University' commitment to improving higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians is affirmed by the [UNE Indigenous Education Strategy 2019-2021](#) which envisions UNE as an:

“Higher education provider that provides a culturally-welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are empowered to excel and thrive through equal partnerships and the valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, practices and principles”

In 2020 this vision was further supported and made actionable via the endorsement by Reconciliation Australia of the inaugural [UNE Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2021](#) which was published in June 2020.² Moreover, as a result of the inclusive and robust dialogue that occurred during the latter half of the year as part of the [UNE 21+ conversation](#), UNE's commitment to equitable access to higher education regardless of circumstance – and its support for the unique requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people looking to undertake higher education – is now enshrined within the newly released [UNE Strategic Plan 2021-2030: Future fitting lives and communities](#). This decadal Strategic Plan seeks to 'Future Fit' the people and places with which UNE is enmeshed by:

- crafting, adapting and supporting learning journeys that are distinctive in their accessibility and flexibility;
- creating and sharing knowledge to make a difference locally, regionally and globally; and
- committing to environmental, social and financial resilience for the University, our staff, our students and our communities.

The Oorala Aboriginal Centre will continue to play a vital role as UNE aspires to continuous improvement in its support of Indigenous students and staff in Higher Education. Empowered by the 'Future Fit' agenda the Centre will strive to be at the forefront of securing UNE's aspirational goals to *Empower communities, Build Resilience and offer Personalised Learning Journeys* for the increasing cohort of Indigenous Australians who choose to study with us.

¹ *UNE Acknowledgement of Country*, [UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020](#). The words of this acknowledgement are attributed to Debra Bennell, a former Director of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre.

² A UNE media release contextualising the inaugural UNE RAP is available at: <https://www.une.edu.au/connect/news/2020/07/unes-reconciliation-action-plan-approved>

1.2. THE OORALA ABORIGINAL CENTRE AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

"Oorala" — from a local Anaiwan word meaning "a camp" or "a place where people come together" — was chosen as a name for the Centre by Aboriginal students enrolled at UNE when it first opened. It reflects the historical significance of the site and its connection with the local Aboriginal community, and highlights the Centre's significance as a place that draws together Aboriginal students from all regions of Australia.

In the early 1990s, Oorala introduced three highly successful alternate entry pathway programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UNE. These included the national award winning [TRACKS](#) tertiary preparation program, the Pre-Orientation Program (POP) and the [Internal Selection Program](#) (ISP). Together these programs broadened the available access to higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Due to a number of practice-led teaching and learning initiatives these three programs have variously altered in their scope and character over the last twenty-five years but nevertheless remain key elements of the suite of academic supports offered to Indigenous students by Oorala. Oorala has maintained the relevance of these Programs through: continual evaluation and review; ongoing academic development; continuous community collaboration and partnership; and technological innovations in course design and delivery. This has occurred in collaboration with relevant professional and academic staff across UNE including staff within Information Technology, Library Services, Learning Design and/or Discipline based expertise.

1.3 BRIDGING AND ENABLING COURSES

As mentioned above the provision of alternative entry pathways is a significant component of UNE's long-term and successful approach to ensuring Indigenous student access, which includes a flexible approach to entry requirements through Oorala's [Direct Entry \(ISP\)](#) and [TRACKS](#) Programs. Additionally, UNE has an online Pathways Enabling Course that is also available to Indigenous students although it is not specifically tailored to support Indigenous transition to university. In 2020, 89 Indigenous students participated in UNE's Indigenous alternate entry and/or Enabling Programs (Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of UNE Bridging and Enabling Courses and their uptake by Indigenous students in 2020.

Program name	Target audience	Outline of program	Outcome
<i>TRACKS Tertiary Preparation Program</i>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants (18 years and over)	Ongoing alternative entry program offered on campus and online through Oorala; Tertiary preparation assists Indigenous students to develop their study skills and their transition to mainstream UNE courses (TRACKS includes five core TRAX units and one undergraduate unit).	In 2020, there were 39 students enrolled in Oorala's TRACKS program, comprising 31 commencing and 8 continuing students. 35 of these students were enrolled Online.
<i>Internal Selection Program (ISP)</i>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants (18 years and over)	Ongoing alternative entry program offered on campus through Oorala; Testing and assessment for UNE course admission; applicants are either recommended for admission to their selected UNE degree or alternatively the TRACKS Program or other tertiary study options. Since 2017 candidates are able to do the ISP test at UNE Sydney Campus in Parramatta. I	In 2020 ISP applications were received from 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students wishing to progress to study at UNE. Of these: (i) One student successfully completed the ISP at the UNE Study Centre at Taree and was offered a place in the Bachelor of Community Services (ii) Five students were supported to successfully apply for direct entry to UNE based upon their prior qualifications and/or experience (ii) Five applicants were current Year 12 students and all were advised to revisit the ISP program on completion of their HSC studies. One of these students subsequently applied for direct entry to the UNE Bachelor of Nursing in 2021 and a further student was given direct entry into a Bachelor Degree Program at another Institution.

<i>UNE Pathways Enabling Course</i>	All applicants who do not meet standard entry requirements for UNE undergraduate courses and have not successfully completed any part of a University course.	Ongoing enabling program offered online through UNE. It prepares students for admission to UNE undergraduate courses. Pathways includes two foundation units and two undergraduate units, with mentoring and additional tutorial support.	34 Indigenous students enrolled in UNE's Pathways Enabling Course in 2020. Of these, 31 were commencing students. All students were enrolled Online.
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1.3.1 Additional enabling strategies

UNE also provides other discipline specific access and enabling programs for our Indigenous students. Examples of alternate entry and access initiatives of the Faculty of Medicine and Health (M&H) and the Faculty of Science, Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL) are outlined below.

Faculty of Medicine and Health (M&H)

Miroma Bunbilla: From its inception in 2012, the UNE School of Rural Medicine has collaborated annually with the University of Newcastle (UoN) to host this Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-entry pathway to the Joint Medical Program (JMP). In previous years the *Miroma Bunbilla* Program ran as a five-to-seven day On-Campus experience in which prospective medical students participated in a range of pre-admission activities including multiple skills assessment; personal qualities assessment; small group problem-based learning tutorials; anatomy sessions and basic science resource sessions. A confirmation of Aboriginality interview was also included, in which the University Elder in Residence and an Aboriginal community member met with each prospective student.

In 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the *Miroma Bunbilla* Program 2020 was adapted for small in-person group participation with coordinated online delivery, with all activities delivered via Zoom. The program retained its problem-based and group based learning modules with participants asked to collaborate and complete assessment tasks via online study groups in dispersed small group settings including at Moree, Tamworth, Orange and Newcastle. Each dispersed venue was subject to a COVID-19 Safe Plan with all social distancing protocols maintained throughout. The Head of the School of Rural Medicine and the Acting Director of Oorala travelled to Moree to support and inform program participants of their options for study at UNE, whilst the Manager of the Student Engagement Team at Oorala travelled to Tamworth to similarly support participants in the program. Two Indigenous medical students from UNE also supported the program as mentors in Moree and Tamworth. Seven participants of this Program were offered places in the JMP Program at UNE for 2021 and all have commenced their studies in Semester 1 2021.

Equity Quota: The Joint Medical Program at UNE has set a 10% quota for students of an Indigenous background. Seven offers were made to Indigenous students for admission to the JMP at UNE to commence in 2021. This is the highest ever number of offers made to Indigenous students to commence medicine at UNE, enabling the School to meet the 10% quota that the JMP has set for Indigenous student intake into medicine. Rural background students also have an equity admission pathway, with the JMP setting a 30% quota. The Australian Government requires that 27% of commencing intake should be from rural background. UNE met this quota in 2020.

Support for Nursing and Allied Health Workers: The School of Health provides Indigenous students with access to the UNE Bachelor of Nursing degree by providing information and opportunity for students to participate in:

- Cadetships with NSW Health (any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student entering an undergraduate nursing degree at UNE is eligible to apply for a NSW Government sponsored cadetship with NSW Health); and
- Direct Entry (Interview Pathway) – an alternative pathway for enrolment in a Bachelor of Nursing aimed at any nursing student.
- NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Health Worker Project – this project maps competencies from Certificate IV to the Bachelor of Community Services to ensure credit is granted to the maximum extent possible and aligns with UNE strategies for improved access, unit success rates and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Faculty of Science Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL)

With the Faculty of Science Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL) at UNE, the following two initiatives have been the recent focus to boost the participation of students from low socio-economic backgrounds including Indigenous students:

Boosting Science Pathways: In the Faculty of SABL, 72% of students entered a Science course via the School Recommended Early Entry pathway in 2020. All students who enrolled in a STEM or Agriculture course were directed to the Boosting Science Pathways course (BSP) course from the UNE101 online preparatory unit prepared by the UNE Student Success Team. Of those students who enrolled in the BSP, 42% were from inner regional and 32% from outer regional locations across New South Wales and Queensland; and 16% of students were from low SES backgrounds. It is estimated that ~6% of participating students identify as Indigenous.

Open Universities Australia: The Faculty of SABL has offered the Bachelor of Laws and Diploma of Science through Open Universities Australia (OUA) since 2019. By 2020, over 900 OUA students have undertaken SABL units with 66 students (over 6% of total enrolments) identifying as Australian Aboriginal or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Offering SABL units and courses through OUA has increased our rates of participation for Indigenous Australians. SABL is continuing to increase and diversify the courses and units with OUA with a view of continuing to increase rates of participation.

1.4 SCHOLARSHIPS

1.4.1 Indigenous Commonwealth Equity Scholarships

ISSP grant monies fund a number of ongoing Indigenous Commonwealth Scholarships (as per Sections 19-22 of the *Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017* [herein 'the Guidelines']) including: scholarships that assist with education costs (Indigenous Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships [ICECS]) and; scholarships that assist with relocation costs, accommodation costs or relocation and accommodation costs (Indigenous Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships [ICAS]). For 2020, the breakdown of scholarship monies paid to Indigenous students by course category studied is shown in Table 2. At UNE, these Commonwealth scholarships are awarded to Indigenous students on an ongoing basis for the full-time- equivalent duration of their course of study.

Table 2: ISSP supported scholarships (Breakdown of 2020 payments).

Level of Study	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		TOTAL	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No. ^a
Enabling	5,600.00	2.0	3,000.00	0.5	1,000.00	1.0	9,600.00	3.5
Undergraduate	100,100.00	35.8	27,000.00	4.5	24,000.00	24.0	151,100.00	59.8
Postgraduate	7,700.00	2.75	0.00	0	3,000.00	3.0	10,700.00	5.75
Other	5,600.00	2.0	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,600.00	2.0
TOTAL	119,000.00	42.5	30,000.00	5.0	28,000.00	28	177,000.00	71.05

a. = Student Head Count since one student may receive more than one type of scholarship. Source: Manager Business Accounting, UNE Finance Strategy & Business Intelligence.

1.4.2 Targeted ISSP-funded undergraduate scholarship support

UNE is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with scholarships to help achieve their academic goals. As part of this commitment, in 2020, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre continued the Oorala Merit Prize and introduced the Oorala Wellbeing Scholarship and the Oorala Kick Start Scholarship, the latter to commence in Trimester 1 2021. The nature and purpose of each of this suite of Oorala Scholarships is described below:

Oorala Merit Prize: Designed to recognise high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success, this Prize is aimed at undergraduate students and is awarded annually to three students from each UNE Faculty who have completed a minimum of 72 credit points of study. Additionally one Indigenous student from the TRACKS Tertiary Preparation Program and one student from the Pathway Enabling Program, who have successfully completed their course, and are currently enrolled in an undergraduate unit of study at UNE, will be considered for a Merit Prize. Merit Prizes are awarded to students with the highest course grade point average (GPA) at the time of selection, and it will be a one-off prize awarded once throughout a students' period of study at UNE. In 2020, there were 28 recipients of the Oorala Merit Prize (See Reward Column in Table 2).

Oorala Wellbeing Scholarship: The Oorala Aboriginal Centre, in collaboration with UNE's Student Accessibility & Wellbeing Office, developed the Oorala Wellbeing Scholarship, worth \$500 per annum to recipients, in 2020. The Accessibility & Wellbeing Office at UNE supports those students who are: (a) living with a disability or health condition, (b) caring for a family member, (c) elite athletes (d) Australian Defence Force and/or State Emergency Services personnel, (e) living remotely, (f) incarcerated and/or (g) lack access to reliable internet and online technology. Many of our Indigenous students fall into one or more of these categories and receive support from the Accessibility and Wellbeing Office throughout their studies. The Oorala Wellbeing Scholarship arose out of our joint vision to improve access to the UNE experience for everyone, regardless of background or current situation. Five students were awarded this Scholarship in 2020.

Oorala Kick Start Scholarship: This scholarship is designed to encourage Indigenous High School students to choose UNE; and especially to develop continuing supportive relationships with school-leavers who have participated in one or more of the Oorala Youth Leadership Camps or Experience Days. It is a one of scholarship payment to the value of \$1000 for full-time students and \$500 for part-time students. These funds are provided to help support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students with the costs of starting their tertiary studies.

1.4.3 Non-ISSP funded undergraduate scholarship support

The Oorala Aboriginal Centre and the broader UNE community further supports Indigenous undergraduate students to participate and progress in their studies by:

- providing a range of additional non-ISSP funded scholarships;
- providing a number of discipline specific awards and prizes that recognise and support academic achievement and progression;
- actively facilitating the application of eligible students for external scholarship opportunities;
- providing a detailed webpage that identifies the many internal and external funding opportunities available to students; and,
- providing regular email, social media and online learning system hub updates about forthcoming scholarship opportunities.

Outlined below are details of a variety of non-ISSP funded financial and associated supports provided to Indigenous undergraduate students studying at UNE in 2020:

Donor Scholarships: The University has a number of undergraduate scholarships funded by various external donors (as both individuals and organisations; and including UNE). A number of these scholarships are specifically available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students studying at UNE. Eleven Indigenous applicants met the eligibility requirements and were scholarship recipients in 2020 (Table 3). In addition, two students received continuing funding into 2020 because of their prior receipt of an externally funded multi-year scholarship (Table 4). These 13 undergraduate students received a total of \$87,000 in Donor Scholarships during 2020 (Table 3 + Table 4).

Table 3: Donor Scholarships awarded to UNE Indigenous undergraduate students in 2020.

Scholarship Title	Number available	Number awarded	Total Value of Scholarships in 2020
Max Schroder UNE Scholarship	4	4	\$24,000
Max Schroder Indigenous Mentoring Scholarships	2	2	\$16,000
Ella Schroder Indigenous Residential Scholarship	1	1	\$10,000
The Mildred and Betty Scholarship	1	1	\$6,000
Grosvenor Engineering Group Indigenous Scholarship	1	1	\$8,000
Northern Inland Academy of Sport/UNE Sporting Scholarship	2	2	\$3,000
TOTALS			\$67,000

Source: UNE Scholarships Office, 05/04/2021

Table 4: Repeat Donor Scholarship funding provided to Indigenous undergraduates at UNE in 2020.

Scholarship Title	Number available	Number awarded	Total Value of Scholarships in 2020
Previous award of Essential Energy Indigenous Scholarship	1	1	\$10,000
Previous award of Aberbaldie Foundation Indigenous Housing Scholarship	1	1	\$11,000
TOTALS			\$21,000

Source: UNE Scholarships Office, 05/04/2021

Indigenous Undergraduate Medicine Scholarship: This scholarship is a joint initiative of the UNE School of Rural Medicine and the Oorala Aboriginal Centre. The first scholarship was awarded in 2019. The purpose of this Scholarship is to encourage Indigenous students to study medicine at UNE by helping to alleviate their financial burden whilst studying. It provides a total value of up to \$30,000 for a maximum period of 5 years. The 2019 recipient of this scholarship received ongoing funding into 2020 to support progress into 2nd year Medicine. There were no new recipients of this scholarship in 2020 with one commencing student applicant not meeting eligibility criteria. The scholarship was carried over to 2021 with two scholarships to be awarded in 2021.

Discipline Specific Awards: In 2020, Indigenous student James Dries was awarded the Barker Prize in Genetics from the School of Science and Technology. This \$200 cash prize is a merit prize awarded on the recommendation of the Head of the School of Science and Technology to the student who achieves the highest mark in the unit GENE210. In addition, there were several other discipline specific awards provided exclusively to Indigenous students at UNE in 2020. These included annual undergraduate student nursing achievement awards, as well as a number of progression scholarships awarded to Indigenous students in the Joint Medical Program for successful progression through to the next semester of their studies (Table 5).

Table 5: Additional awards/prizes given to Indigenous undergraduate students at UNE in 2020.

Prize / Award Title	Number	Total \$ Value of Award/Prize
Hunter New England Population health Prize for 1 st Year Nursing - annual award to A&TSI student with highest aggregate in all 1 st year Nursing units.	1	\$500.00
Hunter New England Population Health Prize for 2 nd Year Nursing - annual award to A&TSI student with highest aggregate in all 2 nd year Nursing units.	1	\$500.00

Hunter New England Population Health Prize for 3 rd Year Nursing - annual award to A&TSI student with highest aggregate in all 3 rd year Nursing units.	1	\$500.00
School of Rural Medicine Indigenous Student Progression Scholarships	8	\$16,000

Source: UNE Schools of Health and Rural Medicine.

Furthermore, where applicable, students are provided with discipline specific advice on other externally funded scholarships to which they may be eligible. For example in the School of Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are continuing Bachelor degree studies at UNE are alerted to their eligibility for the following scholarships:

- Australian College of Nursing – The Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme (F/T) (\$15,000);
- Australian College of Nursing – the Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme (P/T) (\$7,500);
- Australian Rotary Health Indigenous Health Scholarship (\$5,000); and the
- NSW Health Aboriginal Postgraduate Scholarship (\$15,000)

Similarly, in the School of Psychology Indigenous students are encouraged to apply for the following Indigenous awards:

- ATSIPP Indigenous Student Conference Attendance Awards offered by the Australian Psychological Society (APS) to attend the annual APS conference. The award provides up to \$1200 to attend the Annual APS Conference;
- Australian Psychological Society Bendi Lango Bursary for Indigenous postgraduate students ; and
- The Muriel Mary Snow Indigenous Honours Prize for 4th year students commencing postgraduate study with a research component.

Oorala Scholarship Webpage: The Oorala Aboriginal Centre website includes an Oorala Study Support Scholarships portal that links to information about all the scholarship opportunities available to Indigenous students studying at UNE. The website is available at <https://www.une.edu.au/info-for/indigenous-matters/oorala/scholarships>. Further, students receive electronic notification of forthcoming scholarship opportunities via: email through the Student Management System, via curated posts to the Oorala Facebook page, and through notices posted to 'the Hub', the designated Indigenous student forum curated by Oorala on "Moodle," the UNE Learning Management System (LMS).

1.5 SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP AT UNE

Throughout 2020, UNE Research Services continued to support and progress Indigenous participation in the research enterprise of the University in accord with the *UNE 2016-2020 Research Plan*. The actions taken in 2019 to provide increased financial support to Indigenous Research students at UNE and to provide current Aboriginal PhD candidates a pathway into Academic positions at UNE were again operational in 2020. These actions included:

- Making available a new suite of Indigenous Higher Education Research (IHDR) Scholarships (Each valued in 2020 at \$36,250 p.a. for three years for a PhD; or two years for a Research Masters);
- Transitioning a number of Higher Degree Research students to Indigenous Early Career Fellowships; and
- Providing seed grant funds to support Indigenous community engagement in research.

A unique feature of the IHDR scholarships is that candidates are eligible to apply to Research Services for an additional \$7,000.00 per year for cultural supervision and/or mentoring on top of their standard scholarship. Table 6 shows a summary breakdown of the funds allocated in 2020. UNE Research Services directly funded this financial support.

Table 6: Value of Scholarships and Stipends awarded to UNE Indigenous Higher Degree Research Students in 2020.

Scholarship/Stipend Title	Total \$ Value of Scholarship/Stipend
Indigenous Higher Degree Research (IHDR) scholarships	\$313,060.00
Indigenous Early Career Fellowships	\$304,382.00

The research training, scholarship opportunities, and mentoring afforded Indigenous students undertaking postgraduate scholarship at UNE enabled the following noteworthy outcomes for individual students in 2020:

- Mr. Callum Clayton Dixon won the NSW Premiers Community and Regional History Prize in September 2020 for his book titled: "Surviving New England: A history of Aboriginal Resistance & Resilience through the First Forty years of the Apocalypse". The book represents the formal publication of the dissertation Callum prepared whilst a postgraduate student in the School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at UNE and for which he was awarded a Master of Philosophy in History in August 2019.
- In 2020, Ms. Dawn Lewis undertook a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science Honours Degree at UNE and achieved a First Class result. At the same time, she was supported by lecturers in the Discipline of Archaeology and staff within the Oorala Aboriginal Centre (including the Elder in Residence) to: (a) successfully apply for admission to the University of Oxford to

pursue an MSc in Archaeological Science and; (b) successfully apply for a Charles Perkins Scholarship to fund her studies at Oxford. Dawn is currently in Oxford pursuing her Masters Studies.

1.6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

As a member of the *Regional Universities Network (RUN)*, UNE identifies itself as an institution with a vital role to play in securing the future prosperity and sustainability of regional Australia, as well as being an institution with an unspoken moral contract to enhance the social fabric and cultural capital of the regional communities within which it is situated. Further, with an historical geography aligned to the New England-North West Region of New South Wales the institution lies in close proximity to four of the State Electoral Divisions (SEDs) with the greatest number and highest proportion of Indigenous people within New South Wales.³ Hence, the strength of UNE's commitment to improving the lives and educational opportunities of local and regional Indigenous communities derives from it being an inherent part of its regional character and Institutional identity.

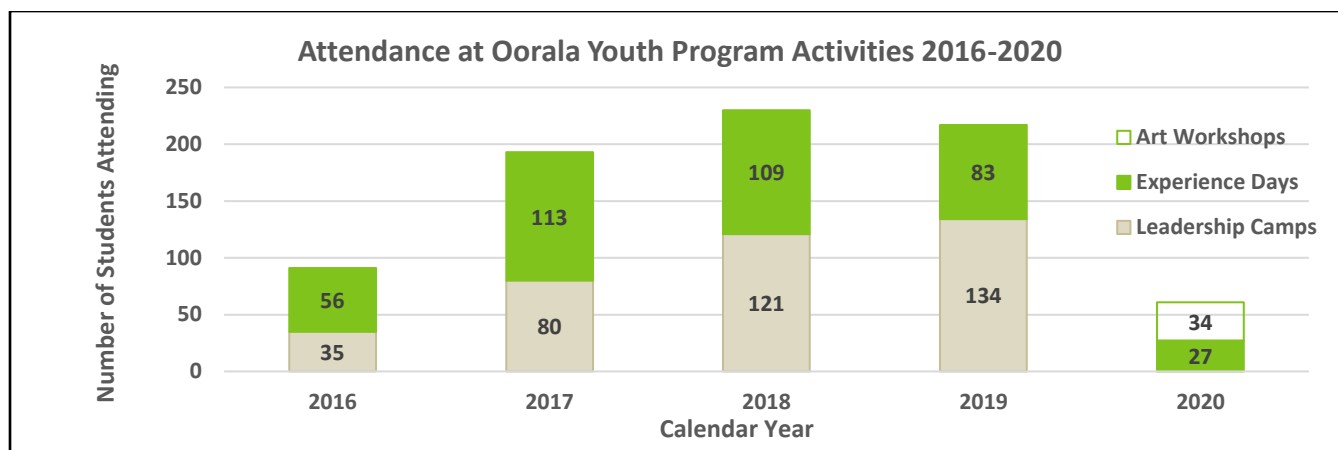
Notwithstanding this, and despite considerable effort by the University and its personnel to support local communities suffering the immediate effects of drought, bushfire and/or the dislocation brought about by COVID-19 restrictions, UNE's Indigenous community engagement activities were inevitably curtailed in 2020. The following sections report the nature and extent of the Indigenous community engagement and outreach undertaken by UNE during 2020 including any adaptations that were made, to accommodate changed circumstances. Section 1.6.1 details those UNE engagement activities that were funded in 2020 through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) to foster Indigenous participation in Higher Education. Section 1.6.2 details the initiatives undertaken in 2020 by UNE Partnerships (UNEP), the education and training company of the University of New England, to support Indigenous students and provide flexible higher education learning opportunities for ongoing career development. Table 7 then details the range of community outreach and engagement activities undertaken by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2020. Finally, Table 8 provides details of a further range of activities undertaken by other Schools and/or Directorates of the University to engage current and future Indigenous students and their associated communities.

1.6.1 Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP)

The Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) aims to ensure that Australians from low socio-economic (SES) backgrounds who have the ability to study at university have the opportunity to do so. The funding provided by the Federal Government assists universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds, as well as improving the retention and completion rates of those students. UNE has been running HEPPP projects, to assist students from low socio-economic backgrounds achieve, for more than eight years. The following two initiatives received HEPPP Funding in 2020.

The Oorala Youth Program: a program targeted specifically at improving the access and awareness of Indigenous students to higher education possibilities, has been one focus of UNE's HEPPP funded initiatives since 2016. During this time, it has engaged 792 Indigenous students from more than 28 High Schools, mostly within regional and remote NSW, in a range of UNE Experience Days and On-Campus Leadership Camps (Figure 1). In 2020, Nationwide restrictions on outreach activities due to COVID-19 affected the delivery of these predominately face-to-face programs from mid-March onwards. Hence, the Program pivoted towards the creation of a number of online student outreach and learning materials; and subsequently to the development of a dedicated Oorala Youth Program website from which platform a range of learning materials could be sourced by local and regional High Schools. As proof of concept 34 students were engaged in an online art program that was developed as a COVID-safe small group collaboration between two local Indigenous artists, Oorala Youth Program staff and a videographer. Similar collaborative arrangements enabled the development of online learning materials relating to traditional weaving, studying law and environmental sciences. In addition 58 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls benefited from the introduction of Yarn-Up-Zoom sessions by the Oorala Youth Program Team. These Zoom sessions included Virtual Tours of the UNE Campus, information about scholarships, student support and academic study skills.

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics data for the 2016 Census indicates that the regional SEDs of Barwon (12751, 18%), Dubbo (10096, 14%), Tamworth (8098 12%) and the Northern Tablelands (7638, 11%) are those four SEDs within NSW with the greatest numbers and percentages of Aboriginal persons resident within them.



Source: Oorala Aboriginal Centre

Figure 1: Indigenous High School Student Attendance at Oorala Youth Program Activities 2016-2020.

KRUKI: In early 2020, the School of Rural medicine received HEPPP funding to deliver ‘KRUKI’, an Outreach Program aimed at inspiring Indigenous students to consider a career in medicine for the fifth consecutive year. Due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on this program it also could not be held in the usual on-campus format. Instead, a virtual experience was developed for distribution to schools and other stakeholders to promote a career in medicine.

1.6.2 UNE Partnerships

UNE Partnerships has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations to enrol 120 students in qualifications ranging from AQF Level 3 to AQF Level 6 over the year to 31 Dec 2020. Most of these students have come through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services (ATSICCHS), reflecting the willingness of UNE Partnerships to collaborate with peak Indigenous bodies in the Health Sector and respond to the education needs of local Indigenous Communities. Three effective collaborations between UNE Partnerships and Indigenous peak bodies that are producing positive educational outcomes for Indigenous community members include:

1. **Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC):** Since 2008, UNE Partnerships has worked with the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council to assist them in their commitment to develop and support the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector in Queensland. In particular, UNE Partnerships customised the Certificate III in Business Administration (Medical) to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services in Queensland. Now in its 14th year of delivery this customised course continues to empower Indigenous people who are entering the workforce to establish an identity in their community and a career in health. The program delivers a very high completion rate of 78%, with 75% of students who have completed the course still employed within the Queensland ATSICCHS Sector. Some 50% of graduates remaining in this sector have in fact progressed to other roles including: Chronic disease Coordinator & Team lead; Health Clinic/Practice Manager; Health Worker (Hearing Program); Medicare clerk; Finance Administration Officer; Allied Health Services Coordinator; Child & Wellbeing Administration, Indigenous Outreach worker and Senior Medical receptionist. To further support the career progression of these individuals, UNE Partnerships and QAIHC have collaborated on a Diploma Level Course.
2. **Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Traineeship Program:** During the last quarter of 2019, UNE Partnerships collaborated with 13 ATSICCHS organisations to apply for a grant under the Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Traineeship Program. UNE Partnerships approached organisations listed in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Northern Territory to offer training services and help with grant applications. UNE Partnerships has commenced delivery of blended programs incorporating online study, workshops and coaching to some 40 students from four states in the following qualifications:
 - Certificate III in Business Administration (Medical);
 - Certificate IV in Leadership and Management;
 - Diploma of Leadership and Management; and the
 - Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management

The program has continued throughout 2020 despite the impact of COVID-19, as UNE Partnerships was agile and able to move quickly to a blended webinar and coaching model, with mentors associated with the Oorala Aboriginal Centre also supporting participants in the program.

3. **The NSW Public Service Commission Graduate Program:** UNE Partnerships commenced a collaborative working relationship and partnership with the NSW Public Service Commission (NSW PSC) in November 2015 for the delivery of a bespoke, highly customised and contextualised Diploma of Government. This Diploma is designed as the formal learning component of the NSW Government Graduate Program, and the entry point for graduate recruits to the public service. NSW PSC introduced an 18-month whole of government program to attract and retain talented graduates with the potential to become future leaders in the NSW public sector. Throughout the 18-month program, graduates acquire a strong set of practical, work-based skills aligned mapped to the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework and to the

Diploma of Government qualification, as well as meeting all capabilities at the Clerk Grade ¾ level. During the past 6 years, a variable portion each year of the graduates have been Aboriginal, with 11 of the 150 2021 cohort identifying as Aboriginal.

UNE partnerships also offers two scholarships annually through alliances with the Australian Association of Practice Management and the Facilities Management Association of Australia. Both scholarships are designated for Indigenous applicants.

Table 7: Indigenous Student Support and Community Outreach Activities provided by the UNE Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2020.

Activity	No of Students/Participants
A. Oorala Aboriginal Centre Activities fully funded by ISSP in 2020	
1. Elder in Residence – 2020 Academic Year Mr Colin Ahoy, Senior.	The Elder in Residence at the Oorala Aboriginal Centre provides Indigenous leadership, cultural advice and pastoral support to the entire University Community. All 945 Indigenous students enrolled at UNE benefit from the wide-ranging engagement of the Elder in Residence in University life and decision making including through participation on the UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee, the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group; the Oorala Aboriginal Centre's Management Committee and the Indigenous Scholarship Committee. He also plays a key role in formal academic ceremonies such as graduation and University cultural celebrations such as NAIDOC Week, as well as School and Faculty academic functions including Conferences and Lecture Series where he frequently provides a formal Welcome to Country. Moreover, the Elder in Residence provides personal one on-one advice and cultural support to Indigenous staff and students across the University; and sets the tone for positive local community involvement in the life of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre and the University.
2. T1 Orientation CommUNE: - 23 February 2020 An orientation "block party" occurred at UNE on Sunday, February 23 from 3 to 7 pm bringing University staff and students together with the wider Armidale community. The event featured food stalls, live music, theatre sports and Science displays as well as family friendly entertainment including giant games and carnival rides. A Welcome to Country by UNE Elder in Residence, Uncle Colin Ahoy opened the event followed by a smoking ceremony facilitated by Colin Ahoy Jr.	The Oorala Aboriginal Centre opened its door and hosted painting, face painting, weaving and didgeridoo playing activities for families and children. The Indigenous Student Association also hosted a fund raising BBQ at Oorala as part of the activities. Some 300 people attended this event and most visited the Oorala Centre to partake in activities, enjoy the BBQ and gain information about the Centre and its support for Indigenous students.
3. T1 Orientation Welcome Day – 24 February 2020 On Campus: The Oorala Aboriginal Centre hosted a BBQ brunch for all On Campus commencing and continuing students to welcome them to UNE and the Centre. Local Aboriginal community members and Elders provided a welcome to Country to students. Online: The Student Experience Team worked with UNE online to deliver presentations via Moodle. Each presentation was live streamed and recorded as well as being posted online allowing maximum engagement with commencing students. Both online and on-campus commencing students received an Oorala welcome pack	30 On-Campus students attended this Welcome Breakfast. + 945 Indigenous students were provided with the opportunity to engage in the Welcome activities Online. The Welcome was available online for all Indigenous students at UNE to be a part of:
4. T1 Orientation Lifesaver Day – 25 February, 2020 The Oorala Student Experience Team staffed an information stall at this annual all-day UNE Orientation activity. The stall provided information to On-campus students about the Oorala Aboriginal Centre, its Student Experience Team, its Academic staff and Programs as well as the academic and wellbeing support available at UNE for the for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	This On-Campus outreach activity enables Oorala to interact with both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students in a mainstream Orientation activity. This assists in ensuring that Oorala is seen as being both a familiar and integral part of the broader UNE Community. It is typical that 1000+ On Campus students take part in Lifesaver Day; and typically Oorala has between 30 to 50 separate engagements with Indigenous students on the day.
5. Indigenous Graduate Recognition and Acknowledgement – May, August and December 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, UNE held no On-Campus graduation ceremonies and no Indigenous student sashing ceremonies in 2020. Nevertheless, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre, and the wider University, acknowledged our student success via various social media and video platforms in three major graduation periods.	May – Congratulatory post on Oorala Facebook page that featured all the names and awards of the graduands reached 1.7K audience with 115 engagements. Further, three Individual graduand stories: were created: Story 1: Facebook - 2.1k reach with 368 engagements; Story 2: Facebook - 2K reach with 99 engagements; Story 3 UNE media feature + Facebook 901 reach with 67 engagements. August – Created a video in which the Acting Director congratulated all the graduands, speaking each name and award. This was hosted on the Oorala YouTube Channel with 48 views recorded, as well as being posted to Facebook (with 275 audience reach and 17 engagements). A further Individual graduand was also posted to Facebook story: 419 reach with 59 engagements. December – created a video featuring all Oorala staff congratulating all the graduands, each name and award spoken by individuals. Hosted on YouTube with 112 views recorded and posted on Facebook with 449 reach and 53 engagements. Individual stories: story 1 1.9K reach with 374 engagements; story 2 703 reach and 99 engagements; story 3 3.1K reach and 288 engagements.
6. Oorala Community T-Shirt Competition – Throughout Trimester 2 2020 Oorala established the inaugural community T-Shirt design competition. The competition targeted Indigenous artists with a connection to the University or Oorala to submit their designs. The winning design came from former student and Armidale artist, Anthony Strong. Once produced the T-Shirts will be available for sale to students, staff and community at cost price.	370 participants were involved in the activity including students, staff and local Aboriginal community members who participated in either the design competition or the selection of the winning design component of the activity.
7. Future Student Engagement	The Oorala Student Engagement Team gave a number of presentation to approximately 95 Indigenous High Schools

	throughout the New England North West during the initial period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of these was to provide students with information about the Centre, its programs and the cultural and academic supports available to students.
8. Digital and Social Media Platforms – Throughout 2020	<p>In 2020, Oorala continued to enhance its online and digital presence in order to aid outreach. A key strategy was to focus on using these media to tell stories (especially student stories) rather than provide information and advice to students alone. In implementing this strategy we did the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed more stories on both the Oorala and UNE Facebook sites and created more Facebook events to enhance our reach to the wider community. Employed an Indigenous third year media and communications student on a casual basis to photograph, interview and write many of the stories. Further improved our relationship with UNE Media and provided them strong student-centred storylines that were taken up and reported in the general UNE media, and prepared for release across the wider region. <p>This was a successful strategy as our student centred stories consistently attracted a reach of more than 1K and (with some individual stories having a reach in excess of 4.5K) and larger overall engagement than we had previously achieved. Oorala also partnered with UNE Marketing and Public Affairs to link to the full UNE Facebook for major corporate events. This increased our overall reach to some 34,000 followers.</p>
9. Local Indigenous Community Sponsorship and Awards – Throughout 2020	<p>Oorala provided Sponsorship to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern Nation Football Club. The local NARWAN EELS Rugby League Club. Oorala also provided a number of end of year academic encouragement and achievement awards to Indigenous students attending local Primary and Secondary Schools throughout Armidale.
B. Oorala Aboriginal Centre Activities Part Funded by ISSP in 2020	
10. Steam Dreaming: Celebrating New England's Innovation and Indigenous Cultures – 21 February 2020.	As part of the Oorala Research Seminar Series, and in collaboration with 'Steam Dreaming', The Oorala Aboriginal Centre hosted an evening on 'Sandtalk' & Indigenous Astronomy with Dr Tyson Yunkaporta & Auntie Veronica Perrurle Dobson. A Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony began the evening with more than 50 people in attendance at this event.
11. NAIDOC – 'Always was, Always Will Be' – Community Acknowledgement Video – July 2020.	COVID 19 led to the indefinite postponement of NAIDOC Week by the National NAIDOC Week Committee in March 2020. To mark the week of its usual occurrence Oorala created a community video. Rose Lovelock, Director of the Armidale and Regional Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place (ARACCKP) and other members of the local Aboriginal community featuring. This Video was uploaded to the Oorala YouTube Channel, the Oorala website, and Oorala Facebook page as well as to the local Anaiwan Community Site within the <i>Storylines</i> online platform.
12. The Frank Archibald Memorial Lecture – 25 October 2020 UNE and the Oorala Aboriginal Centre has hosted this annual lecture - named in honour of Mr Frank Archibald a revered local Aboriginal community member - since 1986. Mr Archibald was renowned for his knowledge and interest in all issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly education and the annual lecture is dedicated to him, his family and Aboriginal people of the New England region. Each year the Lecture is delivered by an invited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speaker who is a leading professional in fields such as education, law, social justice, government and the arts.	The Oorala Aboriginal Centre and UNE hosted an online webinar for the 2020 Frank Archibald Memorial Lecture. Prof. Michelle Trudgett, Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation at Western Sydney University presented her speech entitled 'Cementing Indigenous leadership in higher education' from the UNE Sydney campus in Parramatta. As a distinguished Alumni of UNE ⁴ it was a particularly special occasion for UNE to host Professor Trudgett. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, a local Community screening was held simultaneously at the (ARACCKP) for a small gathering of Archibald family members and other invited guests. Staff located at the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in Armidale facilitated the following online question and answer session.
13. NAIDOC – 'Always was, Always Will Be' – UNE Flag Raising Ceremony – 10 November 2020. "Indigenous People have never ceded responsibility and custodianship for Country and we will keep taking responsibility for caring, crying, singing, learning, acting, speaking and thinking of Country, on or off Country." (Donna Moodie, November 10, 2020) ⁵ .	In line with the National NAIDOC Committee decision to hold its annual week of celebrations in November 2020, and with an easing of COVID-19 restrictions on large gatherings, UNE formally acknowledged NAIDOC week with a flag raising and smoking ceremony on the lawns of Booloominbah. Guest speakers at the Flag Raising Ceremony were Donna Moodie, a Gomeroi woman and Lecturer in Contextual Studies in the School of Education, and Mr Colin Ahoy Junior a local Anaiwan man and undergraduate student

⁴ <https://www.une.edu.au/alumni/alumni-of-distinction-and-award-winners/alumni-award-recipients/2019-alumni-award-winners/michelle-trudgett>

⁵ <https://www.une.edu.au/info-for/indigenous-matters/oorala/whats-on/naidoc/naidoc-2020>

	<p>in archaeology at UNE. A young Indigenous male dance group, the Gogan dancers also performed at the ceremony.</p> <p>150 people from across the University attended this event. After the main Ceremony, a number of Indigenous staff, as well as the Gogan dancers, attended an outdoor luncheon on the University Graduate Walk.</p>
C. Oorala Aboriginal Centre Activities NOT FUNDED BY ISSP in 2020	
<p>14. TRACKS Pre-Orientation Program (POP) – February, 2020 POP is usually run On-campus prior to each Trimester for new students commencing in the TRACKS program. We seek to orient the students to study, in particular the online learning environment. Continuing students also attend and are given specific opportunities to prepare for studying their undergraduate unit, which forms part of the TRACKS program.</p>	<p>6 Tracks students attended the 2-day program in February 2020. During the COVID Restriction period students were also directed to UNE101 an online Moodle resource created by Student Success to assist students orient themselves to the online study environment.</p>
<p>15. Oorala Youth Program—throughout 2020 (refer to Section 1.6.1 above for further details)</p>	<p>92 students were engaged in online learning activities including Art Workshops and Yarn-Up Zoom sessions.</p>
<p>16. Indigenous Scholar/TRACKS Peer Support Program – throughout 2020 Initially a HEPPP funded project this Peer Support Program is now part of the 'business as usual' activities of the Academic Programs Team at Oorala. The Program identifies and recognises UNE's high achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and links them with students in the TRACKS Tertiary Preparation Program. Student mentors share their valuable knowledge and experiences of successful study, and provide relatable points of reference/inspiration to beginning students.</p>	<p>4 On-Campus students participated in this initiative as Scholars in 2020. Scholars attended the Tracks Pre-Orientation Program to in February and undertook a mentor development day facilitated by educational expert Dr Kate Bricknell where they developed mentoring skills in readiness to assist and support first year Tracks students in their learning journey. Through face-to-face and online modalities these Scholars interacted with all students enrolled in the Tracks Program in T2.</p>
<p>17. Miroma Bunbilla Program – December 2020 This is a week-long pre entry orientation and assessment program host by UoN in collaboration with UNE as an alternate Indigenous pathway into the Joint Medical Program.</p>	<p>In 2020 Miroma Bunbilla was facilitated as a small group activity via online technology in a number of regional locations. Approximately 50 Indigenous students participated in the activity and 7 of these successfully transitioned to the JMP Program at UNE. Oorala staff participated in the Program at Moree and Tamworth.</p>
D. TOTAL ISSP Expenditure = Costs (A +B) only	
<p>= A (\$ Full Cost Activities 1-9 above) + B (\$ Part Cost Activities 14-17 above) only</p>	
\$203,212.00	

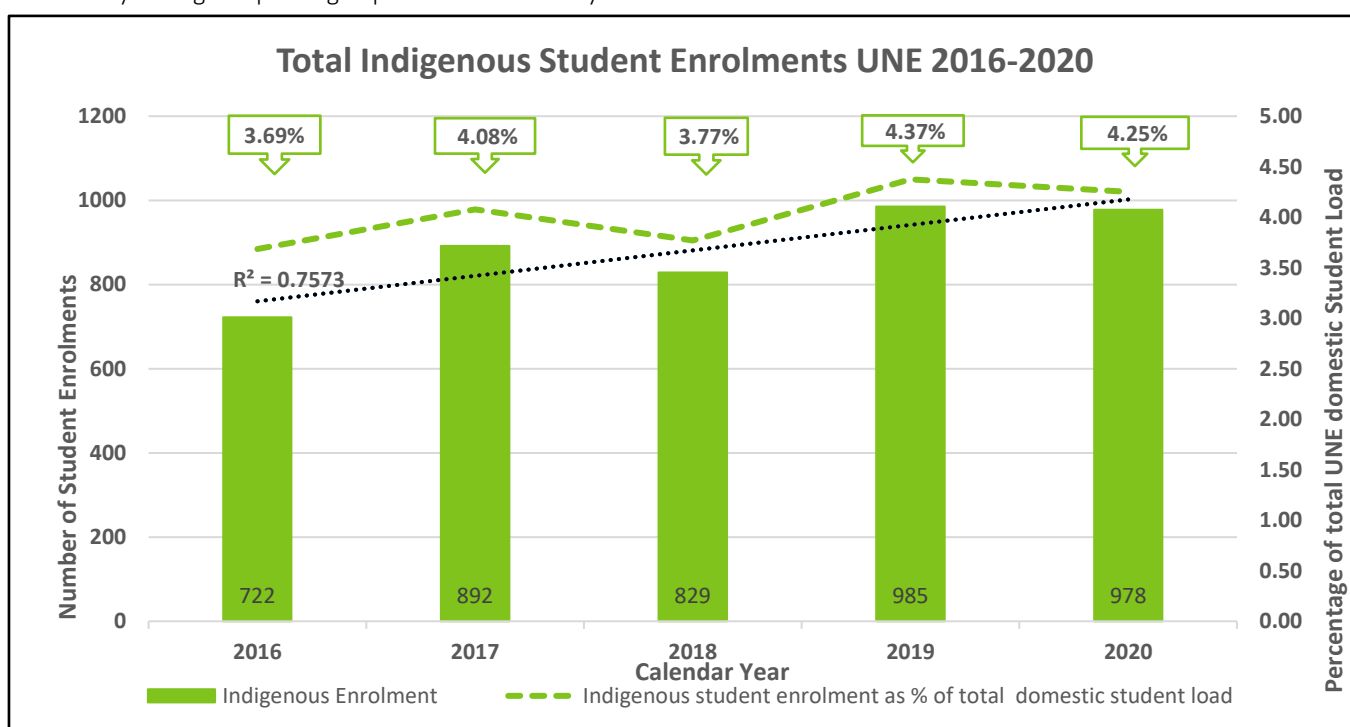
Table 8: Summary of additional Indigenous Community Engagement and Outreach Activities of UNE in 2020.

ACTIVITY	ENGAGEMENT- OUTREACH (Summary/Highlight)
1. Coledale Health and Education Clinic, Tamworth: – throughout 2020.	The Coledale Health and Education Clinic is a Clinic offering GP and Health Education to the Indigenous community of Coledale (West Tamworth) and surrounding areas. It is operated by the Walhallow Aboriginal Corporation, in partnership with the School of Health at UNE. In addition to providing health services to the local Aboriginal community, the Clinic also hosts Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from the School of Health during practical placements. This facilitates the development of cross-cultural communication skills for UNE's nursing and allied health graduates; and provides a learning environment that assists UNE students develop the cultural competence to work with and for Indigenous Australians upon graduation.
2. UNE Commission of choral work to celebrate inaugural RAP – September to December 2020	Combining European and Indigenous knowledges and traditions, UNE music lecturer and composer Dr Paul Smith and oral historian and multimedia artist Dr Lorina Barker are developing the creative work with input from Aboriginal community Elders from Bourke
3. UNE Repatriation Ceremony – February 2020	Indigenous ancestral remains housed in the Cultural Collections of the University of New England (UNE) were given back to Elders of the Dughutti Nation for later internment on their ancestral grounds. Approximately 250 people including: members of the University Executive, staff from the Oorala Aboriginal Centre, other Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff from the wider University, guests from the NSW Office of Heritage, Local Anaiwan Elders, other Aboriginal Community members and invited Dughutti Elders were in attendance.
3. Literacy for Life Foundation: – throughout 2020.	With as many as 50% of Indigenous young people and adults in rural communities having only minimal English language literacy (Level One or below on the Australian Cores Skills Framework), this work is an essential first step to building a larger cohort of students in future generations able to enter university. In 2020, UNE supported the campaign via Research and Evaluation of Adult literacy campaigns in Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities.

1.7 INDIGENOUS STUDENT ENROLMENT NUMBERS AND EQUIVALENT FULL TIME STUDENT LOADS (EFTSL).

1.7.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enrolments 2020

In 2020 there were 945 Indigenous students attending UNE with 978 corresponding Indigenous course enrolments. This number is above the mean Indigenous student enrolment ($n=881$) experienced at UNE during the period 2015-2020, and therefore remains consistent with the sustained upward trend in Indigenous student enrolments experienced at UNE for much of the last decade (Figure 2). Likewise, Indigenous students accounted for 4.25% of all domestic student enrolments at UNE in 2020. This represents a total Indigenous student population at UNE above parity with respect to the proportion of Indigenous people (2.9%)⁶ in the wider Australian population. Furthermore, despite the triple challenges of prolonged drought, catastrophic bushfires and the COVID-19 Pandemic variously impacting UNE throughout 2020, there occurred only a minimal (<0.7%) decline in total Indigenous student enrolments between 2019 and 2020. This is both testimony to the overall resilience of our Indigenous student body; and reflective of the commitment to Indigenous student support made by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre and the wider university community during this prolonged period of uncertainty.

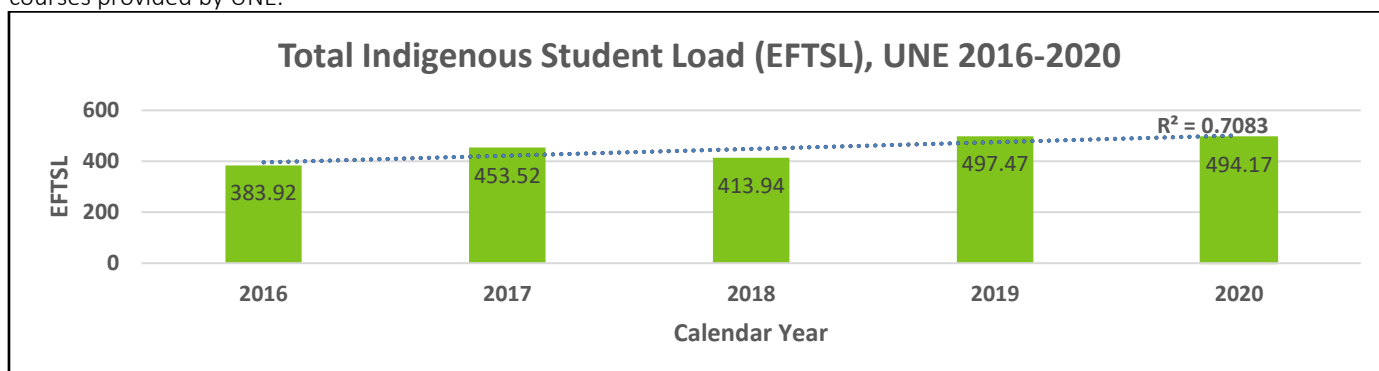


Source: Power BI Application - Course and Load Dashboard - prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit, accessed 26 March 2021.

Figure 2: Total Indigenous Student Enrolment at UNE for the period January 2016 to December 2020.

1.7.2 Total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Load 2020

At UNE, the Indigenous share of total domestic student load has also maintained an upward trajectory in recent years (Figure 3). In 2016, the total EFTSL borne by Indigenous students was 383.92. By 2020, the total Indigenous student EFTSL was 494.17, a 28.9% increase in this five-year period. The total Indigenous EFTSL for the 2020 reporting year reflects a minimal (<0.7%) decline from the peak Indigenous EFTSL of 497.47 reported in 2019. This achievement of an Indigenous student EFTSL load of close to 500 in two consecutive reporting years, speaks to a growing steadfastness in Indigenous student interest and commitment to courses provided by UNE.



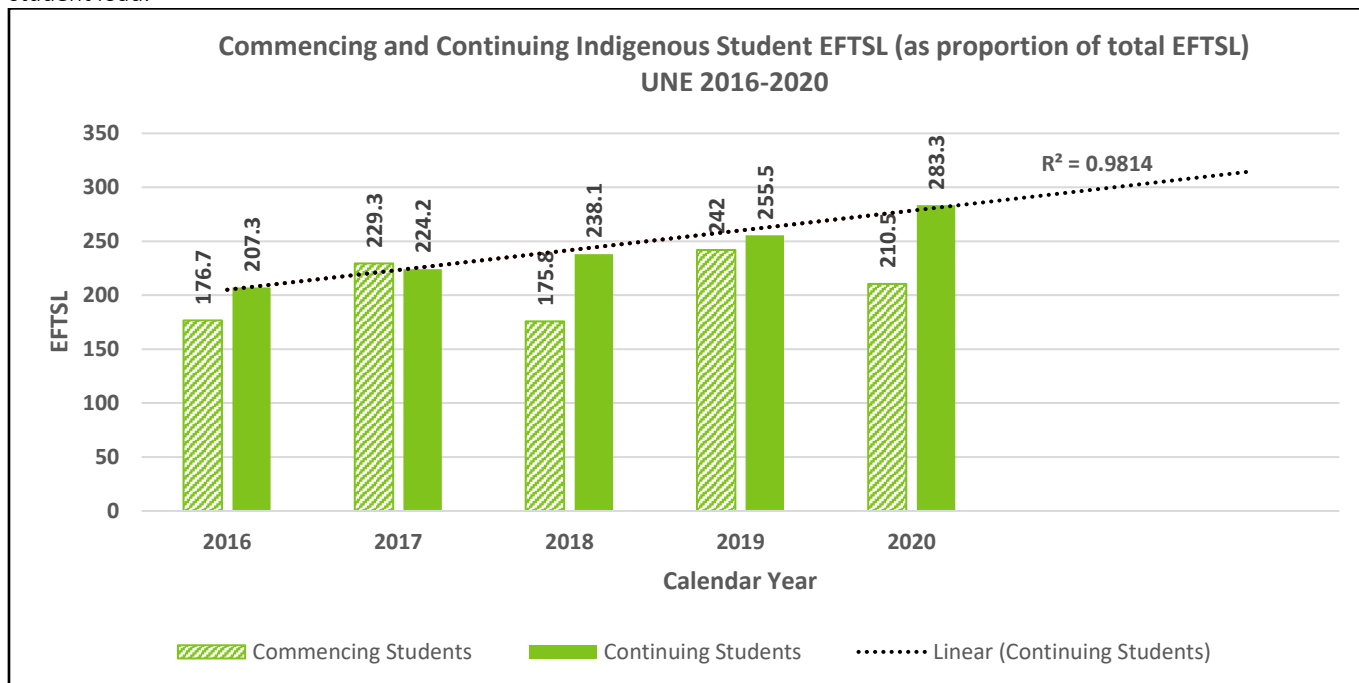
Source: Power BI Application - Course and Load Dashboard - prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit, accessed 26 March 2021.

Figure 3: Total Indigenous Student Load (EFTSL) at UNE for the period January 2016-December 2020

⁶ ABS statistics, 2016.

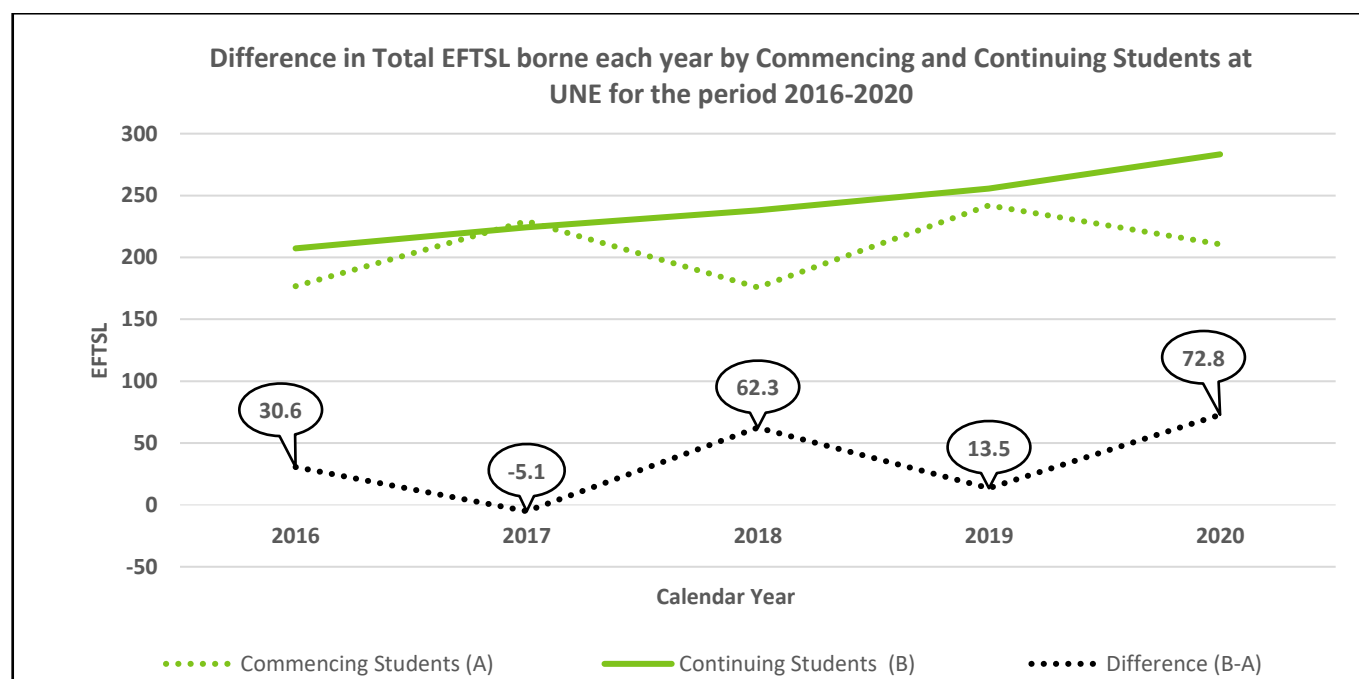
1.7.3 Commencing and Continuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Trends 2016-2020

The raw EFTSL borne by Indigenous students commencing at UNE has remained above 175 for the five-year period 2016-2020. However, during this time it has fluctuated year on year, with no clear linear trend discernable. In contrast, the proportion of raw EFTSL borne by continuing Indigenous students at UNE has trended strongly upwards, rising from 207.3 to 283.3 EFTSL (or by 37%), during the same five-year period (Figure 4). Moreover, the raw difference between the total EFTSL attributable to Indigenous students who continued their studies and those who commenced study in 2020 was 72.8 EFTSL, a difference more than 5 times the equivalent measure of 13.5 EFTSL in 2019 (Figure 5). It seems clear, therefore, that the minimal (0.7%) decline in total Indigenous EFTSL at UNE in 2020 (see 1.7.2 above) directly results from a substantial increase in continuing student load.



Source: Power BI Application - Course and Load Dashboard - prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit, accessed 26 March 2021.

Figure 4: Commencing and Continuing Indigenous Student EFTSL as proportion of Total Indigenous EFTSL at UNE for the period 2016-2020.



Source: Power BI Application - Course and Load Dashboard - prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit, accessed 26 March 2021.

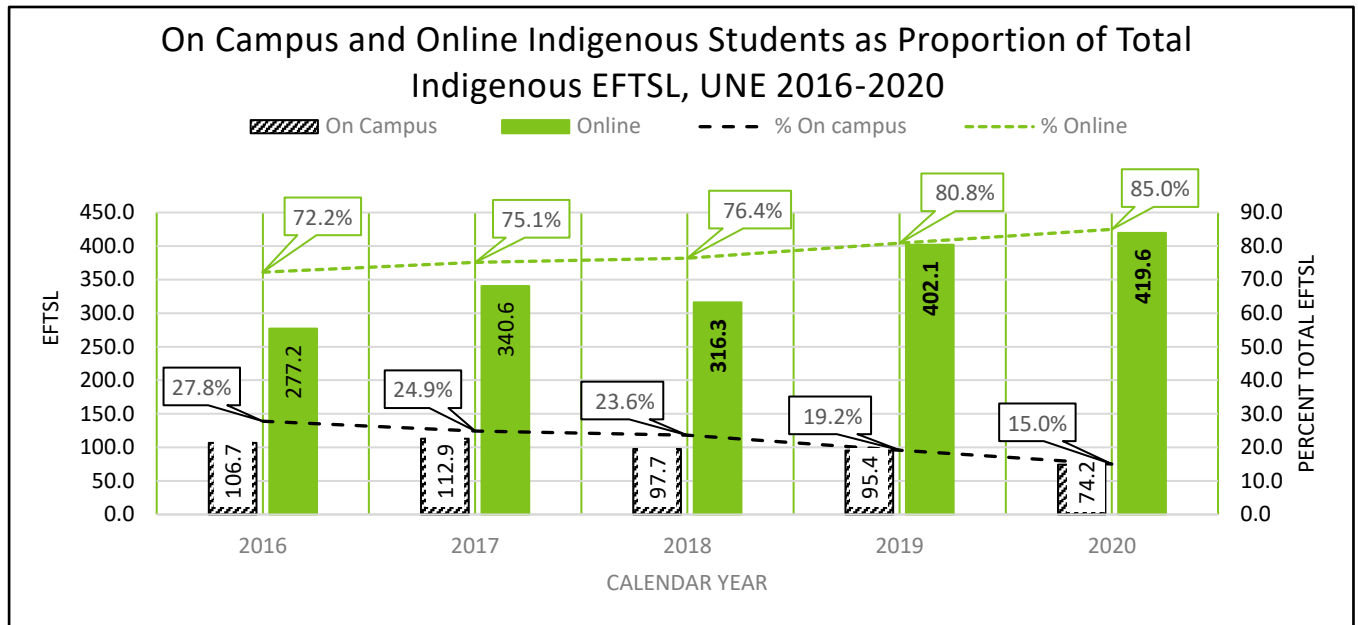
Figure 5: Difference in Total EFTSL borne each year by Commencing and Continuing Indigenous Students at UNE for the period 2016-2020.

1.7.4 On-Campus versus Off-Campus/Online Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Cohorts 2016-2020

The proportion of Indigenous students who choose to study units Online at UNE has risen by 8.6 % in the period 2018-to 2020 reflecting an increasing upward trajectory for student uptake of online study that has prevailed for the past decade (Figure 6). For both 2019 and 2020, more than eighty percent of our Indigenous students studied online (Figure 6). This positive uptake of online modes of study demonstrates the fact that the Indigenous student cohort at UNE is responsive to:

- a. the accessibility of UNE's courses and their modes of delivery, [which is itself built on UNE's long standing commitment to Distance Education]; and
- b. UNE's continuing innovation(s) in online teaching and learning; as well as to UNE's commitment to enhanced flexibility in course delivery and design.

It further suggests that the increased communication and pastoral support measures developed as part of Oorala's Integrated Student Engagement Plan, and the additional adjustments made in light of COVID-19 disruptions, were well placed to support the needs of current students during this crisis period.



Source: Power BI Application - Course and Load Dashboard - prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit, accessed 26 March 2021.

Figure 6: On Campus and Online Indigenous Student Study Load as proportion of total Indigenous EFTSL, UNE 2016-2020.

2. PROGRESSION (ACCESS AND OUTCOMES)

2.1 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED STUDENT SUCCESS RATES AND RETENTION

2.1.1 Integrated Student Engagement and COVID-19 Adaptation

Oorala has continued to embed and systematise a pro-active model of student engagement. Key to this has been the continued enhancement of communication and support measures to enable the effective delivery of timely, culturally appropriate, and sustained academic and pastoral support to the total Indigenous student cohort at UNE. A major focus of the Centre's current work involves providing support for the majority of our Indigenous students who study online (See Section 1.7.4) and who are from regional and remote locations (see Section 4.2).

The provision of direct online study support for our Indigenous students became critical from March 2020 as COVID restrictions led UNE to transition all teaching and assessment to completely online modes of delivery. At the same time, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre was closed to all students and all staff commenced working from home. An immediate priority of the Oorala Student Engagement Team was to pivot their support practices to assist On Campus students who found themselves without access to the Oorala Study Lab or any on Campus facilities where computers, printers and associated IT could be used. Likewise, we had a critical need to also assist a number of students studying online who were unable to access public facilities such as libraries and/or community technology hubs to meet their internet and IT needs. A number of actions were taken by Oorala to assist all Indigenous students at UNE during this crisis period including:

- Providing a number of laptops on loan for student use in circumstances where students both On Campus and Online found themselves without access to Computers;
- Facilitating internet access for student either by loaning internet dongles to locally based students and/or purchasing WIFI systems plus providing initial 6 month coverage of this system;
- Assisting students to withdraw from studies in light of their changed circumstance, including alerting them to any new UNE policy relating to the conversion of grades where applicable; and providing advice around remission of fees. This advice was required by a considerable number of our students as either the requirements for homeschooling and/or the loss of a job due to COVID-19 meant that their study was unsustainable.
- Working collaboratively with the Student Success Team to adjust the Oorala orientation program such that it was delivered completely online via the UNE 101 Moodle site but with Oorala hosting our own presentation and providing other live and recorded materials.
- Working to celebrate the success of our Indigenous graduates at a time when there was no possibility for graduation ceremonies to occur. Oorala maintained our provision of congratulatory packs comprised of a gift from Oorala, a card as well as an embroidered graduation sash. These packs were posted to all eligible graduates during each scheduled graduation period.

In addition to these COVID-19 adaptations to our usual support for Indigenous students, we also maintained our standard business practices and focused where possible on projects designed to improve the retention of our student cohort. Summary outlines of key business practices and/or projects that were either operational or expected in 2020 are provided in the following sections

2.1.1a UNE's Student Relationship Management System (SRM)

All Oorala staff are trained in the use of UNE's SRM with frontline student engagement officers using the system on a daily basis to interact with students. In 2020, members of Oorala's Student Engagement Team recorded 3339 incidents of student-staff interaction on SRM for the calendar year. These interactions include students seeking information, advice and/or referral to another service at UNE but also include proactive interactions of Oorala staff with students to facilitate student progression and support wellbeing (see 2.1.1b and 2.1.1c). A key effect of the sustained use of SRM by Oorala is that there is increased continuity and accountability in our engagement with students meaning we are able to respond to, and address, student issues more efficiently. This increased efficiency has been especially important in Oorala's efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on our regional and remote students studying online.

2.1.1b Personal Retention and Engagement Program (PREP)

As part of the Personal Retention and Engagement Program (PREP) operated by the centralised Student Success Team at UNE, Student Advisors contact every student commencing undergraduate and postgraduate coursework in a particular teaching period. The preferred method of contact is by phone to best ensure a 'personalised' transition to study. Advisors assist each student to 'create their own toolbox' to aid their transition into university study. Based on the individual enrolment profile of each student a tailored 'Personalised Transition Plan' is then sent to the student via email. By doing this, UNE facilitates positive early engagement with the University, its systems (especially the UNE 'Moodle' Learning Management System (LMS) portal and the online orientation unit UNE101) and procedures; as well as the practicalities needed for university study such as time management, work-study-life balance and support contacts. These factors have been shown to impact positively on student experience and persistence and to be a key factor in student success, especially insofar as students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds are concerned.

As the PREP program has a proven effect on improving retention across the commencing student population, in 2020 Oorala worked closely with the UNE Student Success Team to introduce a PREP program specifically designed for indigenous students. A key feature of the Oorala PREP program was the introduction of culturally capable Indigenous Student Advisors that understood the life experiences of Indigenous students. The PREP program at Oorala seeks to link students with appropriate programs to foster readiness for university study and social supports for their transition into the role of student. The program served to further embed a “whole-of-university” approach to the support of Indigenous students and allowed the Oorala Aboriginal Centre to more effectively provide additional services. Oorala continues to offer this program to its students in 2021.

2.1.1c. Online Learning Live – Stage 3 of the Alternate Indigenous Student Pathways Review Project (Oorala –PRP)

The Online Learning Live Project represents the third and final stage of the Alternate Indigenous Student Pathways Review Project (Oorala-PRP) commenced by the Oorala Centre in 2017. Stage 3 of the Oorala PRP specifically actions improvements to the Online Learning Environment for Indigenous students at UNE; including fostering a community of practice, and the provision of online resources that offer ‘whole of student lifecycle’ support for our students. Deliverables for this Project include:

- The development of a suite of culturally appropriate ‘how to’ videos’ for academic skills support; as well as student testimonials to enhance the online pre-access space for our future students.
- The design and implementation of an online ‘study ready’ self-assessment tool; and
- The physical update and renewal of the Oorala Moodle site (The Hub).

In December 2019, ISSP Grant rollover funding was approved to fully complete this Project in 2020. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, Oorala staff had to work off-campus from late March 2020 onwards, only returning to campus in the first week of September. This meant that project elements were not fully realised in 2020. For example, without access to campus and/or students during COVID-19 Restriction periods, the development of a suite of culturally appropriate videos progressed more slowly than anticipated. Up to December 2020 the project team was able to complete four (of six) Student Testimonial videos and two (of six) ‘How to’ Videos. Likewise, the online Oorala Study Ready Tool was 80% complete at years end with delays to the project resulting from the increase in workload of staff as COVID-19 restrictions - including the cessation of on-campus teaching – necessitated that additional urgent and ongoing academic and pastoral support be provided to our Indigenous students. Stage 3 of the Oorala PRP will be completed in 2021. This will coincide with the completion of a synthesis report that will showcase the methods, outcomes and learnings from the full PRP Project Stage 1 to 3 and guide ongoing improvement of the access pathways for Indigenous students at UNE.

2.1.1d.Improving Indigenous Success at UNE.

This Project is focused on the analysis of historical Indigenous student data and supplementary student survey in order to establish a detailed evidence-based profile of the Indigenous student cohort at UNE, with a particular focus being on the clearer characterisation of the barriers and enablers to Indigenous student completions at UNE. Data analysis for this Project was initially expected to commence in the first half of 2020. However, as noted elsewhere, COVID restrictions required all teaching and assessment at UNE to be transitioned online. This placed significant and immediate operational demand on UNE’s IT and data support personnel to ensure continuity of student learning during this time. This meant there were unforeseen time delays experienced in obtaining the historical Indigenous student data sets required for this study. The data necessary for this project was secured in the latter half of September 2020 and initial student survey design were undertaken prior to years end. The project continues and is expected to be finalised by June 30 2021.

2.1.1e. Oorala Outdoor Learning Precinct -Stage 1 Concept Plan.

Envisaged as an extension and revitalisation to the existing Outdoor Precinct at the Oorala Aboriginal Centre, a draft Concept Plan will be prepared in collaboration with a number of stakeholders, including staff from UNE Estate and Built Environment, Indigenous students, Oorala and UNE staff and other Indigenous community members. The space will better support cultural and social practices at Oorala associated with yarning and interaction with community, and increase a sense of belonging for everyone who uses the space. With specific need to consult with community members and to do so in place, COVID-19 restrictions meant little movement on the Concept Plan could be achieved in 2020. Stakeholders Consultations have commenced in the first quarter of 2021.

2.2 STUDENT OUTCOMES - SUCCESS AND RETENTION

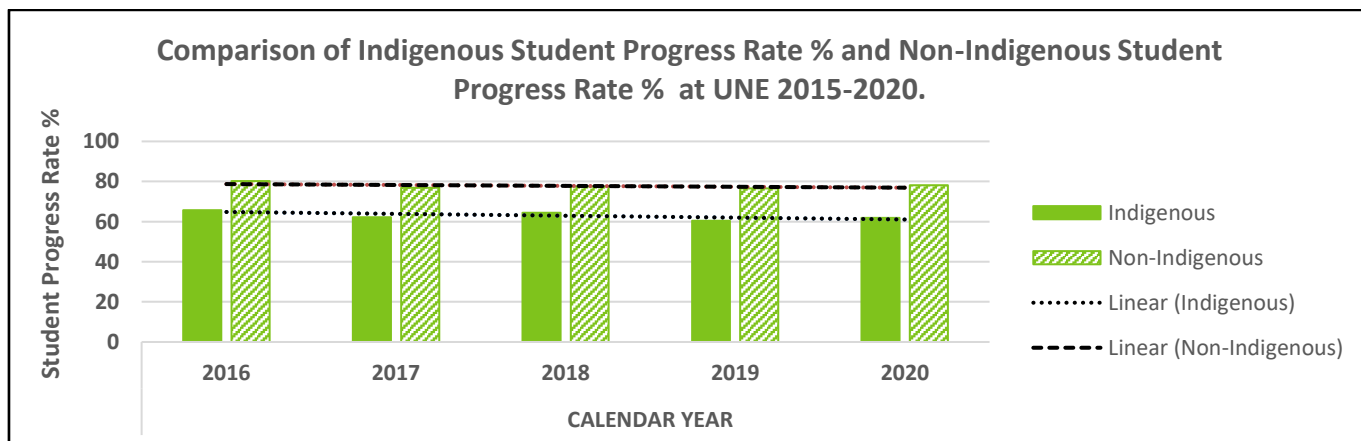
2.2.1 Student Progress Rate – Student Success

The Percent Student Success Rate [previously reported as the Student Progress Rate % (SPR%)] is a percentage measure of student cohort progression determined by dividing the Total EFTSL of Units passed by the total EFTSL of Units completed (i.e. includes pass, fail and withdrawn) within the calendar year. In 2020, the Percent Student Success Rate for Indigenous students at UNE was 61.9%, an increase of 1.4% over the previous calendar year (Table 9). The 5-year mean Percent Student Success Rate achieved by UNE's Indigenous cohort is 62.93% (Table 9). This means that, on average six out of every ten Indigenous students that enroll at UNE succeed in their chosen course of study (Figure 7). The ongoing challenge is to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student success since the success rate of Indigenous students at UNE remains, on average, some 15-percentage points lower than for our non-Indigenous students (Table 9, Figure 7). This gap in success rate between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students at UNE is the subject of the in-depth data analysis project commenced by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in late 2019 (and described further in Section 2.1.1c). It is noteworthy that the Student Progress Rate Index for undergraduate and post-graduate course work has trended above the mean Index for much of the last five years (Figure 8). It is therefore likely that critical aspects of the gap relate to the performance and success of our students in enabling and sub-degree programs.

Table 9: Comparison of the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Domestic Student Progress Rate Percent (SPR%) at UNE, 2016-2020.

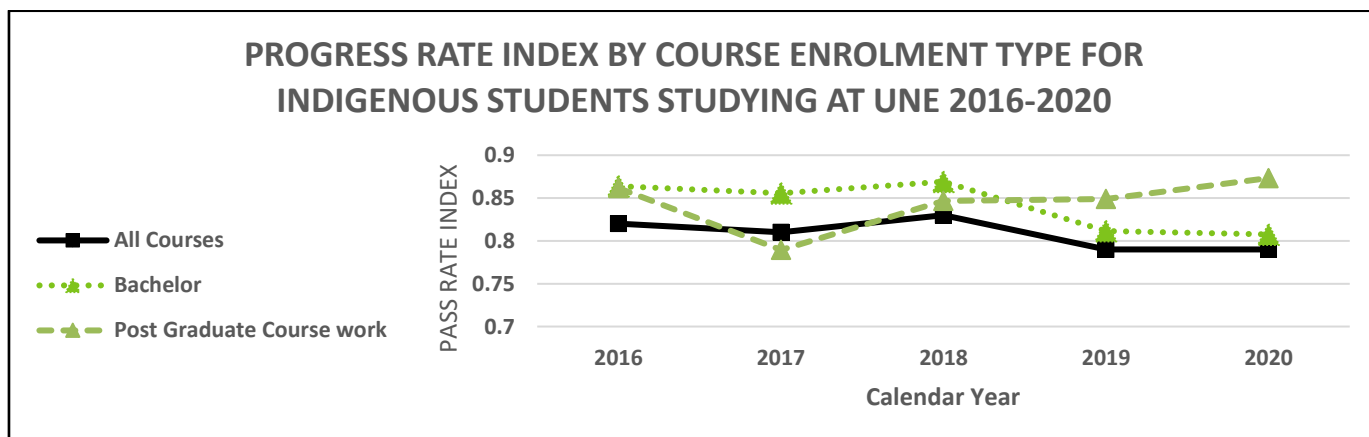
DOMESTIC STUDENTS ^a	CALENDAR YEAR					
Student Progress Rate%	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5 Year Mean
A. Indigenous	65.73	62.19	64.35	60.48	61.9	62.93
B. Non-Indigenous	80.21	76.8	77.44	76.55	78.1	77.82
Total	79.66	76.18	76.94	75.36	76.56	76.94
Index ^b	0.82	0.81	0.83	0.79	0.79	0.81
Difference (B-A)	14.48	14.61	13.09	16.07	16.2	14.89

^a Domestic students includes students with the following Citizenship /Visa status: Australian Citizens, NZ Citizens, permanent Humanitarian Visa and Permanent Resident Visa. ^b The Progress Rate Index is the ratio of the progress rate % for Indigenous students divided by the progress rate % for Non-Indigenous students. Source:



Source: UNE Business Intelligence Unit.

Figure 7: Comparison of Indigenous Student Progress Rate Percentage and Non-Indigenous Student Progress Rate Percentage at UNE (for the period 2015-2020).



Source: UNE Business Intelligence Unit.

Figure 8: Progress Rate Index by Course Enrolment Type for Indigenous Students studying at UNE 2016-2020.

2.3 TUTORIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

2.3.1 Targeted Tutorial Assistance Program

Table 10 provides a breakdown of the tutorial assistance provided to Indigenous students at UNE through the Oorala Targeted Tutorial Assistance (TTA) Program in 2020. Of the 945 Indigenous students enrolled at UNE in 2020, 171 (or 18.1%) received Tutorial assistance, equal to the percentage of students who applied and received tutorial assistance in 2019 (i.e. 175 of 967 students or 18.1%)⁷. Whilst maintaining the same percentage of students using the TTA program in 2020 as in the previous year, a key strategy to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on our Indigenous students was to increase the hours of tutorial assistance available to them; and to facilitate the move of face-to-face tutorials to online modes where necessary. Hence 6882.75 hours of tutorial assistance was accessed throughout 2020, an increase of 1517.75 hours on the previous year. On average, each student who availed themselves of Tutorial assistance in 2020 received 35 hours of assistance, approximately 10 hours more assistance per student than in 2019.

Table 10: Targeted Tutorial Assistance (TTA) provided (2020 breakdown).

Level of study	Number of students assisted		Hours of assistance	\$ Expenditure (\$)
Enabling	32		595.25	
Undergraduate	126		5986.5	1
Postgraduate	13		301	
Other				
Total	171		6,882.75	479,000.00

Source: Oorala Aboriginal Centre, Student Engagement Team.

2.4 SIZE OF THE OORALA ABORIGINAL CENTRE

UNE directs all ISSP grant funds it receives to the Oorala Aboriginal Centre where it is administered for the support of all Indigenous students. Likewise, HEPPP and teaching revenue continue to grow the Centre's ability to support Indigenous student success, as per our accompanying financial statement. For the 2020 calendar year, the Fulltime Equivalent staff load of Oorala was 24.93 comprised of 15.35 FTE Indigenous staff and 8.359.56 FTE non-Indigenous staff (See Table 11 below).

Table 11: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous staff employed in the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2020.

Oorala Employees	Total staff	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Number of Fulltime Equivalent staff	24.93	15.35	9.58
Staff Head Count (exc. Tutors)	23	15	8
Staff Head Count (Tutors only)	73	17	56
Total Head Count (all individuals employed in 2020)	96	34	64

Source: Oorala Aboriginal Centre.

2.5 CULTURAL COMPETENCE – CURRICULUM

2.5.1 Oorala Aboriginal Centre

As part of a UNE wide commitment to embed Indigenous content in the curriculum, and improve the cultural competency of its graduates, the Oorala Aboriginal Centre introduced three undergraduate and one postgraduate unit to its teaching Program in 2012. These "OORA" units have been incorporated into an increasing number of Discipline studies and Courses across UNE (See Tables 12 & 13). In particular, the School of Health has embedded 'OORA200 - Working with Aboriginal People' as a core unit of study in the Bachelor of Nursing, the Masters of Nursing Practice, and the Bachelor of Social Work. Likewise each of the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education (K to 6) and the Bachelor of Criminology Courses at UNE had 10 or more students enroll in this Unit in 2020. Overall, 561 students studying 26 separate UNE courses enrolled in this Unit in 2020. A further 37 students, enrolled across 6 separate courses undertook the parallel OORA400 Unit.

⁷ See data UNE 2019 ISSP Report p.31

Table 12: The units of study offered and administered by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre in 2016-2020.

Undergraduate Courses offered by Oorala Aboriginal Centre	Student Enrolment numbers/Calendar Year				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
OORA100 Aboriginal Resilience and the Arts	35	44	41	51	55
OORA200 Working with Aboriginal People	340	382	472	563	561
OORA300 Aboriginal Resilience and the Arts	5	12	19	23	27
OORA400 Working with Aboriginal People	5	5	13	8	37

Table 13: UNE Courses in which the Units of study offered by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre have been incorporated.

Table 10: ONE Courses in which the Units of Study offered by the Central Aboriginal Centre have been incorporated.			
OORA100	Core unit		Listed
	Bachelor of Music	TRACKS Tertiary Preparation Program Bachelor of Education (K-6 Teaching) Diploma in Music Skills Diploma in Professional Communication	
OORA200	Core	Prescribed	Listed
	Bachelor of Nursing (Rule (a) and (d); Rule (b), Rule (c)) Bachelor of Social Work Master of Nursing Practice	Advanced Diploma in Arts (Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business (Bachelor of Arts component – Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws (Bachelor of Arts component – Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (Bachelor of Arts component – Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Education (Primary) (Schedule 2 – Contextual Studies in Education; Rural and Remote Education and Indigenous Communities)	Bachelor of Audiometry (General Program) Bachelor of Criminology Bachelor of Criminology/Bachelor of Laws (Bachelor of Criminology component) Bachelor of Education (K-6 Teaching) (English; Language; Mathematics; Science and Technology) Bachelor of Educational Studies Bachelor of Social Science (Aboriginal Perspectives) Diploma in Business (Indigenous Organisation Management) <i>Diploma in Community Welfare and Wellbeing (General Program)</i> Diploma in Educational Studies Diploma in Professional Communication Graduate Certificate in Arts
OORA300	Listed		
	Advanced Diploma in Arts (Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts (Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business (Bachelor of Arts component – Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (Bachelor of Arts component – Indigenous Studies) Bachelor of Media and Communications (Media and Culture; Writing and Publishing) Bachelor of Social Science (Aboriginal Perspectives) Bachelor of Theatre and Performance Graduate Certificate in Arts Master of Arts (Theatre and Performance – Rule (a), (b))		
OORA400	Prescribed		Listed
	Master of Arts (Indigenous Studies – Rule (c))		Graduate Certificate in Arts (Theatre and Performance – Rule (a) and (b)) Master of Nursing Master of Nursing (General Program)

2.5.2 Faculty based measures to increase Indigenous content in the curriculum.

Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education (HASSE)

The Faculty of HASSE made progress on its commitment to the ‘implementation of collaborative Indigenous employment, education and research strategies’ throughout 2020. The Faculty provided ongoing support to School and Course based working parties on retention and course development. The Courses offered in both schools of the Faculty are recognised to include considerable Indigenous content, Nevertheless a review and systematic mapping of Indigenous content in the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (HASS) courses has proceeded to complement the work already completed by the School of Education courses through its external accreditation requirements.

School of Education: In the School of Education, all Course and Unit Coordinators are invited to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, readings and education implications in their courses and units. All Education courses (undergraduate

and postgraduate) include Aboriginal Education units, which detail Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and cover the history of education, policy and government acts in Australia with implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures and Histories is a cross- curriculum priority area in the Australian Curriculum. Selected resources, texts for student analysis and readings incorporating Indigenous perspectives are included in unit materials and activities. An Acknowledgement of Country is included at the beginning of every formal lecture (and lecture recording). In 2019, the School of Education employed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designated Level B Academic in the Contextual Studies team. In 2020, this academic took on the course coordination of the Aboriginal Education units in the School.

Faculty of Science, Agriculture Business and Law (SABL)

The Faculty of SABL was awarded \$35,000 in HEPPP funding in 2018 to commence the “Building Indigenous Curricula and Partnerships Project” which included review and evaluation of the Indigenous content of units offered in SABL, including by an Indigenous graduate of UNE. This Project audited the Indigenous content in SABL programs; set up an online database as an ongoing resource and work in progress; help provide Aboriginal perspectives into course content and delivery; and contribute to design and implementation of teaching materials and practices within SABL related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. This program continues to deliver improved delivery and alignment of Indigenous material in the curricula of SABL courses. For example, an outcome of the School of Law curriculum review saw the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in the UNE Bachelor of Laws program expand from six core units to its inclusion in the majority of 16 core units. As the UNE curriculum renewal program rolls out in 2020, this audit will provide the foundation for improved and scaffolded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content throughout SABL courses. The School of Environmental and Rural Science is exploring the development of a Graduate Certificate in Traditional Ecological Knowledge to provide a qualification for Indigenous and non-Indigenous natural resource managers throughout Australia.

School of Environmental and Rural Science (ERS): IN ERS, traditional ecological knowledge is taught in first year in ECOL100 (Ecology: Concepts and Applications) and at higher levels (e.g. EM353 Conservation Biology). Lecturers explain that Science is one of many knowledge systems, but that it is important to consider other systems for additional information that can inform holistic management of ecosystems. An important axiom of what is taught is that traditional knowledge depends on country for its context and significance, and that Aboriginal systems of knowledge are place and people specific. Indigenous perspectives are also examined in the first year curriculum in unit RSNR110: Sustaining our Rural Environment 1 – taken by all environmental, agricultural and engineering courses in the School of ERS through field excursions, lectures and in class discussions. At the end of this unit students: understand the importance of land to cultural and spiritual identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; know recent changes in legal opinion and government policy in relation to native title and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and appreciate the significance of changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Students are examined on their cultural understanding in the final examination. Likewise, in a core unit at third year – EM312 Environmental Impact Assessment –students learn about indigenous considerations and requirements for development. There are speakers in from Office of Environment and Heritage to explain the policy and legal safeguards for indigenous cultural heritage. Students are examined on this material. ERS also has a number of elective units that consider natural resource management and policy in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary culture values are addressed.

Further to this, based on the inaugural 2020-2021 UNE Reconciliation Action Plan, The School of ERS formed an action committee (including: Faculty Dean, Head of School and Vice Chancellors Early Academic Career Indigenous Fellow) Indigenous Fellow), that designed, and have begun to action, the ERS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Strategy, with five main objectives. In 2020/2021, the School has focused on two main actions:

- Objective 1: Creating a culturally safe and supportive place for ATSI staff, HDR and undergrad students and visitors,
- Objective 3: Build Indigenous Curricula.

Both of these objectives have begun to improve the everyday life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the School of ERS. For example, a new unit in the Environmental Sciences focused on Indigenous Australian Sustainability Systems (ENSC220) has been newly designed. With only 24c credit points as pre-requisites this unit will offer an alternative report assessment allowing any student UNE-wide (and anywhere as a bespoke unit), to undertake it. The unit focusses on Indigenous Ecological Knowledge; its equality to western science; and how important relationships with Traditional Owners (and local communities) are during research projects. This will be the first full unit offering of Indigenous studies directly within the Science stream of the Faculty of Science, Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL).

School of Law: Ms. Marcelle Burns (an Aboriginal law lecturer), continues to engage with her colleagues to help embed cultural competency and awareness wherever practical into Law units. Moreover, from 2015 to 2019 Marcelle was the Project Leader for the Indigenous Cultural Competency for Legal Academics Program (ICCLAP)⁸. This program was supported the Council of

⁸ The final report of the Indigenous Cultural Competency for Legal Academics Program of which UNE was the lead institution is accessible at:
https://ltr.edu.au/resources/ID14-3906_Burns_FinalReport_2019.pdf

Australian Law Deans (which has established a working party to support the implementation of ICC in legal education), and the Australian Government Department of Education. The project also facilitated a special edition (Vol 28, Issue 2) of the Legal Education Review on Indigenous cultural competency in law.

Within the UNE Bachelor of Laws program, twelve units (six core and six elective units) include varying amounts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content. For example, the core unit *LAW101 – Law in Context*, includes a topic on ‘Race and the Law’ that focuses on the colonisation and the historical treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Likewise *LAW270 – Interviewing for Advocacy* provides a dedicated topic on ‘Interviewing Aboriginal Australians’ and the importance of developing cultural competency when interviewing Aboriginal clients or suspects. There is a lecture on the differences between Aboriginal English and Standard English. So too, the elective unit *LAW164 – Law and First People of Australia*, is a unit explicitly designed to introduce students to legal issues affecting Indigenous Australians. The unit includes a learning outcome on Indigenous cultural competency that aims to prepare all students to work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their future careers, and provides a supportive learning environment for Indigenous students. The inclusion of Indigenous content in LAW units at UNE will be subject to further review as part of the upcoming LLB curriculum review.

UNE Business School: Indigenous content is embedded in a number of courses and units through UNE Business School, e.g. MM591 ‘Managing Across Cultures’ and MM545 ‘Organisational Leadership’ which includes topics regarding ‘Employing Indigenous Australians’; also MM200 ‘Contemporary Management’ has a broad focus on cultural diversity and social inclusion is addressed. The UNE Business School’s Master of Economic and Regional Development includes a major in Indigenous Futures that seeks to prepare students for a career involved in community and regional development projects.

Faculty of Health and Medicine

School of Health: As noted in Section 2.5.1., the School of Health has embedded the OORA 200 -Working with Aboriginal People as a core unit of Study in the Bachelor of Nursing and the Bachelor of Social Work. This unit examines the history of relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, using the notion of whiteness to understand dispossession, resistance, adaptation and survival of Aboriginal peoples in Australia. Models of community development and cultural awareness will enable students to develop strategies to equip them in working with Aboriginal people in a variety of professional practices. Students are challenged to examine and reflect on the self as a conscious personal and professional actor within the dynamic of ethnic interchanges. The School has also included OORA200 as a listed unit in the Diploma of Community Welfare and included OORA 400 as a listed elective in the Master of Social work. Also, throughout the Bachelor of Social Work, a number of Case Studies are provided that reflect diversity of circumstances and interactions with health and social care systems of Aboriginal people. These case studies reflect issues specific to Indigenous people and their experience of disadvantage and about the rights of young Indigenous people who are accused of or found guilty of committing a crime. In addition, where appropriate assignments have been amended to include students demonstrating knowledge of the adjustment of their counselling practice should the client identify as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

School of Rural Medicine: The Joint Medical Program (JMP) is accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) as meeting AMC Standards for a primary medical program provided by an Australian University. In accrediting the JMP Bachelor of Medicine program, the AMC has acknowledged that the graduates of the JMP meet expected graduate attributes. The ability to work effectively, competently and safely in a diverse cultural environment (including Indigenous cultures) is one of the graduate attributes expected of a student completing the JMP. Graduates of the JMP are expected to have knowledge, understanding and skills in Indigenous Health. Students are required to complete the Indigenous Health component of the JMP BMed, and undertake the required assessments to demonstrate their knowledge of Indigenous Health and competencies in understanding the Indigenous culture. Course outcomes that of the BMedSc/MD which are specific to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders are:

- demonstrate that they respect and embrace the history, culture and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- demonstrate that they are committed to providing culturally competent, holistic, patient-centred care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Similarly, the JMP includes Units of study with specific outcomes relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For example, the specific unit outcomes relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander for the Unit MEDI1101A are:

- demonstrate an understanding of the core principles of cultural competence and the skills for sensitively identifying patients of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin;
- apply fundamental tools and principles of epidemiology to identify and measure the burden of illness of major health challenges facing Australia and other countries, including the gaps in health status and outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- apply fundamental tools and principles of epidemiology to identify and measure the burden of illness of major health challenges facing Australia and other countries, including the gaps in health status and outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander people.

Further to this, The Indigenous Health Unit based at the University of Newcastle (led by Professor Peter O'Mara and Dr John Towney) have undertaken a review of the content of the JMP to increase the Indigenous content across all years of training. This review has been completed and significant changes made to content in year 1 – 5 of the newly accredited BMedSci and MD. The BMedSci and MD Course also offers an Indigenous Health Pathway in year 4. This will be implemented for the first time in 2021.

School of Psychology: The School of Psychology [and the School of Health] uses the following strategies to improve inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in curricula:

- Acknowledgement of Country is made at the beginning of every meeting within the School and staff have been encouraged to include Acknowledgement of Country at the start of each lecture, tutorial, and seminar. Updated Moodle sites include the text and image shown in Figure 8. Likewise, liaison with the Oorala Aboriginal Centre is ongoing to ensure local cultural protocols, practices and people are considered in curriculum design and delivery.
- 'Getting it Right' resources. These were designed and evaluated as part of a research project run out of the Australian Catholic University (ACU) funded by OLTC in which UNE was a pilot site:
https://staff.acu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/655804/Getting_It_Right_June_2014.pdf
- An Aboriginal Psychologist is contracted to deliver face-to-face content in the postgraduate psychology courses.

2.6 CULTURAL COMPETENCE OF STAFF AND CULTURAL SAFETY OF STUDENTS

2.6.1 Cultural Competence of Staff

UNE provides all staff with the opportunity to attend a one-day Cultural Connections Workshop. In standard years, this workshop is run at regular intervals throughout the year as a Professional Development Opportunity sponsored by UNE People and Culture (formally the Human Resource Services Directorate). In the Faculty of HASSE, for example, it is mandated that all staff with supervision responsibilities for other staff members must complete the Cultural Connections (cultural competency) and Unconscious Bias courses offered at UNE. Furthermore, all staff are advised to do this professional development (PD) and the Faculty continues to actively monitor the completion of this PD.

At this workshop, participants are provided with an understanding and appreciation of the impact of history and government policies on the emotional and social well-being of Aboriginal people, particularly those within in the local and regional community. Associated insights into the experience of Aboriginal people supports stronger relationships with the Oorala Aboriginal Centre and facilitates cross-cultural dialogue with Indigenous students and staff across the University. Due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions, only one Cultural Connections Workshops was held in the first quarter of 2020 at which 9 people attended. As these Workshops recommence throughout 2021, all staff yet to complete one will be encouraged to do so.

UNE has established a Diversity Advisory Group, consisting of student and staff representatives. An external representative chairs this Advisory Group and it reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor. This group has Aboriginal staff representation and has the remit to review all relevant policies, rules and procedures.

2.6.2 Cultural Safety of Students

The Oorala Aboriginal Centre is the focal point for Indigenous cultural inclusion and safety at UNE and the wider regional community. The Centre provides both a digital and 'real-world' UNE space where culturally appropriate advice and pastoral support can be obtained by students in a welcoming environment. A feature of this space is recognition and support for the diversity of Indigenous circumstance and experience; and the strong partnership that the Centre maintains with the local Aboriginal community. In addition to Oorala providing a space of welcome and support for all Indigenous students at UNE, individual Schools (such as the four listed examples below) also take responsibility to ensure the cultural safety of Indigenous students.

School of Education

The School of Education ensures that all students in initial teacher education (ITE) programs at UNE complete studies relating to the teaching of Indigenous students. This includes offering a specialist program of study for students seeking to specialise in the teaching of Indigenous students. All academic staff involved in these programs actively maintain their own knowledge of the teaching of Indigenous students. In addition, the Office for Professional Learning (OPL), which manages all school teaching practice for ITE students, ensures that it pays attention to the specific needs of Indigenous students when managing their placements.

School of Psychology

The School of Psychology has a 'Respecting Indigeneity Statement' whose purpose is to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are acknowledged, valued, nurtured, and successful in their studies. The document also aims to develop in non-Indigenous staff and students, respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and values. The School aims to: (a)

create an environment in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff are culturally safe in their interactions with staff and other students; and (b) build a culture of acknowledging Indigenous custodianship of country. The School actively supports the development of cultural competency in staff and the promotion of a culturally safe environment for Indigenous students by:

- Encouraging and supporting all staff to attend and participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events at the University or in the local community (e.g., NAIDOC Week celebrations). This approach allows staff to keep abreast of current Indigenous issues and engagement with Indigenous cultural practices.
- Supporting all staff to attend a 'Cultural Connections' Workshop.
- Holding regular meetings with the Oorala Aboriginal Engagement Officer for the Faculty of Medicine and Health.

School of Rural Medicine

Indigenous students enrolled in Medicine at UNE access the JMP Student Support Program that is available to all Medical students. A two-member case management team (CMT) supports students requiring support due to personal or academic reasons. The CMT meets with the student at regular intervals to ensure that necessary support is in place. An Indigenous Academic is on the Executive Committee of the JMP Student Support Program and works to ensure that Indigenous students are provided with a culturally safe environment. In addition the Indigenous Academic liaises with the Student Engagement Team at Oorala to ensure that Indigenous students enrolled in medicine have ready access to the academic (including tutoring) and cultural support provide by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre.

School of Environmental and Rural Science (ERS)

A working party of the ERS Gender and Diversity Equity Working Group was developed in 2020 to collaborate with local Indigenous people and staff from the Oorala Aboriginal Centre Team, including the Elder in Residence. The first task of this working party and its collaborators was to design and recommend to the University, an Acknowledgement of Country to be included on the UNE Brand Approved staff Email signatures. This will assist in creating a culturally safe communicative method for our Indigenous students.

3. COMPLETIONS

3.1 RISE AND FALL OF COMPLETIONS

3.1.1 Outcomes

In 2020, 83 Indigenous students completed 84 awards across 43 separate course offerings at UNE, ranging from Diploma level through to PhD qualifications (Table 14). The percentage of Indigenous students that successfully completed their courses in 2020 represented 2.12% of the total number of completions at UNE in 2020.

Table 14: Course Completions by Indigenous Students at UNE 2016-2020.

Number of Student Completions	Calendar Year				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Indigenous Graduates	72	80	83	104	83
Non-Indigenous Graduates	3329	3429	3549	3589	3830
% Indigenous Graduates	2.12	2.28	2.34	2.82	2.12

Source: UNE Business Intelligence Services via askcui@une.edu.au email dated 12 April 201 RE Incident # 2103331-0002660.

3.1.2 Strategies connecting graduates with employment (both within and outside the institution)

Across the University, a number of services and supported opportunities are available to Indigenous students to enable them to make workforce connections and improve their employment prospects upon graduation. These include:

Services

- The UNE Employability and Careers Team focuses on (a) embedding employability across the teaching curriculum and (b) on achieving positive graduate outcomes. The team provides services to both on - and off-campus students and mirrors all on-campus services with digital learning platforms for UNE's online students including: one-on-one consultations, online self-help learning resources, work integrated learning; workshops, and employer seminars. The team also facilitates the Unit of Study titled Work300: Integrated Learning – Professional Skills Development. This unit is an elective available across a range of courses at UNE. This unit of study enables students to apply their academic knowledge in a workplace context, and to reflect and report on the experience, thus increasing their level of career readiness. The unit requires (a) 120 hours of fully supervised professional activity, project work or directed investigation in a host workplace; (b) and not more than 30 hours of additional study and assignment preparation including the Online Preparation Moodle unit.

Opportunities

- All graduates from the Joint Medical Program are employed by the State Health Departments to commence internship – as required to gain full registration.
- The School of Health is a member of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) which is the peak body that represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives across Australia. The aim of this body is to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal peoples into nursing and midwifery roles across Australia.
- The School of Health also supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing students gain continuing employment via support/promotion of Cadetships available with NSW Health.
- Programs in the School of Education, the School of Health and the School of Rural Medicine require student placement in work/clinical settings for course completions. Indigenous students who participate in placements are supported by the Oorala Aboriginal Centre to apply for 'Away from Base' funding through the Commonwealth ABSTUDY scheme to assist students meet the accommodation costs of these placements.
- For a number of years, UNE has supported students to achieve Internships via the Career Trackers Indigenous Internship Program. In 2020, three students undertook Summer Internships with external recruiters including the Greater Sydney Commission, South Gippsland Water and Arrpware.
- Indigenous students from UNE have participated in the Aurora Education Foundation Internship program for more than 10 years. In 2020, one UNE Student secured an Aurora Foundation Winter Internship and was hosted by the Aboriginal Legal Service Newcastle (ALS).
- The Senior Human Resources Consultant, Aboriginal Employment at UNE continues to promote the Aboriginal Casual Employment Register to UNE recruiters as well as to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander students and graduates

3.1.3 Strategies to monitor student outcomes after graduation

UNE participates in the Quality Indicators for Teaching and Learning (QILT) suite of government-funded student and graduate surveys. The latest (2020) Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) data indicates that UNE Indigenous graduates reported the following (on an adjusted 5-point Likert-type scale):

- **GADAPTn Average:** The course provided the adaptive skills (broad general knowledge, ability to develop innovative ideas, ability to identify new opportunities, ability to adapt knowledge in different contexts, ability to apply skills in different contexts, capacity to work independently) required for the job: Indigenous: 3.68; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 4.04
- **GFOUNDn Average:** The course provided the foundation skills (oral communication skills, written communication skills, numeracy skills, ability to develop relevant knowledge, ability to develop relevant skills, ability to solve problems, ability to integrate knowledge, ability to think independently about problems) required for the job: Indigenous: 3.83; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 4.03
- **GCOLLABm Average:** The course provided the collaboration skills (working well in a team, getting on well with others in the workplace, working collaboratively with colleagues to complete tasks, understanding of different points of view, ability to interact with co-workers from different or multicultural backgrounds) required for the job: Indigenous: 3.58; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 3.76
- **QUALIMPn Average:** The course Qualification was Important in Securing a Job: Indigenous: 3.03; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 3.06
- **CRSPREPN Average:** Course preparation for employment: Indigenous: 3.43; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 3.29

The reported scores of Indigenous graduates for four of the five GOS Indicators noted above are marginally lower than that for the combined Indigenous and Non-Indigenous scores (See: Table 15 below).

Table 15: UNE 2020 Graduate Survey (GOS) Responses to Key Grouped Questions

QILT Category Identifier for grouped Graduate Outcome Survey Questions	Student Response to QILT Graduate Outcome Surveys Questions ^a		Difference (A-B)
	A. Indigenous Students only	B. Indigenous +Non-Indigenous Students	
GADAPTn (min of 4 Qns answered)	3.68	4.04	-0.36
GFOUNDn (minimum of 6 Qns answered)	3.83	4.03	-0.20
GCOLLABm (min of 3 Qns answered)	3.58	3.76	-0.18
QUALIMPn	3.03	3.06	-0.03
CRSPREPN	3.43	3.29	+0.14
Combined AVERAGE	3.51	3.64	-0.15

^aAs scored on an adjusted 5-point Likert-type scale. SOURCE: Power BI Application - AQ Course Level Surveys Dashboard – prepared and updated by UNE Business Intelligence Services 14/4/2021.

Indigenous graduates also reported the following:

- Median Salary (at time of survey): Indigenous: \$65,866; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): \$67,000
- Proportion of graduate in full-time employment: Indigenous: 56.7%; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 58.3%
- Proportion of jobs where course was a formal requirement for employment: Indigenous: 43.7%; UNE average (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous): 41.5%

Again, the results for Indigenous UNE graduates in 2020 are marginally lower than for our combined Indigenous and Non-Indigenous graduates.

4. REGIONAL AND REMOTE STUDENTS

4.1 SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL AND REMOTE INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

Section 21 (3) (a) of 'the Guidelines' requires that a minimum of 95% of the Commonwealth Equity Scholarship amount paid to regional and remote students in the preceding year (i.e. 2019) be paid to regional and remote students in 2020. For UNE the minimum funds to be offered in 2020 was \$142,298 being 95% of total funds paid in 2019. (See Table16). The actual amount of scholarship support offered to regional and remote students studying at UNE in 2020 was \$198,000. This represents a funding offer of 132% of 2019 scholarship payment, some 37% more funds offered than is required.

Table 16: Scholarship data for remote and regional students.

LEVEL OF STUDY	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		TOTAL	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2019 Payments	99,734	62.0	32,054	9.0	18,000	9.0	149,787	80.0
B. 2020 Offers	140,000	50.0	30,000	5.0	28,000	28.0	198,000	83.0
C. Percentage (C=B/A*100)							132%	
2020 PAYMENTS	93,100	33.3	27,000	4.5	23,000	11.5	143,100	49.3

Source: Oorala Aboriginal Centre

4.2 THE RISE AND FALL OF EFTSL FOR STUDENTS FROM REMOTE AND REGIONAL AREAS

Students from regional and/or remote Australia accounted for 310.1 (or 63%) of the total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE in 2020 (Table 17). This represents a 4 % decline in the proportion of Indigenous EFTSL attributable to students from regional and remote Australia, relative to the previous calendar year. This represents an apparent steady 10% decline at UNE over the past 5 years in the proportion of Indigenous EFTSL attributable to students from regional and remote Australia (Table 17).

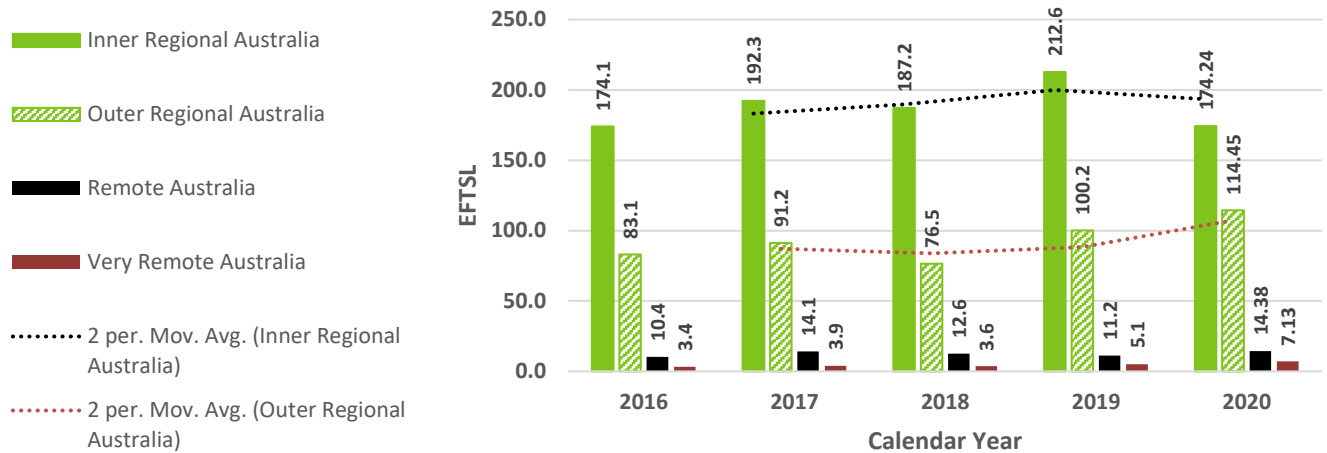
However, declines in total Indigenous EFTSL are not uniform within and between regional and remote student categories (Figures 9-11). The trend in total EFTSL borne by Indigenous students from Inner Regional Australia over the past five years indicates a slight decline in total Indigenous EFTSL during this period. Conversely, the trend for Outer Regional Australia indicates a slight rise in total Indigenous EFTSL in the same period (Figures 9 to 10). Further, the total Indigenous EFTSL borne by students from both remote and very remote Australia at UNE has generally tended upwards over the past five years, and particularly for our very remote students in which a doubling of total EFTSL has occurred in this period (Figure 11). In broad terms this means that UNE is maintaining the total Indigenous EFTSL attributable to Regional and Remote Australia. This strong and continuing engagement with Indigenous students from the regional communities, in which UNE is embedded, is occurring at the same time we are experiencing a surge in the number of students coming to UNE from Major Cities.

Table 17: Study Load (EFTSL) of Indigenous students studying at UNE in 2020 by their location.

Study Load (EFTSL)/LOCATION	CALENDAR YEAR				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Major Cities of Australia	97.5	133.8	121.6	154.8	175.97
Inner Regional Australia	174.1	192.3	186.6	212.6	174.24
Outer Regional Australia	83.1	91.2	79.4	100.2	114.45
Remote Australia	10.4	14.1	13.0	11.2	14.38
Very Remote Australia	3.4	3.9	3.6	5.1	7.13
Overseas	1.4	2.0	1.5	1.6	1.0
Location Data Not Available	3.3	3.9	5.3	7.8	6.88
GRAND TOTAL	373.0	441.2	411.0	493.3	494.05
Total Regional and Remote	270.9	301.5	279.9	329.1	310.2
% Total Regional and Remote	73%	68%	69%	67%	63%

Source: Student Profile Excel Worksheet dated 22/02/2020 prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit and data received via email 12 April 2021 from UNE Business Intelligence and Analytics.

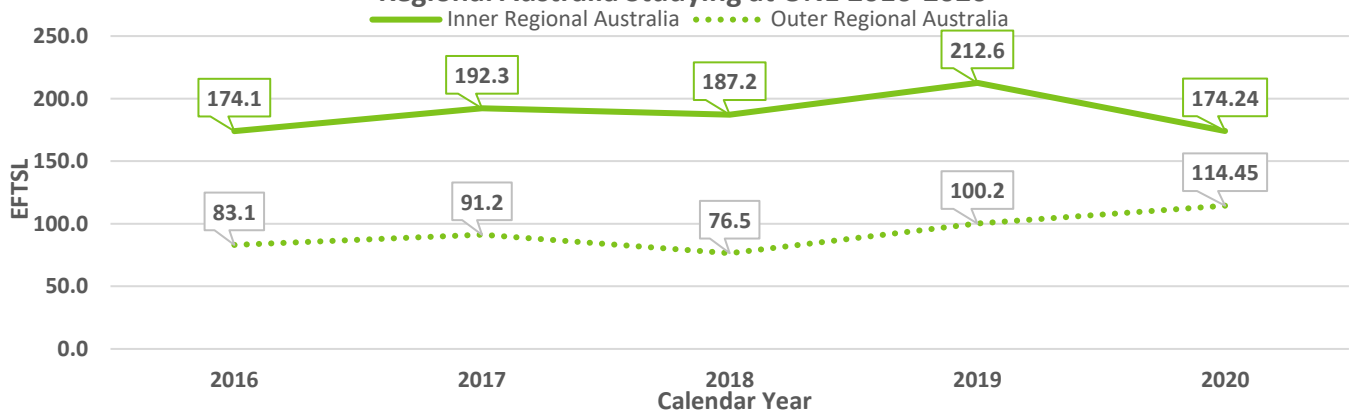
Comparison of Total EFTSL of Indigenous students from Regional and/or Remote Australia Studying at UNE 2016-2020



Source: Student Profile Excel Worksheet dated 22/02/2020 prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit and data received via email 12 April 2021 from UNE Business Intelligence and Analytics.

Figure 9: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Regional and/or remote Australia for the 5-year period 2016-2020.

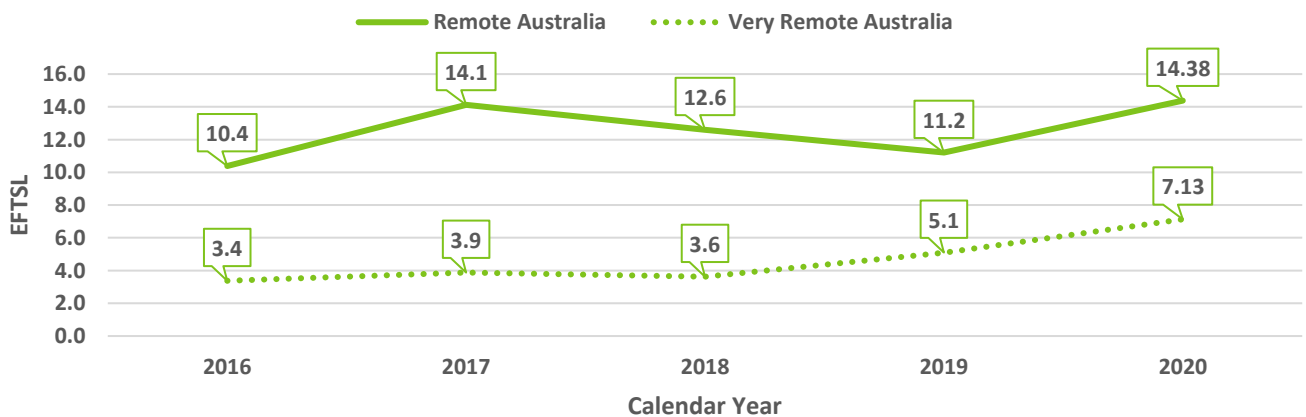
Comparison of Total EFTSL of Indigenous Students from Inner Regional and Outer Regional Australia Studying at UNE 2016-2020



Source: Student Profile Excel Worksheet dated 22/02/2020 prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit and data received via email 12 April 2021 from UNE Business Intelligence and Analytics.

Figure 10: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Inner Regional and Outer Regional Australia for the 5-year period 2016-2020.

Comparison of Total EFTSL of Indigenous Students from Remote and Very Remote Australia at UNE 2016-2020



Source: Student Profile Excel Worksheet dated 22/02/2020 prepared by UNE Business Intelligence Unit and data received via email 12 April 2021 from UNE Business Intelligence and Analytics.

Figure 11: Comparison of total EFTSL of Indigenous students at UNE from Remote and Very Remote Australia for the 5-year period 2016 -2020.

5. WORKING WITH VULNERABLE PEOPLE REQUIREMENT

5.1 STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 35A

This section confirms that the UNE and the Oorala Aboriginal Centre complies with Section 35A, subsections (1), (2) and (3) of the *Indigenous Student Assistance Grant Guidelines, 2017*. All staff and facilitators of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre are required to hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and an Excel spreadsheet recording all staff WWCC details is retained, and updated as necessary, by the Executive Assistant to the Director. Staff are also required to sign the UNE Child Protection Code of Conduct and to complete the *Child Safe eLearning – Keeping Children Safe in Organisations* course offered online through the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian. Copies of all signed documents and electronic notification records of course completion are held in an electronic file by Oorala Management. Further to this, all staff are trained with respect to working with vulnerable people as part of individual and work-team induction processes. Team Leaders are otherwise responsible for ensuring team members meet the necessary requirements. The required working with vulnerable people checklist occurs as Table 12 below.

Table 18: Working with Vulnerable People Checklist 2020.

Checklist Queries	Yes/No
Has the provider completed a risk assessment?	Yes
Have staff involved in ISSP activity received training?	Yes
Does the provider have a compliance process in place?	Yes

5.2 OTHER COMPLIANCE PROCESSES

In terms of other compliance processes, UNE has a number of relevant policies (all available on the University Website) regarding working with vulnerable people including:

- Child Protection Policy
- Child Protection Procedures
- Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy
- Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Procedure
- Student (Related) Grievance Handling Policy
- Student (Related) Grievance Handling Procedures
- Student Alcohol and Other Drug Policy
- Student Alcohol and Other Drug Procedures
- Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules
- Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules - Behavioural Misconduct Investigation and Penalty Guidelines

UNE also has processes to help assist students who have special needs (such as disability) which can be found on the Student Access and Inclusion pages of the UNE website - <https://www.une.edu.au/current-students/support/student-support/student-access-and-inclusion/services-for-students>

UNE also has other support services including: Counselling; Help with homesickness; Respect Now Always, and of course support from the Oorala Aboriginal Centre

6. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

6.1 UNE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STRATEGY 2019-2021

The UNE Indigenous Education Strategy (IES) 2019-2021 is an endorsed document and is available to the public at: [UNE IES 2019-2021](#). This strategy will ensure UNE is a culturally welcoming environment to support growth in Indigenous student and staff numbers, greater inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in UNE's curricula and teaching practices, and in UNE's graduate attributes.

6.1.1 Implementation of strategies and targets

In 2020 Learning and Teaching Transformation (LaTT - and now Education Enterprise) achieved progress towards the implementation of the Indigenous Education Strategy particularly in addressing Section 13c of the ISSP Guidelines (facilitate, monitor and improve upon the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in curricula, graduate attributes, and teaching practices). Progress highlights for the UNE IES in 2020 are identified below with respect to Goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

- **UNE IES GOAL – Embed indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the curriculum**
- **IES KPI – Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the UNE Curriculum Design Framework**

A significant step forward was the development and approval of the [Course Design Framework](#) (CDF) and Online Learning Standards, and subsequent incorporation of these into UNE policy. The CDF seeks to ensure courses and units are coherent, enabling, modern and sustainable and underpinned by evidence-based design principles. **Section 2.9 of the CDF requires that all courses embed indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the core curriculum.**

Additionally, Section 2.1 of the CDF refers to a statement of minimum standards for online learning. During 2020 LaTT facilitated a series of workshops to collaboratively design and develop those standards and associated guidelines that articulate the university's quality expectations around online learning. Oorala actively contributed during the workshops. The Standards were reviewed and endorsed by the Teaching and Learning Committee of UNE Academic Board in March 2021, and now form part of the University's policy framework.

The standards are made up of seven principles in total, the first of which highlights the intent to recognise and value student diversity and culture and refers specifically to the incorporation of indigenous, inter-cultural and international perspectives (Figure 12).

Recognise and value student diversity and culture:

Our learning experiences are designed to be inclusive, respectful and supportive. This is achieved through the recognition and valuing of individual and cultural diversity.

Indicators for demonstrating this principle include:

- Analysing information on students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests in order to set learning goals, design learning experiences and select teaching and learning strategies and resources.
- Providing students with multiple ways of engaging, representing and presenting their work and ideas.
- Flexibility in teaching approaches, learning resources formats, timing of delivery and assessment.
- Providing a choice of assessment tasks and formats.
- Fostering a sense of connection and community amongst learners from all backgrounds.
- Addressing, as appropriate, different learning needs and approaches within the diverse student body.
- Communicating the value of student diversity in the learning context and the benefits of learning from different individual and cultural viewpoints and perspectives.
- Including curriculum content, teaching approaches and learning activities drawing upon, and relating to, indigenous, inter-cultural and international perspectives.
- Creating positive and respectful learning environments that engage learners from a diversity of backgrounds.
- Modelling respectful and culturally competent interactions with students.
- Using examples, case studies and resource materials that draw on cross-cultural comparisons.
- Including materials and learning experiences which draw upon information (including students' own experiences and backgrounds) relating to other countries and cultures relevant to the area of study.
- Demonstrating and fostering respect for student diversity in all its forms (e.g., religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity and cultural backgrounds) in formal teaching settings and in the curriculum.

Source: UNE Education Enterprise Directorate, 2021.

Figure 12: Excerpt from Statement of Minimum Standards for Online Learning, UNE 2020.

- **IES KPI: Design a Bespoke degree pathway in partnership with local industry and community, as well as selected proof-of-concept short course pilots.**

Also in 2020, 9 indigenous students graduated from the Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice (Aboriginal Lore and Culture). This course was a proof of concept program that ran from February 2019 to February 2020. The VC, DVCR and PVCAI approved it. The pilot was a proof of concept model that allowed nine indigenous men who had been identified as future leaders or lore men to use UNE as a credentialing system for Aboriginal traditional lore and cultural knowledge.

The philosophy behind the program accepts that Aboriginal traditional knowledge is of sufficient complexity and skill as to be equivalent to western knowledge, but is not incorporated into University systems because western knowledge systems fail to comprehend and include Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and understanding. The pilot assessed the nine students for their knowledge and expertise in Aboriginal traditional lore, cultural, environmental and spiritual knowledge.

The students were assessed on the basis of completion of a program of on country activities supervised by local senior lore men (Uncle Paul Gordon and Uncle Paul Callaghan), through peer assessment, and academic assessment, all of which was coordinated by UNE academic Dr Eliza Kent. The Graduate Certificate Professional Practice (Aboriginal Lore and Culture) consisted of two elective units HUMS505A & HUMS505B in addition to the DYPP500B unit. These units were selected because they are all independent study units. The two HUMS units were assessed by the senior lore men and involved assessment of the nine students based on their participation in traditional Aboriginal ceremonies throughout 2019. For the DYPP500B unit the lore men undertook a yearlong project. This was assessed by Dr Eliza Kent, since the ceremonies are forbidden to women, and for the purpose of this exercise Dr Kent was granted honorary male status.

- **IES GOAL: Implement flexible, personalised and transformative entry pathways to encourage greater access to university for Indigenous people**

To complement the CDF, in 2020 LaTT developed and tested a process to implement the CDF known as Curriculum Renewal. A number of course teams, including from Oorala, participated in the pilot of this process and co-designed course amendments and artefacts aligned to the CDF.

The Oorala course team successfully developed an online readiness tool designed to provide pre-admission support for new and commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UNE. This tool specifically aims to help students **reflect** on their readiness for study at UNE, increase their knowledge around **services & support** and gain confidence to engage with **university life**, thereby addressing nationwide attrition and retention rates for First Nations People. [The Oorala Study Ready Tool](#) is being piloted in T1 of 2021.

6.1.2 Indigenous Education Statements

All UNE Indigenous Education Statements from 2012-2020 are available to the public at: [UNE Indigenous Education Statements 2012-2019](#).

6.1.3 Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation Australia endorsed UNE's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in July 2020. It is available to the public at: [UNE RAP](#). This inaugural 'Reflect' RAP outlines actions and deliverables that support UNE's commitment to equitable access to higher education for Indigenous students regardless of circumstances. In addition to outlining UNE's vision for reconciliation, the RAP is also an action plan that sets out how the University will continue to work side-by-side with Indigenous students, staff and community members to advance reconciliation.

6.2 UNE INDIGENOUS WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2019-2023 (IWFS)

The UNE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2019 - 2023 is an endorsed document and is available to the public at: [UNE IWFS 2019-2023](#). With this 5-year strategy, the university continues its commitment to making UNE a leader in the education and employment of Indigenous peoples. The focus of the strategy has been on strengthening relationships between UNE and the Indigenous community; building meaningful career paths for Indigenous staff; building understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and appropriate workforce management practices; and increasing meaningful employment options for Indigenous peoples.

6.2.1 UNE 2019-2023 IWFS - Support for development of current Indigenous Employees

The UNE 2019-2023 IWFS supports the professional development of current Indigenous employees by:

1. Promoting the UNE Professional Development fund to all Indigenous employees and encouraging applications from Indigenous staff consistent with fund guidelines;
2. Reviewing current options for study leave to support Indigenous employees to participate in accredited study that takes in Indigenous ways of knowing;
3. Encouraging and supporting the participation of all Indigenous employees in UNE Leadership Programs aligned with their classification;
4. Encouraging and supporting the participation of all Indigenous Early Career Academics in continuing and fixed term positions in the University wide Early Career Academic Mentoring Program (ECAMP)

In addition, the UNE 2019-2023 IWFS commits UNE to develop an induction process for all new Indigenous employees that will include the allocation of a culturally competent buddy and/or mentor; develop flexible employment options for Indigenous professional and academic staff; and promote traineeship opportunities to faculties and directorates. Likewise, the Human Resources Directorate (now People and Culture) will continue to work collaboratively with Faculties and Directorates to identify positions to be targeted for Indigenous people, and continue to provide opportunities for Indigenous staff to be seconded into higher duties positions.

6.2.2 UNE 2019-2023 IWFS – Increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous people at UNE.

Due to the sector-wide impacts of COVID-19, UNE experienced reduced capacity in the Indigenous Employment space with both recruitment and staff retention being negatively affected. Hence, UNE recorded a decrease in Fulltime Indigenous staff to 2.07%. Nevertheless, positive efforts to improve the employment opportunities for Indigenous people across UNE during the year did occur and included the following:

1. A further 12 Indigenous recruits were employed as Casual Academics through the Targeted Tutorial Assistance Scheme making a total number of 17 active Indigenous tutors in the Targeted Tutorial Assistance Program in 2020
2. Recruitment into the Vacant Level 7 Team Lead Position in the Student Engagement Team in the Oorala Aboriginal Centre occurred in the 1st quarter of 2020.
3. The Indigenous lecturer (0.5 FTE) in the School of Rural Medicine resigned in July 2020 to accept a position with the Tamworth based Primary Health Network (PHN). The Vice Chancellor has approved this position be increased to one FTE to be advertised in early 2021.
4. Recruitment into the Vacant Human Resource Consultant – Aboriginal Employment was successfully concluded with the new appointment commencing in the role in early 2021.

6.2.3 Recruitment of Indigenous person to Senior Executive Position at UNE.

The UNE 2019-2023 IWFS committed UNE to identify a position for an Indigenous person in a senior executive role at the level of Pro Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor or equivalent by 2021. A combined position of Pro Vice Chancellor and Director of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre went to market in December 2019 and recruitment processes were in train through to March 2020. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this process was necessarily suspended. UNE has recommenced recruitment for the position.

6.2.4 UNE Indigenous Workforce data.

In 2020, the permanent Indigenous workforce at UNE comprised seven academic staff, the majority of which were appointed at Academic Level B and twenty professional staff of which more than 50% were employed at HEO Level 5 (Table 18). A further twelve professional roles were held by Indigenous personnel on a contract and/or casual basis the majority of which were at HEO Level 4 (Table 18). Some twenty Indigenous people held casual Academic contracts across the year, almost all of whom were employed as Tutors in the Targeted Tutorial Assistance Program administered by the Oorala Centre (Table 18).

Table 19: UNE Indigenous Workforce Data (2020 breakdown).

Level/Position	Permanent		Casual and contract	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
HEO 2		1		
HEO 3				1
HEO 4		2		7
HEO 5		11		2
HEO 6		4		2
HEO 7		2		
Academic A	1		3	
Academic B	5			
Academic C	1			
Academic (other)			17*	
Director		1		
TOTALS	7	20	3 + 17*	12

*In 2020, there were 17 active Casual Academic Contracts for tutors in the Targeted Tutorial Assistance Program at Oorala held by staff that identified as Indigenous. This is more than 3 times the amount of Indigenous tutors actively employed in 2019.
Source: UNE People and Culture and Oorala Aboriginal Centre.

6.3 UNE INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE MECHANISM

6.3a UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee (UNEIEC)

The UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee (UNEIEC) was established in December 2018. The Committee reports to the Vice-Chancellor and advises on matters relating to Indigenous education, employment and research and satisfies the *Indigenous Student Assistant Grant Guidelines 2017* requirements for an Indigenous Governance Mechanism. The composition and terms of reference for this Committee are available to the public on its dedicated UNE webpage: <https://www.une.edu.au/staff-current/une-areas/executive/vice-chancellor/uneiec>.

6.3b Additional Involvement of Indigenous staff in decision making including curriculum evaluation and review

Encouraging and increasing Indigenous representation within governing and decision-making bodies has remained a focus of the University in 2020. Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on decision-making bodies at UNE in 2020 has included:

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)

In 2019 the Vice-Chancellor and University Council approved the appointment of a new senior executive position to oversee all indigenous matters within the University. Recruitment for the the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) position was negatively impacted by COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. Recruitment for this position has recommenced in 2021.

Director of Oorala

The Director of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre provides key leadership on Indigenous Higher Education at UNE through involvement in committees and high-level liaison with Schools and Directorates on matters and issues that relate to academic support and outcomes in recruitment, access, participation, retention and completion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Director is an *ex officio* member of Academic Board, a member of the Deans Committee and the Human Research Ethic Committee of the University. In addition, this position provides for, and has oversight of, the strategic direction of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre and its primary functions in Indigenous community and student engagement, academic programs support and cultural competency.

Elder-in-Residence

Mr. Colin Ahoy, a local Anaiwan Elder continued his appointment as Elder-in-Residence of the University for 2020. The role of Elder-in-Residence is an important role that has ceremonial, liaison and pastoral functions across the University. The role includes consultation and participation in protocols for official events, programs and projects, including Welcome to Country; and incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in academic business and curriculum.

Academic Board

Mr. Darin Gorry, an Indigenous Lecturer in the Oorala Aboriginal Centre continued his appointment as a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee of Academic Board in 2020;

Dr. Lorina Barker, an Indigenous Lecturer in the Faculty of HASSE, continued her appointment as a member of the Curriculum Committee of Academic Board until June 2020 and Ms Marcelle Burns, Indigenous Lecturer in Law took on this role in October 2020.

Mr. Shaun Hooper, an Indigenous HDR Student in the Faculty of SABL, is an appointed member of the Research Committee of Academic Board.

Ms. Donna Moodie, an Indigenous Academic in the School of Education was a member of the Graduate Research Committee of Academic Board in 2020

School Committees

Ms. Marcelle Burns an Indigenous academic in the School of Law is a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee of this School; [Ms. Burns is also a member of the UNE Aboriginal Employment Strategy Governance Committee and also a member of the UNE Reconciliation Action Plan Committee].

Mr. Steve Widders, an Anaiwan Elder, is Patron of the School of Education and is invited to significant occasions held in the School.

In the School of Medicine and Health, the CEO of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) is a member of the Bachelor of Nursing stakeholder group.

The Academic Coordinator of the Oorala Aboriginal Centre is a member of the School of Education Teaching and Learning Group.

6.3.1 Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

Throughout 2020, UNE pursued a program of activity to ensure compliance with Section 10 of the *Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017* and thereby maintain eligibility for ISSP funds in 2019 and beyond. Section 10 (1) (c) of these Guidelines outlines the need for the University to have: (a) an Indigenous Governance Mechanism, (b) an Indigenous Workforce Strategy and (c) an Indigenous Education Strategy.

Consistent with subsection 17(2) (b) of the *Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017*, and as per the governance protocols in place for 2020, the University's Elder in Residence, as a member of the UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee (UNEIEC) endorses this 2020 ISSP report and associated financial acquittal.