

UNE Indigenous Education Strategy 2019 – 2021

Vision

The University of New England is a 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.

To ensure that UNE meets this vision, this strategy is centred on equal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. UNE commits to breaking down systemic and institutional barriers that prevent the full engagement of Indigenous peoples across all parts of the University, and to upholding the rights and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This strategy requires commitment to a whole of University response. This Indigenous Education Strategy provides a way forward for all University documents, actions, activities and processes to be based on equal partnerships and the valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and knowledges. 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.

Guiding Principles

Relationships

UNE will foster positive relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to increase Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers, student retention and completion rates.

Safety

UNE will increase the level of Indigenous cultural competency of non-Indigenous students, graduates and staff to create a culturally-welcoming university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Knowing

UNE will increase the valuing of Indigenous peoples in higher education by promoting Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous research. It will invest in Indigenous pathways, courses and units to

build new partnerships with Indigenous community members. It will increase ensure research is being conducted alongside Aboriginal people as equal partners for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Respect

UNE will consult with Indigenous peoples respectfully regarding all aspects of this strategy. It will foster Reconciliation through all university processes, procedures and practices, and across all university activities and functions.

Connection

UNE will communicate with our local and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by conducting meetings and sharing minutes and reports with transparency to share and detail the progress, decisions and outcomes of this Strategy.

Background

The Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet initiated the *Indigenous Student Success (Higher Education) Programme* (ISSP)¹ on 1 January 2017. ISSP is the major funding source for higher education providers related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, replacing the *Indigenous Commonwealth Scholarships Program* and Indigenous tutorial assistance. Eligibility for ISSP grants requires universities have:

1. An Indigenous Education Strategy, which must:
 - a. include key performance indicators
 - b. prioritise increasing the number of Indigenous students enrolling in, progressing in and completing courses leading to higher education awards
 - c. facilitate, monitor and improve upon the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in curricula, graduate attributes and teaching practices
 - d. include activities for students and employees of the provider that promote cultural competency in Indigenous cultures, traditions and histories and the diversity of circumstances of Indigenous people in Australia

2. An Indigenous Governance Mechanism, which must consist of:
 - a. an appropriately qualified senior academic employee of the provider who is an Indigenous person, *or*
 - b. an appropriately qualified senior executive employee of the provider who is an Indigenous person, *or*
 - c. a committee constituted by a majority of Indigenous persons, each of whom has skills and experience relevant to the role, and,
 - d. The Indigenous Governance Mechanism must:
 - i. have responsibility for advising on, reviewing, making recommendations about, and monitoring the use of ISSP grants
 - ii. have authority within the governance structure of the provider
 - iii. have a charter that outlines: the criteria for appointment under the mechanism, the roles and responsibilities of the employees or the committee that constitute the mechanism, and the decision-making processes of the Mechanism.

¹ Australian Government Indigenous Student Assistance (ISSP) Guidelines are available online: www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L00036/Download

3. An Indigenous Employment Strategy, which must:
 - a. include a plan agreed by an administering officer in writing that:
 - i. provides for the employment of at least one Indigenous person as a senior executive employee at the level of Pro Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, or, equivalent level
 - ii. increases the number of Indigenous employees at least 3 per cent of all employees of the provider
4. An equivalent Full-time Student Load of at least five Indigenous students
5. Access to other funding in assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Monitoring and Oversight

UNE has established the UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee (UNEIEC), which reports to the Vice-Chancellor. The UNEIEC has responsibility for endorsing the following UNE strategies:

- UNE Indigenous Education Strategy
- UNE Indigenous Employment Strategy
- UNE Indigenous Research Strategy
- UNE Indigenous Research Integrity

UNEIEC will report to the Vice-Chancellor and will advise on matters relating to Indigenous education, employment and research. UNEIEC has the capacity to seek reports on Indigenous matters from any work unit within the University.

To progress Indigenous inclusion across the University, UNEIEC will:

- Consult widely, frequently and effectively amongst the UNE Indigenous Stakeholder Community
- Consider any matter relating to Indigenous inclusion at UNE
- Monitor the development and implementation, and ultimately endorse all relevant Indigenous strategies, for approval by the University
- Establish, as necessary, any sub-committees or working groups for the purpose of providing specialist advice on any Indigenous matter relevant to the Committee
- Refer for action or advice any relevant matter to the Vice Chancellor for implementation via the senior executive of the University.

Composition and Membership

UNEIEC for 2019 & 2020 will comprise of:

- Dr Lorina Barker, Chair, Senior Indigenous Academic
- Mr Michael Brogan, Co-Chair, Senior Indigenous Research Fellow
- Mr Colin Ahoy, Elder in Residence, UNE
- Ms Hayley Ford, Indigenous Researcher Support Officer

UNE Indigenous Stakeholder Community

The committee will consult with, and rely upon, and report back to, a large stakeholder group, which will include the following:

- Indigenous Elders of the Northern Region of NSW, and beyond.
- Indigenous Communities of the Northern Region of NSW, and beyond.
- Indigenous students at UNE
- Indigenous Academic staff at UNE
- Indigenous Professional staff at UNE
- Oorala Aboriginal Centre
- Indigenous Employment Officer(s)
- Indigenous Staff supporting Indigenous students at UNE

Strategy Phases

There are three phases within this Strategy:

GROW

Over the next three years, UNE will continue to build relationships and trust with our Indigenous community with a focus on identifying and addressing systemic barriers impacting on students enrolling in and completing HDR programs, courses of study and fully participating in University life. We will focus on internal operations to ensure that staff are upskilled to work in a culturally informed and respectful manner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

EMBED

This is the focus for the implementation phase of the strategy. UNE will concentrate on ensuring new and changed practices are embedded within the life of UNE at all levels and that culturally welcoming practices are bedded down across the organisation.

EMPOWER

This phase focuses on a shift of power and control. UNE will work to address the inequity that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples within the university. This will see the University workforce, governance and curriculum balanced and working through equal partnership upholding value of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices. By this phase, Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing will be core to UNE's curricula and teaching practices.

GROW

- Indigenous knowledge
- Participation
- Indigenous students

Key Strategic Area	Goal	Key Performance Indicators
Indigenous knowledge	Embed Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current and existing practice, and benchmark next practice. 2. Identify examples of existing curricula. 3. Develop proof-of-concept pilot courses and units.
Participation	<p>Build relationships and engagement through the UNE Indigenous stakeholder community</p> <p>Cultivate and Indigenous academic pathway</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee is established, including key local indigenous stakeholders, which will contribute to the development of key University Strategies and Plans. 2. Implement an Indigenous Early Career Support Scheme at UNE.
Indigenous Students	<p>Implement flexible, personalised and transformative entry pathways to encourage greater access to university for Indigenous people</p> <p>Achieve retention and degree completion rate parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students</p> <p>Increase outcomes for Indigenous student unit satisfaction</p> <p>Ensure Indigenous students are involved in UNE governance as equal partners</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Indigenous student involvement in the co-design, evaluation and</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current and existing entry and credit pathways. 2. Deliver OORALA TRACKS program targeting school students 3. Work with the community to determine localised barriers to participation. 4. Design a Bespoke degree pathway in partnership with local industry and community, as well as selected proof-of-concept short course pilots. 5. Improve retention and degree completion rates by 5%. 6. Review and improve business processes that support student success throughout the admission and enrolment process. 7. Introduce new Indigenous Knowledge Unit (INK) within Media and Communications to provide a safe space for Indigenous students to learn with Indigenous paradigms from Indigenous mentors. 8. Ensure Indigenous staff and students are able to attend cultural celebrations.

	improvement of units and courses	<p>9. Specific Indigenous representation on UNE Student Council.</p> <p>10. Students engage in collaboration and co-creation in the development of the INK project.</p> <p>11. Engage students in co-design within selected short-course pilots (such as Anaiwan Language Project).</p>
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EMBED

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Key Strategic Area	Goal	Key Performance Indicators
Indigenous knowledge	Embed Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into UNE curriculum design framework. 2. Design, develop and implement across all curriculum areas of the University. 3. Implement academic course approval processes that include reporting on how Indigenous pedagogy and content are included. 4. Review and renew policies and procedures on credit for prior learning and advanced standing to recognise Indigenous knowledges, and ways of knowing for credit.
Participation	<p>Build relationships through the UNE Indigenous stakeholder community.</p> <p>Cultivate an Indigenous academic pathway</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indigenous people are participating in key University committees including Academic Board and Faculty Committees. 2. Indigenous voices are heard through the guidance of the UNE Indigenous Engagement Committee. 3. Provide development opportunities and support for Indigenous staff in applications for UNE Teaching Awards, and Australian Awards for University Teaching. 4. Provide development opportunities and support for Indigenous staff applying for Advance Higher Education fellowships.
Indigenous Students	Implement flexible, personalised and transformative entry pathways to encourage greater access to university for Indigenous people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a range of entry and credit pathways, building on proof-of-concept and existing good practice. 2. Produce a communication strategy to promote and explain available options to students, industry and community.

	<p>Achieve retention and degree completion rate parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students</p> <p>Increase outcomes for Indigenous student unit satisfaction</p> <p>Ensure Indigenous students are involved in UNE governance as equal partners</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Indigenous student involvement in the co-design, evaluation and improvement of units and courses</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Improve retention and degree completion rate parity by 10%. 4. Implement the INK model within other majors in Arts. 5. Specific Indigenous representation and engagement in <i>The Student Voice in Australian University Governance</i> project, of which UNE is a national lead institution. 6. Implement the INK co-creation process within other majors in Arts. 7. Engage students in co-design within a range of relevant short-courses. 8. Implement recommendations based on current Indigenous student experiences.
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Key Strategic Area	Goal	Key Performance Indicators
Indigenous knowledge	Embed Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into the curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor and report on Indigenous knowledge and perspectives within curriculum across areas of the University. 2. Ensure there are structures to support the sustainability of established frameworks. 3. Students have opportunities within every course to engage in deep and sophisticated understanding of how their discipline is informed by Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies.
Participation	Build relationships through the UNE Indigenous stakeholder community. Cultivate an Indigenous academic pathway	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indigenous staff and members of the community work in partnership with UNE central University and Faculty business units, key committees and reference groups to provide input and strategic advice. 2. Established Indigenous academic pathway which includes induction, training, professional development, career progression and succession planning, networking and mentoring.
Indigenous Students	Implement flexible, personalised and transformative entry pathways to encourage greater access to university for Indigenous people Achieve retention and degree completion rate parity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students Increase outcomes for Indigenous student unit satisfaction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support and connect with students throughout their degree experience to evaluate pathway effectiveness and ensure pathways remain flexible, viable and manageable experiences. 2. Offer all Indigenous applicants a place in a UNE course, best suited to applicant level of ability/ area of interest. 3. Rate parity achieved between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. 4. Continue to monitor, maintain and evaluate rates and practices to ensure sustainable outcomes. 5. Implement the INK model within degrees across UNE.

	<p>Ensure Indigenous students are involved in UNE governance as equal partners</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Indigenous student involvement in the co-design, evaluation and improvement of units and courses</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. All Indigenous students at UNE are empowered to participate in student governance at all levels. 7. Implement the INK co-creation process within degrees across UNE. 8. Establish structures and process to implement student engagement in course and unit co-design as a part of UNE course development and renewal process.
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