



**Creating Inclusive
Futures Together:**
Diversity and Inclusion
Strategy 2020 - 2025

Acknowledgement

Deakin University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our five physical campuses are situated and pay our respects to their Elders; past, present and future. We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation on whose land our Geelong campuses are located, the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation on whose land our Melbourne campus and Melbourne Corporate Centre are located, and the Gunditjmara people on whose land our Warrnambool campus is located. We welcome all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to Deakin. Deakin is committed to valuing, building and sustaining recognition, understanding and positive relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians.

Message from the Vice-Chancellor

At Deakin, we want to be recognised as a world-class, inclusive and progressive university. A thriving culture will ensure that people choose to come to and stay at Deakin and contribute to our success.

We want to create and maintain an environment where people can grow and prosper through access to knowledge and the experiences they have as colleagues and students.

It is very deliberate that inclusion is one of the core values of Deakin – it's central to how we operate now and how we address future challenges and opportunities.

Embedding diversity and inclusion as a university strategic priority through 2020-25 supports our ambition of being a place where the whole community flourishes and advances through the insights that we gain and share every day.

This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is an important pathway to the University's ongoing success. It articulates how diversity and inclusion contribute to the strategic domains in our University's Strategic Plan: Education and Employability, Ideas and Innovation.

The Strategy encompasses the implementation of a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that drives our gender equity, LGBTIQ+ inclusion, cultural diversity, disability access and inclusion, student access and participation, sexual harm prevention related goals.

The common thread between these plans are three strategic themes which guide a whole-of-university approach to embedding diversity and inclusion. The themes are: Respect, Belong and Thrive.

We are already one of Australia's most progressive universities, characterised by our commitment to challenging current ideas and concepts, lifelong learning and employability, discovery and creativity, digital capability, social justice, inclusivity and diversity.

Our pursuit of excellence and generating impact across both education and research is accompanied by a commitment to greater access to education for talented students regardless of their backgrounds. Delivering impact with both equity and excellence is at the heart of our social contract.

On behalf of our Leadership Team, I am excited to see new opportunities and experiences for all our people outlined in our programs and practices, and I encourage everyone to learn about the initiatives in this Strategy.

Professor Iain Martin
Vice-Chancellor



Our Values

Our values are the standards we hold ourselves up against. They're about what's important to us, and sharing these with our students and staff helps keep our values at the heart of our community.

Excellent

We will strive for excellence and pride in our work and who we are.

Ethical

We will always conduct our business with the highest standard of professional behaviour and integrity.

Inclusive

We value our diversity, embrace difference and nurture a connected, safe and respectful community.

Sustainable

We care about our shared future: economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainability are integrated in all we do.

Brave

We approach what we do with courage, ambition and personal responsibility.

Dynamic

We enable success with innovative, adaptable and agile approaches to work and problem solving.

Employer of Choice for Gender Equality

In 2020, Deakin University received the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation (Workplace Gender Equality Agency) for the 14th consecutive year. This coveted citation recognises organisations promoting active commitment to achieving gender equality.

What diversity and inclusion means to us

To help bring our organisational value of inclusion to life, we are working towards creating an environment where we value our diversity, embrace difference and nurture a connected, safe and respectful community.

‘Diversity’ refers to all the differences we bring to study or work. It includes diversity of background, often in combination - such as gender, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, professional discipline, experience - as well as diversity of thinking approaches, educational and functional diversity.

Research by consulting firm Deloitte (2018) reveals that high-performing teams are both cognitively and demographically diverse.

We know that who we are as individuals is multi-dimensional, shaped through an interplay of identity and experience.

At Deakin, we are working together to build a strong culture of safety, mutual respect and inclusion to ensure all members of our community can study and work in a safe and supported environment.

Building on a culture of respect and our history of making a positive difference, we’re creating processes and cultures that enable a sense of belonging and psychological safety.

We see difference as an asset, and an environment of inclusion as the cultural glue of the University. This helps us make a positive impact for the diverse communities that we are part of and support.

That’s why we’ve created our Diversity and Inclusion brand to be ‘Respect. Belong. Thrive’. We want everyone at Deakin – our students, staff, and our local community partners – to feel part of our ambitious agenda.

Respect

We want an environment where students and staff feel included and respected for their unique perspectives and talents.

As a University community, we set strong standards of behavior and we all have a responsibility to act respectfully toward others.

We work to uphold inclusion and respect by challenging attitudes that condone violence, gender stereotypes, power imbalance, gender inequality and inequity. We take a proactive approach to preventing sexual harm in our University community and improving how we respond to, and support those, who have been affected.

Belong

Deakin celebrates diversity in all its dimensions, including diversity of thought. We create safe, engaged communities that foster a culture of inclusion and participation, build resilience and support all learners to achieve their goals.

We have committed to building the inclusive leadership capability of all University leaders so that students and staff feel a strong sense of belonging in our community and achieve success.

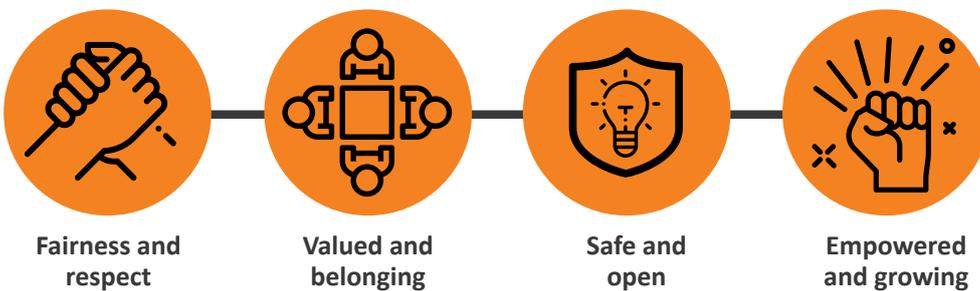
Thrive

We want all our people to feel encouraged to speak up and share their diverse experiences, ideas and perspectives – where they feel they empowered to challenge ideas and contribute to new processes flexible ways of studying and working, making a positive impact for the whole community.



Our three-pronged approach of Respect, Belong, Thrive aligns with leading research by Deloitte. Deloitte's Inclusion Model begins with fairness and respect, moving through stages of belonging, openness to empowerment.

The science of inclusion: Deloitte's inclusion model



Sources: Bersin by Deloitte, *High-impact diversity and inclusion: The new maturity model*, 2017; Juliet Bourke and Bernadette Dillon, *Waiter, it that inclusion in my soup? A new recipe to improve business performance*, Deloitte Australia and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and human Rights Commission 2012.

From Juliet Bourke and Bernadette Dillon, *'The diversity and inclusion revolution: Eight powerful truths'*, **Deloitte Review**, issue 22, January 2018

Strategic domains

why diversity and inclusion matter

The principles of diversity and inclusion underpin Deakin's overall approach to education, employability, digital delivery, innovation and partnerships for impact.

As part of the University's strategic plan, Diversity and Inclusion has identified three domains, which will enable us to advance in shaping the future and creating value for students, staff, stakeholders and the community.

1. Education and Employability

Providing a welcoming, world-class experience for our students is a central commitment. Deakin has students from 130 countries, and our teaching and student experiences benefit greatly from this cultural and experiential diversity. The University aims for all students and staff to develop cultural competence: to value cultural differences and demonstrate intercultural knowledge and skills in their behaviour, pedagogy, workplace practices and in University governance.

Deakin was founded with a social equity mission at its heart, as stated in the Deakin University Act: 'Deakin University aims to be a catalyst for positive change for the individuals and the communities it serves. It aspires to be recognised as Australia's most progressive University.' We bring this to life by promoting diversity through a culture of access, participation and support.

Diversity and inclusion are also fundamental to maintain our very strong reputation for online learning delivery and innovation that enhances the learning experience for all students. The enhanced accessibility of our online course materials (through improved processes for captioning, transcription and audio description), for example, break down one of the barriers to a University experience and benefit staff and visitors with visual impairments.

Deakin also recognises the rights of our LGBTIQ+ students and staff to learn, live and work, free of prejudice and discrimination, with all the essential freedoms enjoyed by other members of our University community and the broader population.

We're also working to increase the representation of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

backgrounds, as well as those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, with learning and career opportunities.

We are conscious of the lifetime benefits of a University education and of the importance of opening this opportunity to as many people as possible. We have a range of programs to improve access and the success of students from groups traditionally under-represented in higher education.

For our workforce, building inclusive leadership at all levels is one of the three areas prioritised in our People and Culture Strategy 2020-25.

Inclusive leadership is recognised globally as a core capability for the leader of the future. We want our leaders to proactively seek to understand different points of view, actively support people from under-represented groups, and create a psychologically safe workplace where people feel secure and trusted to address tough issues or take risks.

This education will help empower our academic and professional workforce to contribute, influence and lead across the diverse University community. Where they're able to access opportunities in their chosen career paths on principles of fairness and equity.

To help us attract and retain global talent, we have a steadfast commitment to gender equity in remuneration and representation, and to flexible work places, across the University.

Finally our focus on inclusion helps students and staff to work effectively in diverse teams, developing life long learning skills for future employment and engagement with diverse communities and cultures in a global context.

2. Digital delivery and innovation

Deakin is a leader in the innovative use of digital technology – digital is in our DNA. We will continue to be human-centric and ethical in creating and managing our digital platforms.

We will lead in the delivery of outstanding online education and blended on-campus experiences

We recognise that when teams have a diversity of background and thinking approaches, and work in an inclusive environment, there is a greater opportunity for break-through ideas and richer problem-solving. The emergence of considerable humanitarian and economic challenges globally will more than ever require organisations to have workforces that can innovate, problem-solve, work cross-collaboratively and with interdisciplinary approaches. This strengthens Deakin's culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Our pioneering work in fields such as health and wellbeing, advancing societies and culture, future industries, and building capability for a sustainable world also benefit from our focus on encouraging diversity of thinking approaches and realising the value diverse and inclusive teams generate.

Immersed within a community of distinguished experts, Deakin has the flexibility, skills and knowledge needed to steer the industries of tomorrow.

Diversity and inclusion also help us to reach our sustainability goals. There is growing global evidence that aligning diversity and inclusion initiatives with sustainability efforts strengthens both the sustainability initiative and the diversity initiative. A tangible way this occurs is in the way Deakin makes a concerted effort to include diverse voices and perspectives to spark new ideas and further our sustainability goals. We advocate for sustainable inclusive development.

We recognise that diverse and inclusive teams are important for robust decision-making. Different thinking approaches and perspectives strengthen assessments of risk and uncertainty, so we invest responsibly and sustainably over the long-term.

3. Partnerships for impact

We recognise the importance of our partnerships and place a priority on shared value.

Our internal partners are key contributors to the achievement of our goals. Deakin's Diversity and

Inclusion Taskforces are our mechanism to drive local area change, engagement and actions to address student and staff access, equity, diversity and inclusion priority work. Our taskforces operationalise our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion also enhances Deakin's reputation for being approachable and collaborative with our external partners in government, industry and the community.

Our capability to develop international research partnerships is strengthened by inclusive leadership education that helps us maximise the benefits of collaborating in diverse multidisciplinary teams and leverage cross-cultural differences.

A number of our local partnerships specifically draw on our diversity and inclusion expertise, including:

- The Deakin Cats Community Centre is in its 6th year of operation provides the state-of-the-art facility free of charge to community groups in the region who meet the criteria of encouraging healthy and active lifestyles for all ages and abilities.
- Impact21 is an education to employment work readiness pilot program that is designed for people living with Down Syndrome and intellectual disabilities. Deakin will partner with students and graduates for continuous improvement of student experience and outcomes. Students are leaders and change agents contributing through feedback, community-building and supported, deep collaboration. Deakin fosters a culture and practice of student and staff partnership that builds respect, reciprocity and a shared responsibility. Collaboration ensures the student voice will meaningfully and effectively inform decision-making. Student well-being is fostered by supportive communities.
- FutureMe is a unique program 3 day program within the Deakin Engagement and Access Program (DEAP). FutureMe introduces students to the changing world of work and engages them in practising the enterprising skills required for success. Over 250 Deakin staff volunteer to participate in career conversations with year 9 students, sharing career experiences, education pathways and personal insights.

Inclusive design of our physical spaces and facilities is enhanced through a deep awareness of the diverse needs of students, staff and stakeholders. We recognise that vibrant, well-used infrastructure contributes to community connections and prioritise accessibility in planning and building.

Implementation

Priorities for action and progress against key metrics are reviewed annually. We have a consolidated annual plan that enables our diversity and inclusion goals at Deakin.

Achievement of our diversity and inclusion goals are supported by:

- Protection of human rights and social justice
- High quality, inclusive and accessible services
- Intersectionality
- Community inclusion
- Connection within and between diverse communities
- Data, research and evidence
- Targets, monitoring and reporting

All activities advance the Deakin Strategic Plan, and our student facing initiatives are guided by the Education and Employability Guiding Plan.

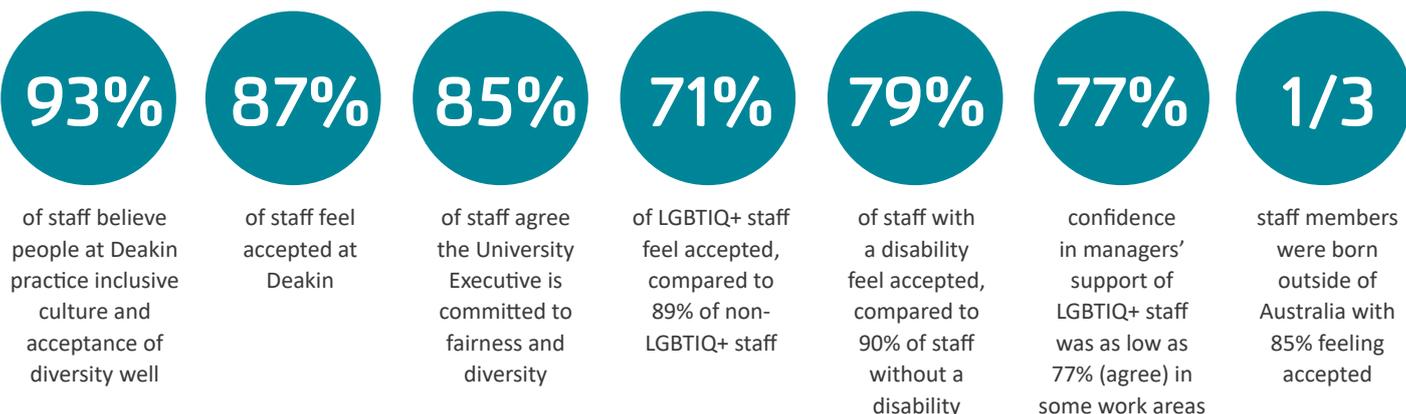
Key step change projects are:

- Building access for Success
- Enabling students as partners
- iBelong at Deakin
- Embedding student mental health and wellness

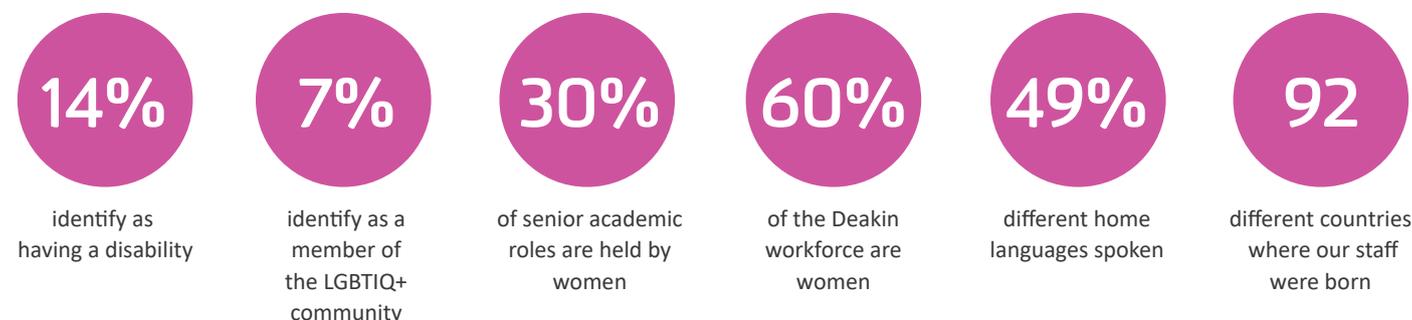
In addition, Deakin remains committed to upholding the principles of Positive Duty and to ensuring inclusive policies and practices which comply with relevant legislation, in particular the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth). Deakin also commits to meeting reporting requirements set out under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) and the Gender Equality Act (Vic) 2020.

Our Diversity Profile at a Glance

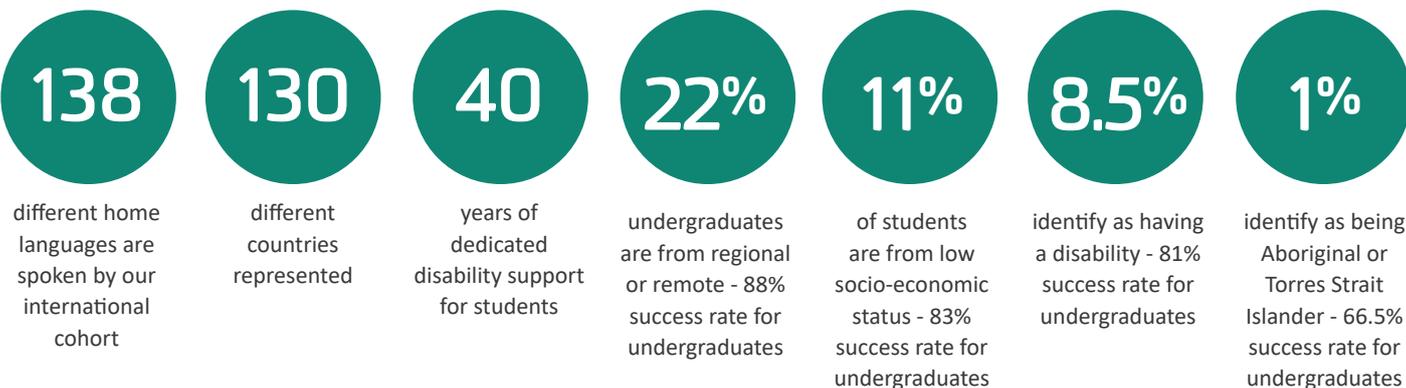
Our Culture



Our Staff



Our Students



Accreditations

Deakin holds accreditations which help drive action against our strategy, namely:



Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI)
– Silver Award for LGBTIQ+ Inclusion



SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Accreditation for
Gender Equity



Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)
Employer of Choice citation – awarded 14
consecutive years



Australian Breastfeeding Association
(ABA) Accreditation

The 'i' in inclusion

While our focus on diversity and inclusion is supported at the highest levels of Deakin, it is everyone's responsibility to do their part in creating a culture where diversity of thought and perspective is valued and encouraged.

Being inclusive is about the little things we all can influence in our everyday lives as much as the bigger programs of work the University is investing in.

Join us in creating a place where people feel included, have a deep sense of belonging and can thrive in their chosen paths.

Three things we can all do to support diversity and inclusion at Deakin

ONE PRACTICE CURIOSITY

Think about the people you work and study with - ask who is most like you and whose perspectives you value the most and why that is. Are there any lived experiences or representation of the broader community you're missing out on and how can you access these?

Next time you're looking for new ideas or making decisions, actively seek out multiple perspectives (especially those different to your own) and encourage alternative or dissenting points of view.

TWO BUILD YOUR CAPABILITY

Take part in diversity and inclusion training, workshops or events to increase your confidence in understanding how you can value the difference that diversity brings. Find out more about what Deakin is doing to support diversity and inclusion so you can share this knowledge with others - Google 'Deakin University Diversity' or get in touch at respectbelongthrive@deakin.com.au

THREE BE AN AMBASSADOR

Join a diversity community working group, get in touch to find out more at respectbelongthrive@deakin.com.au Be an ambassador for safety and respect by calling out discriminatory behaviour, comments, jokes or language about an individual or group.

Share your perspective

The Diversity and Inclusion strategy provides a framework to enable staff and students to really maximise their Deakin experience so we can all realise our full potential.

In the spirit of inclusion, there are multiple ways to provide inputs and feedback on our strategic direction. Let us know what you think, share your ideas and join in the journey respectbelongthrive@deakin.com.au or reach out to the Diversity and Inclusion team.

**Contact**

For further information, please visit the Deakin website at deakin.edu.au.

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