



**Creating Inclusive  
Futures Together:**  
Access and  
Participation Plan  
2021



## 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.

# What diversity and inclusion means to us

Our diversity and inclusion strategy has three strategic themes which guide a whole-of-university approach to embedding diversity and inclusion. The themes are:

## 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 behaviour and we all have a responsibility to address unacceptable attitudes and behaviours.

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

Our focus is on creating places - whether on campus or in our virtual spaces - where everyone feels safe to bring their whole selves to all they do.

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 empowered to challenge ideas and contribute to new processes, flexible ways of studying and working, making a positive impact for the whole community.



# Equity strategies:

## Aligned to the objectives of the HEPPP

At Deakin we welcome learners from diverse backgrounds who broaden our horizons and enrich our learning. We support our students to be globally connected, contributing to Australia and the world. We work with partners, both local and international, to enable flexible and non-traditional pathways into a Deakin education.

Our new strategy Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact seeks to enable greater access for aspiring, talented students from all backgrounds, helping to remove barriers to a Deakin education. Through our Education and Employability Guiding Plan Deakin will prioritise ‘Student Experience that optimises access, participation and success for diverse learners’ and ‘will provide tailored support to promote student success. Academic and peer support is designed in collaboration with teaching teams offering self-directed learning for flexibility, comprehensive library services, peer support communities, and individual assistance. Support is embedded across the student journey.’

Designed to support Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact, the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025 identifies three domains, which will enable us to advance in shaping the future and creating value for students, staff, stakeholders and the community. The principles of diversity and inclusion underpin Deakin’s overall approach to student access and equity initiatives funded through HEPPP:

- education and employability
- digital delivery and innovation, and
- partnerships for impact

The 2021 Access and Participation Plan supports key elements of both the Education and Employability Guiding Plan and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025 through the achievement of critical outcomes relating to student success and retention, whilst importantly targeting key equity groups. 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.

Figure 1 – Hierarchy of Strategic documents at Deakin



# Key activities:

Key activities will widen aspiration, promote higher education and improve access, participation, retention and success.

The 2021 Access and Participation Plan and associated activities have been redesigned to ensure increased access, participation, success, retention and completion of students from groups traditionally under-represented in higher education.

Activities are seeking to primarily target students from low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background in line with changes to Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) guidelines within the Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF).

Activities in the 2021 HEPPP Program have been designed to support Deakin's strategic objectives. We have ensured funds are best placed to flexibly support students and to better enable the activation of the University Strategic Plan.

Activities are a mix of established, evidence-based programs and new projects aimed at building the emphasis and focus on target students from low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous backgrounds.

Please see **Appendix 1** for an overview of our 2021 HEPPP funded activities aligned under the Equity Initiatives Framework.



# Evaluation:

How the strategies and key activities will be evaluated, which may focus on qualitative and/ or quantitative measures of success and overall effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the HEPPP.

Deakin's evaluation approach includes the collection of qualitative and quantitative data to assess components of each activity, i.e. individual events, as well as the overall program (encompassing all activities) evaluation. Program evaluation activities managed through the Strategic Intelligence and Planning Unit (SIPU) will involve data analysis and predictive statistical modelling to identify and support students from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.

All Deakin activities funded through HEPPP are required to prepare an internal annual project plan outlining agreed impact and outcome measures. An internal reporting and evaluation process is conducted every quarter to monitor how these activities have contributed to University outcomes as well as improving access to higher education and increasing participation of students from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.

Regular feedback from key stakeholders complements the internal evaluation process. Research, documenting best practice and the use of focus groups informs the direction of continual program enhancements.

Key metrics of success include, but are not limited to:

- Success in increasing the participation, school completion, career aspirations and tertiary application and enrolment rates from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.
- Retention and success rates of university students from under-represented student groups, both at a state and institutional level.
- Numbers of schools, organisations and students participating in outreach activities.
- Building evaluation capacity, embedding evaluation methods in programs and activities and ensure tangible measurable outcomes are embedded into planning and monitoring activity

Key mechanisms of evaluation include:

- Qualitative surveys of outreach and engagement activities measuring student study intentions, confidence for school and university students
- Student experience survey results
- Mid- year equity data synthesis & interpretations conducted by Strategic Intelligence and Planning Unit (SIPU)
- Diversity and Inclusion and Wellbeing Student Survey 2021

# Partnerships and collaboration

Who the university will partner and collaborate with on strategies and key activities and how this will ensure the objectives of the HEPPP are met

Deakin partners with a range of Schools with a geographical focus area of Barwon South West, Western Metro Melbourne, other Universities, TAFEs, Department of Education Vic, and a range of broader strategic partnerships with groups such as Community NGOs, Western Chances and Good Shepard Microfinance.

As well as internal collaborators and enablers; Deakin Faculties Institutes and Centres, NIKERI & Office of the PVC Indigenous, Deakin University Student Association (DUSA), Research Centres, DeakinTALENT, Deakin Advancements, Divisions of Student Life and Student Administration, Office of the DVC Education and Dean of Students.



# APPENDIX 1:

## HEPPP 2021 Program - Equity Initiatives Framework

Student life cycle	PRE-ACCESS: Outreach to Schools and Communities	ACCESS: Pathways and Admissions (including Enabling Pathways)	PARTICIPATION: Transition, Engagement and Progression (Undergraduate)	ATTAINMENT AND TRANSITION OUT (Undergraduate)
<b>Major principles and aims</b>	<p>A suite of outreach activities co-designed with University stakeholders, school partners and local communities. The program provides educational-based aspiration building activities highlighting pathways in pre-access, access and participation for talented low socio-economic, regional, rural, remote and Indigenous students, parents, carers, schools and communities. Geographical focus areas for this outreach will be Barwon South West, Western Metro Melbourne.</p>	<p>Renew frameworks for course selection criteria, ensuring that Deakin's suite of entry schemes engages with and attracts the most talented students from a diversity of priority cohorts.</p> <p>Determine parameters for strategic reframing of partnerships and engagements in key regions (Barwon, South West); introduction of targeted early- and guaranteed-entry schemes for admission to selected courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness and participation in academic, personal and financial support programs</li> <li>• Improve inclusion and resilience of our students</li> <li>• Raise awareness and embed inclusive education principles and measures of success</li> <li>• Offer peer programs and employment</li> <li>• Improve the inclusiveness and accessibility to target students that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and will introduce a range of initiatives and projects designed to access/ pathways, success and retention</li> <li>• Data analysis and predictive statistical modelling to identify students who are at-risk of discontinuing or failing their studies, from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background</li> <li>• Promoting and protecting mental health and wellbeing as a significant factor in student success, progressing mental health and wellbeing through curriculum and integrated access to personal resilience, self-management and self-care resources for all students</li> </ul>	<p>Employability – prepare students for their chosen career, through workshops, mentoring, cadetship and internship experiences.</p> <p>Job Ready Graduate Grant - will assist with expenses faced with entering the work force including money spent on interview skills, resume writing and business attire.</p>

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<b>Equity performance</b>	Numbers of schools, organisations and students participating in outreach activities from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.	Increase the access opportunities from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retention and success rates of university students from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.</li> <li>% increase of equity students who feel safe studying at Deakin (Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Student Survey)</li> <li>% increase of commencing students who feel a sense of belonging at Deakin (Getting Started Survey)</li> </ul>	Success in increasing career aspirations and completion rates from a low SES, regional/ remote and indigenous background.
<b>Deakin HEPPP funded equity initiatives 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destination Deakin - Deakin Engagement and Access Program (DEAP)</li> <li>Student Equity - Education Research Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access for Success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity Scholarships</li> <li>Inclusive Education</li> <li>Students Helping Students</li> <li>Priority Students</li> <li>Indigenous Inclusion</li> <li>Guided-Self Determination (GSD) Mentoring</li> <li>Student Mental Health and Wellbeing</li> <li>Students as Partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Integrated Learning (WiL grants)</li> <li>Job Ready Financial Assistance Grant</li> </ul>
<b>Percentage of total investment (\$5.1M)</b>	Pre-access: 22%	Access: 4%	Participation: 56%	Transition out: 16%

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<p><b>Central program management</b> <i>(2% of total investment)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program administration and strategy – ensure planned HEPPP activities for 2021 are strategically aligned to support the University Strategic Plan: Ideas to Impact 2030 and Education and Employability Guiding Plan. Enable better activation of the HEPPP funding to support students and the University’s strategic agenda.</li> <li>• Program evaluation – Monitoring the impact and effectiveness of activities aimed at improving the participation of current and prospective domestic undergraduate students from low SES backgrounds in higher education and ensure HEPPP funded projects aimed at increasing the participation, success and retention. Data collection to facilitate provision of support and evaluation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic enablers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deakin Strategy 2030: Ideas to Impact</li> <li>• Education and Employability Guiding Plan</li> <li>• Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025</li> <li>• iBelong at Deakin Program</li> <li>• Student Access, Equity and Participation Reference Group</li> <li>• Respect, Belong, Thrive Advisory Group</li> <li>• Institution-wide research/evaluation projects</li> <li>• Monitoring at each stage (access, performance, outcomes) utilising inclusive approach, with outcomes noted as part of progress report to the Department.</li> <li>• Development and review of federal policies, sector-wide policies and procedures with an equity lens</li> <li>• Review of university policies, procedures and plans with an equity lens provided by equity practitioners and inclusive learning scholars, drawing on insights gained from both practice and research (praxis- approach)</li> <li>• Continuing professional development for promoting inclusive practices and pedagogies</li> </ul>



#### Contact

For further information, please visit the Deakin website at [deakin.edu.au](https://deakin.edu.au)

Deakin University  
221 Burwood Highway  
Burwood VIC 3125  
Australia

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