

# Indigenous Student Success Program

## 2020 Performance Report

<b>Organisation</b>	Deakin University		
<b>Contact Person</b>	Associate Professor Gabrielle Fletcher		
<b>Phone</b>	03 5247 9470	<b>E-mail</b>	g.fletcher@deakin.edu.au

### 1. Enrolments (Access)

#### Performance Data 2016 to 2019

##### EFTSL

Indigenous Equivalent Full Time Student Load ('EFTSL') at Deakin University, according to the data supplied to the Vice Chancellor illustrates Deakin's performance over the past four years. Deakin has shown a consistent decrease in EFTSL from 2016 to 2018 with an increase in 2019.

##### EFTSL – Regional Remote

Indigenous EFTSL from regional and remote areas of Australia has shown a consistent increase from 2016 to 2019, resulting in an increase of just under 8 EFTSL across the four years. In 2019 EFTSL increased by 3.82 from 2018 which shows a positive trend in attracting students from regional and remote areas.

#### Strategies to Improve Access

Deakin University provides a range of programs and strategies to improve access to higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In 2020, these programs and strategies included:

The **Institute of Koorie Education (IKE)** was renamed to the **National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation (NIKERI) Institute** in March 2020 to honour the 34 year legacy of its past and continue to grow and enrich Indigenous Knowledges on a national footprint, providing higher education opportunities to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The name change will be symbolic of the work already undertaken and will reflect the national scope of our expanding core business in Community Based Delivery, Indigenous Knowledges and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The Institute offers undergraduate, and postgraduate studies across a range of disciplines including Indigenous Knowledges, Indigenous research, arts, education, health, and law. The Institute also delivers honours and higher degrees by research across a number of study areas and provides access to higher education in an inclusive and culturally safe environment. Teaching and learning activities are funded by the University. Indigenous access support activities are partly funded by the University and partly funded by the Commonwealth Government.

**NIKERI Institute Application Portal:** The portal allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to enrol directly to the Institute as a direct entry program.

**Indigenous Access Scheme:** introduced in 2020, the Indigenous Access Scheme is a pathway into undergraduate study across several select courses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, with all Faculties represented. Prospective students can demonstrate their readiness to study through previous life or work experience, education, community involvement etc. Funded by the University and HEPPP.

**Indigenous Direct Admissions Program (IDAP):** During COVID-19, NIKERI Institute delivered the first virtual Indigenous testing and assessment program, held from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The aim of the program was to assess the eligibility of students to enrol in studies at NIKERI Institute. The program is designed to provide access to University for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the alternative entry pathway. The IDAP program attracted school leavers to mature age candidates looking for a career in health, arts, education, laws in undergraduate and postgraduate courses at the Institute of Koorie Education. Overall, there were 32 prospective students who registered interest in the program, however 16 students completed the entry assessment and interview. Funded by the University.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda 2016-2020:** University-wide strategies to improve Indigenous participation at Deakin University. See information under section six.

**NIKERI Institute Community-Based Delivery model:** The Institute delivers courses through the mixed mode Community-Based Delivery (CBD) model. The CBD model provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from across Australia access to higher education whilst maintaining their family and community obligations. This model of delivery has increased access to university for Indigenous students from regional and remote areas. CBD is funded through the University and is supported by the Commonwealth Government Away From Base project funding (AFB), which provides Indigenous students with the opportunity to engage in periods of on-campus study.

**Kitjarra Residence:** Dedicated Indigenous student residence to support Indigenous students engaged in the on-campus intensive study at the NIKERI Institute. Funded by the University, partly funded by AFB.

**Indigenous Entry Pathway** (Medicine, Optometry and Medical Imaging) are now established across all major courses within the School of Medicine. Funded by the University.

**Deakin School of Medicine Indigenous Relocation Costs Bursary:** Accommodation bursary provided to medicine students to cover the cost of six months on campus accommodation. Funded by the University. In addition, a preparation for Medicine program was launched in 2019 to assist students transitioning to medical school at Deakin.

**NIKERI Institute Orientation:** The Institute offers orientation to commencing Institute students to ensure cultural well-being, university systems orientation, and development of university study skills. Funded by the University, partly funded by ISSP. Only Trimester one face to face orientation programs were delivered and remaining orientations were delivered online, due to COVID-19.

**Cultural Mentor Program:** In 2020, NIKERI Institute employed a male and female Indigenous Cultural Mentor one day a week to support students with cultural guidance. Fully funded by ISSP.

**Graduate Diploma of Indigenous Research:** Pathway into higher degrees by research for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Funded by the University.

**COVID-19 Relief Fund:** Deakin University offered relief payments of up to \$500 to Deakin students that applied for assistance during the pandemic. NIKERI Institute and the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation called Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin to assist and encourage students to apply for the payment grant. Funded by the University.

## Outreach Activities

**Indigenous Community Engagement:** Local and national engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities to promote higher education aspirations and opportunities. NIKERI Institute employed a Partnerships Coordinator late 2019 to engage and develop local and national community partnerships. The following activities were developed through this role and funded by the University:

- **NIKERI Engagement and Pathways Program (NEPP):** offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school children access to information regarding Deakin University and encourage access to higher education. The NEPP program involved eleven schools participating nationally. The schools involved were Broome Senior High School, Erindale College, Katherine High School, Kirwin State School, Marist Regional College, Newton Moore Senior High School, St Phillip's College, Tamworth High School, Woree State High School.
- **Roadshows:** A Victorian roadshow was conducted prior to COVID-19 and fourteen Aboriginal Cooperative organisations were visited around south western Victoria from Warrnambool, Heywood, Horsham, Mildura, Robinvale, Echuca, Albury, Wodonga, Shepparton and Bendigo.
- **Prospective Students Information Sessions:** Community organisations, Aboriginal cooperatives and prospective students were invited to virtual sessions conducted throughout 2020 as a way of recruiting students to Deakin and NIKERI Institute.

**Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP):** This program provides supplementary funding to Deakin to assist with tailored initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Funded by the Commonwealth Government.

- **Indigenous Inclusion Projects** – funded by HEPPP and staffed by the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation for the benefit of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin University.
  - Data collection, analysis and reporting on opportunities and challenges related to the full inclusion, participation, success, retention, outreach and access for Indigenous students at Deakin University.
  - Improve the cultural awareness programs among Deakin students and staff to encourage uptake and improve the cultural responsiveness of the organisation and learning environment.
  - Leading the planning and implementation of the Curriculum Transformation Project to embed Indigenous Knowledges and perspectives across all disciplines and courses at Deakin.
  - Establishment of the *Ngatanwarr Tyama* transition program for commencing Indigenous students. *Ngatanwarr Tyama* means 'Welcome to Learning' in the Keeray Woorroong dialect. The program introduces commencing Indigenous students to Deakin University, its academic & cultural support services, community supports, and volunteering, internship & employment opportunities they may wish to take advantage of. A follow-up nurture campaign through the first trimester is also integrated.
  - Deakin partnered with the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Wadawurrung Traditional Custodians to trial a new model of cultural immersion activity for school-aged children. Adhering to the strongest cultural protocols and through extensive consultation (more information provided below), the program adapted to the socially distant restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide an experience that used high-quality video material of Wadawurrung Traditional Custodians to tell the story of the Country on which Moolap Primary School sits. Traditional names, animals, practices and landscapes were explored in the video, and then this resource was presented to teaching staff alongside cultural awareness training to support them in using this with their students. Several sessions were then conducted where participating Grade 3 & 4 students were asked to write and illustrate their learnings. Traditional Custodians were brought into the classroom to help facilitate this, and a collaborative mural was painted in one of the school's communal spaces as an enduring reminder of the lessons learnt about Wadawurrung Country and some common Aboriginal artistic symbology.

**Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME):** AIME match Indigenous high school students with a University mentor to deepen educational aspirations and access. In 2020 HEPPP continued to support AIME operating across all three campus sites i.e. Burwood, Geelong and Warrnambool. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AIME developed a multi-faceted solution to ensure as many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as possible remained engaged in their education, continued to develop their imagination, and be reassured that mentors could still be present in their lives everyday whilst we couldn't physically deliver AIME Program Days and Tutor Squads. This solution included:

1. IMAGI-NATION {TV} to meet the challenge of isolation when COVID-19 struck. Our pursuit was to elevate knowledge - every guest we bring on knows something - they have wisdom to share. IMAGI-NATION{TV} - highlights (ep 1-99) <https://vimeo.com/454576826/883f618ecb>

- Guest Mentors included former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, Ndileka Mandela, Stan Grant, Daisy Jeffrey, Nancy Conrad, Damon Gameau and many, many more.

As one example, this week we had Australia's Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Ken Wyatt, provide advice to our students: <https://youtu.be/S5Zn8qfUIPI?t=645>

- 107 Episodes (Mar-Nov)
- 359 Guest Mentors
- 250 Mentees (year 7-12 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander youth) in IMAGI-NATION{TV} Episodes

2. Classrooms - this was simply an online version of AIME's tutor squads centred around the academic development of the students. The session would typically include a storytelling segment by the leader (AIME staff member) to ease the vibe of the arena and set a safe space for students to be vulnerable, followed by breakout sessions between mentors and mentees to discuss particular academic questions/challenges.

### **Scholarships (229 scholarships awarded to Indigenous students in 2020)**

#### **Deakin-funded scholarships (116):**

- Vice-Chancellor's Academic Excellence Scholarship: \$5,000 cash payment and 100% tuition fee allowance per year for normal course duration awarded to **one student**.
- Dr (Aunty) Mary Atkinson Scholarship (Commencing undergraduate): 100% tuition fees paid for the normal course duration, awarded to **two students**.
- Deakin Student Support Scholarship \$1,000: one-off payment of \$1,000 awarded to **eleven students**.
- Deakin Student Support Scholarship \$2,500: \$2,500 per year for fulltime course duration (part-time pro-rata), awarded to **twelve students**.
- Deakin Student Support Scholarship \$5,000: \$5,000 per year for fulltime course duration (part-time pro-rata), awarded to **eight students**.
- Deakin Student Support Scholarship \$7,500: \$7,500 per year for fulltime course duration (part-time pro-rata), awarded to **four students**.
- Student Rental Support Scheme: \$1,200 for one-year fulltime load, awarded to **twelve students**.
- Deakin COVID-19 Financial Assistance Scheme: \$500 awarded to **fifty-eight students**.
- Deakin Engagement Access Program (DEAP) Grant: awarded to **seven students**.
- Deakin University Student Association (DUSA) Scholarship awarded to **one student**.

#### **Donor-funded scholarships (7):**

- Jewish Holocaust Centre Wilson Family Scholarship: one-off payment of \$3,000, awarded to **one student**.
- Ernie Williams Indigenous Scholarship: \$10,000 awarded to **two students**.
- Santa Singh and Balwant Kaur Scholarship: \$5,000 awarded to **three students**.
- Yarn Strong Sista Indigenous Scholarship: one off payment of \$3,000 awarded to **one student**.

#### **Higher Education Partnership Participation Program (HEPPP)-funded and other Government funded- scholarships (22):**

- HEPPP Retention and Support Scholarship: \$2,500 one off payment awarded to **fourteen students**.
- Work Integrated Learning (Wil) Financial Support Scheme: \* Wil Placements support between \$1,500 and \$4,500, awarded to **one student**.
- Rural Clinical Placement Support Scheme: support between \$50 and \$3,000 depending on circumstances and placement, awarded to **seven students**.

#### **Indigenous Student Success Program funded (84):**

- Indigenous Higher Education Scholarship (ISSP): \$2,000 per trimester for one year, awarded to **eighty-three students**.
- Preserved Indigenous Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship (ICECS) awarded to **one student**.

**Table 1 Scholarships - breakdown of 2020 payments<sup>1 2 3</sup>**

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total <sup>4 5</sup>	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling <sup>6</sup>								
Undergraduate <sup>7</sup>	\$134,000	67					\$134,000	67
Post-graduate <sup>8</sup>	\$32,000	16					\$32,000	16
Other	\$2,755	1					\$2,755	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$168,755</b>	<b>84</b>					<b>\$168,755</b>	<b>84</b>

## 2. Progression (access and outcomes)

### Performance Data 2016 to 2019

#### Success Rate

The success rate of units passed, and units attempted has increased in 2019 to the highest value in the past four years resulting in a spike in Deakin's performance. During the past four years, there has been fluctuations in the success rate. As a result, Deakin has implemented several strategies outlined below to consistently improve the success rate of units passed and/or attempted:

Programs and Strategies to Improve Success and Retention:

- **NIKERI Institute:** As the dedicated Indigenous higher education and support centre at Deakin University, NIKERI Institute offers a range of strategies to improve unit success rates and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students. The Institute is committed to creating an academic, cultural, and social place of integrity that places Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, protocols, cultural perspectives and Knowledge Systems at the forefront. Student progress is closely monitored through the Institute's Student Progress Committee and Academic Progress and Discipline Committee.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda 2016-2020:** Deakin-wide strategies to improve Indigenous participation at Deakin University. See information under section six.
- **NIKERI Institute Community-Based Delivery model:** The Institute delivers courses through the CBD model, which provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from across Australia access to higher education whilst maintaining their family and community obligations. This model of delivery enables the Institute to deliver University qualifications in a culturally inclusive way. The approach integrates teaching and student support strategies with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus. Institute courses are relevant, engaging and respond to identified Indigenous community and professional community needs. The CBD is funded through the University and is supported by the Commonwealth Government Away From Base project funding (AFB), which provides Indigenous students with the opportunity to engage in periods of on-campus study.
- **Kitjarra Residence:** The dedicated Indigenous student residence provides support to Indigenous students engaged in the on-campus study at the Institute of Koorie Education. This space ensures a culturally safe environment for Indigenous students to residence in during on-campus study intensives. Funded by the University, partly funded by AFB.
- **Cultural Mentor Program:** In 2020, NIKERI Institute employed a male and female cultural mentor to provide cultural support and guidance to students within the Institute and Deakin University. Funded by ISSP.
- **NIKERI Institute Student Services Division:** The dedicated Student Services Division within the NIKERI Institute provides enrolment, academic engagement, scholarship, examination, and graduation support to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin University. Funded by the University, partly funded by ISSP.
- **Institute Learning Success Plans:** Individualised Learning Success Plans co-created by Institute students and academic staff to improve success and retention.
- **Training in Digital Technology and Cloud Learning:** Online and in-person workshops and support provided to students and staff in use of digital technology and Cloud Learning. Funded by the University.
- **Partnership Coordinator:** NIKERI Institute employs a Partnership Coordinator to create partnerships and relationships with Indigenous community groups and organisations to engage and connect Deakin University to inspire community projects and also increase higher education participation in community. In 2020 a number of virtual community events were organised in consultation with PVCI team to connect and engage community nationally. Funded by Deakin.

- **Medical Student support:**
  - Scholarship support available to students interested and/or studying Medicine, Optometry and Medical Imaging.
  - Dedicated pastoral care support offered by the Indigenous Health team
  - Accommodation bursary available to new and commencing students studying in Medicine, Optometry and Medical Imaging. Covers on campus accommodation costs for Semester 1.
  - Academic Mentor program available to students – academic support over the duration of their studies for students enrolled in Medicine.
  - Culturally safe spaces available at our Waurn Ponds campus and across clinical schools namely, Eastern Health.
  - Identified entry pathways for students interested in studying Medicine, Optometry and Medical Imaging.
  - Indigenous Tutorial support – available via NIKERI Institute to any Indigenous student enrolled in Medicine, Optometry and Medical Imaging.
- **Culturally Safe Environment:** Welcome to Country ceremony practised at orientation for all Institute students to ensure cultural foundation to the educational experience. Aboriginal Cultural Education workshops and seminars available to all Deakin staff, and required for all staff working within the Institute and Senior Management/Executive. These activities contribute the maintenance of a culturally-safe environment within the University. Funded by the University, partly funded by ISSP.
- **Designated Indigenous Specific Spaces:** NIKERI Institute provides a designated Indigenous space at the Waurn Ponds campus for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at Deakin. Deakin also provides an Indigenous staff and student identified space at the Burwood campus to promote a culturally inclusive co-working area. This has been funded by the University. In addition, there is a culturally safe space for health students at Eastern Health, with work(s) in place to establish further safe places at each clinical site at Ballarat, Warrnambool and Geelong Clinical School.
- **Indigenous Tutorial Network:** Provides tutorial support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the Institute and Deakin wide. In-house tutorial service provided to Institute students whilst on-campus, and students are matched with appropriate tutors when home in community. The Student Learning Coordinator, a full-time employee, manages the recruitment and provision of student tutors whilst the students are at home. Funded by ISSP.
- **Medicine Mentor Program:** Mentor program developed to assist Indigenous medical students identified as requiring additional academic support. Funded by the University.
- **Academic Support Officer:** We have one full time Student Learning Advisor (Academic Support Officer) providing tutoring at the Institute to students on study intensives. The support includes structuring essays and assignments, Academic language/grammar, and feedback on assignments. This position is funded by ISSP.
- **Scholarships:** Deakin offers a range of scholarships to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to support progression and retention; ultimately providing support to succeed and complete their qualifications.
- **Indigenous Knowledge Units:** The Institute delivers Indigenous Knowledges units which are available to all Deakin University undergraduate students. This delivery contributes to the cultural competence of Deakin students, and provides a culturally safe learning experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
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- **Indigenous Inclusion Coordinator:** This role sits in the Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous Strategy area and promotes inclusive practices across the university; performs data analysis to report on the challenges and opportunities related to the full inclusion, participation, success, retention, outreach and access for Indigenous students at Deakin University.



- **Office of Indigenous Strategy & Innovation:** Was responsible for HEPPP-funded success & retention projects and activities, including:
  - **Indigenous Student Success Forum:** Given the difficulties of maintaining positive study habits during the COVID-19 pandemic, a one-day virtual forum was held in November 2020 to profile several positive Aboriginal role models, who drew on their personal stories of success to inspire Deakin's Indigenous student cohort and celebrate their successes and perseverance during a very difficult year.
  - **Graduate Learning Outcome 8 (GLO8) Curriculum Transformation Project:** In 2016, Deakin University set goals to:
    - Deliver explicit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' inclusive curriculum to grow enrolments and completion rates and make this curriculum explicit in the Deakin Graduate Outcomes
    - Ensure that all courses have embedded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' references and perspectives as part of the core units and appropriate electives.
    - Ensure that all degrees which have explicit Australian professional registration address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' contexts and perspectives as the essential starting point for understanding the Australian community and context.
 In 2019, GLO8 was amended to become:
 

*Global citizenship: Engaging ethically and productively in the professional context, and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as well as diverse communities and cultures in a global context*

In 2020, A working group was established to generate an approach to embedding the revised GLO8 into curricula across all courses and disciplines in the university. Implementation of the revised GLO8 will initiate ongoing curriculum renewal as capability builds and courses are refined.

- Phase 1 of this project (Jul-Dec 2020) will undertake curriculum-mapping in eight priority courses and the planning of 'on Country' transformational journeys and curriculum support resources.
- Phase 2 begins in 2021 with 'on Country' experiences for the selected eight courses. Phase 2 also includes curriculum mapping for four Schools, with 'on Country' journeys for the four Schools and subsequent curriculum writing.
- For Phase 3, curriculum mapping, on country experiences and curriculum-writing will continue with remaining Deakin Schools; these activities will be staggered and will occur in parallel over coming years.

**Table 2a Tutorial assistance provided in 2020**

Level of study	Number of students assisted	Total hours of assistance <sup>9</sup>	Expenditure <sup>10</sup> (\$)
Enabling			
Undergraduate	114	3728	\$263,854.58
Post graduate	32	1721	\$121,806.26
Other			
<b>Total</b>	146	5449	\$385,660.83

**Table 2b Indigenous Support Activities provided in 2020<sup>11</sup>**

Activity <sup>12 13</sup>	Number of student participants	Expenditure (\$)
Scholarships	84	\$168,755
Cultural Mentor Program	NA	\$53,929
Indigenous Tutorial Network	146	\$385,660.83
Student Learning Advisor (Academic Support Officer)	NA	\$67,297
Cultural Competency Activities	NA	\$1800
Student Printing	NA	\$1,500

### 3. Completions (outcomes)

#### Completions

There has been a positive increase in completions in 2019; a spike of 25 completions from 2018 to 2019 from the data supplied. We expect the number of completions to consistently rise in 2020. The position of Deakin University sits in the top 10 for completions which is a pleasing result.

#### Programs and Strategies to Improve Completions:

- **NIKERI Institute:** NIKERI Institute supports Indigenous students enrolled in Community-Based Delivery programs within the Institute, and Indigenous students enrolled Deakin wide. Deakin University and the Institute offers a range of programs and strategies to improve award course completions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda 2016-2020:** Deakin wide strategies to improve Indigenous completion at Deakin University. See information under section six.
- **NIKERI Institute Student Services Division:** The dedicated Student Services Division within the Institute provides enrolment, academic engagement, scholarship, examination, and graduation support to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin University. Funded by the University, partly funded by ISSP.
- **Indigenous Tutorial Network:** Provides tutorial support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the Institute and Deakin wide. In-house tutorial service provided to Institute students whilst on- campus, and students are matched with appropriate tutors when home in community. Indigenous students and graduates are recruited as tutors in this program. In 2020, all tutoring after March 2020 was conducted virtually due to COVID-19. Funded by ISSP.
- **Indigenous Staff:** The employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff ensures cultural and relational support for Indigenous students. The University has identified a number of positions for applicants who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in line with section 12 of the *Victoria Equal Opportunity Act (2010)*. This is supported by Deakin's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy*.
- **Grow Your Own Program:** Engagement of Indigenous graduates from Deakin University into academic and professional positions at the University. This program provides career progression support. Funded by the University.
- **Partnerships and Engagement:** Partnerships and engagement with industry and government organisations provides placement and work integrated learning opportunities for Indigenous students and graduates. Deakin encourages students to engage in the CareerTrackers program, which provides students with internship and employment opportunities during their course to increase the employment-readiness of graduates.
- **Postgraduate Courses:** Enrolment from Deakin Indigenous alumni into postgraduate studies (both coursework degrees and higher degrees by research) at NIKERI Institute and Deakin wide, provides academic attainment and career progression opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In 2018, there were 28 students enrolled in a postgraduate course. In 2019 there were 30 students which shows a slight increase. In 2020 there were 184 postgraduate Indigenous students, of which 96 were commencing students.

- **HR Consultant (Indigenous Staffing):** The HR Consultant (Indigenous Staffing) position is filled by an appropriately qualified Indigenous person. The position aims to increase Indigenous employment throughout the University and provide networking opportunities to Indigenous staff. One focus of this role is the engagement of Indigenous students and alumni in employment at the University.
- **Indigenous Inclusion Coordinator:** This position supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin to assist in access, outreach programs, success and progression of students. This has included providing connections between graduate employment division 'DeakinTALENT' and Indigenous students, prospective employers and industry partners. Additionally, this position has sought to improve the cultural safety of university services, including health and wellbeing services (counselling, Disability Resource Centre etc), and cultural awareness more broadly among Deakin academic and professional staff, through promotion of anti-racism initiatives and highly visible advocacy for the Victorian Treaty process.
- **Graduate Employment:** Deakin graduates continue to be eligible for career coaching and job-seeking support (even after leaving the university) through the DeakinTALENT division, which has been rated as the top university careers service in Australia. Employment outcomes for Deakin's Indigenous graduates continue to be strong in comparison to their non-Indigenous peers, with greater rates of full-time employment, and a higher median full-time salary upon graduation.

## 4. Regional and remote students

### **Indigenous EFTSL – Regional and Remote**

The proportion of Indigenous Equivalent Full-Time Student Loads ('EFTSL') from remote and regional areas of Australia has shown a steady increase from 2016 to 2019 by 8 which signifies consistent growth in attracting students from remote and regional areas. There was a consistent increase from 2016 to 2018 by 2 consecutively each year and in 2019 it increased by 4.

### **Strategies to improve access to university study:**

#### **Community Based Delivery:**

Students residing in regional and remote areas of Australia have the opportunity to travel to NIKERI Institute in Geelong and participate in face to face Intensives as part of their core studies. During their intensive, students can engage in face to face tutoring as well as Student Learning Advisors to supplement the academic support. This support adjuncts the Cloud based academic support also provided whilst they are at home and studying online. CBD programs enable the students that might not have access to reliable internet to receive sufficient support whilst they attend on campus activities. Unfortunately, all face to face Intensives were cancelled and virtual Intensive were held online via Cloud Deakin from mid March. Trimester 1 and all of Trimester 2/2020. More resources were put into Cloud based learning and providing students with resources where internet wasn't reliable.

#### **NEPP – Information Sessions**

NIKERI Institute Partnership Coordinator conducted a regional road show visiting several Aboriginal co-operations and community centres in Victoria's south west region in February 2020. The road show was extremely successful with over 16 organisations prior to the Institute of Koorie Education becoming NIKERI Institute in March 2020.

Covid-19 isolation and restrictions meant an emergence of Virtual events which allowed NIKERI institute to interact with an audience on a more National scale.

The Roadshows that were planned at the beginning of the year also became virtual and we created partnerships from around Australia including, Broome, Alice Springs, Bunbury, Tamworth, Darwin, Katherine, Griffith, Woree and Kirwin. This also saw the emergence of an outreach program called NIKERI Engagement and Pathways Program (NEPP) which will give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school children access to information regarding Deakin University and encourage a future with higher education. In 2020, there were 11 participating schools nationally.

**AIME:** 2020 was the final year of a pilot project funded by the National Priorities Pool to roll out the AIME mentoring model in regional Victoria, using Deakin's Warrnambool campus as a home base and engaging students in high schools throughout South Western Victoria. AIME facilitates experiences that are designed to increase attendance and success through the final years of high school. The Warrnambool pilot program has been engaging regional Indigenous young people and providing them with exposure to the Deakin regional campus lifestyle and possibilities.

**Deakin Cloud Campus:** In 2020, there were a total of 702 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Deakin University. Of the total, 292 were from regional areas whilst 55 students were from remote areas. In addition, 69% of Deakin's Indigenous students chose to study via the Cloud Campus. As a leader in distance education and online learning, Deakin's students are supported through dedicated, extended-hours online support services, as well as digital communities of their academic peers.

### **Activities to support students during their studies**

**Indigenous Access Scheme:** As described earlier, the Indigenous Access Scheme encourages alternative entry pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and particularly encourages regional and remote students to access guaranteed Commonwealth Supported Places in light of the Job Ready Graduates package of legislative changes.

#### **Indigenous Tutorial Network:**

- There were 69 students from regional and remote areas that received individual tutoring support in 2020.
- 1,415 engagements in total.

**Scholarships:** There were 73 regional and remote students who were offered scholarship funding in 2020, equating to \$146,000.

#### **Academic Support**

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can book in to see the Academic Support Officer online via Zoom, Skype or Microsoft Teams sessions. Cloud Campus students and CBD students can also access Deakin's Student Study Support which provides [academic study support](#) 24/7.

**Table 4 Scholarship data for remote and regional students<sup>14 15</sup>**

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total <sup>16</sup>	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2019 Payments	\$148,181	95					\$148,181	95
B. 2020 Offers <sup>17</sup>	\$172,000	86					\$172,000	86
C. Percentage <sup>18</sup> (C=B/A*100)	116%							116%
<b>2020 Payments</b>	\$146,000	73					\$146,000	73

## 5. Working with Vulnerable People Requirement<sup>19</sup>

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

## 6. Eligibility requirements

### 6.1. Indigenous Education Strategy

The [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda 2016-2020](#) ('Higher Education Agenda') is Deakin University's Indigenous Education Strategy. The Higher Education Agenda responds to the objects of the University to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in teaching, learning, research and advancement of knowledge, in order to contribute to Indigenous educational aspirations and safeguarding of Indigenous cultural heritage: [s 5\(f\) Deakin University Act \(2009\)](#). The Universities Australia Indigenous Cultural Competency Framework and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples provides guidance and context for the Higher Education Agenda. The strategies outlined in the Higher Education Agenda are framed within Deakin University's strategic plan, [LIVE the Future: Agenda 2020. In December 2020, Deakin's new university Strategic Plan "Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact" which provides an even more comprehensive, embedded approach to centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff priorities.](#)

In meeting the requirements of section 13 of the ISSP guidelines the Higher Education Agenda addresses the following:

**Deakin's Key Performance Indicators:**

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student numbers represent whole of Australian population by 2020 (2016 Australia 3% and Victoria 3%). The current Enterprise Agreement sets specific targets for employment which are supported by this Agenda and the Deakin University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Outcomes Committee.

**Progress**

The number of Indigenous staff at Deakin University was 80 in 2016, 44 in 2017, 87 in 2018 and 77 in 2019. As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, there were 66 staff which shows a slight decrease from 2019.

2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities recognise Deakin as a culturally safe and competent environment for teaching, learning and research. Deakin is University of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nationally and this is indicated by growth in enrolments to 1000 by 2020, retention and success to 70% by 2020 and growth in staff numbers to 100 by 2020.

**Progress**

The success rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2020 was 72%, exceeding the target set in the agenda. This also shows a marked increase on the 2019 result of 68.9%. Enrolments grew strongly in 2020, to a total of 695.

3. Cultural Competency Professional Learning is completed by all Senior Managers and is part of the Deakin Induction for all new staff in 2020.

**Progress**

In 2020, Deakin University has continued to provide Cultural Competency professional development, available to all university staff. In addition, the University has incorporated a Cultural Awareness component in the Deakin University Staff Induction program. Plans for more in depth cultural immersion experiences for senior executive members are well advanced for implementation in 2021.

**Strategic Plan**

Deakin's strategic plan was revitalised in 2020 to reshape the vision for the next ten years; "to enhance the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of our communities". On page 5 of Deakin's 2030 Ideas to Impact document, it refers to "**Indigenous Knowledges and Ideas inform our future**".

*"Deakin is committed to Reconciliation and Treaty, advancing the educational aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and moving Indigenous Knowledges into the mainstream of Australian life. All our endeavours will reflect on Australia's full history and seek to build an inclusive future."*

**Deakin's Graduate Learning Outcome 8 (GLO8) - Global citizenship**

Deakin has embedded a [graduate learning outcome \(GLO8\) called Global citizenship](#) to respect and gain a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as diverse communities and culture in a global context. The Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation will be appointing an Indigenous Curriculum Transformation Officer and leading a comprehensive curriculum transformation project to assist in embedding Indigenous Knowledges systems and practices to pedagogy in courses Deakin wide.

- **Indigenous Students:** The key performance indicators and strategy objectives throughout the Higher Education Agenda prioritise increasing the number of Indigenous students accessing, progressing and completing higher education qualifications.
- **Cultural Competency:** The key performance indicators and strategy objectives promote cultural competency expectations for all Deakin students and staff. This was achieved through the delivery of online access for Deakin staff to the *Centre for Cultural Competence Australia's Cultural Competence Course*, module A, with 400 staff completing module A in 2020.
- **Implementation and evaluation:** The responsibility to implement the Higher Education Agenda is Deakin wide, but is led by the University Executive. Implementation and evaluation has been overseen by a senior Indigenous Professor. The KPIs for the Higher Education Agenda are reported above.

**Further highlights in 2020**

- **Recruitment of two PhD Aboriginal staff:** Deakin University committed to the recruitment of two Indigenous Academic Fellows to work at NIKERI Institute. The funding was approved in 2019 and the intention to recruit in 2022.
- **Indigenous Research quantum:** The Deakin University library is working with NIKERI Institute on reporting on all publications submitted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Academics at Deakin.
- **Exactly 100 degrees were conferred on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students in 2020,** only the second time this century milestone has been reached in a calendar year. This is an extraordinary result in a difficult year for all students.



## 6.2. Indigenous Workforce Strategy

In meeting the requirements of section 12 of the ISSP guidelines Deakin University have the following:

The [Deakin University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy](#) ('Deakin Employment Strategy') is the Indigenous Workforce Strategy at Deakin. In addition to the Deakin Employment Strategy, the University has two overarching documents that directly refer to increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and development of Indigenous staff, the University's Enterprise Agreement, and the Higher Education Agenda.

The relevant provisions under the EA, the Higher Education Agenda, and the Deakin Employment Strategy, are coordinated by the HR Consultant (Indigenous Staffing), a role which was realigned from Human Resources Division to the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation in 2020. This is a dedicated and ongoing resource to coordinate all employment programs and initiatives in regards to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy:** The Deakin Employment Strategy outlines the workforce strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The strategy outlines Deakin University's commitment to generate and establish successful job opportunities and employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Enterprise Agreement:** Section 24 of the [Deakin University Enterprise Agreement 2017](#) refers to a targeted incremental increase of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff cohort from 2017-2021, specifically outlining an increase in Professional, Academic and Senior staff over this period (please refer to clause 24.6 of the EA). The EA also commits Deakin to the implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy (24.7) which was introduced in 2018. The target for 2020 is 43 full time equivalent employment: 20 Academic staff and 25 Professional staff.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda 2016-2020:** Deakin has an overarching [Higher Education Agenda](#) that outlines the Universities aspirations for employment in Goal 4: Experience. This section directly refers to an increase in the amount of senior appointments (4.2 Senior Executive, Director and Managerial level), Identifying programs for both the recruitment of new staff (4.10) and the development of current staff (4.11), and the development our own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics by encouraging and supporting current students and staff into gaining further academic qualifications (4.12). As noted by the timelines in the Agenda all of these programs have been worked through during 2016-17 and aspects will be included in the Employment Strategy.

The Deakin University **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy** was formalised and implemented in the second half of 2018. The University focused on the following activities in relation to the Deakin Employment Strategy:

The University focused on the following activities in relation to the Deakin Employment Strategy:

- Development of the working group to assist with the implementation and evaluation of Deakin's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.
- Fostering Indigenous community relationships, is progressing with ongoing meetings with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)
- The continuation and maintenance of the Indigenous Staff Network throughout 2020 were held via zoom meeting in light of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Provision of a culturally safe environment within Deakin University campuses. This was achieved through the delivery of online access for Deakin staff to the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia's Cultural Competence Course, module A, with 400 staff completing module A in 2020.
- Celebration and observation of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events. The following events were held; National Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week – Art project, NAIDOC - Panel Discussion via zoom.

- **Senior Appointment**

Deakin University recruited and appointed Professor Mark Rose to the position as Pro-Vice Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy & Innovation) in 2019, the most senior Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander academic role at Deakin. Professor Rose commenced his appointment in January 2020.

- **Indigenous Workforce Target**

According to section 12 (ii) of the ISSP guidelines, the target number of Indigenous employees is 3% of all Deakin employees. In 2020 the current percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed at Deakin University was 66 which equates to 1.5%. The total number of staff at Deakin in 2020 was 4240.

**Table 6.2 Indigenous workforce data (2020 breakdown)<sup>20 21 22 23</sup>**

Level/position	Permanent		Casual/contract/fixed-term	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
Level A Academic	2			
Level B Academic	8			
Level C Academic	6			
Level D Academic	2			
Level E Academic	4			
Casual Academic			12	
HEW 1				2
HEW 2				2
HEW 3				
HEW 4		3		5
HEW 5		2		1
HEW 6		3		
HEW 7		6		
HEW 8		1		
HEW 9		2		
Casual Research				6
Casual Exam				2
ITN Tutors				22
Casual Other				1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>No of staff who left prior to 31 December 2020</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b> (combined Academic and Casual staff)	
<b>Total Indigenous staff at Deakin as of 31 December 2020</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b> (combined Academic and Casual staff)	

**Total Indigenous staff at Deakin as of 31 December 2020 was 66 equating to 1.5% representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Deakin.**

### 6.3. Indigenous Governance Mechanism

In meeting the requirements of section 11 of the ISSP guidelines Deakin University have the following:

- **Senior Indigenous Academics:** Deakin employs a number of appropriately qualified senior Indigenous academics within the University (see 6.2 table for further information), with these individuals holding positions on a number of decision-making committees throughout the University, including but not limited to the University Executive, Senior Management Group, University Research and Ethics Committees, and the University Academic Board.

As the most senior academic appointment within NIKERI Institute in 2020, Director, Associate Professor Gabrielle Fletcher holds membership on the University's Academic Board, the University Executive, the Faculty of Arts and Education Board, the University Teaching and Learning Committee, Senior Leadership Group, and the Professoriate as part of the Faculty-level governance.

- **Senior Indigenous Executives:** Deakin employs a number of appropriately qualified senior professional staff (see 6.2 table for further information), across a range of faculties and divisions within the University.

- **Institute Advisory Board:** NIKERI Institute Advisory Board provides governance advice around key areas including Indigenous knowledge, courses, student engagement, and community aspirations and partnerships. The Board reflects the national scale of the Institute's activities and advises on cultural context and direction on strategic objectives. Building on the Institute's rich heritage in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, in March 2020 the Institute of Koorie Education transitioned into the National Indigenous Knowledge Education and Research (NIKERI) Institute. With this transition, NIKERI will assume a sharper focus within its specific domain and maintain its own advisory body.

- **The Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation (OISI)** was established in early 2020 some six weeks before Victoria was plunged into lockdown with work from home restrictions in place for the rest of the year and into 2021. In last year's report it was noted that the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation (OISI) intended to establish an overarching governance arrangement with a 'whole of university' view. This meant the NIKERI board aligning its focus to its recalibrated mission. This intention was as a result of the pandemic placed in abeyance for 2020.

As the university returns to more 'on campus' existence the new structure has been briefed and is out for consultation with a start date in the second half of 2021. For the purpose of this report the NIKERI Board is the current Deakin University structure and will transfer this status with the activation of Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee.

The composition of the Advisory Board includes external senior Indigenous representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, as well as internal representatives from the Institute, Faculty of Arts and Education, and the broader Deakin community.

**Board members:**

External Members

**Ms Rosemary Fella**, Magistrate Koorie Court, and Institute Alumni/ Graduate

**Mr Rod Jackson**, Former CEO Wathaurong Co-operative

**Mr Joel Wright**, Co-ordinator, South West Aboriginal Language Program, Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages

**Aunty Geraldine Atkinson**, President VAEAI and Institute Alumni

Deakin Members

**Alfred Deakin Professor Christine Ure**, Acting Executive Dean, Arts and Education, Faculty

**Associate Professor Gabrielle Fletcher**, Director, Institute of Koorie Education

**Professor Maxine Duke**, Executive Dean Health, Faculty Representative

**Ms. Karinda Burns**, Associate Head of Institute (Strategy and Development), Academic Representative

The Advisory Board met twice in 2019 (April and September), to discuss the Institute of Koorie Education operational activities including the following:

- Indigenous curriculum (units and courses),
- Deakin University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy,
- Deakin University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Agenda,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student experience, including Student Awards, and the Community Graduation,
- Draft Institute Strategic Plan with four domains:
  - Student Experience
  - Research
  - Teaching & Learning
  - Community Engagement

### 6.3.1. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

Deakin University continues to strengthen opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students in higher education. Building on its 35 year history, The Institute of Koorie Education (IKE) refreshed and recalibrated to re-launch as the National Indigenous Knowledges, Education, Research and Innovation (NIKERI) Institute in March, 2020. In this new iteration, NIKERI Institute continues to forge its focus, alignment and impact nationally as a Centre of Excellence for First Nations Peoples in the foregrounding of Indigenous Knowledges, and to be the destination for study through the Community Based Delivery (CBD) model, with its dynamic support from a community perspective at its core. 2020 resulted in NIKERI and Deakin pivoting to wholly online teaching and learning within days of COVID-19 lockdown. Student support services increased with multiple outreach initiatives for students, including strategies for progression and cultural and emotional well-being as enablers in this protracted period of isolation. The focus was to engage students connect students to wellbeing services, academic support, tutoring and welfare. It was a difficult year to retain Indigenous casual staff with the financial impacts of COVID-19 for non-ISSP related activities.

Deakin released its the new strategic plan in December 2020, titled early 2021 “Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact” and includes its commitment to ‘Indigenous Knowledges and ideas to inform the future’, embracing its commitment to enunciating its clear support for Reconciliation and Treaty processes, advancing educational aspirations for First Nations Peoples and providing opportunities for Indigenous Knowledges to be incorporated into curriculum through the GLO8, a graduate learning outcome for all Deakin students.

NIKERI Institute continues to deliver its strategic commitment to First Nations Peoples including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. The four domains include Education & Student Success, Research & Innovation, Engagement & Partnerships, and Workforce & Wellbeing.

The financial acquittal and performance report reflects the commitment of the University to ensure Indigenous student success, retention and progression is achieved, despite the social, financial, and environmental effects of the pandemic in 2020. The work of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Strategy and Innovation and the concomitant Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation will continue to represent all First Nations staff and students in the strategic development and implementation of the key domains of student success and retention; employment opportunities; embedding cultural intelligence and strategic accountability across the university; robust and culturally-reflective governance mechanisms; and Indigenous research and educational frameworks Deakin-wide that realise these commitments.

## Additional information for completing the template

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<sup>1</sup> Only payments made during 2020 can be included in this table. For multi-year scholarship agreements, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded in the performance reporting for the relevant future grant year.

<sup>2</sup> Record the number of students (head count) not EFTSL.

<sup>3</sup> Include both preserved and new ISSP scholarships.

<sup>4</sup> This figures in this column should be the sum of the relevant row.

<sup>5</sup> The total may not be the sum of the previous columns as some students may receive several scholarships.

<sup>6</sup> Include payments to all enabling students, including remote and regional students.

<sup>7</sup> Include payments to all undergraduate students, including remote and regional students.

<sup>8</sup> Include payments to all postgraduate students, including remote and regional students.

<sup>9</sup> Record only hours of instruction received by the students (do not include staff planning or organising time).

<sup>10</sup> Include any costs associated with providing tutorial assistance, including staffing costs, materials, facilities etc.

<sup>11</sup> Add more rows if necessary.

<sup>12</sup> Include a brief description of the activity.

<sup>13</sup> Providers can either provide a breakdown of the major activities or a total for all the activities undertaken. Examples of activities may include mentoring, outreach activities, promotion of scholarships, events, elder-in-residence, career guidance etc.

<sup>14</sup> Only record amounts which would/did require payment during the 2020 calendar year. For multi-year scholarship offers, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded against the reporting for the relevant future grant year.

<sup>15</sup> Note the data in this table is a subsection of the all student scholarship data provided in Table 1.

<sup>16</sup> This figures in this column should be the sum of the relevant row.

<sup>17</sup> Record all verbal and written scholarship offers for the 2020 calendar year, including those offers that were not accepted by the student. Record the 2020 component of new scholarship offers and the planned 2020 value of previously awarded scholarships (including continuing scholarships and preserved scholarships).

<sup>18</sup> This data confirms the provider's compliance with Section 21(3) of the Guidelines.

<sup>19</sup> This section confirms that the provider complies with Section 35A of the Guidelines.

<sup>20</sup> While universities report on the number of Indigenous staff members through mainstream reporting requirements, the additional information provided in this section provides enhanced monitoring of the university's efforts in building its Indigenous workforce.

<sup>21</sup> Record all Indigenous staff employed by the provider, including those not working on ISSP-related activities.

<sup>22</sup> The numbers recorded here should be a headcount of staff and not the full-time equivalent.

<sup>23</sup> There is no longer a requirement to break up these by faculty. Please group together results by level.