



USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018-2020





Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and honour the Giabal and Jarowair peoples of Toowoomba; the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul peoples of Springfield and Ipswich; the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, Sydney; and the Kambuwal peoples of Stanthorpe as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways where the University of Southern Queensland is located.

Further we acknowledge the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and future. We celebrate the continuous living cultures of First Australians and acknowledge the important role played by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australian society.

The University respects and acknowledges our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, employees, Elders and visitors who come from many nations across Australia.

NOTE: Within this document, the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous refer to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and First Nations People.

USQ has sought to develop this document in a culturally appropriate manner as a sign of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. USQ welcomes feedback on anything that is incorrect or culturally insensitive – please email Jane Farmer, Executive Director, Human Resources **jane.farmer@usq.edu.au**

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Message from the Vice-Chancellor

USQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018-2020 (the Strategy) provides a framework for a University wide approach to increasing the employment and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all levels, across all organisational areas of the University. Together with the members of the senior executive of the University, I am proud to support this Strategy, which aims to maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee development and career opportunities. This will be achieved by facilitating and encourage the direct involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in determining their own employment and career goals, strategies and ambitions, in accordance with their own aspirations.

USQ developed its first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy in 2006, and through this long-term, strategic approach, we have continued to reflect on and revise goals, objectives and targets in line with the changing needs of our current and future workforce. The Strategy builds on USQ experiences, as well as drawing on best practice in other parts of the higher education sector. The Strategy has been developed in consultation with a range of partners – and most importantly, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The Strategy acknowledges the wealth of cultural knowledge and perspectives, skills and experiences that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bring to the workplace and the value created when Indigenous knowledges are embedded into all facets of University life. By dedicating ourselves to improving the recruitment and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, we will create a better, more inclusive and more successful University for future generations.



Professor Geraldine Mackenzie
Vice-Chancellor



Professor Geraldine Mackenzie
Vice-Chancellor

Introduction

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) is fully committed to increasing the education, employment, and career development opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Connections to national strategies such as the National Indigenous Higher Education Strategy and Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy have been, and continue to be used as a framework to inform best practice. The USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy works in tandem with these frameworks to demonstrate USQ's commitment to cultivating institutional change where our workforce is representative and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture.

USQ developed its first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy in 2006. Since that time, the Strategy has been revised and updated on a number of occasions to reflect revisions to goals, objectives and targets. The enduring aims are to:

- increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and participation at all levels and in all organisational areas of the University;
- maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee development and career opportunities in order to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, job skills, job satisfaction, job security, and economic empowerment; and
- facilitate and encourage the direct involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in determining their own employment and career goals, strategies and ambitions, in accordance with their own aspirations.

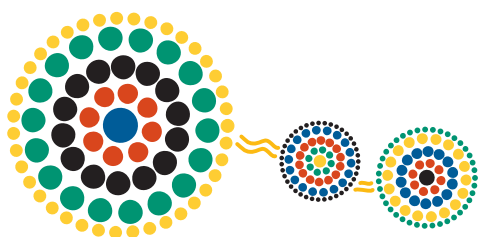
The USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018-2020 continues to support these aims, and aligns with the University's strategic plans and other key plans and strategies, including the USQ Enterprise Agreement, Employment Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Reconciliation Action Plan, USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan and Social Justice Strategic Plan.

Governance

Achieving the aims of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy depends on strong leadership and governance, the continuing commitment of resources, and the development and implementation of the Strategy in a supportive and inclusive workplace.

Since the introduction of the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy in 2006, the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy Committee has overseen the implementation, review and monitoring of the Strategy. The role of the Committee, now known as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy Committee, is to consult widely with all key stakeholders including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and professional employees and their appointed representatives and relevant community representatives, and the Unions, in the implementation of the Strategy.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy Committee is accountable to the Vice Chancellor's Executive, through the Social Justice Strategy Board. The composition of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy Committee includes representatives from University senior management, academic and professional employees from across all locations, Head of the College of Indigenous Studies, Education and Research (CISER), Unions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Support Network Representative/s, and Human Resources. The Committee Terms of Reference contains details of committee functions, authority, membership and operational details.



Implementation, Responsibility and Reporting

Effective implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy requires a shared commitment to its goals, objectives and actions by all leaders, employees and communities working in partnership to achieve positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the University.

Through strong and accountable executive leadership and buy-in, all University Divisions will be required to commit to the Strategy and ensure appropriate priority is given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and employment outcomes. Across all leadership levels in the organisation, including self-leadership, all employees – regardless of their role – are accountable for contributing to the achievement of the key actions in this Strategy.

The Human Resources Department will provide a range of essential career and employment related frameworks, processes, structure and supports, however implementation and application of initiatives will occur in all organisational areas and across all occupational groups across the University. In particular, leadership and active involvement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the University and in the community is recognised as a key driver of success of the strategy.

Operationalising the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy is further enabled by various supporting plans, strategies and activities throughout the organisation which provide more detail of underlying activities, tasks and deliverables for key actions, and identification of responsible and accountable officers.

The Human Resources Department will coordinate regular reporting on progress on strategies and activities, and on outcomes against performance and accountability measures, to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy Committee through to the Social Justice Strategy Board. The Progress Report will provide detail of actions, activities, outcomes and workforce metrics.

In addition to monitoring and reporting on the performance and accountability measures for each of the key goals in this Strategy, the impact of initiatives will also be reported to the Vice-Chancellors Committee and University Council against Strategic Success Indicators (SSIs) in the University of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2016-2020:

- SSI-8: Workplace diversity targets for the University are met or exceeded.



Guiding Principles

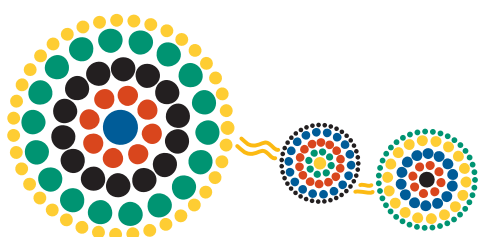
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018-2020 guiding principles have been adapted from the historical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy.

The University acknowledges the following as foundations for the development of the guiding principles of the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy:

- It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are two distinct cultures within Australia, within the definition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and within the diversity of the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a whole.
- It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the oldest continuing living culture in the world. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First People of Australia.
- The diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities, heritages, languages, lore, and social and spiritual systems practiced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is respected and recognised. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge is recognised as a significant contribution to all other bodies of knowledge and we acknowledge the scholarship and expertise that these employees bring to the University.
- It is acknowledged and accepted that participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in cultural, community and related activities is likely to enhance employee engagement and development and therefore provision for participation in ceremonial, community and cultural activities is of direct benefit to the University.

These foundations underpin the following guiding principles and commitments. The University is committed to:

- Fostering a workplace culture and environment that puts cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion at the forefront and which understands, values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture.
- Increasing the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and participation in all types and levels of work activity and all organisational units at the University.
- Capacity building, leadership, professional and career development that strengthens employment opportunities for potential and existing employees, students and graduates.
- Appropriate resourcing and funding to ensure the effective implementation of this Strategy.
- Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are supported by University policies and procedures aimed at eliminating racism in the workplace, and making the University more culturally sensitive, safe and inclusive.
- As far as practicable, actively assisting in and encouraging the promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, identities, heritages, languages, lore, and social and spiritual systems.
- Encouraging the use of “identified” positions and advertising “identified and or/specified positions” in accordance with legislation.



Intent and Aims

The intention of USQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy is to grow and retain a talented and sustainable cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic, research, professional and senior employees through a multi-faceted and coordinated approach.

Through implementation of the strategy, USQ aims to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to 3% of its total workforce. To achieve that overarching representation target, the University will set ambitious individual growth targets for key employee cohorts reflective of USQ's overall workforce profile in terms of employment classification group, mode, level, discipline and location.

Within this broader aim, the University will prioritise academic employment and the professional and career advancement of academic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, and in particular, the continuing employment of this cohort.

To achieve this, USQ will invest in resources and strategies to attract, retain, promote, support and develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent. The University will also focus on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, both internally and externally.

Goals

The USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy outlines five key goals. Broadly, these goals can be aligned under key talent management framework elements of the USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan.

ATTRACT and RETAIN

- Goal 1:** Enrich USQ's employer of choice status to attract top Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent across all career streams.
- Goal 2:** Develop, expand and enhance employment and career pathway opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that embrace a contemporary 'grow your own' approach.

ENGAGE and SUPPORT

- Goal 3:** Enhance and elevate cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion to enable genuine engagement and contribute to effective cross cultural working relationships, wellbeing and positive behaviours in the University community.

DEVELOP and ADVANCE

- Goal 4:** Leverage the USQ People Capability Framework as a platform for implementing innovative professional development and contemporary career development strategies and activities for and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

PLAN and ALIGN

- Goal 5:** Build institutional accountability, transparency and commitment to ensure action, reporting and monitoring of progress, outcomes and recognition of achievements in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career development.

Objectives, Key Actions and Performance Outcomes

ATTRACT AND RETAIN

Goal 1: Enrich USQ's employer of choice status to attract top Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent across all career streams.

Objective/s	Key Actions
1.1 Attract top Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent through best practice talent sourcing, acquisition, recruitment and selection initiatives that promote USQ as an employer of choice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.	1.1 Implement proactive talent sourcing campaigns and recruitment practices that maximise the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation and success, including the strategic use of identified positions.
1.2 Actively promote employment opportunities through formal and informal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks and communities to increase awareness and grow applicant pools.	1.2 Develop a communications plan which leverages a range of stakeholders, both internal and external, to market employment opportunities and pathways at the University to key talent pools.

Goal 2: Develop, expand and enhance employment and career pathway opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that embrace a contemporary 'grow your own' approach.

Objective/s	Key Actions
2.1 Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Career Pathway that provides multiple entry points and a pipeline to employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including a priority on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leveraging the University's own student and graduate cohorts, growth across disciplines and position levels, and building Indigenous research workforce capacity. 	2.1 Develop and implement a Career Pathway that offers a range of targeted initiatives which actively explore, promote and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee representation across all career streams, including a focus on the growth and retention of continuing academic, research and professional employees across all work areas.

Performance and Accountability Measures

- Expanded pools of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for both identified and non-identified positions.
- Increased promotion of employment opportunities to USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, employees and communities.
- Increased number of continuing academic and professional appointments held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Retention of employees in continuing positions, including initiatives for conversion of fixed term and/or casual roles for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Employment of at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in a senior executive role.
- Increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed at USQ, equivalent to 3% of the total workforce progressively over the life of the Strategy.

ENGAGE AND SUPPORT

Goal 3: Enhance and elevate cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion to enable genuine engagement and contribute to effective cross cultural working relationships, wellbeing and positive behaviours in the University community.

Objective/s	Key Actions
3.1 Build a culturally sensitive, safe and inclusive workplace that recognises and values the impact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples contributions and culture.	3.1 Implement a comprehensive development program that aims to develop culturally sensitive, safe and inclusive behaviours by USQ senior executives, managers and employees.
3.2 Increase cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion for all employees through education, training, and collaborative partnerships and networks with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities both internally and externally.	3.2 Facilitate and support programs and events that support cultural inclusion for all employees and cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
3.3 Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the opportunity to fully participate in and provide advice and input regarding policy and practice. This should include opportunity for Indigenous led, or Indigenous co-led development of policy and practice.	3.3 Provide and actively promote opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to link into networks, information and support.
	3.4 Review and revise relevant policy, procedures and processes to ensure that additional workload expected of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is recognised in workload planning, performance review and promotion.

Performance and Accountability Measures

- All current and new executives and all new senior employees complete appropriate cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion training programs.
- Cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion learning and development programs are available to all employees, with an emphasis on those employees who interact professionally with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, students and communities.
- Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage in culturally significant activities, events and networks.
- Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to contribute policy and practice, with University policies and procedures appropriately recognising additional workload required in contributing to such matters.
- High levels of positive employee engagement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.



DEVELOP AND ADVANCE

Goal 4: Leverage the USQ People Capability Framework as a platform for implementing innovative professional development and contemporary career development strategies and activities for and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Objective/s	Key Actions
4.1 Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have the opportunity and support to discuss, identify and progress self-determined career goals.	4.1 Provide culturally safe, sensitive and inclusive opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to engage in independent discussions regarding Indigenous career development matters.
4.2 Promote and support the access, participation and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in leadership, learning and career development programs and initiatives, both internal and external to the organisation.	4.2 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to develop the key capabilities needed for career development and advancement, through policies, procedures and practices which recognise inclusion.
4.3 Ensure the acknowledgement and recognition of success and excellence by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	4.3 Provide opportunities for the specific and unique contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be acknowledged through appropriate promotion, reward and recognition mechanisms.

Performance and Accountability Measures

- Increased participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in leadership, learning and development and career advancement programs and initiatives.
- Expanded pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to experience career progression, including increased success in promotion and/or other advancement opportunities.
- Increased recognition and promotion of excellence and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

PLAN AND ALIGN

Goal 5: Build institutional accountability, transparency and commitment to ensure action, reporting and monitoring of progress, outcomes and recognition of achievements in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career development.

Objective/s	Key Actions
5.1 Promote and market the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy internally and externally.	5.1 Develop and disseminate appropriate communication and promotional material and campaigns, both internally and externally, to raise awareness of and commitment to Strategy goals and objectives.
5.2 Embed Indigenous objectives within the University's workforce and employment related plans, frameworks and requirements.	5.2 Develop and implement Key Performance Indicators to drive success, and create a dashboard of measures of success and strategic outcomes to regularly report to relevant University committees.
5.3 Ensure accessible and visible reporting of University progress and performance on strategy, targets and plans related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce initiatives.	5.3 Identify members of governing bodies and senior University leadership to actively champion and advocate for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy.

Performance and Accountability Measures

- Appropriate resources and funding are provided to ensure the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy is implemented and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Targets identified in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy are met.
- University Key Performance Indicators and targets developed, monitored and regularly reported to University Council, the Vice-Chancellor, Management Committees and Divisional Heads.
- Progress against Strategy goals, objectives and actions reported regularly to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy Committee.



Conclusion

USQ's goal is to reflect the diverse community in which we operate and to create an inclusive place to work. Through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy, we aim to do this by increasing, retaining and embracing the valuable skills, perspectives and experiences that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to the workplace.

It is through commitment and investment from all employees and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that the long-term objective to increase and maintain representation in continuing and fixed-term employment across a wide range of employment categories and occupational groups will be achieved. USQ will prioritise creating a career pathway, enabling the development and advancement of our own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, graduates and employees and achieving cultural inclusion.

Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment histories and knowledges is imperative to leading and implementing positive social change. USQ therefore acknowledges the importance of relationships and connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as a fundamental touchstone to achieving this change. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Strategy provides an opportunity to increase the capability to create solutions with community, to invest in Australia's First Peoples and acknowledge that results are achieved when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are seen as partners and that the solutions lay with everyone. This can only be achieved with mutual understanding, compassion and respect.

Reference Materials

USQ Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

USQ Social Justice Strategic Plan 2017 -2020

USQ Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy 2015 -2017

USQ Employee Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2020

USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan 2016 -2020

USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy 2017-2020

USQ People Capability Framework

National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy

Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017-2020

Indigenous Student Success Program, Higher Education Support Act 2003

For more information

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