



# Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2021



*Staff at the College of Indigenous Studies, Education and Research make a "sea of hands"; connecting hands is an important symbol of reconciliation and commences the process of knowing one another.*



Digital Indigenous artwork was designed in partnership between USQ's Centre for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research (CISER) led by Professor Tracey Bunda and the University's Media and Design team illustrating USQ's three campus locations as well as our online presence supporting student success.



# Reconciliation Action Plan 2019–2021

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

USQ acknowledges the Giabal and Jarowair peoples of the Toowoomba area; the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul peoples of Ipswich and Springfield; the Kambuwal peoples of Stanthorpe; and the Gadigal peoples of the Eora nation, Sydney, as the Traditional Owners where USQ campuses and hubs have been built, and whose cultures and customs continue to nurture this land.

Further, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We celebrate the continuous living cultures of First Australians and acknowledge the important contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have and continue to make in Australian society.

# A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In developing this document, the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has sought to use culturally appropriate terminology and terms acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at all times as a sign of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

It should be noted that in USQ policy, the terms 'Aboriginal' and/or 'Torres Strait Islander' peoples are favoured to describe Australia's First Peoples; but the use of 'Indigenous Australians' (inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) or 'First Australians' is also acceptable. The terms should be capitalised. In addition, the words 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' are adjectives; they cannot be used in isolation and require

a suitable noun: for example, Aboriginal peoples, Aboriginal Australians, Indigenous peoples, and so on.

In terms of acknowledging the preferred term which identifies the 'country' to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples belong, it is noted that in many cases conflicting terminology exists, including with regard to spelling and punctuation. In these cases, every effort has been made to identify the term most acceptable to the communities concerned.

USQ welcomes feedback on what is considered acceptable and unacceptable in the use of language. For contact details, please refer to the back cover of this document.

# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR & PRESIDENT

USQ's purpose is to lead in economic and social development through higher education and research excellence. We seek to broaden higher education attainment through our leadership in the delivery of high-quality learning experiences for all of our students.

As both a public institution accountable for institutional integrity and a corporate citizen motivated by social justice, we recognise the unique opportunities possible for our University in advancing reconciliation through our regions and beyond – as a keeper, creator and facilitator of knowledge, debate and truth.

Realising the vision of a unified and equitable Australian society requires both frank and sensitive consideration of historical atrocities and the tensions that remain within modern race

relations. USQ is fortunate to have dedicated academic and professional staff, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to provide leadership, socially beneficial research, and sensitive and relevant cultural learning experiences for our students and our broader communities.

As USQ Vice-Chancellor, I am committed to ensuring our sustained focus on the reconciliation actions contained within this Reconciliation Action Plan. I have confidence in continued progress along our reconciliation journey with our staff, students and communities, guided by our core values of excellence, integrity, and respect.

**Professor Geraldine Mackenzie**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Through learning and teaching, research and community engagement activities, our vision for reconciliation is to support an Australia:

- Where equity exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in all areas, including education and employment, life expectancy, and quality of life;
- Where unity and positive and constructive race relations exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians;
- Where historical acceptance is evident in all Australians for past injustices to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- Where all Australians will acknowledge and celebrate the unique place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our society.

USQ also shares the vision for reconciliation, as developed by Universities Australia, for its Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020, that... by deepening and enhancing the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, USQ will expand our own contributions to:

- Close the gap in disadvantage;
- Lift the visibility of Indigenous expertise, excellence and contributions to Australia;
- Acknowledge and support the rights, languages and cultures of Indigenous communities;
- tackle racism; and
- Promote equal opportunity and outcomes for all Australians.

# USQ RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

## OUR BUSINESS

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) is a regionally headquartered public university with multiple diverse campuses and hubs in both regional and outer-metropolitan areas of South East Queensland. The University also has a large off-campus education program operating nationally and off-shore. Through our diverse operational locations and broad range of activities in learning, teaching, research and outreach, USQ employs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and professional staff, serves the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and engages with communities as part of our everyday operations.

Originally established in 1967 as a regional campus of the then Queensland Institute of Technology, our institution operated as an autonomous College of Advanced Education from 1971–1989 and, following a two-year period as a University College, became the University of Southern Queensland on 1 January 1992. Through its history, USQ has played an important role in contributing to broadening participation in higher education by serving a highly diverse student constituency.

Our principal contributions to the community occur through supporting an inclusive society, contributing to nation building and economic development, and progressing regional wellbeing. USQ is a member of the Regional Universities Network.

As a major public institution, USQ has a significant role to play in supporting the national reconciliation effort through education, innovation, engagement and corporate citizenship. Our focus is on concrete actions that make a real difference to reconciliation efforts, both at our University and in the wider community.

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### Australian universities foster social responsibility and an open, fair, tolerant and cohesive society.

*Universities Australia*

USQ's obligations in this regard are grounded in the following Universities Australia Policy Principles that underpin Australian higher education <sup>1</sup>:

- *Increasing participation in higher education is necessary to ensure that Australia's future skills needs are met, national productivity improves, and a high-income economy is sustained;*
- *The opportunity to complete a university qualification by Australian citizens is not restricted by the capacity to pay, socio-economic background, location, race, ethnicity, sex, disability or religion;*
- *Australian universities foster social responsibility and an open, fair, tolerant and cohesive society;*
- *Australian universities support mutually beneficial partnerships with business, the professions and the community to build social capital and community cohesion and wellbeing; and,*
- *Australian universities provide flexible options for learning, eliminating participation barriers for students who have work, family or other commitments, and who live in regional and remote areas.*

1. Extract from *Universities Australia's Policy Principles*:  
[universitiesaustralia.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Universities-Australia-A-Smarter-Australia.pdf](https://universitiesaustralia.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Universities-Australia-A-Smarter-Australia.pdf)



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a unique place in Australia as the original inhabitants of the land.

*Australian Human Rights Commission*<sup>2</sup>

USQ's core values of 'Respect, Integrity and Excellence' are fundamental to our desire to build and maintain productive, trusting, respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians; and underpin the University's approach to supporting reconciliation.

USQ employs a large and diverse workforce. As at April 2019, USQ employed 1625 staff (excluding casuals) representing 1523 FTE (full-time equivalents). At this time, USQ employed 42 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, representing 37.94 FTE (full-time equivalent staff members) and 2.5% of total staff numbers. This comprised 26.54 FTE professional staff and 10.4 FTE academic staff. In the 12-month period 2018 to 2019, the number of staff in continuing employment has increased from 27 to 30. From January 2018, 93% of staff that were in continuing roles, continue to be employed by USQ. By 2020, the University has set a target to increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to 3% of its total workforce over the life of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018–2020*.

As at April 2019, USQ had 557 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in their programs, making up almost 3% of the entire student population. USQ had 464 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students studying at Toowoomba, with 51 students studying on-campus in Springfield and 42 students studying on-campus in Ipswich. Many of these students are taking advantage of the flexibility through studying predominantly or partly online.

## OUR RAP

USQ has a long and rich history of supporting and collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The University was able to use this as a solid foundation for the development of its first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2015–2017: *Walking Together*, which was officially launched in 2015. Following the formal launch, a number of road shows and formal communications across the University community were conducted to raise the profile of reconciliation across the University and broader communities, and progress initiatives that further advanced our reconciliation journey.

Through an active and enthusiastic RAP Working Group, meeting bi-monthly, the implementation of the RAP was able to be effectively driven, monitored and reported. Members of the RAP Working Group included:

- Director (Student Success and Wellbeing) as Chair
- Head (Centre for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research)

- Senior Lecturer (Centre for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research)
- Mr Wayne Fossey, Aboriginal Elder
- Director (Workforce Support and Partnering)
- Director (Workforce Strategy and Diversity)
- Former Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Consultant
- Former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Coordinator, Digital Life Lab Projects
- Senior Executive Officer (Policy & Planning)
- Senior Executive Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Office (Research and Innovation)
- Manager (Research Integrity and Ethics)
- Senior Executive Coordinator (Office of Vice-Chancellor)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Coordinator
- Senior Indigenous Workforce Strategy and Inclusion Officer
- Indigenous Student Representative

Achievements during the operation of USQ's first RAP included:

- Our public announcement of fully supporting Universities *Australia's Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020* which committed the University to a number of targets for increasing Indigenous attainment and improving service quality at USQ;<sup>3</sup>
- Launch of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols*;

2. [humanrights.gov.au/education/face-facts/face-facts-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples](https://humanrights.gov.au/education/face-facts/face-facts-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples)

3. [run.edu.au/cb\\_pages/news/Indigenous\\_strategy\\_UA.php](https://run.edu.au/cb_pages/news/Indigenous_strategy_UA.php)

- Launch of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy 2017–2020*;
- Adoption of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency Framework*;
- Amendment of the University's *Purchasing and Procurement procedures* to better support procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses;
- Progress made towards including Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency into the USQ Graduate Attributes Statement;
- Review and refresh of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy*, and subsequent launch of the new *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018–2020*;
- Enhancement of the *USQ HR Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure*;
- Piloting of school-based traineeships;
- Introduction of a new Indigenous Studies major as part of a revamped Bachelor of Arts;
- Continued successful delivery of a significant number of educational and aspirational programs targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- Arrangements made for the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag to be permanently flown at all USQ campuses;
- Arrangements made for permanent displays of Indigenous cultural art to be permanently housed at all USQ

campuses, with the display of cultural artefacts awaiting the development of protocols, a cataloguing project, and engagement with the community to protect the artefacts and make them visible;

- Introduction of an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership award for USQ students; and,
- Ongoing commemoration and/or celebration of days of significance in the Australian calendar.

It is significant that the Workplace Barometer survey of USQ staff in 2016 indicated strong awareness of, and support for, the USQ RAP. Some 89% of staff agreed that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold a unique place in society as First Australians; 90% supported USQ partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, and 85% supported the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners. At that time, some 88% of USQ staff had participated in at least one USQ-organised reconciliation activity.

USQ commenced planning for its refreshed RAP late in 2017, as the first *USQ Reconciliation Action Plan Walking Together 2015–2017* was reaching maturity. An extensive consultation process was undertaken, together with a thorough review of the implementation of the first RAP, in order to inform the refresh process.

Our refreshed RAP has taken as its starting position the same principles used by Universities Australia to underpin the development of its *Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020*; namely:

- *That Australia's universities exist on the traditional lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the continent.*
- *That Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold unique knowledge and knowledge systems which are foundational and fundamentally important to Australia's intellectual, social and cultural capital.*
- *That universities are accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on education and the use of Indigenous knowledge and cultures.*
- *That true partnerships between universities and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within and outside the university are essential to deliver the best outcomes.*
- *That such partnerships should be conducted in a spirit of reconciliation which gives voice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision making that affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.*
- *That social justice requires universities to implement effective policies and practices that recognise the contribution, potential and insight of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, and respond to Indigenous community needs.*
- *That parity of opportunity and outcome is a central objective of policy and practice.*
- *That universities control the resources and processes required to achieve these aims, and are committed to using them effectively.*

USQ takes an all-of-university approach in the development and implementation of its RAP, appreciating that reconciliation is everyone's business and a shared responsibility. The USQ RAP is championed by the Vice-Chancellor with the support of the University's Council and executive management. The implementation of the RAP is overseen by the USQ RAP Working Group who reports to the Social Justice Strategy Board.

Since our first RAP, there have been many achievements and some challenges that provided valuable learning experiences and informed the deliverables of the new RAP, these include:

- As a large organisation with many different divisions and departments, it was initially difficult to devise monitoring processes that accounted for the spread of activity. By getting our internal representation right on the RAP Working group, and supporting those representatives to work closely with senior executives and peers within their division, the University is in a better position to advance our next round of RAP deliverables and associated actions.
- Reconciliation is not possible without the contributions of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, such as Traditional Owners and Elders; it is ongoing work to identify, contact, and build lasting relationships with these stakeholders, as USQ is situated over many operating locations and many stakeholders have other competing commitments. The University will be committing further resources to this goal and further ensuring that these partnerships are formed in a cohesive manner across the whole institution.



*Dancer at 'Deadly Ways' school engagement program breakfast, May 2018.*



# USQ'S ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The following pages highlight a selection of USQ's activities and achievements in the areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, employment and engagement in the period immediately prior to the USQ RAP development.



*Dr Anne Marie Nelson, nurse and academic, 2018 USQ Outstanding Alumnus of the year and 2018 USQ Indigenous Alumnus of the year.*



*Elders Wayne Fossey and Uncle Darby McCarthy with Perry Miller at the anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations.*

*Professor Barbara de la Harpe and Ina Mills cutting the cake at USQ's first NAIDOC Week ball in 2018.*



*Staff and graduates at the USQ Indigenous Higher Educations Partnerships Program graduation event in July 2018.*



*Cultural Connections is a USQ program to engage local school students, where Year 7 and 8 students tour USQ facilities, participate in interactive cultural and study area activities, as well as be inspired by the stories and experiences of USQ current students and Indigenous Elders. Pictured here in February 2019, is Josh Brown, head of the local Galamay Dance Troupe.*





Toowoomba students attended the Queensland Torres Strait Islander Foundation (QATSIF) scholarship and award ceremonies hosted by USQ to mark National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week 2018.



Chloe Short, Mickaela Boase, Maddison Pashley and Hazel Douglas were the 2018 participants in USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship program.



For NAIDOC Week 2018, Janine Kelly, the producer of documentary 'My Struggle, My Fight – Cherbourg Women' spoke about the documentary at a special screening hosted by USQ. With Vice-Chancellor, Professor Geraldine McKenzie and Professor Tracey Bunda, Head of College for Indigenous Studies, Research and Education.



Culture awareness training for USQ staff at the 'USQ Gumbi Gumbi Gardens' yarning circle.



Dr Kev Carmody, singer and songwriter, 2017 USQ Outstanding Alumnus of the year and 2017 USQ Indigenous Alumnus of the year.

# OUR ACTIONS AND TARGETS 2019–2021

## RELATIONSHIPS

In support of its mission, USQ is committed to building mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships based on respect, trust and understanding with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the USQ community.

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	• Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	September 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
	• A list of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to be developed and maintained as a basis for encouraging and informing greater engagement, between the University and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	December 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
	• Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	February 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• All USQ staff, including senior leaders, to be encouraged to attend external and internal NRW events, and the University to actively support external events, where appropriate.	May 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• USQ to maintain a calendar of (both internal and external) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance that is promoted to staff, students and the community.	October 2019	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• At least one major event for NRW held at each USQ campus each year.	May 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.</li> </ul>	December 2019 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, including but not limited to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regularly featuring positive media stories on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, employees, research and communities in USQ media output;</li> <li>encouraging wider access to, and use of, USQ's cultural assets in the forms of images, artworks, artefacts, cultural gardens and other displays; and,</li> <li>commissioning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to perform, create artworks or otherwise contribute to USQ activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	October 2019 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible, USQ to play a leadership role in promoting greater cultural competence and understanding across society in collaboration with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</li> </ul>	February 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual University event/oration to be implemented engaging a high profile Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (or international Indigenous) guest speaker on themes examining culture, legal issues, education, health, and society.</li> </ul>	July 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.</li> </ul>	March 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage all initial teacher education staff and students to sign up to Reconciliation Australia's <i>Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education</i> online platform and engage with the platform's resources.</li> </ul>	January 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia, Reconciliation Queensland and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.</li> </ul>	January 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	June 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate staff on USQ's <i>Anti-Discrimination and Freedom from Harassment</i> policy.</li> </ul>	February 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.</li> </ul>	June 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the deployment of key actions within the University's <i>Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018–2020</i>.</li> </ul>	December 2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.</li> </ul>	April 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)



Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>5.</b> Ensure active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in USQ institutional decision-making, planning processes and documentation development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education, research and employment to continue to be included as priority areas in core policy documents, including institutional strategic and business plans:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advice actively sought from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors and stakeholders in the development of major policies and institutional strategic and business plans;</li><li>Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to contribute to policy and practice, with University policies and procedures appropriately recognising additional workload required in contributing to such matters; and,</li><li>Ensure that implementation of these plans and policies is devolved through the University's Divisions, Faculties, Schools, Institutes and Organisational Units</li></ul></li></ul>	July 2021	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All USQ documents to be written in ways that are culturally appropriate as guided by the <i>USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols</i>.</li></ul>	December 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Network and the Indigenous Student Association to be actively supported and encouraged to play an active role in providing input into institutional decision-making.</li></ul>	December 2019 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Representation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be actively encouraged on boards and committees covering the full range of USQ activities – with representation assured in situations where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation is required or desirable.</li></ul>	December 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to be invited to be part of USQ Boards and Committees, where possible, including Traditional Owners.</li></ul>	December 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement an Elders in Residence program where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders are engaged, and appropriately remunerated, to contribute to University decision-making and development through sharing their wisdom and knowledge, and the provision of leadership.</li></ul>	December 2019 (report)	Vice-Chancellor





# RESPECT

Respect is a core value of USQ. We believe it is an important part of Australia's identity to acknowledge and respect the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.


Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and embed Indigenous knowledges and history that increases cultural competency of employees, students and community. This will be based on regular reviews of cultural learning needs of the University. Development, review and implementation of USQ's cultural competency scaffolding will be a consultative approach and communicated through multiple channels, such as RAP Area Champions, learning and development opportunities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Support Network, and CISER, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>define cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and to utilise the various channels through which cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion);</li> <li>develop cultural awareness training in collaboration with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants;</li> <li>provide opportunities for all staff to participate in cultural training, with an emphasis on those staff who interact professionally with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and</li> <li>achieve the completion of cultural competency training for the following designated staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Justice Strategy Board members, RAP Working Group members, Human Resource managers and other key leadership staff;</li> <li>current executive staff and newly appointed senior staff; and</li> <li>all supervisors and potential supervisors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research higher degree (RHD) students.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Provide cultural learning opportunities for USQ students.</li> <li>Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency into the USQ Graduate Attributes Statement.</li> <li>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Gardens Learning Development &amp; Engagement Committee be maintained to encourage use of USQ Toowoomba's Gumbi Gumbi Gardens for education and community engagement purposes, and to encourage the development of Cultural Gardens at the other campuses.</li> <li>A plan to be developed and implemented to increase library resources on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander themes.</li> </ul>	<p>October 2021</p> <p>May 2020 (report)</p> <p>June 2020</p> <p>March 2020 (report)</p> <p>June 2020 (report)</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)</p> <p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</p> <p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</p> <p>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)</p> <p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</p>

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>7.</b> Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols, through the promotion and accessibility of USQ's <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols</i> document.</li> </ul>	February 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per USQ's <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol</i> document, invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events (including NAIDOC and NRW) each year.</li> </ul>	July 2020 (report)	Vice-Chancellor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships to be maintained.</li> </ul>	June 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include an Acknowledgement of Country, or other appropriate protocols, at the commencement of all official meetings.</li> </ul>	December 2020 (report)	Vice-Chancellor
<b>8.</b> Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>	July 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff, through inclusion in the Calendar of Events of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that is promoted to staff, students and the community.</li> </ul>	July 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one major event for NAIDOC Week developed in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at each USQ campus, or in the local community, each year.</li> </ul>	July 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week, including through provision in the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy</i> that ensures that additional workload expected of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is recognised in workload planning and in performance assessments and promotions processes.</li> </ul>	December 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)  Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>	July 2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)

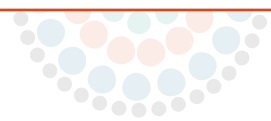
## OPPORTUNITIES

USQ continues to build an organisational culture that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive, and which creates opportunities through learning, teaching, research and community engagement activities for participation and success by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	January 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue a position within the Human Resources Department which focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' employment, career development and progression.</li> </ul>	January 2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.</li> </ul>	January 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A stream of mentoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be maintained which can include a component of cultural mentoring.</li> </ul>	January 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018–2020</i> to be implemented to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership;</li> <li>increase the number and proportion of employees who are Indigenous persons to at least 3% of all employees;</li> <li>provide for the professional development and career advancement of academic and professional employees who are Indigenous persons;</li> <li>provide for additional workload expected of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff being recognised;</li> <li>provide support for staff to engage in programs for employees that promote cultural competency in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, traditions and histories, and the diversity of circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	January 2021	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)



Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› encourage Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on recruitment and selection panels; and</li> <li>› engage with external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or consultants to advise on recruitment, employment and retention strategies, including professional development.</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</li> </ul>	March 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander careers platform to house employment vacancies, careers and professional development information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and prospective employees to be created.</li> </ul>	October 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.</li> </ul>	September 2021	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The statement: <i>'USQ values diversity and inclusion in its work environment and provides employment opportunities which are inclusive of peoples from all diversity groups'</i> to be included on the University's careers website.</li> </ul>	(report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broader cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion program which upskills all employees in cultural competence to be provided.</li> </ul>	December 2019	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University to have in place processes that ensure timely and appropriate remuneration of members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who perform services for the University.</li> </ul>	October 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
		August 2020 (report)	
<b>10.</b> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</li> <li>• Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.</li> <li>• Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned business.</li> <li>• Investigate Supply Nation membership and/or Black Business Finder membership.</li> </ul>	September 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
		December 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
		October 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
		October 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)



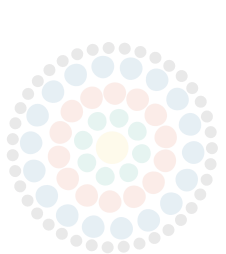






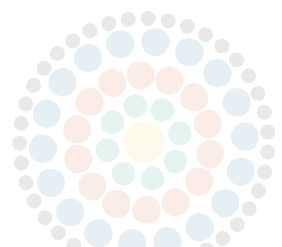
## GOVERNANCE

As a socially responsible organisation, USQ will engage all stakeholders in the annual review and reporting to Reconciliation Australia, and remain open and accountable for the progress made against our RAP.

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>13.</b> Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	October 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	October 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• RAP Working Group (RWG) to be responsible to the Social Justice Strategy Board for:	October 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› reporting annually to Reconciliation Australia on the progress in implementing the USQ RAP, including the completion and submission of the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually;</li> <li>› coordinating USQ's participation in the RAP Barometer survey; and,</li> </ul>		
	• PWG is to meet at least six times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.		
<b>14.</b> Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	October 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• The role of coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the RAP to be assigned to a senior manager.	October 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	October 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	• The USQ Vice-Chancellor maintained as USQ RAP Champion.	October 2020	Vice-Chancellor
	• The implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory group to provide cultural advice and guidance on the implementation of the RAP.	December 2020 (report)	Vice-Chancellor
	• Ensure that implementation of these plans and policies is devolved through the University's Divisions, Faculties, Schools, Institutes and Organisational Units.	July 2021	Vice-Chancellor

Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>15.</b> Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published USQ RAP provided to Reconciliation Australia for registration and uploading to website.</li> </ul>	October 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	September 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders, quarterly.</li> </ul>	March 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USQ RAP to be a key part of the University's planning framework.</li> </ul>	March 2020 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.</li> </ul>	January 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USQ RAP to be made readily available through the wide distribution of printed copies and through a readily accessible online version on the USQ website.</li> </ul>	December 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual communication and stakeholder engagement plan to be developed and implemented to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› promote greater awareness of the RAP;</li> <li>› reconciliation in general; and</li> <li>› promote the effective implementation of the RAP.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	January 2020	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG to communicate progress in the implementation of the RAP via a dedicated web page and through regular forums.</li> </ul>	March 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP presented and promoted to all new staff and students through staff inductions and student orientations.</li> </ul>	February 2021 (report)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG to be responsible to the Social Justice Strategy Board, as a standing agenda item, for publicly reporting our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings; including: ensuring that USQ's Annual Report includes achievement and progression of the RAP.</li> </ul>	March 2020 (report)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP presented and promoted to all new staff and students through staff inductions and student orientations.</li> </ul>	February 2021	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider participation in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.</li> </ul>	October 2021	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)



Actions	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>16.</b> Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise Reconciliation Australia of plan to commence work on refreshing the Reconciliation Action Plan.</li> </ul>	March 2021	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RWG to be responsible to the Social Justice Strategy Board for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› liaising with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements;</li> <li>› refreshing the USQ RAP using a process that is open and consultative of all stakeholders;</li> <li>› organising approval of draft RAP by Social Justice Strategy Board and Vice-Chancellor's Executive, and forwarding approved document to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback; and</li> <li>› submitting approved updated draft USQ RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	October 2021	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services)



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which the University of Southern Queensland stands.  
We pay our respects to Elders – past, present and future.



*Professor Tracey Bunda (Head of College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research), Dianne Lucas (Senior Indigenous Workforce Strategy and Inclusion Officer) and Ren Perkins (Indigenous Learning Advisor) reading the newly launched USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy 2018–2020.*



# APPENDIX: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND'S RECONCILIATION JOURNEY AND ACHIEVEMENTS



- 1974** Aboriginal Studies is introduced in The School of Arts as liberal arts electives.
- 1982** An Aboriginal Research Management Training Programme is established in the School of Business Studies; running until 1985.
- 1984** Dean USQ School of Arts, Mr Leon Cantrell, is appointed to the Board of Advanced Education's Committee to Facilitate the Participation of Aboriginal Peoples in Advanced Education in Queensland.
- 1986** The Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (OATSIE) is established within the School of Arts. It introduces a special admissions program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Scheme.
- 1991**
- Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag is established as an autonomous Indigenous support unit. In 2007 this unit evolved into The College of Indigenous Knowledges (CAIK) and in 2014 The College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research (CISER) within the Academic Division.
  - A collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artefacts is established and displayed.
  - A pre-tertiary pathway program specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is introduced.
- 1993** The Jilalan Project established to develop culturally appropriate preparatory curriculum material – the precursor to the Indigenous Higher Education Preparatory Program (IHEPP) introduced in 2001.
- 1995** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander units included in the new Bachelor of Education degree.
- 1996**
- Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag moves to a new purpose-built facility (T-Block Annexe).
  - USQ holds celebrations for the first National Reconciliation Week (NRW), and maintains an annual program of events for NRW and NAIDOC Week from this time.
- 1999** Ms Karen Davis is the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander USQ student to graduate with a Bachelor of Engineering degree.
- 2003** Auntie Olga Miller becomes the first distinguished Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander woman to receive a USQ honorary award – Fellow of the University – for her service to the community.
- 2006**
- USQ develops its first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy.
  - The position of Indigenous Education & Outreach Consultant is introduced in the University's Learning & Teaching Support Unit.
  - Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag's Stephen Hagan is named 2006 NAIDOC Person of the Year.
- 2007** USQ introduces a cultural sash that identifies heritage to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and staff to wear at graduations and formal academic ceremonies.
- 2008** Dr Kev Carmody becomes the first USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumnus to receive a USQ honorary award – Doctor of the University – for his distinguished career in, and contributions to, music.

- 2010** USQ scholarships specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prospective students are introduced.
- 2011** USQ's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PhD graduate is Dr Maree Toombs.
- 2012**
- For the first time, a graduating trainee secures full-time continuing employment through internal appointment.
  - USQ begins its annual sponsorship of The History Book award in the Queensland Literary Awards suite. The award's criteria gives emphasis to books addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander themes. The inaugural winner is *The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines Made Australia*, by Bill Gammage.
  - Cross-cultural awareness training program is introduced.
- 2013**
- Gumbi Gumbi Cultural Gardens opens at the USQ Toowoomba.
  - The Making the Connection project is officially launched.
  - On-Country trips for staff are introduced in collaboration with Community Elders as cross-cultural training.
- 2014**
- The Vice-Chancellor establishes the Elders and Valued Persons Advisory Committee with a membership drawn from distinguished persons from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
  - USQ introduces the Indigenous Service Alumnus of the Year award as part of its annual Alumnus of the Year Award suite. The inaugural winner is Auntie Olga Miller. This becomes the Indigenous Alumnus of the Year award from 2018.
- 2015**
- USQ launches its first Reconciliation Action Plan 2015–2017: *Walking Together*.
  - The review and refresh of the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development and Employment Strategy.
  - Amendment of the USQ HR Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on review panels, and encourage advertised positions to be considered for an identified specified role.
  - School-based traineeships are piloted.
  - A new Indigenous Studies major is part of the proposal for the re-accreditation of the revamped Bachelor of Arts.
  - The Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag are permanently flown at all USQ campuses.
  - An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership award is introduced for USQ students, with the award presented at the annual USQ Students' Awards Night.



## 2016

- USQ launches its *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols: Forging connections, building relationships, showing respect and supporting reconciliation*.
- USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency Framework–based on University Australia’s Indigenous Cultural Competency Framework – is adopted.
- USQ’s Institute for Resilient Regions is commissioned by the Surat Aboriginal Corporation to work collaboratively in the development of the South-West Queensland Indigenous Cultural Trail which was launched in six Queensland towns over August-September 2017.
- USQ’s Purchasing and Procurement procedures are amended to support procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
- Permanent displays of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural artefacts are installed at the USQ Springfield and USQ Ipswich.
- The Workplace Barometer survey of USQ staff shows strong awareness of and support for the USQ RAP.

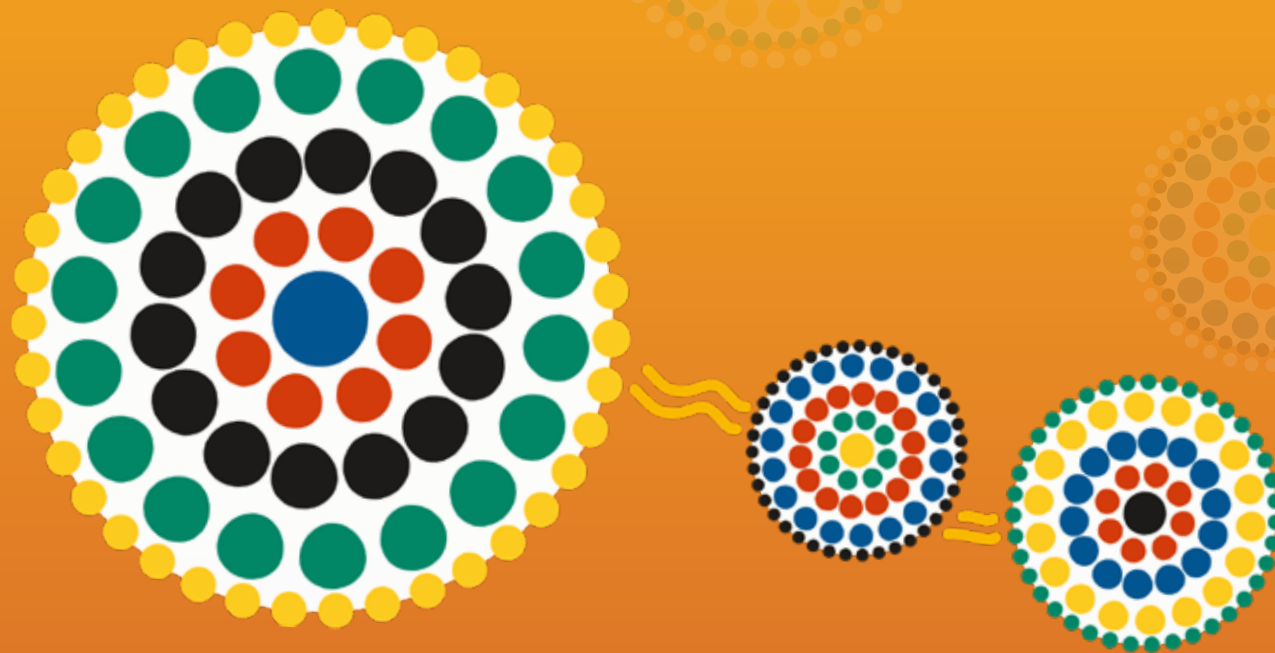
## 2017

- Launch of the *USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy 2017–2020*.
- USQ publicly announces its full support for Universities Australia’s Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020.
- Work is progressed towards including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency into the USQ Graduate Attributes Statement.
- Work commences to refresh the USQ RAP.

## 2018

- USQ’s Alumnus of the Year has been awarded to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person for the third consecutive year.
- Work commences on USQ’s first Indigenous Education Strategy.
- University implements a Graduating Indigenous Leaders Commitment where additional resources are appointed to support the educational success of its Indigenous students.
- An investigative project is undertaken to explore what insights can be gained by comparing various data sets that contain aggregated student data, in the hope that resources and effort can be applied in strategic areas to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.





# USQ CONTACT

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