



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

The University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2011-2013



Reconciliation
A U S T R A L I A
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the University of Melbourne's first Reconciliation Action Plan.

The University's Action Plan was endorsed by the Senior Executive in December 2010, and commits the University to a big agenda. It is an opportunity to reflect on the University's contribution to Indigenous development in Australia, and to help address the disadvantages faced by Indigenous Australians in health, employment and education.

Research has shown education to be one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of disadvantage. We aim to use the expertise and resources of our teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer activities to make a sustained contribution to lifting the health, education and living standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We aim to develop knowledge and knowledge processes supporting Indigenous development.

I commend the *Murrup Barak Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development*, and all in the University community who worked with them, for developing our Action Plan. I especially acknowledge too the contribution and support of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, staff and students.

We look forward to achieving the targets the University has set in the coming years.

Glyn Davis
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Melbourne

The University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan

A big agenda

Nearly 40 years ago the Aboriginal poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal penned the iconic poem 'Song of Hope', ending with the verse:

To our fathers' fathers
The pain, the sorrow;
To our children's children
The glad tomorrow.

These words poignantly capture the grief and aspiration, the pain and the hope felt by Indigenous people pursuing the development agenda to close the gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. The sentiments are often expressed as a desire for change – moving out of the town camp into the main street – or from a position of social inequality and marginalization into one in which the dreams and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are fully realized. This transformation is complex and multi-faceted. If all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are to realize their true and full potential as individuals and as the original custodians of this land then change is required across Australian society and institutions, within Indigenous Australia, and in the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous society. It is a big agenda.

The University of Melbourne has a role to play in this big agenda, by producing the human capital and knowledge for this transformation.

All our graduates, regardless of how directly they are connected into this agenda and regardless of their personal and cultural histories, can make a contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander development through their leadership, service and productivity. To that end our graduates will need to have a respectful understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. We will know that there is an impact from the knowledge we produce and the expertise we develop when the accountability of other institutions is strengthened, innovation and creativity is fostered, and the agenda for change built. To achieve this, our research will focus on the issues of the big agenda and will be conducted in a way that leads to sustained benefit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As a university we also have an important contribution to make through the growth of a cadre of Indigenous Australian graduates from the higher education system. Indigenous and other graduates can contribute significantly to a transformed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander future through their service and by pressing for Indigenous advancement and reform within their professions; through their leadership; and through their role in Indigenous economic and cultural development.

If we are to step up to the challenge of this big agenda we need to build reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that are grounded in respect. We should not expect to contribute to change and development in Indigenous Australia without expecting that we need to change and be transformed ourselves in order to achieve this.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is a modest but significant step for our University on a much longer journey towards realizing the goals of this big agenda.

Our Vision

The University of Melbourne's vision for reconciliation is to use the expertise and resources of its teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer activities to make a sustained contribution to lifting the health, education and living standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We aim to develop knowledge and knowledge processes that support Indigenous development.

Our vision includes producing the highest quality outcomes in all aspects of our academic endeavour – from recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to building our cohort of Indigenous Australian academic and professional staff.

Our Business

The University of Melbourne is a public-spirited and internationally engaged institution. Our activities span research, learning and teaching, and engagement with community, business and government. Our business is to provide our students, staff and community with outstanding educational and research opportunities and outcomes. In 2010 the University employed approximately 7,100 staff and 24 of these were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, 13 employed in the professional staff area and 11 in the academic staff area. In addition, 11 casual staff positions were held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – five professional staff and six academic staff.

For the 2010 academic year the University enrolled 75 commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – 31 into undergraduate courses and 44 into postgraduate programs. (Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander commencing enrolments were 8,398 undergraduate and 7,012 postgraduate.) The total enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 2010, across all years of study, was 107 undergraduate and 88 postgraduate. (Total non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments for the same period were 28,420 undergraduate and 16,247 postgraduate, with international students comprising approximately 28% of total enrolments.)

Our RAP

The development of the University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is aligned to the method and framework developed by Reconciliation Australia. This framework groups activities and actions as:

- Strong and positive relationships
- Respect for the special contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Working together to ensure all Australians have the same life opportunities

The key principles that underpin the RAP:

- The Reconciliation Action Plan represents a University-wide commitment. Accordingly, the responsibilities outlined in the plan should align with existing accountability structures.
- The activities in the Reconciliation Action Plan build and extend on core business activities.

- The implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan will be, as much as possible, integrated through the University's planning cycle.
- A process will be established to refresh the Reconciliation Action Plan each year. This will include the production of an annual report and refreshed RAP.

The process of developing the RAP:

- Meeting of a Convening Panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders with whom the University has longstanding association, and chaired by the Provost, to discuss a vision for the Reconciliation Action Plan.
- A series of University fora and consultation sessions conducted to discuss the key themes that came out of the Convening Panel discussion.
- The recording of all the ideas generated through the consultation sessions for future consideration.
- Drafting of the first RAP document including all actions judged to be achievable in the short term. (Big ideas, which require further scoping work, were noted and retained by Murrup Barak without deadlines and accountabilities, for inclusion in future plans.)

Within these broad categories we commit to six focus areas for action: Partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities; Cultural Recognition; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Recruitment and Retention; Teaching and Learning; Research; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Employment.

RELATIONSHIPS

Action Area 1: Partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities

The development of genuine and effective partnerships between the University and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities underpins this RAP. Genuinely reciprocal and sustained partnerships require respect (Action Area 2) and a commitment to inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all facets of University life. It is important to us to build a collaborative learning environment for all of our students and a culturally safe and welcoming environment for all students and staff.

Action	Lead Portfolio Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
1. Host an annual forum for University partnerships to profile existing work, identify gaps, and develop strategies to promote best practice for partnership development. <i>Including best practice strategies to enhance the role of Aboriginal elders and leaders in University decision making and promoting learning about Indigenous cultures.</i>	Director Murrup Barak, Deputy Vice Chancellor (University Affairs)	By 31/12/2011	Inaugural forum in 2011. Strategies published for implementation in 2012. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to be included in discussions and consulted as part of the annual review of the RAP.
2. Collaborate with the Indigenous community partners in the Goulburn Valley to establish the proposed Kaiela Institute.	DVC (University Affairs), Director Murrup Barak	From 2011	New Institute established by 2012.
3. Brief senior University staff to ensure University decision-making is informed on Indigenous issues. (Senior staff to include Faculty General Managers, Heads of Administrative Divisions and the Senior Executive.)	Vice-Chancellor, Provost	From Feb 2011	An annual presentation to one of the following senior leadership groups of the University: Heads and Deans, Planning & Budgets Committee, Academic Board, University Council.
4. Development of at least one new partnership aligned to the University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan.	Director Murrup Barak, DVC (University Affairs)	By 30/11/2011	One new partnership per year.
5. Establishment of a RAP Responsible Persons Implementation Group made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other staff and with Executive support.	Director Murrup Barak	Quarterly with additional meetings as needed	RAP Responsible Persons Implementation Group meets at least 4 times per year.

RESPECT

Action Area 2: Cultural Recognition

Build understanding and respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Enhance the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across all university campuses. Create opportunities for staff and students to gain an understanding of the contemporary, historical and traditional cultures, values and knowledge of Indigenous Australians and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This will ensure that our University is a culturally safe learning environment and provides all students with a well-rounded education that will help them meet their career aspirations and life goals. It will also help in providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with a culturally safe and welcoming working environment.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
6. Implement protocols for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Acknowledgement of Country' or 'Welcome to Country' at University events where members of the public are present (irrespective of whether content relates to Indigenous affairs). • Remuneration for Traditional Owners conducting 'Welcome to Country' at University activities and Elders engaged in University business. 	Vice-Chancellor, Senior Vice-Principal	By 30/11/2011	Protocols disseminated by 30/06/11. Source of funding and level of remuneration to be determined by the Senior Vice-Principal by 31/03/2011. Acknowledgement of Country held at all public events. Welcome to Country conducted by Traditional Owner/s at major events.
7. Develop Indigenous cross-cultural training resource and other strategies for University staff aligned with the Indigenous Employment Framework 2010-2013 with a focus on making the University a culturally safe place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the University community.	Executive Director Human Resources, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement)	Pilot developed and launched by 30/11/2011	Pilot program for organizational cultural awareness and training developed. Faculty and divisional rollout in 2012. All faculties and administrative divisions to report from 2012 on number of staff completing training.
8. Publish annual program of events to profile Indigenous issues across the University, including NAIDOC week, and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus in key university events – e.g. Open Day, Research Week, Graduation Ceremonies.	Chief Marketing Officer Marketing & Communications, Director Murrup Barak	Annually each November	Annual calendar of events. At least 5 events in calendar. Measure attendance for signature events including the Dungala Kaiela Oration and the Narrm Oration to determine effectiveness of publicity and gauge audience feedback.
9. Upgrade University signage and establish permanent markers at the main entrance of each University campus to include acknowledgment and celebration of Traditional Owners.	Executive Director Property & Campus Services, Director Murrup Barak	Approach developed by 30/11/2011	Signage and markers upgraded by the end of 2012.

<p>10. Develop proposal for major symbolic statement through commissioned public art on Parkville campus to celebrate the historical and continuing connections between Aboriginal peoples and the University and environs.</p>	<p>Executive Director Property & Campus Services, Director Murrup Barak, DVC (University Affairs), Vice-Chancellor</p>	<p>Proposals agreed by 30/12/2011</p>	<p>Implementation commenced from 30/06/2012.</p>
<p>Scoping Project led by the Director of Murrup Barak Melbourne Institute of Development for a rolling exhibition of Aboriginal art (with related artists program and agreed policy framework to ensure cultural respect with regard to display, appropriate storage, and access to cultural objects and protection of artists' copyright).</p>			

OPPORTUNITIES

Action Area 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Recruitment and Retention

Strategies to enhance the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and to build, extend and sustain current efforts. To that end the University will foster innovation, build an evidence-based approach, and agree to a framework that will embed responsibilities for delivery across University programs. This will ensure our University community maintains and builds on its diversity and provides appropriate support and development opportunities for all of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. We aim to grow and develop the University's own Indigenous 'community' and community spirit.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
11. Review University-wide roles and accountabilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student recruitment and retention to ensure direct alignment with future strategy.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement), Director Murrup Barak	By 30/6/2011	University Senior Executive reaches agreement on review proposal.
12. Identify recruitment and retention strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the graduate professional degrees.	Deans, Director Murrup Barak	30/6/11	Strategies identified for implementation through 2012.
13. Establish targets for new generation undergraduate degrees and graduate professional degrees.	Deans, DVC (Global Engagement), Director Murrup Barak	30/6/11	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student targets published for implementation in 2012.
14. Extend scholarship opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kwong Lee Dow Scholarship program Graduate professional programs Research higher degree scholarships Include a mentoring component with suitable role models in all scholarship programs.	DVC (Global Engagement), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement), DVC (University Affairs), Director Murrup Barak	For 2012	1-2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kwong Lee Dow Scholarships in 2012. One new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate program scholarship in 2012. 1-2 new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Higher Degree scholarships in 2012.
15. Extend University initiatives in the Goulburn Valley in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve secondary school retention. Build on outcomes of the Academy of Sports Health and Education. 	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement), Community Partners, Director of Academy of Sport Health and Education, Dean Melbourne School of Graduate Education	By 30/11/2011	Review of current initiatives, planning for rollout in 2012 to be completed by the end of 2011. Measurable targets to be agreed through review process for implementation in 2012.

16. Review and extend 'Extended BA Program' model. Consider opportunities for non-school leavers, alternatives to the residential component, and expansion to additional undergraduate degrees.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement), Dean of Arts, other Deans & Provost, Director Murrup Barak	By 31/12/2011	Review proposals for expansion of the Extended BA program model for implementation in 2012. Extended programs for at least 2 additional undergraduate degrees for implementation in 2012.
17. Implement proposal to revitalize the University's provision of opportunities for training and professional practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture.	Dean Victorian College of the Arts & Music, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Participation & Engagement), Director Murrup Barak	By 30/06/2011	Appointment of program director and 2 staff positions by end of 2011. At least 1 of these positions to be Indigenous specific.

Action area 4: Teaching & Learning strategies

The University has already agreed to a number of desirable attributes for graduates including being attuned to cultural diversity and having respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, cultures and values. The strategies outlined in this section build on this agreement and outline steps to realize this ambition.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
18. Establish annual University award for excellence and innovation in Indigenous higher education.	Provost, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning)	By end 2011	One award per year.
19. Identify strategies in the University's Teaching and Learning Plan to increase engagement of students with quality Indigenous teaching, including in Indigenous Studies, and enable students to identify pathways for specialisation (including expansion of student placements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and contexts). Steps include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of current graduate attributes. Audit of undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs and quality outcomes. Audit of accreditation requirements. 	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning), Associate Deans (Academic), Director Murrup Barak	End 2011	Audit results and studies published. Eight new student placements by the end of 2011.
20. Develop an online resource that fosters networking and professional development of academics engaged in Indigenous teaching and assists students to identify new learning opportunities and research opportunities.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning), Director Murrup Barak	End 2012	Online resource established.

Action area 5: Research

University of Melbourne research has the potential to produce knowledge and innovation needed to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous life opportunities. Current efforts need to be extended and the number of students and graduates undertaking research training in Indigenous Studies increased.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
21. Enhance productivity and impact of research carried out in the field of Indigenous Studies. Steps to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of research quantum. Audit of RHD training and load. Agreed strategies and targets to enhance quality, productivity and impact. 	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Director Murrup Barak, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Research)	Audit by end 2011 Strategies agreed by end 2012	Audit published. Strategy and targets published.
22. Implement strategies to support RHD students in Indigenous Studies to foster effective supervision.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Research)	Commenced through 2011	Strategies reported in first report of RAP with targets established for 2012.
23. Develop Graduate Certificate of Indigenous Research Leadership, building on the Professional Certificate of Indigenous Research Training and Practice piloted in 2011.	Director Murrup Barak	June 2011	Graduate Certificate Program approvals completed by end of 2011. 15 students enrolled in Professional Certificate program for 2012.

Action area 6: Indigenous Staff Employment

In 2010 the University agreed to the Indigenous Employment Framework 2010-2013 (IEF). The IEF headline targets are aligned with the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy and the University of Melbourne Collective Agreement 2010. Actions outlined here are drawn from IEF.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
24. Develop Faculty and Divisional Indigenous Employment Plans (IEPs) aligned with the IEF.	Deans & Administrative Division Heads	June 2011	Employment goals/targets and strategies included in Faculty and Divisional Business Plans in 2011.
25. Faculties and Administrative Divisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegate accountability for IEPs and incorporate IEP into Equal Opportunity & Diversity plans. Identify resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadetships, internships or graduate traineeships during business planning cycle. 	Deans & Administrative Division Heads	By June 2011	Accountabilities delegated. Resources identified and reported.
26. Identify strategies to ensure Indigenous businesses are considered through University tenders and procurement.	Chief Financial Officer & Head of University Services	By 30/06/2011	Strategies published. Implemented through the 2012 Operational Plans.

TRACKING AND REPORTING PROGRESS

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<p>27. Annual RAP report and refresh published by 30 November each year.</p> <p>Deans to designate responsibility for coordination of RAP implementation and reporting to relevant Head of Department, Associate or Assistant Dean.</p> <p>Administrative Division Heads to designate a Senior Manager to be responsible for coordination of RAP implementation and reporting.</p>	<p>Provost, Deans, Administrative Division Heads</p>	<p>Nov 2011</p> <p>By 31 March 2011</p>	<p>RAP report and refresh published annually by 30 November.</p> <p>Delegations for all faculties and administrative divisions.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to be included in discussions and consulted as part of the annual review of the RAP.</p>

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