

Indigenous Student Success Program

2023 Performance Report

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1. Declaration

In providing this Performance Report, it is acknowledged that it is an offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* to provide false or misleading information.

2. Enrolments (Access)

In 2023, Murmuk Djerring, the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Strategy 2023–2027 was released succeeding the University's third Reconciliation Action Plan. Murmuk Djerring sets out the aspiration to be the University of choice for Indigenous people, with unprecedented investment to attract, nurture and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. Tangible support through a range of programs and initiatives will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students personally succeed and flourish while at the University of Melbourne and go on to contribute nationally and globally.

Outlined in Murmuk Djerring 2023 – 2027 is the Indigenous Strategy Action Plan, progressing our five strategic priorities - Leadership; Place, Heritage and Culture; Partnerships; Indigenous Knowledge; Truth telling and Justice – which provide the overarching framework for delivering on our Aspiration.

Supporting Murmuk Djerring is a new Indigenous Student Plan 2023 – 2027 which was endorsed in 2023.

The University of Melbourne has had in place Indigenous Student Headline Targets. These include a 1000-strong Indigenous student cohort by 2029 and undergraduate to graduate student enrolment and success ratios to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by 2025.

The total number of applications has been increasing since 2018 and the number of admissions has followed suit, reaching a total of 508 Indigenous student enrolments in 2023. Of note is the increase in Indigenous postgraduate student numbers in 2023, continuing the strong growth from 2022.

2023 Enrolment Highlights

- Total enrolments increased by 10%
- Commencing enrolments increased by 5.7%
- Higher Degree by Research commencing enrolments increased by 70%
- Higher Degree by Research total enrolments increased by 11%
- Total postgraduate enrolments increased by 20.6%

Table 1: Commencing and total Indigenous enrolments and EFTSL by course level in 2023

	Commencing		Total	
Course Level	Headcount	EFTSL	Headcount	EFTSL
HDR	17	<10 ¹	67	38.997
HDCW	79	57.06	172	118.94
OPG	80	22.06	94	25.313
UG	62	50.81	213	161.56
NA	<10 ¹	<10 ¹	<10 ¹	<10 ¹
Total	<240¹	<140¹	<545¹	<350¹

Table 2: Total Indigenous student enrolments at the University in 2023 by academic division

	Headcount	EFTSL
Architecture, Building and Planning	15	11.13
Arts	135	93.82
Business and Economics	39	20.67
Engineering and IT	<10 ¹	<10 ¹
Faculty of Education	75	31.97
Fine Arts and Music	48	33.34
Law	35	23.91
Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	121	79.68
Science	68	45.59
Non-Award	<10 ¹	<10 ¹
Total	<34¹	<350¹

Murrup Barak: Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development: Outreach and Engagement**Provision of Indigenous student recruitment, retention and support services (directly funded by ISSP)**

The Outreach and Engagement Team supports the University's Indigenous student recruitment agenda. The team is made up of a Team Leader and 2 x Indigenous Student Outreach Officers. The team work collaboratively with Admissions, Future Students, Scholarships, Faculties and Schools to increase Indigenous student access to the University of Melbourne. The Outreach and Engagement Team has coordinated a number of activities (listed below) alongside regularly building relationships with local, regional and interstate communities, schools and individuals seeking an interest in studying at University of Melbourne.

- Residential Indigenous Science Experience (RISE): The aim of RISE is to increase Indigenous students' interest in science. Indigenous students in years 9 and 10 from across Victoria are provided with the opportunity to network and carry out hands-on practical experiments in biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, and engineering.

¹ This value has been adjusted to protect Indigenous student privacy.

- Open Day Program: Murrup Barak coordinates offer a day for Indigenous students that provides an opportunity to experience university first-hand and to engage with Faculties and other Indigenous students who aspire to university.
- Victorian Indigenous Engineering Winter School: VIEWS (a partnership with RMIT University, Swinburne University and Monash University) aims to increase Indigenous participation in engineering. Indigenous year 11 and 12 students are provided with an insight into what it is like to study and work as an engineer. Participants explore pathways and study options in engineering, meet Indigenous engineers, and visit employers to see engineering in action.
- National Indigenous Business Summer School: The National Indigenous Business Summer School (NIBSS) is an exciting program for Years 11 and 12 Indigenous high school students. The program is an initiative of the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC), hosted by the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Melbourne. The purpose of the program is to provide a fully immersive experience for students thinking of entering the world of business or becoming an entrepreneur. Students have the opportunity to see business in action and learn about the available pathways into business studies.
- Yagilaith Camp: Hosted by Murrup Barak, Yagilaith is an opportunity for Year 11 and 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students on an ATAR/IB pathway in any state or territory to have a University of Melbourne campus experience.
- Toorong Marnong/Koori Big Day Out: Murrup Barak have a strong relationship with Toorong Marnong and work closely with Indigenous support centres at other Victorian Universities. These include Indigenous specific expos in Shepparton, Mildura and Gippsland.
- VTAC Support. During the 2023 VTAC process Murrup Barak were able to provide support to Indigenous students in areas including accommodation and scholarships. These resulted in a 50% conversation increase.

The Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development

The Wilin Centre within the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music at the Southbank Campus of the University acts as an access point to academic and student support services for Indigenous students who require culturally appropriate support at the Faculty. The Wilin Centre delivers outreach programs to the communities throughout Victoria and the South-East, to remove barriers to access and foster relationships with community practicing artists.

The Wilin Centre employs 1 x ISSP funded position - Schools and Community Liaison Officer who is responsible for promoting pathways and opportunities which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students throughout their application, admission and induction.

Non-ISSP Funded Strategies to improve access for Indigenous students

Access Melbourne

Access Melbourne is the University's special entry access scheme. It offers students from disadvantaged backgrounds entry to the undergraduate course of their choice, even if their ATAR is below the Clearly-in ATAR. Indigenous Australians are a priority group under the Access Melbourne

scheme. Through Access Melbourne, the University now guarantees entry to Indigenous students who meet prerequisites and achieve the following ATARs (or notional ATARs):

- 50.00: Arts (Extended)
- 55.00: Science (Extended)
- 70.00: Design and Arts
- 75.00: Science
- 83.00: Commerce
- 85.00: Biomedicine

Additionally, every Indigenous student that accepted an offer for an undergraduate degree at the University of Melbourne in 2023 was considered for a Melbourne Access Scholarship valued at \$5,000 per year for the standard duration of their undergraduate scholarship.

Pathway Programs: In 2023 The University of Melbourne offered two undergraduate pathway programs specifically for Indigenous students, the Bachelor of Arts Extended (B-ARTSEXT) and Bachelor of Science Extended (B-SCIEXT). These are four-year degrees that include a year of bridging subjects to provide a strong foundation for success in later study.

As of 2023, the Bachelor of Arts Extended has been discontinued due to a decline in numbers, coinciding with an increased participation of Indigenous students in mainstream Bachelor of Arts following Access Melbourne's reduced ATAR entry.

PhD Familiarisation Facilitated through The Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health: The Indigenous PhD Familiarisation Program is aimed at supporting Indigenous students who are considering applying for and undertaking a PhD. Participants in these programs engage and network with Indigenous academics and current PhD students and work on research ideas as a cohort and with prospective supervisors.

MDHS Indigenous Graduate Pathways: The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences gives priority access to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students at the University of Melbourne under the Indigenous Graduate Pathways. In 2023, a total of 16 students enrolled into the Doctor of Medicine.

Indigenous Alternative Entry Pathway JD: Melbourne Law school offers an alternative entry pathway for Indigenous applicants to the Juris Doctor Program. The Selection Committee will consider the applicant's academic performance in their tertiary studies, and the interview. The interview is intended to provide a face-to-face opportunity for Indigenous applicants to speak to their professional and personal experiences and their reasons for applying to the MLS JD Program.

MURRA Indigenous Business Program: Offered by the Melbourne Business School since 2012, the program attracts Indigenous entrepreneurs and professionals from around Australia and provides them with the tools to grow their own businesses and develop economic opportunities for their communities.

Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity: Established in 2016 at the University, the Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity is an Indigenous-led, lifelong, collaborative fellowship program that seeks to harness Indigenous knowledge and ingenuity to create positive social change. Throughout the yearlong fellowship, the program provides the tools, resources, and connections for fellows, most of whom are Indigenous, to become deeply engaged changemakers across the Pacific region.

Professional Certificate in Indigenous Research and the Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Research and Leadership

292 Indigenous graduate research students and Early Career Researchers from across Australia have participated in The Professional Certificate in Indigenous Research and the Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Research and Leadership since 2010.

The programs have been instrumental in producing future Indigenous academic leaders with eight current Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous/Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous graduates of the Programs. A further 15 graduates currently hold Associate Dean (Indigenous) and other senior professorial roles.

With the conclusion of philanthropic funding and lack of ongoing institutional funding, the University of Melbourne, together with Western Sydney University and the University of Queensland is seeking Government support. The Programs are a proven model to support the development of an Indigenous academic workforce and Government investment would align with Accord priorities and demonstrate its commitment to delivering tangible outcomes for Indigenous Higher Education.

The Proposal seeks an initial Government contribution of \$4 million over four years to secure the future of existing programs and provide scope for program expansion and diversification beyond current offerings.

Table 1 **ISSP Scholarships - breakdown of 2023 payments¹**

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total ²	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling ³							\$ -	0
Undergraduate ⁴	\$ 313,000.00	86	\$ 178,000.00	36	\$ 224,500.00	128	\$ 715,500.00	250
Post-graduate ⁵	\$ 24,500.00	45	\$ 20,000	2	\$ 103,378.00	55	\$ 147,878.00	102
Other							\$ -	0
Total	\$ 337,500.00	131	\$ 88,000.00	38	\$ 327,878.00	183	\$ 753,378.00	352

3. Progression (outcomes)

The University of Melbourne continues to work towards realising the Indigenous Student Headline Targets of achieving parity in success rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at the undergraduate and graduate coursework levels by 2025. Monitoring of Indigenous students' academic

success has indicated that Indigenous students have consistently performed well above the national and Victorian state average, with success rates between 80% and 86% over the last six years and a success rate of 84% for undergraduate and 85% for graduate students in 2023.

Table 3: Indigenous success rates at the University in 2022 and 2023

Course Level	2022 Success Rate	2023 Success Rate
HDCW	90.10%	87.40%
OPG	93.55%	83.38%
UG	83.00%	84.28%
Total	86.23%	85.43%

Murrup Barak, Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development

Murrup Barak plays a critical role in co-ordinating and supporting the development of a wide range of Indigenous programs, building on the University's aim to increase involvement of Indigenous people across all facets of its operations, as staff, as students, and as interested community members contributing to the quality of our Indigenous teaching, learning, research, and programs.

Murrup Barak provides leadership in the development of a supportive environment for Indigenous students enrolled in University programs. Murrup Barak acts as a point of referral for Indigenous students to ensure that they can appropriately access University academic and student support services.

The 2023 staffing of Murrup Barak was:

- Director.
- Senior Advisor
- Program Manager
- Team Leader Student Success
- Team Leader Outreach and Engagement
- Project Officer – Media and Communications
- Administrative and Community Liaison Officer
- Indigenous Student Success Officers (three positions)
- Indigenous Student Recruitment Officers (two positions)
- Strategic Project and Engagement Coordinator

Indigenous Student Success Team (*directly funded by ISSP*)

The Team delivers services and programs to cover different aspects of student life including:

- transitioning to university
- access to academic skills
- Student advising
- Student advocacy
- general wellbeing
- community and cultural engagement
- financial assistance
- housing services and global mobility

Priority services to increase engagement provided by the Indigenous Student Success Team in 2023:

- Dhumbali Orientation
- Student Ambassador Peer Support Program
- Reward Scholarships

- Student Success Grants
- Food security support
- Conference participation support
- Cultural Workshops
- Cultural engagement with Elders
- Streamlined referral service to mental health support

Murrup Barak is constantly reassessing how we acknowledge the achievements of Indigenous students. In response to the persistent economic crisis, which has resulted in inflation and the unaffordability of many essential items, consideration was made to offer a reward scholarship to students who have excelled academically during this challenging period. In 2023 Murrup Barak introduced the Commonwealth Reward Scholarship to acknowledge students in two categories 1. Weighted Average Mark between 60 and 79, 2. Weighted Average Mark over 80.

Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS)

ITAS provides one on one tutorial services to students with the aim of students achieving academic excellence. ITAS is the largest service provided by Murrup Barak, engaging 24% of the total Indigenous student cohort.

Undergraduate students received more tutoring than graduate students. In 2023, 34% of undergraduate students engaged in ITAS compared to 14% of graduate students. Undergraduate students generally need more academic support, especially in their first and second years.

In 2023 the University of Melbourne introduced a new casual staff engagement policy which enforces a rule of engagement for a minimum of 3 hours. The expenditure on casual staff salaries engaged within the ITAS program has been impacted and has seen an increase of 25% in casual salary expenditure.

Table 2 **Tutorial assistance provided in 2023**

Level of study	Number of unique students assisted ²	Total number of tutorial sessions attended ³	Total hours of assistance ⁴	Expenditure ⁵ (\$)
Enabling				
Undergraduate	77		5152.75	\$380,090
Post-graduate	56		1826.18	\$5487
Other				\$30,313
Total	133		6978.93	\$415,890

Wilin Indigenous Student Support *(partly funded through ISSP)*

The Wilin Centre currently employs 2 Indigenous staff members whose roles are directly focussed on student support, retention and success. The numerous support and engagement activities listed in section 1 are available for all Indigenous students enrolled at the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music.

Non-ISSP Funded Strategies to improve progression for Indigenous students

Poche Centre for Indigenous Health: The Poche Centre for Indigenous Health helps connect prospective Indigenous PhD students with senior academics at the University who can assist them with their applications. This includes assisting them to navigate the application process, articulating the applicant's research training and experience, and advocacy during the selection process. The Poche Centre also connects prospective Indigenous PhD students and early career researchers with academic supervisors and mentors. In partnership between the Melbourne Poche Centre and Kings College London, the University also runs the Melbourne Poche Leadership Fellows Program, which supports the development of emerging Indigenous leaders in academic, policy, clinical and research roles. The program is aimed at Indigenous early career professionals in the health sector who are looking to influence broader change for Indigenous people.

Research Unit in Indigenous Arts and Cultures

Faculty's Research Unit for Indigenous Arts and Cultures (RUIAC) operates in partnership with Wilin to provide support to Indigenous students enrolled in allied graduate programs across the faculty. The Indigenous Graduate Research Training Program (IGRTP) includes supervision, research seminars and symposia, reading group, research skills workshops and research training opportunities.

Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Arts:

The Indigenous Studies program sits within the Faculty of Arts, School of Culture and Communication. It was relaunched in 2020 to focus on contemporary issues in ways that relate locally grounded insights to world-wide issues and concerns. The Indigenous Studies program seeks to understand the social, economic and political challenges that confront the world today from the points of view articulated by Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous Studies Program provides interdisciplinary teaching and learning, and research activities that critically engage with rich history, knowledge and cultures of Indigenous people of Australia and globally. The program engages and supports Indigenous undergraduate students as well as the growing cohort of HDR students.

Indigenous Studies Unit (ISU): In the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, the ISU develops world-class teaching and research in Australian Indigenous Studies and works to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in Research Higher Degrees. The ISU contributes to an evidence base in a range of research areas that improve outcomes in Indigenous health, economic participation, and cultural and resource management.

Leaders in Medical Education (LIME) Network: The University holds leadership positions in the LIME Network, a collection of medical schools in Australia and New Zealand dedicated to ensuring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in Indigenous health, as well as best practice in the recruitment and retention of Indigenous medical students.

Principles for the Naming of Places

A key issue for many Indigenous students that affects their sense of safety and belonging and thus their learning experiences at University is the naming of buildings and places on campus after historical figures who were the proponents of racist practices.

In June 2023, the University established the Places Naming Advisory Group to develop principles for the future naming of places across the University of Melbourne's campuses in preparation for a strategic review of building names. The need for naming principles has emerged in the context of discussions on Indigenous cultural recognition, appropriate acknowledgement of notable women and others who represent the diversity of the University community, and examples of anachronistic use of subject names for buildings.

Informed by a review of approaches to naming and renaming university buildings across the world, the University's historical context and alignment with the University's strategic intentions, the Places Naming Advisory Group has developed draft principles to guide the future naming of University buildings, and is now consulting on these proposed changes.

The University has a strong desire to reflect and acknowledge Indigenous peoples and their enduring connection to the lands we work and learn on. This has been a central consideration of the Places Naming Advisory Group, which includes Indigenous representation and subject matter experts, throughout its deliberations.

Meaningful recognition of Indigenous peoples, Country, their cultural heritage and historic experiences can be achieved in many different ways. Maintaining flexibility in the naming principles and embedding contextualisation of all buildings names across the campus provides opportunities to recognise Indigenous peoples, their cultural heritage and the difficult conversations about the University's past in unique and meaningful ways across campus.

4. Completions (outcomes)

The number of Indigenous students completing has more than doubled in the past 5 years, from 76 in 2018 to 157 in 2023 with the University of Melbourne having one of the best Indigenous cohort completion rates in the country. In 2020 the University celebrated a milestone of 1000 graduated Indigenous students. Since 2023, 1458 graduates have joined the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Alumni community.

Table 4: Completions of Indigenous students at the University of Melbourne in 2023

	Completions	Attainment rate	4-year cohort completion rate	9-year cohort completion rate
HDR	<10 ²	0.97%	13.33%	55.56%
HDCW	46	0.94%	51.79%	71.79%
OPG	60	3.43%	85.42%	80.00%
UG	46	0.81%	43.37%	52.63%
Total	<165²	1.23%	54.81%	65.99%

Murrup Barak's targeted support programs (*directly funded by ISSP*)

Murrup Barak's targeted support programs include:

- the coordination of the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS)
- the provision of seminars targeted at Indigenous students;
- programs to support cultural development and engagement with Indigenous Elders;
- processes to enable students to provide feedback on their experience at the University;
- an inclusive social network and meeting place for students including a regular Tuesday lunchtime event; and

² This value has been adjusted to protect Indigenous student privacy.

- the provision of a referral services.
- Provision of advocacy service and support for special consideration process.
- Industry engagement collaboration with Faculties.
- Career and graduate pathways events

Murrup Barak offer several paid positions each year for students to take on a leadership role and provide mentoring support to peers. There is an increased focus on first-year students who required support with navigating the University. Student Ambassadors have an increased success rate and are more likely to complete their studies whilst gaining employment experience.

University of Melbourne Student Union Support *(Partly funded by ISSP)*

University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) – Indigenous Office: 2 x Indigenous office bearers are employed through UMSU to provide advocacy and student support to Indigenous students. The Indigenous Office at UMSU run various student activities throughout the year to keep Indigenous students engaged via a social and cultural enrichment programs.

Faculty Support Activities *(Non-ISSP funded)*

All academic divisions have appointed an Associate Dean, Assistant Dean or a delegate of the Dean with an Indigenous focus. All of these roles are representatives on the Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates Indigenous, which is part of the University's Indigenous governance mechanism. The Faculty of Science, the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and the Faculty of Business and Economics and the Melbourne Law School also have dedicated Indigenous Student Support Officers to support students to successfully navigate their degrees.

In addition to these programs, each faculty is required to develop its own Divisional Indigenous Development Plan that include their own context-specific Indigenous student support activities. These include Indigenising the curriculum through targeted grants, workshops, expanding access to Indigenous knowledge subjects as breadth or elective subjects and On Country experiences for students.

5. Regional and remote students

Indigenous students are increasingly arriving at the University from regional and remote Australia. With continued increases in commencements of Indigenous students from regional and remote regions over the last decade, the proportion of all Indigenous students enrolled at the University in 2023 from regional and remote Australia has reached 36%. EFTSL trends for Indigenous students have been similar to headcount trends.

Table 5: Commencing Indigenous students at the University by remoteness area in 2023.

Remoteness	Commencing Headcount	Commencing EFTSL	Total Headcount	Total EFTSL
Major Cities	148	92.48	340	219.23
Inner Regional	50	27.89	110	73.07
Outer Regional	26	12.24	61	37.33
Remote	<10 ³	<10 ³	15	10.11
Very Remote	<10 ³	<10 ³	<10 ³	<10 ³
Unknown	<10 ³	<10 ³	<10 ³	<10 ³
Total	<240³	<140³	<545³	<350³

³ This value has been adjusted to protect Indigenous student privacy.

All Indigenous students are eligible to receive an Access Melbourne scholarship in combination with Commonwealth Scholarships. Indigenous Accommodation Grant targets students who are moving from regional and remote areas and provides funding to their accommodation provider to relieve financial stress.

Diploma in General Studies (Non-ISSP funded)

The Diploma in General Studies (DiGS) provides an introduction to a range of Melbourne bachelors degrees. It supports students in their transition to university or employment and provides a pathway into a University of Melbourne bachelors degree. Students who successfully complete the DiGS and are eligible for the Access Melbourne scheme (see above) and are guaranteed entry into agriculture, biomedicine, commerce, design or science. Located at the University's Dookie Campus in the Goulburn Valley, the DiGS is designed to attract Indigenous and regional and remote students.

Dungala Kaiela Research Fellows Program (non-ISSP funded)

The Dungala Kaiela Research Fellows Program provides a pathway for emerging Indigenous researchers and leaders living in the Goulburn Valley and working in health to undertake a PhD through the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences. Dungala Kaiela Fellows are supported to undertake their graduate research in the Goulburn Valley with a Research Fellow Level A salary with a three-year contract. Dungala Kaiela Fellows can apply for a further three-year Indigenous Post-doctoral Fellowship paid at a Research Fellow Level B salary upon completion of their PhD.

Table 4 ISSP Scholarship data for remote and regional students⁶

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2022 Payments	76,000	29	32,000	11	150	1	108,150	41
B. 2023 Offers ⁷	108,000	60	58,000	18	97,000	56	263,000	134
C. Percentage ⁸ (C=B/A*100)							243%	
2023 Payments	140,000	50	36,000	12	123,000	71	299,000	133

6. Eligibility criteria

6.1. Indigenous Education Strategy

Indigenous Education Strategy

The University of Melbourne's approach to advancing its Indigenous agenda has been to embed accountabilities across the University. This is reflected by the incorporation of the University's aims for Indigenous development throughout the hierarchy of its policy and strategy documents. In recognition of such, our Indigenous Education Strategy draws together all of the existing plans, strategies and frameworks into a single document.

The plans, strategies and frameworks that articulate our key performance indicators, goals and targets for Indigenous student outcomes include:

University level:

- [Advancing Melbourne 2030](#)
- [Murmuk Djerring: The University of Melbourne Indigenous Strategy 2023 – 2027](#)
- [Indigenous Education Strategy 2018 – 2022](#)
- [Indigenous Student Plan 2023 – 2027](#)
- [Indigenous Employment Plan 2023 – 2027](#)
- [Indigenous Research Framework 2023 – 2027](#)
- [Indigenous Internationalisation Plan 2020 – 2024](#)
- Indigenous Student and Staff Headline Targets
- Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Framework

Divisional level:

- Divisional Indigenous Development Plans

Taken together, these documents provide information on the ways in which the University will:

- increase the number of Indigenous students enrolling in, progressing in and completing courses leading to higher education awards;
- facilitate, monitor and improve upon the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in curricula, touchstones (formerly called graduate attributes), and teaching practices; and
- include activities for students and employees of the provider that promote cultural competency in Indigenous cultures, traditions and histories and the diversity of circumstances of Indigenous people in Australia.

The Indigenous Education Strategy is publicly available via the University's 'About Us' page and can be accessed directly from the following link:

https://about.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/63002/ISSP_IES_20181127.pdf

Responsibilities for implementing the Indigenous Education Strategy sit with the portfolio leads of the appropriate faculties and administrative divisions, with oversight provided by the Indigenous Strategy Reference Group (ISRG). The faculties and Chancellery are represented on ISRG. The Indigenous Strategy team in Chancellery (Office of the Provost) has significant responsibility for implementing and monitoring progress on Murmuk Djerring (the University of Melbourne Indigenous Strategy), and works with the faculties and administrative divisions to develop, implement and monitor local-level plans and strategies. Operational oversight of activities within the University's 9 faculties is also provided by the Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates Indigenous (CADDI).

Throughout 2022 and 2023, the University reviewed its suite of Indigenous strategies, frameworks and plans and in 2023 released:

- Murmuk Djerring: The University of Melbourne Indigenous Strategy 2023 – 2027¹
- Indigenous Student Plan 2023 – 2027
- Indigenous Employment Plan 2023 – 2027
- Indigenous Research Framework 2023 – 2027

The University will review its Indigenous Student and Staff Headline Targets during 2024 and will revise its Indigenous Education Strategy to align with the newly released strategies, frameworks and plans.

Murmuk Djerring: The University of Melbourne Indigenous Strategy 2023 – 2027

The University launched its new Indigenous strategy, *Murmuk Djerring 2023 – 2027*, in 2023. With our University-wide and Faculty-level Indigenous frameworks and plans firmly embedded in our planning and operations, *Murmuk Djerring*, has a focus on 21 Signature Projects articulated through five themes:

- Leadership
- Place, Heritage and Culture
- Partnerships
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Truth-Telling and Justice.

The impact of *Murmuk Djerring* will be transformational. Each of its five themes contain Signature Projects that enhance Indigenous student access and outcomes by developing their capabilities, providing education pathways, increasing their opportunities and improving their lived experience.

The approach taken in *Murmuk Djerring* builds on the University's third 'elevate' *Reconciliation Action Plan, April 2018 – December 2022*, which detailed 14 substantial Signature Projects arranged under four themes:

- Leadership for Change;
- Our Place;
- Purposeful Partnerships; and
- International Engagement.

While acknowledging the support of Reconciliation Australia and the invaluable framework that the RAP program has provided with respect to progressing the University's Indigenous priorities over the last twelve years, we now seek to progress these outside the parameters of the RAP framework in a bold new Strategy that is unconstrained by the limitations of a RAP, and which can respond in a timely way to changing University and national priorities. This decision was first made in 2021 by our Indigenous leadership, governance committees and University Executive and Council. The decision was revisited in 2022 and, after extensive consultation, was reconfirmed both by these groups and, importantly, our Traditional Owners Advisory Group.

Targets, Measurement and Reporting

The Indigenous Student Plan 2023 – 2027 is the key strategy for enhancing the recruitment and retention, progression, success and completions of Indigenous students at the University. It sets out the University's headline student targets to increase access and outcomes for Indigenous students. These targets are regularly reviewed and, in 2018, they were amended to be:

- Indigenous student headcount to reach 1000 by 2029;
- Undergraduate to graduate student ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by 2025; and

- Undergraduate and graduate success ratio between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students of 1 by 2025.

These targets were developed in recognition of the changing student demographic brought about by the implementation of the Melbourne Model such that our domestic graduate student numbers are roughly equivalent to our domestic undergraduate numbers (50.1% and 49.9% respectively). These Headline Targets are currently being reviewed and aligned to the suite of updated Indigenous strategies launched in 2023.

The current Indigenous Student Plan 2023 – 2027 was released in 2023 and is publicly available from the following link:

https://about.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0021/414354/Indigenous-Student-Plan-2023-2027-FINAL.pdf

The University has established robust mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on its performance over time. The annually published *Indigenous Outcomes Performance Report* (IOPR) is a key tool for tracking and reporting on progress. The reporting in the IOPR is guided by the three-tiered *Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Framework* (IOMF), which identifies a range of measures and their reporting frequency under the following headings:

- educational attainment and outcomes (Tier 1);
- predictors and precursors of outcomes (Tier 2); and
- educational system performance measures (Tier 3) that support these.

Reporting on progress towards our RAP targets and against University-wide and Divisional-level frameworks and plans is also undertaken on a regular basis.

The University has made excellent progress towards achieving its Indigenous student headline targets. The numbers of Indigenous students at the University have more than doubled to 537 since the targets were first adopted, and Indigenous students made up 1.26% of the domestic student cohort in 2023. The University acknowledges it will need to accelerate its efforts if it is to reach the ambitious target of having 1000 Indigenous students by 2029.

There are currently 1.00 domestic postgraduate students for every undergraduate student at the University. The number of Indigenous postgraduate students has exceeded the number of undergraduate students such that this ratio is now 1.54 for Indigenous students, increasing from 0.97 in the last six years. Chancellery continues to work with the faculties to ensure this progress is maintained.

The University of Melbourne has, over many years, performed well above the national average with respect to Indigenous students' academic success, with success rates above 80% over the last six years. Success rates for Indigenous postgraduate students are higher and closer to parity with other domestic students than they are for undergraduate students. Success rates were declining at the University for domestic students across all course levels in recent years, but particularly for Indigenous students. However, success rates markedly improved over the last two years. The University is currently exploring ways it can provide enhanced support to Indigenous students, particularly undergraduates, to further improve Indigenous success rates to meet our target of success rate parity.

6.2. Indigenous Workforce Strategy

The University of Melbourne's approach to advancing its Indigenous agenda has been to embed accountabilities across the University. Our commitment to increase the number of Indigenous people

working at the University is articulated in our Indigenous Education Strategy (see section 4 above), which summarises the array of plans, strategies and frameworks that encompass our Indigenous workforce strategy.

The Indigenous Employment Plan 2023 – 2027 is the key strategy for enhancing the recruitment and retention, progression, success and completions of Indigenous students at the University. It sets out the University's headline student targets to increase access and outcomes for Indigenous students. These targets are regularly reviewed and, in 2020, they were amended to be:

- Indigenous staff numbers to reach 350 by 2025.
- An Academic to Professional staff ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff by 2025.
- A senior (Level 8 and above) to junior Professional staff ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff by 2025.

The current Indigenous Employment Plan 2023 – 2027 was released in 2023 and is publicly available from the following link:

https://www.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/4852221/Indigenous-Employment-Plan_20231130.pdf

In addition to the Indigenous Employment Plan, each faculty and Chancellery have incorporated their own context-specific goals to support increased Indigenous employment at the University in their Divisional Indigenous Development Plans. All of these are being redeveloped and aligned with the updated suite of Indigenous strategies and are planned for release in 2024.

Progress towards meeting the University's Indigenous targets and measures, overall and at the level of faculties and graduate schools, is reported in the annual Indigenous Outcomes Performance Report (IOPR) and in the Social Inclusion Barometer. The IOPR reports on a range of Indigenous Student, Staff, Teaching and Learning and Research data. Our performance across the institution is also reported in the annual, internal Advancing Melbourne Performance Report and discussion of divisional level performance also occurs as part of the Vice-Chancellor's annual planning round.

The University is progressing towards meeting its Indigenous Staff Headline Targets. Since the implementation of the University's second IEF in 2014, Indigenous staff numbers in ongoing and fixed-term positions at the University more than tripled from 42 to 186 in 2023 as at the March 31 snapshot date and has reached 228 as at 29 February 2024. The marked growth in Indigenous staff numbers since 2014 has seen the proportion of Indigenous staff reach 1.8% (2.0% at February 29 2024), which includes 22 Indigenous Academic staff in level D and level E positions and an almost equal split between Academic and Professional staff.

Melbourne Indigenous Professional Employment Program

The rapid growth in Indigenous professional staff numbers at the University is largely due to the success of the Melbourne Indigenous Professional Employment Program (MIPEP), which replaced the Indigenous Australian Employment Development Program (IAEDP) in 2017. MIPEP is a 2-year Indigenous traineeship initiative for the recruitment of early entry professional staff members at The University of Melbourne. MIPEP was put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. MIPEP resumed in 2022 and there were 6 staff engaged in MIPEP during 2023.

In 2022 and 2023, two full-time staff were employed to administer MIPEP. MIPEP was comprehensively reviewed, and a revitalised offering developed for the 2024 cohort. The new offering has broadened the employment levels offered to MIPEP participants to cater to applicants with a

wider range of skills and prior professional experience. In January 2024, 15 staff commenced in MIPEP in positions across the main Parkville campus and at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Office of Indigenous Employment and Development

The Office of Indigenous Employment and Development adopts a whole of university approach to recruiting Indigenous staff, providing them with meaningful support throughout their employment, and ensuring confidence in their cultural safety while at work.

A Signature Project in Murmuk Djerring, the Office commenced operating in late 2023 and was fully staffed and operational as of January 2024. The current focus is on implementing our Indigenous Employment Plan 2023–2027, along with other University policies, programs and initiatives relating to Indigenous staff recruitment, retention, professional development, and building connections and networks.

Table 5.2 Indigenous workforce data (2023 breakdown) [\[iii\]](#)

Staff Classification	Headcount
Academic Continuing	37
Academic Fixed Term & Casual	55
Professional Continuing	58
Professional Fixed Term & Casual	38
Total	186

6.3. Indigenous Governance Mechanism

Associate Provost, Professor Marcia Langton and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous), Professor Barry Judd led the University's Indigenous agenda in 2023. Cultural authority and leadership are also provided by our Traditional Owners and Elders through the Traditional Owners Advisory Group.

The University's Indigenous Governance Mechanism is comprised of the Traditional Owners Advisory Group (TOAG), the Indigenous Strategy Reference Group (ISRG) and the Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates Indigenous (CADDI). Together these have a significant role in advising on University-wide Indigenous priorities which guide Murrup Barak on effective allocation ISSP resources.

The Traditional Owners Advisory Group (TOAG) is the advisory mechanism to support the governance of Indigenous programs with respect to Indigenous community engagement and cultural protocols and the implementation of University Indigenous strategy. Our Traditional Owners and Elders have served for many years.

Traditional Owners Advisory Group

Membership

Chair

Professor Barry Judd, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous (Chair)

Victorian Registered Aboriginal Party Representatives

Aunty Karen Jones, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (also a partner organization)

Ms Kelly Lehman, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation

Uncle Graham Atkinson, Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation)

Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation – Currently vacant

Elders and Respected Persons

Aunty Lorraine Padgham

Aunty Sandra Smith

Other Elders and Respected Persons as appropriate

Partners Organisations

Kaiela Institute – Currently vacant

Ms Denise Bowden, Yothu Yindi Foundation

Aunty Karen Jones, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (also a RAP)

University Representation

Professor Duncan Maskell, Vice-Chancellor

Professor Nicola Philips, Provost

Professor Marcia Langton, Associate Provost; Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor; Foundation Chair of Australian Indigenous Studies

Sonia Harvey, Director, Office of Indigenous Employment and Development

Will Carter, Director, Indigenous Partnerships

Inala Cooper, Director, Murrup Barak: Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development

Tiriki Onus, Head, Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development (commenced as Pro Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) in March 2024)

Terms of Reference

The Traditional Owners Advisory Group is a forum for providing advice and insights to the Vice-Chancellor and University Executive on matters of interest to the members of the Advisory Group.

The Group will:

- Discuss matters raised by Traditional Owners in support of the University's teaching and learning, research and engagement activities and priorities
- Provide cultural oversight of the University's Indigenous strategies
- Provide cultural oversight of the University's engagement with Indigenous knowledge
- Advise the University on appropriate engagement with Traditional Owner groups
- Advise the University on appropriate cultural and community protocols
- Report to the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group and University Executive after each meeting
- Meet at least twice annually, or as otherwise agreed by the Advisory Group

Indigenous Strategy Reference Group

Membership

Prof. Marcia Langton, Associate Provost

Margot Eden, Associate Director, Indigenous Strategy

Prof. Aaron Corn, Director, Indigenous Knowledge Institute

Inala Cooper, Director, Murrup Barak: Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development

Brittney Henderson, Indigenous Office Bearer, University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU)

Prof. Su Baker, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Community & Cultural Partnerships)

Prof. Adrian Little, Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)

Prof. Kate Smith-Miles, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Capability)

Nick Blinco, Vice-President (Advancement)

Sean Hogan, Acting Chief Human Resources Officer (or nominee) (Alexis Beckwith commenced as Chief Human Resources Office on ISRG in 2024)

Chair, Indigenous Graduate Student Association (IGSA) (TBC)

Terms of Reference

The Indigenous Strategy Reference Group advises the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) on the University's key high-level Indigenous partnerships and strategic initiatives. The group will:

- Provide advice on the implementation and progress of the University's key strategic initiatives and other key initiatives.
- Ensure there is appropriate alignment and synergies across multiple projects and portfolios.
- Consider emerging possibilities in relation to the University strategy, Advancing Melbourne.
- Support the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) in strategic decision-making.
- Formulate new initiatives for consideration by the appropriate bodies within the University, including the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group (VCAG) and University Executive.
- The ISRG will meet monthly.
- This ISRG will report to the Provost via the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous).

Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates Indigenous

Membership

Chair

Rotating Chair during 2023

Members

Associate Professor Shawana Andrews, Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Dr Eddie Cubillo, Melbourne Law School

Professor Sandra Eades, Associate Dean (Indigenous), Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Associate Professor Michelle Evans, Faculty of Business and Economics

Dr David O'Brien, Nominee, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning

Professor Melitta Hogarth, Faculty of Education

Professor Barry Judd, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)

Tiriki Onus, Head, Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development, Faculty of Fine Arts and Music

Dr Cameron Raw, Associate Dean (Indigenous), Faculty of Science

Professor Frank Vetere, Deputy Dean (Engagement), Faculty of Engineering, and IT

Inala Cooper, Director, Murrup Barak: Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development

Margot Eden, Director (Indigenous Strategy), Office of the Provost

Terms of Reference

The Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates (Indigenous) is a forum for consultation and coordination between the academic divisions, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) and Indigenous Strategy Reference Group on the University's ongoing efforts to improve Indigenous higher education, research, engagement and employment outcomes.

The Committee will support academic divisional alignment with University-wide Indigenous strategies and plans through implementing these at the academic divisional level and advising on:

- Issues that impact Indigenous student participation, success and completion rates at the divisional level and Indigenous student support needs and services;

- Indigenous academic and professional staff numbers, classification, distribution and career trajectories in their faculties/schools; and
- Academic divisions' research performance related to Indigenous matters.

The Committee will coordinate and review the implementation of Divisional Indigenous Development Plans.

Other Committees with Indigenous Governance Functions

In addition to TOAG, ISRG and CADDI, the below central committees guide and make decisions on a range of Indigenous matters. These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee
- Indigenous Scholarships and Awards Committee

At the faculty level, Traditional Owners and a range of local committees guide Indigenous research, teaching and learning and engagement activities. These include:

- Reconciliation and Recognition Committee within the Melbourne Law School
- Connection to Culture Committee within the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning
- Individual relationships with Wurundjeri Tribe Council through the Melbourne Law School and the Australia Centre Collaboration within the Faculty of Arts

In August 2019, the Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) met with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation Elders and staff. This was an opportunity for the Vice-Chancellor (who commenced in October 2018) to meet Corporation members and staff and hear about how the University could better work with the Wurundjeri community. University staff from the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group, Deans and other selected staff with relevant areas of expertise also attended this meeting and continue to provide an opportunity for the Corporation members to connect with academic staff who have expertise on a range of issues of interest to them, including native title, education and linguistics.

6.3.1. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

On behalf of the University's Indigenous Governance mechanism, I am pleased to endorse the ISSP Report. Of note with respect to the University's 2023 Indigenous activity are the following:

- 171 Indigenous students commenced in graduate programs during 2023, following the 133 who commenced in 2022, which is the largest ever intake. This brought the proportion of Indigenous students enrolled postgraduate degrees at the University to 60.6% compared to 50.1% of non-Indigenous domestic students.
- Fifteen students commenced in PhD programs in 2022 bringing our total enrolments of PhD candidates to 60, which the University believes is the highest PhD enrolment of any Australian university.
- In 2023, 5 Indigenous students received Melbourne Chancellor's Scholarships, bringing the total number of Indigenous Chancellor's Scholars to 38. These high-achieving students enjoy fee exemptions and are guaranteed a place in a graduate program of their choice if they satisfy eligibility requirements. Students also receive a living allowance for up to 3 years.
- The University hosted the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) Indigenous Knowledge Network in November 2023. Thirty participants with Indigenous and non-

Indigenous backgrounds attended from countries including Taiwan, Hawai'i/ USA, Canada, Philippines, New Zealand, Ecuador, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Chile, and Malaysia.

- The Indigenous Knowledge Institute launched a new PhD course in Indigenous Knowledge – the first of its kind in Australia – that offers a unique opportunity for Indigenous knowledge holders to engage in vital research and foster new collaborations. The course has been designed to explicitly recognise Indigenous knowledge as its own interdisciplinary subject area.
- The Indigenous Knowledge Institute provided seed funding to seven research projects in Indigenous Knowledge, with topics ranging from historical trade partnerships and education, to art-making, native bees, seasonal calendars, and cultural burning practices.
- The Indigenous Knowledge Institute awarded three bursaries of \$5,000 per year for three years to support PhD candidates at the University conducting research on a topic related to Indigenous knowledge.
- A University truth-telling project commenced in January 2021. The Project's first major output – the first volume of a book documenting the University's relationship with Indigenous Australians dating back to 1853 is published by Melbourne University Press in 2024 – includes around 80 contributors and totals more than 300,000 words. The first Volume will be launched on 28 May 2024 during National Reconciliation Week and was submitted to the Yoorrook Justice Commission on 6 February.
- In 2023, Akawyan Pakawyan, a senior leader of the Indigenous Pinuyumayan people in the Puyuma village of Taitung in Taiwan, delivered the 2023 Narrm Oration and spoke about her work as an educator that reunited the 10 Pinuyumayan communities and restoring their language and culture after a lapse of seven decades. Akawyan discussed how her work is underpinned by rigorous research and has paved the way for efforts to restore and maintain all Indigenous languages and cultures in Taiwan.
- In 2023, Professor Megan Davis, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Society at UNSW Sydney, delivered the Dungala Kaiela Oration on the topic of the 2023 Australian Indigenous Voice referendum.
- In 2023, National Reconciliation Week consisted of program of more than 18 events located at the Parkville and Southbank campuses. Events ranged from Lighting the Wilin – a smoking ceremony by Boon Wurrung Traditional Owners to mark the start of National Reconciliation Week – to presentations, panel discussions and sporting events. The program provided a diverse range of events and opportunities which appealed to students, staff and the general public.
- The Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences commenced the Tanderrum International Visiting Scholars Program in 2023. Two PhD scholars from the University of Toronto, Canada, visited the Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health for two weeks. They met with Indigenous academics across the faculty, visited Aboriginal community organisations, presented their research to the MDHS Indigenous PhD cohort and participated in the Poche Leadership Program.
- The Indigenous Law and Justice Hub and Melbourne Law School Clinics delivered the new Juris Doctor elective subject Access to Justice on Country. The subject, delivered

intensively through two weeks of travel on Larrakia Country (Darwin and surrounds) considered community understandings and aspirations of justice in the settler-colony, and the barriers that exist to meaningful access to justice.

- In June 2023, the University established the Places Naming Advisory Group to develop principles for the future naming of places across the University of Melbourne's campuses in preparation for a strategic review of building names. The final report was delivered in December 2023.
- In 2022, the University welcomed Professor Aunty Diane Kerr, Professor Wanta Pawu and Professor Brian Gumbula as Indigenous Knowledge Institute Fellows. The IKI Fellows are employed at Level E to undertake a program of research during 2022 and 2023 to advance Indigenous knowledge scholarship and exchanges.

Professor Barry Judd
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)

Additional information for completing the template

¹ This information provides for the number of students and cost of the scholarships expended in 2023. The figures for students should include the actual number (head count, not the EFTSL). Scholarship figures (head count and costs) should include the university award scholarships from the flexible finding pool as well as any preserved scholarships. Only payments made during 2023 should be included in this table. For multi-year scholarship agreements, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded in the performance reporting for the relevant future grant year.

²Total number of unique students supported by tutorial assistance (if students have attended multiple tutorial sessions, still count them as 1 student).

³ Record total number of tutorial sessions attended by students (each class a student attends counts as 1, the same student may attend multiple tutorial sessions throughout the year).

⁴ Record only hours of instruction received by the students (do not include staff planning or organising time).

⁵ Include any costs associated with providing tutorial assistance, including staffing costs, materials, facilities etc.

⁶ Only record amounts which required payment during the 2023 calendar year. For multi-year scholarship offers, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded against the reporting for the relevant future grant year. Note the data in this table is a subset of the scholarship data provided in Table 1.

⁷ Record all verbal and written scholarship offers for the 2023 calendar year, including those offers that were not accepted by the student. Record the 2023 component of new scholarship offers and the planned 2022 value of previously awarded scholarships (including continuing scholarships).

⁸ This data confirms the university's compliance with Section 21(3) of the Guidelines.