THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE AUSTRALIA

SUB CRUCE LUMEN

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy

2006 – 2009

Furthering Commitment through Practice

Acknowledgements: Many people assisted with the development and the launch of this strategy. The University would like to extend thanks to those who offered their time, advice and assistance to this process.

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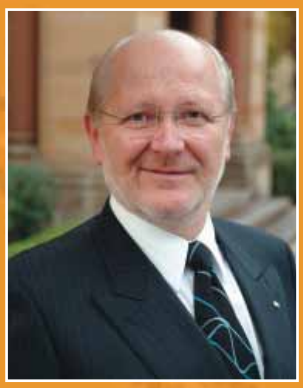
Future Pathways
The 4 circles in the centre of the design represent each campus of the University of Adelaide. The pathway of dots linking the campuses together represents the unity and strength to support each other's goals and commitments. The feet represent the pathway of Indigenous people on their journey to either studying or working across the University of Adelaide. This will in turn improve and give opportunties for achieving better outcomes for the careers of Indigenous people in South Australia.

From the Vice-Chancellor



Kaurna Acknowledgement

The University acknowledges that the Kaurna People are the original inhabitants of the land where the first campus of the University was built and further recognises that the colonisation of Australia in the past two centuries has led to the dispossession, alienation and impoverishment of the Indigenous peoples. The University of Adelaide is committed to the process of reconciliation and the elimination of injustice and disadvantage in respect of the rights of Australia's Indigenous peoples and to their self-determination within the life of the nation.

The University of Adelaide acknowledges that social, educational and economic disadvantage are experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This disadvantage is apparent in the continuing under-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the higher education sector. With a number of different campuses situated on Kaurna land, the University is in a unique position to provide leadership in terms of seeking to redress these disadvantages. Furthermore, as one of the state's larger employers, the University has a responsibility to develop its own employment and career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The University of Adelaide Future Directions Strategic Plan (2004-2008) sets out as a priority the development and implementation of a sustainable and effective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy. The goals expressed in this strategy are further supported through the commitments outlined in The University of Adelaide's Reconciliation Statement.

The University of Adelaide *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2006-2009* has been developed to promote the increased participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff across the full range of University activities. The key objective is to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment at all levels across the University.

In order to achieve this objective, the University will work jointly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities, external organisations, agencies and sectors to plan, design, deliver, monitor and evaluate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within the University. This commitment to consultative processes and continued evaluation and refinement represents the University's desire to become a centre of excellence in the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. It further seeks to embrace the principles of self-determination and empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the identification of individual career pathways, which form a part of this strategy.

The University of Adelaide is committed to creating a work environment which welcomes and values peoples from diverse cultural backgrounds and to principles of equity and justice that recognise the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I am honoured to endorse the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2006-2009.*

Professor James McWha
Vice-Chancellor and President
The University of Adelaide

Contents

OBJECTIVES.....5

GUIDING PRINCIPLES 5

CURRENT PROFILE 5

TARGETS 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY 5

KEY RESULT AREAS 6

1. Increased Participation..... 7

2. Job Opportunities..... 7

3. Recruitment 7

4. Induction..... 7

5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Development..... 7

6. Mentoring..... 8

7. Retention..... 8

8. Alumni..... 8

9. Cultural Awareness and Respect..... 8

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY.....8

Objectives

The key objective of this strategy is to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within the University. This will be achieved by appointing at least five (5) Indigenous Academics and ten (10) Professional staff over the duration of the strategy.

The objectives of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy* are to:

- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at all levels of discussion, planning, implementation and review of the strategy
- Establish a percentage target for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, providing for both a significant and sustainable increase in the numbers of these staff across all faculties and divisions in the University
- Maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff development in order to increase their knowledge, independence, job security, career sustainability and self-sufficiency
- Maintain and increase an equitable work environment
- Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and participation at all levels and all spheres of work activity across the University
- Provide mechanisms for the direct involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in determining their own career strategies
- Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Advisory and Monitoring Committee
- Appoint an Executive Officer to manage the development and implementation of the strategy
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision-making positions.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles underpinning this strategy are:

- Recognition of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, experiences, histories and geographical locations
- Valuing the expertise and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals and community members to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, academia and scholarship in general
- Recognition and inclusion of prior learning and life experiences relating to the transfer of skills relevant to specific positions
- Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and processes and recognition of the significant contribution of this knowledge to the University

- Affirmative action in recruitment, retention, selection and promotion, in both mainstream and designated career pathways
- Equity of access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to mainstream services
- A workplace free of racism.

Current Profile

As at June 2005, the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within the University represented 0.51% of total employment, significantly lower than the state employment figure of 0.87%.

Designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander areas such as Wilto Yerlo, Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Yaitya Purruna in the Faculty of Health Sciences tend to have the highest rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the University.

Targets

The University recognises that emphasising target numbers can be detrimentally interpreted in regard to staff recruitment and retention. Therefore over the three-year lifespan of this Strategy, the University will build on earlier efforts and place particular importance on increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing numbers in research and teaching positions, and increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff numbers across the full range of professional and academic positions in the University.

Implementation of the Strategy

In April 2005, The University of Adelaide appointed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Officer to facilitate the implementation of the strategy. The role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Officer is to:

- Engage, advise and liaise with senior staff across all faculties and divisions to promote the strategy and increase awareness across the University
- Work with Human Resources, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Advisory and Monitoring Committee to develop processes aimed at attracting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- Establish an employment register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers in conjunction with Human Resources
- Maintain current employment and community networks and develop new links between the University and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Liaise with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in regards to individual career development
- Provide support and advice to local work areas, supervisors, and managers
- Develop and maintain an active Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alumni Association, and provide support to Human Resources in developing and maintaining a database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates
- Assist the Director of Wilto Yerlo, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Advisory and Monitoring Committee, and Human Resources in the development and implementation of a University wide Cultural Respect and Awareness training program.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy

Key Result Areas

1. **Increased Participation**
   Increase the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through employment within the University.

2. **Job Opportunities**
   Actively utilise all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks to maximise and provide opportunities for potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

3. **Recruitment**
   Actively recruit using a variety of culturally appropriate methods.

4. **Induction**
   Ensure all new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to the University undertake a culturally appropriate induction program.

5. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Development**
   Increase the knowledge and skill base for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to maximise opportunities for employment in a wider range of positions across the University.

6. **Mentoring**
   Provide a quality mentoring program that will enhance a sharing of information for the mentor and mentoree for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

7. **Retention**
   Maximise employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by ensuring career progression, remuneration and job security strategies are in place.

8. **Alumni**
   Provide an awareness of the University's Alumni service and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander past / present students and staff to make use of this resource.

9. **Cultural Awareness and Respect**
   Actively promote cultural awareness, respect and understanding by ensuring an inclusive work environment that respects gender, culture, language and history.

Key Result Areas

1. Increased Participation

The University of Adelaide will increase the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by developing and implementing a promotional and marketing strategy specifically designed to raise the profile of the University of Adelaide as an employer of choice within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

2. Job Opportunities

The strategy is aimed at increasing the pool of prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through:

- The creation of job opportunities
- Identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions in line with Section 65 of the Equal Opportunity Act (SA) 1984
- Advertising and promotion of available positions through appropriate media outlets and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Officers in external agencies.

3. Recruitment

The University of Adelaide will attract prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by:

- Targeting and matching suitably qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for positions
- Developing relationships with organisations specialising in Indigenous employment including traineeship, cadetship and apprenticeship providers, and graduate programs
- Advertising in all relevant forms of media including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander print, radio and television
- Showcasing the University of Adelaide as a preferred employer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jobseekers
- Utilising community links and settings for dissemination of information
- Building relationships with school career advisors, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students
- Offering work experience placements to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary school students, and post-school jobseekers.

4. Induction

Induction procedures will be in line with University of Adelaide policies and procedures. The new employee is to be linked into the designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander areas such as Wilto Yerlo, Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Yaitya Purruna in the Faculty of Health Sciences, to ensure networking is maintained and the employee is supported external to their work environment.

5. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Development

The University of Adelaide will facilitate career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff through:

- Provision of access to existing training programs within the University
- Inclusion of the objectives of the strategy in the University of Adelaide staff development and promotion policies
- Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff in local, national and international conferences and workshops
- Building links with the Centre for Learning and Professional Development and Professional and Continuing Education
- Facilitation of access to appropriate training external to the University.

6. Mentoring

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Officer will identify mentors within the workplace. Mentoring will be a partnership that supports development and learning in the workplace by the sharing of experiences and knowledge to assist staff in identifying individual training needs.

Mentoring for academic staff will:

- Ensure all induction processes are in accordance with Human Resources, policies and procedures
- Provide staff with an understanding of career path options
- Provide clear identification and support for career development, training and upgrading of skills
- Establish strategies across the University with the aim of retaining staff who have undertaken traineeships, cadetships and graduate programs
- Develop skills to enable staff to transition into vacant positions through workplace incentive programs and Human Resource, policies and procedures
- Facilitate further training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates to increase skills as tertiary teachers
- Provide training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff in applying for research funding
- Lead to the development of research skills
- Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff to publish.

Mentoring for professional staff will:

- Ensure all induction processes are in accordance with Human Resources, policies and procedures
- Provide clear identification and support for career development, training and upgrading of skills
- Establish strategies across the University that aim to retain staff that have undertaken traineeships, cadetships and graduate programs
- Develop staff skills to enable them to transition into vacant positions through workplace incentive programs and Human Resources policies and procedures
- Identify a range of opportunities to enhance the skills of Indigenous staff
- Provide direction for career path options
- Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to identify as a member of the University community thereby increasing morale, communication and productivity within the University
- Enhance the immediate to long-term recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- Provide opportunities for input into the decision-making processes within the University.

7. Retention

To ensure successful retention and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff the University will:

- Build good working relationships and two-way communication with new and current staff
- Develop clear understandings of the cultural and community commitments faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and provide mechanisms that allow Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff to fulfil those obligations
- Develop and strengthen connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander local communities and support structures, including families and Elders
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with outside service providers
- Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are provided with the necessary training and support to perform required duties at expected levels
- Recognise that the abilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for retention and progression in employment are equal to those of the broader Australian community
- Provide regular, culturally appropriate feedback and constructive advice
- Celebrate the successes of the University of Adelaide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

8. Alumni

In addition to current students and staff, previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates will be targeted and canvassed for employment in newly created academic positions.

Through the provision of study awards, The University will specifically encourage those individuals to undertake post-graduate studies.

9. Cultural Awareness and Respect

The University of Adelaide has a stated commitment to the 'promotion of understanding of Indigenous issues, culture and history.' [1] In order to provide an inclusive work environment which respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff, and supports equity in employment, the University will facilitate Cultural Awareness and Respect training for all staff, including Deans and Divisional Heads, Heads of Branches and Units.

To ensure the implementation of appropriate cross cultural training that is suited to the University of Adelaide community, a cultural awareness program will be developed to:

- Provide a greater understanding of language, culture and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Explain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connections to land and sea
- Equip all staff with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues
- Assist staff develop a clear understanding of the complexities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including self-identification based on descent rather than physical appearance
- Inform staff on the processes involved for confirmation of Aboriginality of individuals based on descent, community connections, language and family groups
- Raise understanding regarding the importance of fulfilling cultural obligations including attendances at local and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander celebrations such as; sporting events, award ceremonies, art and music festivals, NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week
- Outline the significance of attendance at funerals
- Discuss the nature of cultural leave
- Provide cultural awareness training to localised workplaces prior to the appointment of new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- Develop processes for managers and supervisors to discuss ethical behaviour and treatment in the workplace from a management perspective.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy

A committee comprising University and ATSI staff representatives will monitor the implementation of this strategy.

This committee will be known as the University of Adelaide Aboriginal and Torres Islander Employment Advisory Committee.

An independent external review of the strategy will be commissioned by the committee in accordance with the University of Adelaide 2006 – 2008 Agreement before the completion of the strategy period.

[1] University of Adelaide Reconciliation Statement, July 2003

Acknowledgements: Others who gave valuable assistance

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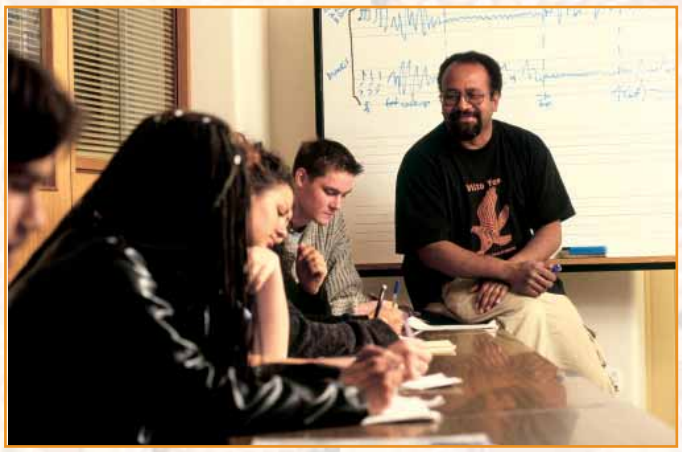

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