Promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student engagement in law

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Philosophy:
Legal education can help to transform the entrenched social and legal disadvantage faced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Australians. ATSI students have outstanding educational abilities; Adelaide Law School ensures they have the support to succeed and fulfil their true potential.

Diverse Pathways and Supporting the Transition to University
- Mock trial roadshows for high school students
  “Thank you so much for your time and attention … Students came back very excited … and have been busy swapping stories since.”
- Community awareness-raising
- New pathway for Port Augusta students (with TAFE SA)
- Law school visits for prospective students
- Assistance with enrolment and orientation (with Wirlu Yarlu: Aboriginal Education)
- Whole-of-school support
  - Indigenous Student Liaison Officer for proactive contact with students throughout their studies
  - Dean
  - All academic and professional staff
  “Thank you for your support this year … my improving study behaviour and attitude has been fostered by your ongoing support.”
- Dedicated ATSI student study and tutoring rooms in the Law Library
- Increased awareness of Indigenous issues across the curriculum
- Engagement with Aurora Native Title Internship Program (national Indigenous issues internships)

Inclusive Academic Assistance which Respects Cultural Differences
- Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (with Wirlu Yarlu: Aboriginal Education)
  - Selection of tutors
  - Promotion to increase take-up rate
  - Monitoring progress across all courses
- Additional small-group ITAS tutoring
  - Students feel comfortable to contribute to discussions and empowered to ask questions and direct their learning
- Prize for Outstanding Academic Achievement and Contribution to the Community by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Law Student

Building Networks with the Legal Profession
- Indigenous Law Student Mentoring Program (with Law Society of South Australia)

Are we Making a Difference?
- First student admission from Port Augusta pathway in 2013
- Course fail grades reduced from 30% in 2009 to 19% in 2012
- Credit, distinction and high distinction grades increased from 27% in 2010 to 40% in 2012
- Higher proportion of recent ATSI graduates in legal employment than graduates overall
- Increasing ATSI law student enrolment and completion rates

Students and graduates with ILSMP Chair Hon Justice Sulan, Supreme Court of South Australia

Adelaide Law School - ATSI Active Enrolments and Completions, 2008 - 2013