University of Melbourne Reconciliation Action Plan 2011–2013
Outcomes and Achievements – by RAP Action Area

This report outlines the outcomes and achievements of the University of Melbourne’s first Reconciliation Action Plan for the period from January 2011 through to December 2013.

The early sections of the report group achievements and outcomes according the six action areas that underpin the University’s first RAP.

The final sections of the report reflect on the learning so far from the experience in developing and implementing this RAP and comment on the process proposed for the development of a new RAP for the period 2014–2016.

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 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.

Actions achieved in full

• Partnership with the Kaiela Institute formalized in October 2011 – partnership initiatives include the annual Dungala Kaiela Oration and Business & Economics Student Placements (Five Student Practicum Projects have been completed)
• Regular briefings to senior management and academic fora on Indigenous issues including two reports each year to the University’s Senior Executive on Indigenous staff and student numbers
• Four senior Indigenous appointments were made during the life of RAP 1: Assistant Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Higher Education; Associate Dean Indigenous Development and Chair of Indigenous Health in the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry & Health Sciences; Head of Wilin Centre at the VCAM
• Implementation of partnership with Rio Tinto Australia, new partnership formed with EIDOS Institute. A number of Faculties and Departments have established partnerships with Indigenous communities specific to their areas of study
• New structure and reporting lines developed for the Academy of Sport Health & Education (ASHE) in Shepparton to provide improved pathways into further education and employment for Indigenous youth in the Goulburn Valley. A five-year plan to ensure the ongoing sustainability of ASHE was finalized in late 2013.
Actions partially achieved

- Proposed annual forum on Indigenous partnerships – initiative on hold. However a “Forum on Indigenous Teaching: Building the Evidence Base” was held in October 2013
- RAP Working Group/Indigenous Strategy Development & Implementation Group has met 6 times over 2 years, (goal was 4 times per year). Other groups including Elders Panel and Associates Forum met regularly to discuss/advise on Indigenous programs and Indigenous issues including RAP implementation

Case study opportunities

- Business and Economic Student Practicums in Goulburn Valley and Cape York
- Interviews with Senior Indigenous Academics regarding Indigenous Programs
- Partnership with Warmun Community – Conserving Gija Art [Link]
- Sharing Place, Learning Together - Venom Project in Maningrida (AVRU & MGSE) [Link]

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.

Actions achieved in full

- Protocols for Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country established and placed on Murrup Barak Web pages [Link]
- Guidelines for remunerating Traditional Owners and Elders contributing to University business developed by Onemda Koori Health Unit and shared across the University
- The University has adopted an evidenced-based program to change staff awareness and behavior in support of enhanced cultural competence called Courageous Conversations about Race. The program is being implemented via a train-the-trainer model. An initial group of 20 staff underwent training in 2012. Further facilitator training was provided to a larger group of staff in November 2 2013.
- An Indigenous Employment Guide for Managers & Recruiters developed by Murrup Barak was published in June 2012
- Traditional owners are acknowledged on all campus maps
Actions not achieved or only partially achieved

• An annual on-line calendar of Indigenous events will be incorporated into a new website “Reconciliation@Melbourne” to be built and launched in early 2014 as a support to the development of the University’s second RAP 2014-2017
• Discussions are underway for a proposal for a major symbolic statement through commissioned public art on the Parkville Campus to celebrate the historical and continuing connections between Aboriginal people and the University of Melbourne

Case study opportunities

• Billibellary’s Walk – an Aboriginal walking tour of campus – participants reflect on Indigenous knowledge and values and the impact of colonialism on Aboriginal communities – developed as a partnership between the Faculty of Medicine Dentistry & Health Sciences, Murrup Barak and the Wurundjeri Tribal Land Council

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.

Actions Achieved in Full

• Five year, University- wide Indigenous Student Plan developed published mid 2013
• Since 2011, each Faculty has developed and is implementing its own Indigenous Student Recruitment & Retention Plan
• Development of a five year plan for future of ASHE – completion late 2013
• Bachelor of Science Extended Program under development for launch in 2015
• Appointment of Ms Deborah Cheetham as Head of Wiln Centre and Associate Dean Indigenous Development in the Victorian College of the Arts and Music
• Goal for Indigenous student recruitment set at population parity by 2050
• An Indigenous Performance Report presented to Senior Executive in May and November each year reports on Indigenous student and staff numbers

Case study opportunities

• MDHS – Indigenous student support model
• Bachelor of Arts (Extended) Program
• RISE – Residential Indigenous Science Experience, a science camp experience for students from years 9/10 held in November 2012
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.

Actions Achieved in Full

• The Rio Tinto Award for Innovation & Excellence in Indigenous Higher Education is was offered annually from 2011 to 2013.
• A Women-in-Leadership project team in 2012 developed a multidisciplinary framework for reviewing quality in Indigenous Teaching
• LOGA Project (Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes) led by the DVC Academic meets regularly to work on strategies for embedding the Graduate Attributes in the curriculum
• Audit of Undergraduate and Graduate courses which include a theme or sub-theme on Indigenous topics completed and a comprehensive report placed on-line in 2011
• Teaching resources for Indigenous teaching ([Indigenousteaching.com](http://Indigenousteaching.com)) available from MB web-pages since 2011

Case study opportunities

• Professional placements for Master of Teaching Students & introduction of Indigenous Teaching Elective into the Master of Teaching Program [Link](#)
• Rio Tinto Award for Innovation and Excellence in Indigenous Higher Education – winner profiles: LIME Network [Link](#), Bower Project [Link](#), Learning on Country [Link](#)

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.

Actions Achieved in Full

• Audit of research quantum and RHD training and load completed and published on-line.
• An Indigenous Research Agenda due for finalization in early 2014 was developed through 2013 to support the implementation of the Research@Melbourne Strategy: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025 launched by the University in 2012.
• Professional Certificate in Indigenous Research offered annually. A total 50 students from across Australia have completed this program since 2010. Prior to 2010 the program operated as a non-award course – the Summer School for Indigenous Postgraduate Students.
- Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Research and Leadership was offered for the first time in July 2013

**Case study opportunities**
- Indigenous Graduate Student Association Research Symposium held annually since 2011 [Link]
- Summer School for Indigenous Postgraduate Students – now a Graduate Certificate course [Link]

**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.

**Actions Achieved in Full**
- In 2011 all faculties and administrative divisions developed and are implementing Indigenous employment plans aimed at bringing the University’s population of Indigenous staff to population party by 2020
- 150% increase in Indigenous staff numbers over three years since RAP1 launched *(From 25 in 2010 to 65 in December 2013)*

**Actions not achieved or only partially achieved**
- Strategies to ensure Indigenous businesses are considered through University tenders and procurement

**Case study opportunities**
- Indigenous Professional Staff Entry Level Program [Link]

**Learning from the experience of implementing RAP 2011–2013 (RAP 1)**

1. Outcomes, especially in the context of partnerships with Indigenous communities, are coming from the commitment of the University to use its resources to benefit Indigenous communities rather than from initiatives strictly linked to the formal actions in the RAP. This demonstrates that the University as a community is active in translating the desire for change expressed in our RAP preamble as the “big agenda” into action.

2. Traction on some of the formal actions in the plan has been slower than anticipated or have taken place in a manner not foreseen at the time of developing and formalizing the RAP. Potentially this could be remedied in a future RAP through more broadly inclusive measures.
3. Two major planks of the RAP – Indigenous employment and Indigenous student recruitment and support are long-term strategies requiring sustained and collaborative action by all faculties and administrative divisions. The goals established by the University, of population parity in staff numbers by 2020 and student numbers by 2050, are progressing but remain a major challenge. We are satisfied that the steps we are taking and the collective responsibility for outcomes that has been embraced by the University community will ensure we can deliver on these goals. However continual monitoring and review of stats is required to ensure the goals remain achievable.

4. All in all we believe that the University of Melbourne does have the capability to realize the vision and commitment required to contribute to the big agenda identified in our RAP 2011- 2013 as ‘a desire for change, for moving out of the town camp into the main street – or from a position of social inequity and marginalization into one where the dreams and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are fully realized’.

5. In developing our second RAP we are in the good position of having a selection of stories or case studies, to share about the progress being made in various sections of the University. These stories can be used as models for others keen to convert good intentions into actions and as a means of building commitment among all parts of the University community. They are also a useful resource for showcasing how this University contributes to Indigenous development through its teaching, learning and research.

Developing the University’s second RAP 2014–2016 (RAP2)

The University proposes commencing the development of its second RAP in late 2013.

The first step in the development process was meeting of the Convening Panel, a group of Elders who have been involved in the development and implementation of our of the first RAP since their first meeting in August 2010. This meeting took take place in August 2013 to establish the vision and direction of the new RAP.

A new website will be launched in early 2014: Reconciliation at Melbourne – to support the development and implementation of RAP2.