



The University of Melbourne

Indigenous Education Strategy 2018 – 2022

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Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Melbourne acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands upon which our campuses are situated:

- the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples (Parkville, Southbank, Werribee and Burnley campuses)
- the Yorta Yorta Nation (Shepparton and Dookie campuses)
- the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years.

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners and Elders who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We also acknowledge and respect our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, Elders and collaborators, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who visit our campuses from across Australia.

Executive Summary

The University of Melbourne's *Indigenous Education Strategy 2018-2022* is informed by the following University strategies, frameworks, plans, headline targets and reports.

University level

- [*Growing Esteem 2015–2020*](#)
- [*Engagement at Melbourne 2015–2020*](#)
- [*Research at Melbourne: Ensuring Excellence and Impact to 2025*](#)
- [*Reconciliation Action Plan April 2018 – December 2022*](#)
- *Indigenous Education Strategy 2018 - 2022*
- [*Indigenous Student Plan 2013–2017 \(extended to 2018\)*](#)
- [*Indigenous Employment Framework 2018–2021*](#)
- *Indigenous Student and Staff Headline Targets*
- *Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Framework*
- *Research @ Melbourne: Indigenous Research Implementation Framework 2013-2018*
- *Indigenous Outcomes Performance Report (annual)*

Divisional level

- *Indigenous Student Recruitment and Retention Plans 2016–2018*
- *Indigenous Employment Plans 2016–2018*
- *Indigenous Research Plans (dates vary according to Academic Division)*

This strategy draws together target measures, goals and key performance indicators articulated in our *Reconciliation Action Plan April 2018 – December 2022* (RAP 3) and other University-wide and Divisional-level Indigenous strategies and plans, together with a broad range of additional programs and initiatives in order to meet the requirements of the [*Indigenous Student Success Program \(ISSP\) Guidelines*](#). These are to 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, 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.

Our Vision

Reconciliation is central to the full realisation of the University of Melbourne's purpose. For true reconciliation to occur, we need to foster an environment in which the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their fellow Australians is characterised by a deep mutual respect, leading to positive change in our nation's culture and capacity.

The manifestation of our vision for reconciliation requires the University to make the following commitments.

- To truly engage with, and learn from, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations
- To embed Indigenous cultures and knowledges in the University's research, teaching and learning, and engagement activities
- To demonstrate an understanding of, and deep respect for, the traditions, heritage, knowledges and perspectives of the many nations and language groups that make up Indigenous Australia
- To reflect Indigenous cultural heritage in the University's physical environment
- To ensure that our campuses are places where Indigenous peoples feel culturally safe and are treated with dignity and respect

<https://unimelb.edu.au/reconciliation-action-plan>

The University of Melbourne

Established in 1853, the University of Melbourne is a public-spirited and internationally engaged institution that makes distinctive contributions to society in [research](#), [learning and teaching](#) and [engagement](#) with community, business and government. We are consistently ranked among the leading universities in the world, with international rankings of world universities placing us as number 1 in Australia and number 32 globally (Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2017–2018). Our business is to provide our students, staff and community with outstanding educational, research and engagement opportunities and outcomes. The University has three campuses in the Melbourne metropolitan area at Parkville, Southbank and Burnley, and four in rural Victoria at Creswick, Dookie, Shepparton and Werribee.

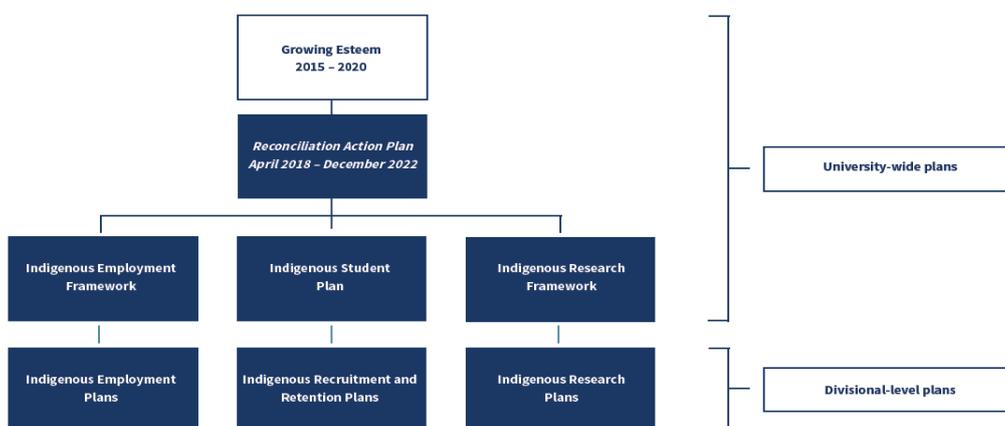
Reconciliation Action Plan April 2018 – December 2022

[Engagement at Melbourne 2015–2020](#) articulates a commitment to public value that will inform our contributions to society’s intellectual, cultural, social and economic life. Alongside student and staff engagement, and efforts led by Academic Divisions, meeting this commitment will be achieved through investment in six keystone engagement programs, one of which is our RAP.

As one of only several key supporting plans in the University’s [Growing Esteem 2015–2020](#) strategy, our RAP further embeds in our policy and planning architecture our strategy for reconciliation. In so doing, our efforts to create a culture of reconciliation – such that Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples have an equal and equitable opportunity both to achieve in education and to have a stake in shaping the future of this University and of the broader Australian and global societies – are supported.

With our University-wide and Divisional-level Indigenous frameworks and plans now firmly embedded in our planning and operations (see below), our ‘elevate’ RAP 3 sees a shift in focus.

University-wide and divisional-level Indigenous frameworks and plans



This shift has seen the development of 14 Signature Projects categorised under four Themes. The University believes that the outcomes of these substantial projects will have a transformative impact well beyond the University and signal our intention to invest in reconciliation at a deeper level.

Our RAP Themes and Signature Projects are:

Theme 1: Leadership for Change

- Signature Project 1.1 – [Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity](#)
- Signature Project 1.2 – [Melbourne Poche Leadership Fellows Program](#)
- Signature Project 1.3 – 1000 Indigenous Business Leaders by 2025
- Signature Project 1.4 – [Jawun Development Program](#)
- Signature Project 1.5 – [Indigenous Leadership, Excellence and Achievement Program](#)

Theme 2: Our Place

- Signature Project 2.1 – Place and Indigenous Cultural Recognition
- Signature Project 2.2 – [Student Precinct Project](#)
- Signature Project 2.3 – Indigenous Academy

Theme 3: Purposeful Partnerships

- Signature Project 3.1 – Indigenous Procurement Strategy
- Signature Project 3.2 – Indigenous Engagement Management System
- Signature Project 3.3 – [Yothu Yindi Foundation Partnership](#)
- Signature Project 3.4 – [Goulburn Valley Partnership](#)

Theme 4: International Engagement

- Signature Project 4.1 – International Academic Engagement Program
- Signature Project 4.2 – Indigenous Internationalisation Plan

Our 'Elevate' [Reconciliation Action Plan April 2018–December 2022](#) also signals our 'proven track record of embedding effective RAP initiatives in [our] organisation through [our] Stretch RAP and [preparedness] to take on a leadership position to advance national reconciliation... and actively champion initiatives to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and create societal change.' (Reconciliation Australia, 2018).

Indigenous Leadership and Governance

The University's senior Indigenous leadership sits with the [Pro Vice-Chancellor \(Indigenous\)](#), and the [Associate Provost](#). The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) has responsibilities for leadership of the University's Indigenous higher education strategy and development while the Associate Provost leads in specific areas of engagement, cultural collections, heritage issues and development of Indigenous teaching and research activities across the University.

Our Traditional Owners and Elders Reference Group (TOERG) and the Indigenous Strategy Advisory Group (ISAG) are the [mechanisms](#) through which the governance of Indigenous programs with respect to Indigenous community engagement, cultural protocols and the implementation of University's Indigenous strategy are supported.

(<https://about.unimelb.edu.au/reconciliation/governance>)

A range of other University-wide and Divisional-level committees also guide and make decisions on a range of Indigenous matters.

Indigenous Education and Support

In addition to the central support services in place for all students, targeted support for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is provided by all Faculties and Graduate Schools, and particularly through the:

- [Murrup Barak Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development](#)
- [Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development](#)
- [Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health](#).

1. Key Performance Indicators

In 2015 the University developed an *Indigenous Outcomes Measurement Framework* against which it reports annually on an extensive range of Indigenous education performance indicators through the *Indigenous Outcomes Performance Report (IOPR)*. These performance indicators relate to:

- Indigenous students;
- Indigenous staff;
- Indigenous teaching and learning; and
- Indigenous research.

This information guides the development of our Indigenous programs and strategies, enables evaluation of their success and tracks progress towards our Indigenous Student and Staff Headline Targets. Our Indigenous Student and Staff Headline are:

Indigenous Students

- Indigenous student headcount to reach 1000 by 2029;
- Undergraduate to graduate student ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by 2025;
- Undergraduate success ratio between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students of 1 by 2025; and
- Graduate coursework success ratio between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students of 1 by 2025.

Indigenous Staff

- Indigenous staff numbers to reach population parity by 2020;
- Academic to Professional staff ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff by 2025; and
- PSC 8 and above to less than PSC 8 Professional staff ratio to be equal for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff by 2025.

2. Indigenous Students

The [Indigenous Student Plan 2013-2018 \(ISP\)](#) is the key strategy for enhancing the recruitment and retention, progression, success and completions of Indigenous students at the University. Academic Divisions have also developed *Indigenous Student Recruitment and Retention Plans* particular to their own contexts. In addition, a range of programs and initiatives are in place which prioritise improving Indigenous outcomes.¹ These programs include:

- National Indigenous recruitment strategy
- Indigenous Specialist Education Programs
 - [Bachelor of Arts Extended Program](#)
 - [Bachelor of Science Extended Program](#)
 - [Professional Certificate in Indigenous Research](#)
 - [Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Research and Leadership](#)
 - [PhD Familiarisation Program](#)
- Indigenous [scholarships and awards](#) program
- [Indigenous Student Success Team](#)
- Community and Cultural Engagement activities
- *Reconciliation Action Plan April 2018 – December 2022:*
 - Signature Project 1.2 – [Melbourne Poche Leadership Fellows Program](#)
 - Signature Project 1.3 – 1000 Indigenous Business Leaders by 2025
 - Signature Project 2.1 – Place and Indigenous Cultural Recognition
 - Signature Project 2.2 – [Student Precinct Project](#)
 - Signature Project 2.3 – Indigenous Academy
 - Signature Project 3.3 – [Yothu Yindi Foundation Partnership](#)
 - Signature Project 3.4 – [Goulburn Valley Partnership](#)
 - Signature Project 4.1 – International Academic Engagement Program
 - Signature Project 4.2 – Indigenous Internationalisation Plan

¹ For full list of programs, please refer to the University of Melbourne's [ISSP Financial Acquittal 2017](#)

3. Indigenous Knowledges, Graduate Attributes, Teaching Practices

Our vision for reconciliation requires the University to make a number of commitments, including:

- To truly engage with, and learn from, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations
- To embed Indigenous cultures and knowledges in the University's research, teaching and learning, and engagement activities
- To demonstrate an understanding of, and deep respect for, the traditions, heritage, knowledges and perspectives of the many nations and language groups that make up Indigenous Australia
- To reflect Indigenous cultural heritage in the University's physical environment
- To ensure that our campuses are places where Indigenous peoples feel culturally safe and are treated with dignity and respect.

(<https://unimelb.edu.au/reconciliation-action-plan>)

3.1 Indigenous Knowledges and Teaching Practices

Under the University's second [Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2017 \(RAP 2\)](#), an audit of Indigenous content in the University's curriculum identified the need to articulate a vision for Indigenous studies across the University and develop strategies to address the embedding of Indigenous Knowledges. This included supporting the development of coursework programs that include Indigenous content.

Steps taken to increase the Indigenous content in the curriculum include:

- appointment of a [Pro Vice Chancellor \(Indigenous\)](#) responsible for Indigenous higher education policy and strategy, with embedding Indigenous Knowledges in the curriculum a particular priority
- implementation of RAP 3 Signature Projects:
 - [1.1 - Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity](#)
 - [3.4 - Goulbourn Valley Partnership](#)
 - 4.1 - International Academic Engagement Program
- increasing the number of [subjects that include Indigenous content](#) and the number of [students enrolling](#) in these subjects; and
- establishment of a Teaching and Learning Indigenous Knowledges: Community of Practice and a Connecting Indigenous Knowledges and the Biosciences: Community of Practice
- establishment of a *Global Institute for Indigenous Knowledge* that will develop scholarly and scientific understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems across the full breadth of academic endeavours – research, teaching and learning, and engagement – building upon and extending University strategic initiatives and providing a beacon for researchers, policy makers and global engagement

- provision of information on Indigenous research conducted at the University to prospective and current indigenous researchers, and connection to a strong Indigenous research community through the [Indigenous Hallmark Research Initiative](#)
- support of discipline-specific research units to both advance and preserve Indigenous-related knowledge and understanding. These include, but are not limited to, [Research Unit for Indigenous Languages](#), [Indigenous Settler Research Collaboration](#), [Indigenous Studies Unit](#), [Indigenous Eye Health](#), [Research Unit for Indigenous Arts and Cultures](#)

3.2 Graduate Attributes

The Melbourne Graduate

The University of Melbourne educational experience prepares well-rounded graduates who are academically outstanding, practically grounded and socially responsible. Of relevance to this Strategy is that they:

- have a high regard for human rights, social inclusion, ethics and the environment
- are aware of the social and cultural diversity in communities
- can work collaboratively with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In particular, our graduates will have, an understanding of and, deep respect for Indigenous knowledge, culture and values.

(<https://provost.unimelb.edu.au/teaching-learning/the-melbourne-graduate>)

4. Cultural Competency

The University believes that recognition of the continuing value and contribution of Indigenous cultures is critical to the development of understanding and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their fellow Australians. We also recognise that there is an opportunity to improve the lived experience of the University's Indigenous community through promoting cultural awareness and recognition.

This will be achieved through:

- enhancing the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across all the University's campuses
- creating opportunities for staff and students to gain an understanding of the contemporary, historical and traditional cultures, values and knowledges of Indigenous Australians and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- ensuring our University is a culturally safe, welcoming and respectful learning and working environment for Indigenous students and staff and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

(<https://unimelb.edu.au/reconciliation-action-plan>)

This commitment is articulated and demonstrated through a range of programs and initiatives including:

- Commitments made in [RAP 3](#) and our associated University-wide and Divisional-level strategies and plans ([Indigenous Employment Framework](#), [Indigenous Student Plan](#))
- Indigenous Cultural Awareness Workshops
- Indigenous Australian Cultural Competency Program
- [Marrang](#): Cross-cultural training
- [Billibellary's Walk](#)
- Anchoring [Indigenous recognition](#) and development in the University's built and landscape environment through:
 - The University of Melbourne Estate Plan
 - The Indigenous Design Standard
 - Developing an Indigenous Campus Narrative for each of our campuses
- Acknowledging and celebrating important milestones and events (including Smoking Ceremonies, [Welcomes and Acknowledgements of Country](#), [Indigenous students' graduations](#), [Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week events](#))

5. Monitoring and Reporting

A number of mechanisms are in place to monitor and report upon progress towards our targets measures and wider reconciliation goals. The first of these, the *Indigenous Outcomes Performance Report* published annually, details progress towards the achievement of a large number and wide range of Indigenous student, staff, teaching and learning, and research outcomes together with our Indigenous Student and Staff Headline Targets.

Reporting against University-wide and Divisional-level frameworks and plans is undertaken on a regular basis. Annual public reporting on progress towards RAP Signature Project target measures will also be undertaken and quality assured by an independent external party. A mid-term review will also be conducted three years into our RAP to monitor progress and ensure the incorporation of relevant national and institutional priorities.