



University of
South Australia

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Robert Taylor performing the Kurna
Welcome to Country for UniSA's incoming
Vice Chancellor Prof David Lloyd,
Graduation Ceremony, March 2013





**Vice Chancellor and President
David Lloyd**

VICE CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

In 2012, the Chancellor, Dr Ian Gould, and the then Vice Chancellor, Professor Peter Høj, committed the university to the development of a reconciliation action plan, or RAP. Since that time, many staff, students and members of the external community, building on a framework provided by Reconciliation Australia, have worked together to craft our first RAP and to explore what reconciliation means in a modern university. I'm delighted and honoured to introduce the fruits of their endeavours.

One of the functions set out in the university's founding legislation is 'to provide such tertiary education programmes as [it] thinks appropriate to meet the needs of the Aboriginal people.' We have significant cohorts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, although neither group is yet at population parity. Much work has been done - for example, we have had an Indigenous Employment Strategy in

place for many years, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students now enrol in a much larger range of disciplines than they did ten years ago. We were the first university in Australia to make a formal commitment to reconciliation and to embed this in the institution's core values. However, we have also realised that aspirations, no matter how firmly held, are insufficient. If we want real change we require a plan; one that contains real and measurable actions that can provide signposts and milestones of our progress.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan offers a real opportunity for us to deepen the respect and relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other groups within the university. It is a framework for cultural change, change that supports other projects that will deliver better opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. It demonstrates support from the most senior levels of university

management. Our RAP expresses our commitment to continue the work we have started and to track our progress against intentions, goals and achievements.

I would particularly like to thank Professors Peter Buckskin and Esther May for co-chairing the RAP steering group. I commend this first UniSA Reconciliation Action Plan to you and look forward to its further development.

David Lloyd
Vice Chancellor and President

An Act to establish the University of South Australia; and for other purposes.

5- Functions of the University

(1) the functions of the university are as follows:

(c) to provide such tertiary education programmes as the University thinks appropriate to meet the needs of the Aboriginal people; and

(d) to provide such tertiary education programmes as the University thinks appropriate to meet the needs of groups within the community that the University considers have suffered disadvantages in education



UniSA graduates Bianca Chaptini (left) and Joy Sagan (right) at the City West campus

OUR BUSINESS

UniSA is a comprehensive university. We provide undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs and higher degrees by research, conduct research and engage in community service. We teach face-to-face in South Australia and Asia. We have a substantial on-line presence which reaches beyond state and national boundaries. We have research relationships across the world. Students travel overseas as part of our student mobility programs or for research.

We employ 2800 fixed-term and continuing staff. We employ 27 fixed-term and continuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.¹

We have almost 35,000 students. Of these, 9,000 are international students, of whom 3,500 study overseas. We have approximately 350 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.²

¹ / Audited figures at 31 March 2013

² / 2012 figures reported to Federal Government



Jasmine Valadian, Cianna Tridente
and Brian Marshall (left to right),
MATSITI Conference, 2013

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

UniSA's commitment to improving the education and life opportunities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders has been given expression in its founding Act, in the work of its antecedent institutions and in many of the university's achievements summarised elsewhere in this RAP. In 1997, UniSA became the first Australian university to make a public commitment to the achievement of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians. This commitment to, and vision for, reconciliation was based on:

- acknowledgment of the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Indigenous peoples of Australia and the original owners of this land, and recognition of their loss of land, children, languages, health and kin
- the belief that reconciliation is a prerequisite for Australia to reach a mature nationhood which acknowledges the past, understands the present, and faces a future confidently based on the co-existence of rights
- acceptance that educational institutions have a particularly valuable contribution to make to the process of reconciliation by educating the Australian community about the cultures, languages, history and contemporary experiences of Australia's First peoples
- the University of South Australia's special responsibility to provide leadership in the areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and education, by virtue of its founding Act."

[Endorsed by the University of South Australia Council, September 1997].

This recognition that reconciliation is an essential element not only of what we do, but of who we are and what we aim to achieve, is reflected in the university's statement of core values.³

The university acknowledges that, while reconciliation has long been a core value, more needs to be done to build relationships, to deepen respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, and to provide greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples not only within the university but in society at large. The university's first Reconciliation Action Plan guides us towards the achievement of these objectives.

³ / <http://www.unisa.edu.au/About-UniSA/University-vision/>

WHERE OUR RAP FITS

The RAP forms part of a larger project “to strengthen UniSA’s position as the University of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia and beyond”.



Trevor Ritchie (right), South Australia’s first Aboriginal Occupational Therapy graduate, with grandmother Dr Alitya Rigney (left), March 2014

UniSA will take meaningful steps to strengthen its position as the University of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia and beyond.

We will create a complete and safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to grow and contribute to their communities and to Australian society more broadly.

Through true partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, we will develop the pipeline from high school through to postgraduate engagement, identifying and supporting the best and brightest young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will support these leaders of tomorrow by creating an environment where they can learn, grow and define the future in a place that acknowledges, respects and learns from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wisdom, and celebrates the pursuit of knowledge in all its guises.

From Crossing the Horizon: UniSA’s Strategic Plan for 2013-2108

OUR 2014 RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The framework for a RAP and many of the actions within it are set by Reconciliation Australia (see Reconciliation.org.au). Reconciliation Australia mandates three sets of activities – Respect, Relationships and Opportunities. We've chosen to combine the first two.

The symbols show where these actions fit into the Reconciliation Australia framework:



RELATIONSHIPS



RESPECT



OPPORTUNITIES

The "Responsibility" column shows the responsible senior manager and, where appropriate, the staff member who will have operational responsibility.

ABBREVIATIONS:

- COO** Chief Operating Officer
- CRE** Centre for Regional Engagement
- CTH** Crossing the Horizon (the university's strategic action plan 2013-2018)
- DVC** Deputy Vice Chancellor
- IES** Indigenous Employment Strategy
- IPEEG** Indigenous Participation, Education and Employment Group
- ISER** Indigenous Scholarship, Engagement and Research
- PVC** Pro Vice Chancellor
- SMG** Senior Management Group

Related projects include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander University of Choice (a Crossing The Horizon project, commencing 2014), a review of Indigenous Student Services (early 2014) and, eventually, an evaluation of Indigenous Content in Undergraduate Programs.

RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPECT

ACTION/AREA	TIMELINE	WHAT WE WILL DO	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE DONE IT	
Symbolism and Recognition (1)	June 2014	Raise understanding of the meaning and significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Vice Chancellor	Guidelines on the use of Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country revised and promoted.	
			Provost	Formal Welcome to Country included in revised whole-of-institution orientation model (CTH).	
Symbolism and Recognition (2)	December 2014	Raise understanding of the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to the land and their cultural heritage.	Chief Operating Officer (Director: Facilities Management Unit)	Design consultant briefed for a project to install a physical Acknowledgement of Country on each campus to complement the already existing reconciliation stones on each campus and acknowledge the Kaurna (Adelaide), Boandik (Mt Gambier) and Barngarla (Whyalla) peoples on the relevant campuses.	
			Provost (Director: Student and Academic Services)	Major Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artwork installed in prominent place in Jeffrey Smart Building (learning centre). A commissioned 'Kaurna shield' is prepared for use in place of a mace at graduations.	
			Vice Chancellor (Director: Communications and Marketing)	Short publication on Kaurna, Boandik and Barngarla peoples suitable for distribution at key locations designed, and discussed with key Aboriginal stakeholders.	
Symbolism and Recognition (3)	June 2014	Develop proposal for naming appropriate spaces after Aboriginal elders.	Provost (Dean: Indigenous Scholarship, Engagement and Research (ISER))	Proposal delivered to Vice Chancellor.	
Symbolism and Recognition (4)	December 2014	Develop proposals for increasing prominence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and related issues on the corporate web.	Vice Chancellor (Director: Communications and Marketing)	Proposal delivered to SMG.	
Symbolism and Recognition (5)	December 2014	Plan an artwork produced by staff and students under the guidance of an Aboriginal artist.	Vice Chancellor	Proposal in place for Reconciliation Week 2015.	
External Relationships (1)	December 2014	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders within our local area or sphere of influence to help us develop future RAPS and gather input to other activities.	Senior Management	Final quarterly IPEEG report to Vice Chancellor and Senior Management Group demonstrates a pattern of meetings with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities to provide input to both reconciliation and wider university activities.	
			Vice Chancellor (Dean (ISER))	Vice Chancellor has championed through the SA Vice Chancellors' Committee the formation of a Council of Elders for the three SA public universities.	
			Senior Management (Heads of Schools/ Directors as applicable)	Working relationships established and reported to IPEEG.	

RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPECT

ACTION/AREA	TIMELINE	WHAT WE WILL DO	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE DONE IT	
External Relationships (2)	December 2014	Engage with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni.	Provost DVC: International and Advancement (Dean: ISER)	Report to SMG about strategy adopted and outcomes, and proposal for maintenance of engagement.	
Celebrations	May 2014	Use National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and other celebrations to raise awareness of the importance of relationships and respect.	Campus Directors (Pro Vice Chancellors/Director Regional Engagement)	Building on 2013 NRW program, successful events held on each four city campuses and at Centre for Regional Engagement with budget and organisational responsibility taken by Division PVCs/Director CRE. Division PVCs/Director CRE report to IPEEG with summary of activities and participation statistics for NRW.	
	July 2014		Senior Managers (Heads of Schools/Unit Directors)	IPEEG records show how each school and unit (where relevant) supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students to participate in NAIDOC Week.	
Internal Communication	March 2014	Increase internal awareness of the RAP and what we are trying to achieve.	Vice Chancellor	Vice Chancellor has announced development and launch of RAP. RAP has been officially launched with an appropriate ceremony.	
	December 2014		Provost	IPEEG has developed and implemented a strategy to communicate core RAP principles and actions to organisational units across the university. IPEEG has reported the outcomes of the communication strategy to Vice Chancellor and SMG.	
Cultural Awareness/ Capability (1)	December 2014	Continue current staff training programs.	Vice Chancellor (Manager: People Development and Performance)	Report to IPEEG to shows current cultural awareness training activities and attendance continue.	
Cultural Awareness/ Capability (2)	December 2014	Develop proposal to expand reach of cultural awareness/capability program to staff.	Vice Chancellor (Director: Human Resources)	Proposal delivered to Vice Chancellor.	
Cultural Awareness/ Capability (3)	December 2014	Develop proposal to expand reach of cultural awareness/capability program for students (taking into account ICUP).	Provost	Proposals delivered to Vice Chancellor.	
Cultural Awareness/ Capability (4)	December 2014	Lay the foundation for future action to identify and combat explicit or systemic racism.	Vice Chancellor	University has collected information about policy and practice in Australian and overseas universities. Current UniSA policy is revised if required to ensure that students and staff can seek redress for racist acts.	

OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION/AREA	TIMELINE	WHAT WE WILL DO	RESPONSIBILITY	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE HAVE DONE IT	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment (1)	June 2014	Evaluate, and if appropriate, continue Indigenous Graduate Trainee program.	Vice Chancellor (Director: HR)	Director HR has made recommendation to Vice Chancellor through mechanism of Vice Chancellor's Development Fund.	
			Vice Chancellor	Vice Chancellor has made decision about future of program and source of funds.	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment (2)	December 2014	Update the Indigenous Employment Strategy to outline how the University will reach its 2% employment target.	Vice Chancellor (Director: HR)	The university's IES is updated and approved by SMG. The IES outlines a strategy to reach a 2% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment target	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment (3)	See note	Capture data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and student enrolments to inform future developments.	Vice Chancellor (Director Human Resources/ Director Business Intelligence and Planning)	Data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and student enrolments continue as part of normal data collection activities. Reported to federal government every year. Note: Employment – reference date 31 March, verified data submitted to federal government June 30. Student Enrolment – reference date 31 December, data verified with federal government by following 31 May.	
Supplier diversity	December 2014	Lay the groundwork for systematic engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers.	Chief Operating Officer (Director: Finance)	University has researched HE sector practices. COO has identified opportunities for university to source from appropriate suppliers. University has put in place mechanisms to ensure that cost centre managers use Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander suppliers where appropriate.	

GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT, RESOURCES AND REPORTING

Governance and Management (RAP working group)	December 2014	The Indigenous Education, Employment and Participation Group (IPEEG), will function as the RAP Steering Committee and will oversee the implementation of the RAP. The Provost chairs IPEEG.	Provost	Minutes of IPEEG show RAP is discussed at each meeting. Each member of IPEEG attends at least 75% of meetings or sends proxy. IPEEG reports on RAP progress to Vice Chancellor and Senior Management Group quarterly through Provost.	
Resourcing	January 2014	Provide resources for ongoing development and implementation of the RAP.	Vice Chancellor	Allocation is established in Vice Chancellor's Development Fund or other appropriate source.	
Reporting	March 2015	Complete RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Vice Chancellor	RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire completed and submitted to Reconciliation Australia.	
Development	December 2014	Develop our RAP for 2015.	Vice Chancellor	Vice Chancellor and Senior Management Group have endorsed 2015 RAP.	

The intertwined elements of this project are set out in the following matrix:

FOUR ELEMENTS:

UniSA commitments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders [Guiding our development as a *University of Choice*]

Our RAP does not address the 'Education and Participation' and 'Research and Engagement' elements of the matrix in any detail as they are part of the wider University of Choice project. The RAP does include a reference to the university's Indigenous Employment Strategy as required by Reconciliation Australia.

EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

- Guided by the requirement of UniSA's Act
- Commonwealth requirements etc

INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

- Guided by the university's *Enterprise Agreement*
- 2% employment target
- National report on Indigenous workforce development in Australian universities

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

- Guided by the university's values
- Creating a culture that is safe and respectful of our Indigenous heritage and the living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT

- Guided by the Commonwealth's Behrendt review recommendations



OUR RAP CHAMPIONS

The RAP is championed by the university's most senior leaders, the Vice Chancellor (chief executive officer) and Chancellor (Chair of University Council, the equivalent of a company board).

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) End of Year celebration, 2013

HOW WE CREATED OUR RAP



Staff, students and community members participating in the inaugural Cycling for Culture ride – a Un|SA-sponsored event to raise awareness of Kaurua language and culture, October 2013

A RAP Development Steering Committee, appointed by the Vice Chancellor, oversaw the RAP's development.

The steering committee co-chairs were:

- Professor Peter Buckskin, Dean: Indigenous Scholarship, Engagement and Research
- Professor Esther May, Acting Pro Vice Chancellor, Dean: Health and Clinical Education, Division of Health Sciences

Other members were (in alphabetical order):

- Ms Skye Akbar, PhD student, School of Marketing
- Professor Fiona Arney, Director: Australian Centre for Child Protection
- Associate Professor Mahfuz Aziz, Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment
- Mr Alan Brideson, Director: Marketing and Communications

- Professor Roger Burritt, Director: Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability

- Ms Kim Morey, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (external community member)

- Professor Stanley Nangala, Head of School: David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research

The RAP Development Steering Committee was supported by a RAP Secretariat:

- Mr David Cox, Executive Officer to the Vice Chancellor
- Mr Edoardo Crismani, Indigenous Graduate Trainee (to June 30 2013)
- Mrs Deanne Hanchant-Nichols, Consultant: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Development
- Mr Greg Giles, Manager: People Development and Performance

- Ms Gianna Tridente, Project Officer to the Dean: Indigenous Scholarship, Engagement and Research

There was a large support group of staff and students from across the university.

Consultations during the development of the RAP included:

- **unijam**, the university's 38 hour online planning consultation, which reached almost 8,000 staff, students, alumni and external guests. Unijam included discussions on reconciliation, racism and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni.
- A staff workshop with presentations from Reconciliation Australia and other organisations with RAPs
- Discussions with senior managers
- Meetings with groups of Aboriginal staff and students
- Meetings with staff involved in delivering Indigenous Content in Undergraduate Programs

- Circulation of the draft RAP to all student mentors working on the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience program and to members of the Experience Leadership Program
- Discussion at the Indigenous Participation, Education and Employment Group.



**University of South Australia
Students Association**

An part of the University of South Australia
Students Association (USASA) commitment to
Reconciliation, equity and social justice we
acknowledge that the USASA Office on
the Campus occupies Koori Land



**UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO
AUSTRALIAN RECONCILIATION**

The University of South Australia seeks to respond to today's
challenges of nationhood and national identity in a way that
comprehends the past and gives hope for the future.

This statement expresses the University of South Australia's
public commitment to the achievement of Australian
Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous
people, a commitment based firmly upon:

- acknowledgment of the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Indigenous peoples of Australia and the original owners of this land, and recognition of their loss of land, children, languages, health and kin;
- the belief that reconciliation is a pre-requisite for Australia to reach a mature nationhood which acknowledges the past, understands the present, and faces a future confidently based on the co-existence of rights;
- acceptance that educational institutions have a particularly valuable contribution to make to the process of reconciliation by educating the Australian community about the culture, languages, history and contemporary experiences of Australia's Indigenous peoples;
- the University of South Australia's special responsibility to provide leadership in the areas of indigenous research and education, by virtue of its founding Act.

**Reconciliation
Stone**





RAP steering committee:

Prof Fiona Arney, Ass Prof Mahfuz Aziz,
Prof Stanley Nongala, Prof Peter Buckskin,
Prof David Lloyd, Prof Esther May, Prof Roger
Burritt, Dr (Uncle) Lewis Yenoburka O'Brien
(left-right)

HOW WE WILL IMPLEMENT OUR RAP/THE RAP STEERING COMMITTEE

The duties of a RAP Steering Committee will be discharged by the University's peak advisory body on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters, the Indigenous Participation, Education and Employment Group (IPEEG). IPEEG is chaired by the Provost & Chief Academic Officer, who reports directly to the Vice Chancellor. IPEEG is broadly based and includes executive level Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff from all four academic divisions (faculties) and across the university. IPEEG will oversee both the implementation of the RAP and the development of future versions.



1



2



3



4

OUR HISTORY/TIMELINE

- 1 / Wayne Atkinson
- 2 / Prof Mary Bin-Sallik and Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue
- 3 / On graduation day, Dr. Eric Willmot and Margaret Crosbie (left) and Ruby Hammond (right)
- 4 / Alwin Chong, Joan Mullins, Colin Friel, Prof Mary Bin-Sallik, Denis McDowell and Barbara Fox
- 5 / Gavin Wanganeen
- 6 / Pitjantjatjara language Summer School tutors and participants, 2014
- 7 / Creating 'Spirit of the Campus'
- 8 / Caleb Osborne, Gianna Tridante, Prashant Joshi, Professor Peter Buckskin, Mark Waters: Reconciliation SA, Reconciliation Week 2012

1968

Aboriginal Studies and Teacher Education Centre (Western Teachers College)

1973

The Task Force – Australia's first Indigenous tertiary program (South Australian Institute of Technology)

1984

Anangu Tertiary Education Program (AnTEP)

1988

School of Aboriginal and Islander Administration (SA Institute of Technology)

1991

University of South Australia Act includes the function: "to provide such tertiary education programmes as the University thinks appropriate to meet the needs of the Aboriginal people"

1996

Unaipon School

1997

UniSA the first university in Australia to make a Statement of Commitment to Australian Reconciliation

1998

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment scheme



5



6



7



8

2001

Full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment position

2002

Indigenous Employment Strategy

2004

Indigenous Content in Undergraduate Programs (ICUP)

2005

David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research

2005

Gavin Wanganeen Scholarship, one of a number of scholarships supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

2010

UniSA College, providing pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

2010

Indigenous Graduate Trainee program

2012

Inaugural Dean: Indigenous Scholarship, Engagement and Research

2013

Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) at UniSA

2013

Welcome to Country to new Vice Chancellor

(see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDH4__qLONc)

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research (a school within the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences)
- Office of the Dean: Indigenous Scholarship, Education and Research
- More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (national project housed at UniSA)
- Indigenous Content in Undergraduate Programs
- Indigenous Support Service (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students)
- Indigenous Employment Strategy
- Indigenous Graduate Trainee Program
- Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Celebrations
- Acknowledgement of country at official occasions

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)
- Cycling for Culture 2013

*“Respect and relationships both bind and better society.
Reconciliation is much more than a word. It is a culture.”*

DAVID LLOYD VICE CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

Front cover image: Spirit of the Campus **Artist:** Rikurani, 2013

The concentric circles represent the six South Australian campuses of the University as meeting places of people from all nations. The darker background behind the circles represents the Aboriginal campfires with ochre-coloured earth in between. The dots represent land, water and people. Commissioned for the University of South Australia Reconciliation Action Plan.

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**University of
South Australia**



**Reconciliation
ACTION PLAN**
INNOVATE RAP



**SOUTH
AUSTRALIA**