



2009-10 Reconciliation Action Plan



OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The University of Ballarat Australia acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, Jadawadjali, Jaadwa, Wathaurong, Dja Dja Wurrung and Wurundjeri peoples as the traditional owners of the land where its campuses and centres are located.

The University shares the vision of Reconciliation Australia that recognises the special place and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians.

The University also recognises that reconciliation will only be achieved if the past is acknowledged, the present understood and the future based on equality, respect and genuine opportunity.

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, devastation to their lives, laws, languages, culture, customs and traditions has been caused by non-Indigenous settlement of Australia. Today, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to experience racism, racial discrimination, injustice and oppression in their daily lives.

In recognition of these historical events and their on-going effects, the University of Ballarat Australia will contribute to the process of reconciliation with measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education, health, employment and opportunity.

The University acknowledges that access to, and participation in, education are fundamental to closing the 17-year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians.

As a multi-sector institution delivering secondary school level, TAFE, higher education, further education and research programs and courses, the University is well placed to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and participation rates by strengthening its pathways and raising aspirations and confidence levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

The University will continually strive to provide a learning and working environment which promotes and values diversity and offers equality of access and opportunity to all. It will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to participate actively in the life and activities of the University.

To further the process of reconciliation, the University has developed a Reconciliation Action Plan focussing on: improving education, training and research opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; improving the visibility and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge and studies on all campuses; recruiting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at all levels of the University; and ensuring that there is involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the decision-making and governance of the University.





OUR BUSINESS

The University of Ballarat Australia is a multi-sector university providing educational, cultural, professional, technical and vocational services to people living in Central and Western Victoria and beyond. The University's campuses provide programs and courses for more than 25,000 students, of whom 17,000 are domestic students with many from regional Victoria.

The University has had a long-standing commitment to reconciliation through the provision of educational and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and this provision has included:

- > The establishment of the Aboriginal Education Centre;
- > Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation (co-chair) on the Aboriginal Education Management Committee (advisory to the Vice-Chancellor);
- > The implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy;
- > Introduction of the Academic Recruitment Program (Graduate Certificate in Education);
- > The introduction of cultural training for staff;
- > Displaying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags at all campuses;
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art exhibitions and commissioned art works;
- > The formation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Committee (standing committee of Academic Board);
- > The inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in units in behavioural and social sciences and humanities disciplines, education and nursing;
- > Offering scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and,
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership on Council and Academic Board.

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (2009–2010)

In partnership with Reconciliation Australia, the University of Ballarat Australia has committed to implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to advance the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as Indigenous Australians, and non-Indigenous Australians.

The University acknowledges that access to, and participation in, education are fundamental to closing the 17-year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people by providing life and career opportunities through education and employment.

As part of the University's 10th anniversary as a multi-sector tertiary education institution, the University undertook to improve the level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training, undergraduate and post graduate enrolments, improve the rates of success, retention and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working at all levels of the University. The University is one of only three Australian universities which takes its name from an Indigenous word with Ballarat meaning 'resting place'.

In 2008 the University Council endorsed a review of the University's Statement on Reconciliation. The revised Statement (below) articulates the University's vision for reconciliation and the RAP documents the strategies and processes required to achieve this vision.

In 2008, the University signed a *Statement of Commitment* with Reconciliation Australia affirming its commitment to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The University indicated the RAP would focus on:

- > Education, training and research opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- > Cultural awareness and recognition; and
- > Recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.





The RAP provides an opportunity to expand and to strengthen current activities and to develop new initiatives through a co-ordinated, University-wide approach. Beginning with its implementation in 2009, the Plan's actions and targets will be monitored and reviewed annually as part of the University's policy, planning and reporting cycle. The RAP focuses on activities relevant to the University's key objectives which relate to:

1. Providing **access** to effective and high-quality learning and research opportunities for Australian and international students.
2. Producing **graduates** who are sought after within Australia and internationally for their knowledge, skills, competencies and employability.
3. Undertaking internationally recognised **research**, and engaging in knowledge transfer, that has demonstrable relevance to, and impact on, communities, industries and regions served by the University.
4. Deepening our **engagement** and partnership through industry, community and collaborative opportunities.
5. Creating a work environment where **staff** are valued and where there are opportunities for renewal, career development and leadership.
6. Committing to continual improvement in the **stewardship** of resources through ethical, effective and sustainable management and governance.

The University of Ballarat's RAP has been developed in consultation with staff and students under the guidance of the RAP Working Party. The Working Party was established jointly by the University's Aboriginal Education Management Committee and the Vice-Chancellor to oversee the development of the RAP and the revision of the Statement on Reconciliation. Membership includes representatives of the Ballarat and Horsham Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, the Manager of the Aboriginal Education Centre, representation from the National Tertiary Education Union, the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and representation from Reconciliation Australia.

Round-table discussions and workshops have provided a number of opportunities for senior management to contribute to the development of the RAP. The Vice-Chancellor has provided regular reports to the Council and the Academic Board on progress and members have been able to provide valuable input to the process. Staff have also been informed through the University-wide news bulletin and have been invited to provide feedback on draft RAP documents. To demonstrate its commitment to the development of a RAP, the University initiated inclusion of the RAP in its recent Union Collective Agreement. Importantly, community consultation and feedback has occurred with the development of the RAP and has involved the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECGs), the Aboriginal Co-operatives and other groups such as School Liaison Officers.

RELATIONSHIPS

Fostering respectful relationships and supporting a work environment that is tolerant and open to diversity and creates a sense of community.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, staff and students to participate in the University's governance and on the RAP Implementation Working Party	Vice-Chancellor	Dec 2009	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership on Council, Academic Board and RAP Implementation Working Party
Review role and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Education Management Committee (AEMC)	Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Dec 2009	AEMC included in organisational structure and established as an advisory committee to the Vice-Chancellor Review Terms of Reference for AEMC & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Committee (IERC) to clarify their roles





RESPECT

Having respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, land and history.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Having respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, land and history	Vice-Chancellor	July 2010	Installation of more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork (with detailed history) on all campuses Annual Reconciliation Lecture with an appropriate naming of the Lecture University-wide NAIDOC celebrations
Develop Aboriginal Cultural Protocols (University Guidelines)	Vice-Chancellor	Dec 2009	Acknowledgement of Country at graduations and other significant events Protocol for flying Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander flags Appropriate campus signage showing acknowledgement of Country
Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence of staff including members of Council	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	July 2010	Development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence training package through IPOL in collaboration with AEC and roll out of training for all staff, including the University Council, over the next three years
Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence of students	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	July 2010	Development of a training module/unit to improve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence of students; set targets for student numbers
Further develop programs to include postgraduate courses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	Dec 2010	Graduate Certificate modules/units in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies; set targets for number of courses
In the criteria for review of programs, include reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies.	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	July 2010	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in courses/programs; set targets for number of program reviews

OPPORTUNITIES

Promoting opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Implement relevant recommendations in Review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy Report Develop a University Policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment	Vice President, Corporate Services	Dec 2010 July 2010	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the University from 8 to 15 Policy and Procedure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment approved by University Council
Increase the pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	Dec 2009	Continue School to University Pathways Project beyond 2009 to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention 5 Scholarships for 2010 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 10-12 to encourage participation in tertiary education Development of a learning space within the Technical Education Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
Introduce an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Entry Scheme	Vice President, Student and Learning Support	July 2010	Launch of Scheme for 2011 academic year
Investigate the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program (DEEWR), including opportunities with businesses at the University's Technology Park	Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice President, Corporate Services	July 2010	Proposal approved and implemented

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Improve opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to study towards a Masters or Doctoral degree as part of Indigenous employment strategy	Deputy Vice-Chancellors	Dec 2010	Increase in numbers of Indigenous staff with post graduate qualifications
Indigenous Education and Research Committee (IERC) to develop a strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-related research/grants	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research, Chair, IERC	July 2010	Indigenous Research Strategy approved and implemented
IERC to develop a strategy to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers through the Early Career Research Program	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research, Chair IERC	July 2010	Strategy approved and implemented

TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

A University of Ballarat RAP Implementation Working Party will be established to review, update and report annually on the outcomes of the RAP to the University and to Reconciliation Australia.

The RAP Implementation Working Party will meet quarterly to review progress on the RAP.



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Reconciliation Action Plan

