

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY

**Serving the Cause of Indigenous Issues:
Thematic Analysis of the Institutional Audit Reports
of AUQA**

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CONTEXT

Australian universities are pivotal in the country's efforts to improve the circumstances of Indigenous people. They follow a suite of programs to promote the Indigenous indicators – access, participation, retention and success – in higher education. The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) that audits the Australian universities once in five years has commented on these programs in its audit reports, which are made public. This synopsis analyses the information from those audit reports on successful models followed by the Australian universities to serve the cause of Indigenous issues. It also identifies areas where universities have been encouraged to improve their performance in relation to their objectives of promoting Indigenous education, and to enhance the indicators.

The main purpose of the analysis is to feed into discussions on enabling policies and practices to support Indigenous students and staff more effectively and to make this knowledge widely available. It should be noted that the information provided in this report cannot be used to compare institutions due to the nature of the quality audit by AUQA. AUQA does not impose an externally prescribed set of standards upon auditees, but rather uses, as its primary starting point for audit, each organisation's own objectives. Those institutions that have written 'Indigenous objectives' have been audited more closely in respect of how they are addressing and achieving those objectives. The following analysis should be seen in this light.

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OVERVIEW

All institutions have an Indigenous Plan. This is partly due to institutional commitment to Indigenous development and partly to DEST's requirement for such a plan. The level of commitment to Indigenous outcomes varies significantly between institutions. In many universities, the plan is a live document, subject to active attempts at implementation, but in others the plan appears to have no active effect. AUQA encountered dedicated people right across the sector, and pockets of good practice. However, the people and practices are isolated within the respective institutions and are not replicated across the system. There is little effective institution-wide coordination in universities, and an absence of system-wide approaches to improving the Indigenous indicators. There is little system learning, and not much evidence that good practices are moving across the system. There could be a role for IHEAC and for NIHEN here.

Although many Indigenous students are enrolled at institutions far from home, the institution's local environment, and the traditional owners of the land on which the institution is located, play a central role in the well-being of Indigenous students. This suggests a value in, and therefore a need for, regional and community networks to enhance mutual support and sharing of good practices. At present, there are few such networks that actively support the needs of Indigenous students and staff. There is a need for more opportunities for sharing of experience among staff of various institutions who work on Indigenous issues. Except for a few instances of institutions of a particular region (eg WA) working together, active ways of learning from each other on better ways of dealing with Indigenous issues is still developing.

The reports note that greater attention should be given to indicators of student performance such as those provided in the DEST Indigenous Higher Education strategies reports in respect of student access, participation, retention and success. Indicators are reported, but little used as 'drivers' and little evidence that strategies are related to them as either inputs or targets. AUQA has encouraged institutions to use these (and possibly other) indicators as useful external reference points for both gauging success and for setting internal objectives and targets. In general, performance against DEST Indigenous indicators needs further attention and greater commitment. A good starting point would be for them to be linked more explicitly to the strategic plans, with definite action plans for their achievement.

While enrolment seems to be a challenge for many universities, retention and success rates are relatively better due to effective post-entry support services. The support units have a major role in this achievement.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Planning

Making a commitment: It is very encouraging to note that all Australian universities have made explicit commitments to the development of Indigenous students and staff in a variety of ways. The audit reports mention objectives, values, Acts, strategic plans and Statements of Reconciliation that guide their actions to promote Indigenous issues. The level of achievement of targets is highly variable among the universities but there is significant awareness about the priority to be given to Indigenous issues.

Strategic plans: To demonstrate their commitment to Indigenous issues, Australian universities have developed specific strategies. The audit reports indicate how, consistent with their mission and values, institutions have an extensive set of strategies for Indigenous Education and have included them in their overall institutional strategic plans. In general, the strategies outline the institutional emphasis and approach to increase the participation, retention and success rate of Indigenous students in higher education courses. Many institutions have identified recruitment of Indigenous staff as one of the strategic priorities and have recruitment plans to increase the Indigenous staff on campus.

Resources and leadership: There are institutions where there is considerable potential to address Indigenous education issues in a more comprehensive fashion, but this potential is being constrained by the lack of an appropriate senior person with University-wide responsibilities in this area. The audit reports recommend that such a person take responsibility for ensuring that specific entities are working in a co-ordinated fashion; identifying organisational barriers to Indigenous education and developing strategies in response; and establishing systems for monitoring organisational progress in this area.

Another audit report notes that although some senior managers have been supportive of the strategic plan, there is a need for senior management to take greater responsibility for driving the implementation of the Strategic Plan related to Indigenous issues throughout the university. Consequently, the university has been encouraged to identify a senior academic ‘champion’ to work with the Indigenous support unit on communicating and implementing the Strategic Plan.

Monitoring and co-ordinating the efforts: Need for more coordination among the initiatives emerges as an area that needs attention. There are instances where, although the institutions are performing well regarding Indigenous students, the audit reports indicate that an opportunity exists to strategically align the resources and provide a more focused and co-ordinated overall effort.

Cooperation in various initiatives across the multiple campuses of institutions, to provide support for Indigenous students, and integrate them into the overall management of the campuses has been found to be inadequate in some cases, reducing the ability of the Indigenous plans to make a significant contribution. There are comments in the audit reports that note that support to Indigenous students at times is ‘reactive support’ based on dealings with individual cases, and that better planned support would result in more sustainable results. Co-ordination, integration and dissemination is needed.

Universities record success in some areas and find it challenging to extend it to other areas. There are also cases where the Indigenous support unit may be doing well but its integration into the other units of the institutions and the awareness level of those outside that unit are not found to be adequate.

Support

Advisory Committees and Structures: The Advisory Committees and structures, which have been established in most universities, seem to be contributing well to the promotion of Indigenous issues by involving representatives from Indigenous communities in policy development and implementation plans. In institutions where this was not happening very effectively, the audit reports also note that review and re-organisation of the structures were already underway. In general, the audit reports have acknowledged the advisory committees as important mechanisms through which the universities can discuss with representatives of Indigenous communities the relationship between themselves and the University. The need to revisit arrangements relating to the Aboriginal Consultative Committees can be observed through some audit reports.

Support Services: Many successful support services can be found through which the universities tangibly demonstrate their commitment to Indigenous issues. Most universities have dedicated support units, to cater to the needs of the Indigenous students and staff, with dedicated staff to administer the services provided by the units. The range of services include preparatory programs to help Indigenous students gain entry to higher education programs, provision for special entry, tutorial support after entry, counselling, advocacy, individualised mentor support right from entry, liaison/contact officers dedicated to Indigenous issues, and financial support. These support services have played a significant role in increasing enrolment of Indigenous students into higher education and in increasing the retention and success rates. In cases where support services did not give expected results, institutions were reviewing strategies and developing further support mechanisms.

From ‘Support Centres’ to ‘Centres of Knowledge’: In the case of some institutions, the Indigenous support units that started as administrative units for support services to Indigenous students and staff, have evolved into centres of knowledge on Indigenous issues. The involvement of these units in formal academic programs is increasing. Staff are increasingly becoming involved in giving guest lectures or substantive teaching into courses across their institutions. Some of these units have developed a strong academic base and were evolving into role models in teaching and research of Indigenous issues. Staff development for the staff of the support units has also emerged as an area that needs attention.

Curriculum

Indigenous subjects: Efforts to offer courses concerning Indigenous issues and to tailor new courses that might be of interest and relevance to Indigenous community can be observed. While customisation of courses to serve the needs of the Indigenous students has been appreciated, the need to sustain a balance between flexibility and consistency has also been noted and universities have handled this balance adequately. In terms of the curriculum and course design process to enhance reconciliation, the audit reports generally indicate that this is not yet occurring in a systematic manner.

Embedding Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum: While the Australian universities have adopted a variety of ways to offer ‘Indigenous subjects’, the need to ensure a common understanding of ‘Indigenous perspectives’ has been voiced in a few reports. While some universities have made partial attempts as a part of their awareness building strategies, there are institutions that have made systematic attempts to embed Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. In general, this is an area where many new initiatives can be seen and institutions have to work further to consolidate their plans.

Creating Pathways: Universities have been commended for the different practices they had put in place to provide pathways for Indigenous students to continue their studies. Bridge courses and preparatory programs to enhance the skill set of the Indigenous students have been noted. The general picture that emerges is of diversity in approaches to strengthen the link between the preparatory programs and higher education programs as well as the articulation arrangements between vocational and higher education courses.

Outreach

Catch them Young – Targeting the Indigenous students in the schools: To reach out to students early on and with a view to developing a positive relationship and encouraging them to consider university education as a realistic option upon leaving school, universities have made notable efforts, although with varying levels of success. Practices such as bringing the school students to the university campus for an experience of the university life, bringing the school students for educational camps, and tracking the progress of year 10 students till they finish year 12 have been noted.

Flexible learning: The audit reports comment on the flexible forms of learning experiences provided by the universities that facilitate enrolment of Indigenous students and help in retention. The emergence of new teaching models that are more suitable to the learning styles of Indigenous students can be seen.

Awareness building among non-Indigenous community: There is an acknowledgement that Indigenous issues may be served not only by actions addressed to those people but also by appropriate actions addressed to other members of society. In this respect, many universities have incorporated the Indigenous courses in different ways targeting a wider section of the campus community so that the awareness level is raised among all members of the institution. At the time of audit, institutions where students could graduate without serious engagement in the study of Indigenous culture, had plans in hand to introduce a compulsory unit.

The audit reports also note that given the importance of the reconciliation objectives, there is a need to assist all staff to understand what the reconciliation objectives are and to identify the part they are expected to play in achieving them. One means of raising awareness and discussion of these issues is through staff seminars or workshops on reconciliation-related topics, involving a wide range of staff. Institutions have found seminars on Indigenous issues targeting the non-Indigenous staff of the campus and cross-cultural training programmes useful in awareness building.

Interaction with aboriginal community and valuing Indigenous people: Serving the cause of Indigenous issues requires work both within the institution and in the community and universities have been commended for some of their out-reach efforts. Involving the representatives of the Indigenous communities in advisory committees, seeking their views on curriculum to incorporate Indigenous units, tapping on the knowledge resources of the Indigenous communities to teach Indigenous issues, facilitating interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities etc can be seen.

The need for participation of Indigenous people in the governance of the university has been noted in a couple of reports. One of the audit reports specifically notes that the contribution able to be made to the governance of the university by the full Board of Governors is diffused by its large size and its membership composition, which has many international members and does not give representation to relevant local constituencies such as Indigenous communities and students. Another audit report recommends increased representation to Indigenous people in the governance structure.

In general, a number of local initiatives aimed at linking the institution with Indigenous communities have been acknowledged as good practices in the audit reports. There is no doubt that increased effort has been put into community linkages over the past several years and that these efforts are helping to strengthen important relationships with Indigenous communities.

Indigenous employment: There is recognition that recruiting Indigenous staff who will serve as role models and provide added leadership for Indigenous students or Indigenous studies is a good strategy. Institutions have been paying attention to increase the Indigenous presence in the campus. However, this seems to be an area that requires further work.

Research

Indigenous research: In addition to focussing on improving the enrolment of Indigenous students and their success rates, universities have strategies for lifting the quantity and quality of Indigenous research. Effective research training opportunities for Indigenous students and scholarships have been noted in the audit reports. Here again, as in the case of teaching and learning models, new pathways are being developed.

In relation to research with Indigenous communities, the audit reports indicate how some of the research models are seen as heavily focused on a particular model of research and that they are less relevant as a foundation for research with Indigenous people. There is some concern over being a subject of research rather than a researcher. There are comments that there is opportunity to assist students and Indigenous communities discover mutually acceptable research models and to progress further the reconciliation mission. Research training, support to early researchers, role of Indigenous researchers in Indigenous issues related projects etc have also been given attention in the audit reports.

Detailed audit outcomes are set out in sections 4 to 8.

In summary, every institution audited by AUQA so far has shown, in overall terms, attention to Indigenous communities and students, although it does not always feature strongly in the general culture of the institution. Most Australian universities have demonstrated tangible results by establishing support units, schools or research centres specifically dedicated to promoting Indigenous indicators and Indigenous studies. They have achieved success at varying levels and some need to do more work than the others and in some areas. This analysis might throw light on how to approach those areas that need further work and successful initiatives highlighted in this analysis may be of help.

1 INTRODUCTION

All self-accrediting higher education institutions that receive federal funding undergo audit by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) once in five years and the audit reports are made public. This report analyses the information from those audit reports on successful models followed by the Australian universities to serve the cause of Indigenous issues. It also identifies areas where universities have been encouraged to improve their performance in relation to their objectives to promote Indigenous indicators. The main focus of the analysis is to feed into the discussions on enabling policies and practices to support the Indigenous students and staff more effectively and make this knowledge widely available.

2 **QUALITY AUDIT BY AUQA AND INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

AUQA uses the process of quality audit. The audit starts from the objectives of the organisation being audited. As a part of the various areas investigated during the audit, the audit panels have looked at the Indigenous Education strategies and investigated their implementation in these institutions. Those institutions that have written 'Indigenous objectives' have been audited more closely in respect of how they are addressing and achieving those objectives. In almost every audit the audit panel has interviewed Indigenous staff and staff of the Indigenous Support Centre (variously named).

AUQA has now audited 33 of the Australian self-accrediting higher education institutions – 31 universities and 2 other self-accrediting institutions. This report considered the 31 public audit reports of the Australian universities. The audit reports indicate that there is no single explanation for what would promote the Indigenous indicators – access, participation, retention and employment – in higher education. Institutions have been commended for a range of enabling policies, structures and support systems they have put in place to promote the Indigenous indicators. While there are significant differences in the way the Australian universities have responded to the cause of Indigenous education, there are also commonalities in experiences and successful models. An analysis of the sections of AUQA Audit Reports relating to Indigenous staff and students would help to identify some good practices and enabling strategies in the education of Indigenous students and employment of Indigenous staff. However, the information obtained from the audit reports has to be seen in the context of the audits.

3 INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THE AUDIT REPORTS

The information obtained from the audit reports cannot be used for institutional comparisons. AUQA does not impose an externally prescribed set of standards upon auditees, but rather uses, as its primary starting point for audit, each organisation's own objectives. This approach recognises the auditee's autonomy in setting its objectives and places explicit responsibility on the auditee to devise systematic process for evaluating its objectives. The core task of AUQA audit panels is to consider the auditee's performance against these objectives. This makes generalizations and institutional comparisons difficult in a sector that is marked by a high level of organizational complexity, and diversity.

Although the audit panel elucidates how the institution acts on Indigenous issues, the starting point is again the auditee's own objectives. For example, there are institutions that were dealing with Indigenous issues as a part of their equity plan (at the time of audit) and those audit reports have not recorded explicit audit conclusions about Indigenous issues although the equity issues have been considered adequately. There are universities that have set up specific Indigenous issue related objectives and established dedicated structures and staff force, and they have been given recommendations on how to sustain those efforts and make them more effective. Those recommendations are not areas for improvement in the absolute terms, but only in terms of the set goals and objectives that are yet to be achieved. In other words, how the audit panels approach 'Indigenous issues' is influenced by the place the institution gives to promoting Indigenous issues in the overall mission and objectives. Due to this institution-specific assessment framework, the level of detail presented in the audit reports related to Indigenous issues and the emphasis also vary. Consequently, it is difficult to deduce comparative information. But at the same time, it is this diversity and institution-specific approach that has brought out a wealth of information on good practices Australian institutions have in place to promote Indigenous issues.

It should also be noted that the audit reports have been published over a period of three and a half years – December 2002 to June 2006. Institutions that have completed 18 months after the publication of their audit reports have submitted progress reports. The progress reports indicate that institutions have taken action on almost all recommendations recorded in the audit reports. Considering the data from a 2002 audit report, without any regard for the progress made over three years, and synthesizing it with the data taken from the 2006 report does not allow any valid inference about the attention institutions give to Indigenous issues. Therefore, the progress reports of the institutions that have completed 18 months after the publication of the report and the actions taken related to Indigenous issues have also been considered for this report.

Keeping this context in the background, an attempt is made in the following pages, to see the pattern that emerges from the audit reports in relation to promoting the Indigenous issues.

(In the sections that follow, the name of the university is given in full in the first occurrence. In the occurrences that follow abbreviations are used. The list of abbreviations is given as appendix 4. Also note that due to the variation in the level of detail the audit reports contain about the universities, not mentioning of a university does not imply that the university is not doing well in that area. The quotes about the universities are more on highlighting the variety in approaches as well as commonalities in the basic principles.)

3.1 Making a Commitment

Australian universities have made explicit commitments to the development of Indigenous communities in general, and students and staff in particular, in a variety of ways. The audit reports mention of objectives, values, Acts, strategic plans and Statements of Reconciliation that

guide their actions to promote Indigenous issues. Some of them are given below to give a flavour of the commitment the Australian universities have taken up for themselves.

The University of Queensland (UQ) has made a commitment ‘to provide an educational context where Indigenous people develop their skills and obtain qualifications enabling them to contribute as leaders and professionals within their own communities and within broader Australian society.’

University of Ballarat (UB) states that it has a commitment to identifying and meeting the needs of Indigenous students and communities. UB Council adopted a ‘Statement of Reconciliation’ in May 1999, which has become University policy. The Statement of Reconciliation notes that ‘the University will make its best efforts to ensure that the Indigenous people, especially those who are members of the University and its community are assisted to overcome such injustices and oppression as they may suffer on the basis of their race or status as Indigenous people, and to achieve their reasonable aspirations for themselves and their communities, both as Australia’s Indigenous inhabitants and as citizens of Australia’.

Australian Catholic University (ACU) has a ‘Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation’ which was adopted by its Senate in 1999. The audit report notes that an important dimension of the University’s region and community mission is the commitment it has given to Indigenous education, by ‘promoting equity and cultural diversity with a particular focus on the region’s Indigenous peoples.’

The audit report notes that the Edith Cowan University (ECU) has a strong history of commitment to Indigenous communities and that this is reflected in, inter alia, its Statement of Reconciliation (1998) and its Indigenous Education Strategic Plan.

University of South Australia (UniSA) has made a commitment to ‘the needs of Aboriginal people’ as mandated by its Act, and the audit report acknowledges that the University has addressed this responsibility willingly.

University of Wollongong (UoW) has identified ‘appreciation of and support for Indigenous perspectives and reconciliation’ as one of its values.

University of Western Australia (UWA) expresses a commitment to Indigenous people through, for example, recognising Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week and through acknowledging the traditional land-owners at formal events such as graduation ceremonies. This is appreciated by Indigenous staff and students.

University of New England (UNE) has established a Reconciliation Plan/Statement that indicates its commitment towards Indigenous people.

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) states in its Performance Portfolio that it has a focus on reconciliation with Indigenous Australians. The Audit Panel acknowledges various actions taken by the University to encourage reconciliation, including its public acknowledgement of the Eora land on which the University stands and the Eora people as the traditional owners of the land.

In 2002 representatives from the Central Queensland University (CQU) and the Darumbal people signed a Reconciliation Statement, ‘setting a course for CQU to be a leader in the reconciliation process for the CQU communities and in the higher education sector’.

The James Cook University’s (JCU) core beliefs and values listed in the Millennium Document include University’s special responsibility to the remote, rural, and Indigenous communities of the region.

University of Sydney (USyd) has made a commitment to ‘encourage and support the participation and success of Indigenous Australian students by increasing opportunities for them to participate in the University as students, educators, administrators and researchers and by providing support mechanisms to ensure successful outcomes;’

3.2 *Strategic Plans and Goals*

To demonstrate their commitment to Indigenous issues, many Australian universities have developed specific strategies and set themselves specific goals and objectives. The audit reports indicate how, consistent with their mission and values, institutions have an extensive set of strategies for Indigenous Education and embedded them in their overall institutional strategic plans. In general, the strategies outline the institutional emphasis and approach to increase the participation, retention and success rates of Indigenous students in higher education courses. Institutions also have recruitment plans to increase the Indigenous staff on campus.

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) has an Indigenous Education Strategy in Higher Education to pursue access and participation for Indigenous students, with increasing success and retention through appropriate support. The Strategy aims to do the following:

‘To provide educational opportunities and create an educational environment where Indigenous peoples can realistically develop the skills and competencies needed to ensure self-regulation and self-determination within the broader contexts of Australian society.

To provide academic and personal student support services appropriate to the needs of students from diverse cultural, social and economical backgrounds.’

The University of Adelaide (UA) has a Strategic Plan which signals the importance of ‘promoting a culture of mutual respect that makes social justice and cultural diversity key components for our quest for excellence’. In light of this objective, the Director of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies (CAIRS; then known as Wilto Yerlo) was asked to develop a University-wide strategy for Indigenous education. The resulting Indigenous Education Strategic Plan was endorsed in 1999. Elements of it have been adopted by a number of faculties.

In Notre Dame University (NDU), the high-level strategic goals include ‘to make a special contribution, through education, to the advancement of the Kimberley region of Western Australia and to the reconciliation of the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people of Australia’. NDU has a specific objective for its Broome campus namely ‘to be a centre for the promotion and support of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people’.

UWA has designated Indigenous Issues as one of the eight key areas of academic strength, opportunity and importance for the University in its Academic Profile. Indigenous staff and students are very positive about the strategies specific to the activities of the School for Indigenous Studies and the research centres.

UniSA’s Indigenous Education Strategy aims to attract Indigenous staff and increase their research profile; to attract, support and retain Indigenous students to completion; and to include Indigenous experience in curricula. The audit report states that UniSA is showing varying degrees of success in these objectives.

La Trobe University’s (LTU) strategic direction for students in its Strategic Plan 2004-2008 includes a plan to consolidate and strengthen support and opportunities for Indigenous students. The Indigenous Education Statement for the 2004-2006 triennium sets out the following specific objectives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) students:

‘to increase access, participation, success and retention of students; to provide courses and flexible learning programs that meet the needs of Aboriginal communities, and to increase cultural understanding.’

CQU gives effect to its Reconciliation Statement in the most tangible means through its Nulloo Yumbah Centre.

Charles Darwin University's (CDU) goals for the intermediate term (ie by the end of 2010) include 'having an Indigenous vocational and higher education load nearing parity with population proportion' and 'recognised internationally as a centre of excellence in areas of: tropical knowledge; desert knowledge; and Indigenous and cross cultural knowledge'.

3.3 *Advisory Committees and Structures*

The Advisory Committees and structures, which have been established in most universities, seem to be contributing well to the promotion of Indigenous issues. In institutions where this was not happening very effectively, the audit reports note that reviewing and re-organising the structures were already underway. In general, the audit reports have acknowledged the advisory committees as important mechanisms through which the universities can discuss with representatives of Indigenous communities the relationship between themselves and the University. The need to revisit arrangements relating to the Aboriginal Consultative Committees can be observed through some audit reports.

In Griffith University (GU), the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee is advisory to Council. The Chancellor is a member.

NDU's Broome Campus is the centre for the promotion and support of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. A Broome Campus Advisory Board provides advice on academic programs and, more generally, on the future development of the campus.

UNE receives advice on institutional strategies through its Indigenous Australian Access and Participation Committee.

In the University of Newcastle (UNC), high level advice is provided to the University through the Board of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training.

UWA has an Aboriginal Management Advisory Board. The Indigenous Education Statement (for the 2004-2006 Triennium) states that a 'new Aboriginal advisory structure will be implemented to reflect the increases profile of Indigenous education in the University'.

The *ECU Performance Portfolio* states that an Aboriginal Course Advisory Committee provides input into course development and an Aboriginal Consultative Council provides advice on all Indigenous activities at ECU.

CDU has established an Indigenous Think Tank and an Indigenous Reference Group. The former consists of land council leaders and high-profile academics and acts as a sounding board for the VC, giving strategic guidance to the University. The latter is convened by the PVC (C&A) and consists of seven members of the Indigenous community, with the Dean of Indigenous Research and Education as an ex officio member. Its role is more tactical, providing guidance on Indigenous issues, monitoring CDU's Indigenous outcomes, and advising on the implementation of ideas from the Think Tank.

3.4 *Support Services*

Many successful support services can be found through which the universities tangibly demonstrate their commitment to the Indigenous issues. They include dedicated units to cater to the needs of the Indigenous students and staff and dedicated staff to administer the support services. The need to provide a dedicated structure for Indigenous students to identify with has

been well recognised. The range of services include preparatory programs to help Indigenous students gain entry to higher education programs, provision for special entry, tutorial support after entry, counselling, advocacy, individualised mentor support right from entry, liaison/contact officers dedicated to Indigenous issues, and financial support. These support services have played a significant role in increasing enrolment of Indigenous students into higher education and in increasing the retention and success rates. In cases where support services did not give expected results, institutions were reviewing strategies and developing further support mechanisms.

In UQ, for admission, many Indigenous students are interviewed by telephone to overcome the difficulty and cost of travelling. Much emphasis is also laid on post-entry support and a contact officer is assigned on entry. There have been Indigenous liaison officers in the faculties (but their number is dwindling). The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit provides support for Indigenous students and the Unit has an area within the St Lucia campus, and students can identify with it. A common room and computer room are provided.

The Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag Higher Education Centre of USQ enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander special entry students to have the support they require to complete their tertiary education. Its principal role is to provide support for students, in the form of counselling, advocacy, consultancy, research, academic tutoring and a special tutorial program. It also teaches a large range of courses including those required for a Tertiary Preparation Program tailored for the learning needs of Indigenous students, as well as credit courses in a growing number of programs such as Indigenous Mental Health. The underlying principle of Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag is to focus USQ's resources and involvement in the provision of a wide range of educational, research and consultancy services for the individual, communities, USQ staff and other bodies.

The Centre for Aboriginal Studies of Curtin University (CU) offers bridging courses for Indigenous students. It has a broad portfolio, aiming to increase the number of Indigenous students, the extent of Indigenous studies, the employment of aboriginal people, and the amount of appropriate research (either alone or in partnerships).

In UB, the Aboriginal Education Centre offers support to the Indigenous students.

ACU has three Indigenous Support Units and three Indigenous Advisory Committees – one in each of its three campuses located on Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. They provide academic and personal support for Indigenous students undertaking courses and are working with staff on Indigenous perspectives. Staff from the support units are involved with students from the time that students apply as it is considered that the personal relationship is necessary.

UNC has a number of dedicated facilities to assist with Indigenous education. These include Wollotuka and its research centre Umulliko. The facilities at Wollotuka are one indication of the University's commitment in this regard, and are widely praised by staff and students alike. They provide excellent support for graduate students and are designed to anticipate further growth in this area. There are mentoring programs in place for Indigenous students. Staff are appreciative of the high level of support from the University's senior executives. A brief description of this strategy is given in Appendix 2 and more details can be found in the Good Practice Database of AUQA.

In the University of Canberra (UC), the *Ngunnawal* Centre offers support services to Indigenous students, including coordination of the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS). The Audit Panel has commended the specialist support available to the University's Indigenous students and to their community.

The audit report of Macquarie University (MU) indicates that students interviewed by the Audit Panel were very supportive and appreciative of the support services they had availed themselves of (such as health, counselling, disability support and Indigenous student support), and of the way

these services contribute to an overall ambience on campus that is conducive to their social and academic aspirations. Indigenous students express very high satisfaction with the services provided by Warawara, which provides support and access to resources for all Macquarie Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, both on and off campus, as well as offering teaching programs.

The Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies (CAIRS) of the University of Adelaide plays a significant national role in addressing Indigenous disadvantage.

The GUMURRII Centre is the major support mechanism for Indigenous Australian students in Griffith University. The Centre provides learning resources, and individual consultations and tutorials on all campuses and maintains permanent offices on both the Nathan and Gold Coast campuses. A student support officer is based on each campus and is available to all Indigenous students.

UWA has a Centre for Aboriginal Programs (CAP). Indigenous students look to CAP for both academic guidance and general support. They are strongly appreciative of the Centre and attribute much of their success to this supportive environment.

UNE has several initiatives in place for supporting Indigenous students, notably the Oorala Aboriginal Centre which provides valuable support. The University has recognised that for many current and prospective Indigenous students, standard English is virtually a second language. In response, Oorala has developed a bridging program called TRACKS. Approved for ABSTUDY, the TRACKS program is 12 months full time for external students or 6 months for internal students. TRACKS has proven successful in facilitating access to University education. It has been used with particular success in correctional institutions, predominantly with Indigenous students. AUQA has commended the University of New England for the TRACKS program, which demonstrates a strong commitment to the fulfilment of the University's goals for Indigenous education. A brief description of this strategy is given in Appendix 2 and the Good Practice Database of AUQA has more details.

The Indigenous Education Centre (IEC) of the Charles Sturt University (CSU) offers support services, across each campus, to Indigenous students. The Indigenous students to whom the Panel spoke were strong in their praise for the support they had received from the IEC. The Centre plays an important role in the achievement of relatively high participation and retention rates. The IEC was under review at the time of the Audit Visit. The Panel has noted that in commissioning the external review, the University has reaffirmed its commitment to 'maintain and strengthen an IEC dedicated to providing culturally appropriate support for students from Indigenous communities and to promoting effective linkages and communication between the University and Indigenous communities in Australia'.

LTU has established the Ngarn-gi Bagora Indigenous Centre at the Bundoora campus and the Aboriginal Tertiary Support Unit at the Bendigo campus (and other campuses may also have an Aboriginal Liaison Officer) to support prospective students.

One of UNSW's priority goals is to strengthen its relationship with the Indigenous community to sustain and increase the access, participation and retention rates for Indigenous students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It strives to achieve this goal through the Nura Gili Indigenous Programs Centre that was established in 2004, bringing together the University's Aboriginal Education Program, Aboriginal Research and Resource Centre and the Indigenous employment group. The Centre offers a number of programs for prospective Indigenous students, including an Indigenous Winter School and preparatory programs in law, medicine, social work, commerce and economics and the built environment. Nura Gili combines teaching programs, student academic and liaison support, Indigenous employment support and a resource centre.

In UNC, a general finding was that the resources of the University provide generous support for a small proportion of the total number of enrolled Indigenous students.

USyd has established the Cadigal Scheme, designed as both a special entry scheme for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students and an academic support program once they have enrolled. This optional scheme is intended to encourage greater participation in tertiary education by ATSI students. The Cadigal Scheme is available for admission into all of the University's undergraduate courses which are offered through the Universities Admissions Centre (of NSW and ACT). It is managed by the Koori Centre for the majority of the University's courses; Yooroang Garang manages the scheme for courses offered by the Faculty of Health Sciences at Lidcombe campus. A number of students have benefited from this scheme, having not initially achieved the necessary University Admission Index scores, but having subsequently passed their first year of University study with significant assistance from the additional tutoring available through the Cadigal Scheme. There are also several Tertiary Preparation Courses available to assist students with pre-entry study skills assistance.

CDU has developed the Indigenous Support Unit (ISU) which consists of support people in each of its schools (at the time of audit there were eight of them) under a central ISU co-ordinator. As a group, the ISU has offered a three-day orientation program and works with individual schools on making courses more accessible to Indigenous students or Indigenousising courses. The University also administers the DEST Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme. Up to two Indigenous cadetships for HE students worth up to \$60,000 each for a four-year program were introduced in 2005. These offer mentoring and paid University employment during major semester breaks. Successful completion of the degree will position the cadet to gain graduate employment in one of the diverse areas of CDU management. The audit report notes that the concept is a useful one, provided the targeted employment options are not too narrow. At the time of audit there was one cadet. AUQA commended CDU's establishment of the Indigenous Support Unit and the Indigenous cadetships.

In UniSA, the Aboriginal and Islander Support Unit (AISU) provides support to Indigenous students and is located on all campuses and at four rural study centres. Indigenous students are enrolled in many awards or programs across all divisions, including non-'traditional' areas. There is an increasing amount of Indigenous and non-Indigenous partnership teaching. UniSA takes a high number of special entry students and a high number of external students. Correspondingly, its access and participation figures are higher than average, but retention is at, and success is below, both the state and national averages. Retention for external students is much better when they attend a rural study centre. AISU is developing further support mechanisms with a view to increasing retention and success. The audit report acknowledges that excellent work is under way, and that the momentum needs to be maintained.

University of Tasmania (UTas) provides support services through the Riawunna program. The audit panel has suggested that the facilities made available to Indigenous students through this program need attention. The University has identified the establishment of a combined Equity Unit to cater more effectively for the needs of both staff and students, including the roll-out of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy. AUQA affirmed this plan.

3.5 *From 'Support Centre' to 'Centre of Knowledge'*

In the case of some institutions, the Indigenous support units that started as administrative units for support services to Indigenous students and staff, have evolved into centres of knowledge on Indigenous issues. The involvement of these units in formal academic programs is increasing. Staff are increasingly becoming involved in giving guest lectures or substantive teaching into courses across the University. Some of these units have developed a strong academic base and are evolving into role models in teaching and research of Indigenous issues.

In Griffith University, the GUMURRII Centre staff were increasingly becoming involved in giving guest lectures or substantive teaching into courses across the University. At the time of audit, this had led to some discussion whether there should be formal academic programs offered through the Centre.

The staff of Nura Gili at UNSW convene a range of Aboriginal Studies courses, supervise postgraduate students and provide advice on Indigenous matters.

The Nulloo Yumbah centre is described in the Portfolio as CQU's Indigenous learning, spirituality and research centre. The audit report notes that under the proposed new structure Nulloo Yumbah will be more aligned with teaching and learning activities. The centre is still in the stages of consolidating a critical mass of staff focused on matters of importance for Indigenous peoples, and building up the capability and capacity to design and deliver effective teaching, support and research programs. The centre exhibits energy of extraordinary teamwork and optimism about their potential contribution. AUQA commended CQU's Nulloo Yumbah centre for establishing a concentration of expertise and energy for Indigenous issues which will benefit the University and its wider stakeholders.

In UQ, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ATSIS) Unit is an administrative unit for the support of Indigenous students. It does this not simply by providing services but by acting as role models in teaching and research. It has established a firm academic basis (just as university libraries and staff development units have done). The Unit has a clear philosophy for its activities, namely that when students leave UQ they are not only well-qualified academically but are also stronger within their own culture. To this end, the Unit involves as many staff as possible, not merely Indigenous staff, and is actively engaged in many issues affecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the broader community. The Unit recognises that the way to attract Indigenous students is to ensure that the University is seen to have an Indigenous milieu for them.

The School of Indigenous Australian Studies (SIAS) of JCU has developed its programs so that not only are they effective in meeting the needs of the local Indigenous communities, but also have attracted a number of non-Indigenous students, including some International students. This approach has helped transform SIAS from the status of a centre dedicated to serving the needs of Indigenous Australians, to that of a School of the University in its own right.

3.6 *Indigenous Subjects*

Efforts to offer courses concerning Indigenous issues and to tailor new courses that might be of interest and relevance to Indigenous community are observed. While customisation of courses to serve the needs of the Indigenous students has been appreciated, the need to sustain a balance between flexibility and consistency has also been noted and universities have handled this balance adequately. In terms of the curriculum and course design process to enhance reconciliation, the audit reports in some cases indicate that this is not yet occurring in a systematic manner.

In Curtin, Aboriginal Education Policy Implementation Committee encourages the development of aboriginal subjects. It has signed a MOU with the Faculty of Health Sciences on this.

USQ has introduced a number of courses specifically concerning issues of interest for Aboriginal people, such as Tourism, Indigenous Mental Health and Australian Indigenous Issues.

The Aboriginal Education Centre of UB was developing a range of courses in Aboriginal studies in 2002. UB has formed the Aboriginal Education Management Committee to seek views and comments on a range of issues pertinent to Indigenous people. The place of this Committee in the structure of the University was under review at the time of the panel's visit.

Education of Indigenous students is a high priority in ACU's equity policy, and there are courses in Sydney and Brisbane campuses specifically for Indigenous students. Three such courses, at the time of audit, were a Diploma of Education, a Diploma of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Education. The last-named is focused on field-based learning, designed specifically for the NSW Department of Education. There were 40 graduates from these programs in 2001.

In the area of health, UNC has demonstrated notable success in education for Indigenous students. At the time of audit, it was graduating more Indigenous students than any other health faculty in the country.

In UniSA, within the Division of Education, Arts and Social Science, the Unaipon School teaches Indigenous programs. It provides courses on Indigenous issues to students in a number of schools and programs. The School was a national leader when it introduced a BA in Indigenous Studies.

UNSW had plans to offer an Aboriginal Studies major sequence from 2006.

While providing for flexibility in course design, it is also important to ensure consistency. AUQA commended the Academic Board of JCU for sustaining an appropriate balance between consistency and flexibility in the processes used to accredit and review course proposals which enables staff to customise courses and course materials to meet regional, international, and Indigenous needs.

3.7 *Embedding Indigenous Issues in the Curriculum*

While the Australian universities have adopted a variety of ways to offer courses that are of interest and relevance to Indigenous community, the need to ensure a common understanding of 'Indigenous perspectives' has also been voiced in a few reports. While some universities have made partial attempts as a part of their awareness building strategies, there are institutions that have made systematic attempts to embed Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. In general, this is an area where new initiatives can be seen and many institutions have to work further to consolidate their plans.

In ACU, increasingly, Indigenous perspectives were being incorporated into all courses as they were reviewed. All undergraduate teacher education students had to undertake a core unit in Indigenous cultural perspectives. However, some course combinations could bypass this requirement: for example a student who had completed a degree and then undertook a Diploma of Teaching was educated for teaching but without completing a unit in Indigenous cultural perspectives. The audit report made an observation that ACU should address this anomaly.

The Oodgeroo Unit is the centre of the activities of the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, studies and research. In 2001 QUT adopted a Reconciliation Statement which specifically addresses 'Indigenous participation and perspectives' in learning and teaching. One of the major initiatives by the University to achieve this ambition was the project to embed Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. This objective was further emphasised by being incorporated into the Equity Plan 2002-2006 as a specific responsibility for the faculties in cooperation with the Oodgeroo Unit. The audit panel noted that there was a commitment to achieve the objective among faculty and school staff. However, there was not a common interpretation of the term "Embedding of Indigenous Perspectives" shared across the University resulting in differing views about the content of projects and assessment of their value. AUQA recommended that QUT reconsider the definition of "Embedding Indigenous Perspectives" into the curriculum in consultation with a large range of internal stakeholders in order to assure a university-wide understanding of its meaning.

CDU's Enabling Objectives include 'Engage with Indigenous communities to ensure Indigenous perspectives guide the design, access, delivery and evaluation of programs.' CDU has been responding to guidance from the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) by aiming to ensure that all students are provided with knowledge about Indigenous Australia - initially through the common units but in time through Indigenisation of the curriculum more generally. The situation at the time of audit was that students completed one core unit on Regional and Indigenous Issues, and one of two other Literacy units, namely Academic Literacies or Design & Innovation: Communicating Technology. The former is tailored more to Humanities/Social Sciences students and the latter to Technology/Science students, with students being encouraged to choose them accordingly. The Audit Panel observed a polarisation of views on the Common Units Program. The Audit Panel's view was that negative attitudes to the program may be due to its prescriptive approach to the units offered, rather than being focused on the development of each student's skills and knowledge. AUQA recommended that CDU ensure that the intended outcomes of the Common Units Program are achieved and that it is catering for the different ability levels and knowledge of different students.

3.8 *Creating Pathways*

Universities have been commended for the different practices they had put in place to provide pathways for Indigenous students to continue their studies. Bridge courses and preparatory programs to enhance the skill set of the Indigenous students have been commended. The general picture that emerges is of diversity in approaches to strengthen the link between the preparatory programs and higher education programs as well as the articulation arrangements between vocational and higher education courses.

In the University of Adelaide, the programs offered by CAIRS and the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music are seen as pathways for Indigenous students to continue into studies elsewhere in the University.

AUQA commended NDU for offering programs that provide a pathway for students into higher education. The vocational education and training programs offered at the Broome campus were proving to be successful pathways into higher education for students especially in the local area. The audit report also notes that the number of students articulating from the Certificate 4 and Diploma programs was relatively small and that the retention of these students has been challenging.

UWA has developed some atypical approaches to increasing access and participation. The majority of Indigenous students at UWA have entered via alternative entrance provisions ($\approx 100\%$ in Medicine and Law), and perform well in their studies. This is evidence of the success of UWA's Aboriginal Pre-Law Program and Pre-Medicine Summer School non-credit programs. AUQA commended these efforts and the Good Practice Database of AUQA has more details of this practice.

The TRACKS program of UNE discussed earlier (also included in the Good Practice Database of AUQA) deserves a mention here for its success in facilitating access to University education of Indigenous students. A brief description of this strategy is given in Appendix 2.

In JCU, the audit panel noted that some Indigenous and remote students have entered the Medical program by articulating from the TAFE health worker training program. Given the importance JCU places on 'Participation', 'Engagement', and 'Equity', as well as the concern about reaching enrolment targets, the Audit Panel encouraged the University to continue to build on existing initiatives to improve articulation from the TAFE sector particularly for the benefit of members of rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.

3.9 *Catch them Young – Targeting the Indigenous students in the schools*

To reach out to students early on and with a view to developing a positive relationship and encouraging them to consider university education as a realistic option upon leaving school, universities have made notable efforts, although with varying levels of success. Practices such as bringing the school students to the university campus for an experience of the university life, bringing the school students for educational camps, and tracking the progress of year 8 students till they finish year 12 have been noted.

In UB, the Aboriginal Education Centre co-ordinates the Indigenous Youth Development Program, a joint initiative of UB and the Ballarat District Aboriginal Co-operative which has been operating annually since 1996. This Program introduces approximately 50 'Year 10-12' Indigenous students throughout Victoria to university life. At the time of audit, UB had three students enrolled who were past participants of the Program. The audit panel has recommended that a formal review of the program may be timely, to better understand the factors that lead some students to enrol or not to enrol in further study.

IN CDU, the 'Indigenous Taste of Uni' program identifies local Indigenous Year 12 students with potential for HE and brings them onto campus for an experience of University. Of about 40 students in the first group of visitors, over half subsequently enrolled in HE courses. Groups of Indigenous Year 10 and Year 12 students are brought onto campus – 120 and 60 the year before the audit to the Casuarina and Alice Springs campuses respectively. This is seen as a long-term commitment, aiming to have students visit in both Year 10 and Year 12. Making contact at Year 10 permits pointing them towards VET as well as HE.

UWA has articulated an Indigenous Education Strategy that starts at the secondary school level. The University identifies and makes contact with Indigenous students in Year 8 through a 'Discovery Day' held in December each year. It registers them in a database and, under its umbrella University Aspirations Program, offers a range of services such as educational camps in Years 10 and 12. The progress of these students is tracked until year 12, at which time recruitment strategies are implemented.

3.10 *Flexible Learning*

Among the Australian universities, there is recognition of Indigenous perspectives in program delivery. The audit reports comment on the flexible forms of learning experiences provided by the universities that facilitate enrolment of Indigenous students and help in retention. The emergence of new teaching models that are more suitable to the learning styles of Indigenous students can be seen.

In ACU, many of the Indigenous students study 'away-from-base', that is they attend campus twice each semester for approximately five days and then undertake the remainder of their study from home. This arrangement enables the students to continue their work in schools and also to work with their local communities.

The UA audit panel has found particularly impressive the use of music to introduce young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders into formal education and training.

In UNC, in 2003 when the audit visit was conducted, an increasing number of Indigenous students were seeking to undertake their study and submit their work for assessment using Indigenous perspectives, methods and even languages. The University was yet to address that issue in a comprehensive fashion, but there was a recognition that it may need to do so if its Indigenous enrolments, particularly at the postgraduate level, are to continue to grow. Some staff members were working on a project to maximize benefits from the contributions that Indigenous students can make to classes, for example in tutorial sessions.

The Institute of Koorie Education (IKE) of the Deakin University (DU) follows a community-based learning model. It works in partnership with faculties to offer undergraduate courses in law, nursing, social work, education and arts to Indigenous students throughout Australia using a community-based learning model. The Institute also offers postgraduate courses in health and environmental science. The community-based learning model is particularly well suited to students in rural and remote areas who are able to study from home, attending the University for residential programs. The audit report notes this as an exemplar for Australia.

Distance Education (DE) is another noteworthy strand of flexible delivery at JCU, and the valuable contribution that both Online and DE make to providing services to rural, remote (including offshore) and Indigenous communities has been noted by the audit panel.

3.11 Indigenous Research

In addition to focussing on improving the enrolment of Indigenous students and their success rates, universities have strategies for lifting the quantity and quality of Indigenous research. Here again, as in the case of teaching and learning models, new pathways are being developed.

In UQ, the Indigenous support unit has conducted several major research projects and emphasises to students that while cultural output is important, academic rigour is equally so.

In NDU, some of the research students based at the Broome campus are involved in research with Indigenous communities.

UWA's commitment to Indigenous people is supported through two research centres focusing on topics of particular interest to Indigenous people and the promotion of Indigenous culture. These are the Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health (CAMDH) and the Centre for Indigenous History and Arts (CIHA). The University needed to consider how the research outputs of these centres, and particularly of CIHA, can be effectively included and reported in the usual research output classifications. This is a difficult issue nationally, and the audit report notes that UWA has an opportunity to provide leadership in this area.

The Indigenous College of Education and Research (ICER) of UniSA is responsible for marketing and Nunga (Indigenous) Research.

In La Trobe, research on Indigenous issues is one of the areas of research interest. All research applications which involve legal, Indigenous or external funding issues, must be considered by the University Human Ethics Committee.

UNC has a research centre Umulliko which is guided by a research advisory group comprising internal and external stakeholders. Through the efforts of Umulliko, the number of Indigenous research students had increased tenfold when the audit panel visited the university. The audit report acknowledges that this is very encouraging and is evidence that Umulliko is proving successful in helping the University achieve its objectives.

In relation to research with Indigenous communities, the audit reports indicate how some of the research models are seen as heavily focused on a particular model of research and that they are less relevant as a foundation for research with Indigenous people. There are comments that there is opportunity to assist students and Indigenous communities discover mutually acceptable research models and to progress further the reconciliation mission. Research training, support to early researchers, role of Indigenous researchers in Indigenous issues related projects etc have also been given due attention in the audit reports.

Although the total number of Indigenous HDR students was still modest, the Audit Panel was impressed with the JCU commitment and capacity to build from this base. AUQA commended JCU for success in providing effective research training opportunities for Indigenous HDR students.

CDU has been successful in attracting some leading researchers, which has enhanced the University's image. The audit report of CDU notes that more work is needed to implement a systematic early career researcher support system and to develop a cohort of Indigenous mainstream researchers. The audit panel suggested that issues that can be addressed further include the need for: a program for developing Indigenous researchers; recognising more field workers as researchers; building on the CDU/NTU Government partnership; and the resolution of issues relating to the ownership of Indigenous knowledge. While recognising the fact that it is always difficult for under-represented groups to achieve parity of representation, the audit panel of CDU suggested that as far as possible there should be an Indigenous researcher on all Indigenous research projects and the panel also notes that this will help to address the issue of ownership of knowledge. Devising a program for the development of Indigenous researchers, targeted funding, and recognition and training of field workers where appropriate have also been noted.

3.12 Awareness Building amongst non-Indigenous Community

There is an acknowledgement that Indigenous issues may be served not only by actions addressed to those people but also by appropriate actions addressed to other members of society. In this respect, many universities have incorporated the Indigenous courses in different ways targeting a wider section of the University so that the awareness level is raised among all members of the institution. At the time of audit, institutions where students could graduate without serious engagement in the study of Indigenous culture, had plans in hand to introduce a compulsory unit.

The audit reports note that given the importance of the reconciliation objectives, there is a need to assist all staff to understand what the reconciliation objectives are and to identify the part they are expected to play in achieving them. One means of raising awareness and discussion of these issues would be by sponsoring a series of staff seminars or workshops on reconciliation-related topics possibly involving staff and Advisory Board members who deal with Indigenous issues.

In Curtin, AEPIC helps with cross-cultural awareness within the university. The university introduced a first year elective in 2002 in one of the faculties and had plans to make it compulsory; and it was intended to have the other divisions included by 2008.

In UQ, at the time of audit, although Indigenous students represented only one per cent of the UQ student body, 1500 students were taking courses given by the Indigenous Studies Unit ATSI.

In UNC, one initiative for raising staff and student awareness of the other cultures represented in the University is the annual Cultural Awareness week. The audit report acknowledges that this is a positive initiative, although it was subject to some criticism regarding inadequate incorporation of Indigenous cultures, and the University was encouraged to consider this issue for future such events. Students also suggested that there was a need for non-aboriginal staff across the campuses to improve their general awareness of Indigenous protocols and practices, particularly as they relate to teaching practice.

UniSA is moving towards a requirement for all students to take a course on Indigenous issues and at the time of audit, about 15% of undergraduates did so. The Audit Panel observed that to serve 'the needs of Aboriginal people' (UniSA Act) the extension of Indigenous courses to a wider range of programs was under active discussion in the University.

At the time of audit of the University of Sydney, an Indigenous Equity Taskforce was developing a policy to engender awareness about Indigenous studies into courses. This started from Education and Social Work, which had some success with this issue. Also, the Koori Centre (and, at the Lidcombe campus, Yooroang Garang) provides service teaching into a range of programs. The Koori Centre has developed cross-cultural packages which are used by a range of academic and service departments throughout the University to raise awareness of cultural issues and to develop tools for working effectively across a range of cultures.

CDU has developed cross-cultural awareness training for staff and has been commended for this.

The Audit Panel of the University of Melbourne (UoM) registered a high level of awareness of Indigenous issues to the extent that most discussions about equity issues were referred to as relating to the Indigenous agenda. However, the panel found that the awareness was not systematically backed by actions and affirmed the need identified by the institution to continue to implement the Reconciliation Statement and promote the role of the Indigenous Unit.

3.13 *Interaction with Aboriginal Community and Networking*

Serving the cause of Indigenous issues requires work both within the institution and in the community and universities have been commended for some of their out-reach efforts. Involving the representatives of the Indigenous communities in advisory committees, seeking their views on curriculum to incorporate Indigenous units, tapping on the knowledge resources of the Indigenous communities to teach Indigenous issues, facilitating interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities etc can be seen. Inviting Australian Aboriginal people with deep knowledge of Indigenous culture to speak at the universities on days of celebration and interest to Indigenous students was increasing.

In Curtin, formal interaction with the aboriginal community is through an advisory committee.

In its Performance Portfolio, the Southern Cross University (SCU) states that it 'has a long-standing record of support for Indigenous education, which continues to be featured in the University's new strategic commitments, and has been supported through provision of outreach, student support and curriculum initiatives. Following a review process, the University made a full professorial appointment in 2001 to Gineevec: the College of Indigenous Australian Peoples (CIAP).' Subsequently, the College developed a five-year plan that includes double-degree programs and an increased research emphasis. It caters for about 150 Indigenous Students on campus. AUQA commended CIAP for its initiatives in establishing a constructive teaching, research, and community presence in the life of students and staff at the University, and within the region it serves. This includes involvement at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, via scholarly work, and requires meaningful involvement of local Indigenous Australian elders, and provision of community outreach services.

American students at NDU on a study abroad program are given the opportunity to travel initially to the Broome campus and from there to various areas of the Kimberley region to spend time meeting remote aboriginal people in their home communities. This visit is preceded by the students completing the Core Curriculum unit in Aboriginal Studies, which provides students with a helpful introduction to the historical and contemporary issues of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The students speak very highly of this aspect of their study in Australia.

The Advisory Board of the Broome Campus of NDU serves as a strong bond between the Broome Campus and the Indigenous Community. The Board is chaired by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Broome and has members drawn from local schools, business and community groups. The audit report notes that the current balance of representation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives and various community interests is appropriate. Members of the

Advisory Board make a positive contribution to the development of the campus and to its ability to achieve the objective of reconciliation. The Broome Campus Advisory Board is routinely invited to comment on curriculum-related matters and proposed course outlines. The Advisory Board is particularly able to have an input into ensuring that courses on the campus meet the needs of local business or industry and Indigenous peoples. The Board is seen as an expression of the University's desire to work in partnership with the local communities, to their mutual benefit. The audit report notes that as it develops its model of reconciliation, the University has the potential to demonstrate considerable leadership for the Australian higher education sector.

In UNC, high level advice is provided to the University through the Board of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training, which includes representatives from internal and external stakeholder groups such as the Gibalee Aboriginal Learning and Development Centre, Wollotuka (the School for Indigenous Studies), Indigenous Health Services, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), DEST and the community. The Audit Panel was in support of this concept and encouraged the University to make the most of such a resource.

UNE's Strategic Plan states that its Partnerships goal will be achieved through, *inter alia*: *Partnerships with Indigenous communities*. Within its wider community, UNE is regarded as providing leadership in improving relationships with Indigenous communities. As an example of how this is recognised, the University enjoys the support of Indigenous elders who have indicated their esteem for the University via such methods as conducting a smoking ceremony for the building that was renovated for the School of Professional Development and Leadership. This has been aided by the strategic appointment of a Community Liaison Officer, which is proving to be a successful initiative. AUQA has commended the University of New England for a wide range of examples of positive community linkages, including Access Centres, relationships with Indigenous communities and sharing facilities.

In La Trobe, there are several structures in place to try and improve the effectiveness of the University's service to Indigenous students and communities. The state of Victoria has 26 local Aboriginal Education Consultative groups, and LTU is linked with many of these; most notably the groups at Bundoora and Bendigo, of which it is a member. Through these connections the University is able to obtain advice on issues pertaining to Indigenous communities, ranging from teaching opportunities through to research projects.

In UNSW, a range of Aboriginal Studies courses are taught with input from elders from the local Indigenous community.

The Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies (CAIRS) of the University of Adelaide plays a significant leadership role in relation to the University's outreach to Indigenous communities both within South Australia and interstate.

Two noteworthy examples of effective rural, remote and Indigenous community engagement reviewed by the Audit Panel in JCU are the Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP) and the targeted initiatives of the School of Medicine. RATEP was established as a joint initiative between Education Queensland, JCU and Tropical North Qld Institute of TAFE in 1992. RATEP is an innovative course that provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in rural and remote communities access to the Bachelor of Education over five years and via distance education. TAFE delivers the front end of the program and JCU the final three years. TAFE and JCU collaborate on curriculum development to facilitate the articulation involved. Approximately 60% of Queensland's Indigenous classroom teachers are graduates of RATEP or its predecessor, the Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP). The School of Medicine has appointed approximately 300 local GPs and specialist medical practitioners to Adjunct academic positions to recognise their contribution to teaching and research.

UoM's goal with respect to its community engagement is comprehensive and covers not only the communities in Victoria but Australia-wide. The Performance Portfolio identifies UoM's priorities in that regard that include 'work with the Indigenous communities to meet their social and educational needs and aspirations'.

USyd has a range of means in place for linking with Indigenous communities consistent with the Indigenous Education Statement 2004-2006 Triennium: 'To recognise and promote understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures.' The Audit Panel heard positive comments from a wide range of people, including staff, students, foundations and external community representatives, of the extent to which the Koori Centre has been effective in linking the University and Indigenous communities. Also, the Audit Panel noted the number of students from overseas who come to the University through student exchange and study abroad schemes and who engage with the Koori Centre as a means of learning about Australia's Indigenous people. AUQA commended the University of Sydney's Koori Centre for the strong links it has established with Indigenous communities and for the efforts it makes in recognising and promoting understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures.

Concerning the UTas community engagement agenda, the Audit Panel was very positive about the special relationships formed with the Tasmanian Government and some local communities, including the northwest region through the Cradle Coast Campus initiative. However, the panel agreed that more policy work was required to lift the community engagement agenda to a new level, and found that there is a need to engage more effectively with members of the Indigenous community, and to ensure that the University becomes more fully engaged with Tasmanian TAFE and schools, especially those schools in locations outside of cities with a UTas campus presence.

The University of Tasmania has an Aboriginal Partnership Agreement with Aboriginal Communities, and the audit report notes that further attention needs to be paid to the effective implementation of this agreement. AUQA has recommended that UTas pay further attention to involving both Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community in appropriate university curricular and extra-curricular events.

AUQA commended CDU's recognition of its vital role in Indigenous development and its commitment to valuing Indigenous people.

Need to consider participation of Indigenous people in the governance of the university has been noted in one report. Membership composition and size of the governance structure is another area that has received the attention of the audit panels. At least one report specifically notes that the contribution able to be made to the governance of the university by the full Board of Governors is diffused by its large size and its membership composition, which has many international members and does not give representation to relevant local constituencies such as Indigenous communities and students. Another audit report recommends increased representation to Indigenous people in the governance structure and advisory groups.

The Governing Council of CDU had only one Indigenous member at the time of audit. CDU's expressed regional orientation and desire to be led by issues coming from its environment point to the need to try to increase the Indigenous membership of Council. The audit panel suggested that CDU attempt to get Indigenous representation on all, or at least an increasing number of, course advisory groups.

In general, a number of local initiatives aimed at linking the institution with communities have been acknowledged as good practices in the audit reports. There is no doubt that increased effort has been put into community linkages over the past several years and that these efforts are helping to strengthen important relationships with Indigenous leaders.

3.14 *Monitoring and co-ordinating the efforts*

The audit reports provide some information on how successful the universities are in monitoring their various initiatives and in ensuring co-ordination between the initiatives. For example, in Curtin, the Indigenous initiatives are monitored and overseen by AEPIC, which develops an Aboriginal Education Plan and reports through the VC to the academic senate. AEPIC meets quarterly. All the divisions are represented on it.

Co-operation and co-ordination between two institutions that have Indigenous objectives can be seen. The Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) is a self-accrediting institution, located only 100km south of Darwin, and educating Indigenous students. Like CDU, BIITE has many outstation activities. It is natural that the two should co-operate, to avoid duplication and strengthen the total educational provision for Indigenous students. The Federal government provided funds for activities associated with establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two institutions, and this is now in place. The general text of the MoU is being underpinned by the production of agreements on points of detail, eg sharing capital infrastructure at remote sites. The audit report notes that this MoU is a very useful step in the development of provision for Indigenous students in the NT, even though a great deal more needs to be done to develop agreements at the local level.

Some institutions have clear lines of responsibility for the various units involved in Indigenous initiatives and the co-ordination is overseen effectively. However, not all universities are strong in this area. Need for more coordination among the initiatives emerges as an area that needs attention. There are instances where although the institutions are performing well regarding Indigenous students, the audit reports indicate that an opportunity exists to strategically align the resources and provide a more focused and co-ordinated overall effort.

Cooperation among various initiatives across multi campus institutions, to provide support for Indigenous students and integrating them into the overall management of the campuses has been found to be inadequate in some cases, reducing the ability of the Indigenous plans to make a significant contribution. There are comments in the audit reports that note that support to Indigenous students at times is 'reactive support' based on case by case dealings and that a well-coordinated well thought out support would result in more sustainable results.

There are also cases where the Indigenous support unit may be doing well but its integration into the other units of the institutions and the awareness level of those outside that unit are not found to be adequate.

Universities record success in some areas and find it challenging to extend it to other areas. For example, in UNC the Indigenous education strategies have worked well in the faculty of health. The challenge is to expand this success to other disciplinary areas.

In UWA, the challenge now is to ensure that Indigenous issues in education are not only treated as a distinct issue but that, as appropriate, expertise on education for Indigenous people is embedded within all the Schools and policies of the University.

The audit report of LTU notes that the University needs to put more effort into its linkages with Indigenous communities. There are pockets of strong activity and excellent linkages between LTU and Indigenous communities, but the efforts need to be more systemic.

In CQU, the activities of Nulloo Yumbah tend to stand alone, and the audit panel has recommended that the University may expand its reconciliation efforts into its other regional locations.

3.15 *Indigenous Employment*

There is recognition that recruiting Indigenous staff who would serve as a role model and provide added leadership for Indigenous students or Indigenous studies would be a good strategy. Ensuring the presence of adequate number of Indigenous staff in the campus and their participation in campus activities has been attended to by many universities.

JCU has made a commitment to attract Indigenous staff to work at JCU. In 2000 JCU was the first Australian University to have an Indigenous employment clause in its Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, with the aim of achieving Indigenous representation in the JCU staff profile at the same proportion as in the broader community, which was then 7.8%. At the time of the Audit Visit the proportion within JCU was 4.6%. Apart from a number of Indigenous staff appointments across JCU the University has appointed Indigenous support officers, and this initiative has provided some measure of peer support for incoming Indigenous staff and also direct support, to Indigenous students, especially in Faculties having a small but growing number of these students. The Audit Panel found this JCU-wide initiative to be effective. AUQA commended JCU for its Indigenous employment strategy, which has been implemented across disciplines, for both academic and general staff. In 2003 the Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences adopted a new requirement for all courses in the Faculty to include Indigenous Australian content taught by an Indigenous Australian.

Indigenous Staff Recruitment is a deliberate strategy of UoM to recognise the workplace needs and aspirations of Indigenous Australians and to promote their employment and career development. As a consequence of this priority, UoM has exemption from the Equal Opportunities Act to allow advertising and selection to this target group. The aspirations of UoM are laid out in its Indigenous Employment Strategy. UoM's Indigenous Employment Strategy was praised by the Indigenous staff members interviewed by the Audit Panel as contributing to the progress being made towards achieving the objectives for Indigenous recruitment. The appointment of an Indigenous Employment Coordinator is likely to assist the efforts to further increase the numbers of Indigenous staff, which have risen from 12 in 2003 to 21 in 2004. AUQA affirmed UoM's recognition of the need to increase the awareness of the Indigenous Employment Strategy among faculties and departments, and to actively support and promote the recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees.

In Curtin, most Indigenous staff were academic. UQ had a full-time staff of 12, with other part-time and research staff in the Indigenous support unit. In UA, the audit report notes that the appointment of appropriately qualified Indigenous Australians to the academic staff of the University had been identified as a priority for implementation commencing in 2000. Its support unit for Indigenous students namely CAIRS had one full-time student adviser and at the time of the panel's visit was appointing a second person.

In Griffith, the proportion of Indigenous Australians and people with disabilities on staff have remained static since 1999. A Task Group was formed in 2001 to develop strategies for achieving the target for Indigenous Australian staff and it has stimulated considerable activity. One action was the appointment of an Indigenous Co-ordinator in 2002 whose role is to develop links with Indigenous Australian alumni and various community agencies to increase the number of Indigenous Australian applicants for vacancies. The University operates an Academic Staff Equity Development Program which enables six academic staff per year from an equity group to be released from teaching requirements for one semester so that they may concentrate on research/PhD work. This proved a highly successful practical measure of support for these staff. The Council's 'Top-10' report indicators include Indigenous support fund grant success. In relation to this measure, at the time of audit, the University was already demonstrating performance within the top ten of Australian universities.

UniSA has set a target for Indigenous staff of 2%, because of the age and educational profile of Indigenous South Australians. The proportion at the time of audit was 1.2%, which was slightly below the population percentage in South Australia. UniSA has introduced research incentives for Indigenous staff, and a number of traineeships, and was aiming both to enhance qualifications and to target continuing employment in a broader range of areas and divisions of the University.

As a part of the policy initiatives to provide a workplace that is equitable, University of Wollongong has taken initiatives regarding Aboriginal employment. UOW also led the development of Equal Opportunity Online which is being adopted across the university sector to provide training on discrimination and harassment issues.

CSU has included Indigenous staff recruitment as one of its strategic priorities for 2005.

USyd had 12 Indigenous academic staff from a total population of 2,345 academic staff (excluding casuals) at the time of audit. In total, 24 of the more than 5,000 staff employed by the University were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In its Indigenous Employment Strategy the University noted that this represented 'approximately 0.005% of the University's permanent workforce – well below 2%, represented the approximate percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the working age population of New South Wales (ages 15 - 64).' However, in absolute numbers this compares favourably against many other HE institutions.

In its Indigenous Education Statement 2004-2006 Triennium, the University of Sydney sets the following objective: 'To increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in education and training.' To that end, the Indigenous Employment Strategy seeks to apply a broad range of methods, such as 'assisted merit-based recruitment', targeted entry level recruitment, apprenticeships, cadetships and retention initiatives. At the time of the Audit Visit there were three apprentices and one trainee, indicating moderate success. In practice, the focus for attracting academic Indigenous staff is on those strategies that involve nurturing Indigenous students so that they may progress to academic careers within the University. The Audit Panel acknowledges the University's recent moves to the appointment of an Indigenous Employment Officer, and therefore to meet its overall commitment to equity. AUQA recommended that the University enhance its efforts to increase the employment of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.

3.16 *Resourcing and Leadership*

Related to the issues of resource and staffing is the issue of leadership. There are institutions where there is considerable potential to address Indigenous education issues in a more comprehensive fashion, and that this potential is being constrained by the lack of an appropriate senior person with university-wide responsibilities in this area. The audit reports recommend that such a person can take responsibility for ensuring that specific entities are working in a co-ordinated fashion; identifying organisational barriers to Indigenous education and developing strategies in response; and establishing systems for monitoring organisational progress in this area.

Another audit report notes that although some senior managers have been supportive of the strategic plan, there is a need for senior management to take greater responsibility for driving the implementation of the Strategic Plan related to Indigenous issues throughout the University. Consequently, the University has been encouraged to identify a senior academic "champion" to work with the Indigenous support unit on communicating and implementing the Strategic Plan.

Reassessing and redefining the role of the senior positions and making additional appropriate senior research appointments has been recommended to CDU. The audit panel suggested that CDU should consider making the Dean of Indigenous Research and Education position a part of the senior executive, to maximise the effectiveness of this position.

USyd has the Enterprise Bargain which provides for the appointment of a senior academic position at the professorial level, which may assist in providing important leadership and coordination for Indigenous issues.

The Oodgeroo Unit of QUT is expected to play a key role in the processes and the projects dealing with embedding Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum of different courses and into research projects. This role is emphasised in the QUT Reconciliation Statement Implementation Strategy 2005-2010, which at the time of the Audit Visit was in the process of being approved by Council. The main responsibilities of staff in the Oodgeroo Unit are teaching, providing academic and pastoral support and engaging with the local Indigenous communities to help attract more students to the campus. The responsibility to participate in the implementation of the projects deriving from the Reconciliation Statement is an addition to the main tasks of staff. AUQA recommended that QUT review the level of resourcing provided to the Oodgeroo Unit in the light of its role in embedding Indigenous aspects into the curriculum and research.

3.17 *Support for staff of Indigenous units*

A need for more opportunities for sharing of experience among campus staff of various institutions who work on Indigenous issues has been noted. Staff development for the staff of the support units has also emerged as an area that needs attention.

The GUMURRII Centre of Griffith is serving well the needs of the Indigenous Australian students at the University and its staff feel supported by the senior executive in their work. However, Centre staff rely heavily on one another for support and mentoring and the Panel recommended that there would be considerable benefit in the Centre seeking to establish formal links with similar units in other Australian universities for mutually beneficial professional development and information sharing.

The audit report of ECU indicates that a combined WA universities strategy involving their Indigenous Higher Education Centres has received support from WA's Vice-Chancellors. A series of forums on key Indigenous Higher Education issues was being planned by each Centre and audit panel considered these steps as appropriate responses.

In UA, the Director of Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies participates in an informal network of directors from equivalent centres in other universities.

3.18 *Indigenous Indicators*

The reports note that, in some cases, greater attention may be given to indicators of student performance such as those provided in the DEST Indigenous Higher Education strategies reports in respect of student access, participation, retention and success. Institutions have been encouraged to use indicators such as these as useful external reference points for both gauging success and for setting internal objectives and targets. The need to develop more effective initiatives to encourage able Indigenous students to complete their schooling and aspire to undertake university studies, and a greater emphasis on articulation from Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) to higher education (HE) have been noted. The audit reports acknowledge the positive role played by the Indigenous support units in increasing the enrolment and retention rates of Indigenous students. Universities are found to be devising various strategies to improve their performance related to the Indigenous indicators.

The audit report of ACU notes that there had been a steady increase in the numbers of Indigenous enrolments. ACU performs comfortably above the national average on all four equity indicators for Indigenous students (access, participation, retention, success).

QUT aims to have a diverse student body measured by pathways and background. Activities designed to achieve this target have increased the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments that has gone up from 182 in 2001 to 294 in 2004.

Indicators of Indigenous student access, participation, retention and success at CSU for 2002-2003 were above national rates. The University lists 'Indigenous student participation and success' as one of the key indicators of its performance with respect to regional engagement. The audit report has noted that the Indigenous Education Centre played an important role in this achievement.

Central Queensland is home to a large Indigenous population. Over three hundred Indigenous students attend CQU.

UNC measures its success against its Higher Education Strategies primarily by the standard DEST indicators (i.e. Access, Participation, Retention and Progression). It performs better than national averages for some of these indicators (Retention and Success), although these indicators are trending downwards. The University felt that the diagnostic utility of these indicators was limited and worked with state and national networks of Indigenous centres to develop more useful ones. It made submissions on this matter to the Higher Education "Crossroads" Review. The Audit Panel interpreted these as signs that the University was taking its Indigenous education responsibilities seriously.

In JCU, data on participation, retention, and completions by Indigenous UG and PG students indicate that despite the numbers being reasonably small, the trend data was generally positive, including that for Indigenous HDRs.

At the time of audit although Griffith's equity indicators for commencing students in 2002 were below national average for Indigenous students, and needed further work, the Panel noted that the retention rate for Indigenous students was above the national average and had been trending up.

USQ in general could improve considerably in both advocacy and in terms of student performance results (access, participation, retention and success) as measured in the DEST Indigenous Strategies in Higher Education reports.

Recruitment of Indigenous students is an ongoing challenge for LTU. In 2003, 80 of the University's 26,575 enrolments were classified as Indigenous students and LTU was below national and state averages in access and participation rates for this equity target group. Retention and success rates were consistent with, or slightly better than, state averages. This suggests that the University is successful with Indigenous students once they have enrolled. AUQA affirms that La Trobe University needs to increase its attention to Indigenous students as an issue of relevance to the whole University community.

A similar situation was observed in the case of UWA. The panel noted that for Participation and Success, UWA falls below both state and national averages. Once students are enrolled, however, the University performs well in terms of retention, suggesting that the support systems for enrolled Indigenous students are effective. The audit report commented that this may partly a consequence of the nature and tradition of UWA, which has the highest proportion of school leaving students in the country, seeks those with the highest entry scores, and teaches predominantly through on-campus modes.

CDU had around 230 Indigenous HE students (headcount) and 46 Indigenous staff at the time of audit. While acknowledging this as an admirable achievement, the audit panel suggested that CDU needed a more fully expressed plan for increasing the participation of Indigenous students and staff. Although above national sector averages, the participation and success rates of Indigenous students in CDU were significantly lower than the other equity target groups. The

panel noted that the participation rate had been unchanged over the last three years. For a university with a significant proportion of Indigenous people in its client population, this indicates that recruitment programs have to be strengthened.

While UNSW's rates of Indigenous access and participation have been low compared to NSW and sector averages, enrolments have increased since the establishment of Nura Gili, and success and retention rates are high. AUQA has commended UNSW for the programs for prospective Indigenous students provided by the Nura Gili Indigenous Programs Centre and for the high success and retention rates of Indigenous students of the University.

In ECU, important indicators suggest that the University still has some work to do in addressing its access, participation and retention performance. According to DEST statistics, at the time of audit (2004), ECU's Indigenous retention and success rates were the lowest in WA; and its Indigenous access and participation rates, although the highest in the state, had more than halved from 1999 to 2003. ECU has stated that the low retention and success rates were exacerbated by a high percentage of external Indigenous students enrolled in enabling courses, a matter which the University was endeavouring to address.

The School of Medicine in JCU is committed to graduating medical practitioners who are more likely to stay and serve northern Queensland regional community, especially its rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. To fulfill this commitment the Medical School targets students from rural and remote areas, with 50% of each cohort to have rural and remote backgrounds. There is also an annual intake target of at least five Indigenous students. This target has been met for the first five years of its operation. JCU claimed that it has one of the highest percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students enrolled in its undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The DEST statistics confirm that in 2003 JCU was second only to Charles Darwin University in this respect.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE MAJOR AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

The discussion above has considered all the observations made in the audit reports related to Indigenous issues. It is also worth looking at the major audit conclusions separately and analyse them. Every audit report contains a summary of findings together with lists of commendations, affirmations and recommendations known as CARs. A commendation refers to the achievement of a stated goal, or to some plan or activity that has led to, or appears likely to lead to, the achievement of a stated goal, and which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. A recommendation refers to an area in need of attention, whether in respect of approach, deployment or results, which in AUQA's view is particularly significant. Where such matters have already been identified by the institution, with adequate evidence, they are termed 'affirmations'. Other favourable comments and suggestions are mentioned throughout the text of the audit report. The analysis given under section 3 covers all the comments including the observations made in the text of the report. In view of the significance attached to the major audit conclusions, the following sections present the analysis of CARs.

The following table presents the number of CARs on Indigenous issues that the 31 audit reports present. It should be noted that AUQA does not encourage the number of CARs for institutional comparisons or as a quality index. Those institutions that have written 'Indigenous objectives' have been audited more closely in respect of how they are addressing and achieving those objectives. For example, in view of the explicit reference to knowledge of Indigenous culture and issues in the UniSA Act, the Audit Panel indicated that it might be appropriate to consider whether to include it at the next revision of Graduate Attributes.

Table 1: Audit Reports considered for the Analysis

S.No.	Month and Year of Release of Audit report (AR)	Name of the Self Accrediting Institution (SAI)	CARs on Indigenous Issues
1	October 2002	University of Southern Queensland	
2	October 2002	Curtin University	1C
3	November 2002	University of Ballarat	
4	December 2002	Australian Catholic University	
5	January 2003	The University of Newcastle	1C 1R
6	March 2003	University of Adelaide	1R
7	March 2003	Swinburne University	
8	June 2003	University of Canberra	1C
9	July 2003	Macquarie University	
10	September 2003	University of Queensland	
11	October 2003	Southern Cross University	1C
12	November 2003	Notre Dame University	1R
13	December 2003	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology	
14	April 2004	Griffith University	

15	April 2004	University of Western Australia	1C
16	May 2004	The University of New England	2C
17	August 2004	University of South Australia	
18	September 2004	James Cook University	3C
19	October 2004	Edith Cowan University	
20	November 2004	Charles Sturt University	
21	December 2004	The University of Sydney	1C 1R
22	February 2005	Deakin University	1C
23	February 2005	Bond University	
24	March 2005	La Trobe University	1A
25	August 2005	Queensland University of Technology	1A 2R
26	October 2005	Charles Darwin University	3C 1R
27	November 2005	University of Tasmania	1A 1R
28	January 2006	The University of Melbourne	1A
29	February 2006	Central Queensland University	1C
30	March 2006	University of Wollongong	
31	March 2006	University of New South Wales	1C

(C - Commendation, A - Affirmation, R - Recommendation) (SAIs for which the progress reports have been considered are highlighted.)

As the above table indicates, 16 universities have major audit conclusions related to Indigenous issues. There have been 17 commendations and 12 affirmations or recommendations.

5 SPECIFIC AUDIT COMMENDATIONS

Every audit report contains a summary of findings together with lists of commendations, affirmations and recommendations (known as CARs). The 31 audit reports have altogether 422 commendations, out of which 17 are related to Indigenous issues constituting 4% of the total. Since AUQA audits have a large number of considerations in understanding institutional quality, the coverage of 4% in the commendations regarding Indigenous issues can be seen as positive indicator.

The 17 commendations in the audit reports cover about 13 areas that include the following:

1. general attention to Indigenous education and other needs
2. establishment of dedicated centres
3. adequate support services
4. improvement in certain Indigenous indicators, including success and retention rates
5. flexible learning models and course design
6. effective research training to Indigenous students
7. Indigenous employment strategy
8. constructive teaching, research and community presence, including the Indigenous community
9. effectiveness of the preparatory programs
10. sharing facilities
11. cross-cultural awareness and training
12. reaching out to school students
13. establishing a concentration of expertise and energy for Indigenous issues

The above areas are drawn only from the commendations highlighted in the audit reports. In addition, the reports have many positive comments about the institutional efforts to serve the cause of Indigenous issues. The fact that there are commendations in areas that are mentioned above as being weak is not a contradiction: it simply indicates that at one institution is doing this well. This reinforces the need for greater attention to be paid to inter-institutional learning and sharing.

The full list of commendations is given in appendix 1. Very closely linked to the commendations found in the audit reports is the Good Practice Database (GPDB) of AUQA. It contains details of commendations that have high value of transferability in other contexts. Out of the seventeen commendations on Indigenous issues of the 31 audit reports, nine have been selected by AUQA as appropriate for wider promulgation and potential transfer and the following section describes those details.

6 GOOD PRACTICES VALIDATED BY AUQA

Very closely linked to the commendations found in the audit reports is the Good Practice Database of AUQA. It contains details of commendations that have high value of transferability in other contexts.

The overall goal of the Good Practice Database is to make information about good practices in the Australian Higher Education sector publicly available for the benefit of the sector so as to assist improvement efforts. The source of Good Practices for consideration is the AUQA Audit Reports and the commendations therein. Not only is this the source in respect of which AUQA has the most obvious mandate, but all the Good Practices available for consideration have been subjected to a consistent process of quality audit by external peers. Moreover, using the commendations within the Audit Reports in this fashion helps to maximise the benefits that the HE sector obtains from AUQA.

Submission of good practices to the AUQA GPDB is by invitation only. Not all commendations become good practices. AUQA Audit Panels, when conducting audits of institutions, are focused on that auditee's own objectives. The Audit Panels are not tasked with considering whether commendable aspects of that auditee are also appropriate for wider promulgation and potential transfer. Therefore, although the Audit Reports provide an appropriate original source of Good Practice (GP), the Audit Directors identify and select commendations in the Audit Report that are suitable for entry into the Good Practice Database. There is also a process of refereeing the GP entries to ensure that they are written clearly and coherently to provide enough information to the readers to benefit from the GPDB.

The GPDB presents practices under 13 topics, one of which is 'Indigenous Issues'. Out of the seventeen commendations on Indigenous issues of the 31 audit reports, nine have been selected by AUQA as appropriate for wider promulgation and potential transfer. Seven of those practices have already been published on-line and they are:

- a. Supporting Indigenous Students: Graduating Indigenous Professionals
- b. TRACKS Indigenous Tertiary Preparation Program
- c. Indigenous Education: Helping Indigenous Students to Achieve Success
- d. Strategic Commitment to Indigenous Education and Development
- e. Indigenous Support and Initiatives
- f. Liaison with Secondary Schools
- g. Institute of Koorie Education's (IKE) Community-based Learning Model

Two more will be published by the end of 2006.

AUQA views the GPDB as one of the most effective means of enhancing quality. Since the launch of the GPDB on 27 November 2003, individual good practices have been accessed over 30,000 times. Feedback collected from the HE sector indicates that GPDB is seen as a good source of reference.

The AUQA Good Practice Database Team surveyed the Contributors (the institution's AUQA audit contact person) and the Contact Person/s (for the individual good practice) in 2005 to garner their perception of AUQA's processes in facilitating the development of the good practice entries and also (if not more importantly) the value of the Database to these individuals and their associated institution. The general comments from the Contributors and Contact Persons indicate that they find the GPDB a very worthwhile tool that is well structured and compiled and provides quick and easy to access to useful and valuable information. The GPDB has been used by some for benchmarking purposes. It has been referred to when developing new policy and practice and

when reviewing/updating existing policy and practice. Although AUQA has not done the feedback analysis with specific reference to entries on Indigenous issues, it is reasonable to expect that the good practices on Indigenous issues have helped other institutions to learn from the experiences of the others.

7 SPECIFIC AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The 31 audit reports have altogether 655 affirmations and recommendations, out of which 12 are related to Indigenous issues constituting 1.8% of the total. Of these two thirds are affirmations indicating that institutions have already identified them as areas that need attention. Areas of coverage of these 12 affirmations and recommendations include the following:

- embedding Indigenous issues into curriculum and research
- promoting university-wide understanding
- enhancing resources
- leadership to implement the Indigenous Strategy
- integration and co-ordination of various initiatives across campuses
- reviewing and strengthening the research senior research appointments, development of Indigenous researchers with targeted funding, and including recognition and training of field workers
- university-wide leadership and co-ordination
- recruitment strategy for Indigenous staff
- student support
- community involvement
- attention to Indigenous issues

An analysis of the recommendations and how institutions have acted on them indicate them almost all recommendations have been given due attention.

8 PROGRESS MADE AFTER THE AUDIT

As mentioned earlier, the audit reports have been published over a period of three and a half years – December 2002 to June 2006. Institutions that have completed 18 months after the publication of their audit reports have submitted progress reports (PRs). The progress reports indicate that institutions have taken action on almost all recommendations recorded in the audit reports, or have initiated plans to do so. The progress reports of the institutions that have completed 18 months after the publication of the report and the actions taken related to Indigenous issues have also been considered for this report. However, we should note the following related to the progress reports:

- PRs mostly address action taken on recommendations and affirmations, but also cover some of the other suggestions for action mentioned in audit reports. Thus, in areas that needed improvement at the time of audit, the PRs indicate how well institutions have progressed.
- Of the 31 reports considered, 16 have received CARs. In the case of the other 15 institutions, the audit panels have made observations in the text of the report about how well the institutions had been handling the Indigenous issues.
- Out of the 16 that have received CARs, seven have received only commendations. It is reasonable to assume that institutions have sustained those good initiatives.
- Out of the remaining nine that have received affirmations and or recommendations, the progress report was received for four institutions, namely University of Newcastle, University of Adelaide, Notre Dame University and University of Sydney, with one recommendation each, and those progress reports were considered. In Table 1, these universities have been highlighted.

University of Newcastle has received one commendation and one recommendation. The recommendation is about ensuring a university-wide leadership and coordination in respect of Indigenous education. The PR states that Wollotuka School of Aboriginal Studies is fully engaged with the management of the academic teaching and research programs that it oversees through Wollotuka and Umulliko. There is a heavy workload in these units generated by engagement with community bodies. However, there are still some issues of concern with regard to global policy development and co-ordination with regard to Indigenous education.

The PR notes that the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board is not in a position to provide day to day leadership and coordination. The Board relies on the head of the School of Aboriginal Studies to document and transmit recommendations and feedback from the Board. The university is considering the following improvements in the operation of the Board:

- the Board meets at least every two months
- has a Chair resident in the Region; and
- establishes more effective communication with the Vice-Chancellor.

The PR recognises that Wollotuka School of Aboriginal Studies has the potential to carry out some of the university-wide coordinating functions, as its engagement with a wide range of Indigenous education and community bodies ensures it is well placed to identify Indigenous educational needs and advise both the University and government bodies.

University of Adelaide had one recommendation on identifying a senior academic to promote action on Indigenous issues. In response to this, the meeting of VCC in December 2003 appointed the Executive Dean, Humanities and Social Sciences as 'Champion' for Indigenous matters to be

an advocate across the University community for Indigenous issues and to provide assistance and guidance to the Director of the Centre for Aboriginal and Indigenous Research and Studies. An Indigenous Issues paper was presented to VCC in May 2004 to discuss an employment strategy and cultural awareness training. Arising from discussions on these issues, the position of an Indigenous Employment Officer was advertised, but the University has had difficulty in making an appointment. It has, however, employed an Equity and Diversity Consultant who will address some aspects of the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan and will assist the Indigenous Employment Officer when that position is filled.

Some examples of specific achievements include:

- The Faculty of Health Sciences has been active in implementing the Plan through its Yaitya Purrana Indigenous Health Unit (Department of General Practice) by increasing student enrolments in the Faculty and providing expert advice to practitioners in the field on Indigenous health resources and information, cross-cultural staff development and training, and grants and consultancy projects. The Unit has also contributed to the undergraduate curriculum and extended community partnerships regarding Indigenous health work issues and Indigenous health research policy development.
- The Faculty of Engineering, Mathematical and Computer Sciences is investigating the possibility of a collaborative bridging course with Charles Darwin University.
- The School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design in the Faculty of the Professions has produced a working document for its students on language usage in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Islander people.
- The Adelaide Graduate School of Business, within this Faculty, has established scholarships to assist postgraduate Indigenous students.

The Notre Dame University was given a recommendation that, given the importance of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in the University's Mission Statement, specific attention be directed to the achievement of this goal on the Fremantle campus as it is on the Broome campus. While the University agreed with the Panel's view that there is much that the University could do to advance the interests of the Indigenous peoples in the southern parts of the State, it states that there is little that can be done directly while the University's current allocation of externally supported places remains small. The University's ability to establish at Fremantle anything comparable to the programs made possible at the Broome campus through targeted Commonwealth student places will depend on a provision of Indigenous HECS places specifically for the Fremantle campus. The PR indicates that the University continues its efforts to obtain a limited quota of targeted HECS places to be applied specifically for this purpose on the Fremantle and/or Sydney campuses.

University of Sydney had a recommendation regarding Indigenous employment. In response to that the University has enhanced its efforts to increase the employment of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders by:

- Developing an Indigenous Employment Strategy
- Implementing a cadet/traineeship program which, to date (June 2006), has successfully appointed 2 Indigenous apprentices and 3 Indigenous trainees
- Approving appointment of Indigenous cadet lecturer
- Implementing 'Targeted Entry Level Recruitment' as a new initiative to support and encourage Indigenous staff to commence a career with the University
- Assisting Indigenous applicants through the development of generic templates for letters of application and statement addressing selection criteria; and individual assistance with job application and job matching
- Developing, piloting and implementing a Cross-Cultural Program

- Developing 3 positions for senior Indigenous academics:
 - Professor Indigenous Studies
 - Director of Indigenous Education
 - Director of Indigenous Health Programs (Head of Yooroang Garang)
- Appointing a Rural and Indigenous Support Officer in the Faculty of Medicine

The emerging pattern is that institutions have either taken action on recommendations or have initiated plans to do so.

9 CONCLUSION

This analysis is based on reports of AUQA audits of universities. These institutions operate within a particular financial and policy environment that is created by the state, territory and federal governments, and by the society more generally. Therefore, and despite the high level of university autonomy in Australia, they are not entirely free agents in respect of the various initiatives they might prefer to undertake. The requirements on universities to create, preserve and transmit knowledge mean that there must be a balance between leading and following society, as they engage with their communities.

There are particular social factors that affect the universities' work with and for Indigenous people. For example, school-level participation and successful completion by Indigenous students is very low, and the external environment for many Indigenous students is not conducive to supporting them through tertiary study. This has flow-on consequences for the size of the pool of possible Indigenous academic and administrative staff. This report on what universities have achieved in relation to Indigenous affairs, and where improvements are possible, should be read in this context.

As the above analysis indicates, every institution audited by AUQA so far has, in overall terms, given evidence of attention to Indigenous staff, students and communities, although this attention does not always feature strongly in the general culture of the institution. Institutions have achieved success at varying levels, with some institutions needing to do more work than others. At one end of the spectrum, there are areas of distinct strength; at the other end, the audits have identified weaknesses that should be addressed.

This analysis is intended to assist by revealing the weaker areas and throwing light on how to approach them, particularly by highlighting the successful processes and practices that AUQA has observed.

Areas in particular need of attention are the need for university-wide co-ordination of activities, more system-wide approaches and explicit sharing of good practices (a role here for IHEAC and for NIHEN), better use of the equity indicators to guide planning and actions, development of Indigenous staff, and enhancement of the cultural context.

Other gaps noted include: locating accountability and responsibility with a senior staff member, Indigenous membership of governing boards, awareness of Indigenous aspects among other staff and units, research models for Indigenous issues, and Indigenous staff recruitment.

Major areas of strength are the existence of Indigenous objectives, advisory committees, and support centres. Most Australian universities have demonstrated tangible results by establishing support units, schools or research centres specifically dedicated to promoting Indigenous indicators and Indigenous studies.

In addition, flexible approaches to suit the learning styles of Indigenous students, Indigenous subjects, special drives and personalised support have emerged as strengths.

APPENDIX 1: Commendations on Indigenous Issues

1. AUQA commends the University of Canberra for the services provided to Indigenous students through the *Ngunnawal* Centre
2. AUQA commends Curtin on its thorough and effective attention to Indigenous matters.
3. AUQA commends Deakin University's Institute of Koorie Education for the community-based learning model that is successfully providing Indigenous students with access to higher education.
4. AUQA commends the Academic Board of JCU for sustaining an appropriate balance between consistency and flexibility in the processes used to accredit and review course proposals which enables staff to customise courses and course materials to meet regional, international, and Indigenous needs.
5. AUQA commends JCU for success in providing effective research training opportunities for Indigenous HDR students
6. AUQA commends JCU for its Indigenous employment strategy, which has been implemented across disciplines, for both academic and general staff
7. AUQA commends the University of Newcastle for taking seriously its responsibilities to Indigenous education and for helping its Indigenous students achieve notable success, particularly in the area of health.
8. AUQA commends the College for Indigenous Australian Peoples at SCU for its initiatives in establishing a constructive teaching, research, and community presence in the life of students and staff at the University, and within the region it serves.
9. AUQA commends the University of New England for the TRACKS program, which demonstrates a strong commitment to the fulfillment of the University's goals for Indigenous education.
10. AUQA commends the University of New England for a wide range of examples of positive community linkages, including Access Centres, relationships with Indigenous communities and sharing facilities.
11. AUQA commends the University of Sydney's Koori Centre for the strong links it has established with Indigenous communities and for the efforts it makes in recognising and promoting understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures.
12. AUQA commends The University of Western Australia for the support it provides to Indigenous students and most particularly for the success it has with its preparatory programs for professional courses.
13. AUQA commends CDU's recognition of its vital role in Indigenous development and its commitment to valuing Indigenous people.
14. AUQA commends CDU's establishment of the Indigenous Support Unit, the Indigenous cadetships, and the cross-cultural awareness training program.
15. AUQA commends CDU's secondary school liaison program
16. AUQA commends Central Queensland University's Nulloo Yumbah centre for establishing a concentration of expertise and energy for Indigenous issues which will benefit the University and its wider stakeholders.
17. AUQA commends UNSW for the programs for prospective Indigenous students provided by the Nura Gili Indigenous Programs Centre and for the high success and retention rates of Indigenous students of the University.

APPENDIX 2a: Indigenous Education: Helping Indigenous Students to Achieve Success

Goal: The three goals in the University of Newcastle's strategic plan that relate to Indigenous education are:

- We are known nationally and internationally for our commitment to and success in providing education for Indigenous Australians and developing awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through diverse curriculum content.
- Our Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre (Umuliko) is recognised for the relevance of its research and its impact on Indigenous issues.
- We have strong partnerships founded on mutual respect with Australian Indigenous peoples and International First Nations.

The goal of Wollotuka is to provide an environment that nurtures the unique cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that ensures the growth of knowledge and awareness for all Australians.

Context: UNC established a School of Aboriginal Studies in the Faculty of Education and Arts, Wollotuka as an Aboriginal Enclave in the mid-1980s to increase access and support for Aboriginal students. Its function progressed from offering preliminary access programs to diploma-level offerings to the Bachelor of Aboriginal Studies and the recent Honours program. Parallel to Wollotuka's development was that of the Indigenous Australian Medical Students Program, which commenced in 1985 and had produced its first graduates by 1990.

Internal evaluation of the then Department in 2000 resulted in a major restructuring of the elective options and communications courses within the Indigenous Program. This was a response to low class sizes and a need for a broader, less restricted and more dynamic range of culturally appropriate study options. Indigenous academic activity at Newcastle University has continued to increase through the collaborative efforts of student support, Wollotuka's academic area, the Umulliko Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre www.newcastle.edu.au/school/aborig-studies/about/research.html, Yapug (a program designed to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gain skills for entry into the health and other professions) and the Discipline of Aboriginal Health.

Wollotuka now has the capacity to offer all levels of programs - undergraduate degrees through to postgraduate doctoral programs - on the two major campuses of the University. The University's very successful Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre, now in its sixth year of operation, is contributing strongly in research and research training for Indigenous people.

Practice: Programs are internally reviewed on an annual basis as part of the Department of Education, Science and Training's reporting mechanisms and were a prime focus of a major external review in 2000 that has guided much of the development and staffing in the area in the past two years. The review recommended structural changes and clearer line responsibilities, all of which have now been implemented.

In 2002 the degree program was extended into Honours; this development complements the suite of course offerings from enabling through to doctoral-level Aboriginal Studies. In addition to these developments, Indigenous student support remains the foundation focus of Wollotuka through mentoring programs, a targeted orientation program, special entry, a computer laboratory, and Faculty-initiated mentor groups. Students' results remain above national Indigenous benchmarks.

Wollotuka is now a School in the Faculty of Education and Arts, and provides policy, advice and support as well as educational programs. A close association exists with Aboriginal communities and agencies via formal committees such as the Board of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training and the Umulliko Research Advisory Committee. Wollotuka also has active, less formal, but equally important, close interaction with local and extended Indigenous communities through celebrations of culture and reciprocity.

A service for Indigenous students was opened at the Ourimbah Campus on the New South Wales Central Coast in November 1999. The Gibalee Aboriginal Learning and Development Centre is in the process of negotiating and developing appropriate course options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the Ourimbah Campus in line with the Campus' multi-sectorial functions between the University of Newcastle, the TAFE NSW Hunter Institute and the Central Coast Community College.

Evidence of Success

- UNC is above all national performance in access, participation, retention and success rates.
- Over the past 14 years of the special entry program, 57 students have been admitted to the program, 18 have graduated and 18 have withdrawn or been excluded from the program.... 70% of candidates pass the first year of the program on their initial attempt.... In the fourth and fifth year of program 92 and 100% of students respectively pass on their first attempt.
- The University has achieved the highest number of Indigenous medical graduates nationally.
- Umulliko is an established, financially viable, stable, Indigenous research centre with strong links to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.
- External research income of \$168 738 in 2000 from the Australian Research Council, government departments, foundations and Indigenous organisations is indicative of the standing of Umulliko as an Indigenous research service provider.
- There are three Indigenous doctoral graduates, plus five research masters to date and Umulliko is currently contributing to the supervision and mentoring of 19 research masters and 11 PhD candidates.

Umulliko has established collaborations with Indigenous groups at the University of Auckland, University of Oulu (Finland) and the University of Kansas, which has led to the internationalisation of the University's Indigenous research activities.

Resources Required: A \$3.5 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Multipurpose Centre was completed in April 2002 and brings together the Indigenous staff of Umulliko, Wollotuka and Indigenous Health. It provides a focus point for both University and Indigenous community activities. The University has continued to strongly support Umulliko from recurrent funds, the capital works budget, research quantum allocations and Research and Research Training Services. Wollotuka has about ten academic staff and ten general staff spread across the University's campuses.

APPENDIX 2b: Supporting Indigenous Students: Graduating Indigenous Professionals

Goal: The University of Western Australia's (UWA) objective is to achieve equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This means:

- equitable access to, participation in, and graduation from the full range of courses and research opportunities
- effective participation in educational decision making
- equitable participation in teaching and research and employment
- full participation in the community and cultural life of the University.

UWA supports the development of Indigenous higher education at all levels through the development of teaching and research that adds to the body of knowledge and experiences of Indigenous people, and by ensuring that all students and staff develop an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and identity.

Context: The University acknowledges that it is situated on Nyoongar land and that Nyoongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land and continue to practice their values, languages, beliefs and customs. The School of Indigenous Studies (SIS), incorporating the Centre for Indigenous History and the Arts, has overall responsibility for Indigenous education and cultural protocols, and provides a visible Indigenous presence on campus for Indigenous students and communities.

Professional degrees have traditionally been the hardest degrees for Indigenous people to access, yet graduates are urgently needed in these areas. UWA provides access to - and support in - all of its courses, with particular emphasis on highly competitive courses such as Law, Medicine, Engineering and Social Work, ensuring Indigenous graduates are properly represented in the professions.

Practice: The SIS provides programs for Indigenous students that are innovative, flexible and responsive to student needs as well as community aspirations. The Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health (CAMDH) in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, is co-located with SIS and provides specialised support for Indigenous students in Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences. The School and CAMDH provide pathways into mainstream degree studies that enable Indigenous students to tailor a program to meet their individual educational needs and aspirations.

Secondary Schools Program: Due to continuing low achievement in secondary schools, UWA offers a comprehensive program for Indigenous secondary students that is designed to encourage them to see university as a realisable goal and to help them make informed study choices. Indigenous students from UWA participate as mentors and supervisors. This includes: Year 8 Discovery Day, Year 10 Health Careers Camp (CAMDH) and Year 12 Seminar.

Recruitment and Entry Procedures: The School of Indigenous Studies provides culturally appropriate recruitment, testing and entry procedures developed by Indigenous staff members who have overall responsibility for program delivery. These programs target school leavers as well as the wider Aboriginal community. Prospective Indigenous students are predominantly recruited through the School's established family and community networks and assessed on an individual basis in a culturally secure environment. Multiple access points or pathways into the university recognise the cultural diversity and educational backgrounds of Indigenous peoples. The Provisional Entry Scheme provides entry to *all* degree studies at UWA for Indigenous applicants based on work experience or previous education background.

Indigenous School Leavers with TEE: Indigenous school leavers with TEE (Western Australian Tertiary Entrance Examinations) can gain entry to *all* degree courses (including Medicine and Law) through consideration of their Tertiary Entrance Rank, and other factors, on an individual basis.

Preparatory Courses: Preparatory courses provide access to all mainstream degree studies and contribute to retention and success by equipping students with the appropriate skills and knowledge for their chosen field of study:

- The Aboriginal Orientation Course is studied over two semesters and includes core science stream subjects in physics, chemistry and human biology.
- The Aboriginal Pre-Law Program is an intensive five-week preparatory course leading directly into Law studies (LLB).
- The Pre-Medicine Summer School, through CAMDH, is an intensive preparatory medical summer school for students wanting to enter Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

Student Resource Centre: The Student Resource Centre provides a high level of support services, resources and facilities to assist Indigenous students across campus in all fields of study including postgraduate study. This includes support for leadership development and cultural affirmation of Indigenous students through Indigenous leadership and staffing of SIS and CAMDH.

Evidence of Success: This success is seen in increased numbers of Indigenous students on campus. Ninety-five per cent of these students enter through one or more special programs and many first made contact through the secondary schools program. This is reinforced by 100 per cent of Indigenous students using SIS and CAMDH services, and an increasing number of Indigenous graduates, including (at the end of 2003) 5 doctors, 24 lawyers, 4 engineers, 7 social workers, and a number of scientists, physicists, historians, anthropologists and teachers. In 2003 UWA won an Australian Award for University Teaching in the Institution Awards category for 'Providing an innovative and practical approach to the provision of services to Indigenous students'.

Resources Required: SIS has highly qualified Student Services staff including an Academic Coordinator, Orientation Coordinator, Schools Officer and a specialist full-time Law Tutor. CAMDH staff includes Indigenous doctors who not only provide specialised academic and general support to medical students but also mentor them into the medical profession. In addition to dedicated student support positions, all staff in SIS and CAMDH - including teaching and research staff - contribute to student support services. The following resources are provided: computers, library resources, study and tutorial space, sponsorship of social and sporting activities, conferences and financial support to the Western Australian Aboriginal Students Corporation.

APPENDIX 2c: TRACKS Indigenous Tertiary Preparation Program

Goal: The goal of the TRACKS tertiary preparation program is to enhance Indigenous students' access to the University of New England (UNE) and to assist students in a successful transition to university courses. UNE's Indigenous Education Plan aims to increase the access and participation rates of Indigenous students and provide pathways to tertiary education for Indigenous people, particularly students from remote and rural areas and students in correctional centres. TRACKS is designed to provide external students with the skills and resources to overcome issues of geographical and study isolation associated with distance education.

Context: The Oorala Centre www.une.edu.au/oorala at UNE offers the TRACKS tertiary preparation program. Until 1999 students were required to attend preparation classes on campus. The TRACKS program is now offered internally, externally and at a number of correctional centres in New South Wales and Queensland.

The TRACKS program is designed to overcome the negative perception of students - particularly those at correctional centres - that they are unable to access and participate in higher education. By identifying individual learning needs, the students' knowledge and educational background are affirmed.

Practice: TRACKS is a UNE preparation program designed to assist Indigenous students with the development of study skills and the transition to university courses. At the successful completion of the course, students will gain entry to UNE undergraduate programs subject to any additional entry requirements set out by the relevant faculties.

TRACKS is offered as both an external and an internal program depending on the students' needs which are identified at an initial interview by the lecturers. The external program can be completed over a 12-to-18-month period, depending on the student's progress and circumstances. External students attend one residential school per semester. The internal program is run for six months and students attend classes at the Oorala Centre three days a week. All students complete three units: TRAX 103 (Aboriginal Studies), TRAX 105 (University and Study Skills) and TRAX 106 (Academic and Research Skills). All three units are closely linked through the structure of the program material and the provision of an academic mentor 'who walks the students through the program'. In addition to the formal delivery of the program, the academic mentor assists students in a less formal way and discusses their circumstances and any academic and personal issues that may arise throughout the program. This is achieved by meeting students in a location that is suitable to the students.

The TRACKS program recognises Indigenous students' diverse cultural backgrounds, educational experiences and social circumstances. It also recognises that tertiary education, by its nature, places the responsibility for success on the students. TRACKS therefore, focuses on individual learning needs, affirming students' experiences, knowledge and aspirations. Students are encouraged to reflect and evaluate their knowledge systems, their formative understanding of tertiary education as well as the nature of academic culture in an inclusive and appropriate learning environment that is created in consultation with the students. While it is critical that students can incorporate their life experiences, learning preferences and beliefs into the program, TRACKS also reflects the nature of studying at university. The TRACKS program therefore assists students to recognise their individual learning challenges and any misconceptions related to past educational experiences by creating a unique, supportive relationship between all stakeholders.

This relationship is enhanced by the recent introduction of an academic mentor, whose role encompasses both teaching and peer support. Participants in the TRACKS program are given every opportunity to familiarise themselves with learning and teaching styles at university. They also receive immediate and relevant 'feedback' on their academic work, their participation in the program, their career aspirations and their progress in developing an understanding of the administrative processes involved in tertiary education.

In this holistic approach, students are able to develop a relationship with the facilitators which provides for a combination of personal and academic achievement. An integrated approach is taken in the support of students' learning through the inclusion of a peer mentoring program. This support is facilitated through the use of UNE's *tUNEup* university preparation course, and through existing educational programs at correctional centres involving correctional centre and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) staff. Learning and teaching in the TRACKS program does not take place in isolation but invites support from all stakeholders in the educational experience of the participants.

TRACKS has grown from a community-based program to a program of national significance. It is available to Indigenous students throughout Australia and has attracted participants from various country and metropolitan regions. Now in its fifth year, TRACKS continues to be supported by Corrective Services. At the time of writing (late 2004), a review of the program was taking place in consultation with educational staff at the Glen Innes Correctional Centre as well as students.

Evidence of Success: Since its inception in late 1999, TRACKS has contributed to an increase in the number of Indigenous students participating in degree programs at UNE, and it continues to attract up to 50 applicants a year. In 2001 the Oorala Centre was awarded an Australian University Teaching Award for its delivery of the TRACKS program in correctional centres. The program has been expanded to include a number of correctional centres in New South Wales and south-east Queensland. So far 6 former inmates have progressed to undergraduate degree programs at UNE, and demand for the program at correctional centres continues to increase, with 15 participants enrolled in the program in 2004.

Resources Required: Two TRACKS lecturers are required. To enable them to provide individual support for students in correctional centres, each lecturer is assigned up to 15 students at the Glen Innes Correctional Centre. At other correctional centres, where students are supported by educational staff at those facilities, lecturers will visit students once a term. The program has also benefited greatly from the inclusion of Indigenous support staff in the running of sessions. Overall, the program requires a significant commitment from all stakeholders including the Oorala Centre, UNE, Corrective Services and TAFE.

APPENDIX 2d: Institute of Koorie Education's (IKE) Community-based Learning Model

Goal: Deakin University has 'commitments to equity and access' as one of its core commitment. The Institute of Koorie Education (IKE) is a significant demonstration of this commitment.

Context: IKE was established in 1992 and succeeded the Koorie Teacher Education Program. It provides a partnership between the University and the Victorian Koorie community, supported by a Board that includes community members. An agreement with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI) formalises Deakin University's collaborative partnership with Victorian Koorie communities.

At the highest level, Deakin University works in consultation with VAEAI to develop relevant and appropriate programs that are responsive to the professional needs of Indigenous communities. Five Aboriginal people nominated by VAEAI serve on the Board of the Institute of Koorie Education to guide the Institute's community, academic, administrative and financial affairs.

The dedicated services of the Koorie Elders of the Victorian Koorie communities have contributed enormously to the achievements of the Institute of Koorie Education; these Elders act as mentors and teachers to the academic staff of the Institute, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The avenues for Elder guidance and advice are principally through the Board of the Institute, augmented by direct involvement in degree programs and community graduations as Speaking Counsel, and as advisers in community-oriented research projects.

The input of these Elders has assisted the Institute's translation of the University's degree courses into community-based Indigenous higher education programs with a sound and rigorous Indigenous knowledge base. The Elders have become joint authorities with the University's academic staff on the content and direction of higher education programs which are respectful of Indigenous knowledge.

In 2005, the Institute had a total of 31 staff, 13 of whom were Indigenous. More than 75% of the Indigenous staff members held continuing appointments and on average had been with the Institute for 7.5 years. In particular, two academic staff members have worked with the Institute for 15 and 11 years respectively. The Institute is keen to increase the proportion of Indigenous staff as evidenced by Deakin University's Koorie Employment Strategy Plan. Under this Plan, which had the objective of employing five graduates of IKE over a five-year period, three Koorie graduates of IKE are on its staff.

IKE courses now encompass a range of programs, including professional awards in law, nursing and social work, and postgraduate programs in health and environmental science.

Practice: IKE offers courses in partnership with the faculties through a unique off-campus community-based delivery method. What this means is that students are taught through a mixture of on-campus and off-campus teaching. Students come to the Institute for periods of intensive on-campus teaching blocks and live at the Koorie residences on campus during this time. When back in their communities, students are provided with off-campus teaching using study materials and tele-tutorials and are further supported by supplementary tutors at the local level. This model ensures that students from rural, remote and metropolitan areas, across all age ranges, are able to undertake studies without compromising family or community responsibilities.

Deakin University has the highest Indigenous student load of any university in Victoria. Key features of Deakin University's community-based learning model are:

- working in partnership with Indigenous Australian communities and other relevant stakeholders to identify and plan an educational program to meet the needs of Indigenous students
- adapting of existing degree programs through a collaborative process with Indigenous Australian representatives, community stakeholders and academic staff that addresses students' cultural and learning needs and integrates student support, while at the same time satisfying the quality assurance requirements in respect of the academic program, including admission requirements, selection criteria, course content and assessment
- developing a strategic management framework to encapsulate culturally inclusive practices in curriculum development, staffing, student learning and support
- providing formal mechanisms to continuously review teaching content and methodologies and student support services.

In consultation with faculties, IKE develops customised, appropriate teaching styles and timetabling arrangements for Koorie students. Koorie cultural knowledge and perspectives are incorporated into the curriculum following negotiation between IKE and faculty staff.

The declining retention rates of Indigenous students is considered to reflect reductions in government support schemes for Indigenous students, including Abstudy. IKE staff members, concerned with the long-term success of students, have implemented strategies to encourage students at risk to reduce workload rather than to withdraw from their degree. The University encourages this flexible approach.

Evidence of Success: From 18 initial enrolments limited to the field of teacher education, today more than 300 students enrol annually (405 in 2003) in programs covering discipline areas taught across every faculty at Deakin University. It is the only facility of its type in Australia to offer a full complement of programs in community-based mode that mirror the offerings of the University.

Up to the end of 2005 almost 400 students have graduated. From single figure annual graduations in the early 1990s, now between 25 and 35 students graduate from IKE each year. Though its commitment to the principles of community-based learning and a readiness to develop a broad range of programs to meet the needs of Indigenous communities, Deakin has sustained access and participation outcomes for Indigenous students at more than twice the rate experienced by the rest of Victoria and significantly higher than the national average.

In 2000, Deakin University won an Australian Universities Teaching Award in the institutional category for innovative and practical approaches to the provision of educational services to the local and regional community. More recently IKE was presented with the Wurreker Award, in the University category. The Award is presented jointly by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated and the Office of Training and Tertiary Education. The Wurreker Awards celebrate Koorie individuals and organisations that have achieved outstanding results in their chosen areas.

Resources Required: The annual budget for the IKE is approximately \$5 million.

APPENDIX 2e: Strategic Commitment to Indigenous Education and Development

Goal: Deakin University has 'commitments to equity and access' as one of its core commitment. The Institute of Koorie Education (IKE) is a significant demonstration of this commitment.

Goal: Charles Darwin University (CDU) has goals for both the shorter and the intermediate term directly relevant to the promotion of Indigenous issues. These goals are made operational, in part, through the Community and Access Operational Priorities Plan which states that the University will engage with Indigenous communities to ensure Indigenous perspectives guide the design, access, delivery and evaluation of programs.

Context: With some 28% of the population recognised as Indigenous Australians, the Northern Territory has by far the largest proportion of Indigenous residents of any other state or territory in the nation. 38% of students enrolled in the Northern Territory's primary schools in 2005 were Indigenous. The University's operating environment is characterised by the unique feature that Indigenous issues are not a minority issue, as these matters are very much mainstream.

As a dual sector VET and higher education provider, the University offers multiple entry and exit points for students. Developing pathways into and through the various programs that meet the needs of Indigenous Territorians requires very high-level policy and process direction, given that there are significant historical distinctions between sectors and levels. In addition, there is a new commitment on the parts of the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments to make a joint approach to Indigenous issues, and a special relationship that has developed between the University and the Northern Territory Government through the Partnership Agreement.

Practice: CDU has a comprehensive organisational commitment to fully engage with Indigenous issues that demonstrates a coherent linkage between policy, structures and activities. This commences with the Indigenous Peoples Policy adopted by the University Council and flows through to the Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Think Tank and the Pro Vice-Chancellor Community and Access's Indigenous Reference Group to the appointment of the Dean Indigenous Research and Education (IRE). While the Dean IRE reports directly to the Vice-Chancellor, the position has a University-wide remit to ensure Indigenous perspectives are understood and taken into account. Likewise, the Dean IRE also operates on the Territory and national scenes through participation in a wide variety of boards, committees and councils to ensure that not only is CDU represented but these broader perspectives are also brought back to the University.

The University has further committed to strategic placement of academic programs directly related to Indigenous matters in the School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems that has a separate but complementary role to the Indigenous Academic Support Unit and other initiatives.

The University's highest-level commitment to recognising and operating in a manner that incorporates Indigenous perspectives extends to the development and full participation in a number of major external relationships, including the Memorandum of Understanding for Collaboration with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, the Charles Darwin University-NT Government Partnership Agreement and the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre.

Finally, the University has a specific Indigenous Employment and Retention Strategy that includes specific targets and outcomes, including a significant program for trainees to be located in virtually all areas of University operations.

Evidence of Success: With an Indigenous enrolment of just over 25%, the University is nearing population parity in the VET sector. And while the higher education Indigenous enrolment of 5% in undergraduate programs is high by national comparisons, there remains considerable distance to go to reach the Northern Territory goal.

The Aboriginal language project developed by a CDU team with Yolngu Aboriginal community leaders, has won the Prime Minister's Award for University Teacher of the Year. This prestigious award is presented to an academic or team with an exceptional record of advancing student learning, educational leadership and scholarly contribution to teaching and learning.

Well over 400 staff participated in the Cross-Cultural Training Courses in the past year and a half.

Resources Required: The most important resource required is a philosophical commitment to a recognition for, and respect of, different cultural perspectives, which permeates the organisation from top to bottom. Because Indigenous issues are core business for CDU, there is no specific allocation of resources for Indigenous strategic approaches.

The major internal role of the Dean Indigenous Research and Education (IRE) is to ensure that University activities and processes reflect this broad commitment. The Dean IRE works closely with all of the staff in the Community and Access portfolio to ensure that the necessary amount of influence can be exerted throughout the organisation without the necessity for the costly duplication of positions and structures. The Dean IRE also plays a very significant role in groups external to the University such as the National Indigenous Council, membership of the AVCC Committee on Indigenous Higher Education, being a member of the Council of the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, and a number of other national committees.

Notes: The Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Think Tank has a crucial role in providing the Vice-Chancellor with frank and open views about the broader national policy and philosophical imperatives. The development of clear academic pathways removes obstacles to participation in tertiary education by recognising a person's starting point and offering explicit assistance to ensure they can achieve the knowledge and standards required to gain higher education qualifications. The Vice-Chancellor generally meets with this group and often seeks an individual member's views on a particular topic.

At a more operational level, it has become accepted practice to involve Indigenous members of either the staff or the community in the process when decisions are being considered that impact directly on Indigenous people. This might include decisions about the content of cross-cultural courses and their delivery, employment practices, assessment guidelines, and in course design and delivery decisions. The Memorandum of Collaboration with Batchelor Institute has provided further opportunity to work with an Indigenous-controlled organisation in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. This is of clear benefit to Indigenous residents of the Northern Territory due to less duplication of offerings, clear pathways between the organisations and consistent messages promoting the value of tertiary education and training.

APPENDIX 2f: Indigenous Support and Initiatives

Goal: Charles Darwin University (CDU) has goals for both the shorter and the intermediate term directly relevant to the promotion of Indigenous issues. These goals are made operational, in part, through the Community and Access Operational Priorities Plan which states that the University will engage with Indigenous communities to ensure Indigenous perspectives guide the design, access, delivery and evaluation of programs.

Context: With some 28% of the population recognised as Indigenous Australians, the Northern Territory has by far the largest proportion of Indigenous residents of any other state or territory in the nation. 38% of students enrolled in the Northern Territory's primary schools in 2005 were Indigenous. The University's operating environment is characterised by the unique feature that Indigenous issues are not a minority issue, as these matters are very much mainstream.

As a dual sector VET and higher education provider, the University offers multiple entry and exit points for students. Developing pathways into and through the various programs that meet the needs of Indigenous Territorians requires very high-level policy and process direction, given that there are significant historical distinctions between sectors and levels. In addition, there is a new commitment on the parts of the Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments to make a joint approach to Indigenous issues, and a special relationship that has developed between the University and the Northern Territory Government through the Partnership Agreement.

Practice: As Australia's newest University, CDU had the opportunity to revisit and review virtually every aspect of operations inherited from the predecessor organisations (for more information see the website: www.cdu.edu.au/vc/docs/annualreport_2003.pdf). As a result of a renewed strategic commitment to Indigenous issues (see Commendation 9 of the AUQA Audit Report at the website: www.cdu.edu.au/aqpvvet/documents/AuditReportCDU2005.pdf) it was decided to establish the Indigenous Academic Support Unit (IASU), instead of having support lecturers dispersed throughout the faculties and schools. The IASU allocates academic support staff to areas of most need or to support emerging priorities. For example, a large number of Indigenous male employees of the Northern Territory Public Sector completed the VET Certificate IV in Frontline Management as part of a program called Kigaruk. Many of these students have now enrolled in an undergraduate Business course and the IASU has been able to assign a support lecturer to this group.

In addition to concentrating the expertise and sources of Indigenous-specific advice on areas such as scholarships and access to tutors, the University has implemented a number of specific initiatives. These include two Vice-Chancellors' Cadetships which combine employment and study opportunities, participation in the Indigenous Youth Mobility Program, commencing the use of Away From Base Funding to support travel of both students and lecturers in order to overcome some of the difficulties associated with remoteness, the Indigenous Taste of Uni days for secondary-school students and ensuring that each secondary-school Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker has a formal link with one or more of the IASU staff. The University also has a number of Indigenous Specific Scholarships, for more information on these and other references here, refer to the Notes in this entry.

In order to facilitate the promulgation of Indigenous perspectives throughout the University, a rolling program of cross-cultural training for University employees has operated for the past 18 months. This program is compulsory for all staff.

The Indigenous cultural awareness program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- establish cultural safety for Indigenous students and staff
- improve staff teaching and communication strategies to improve learning outcomes for Indigenous students
- improve staff understanding of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews and how those world views impact on their job
- reduce or eliminate incidents of racism at CDU
- create a workplace culture of inclusiveness and see diversity as a strength in workplace culture.

The outcomes of the course have been highly regarded by the participants and formal evaluation has indicated that the aims listed above have been achieved. A number of participants have commented on how their personal knowledge has increased as a result of completing the course. There is a strong word-of-mouth recommendation among staff to support attendance at the one-day sessions.

Evidence of Success: With an Indigenous enrolment of just over 25%, the University is nearing population parity in the VET sector. And while the higher education Indigenous enrolment of five per cent in undergraduate programs is high by national comparisons, there remains a considerable distance to go to reach the Northern Territory goal.

The Aboriginal language project developed by a CDU team with Yolngu Aboriginal community leaders has won the Prime Minister's Award for University Teacher of the Year. This prestigious award is presented to an academic or team with an exceptional record of advancing student learning, educational leadership and scholarly contribution to teaching and learning.

The use of Away From Base funding has increased from a zero base in 2003 to an anticipated \$2.5m in 2006. This has assisted significantly in achieving VET delivery targets in regional and remote areas. The University annually employs about 170 individual tutors for students through the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme.

Well over 400 staff have participated in the Cross-Cultural Training Courses in the past year and a half. More courses are planned for future years due to the sheer number of staff and the constant turnover of employees.

More than 500 secondary-school students have participated in the Indigenous Taste of Uni days held in both Alice Springs and Darwin.

Resources Required: The bulk of activities described in this entry have been directly funded from a variety of Commonwealth Indigenous Initiatives from both higher education and VET sectors.

APPENDIX 2g: Liaison with Secondary Schools

Goal: Charles Darwin University's (CDU's) overarching goals include being recognised as: the people's university in the Northern Territory (NT), a cultural and intellectual asset and a unified institution delivering quality VET and Higher Education programs. These goals aim to provide the Territory with skilled graduates, from both VET and higher education, who are able to practise what they have learnt, in cross-cultural environments. More information on CDU's goals is available at the website: www.cdu.edu.au/strategicdirections/goals.html.

The Community and Access Operational Priorities Plan, Objective Three, is to: 'Build and maintain a strong relationship with All NT Secondary Schools'. The University wishes to build upon its unique dual sector to increase the number of Northern Territory school students who move from secondary school into both vocational and higher education. For further information about the Community and Access Operational Priorities Plan see the website: www.cdu.edu.au/communityandaccess/operationalpriorities05-06.html.

Context: As a political jurisdiction the Northern Territory demonstrates many of the characteristics of a developing economy. While Northern Territory secondary schools consistently produce urban academic outcomes that are as good as any other in Australia, the overall educational indicators and measures commonly reported are invariably located in the lower rankings of the eight states and territories.

The very existence of Charles Darwin University, including its predecessor institutions, has received strong bipartisan political support in the Northern Territory. All parties recognise that the economic, social and cultural development of the Northern Territory will be driven by the activity associated with a permanent University presence in the jurisdiction.

The economic development of the Northern Territory will require a mix of imported and 'home grown' skills in a wide range of industry and business areas in both the vocational and higher education sectors. The 'home grown' portion of this mix will have its genesis in the local secondary schools.

As a dual sector University, CDU has multiple entry points for secondary-school students that include:

- VET in Schools
- School-Based New Apprenticeships
- full apprenticeships
- enabling programs
- special entry mechanisms
- traditional higher education admissions.

In addition, the University also has a co-located senior secondary college on the Alice Springs Campus. The relationship between the college and the University campus is characterised by the sharing of joint facilities and services such as the library, course and career advice and common timetabling.

Practice: In order to ensure there is a genuine and productive connection between the University and the 70 Northern Territory schools that have secondary-aged students, the University has appointed two Secondary Schools Liaison Lecturers; one based in Darwin and the other in Alice Springs. These positions reflect CDU's view that Community Engagement is the third major component of the University's role, in addition to teaching and research. The occupants' experience and qualifications have included a secondary-trained teacher, a social worker and a woman who holds a trade qualification as an auto electrician.

The liaison lecturers have a key role in brokering relationships, ensuring that people in both the school and University are linked. A variety of interactions between the two organisations occur, which typically involve different people and it may not be immediately obvious who to contact to ensure an effective outcome. For example, secondary-school staff need to engage with CDU staff at multiple points. Similarly, the University must deal with: the school Principal for strategic content; career advisors for options; VET coordinators for delivery; broader school communities for marketing; as well as individual teachers. (For example, the School of Logistics and Engineering found that senior Physics teachers have more influence than other staff in encouraging students to consider studying Engineering at CDU).

The relationship between the University and each school is also formalised through signing a Letter of Intent. Each Letter of Intent sets out the range and nature of the relationship in very explicit terms. The role of Secondary School Liaison Lecturers is to ensure that this complex set of relationships is known and maintained.

Evidence of Success: Overall, both the number and proportion of secondary-school students studying at CDU are on the increase, including admissions to higher education courses, VET in Schools, School-based New Apprentices and traditional apprentices. About 80% of secondary students who attend the co-located senior college on the Alice Springs campus enrol in a CDU VET course. The University is also a consultant to the consortium that will operate the Darwin Australian Technical College from 2007. Feedback from secondary schools indicates that they value highly the Secondary School Liaison Lecturers and the role they play. Nearly 75% of Northern Territory Year-12 students who receive an acceptable Tertiary Entrance Rank enrol at CDU in higher education. Furthermore, the number of secondary-school students enrolled in a CDU VET course has grown steadily over the last five years, with nearly 1200 secondary-school students from 44 schools enrolled in a CDU VET course in 2006.

Resources Required: The University allocates 1.5 full-time positions to the role of Secondary School Liaison Lecturer. In addition, a modest budget for travel and communications is provided.

Notes: The Northern Territory has a wide range of schools that cater for secondary-aged students. These range from large senior secondary colleges in urban locations, comprehensive high schools, community education centres in remote communities and the open education centre. The Northern Territory government has made a significant effort in recent years to both improve and increase the number and quality of students who complete Year 12 in remote areas of the jurisdiction.

(For further information and details of the contact person please visit the GPDB website: <http://www.auqa.edu.au/gp/about/index.php>)

APPENDIX 3: Affirmation and Recommendations on Indigenous Issues

Affirmations

1. AUQA affirms the La Trobe University's intention increase its attention to Indigenous students as an issue of relevance to the whole University community.
2. AUQA affirms the UTAS decision to introduce a suite of programs to improve the University's equity performance; including identifying gender targets for senior academic and management appointments, and Indigenous and NESB students.
3. AUQA has affirmed UoM's recognition of the need to increase the awareness of the Indigenous Employment Strategy among faculties and departments, and to actively support and promote the recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees.
4. AUQA affirms the need identified by QUT to continue to implement the Reconciliation Statement and promote the role of the Oodgeroo Unit.

Recommendations

5. AUQA recommends that QUT reconsider the definition of "Embedding Indigenous Perspectives" into the curriculum in consultation with a large range of internal stakeholders in order to assure a university-wide understanding of its meaning.
6. AUQA recommends that QUT review the level of resourcing provided to the Oodgeroo Unit in the light of its role in embedding Indigenous aspects into the curriculum and research.
7. AUQA recommends that the University (of Sydney) enhance its efforts to increase the employment of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.
8. AUQA recommends that the University (of Adelaide) identify a senior academic "champion" to work with the Director and staff of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies on communicating and implementing the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan.
9. AUQA recommends that, given the importance of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in the University's (NDU) Mission Statement, specific attention be directed to the achievement of this goal on the Fremantle campus as it is on the Broome campus.
10. AUQA recommends that, in order to achieve its objective of creating a centre of excellence for Indigenous knowledge, CDU reassess and redefine the role of the Dean, Indigenous Research and Education, make additional appropriate senior research appointments and devise a program for the development of Indigenous researchers, possibly including targeted funding, and including recognition and training of field workers where appropriate.
11. AUQA recommends that the University (of Newcastle) consider means by which University-wide leadership and co-ordination can be provided in respect of Indigenous education.
12. AUQA recommends that UTAS pay further attention to involving both Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community in appropriate university curricular and extra-curricular events.

APPENDIX 4: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACU	Australian Catholic University
AEPIC	Aboriginal Education Policy Implementation Committee
AISU	Aboriginal and Islander Support Unit
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (USyd)
ATSIS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (UQ)
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee
BIITE	Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
CAIRS	Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies
CAMDH	Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health
CAP	Centre for Aboriginal Programs
CARs	Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations
CDU	Charles Darwin University
CIAP	College of Indigenous Australian Peoples
CIHA	Centre for Indigenous History and Arts
CQU	Central Queensland University
CSU	Charles Sturt University
CU	Curtin University
DE	Distance Education
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training (C/W)
DU	Deakin University
ECU	Edith Cowan University
GPDB	Good Practice Database
GU	Griffith University
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
HE	Higher Education
ICER	Indigenous College of Education and Research
IEC	Indigenous Education Centre
IKE	Institute of Koorie Education
IRE	Indigenous Research and Education
ISU	Indigenous Support Unit
ITAS	Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme
ITEP	Indigenous Teacher Education Program
JCU	James Cook University
LTU	La Trobe University
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MU	Macquarie University
NDU	Notre Dame University

NTU	Northern Territory University
PR.....	Progress Report
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RATEP	Remote Area Teacher Education Program
SCU.....	Southern Cross University
SIAS	School of Indigenous Australian Studies
TAFE.....	Technical and Further Education
UA.....	University of Adelaide
UAI.....	University Admission Index
UB	University of Ballarat
UC	University of Canberra
UNC	University of Newcastle
UNE	University of New England
UniSA.....	University of South Australia
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UoM	University of Melbourne
UoW	University of Wollongong
UQ.....	University of Queensland
USQ.....	University of Southern Queensland
USyd.....	University of Sydney
UTas	University of Tasmania
UWA	University of Western Australia
VTE.....	Vocational and Technical Education

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