WIDENING PARTICIPATION – A COORDINATED QUEENSLAND APPROACH

October 2009

This proposal has been developed by the Widening Participation Working Group and was endorsed by this group on 16th October 2009. A draft proposal was circulated to members of all five working groups and equity and outreach units within Queensland universities for initial feedback. A workshop was held on 9th October with representatives from Indigenous outreach, engagement and support in universities together with schooling and VET representatives to consider the proposals. Specifically this workshop explored how the widening participation projects can be made more inclusive of Indigenous people and what Indigenous specific projects are worth further investigation. Ongoing consultation with these and other stakeholders will be required to undertake more detailed development of proposals.

The Coordinated Queensland Approach to Widening Participation was given in principle endorsement by all Queensland Vice-Chancellors represented on the Higher Education Forum by flying minute in December 2009. Prioritisation and further development of proposals will be undertaken in 2010.

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PART 1 – BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Context

The work program of the 'Widening Participation' Working Group, set up under the auspices of the HEF, is focussed on the national low-SES student participation target - being 20% of undergraduate enrolments to be low-SES people by the year 2020. As well, the work program of this group includes consideration of Indigenous participation.

This paper seeks to

1. tease out the implications of the low-SES target for Queensland's tertiary providers;

2. suggest a State-wide approach to improving low-SES and Indigenous enrolments, within which
   - each tertiary provider pursues its own particular mission,
   - all tertiary providers, in partnership with schools and community groups, collaborate on key areas/issues;

3. suggest several possible projects for consideration, especially with a view to funding bids to Structural Adjustment and 'Partnership' funds for 2010 and beyond.

Scope

The national target immediately raises the following questions.

(a) How many new enrolees are required to meet target across Queensland? In each region? In each institution? What cohorts and demographics need to be considered?

(b) Who are they, and where will they come from?

(c) In which institutions will they enrol?

(d) How will we motivate them to participate?

(e) What steps will institutions need to take to ensure new learners have a successful transition and are retained once enrolled?

This brief paper is focussed on answering (d) – how to build motivation and interest in tertiary participation.

It assumes preliminary answers to the other questions as follows:

(a) a significant number of new enrolments will be required;

(b) they will be both school leavers and adults; that they will be sourced from existing unmet demand, and from currently uninterested and under-represented cohorts, and from all parts of Queensland; they will be Indigenous and non-Indigenous;

(c) that all institutions will be enrolling some of these new learners;

(e) that all institutions will take local action to improve the retention of low-SES and Indigenous students.

It is acknowledged that each of these assumptions may vary over time, by degree, and for each individual institution. However, they are a reasonable basis on which to build an exploration of collaboration related to outreach. More detailed statistical work is being explored on question (a) at regional and school level by the

Evidence Working Group. The 'Evidence' Working group has done some preliminary work on the degree-holding target and has clearly established the confronting scale of the Queensland gap.

At a practical level, we cannot wait for specific answers to (a), (b) and (c) prior to acting, or we will miss the 'policy moment' and the opportunity to access additional funding.

Current Enrolment Data

Queensland domestic undergraduate enrolment data for 2008 below shows that Queensland performs above the national average in Low SES enrolment with 19.4% of all students from low SES postcodes. Indigenous enrolments in Queensland are also higher than the national average, but much lower than is required to achieve parity based on population (the Indigenous parity rate for Queensland in 2006 was 4.17). With regard to the national 40% attainment target, it is estimated that Queensland enrolment will need to grow by 75,000 by 2025.

Queensland Domestic LSES and Indigenous undergraduate students by institution, 2008 (public universities only)

	All Students	All LSES Students		All Indigenous Students	
		Headcount	% of all	Headcount	% of all
Queensland					
Central Queensland University	7,937	3,706	46.69	146	1.84
Griffith University	22,152	3,301	14.90	441	1.99
James Cook University	9,368	1,936	20.67	338	3.61
Queensland University of Technology	26,284	3,622	13.78	348	1.32
The University of Queensland	23,294	3,489	14.98	145	0.62
University of Southern Queensland	11,478	3,714	32.36	208	1.81
University of the Sunshine Coast	4,453	599	13.45	75	1.68
Queensland Sub-total	104,966	20,367	19.40	1,701	1.62
Australia	561,886	90,467	16.10	7,038	1.25

Source: DEEWR 2009

Low SES data is based on 2006 Census SEIFA.

Unmet Demand

According to DEEWR's 2009 report (Undergraduate, Applications, Offers and Acceptances), current unmet demand in Queensland for school-leavers and adults is about 9% or 4,700 people, an unknown number of whom are low-SES or Indigenous. This is a somewhat higher rate than the previous four years when unmet demand was falling. The pipeline of school-leavers is not expected to grow significantly over the next 8 years.

This document represents work in progress for the Higher Education Forum by the Widening Participation Working Group. It has in-principle endorsement of the Higher Education Forum, however does not represent endorsed Queensland Government Policy.

Even a cursory look at the data reveals that large numbers of new learners cannot be sourced from the usual cohorts – those that have the pre-requisite levels of achievement; can afford student life; and who already aspire to tertiary study.

Thus, much of the 'widening participation' work will need to be with cohorts who are uninterested in post-school study and/or face barriers to entry. This new "more sophisticated form of outreach" (Bradley, 2008) is different in kind from mainstream marketing, and the characteristics of such outreach need to be informed by an understanding of the issues and barriers at play, and the nature of the personal change process.

The nature of the issues

Much has been written before and after the Bradley Review about the factors inhibiting the tertiary participation of disadvantaged people. In brief, several intersecting factors are at play, in particular, understanding the opportunities and how to access them (awareness); having sufficient money to support student life (affordability); having the satisfactory criteria to gain entry (achievement); and having the desire to engage in tertiary study (aspiration).

Both practice and research tells us that overcoming these factors is not easy, and involves issues of personal identity; family, school and locality culture; myths and misconceptions; and the legacy of unequal schooling and/or racism.

The nature of the change process

Moving from being uninterested in tertiary study to being actively interested is, by nature, a journey, and not a single revelatory experience. Those with no family history of tertiary participation and/or from under-represented cohorts , will ideally need a combination of high-quality schooling with high expectations; encouragement, support and information about careers/pathways; family support; transition support and practical assistance with costs/admissions matters, and all this spread over a period of time and from a young age.

The change process has as much to do with identity and imagination, as it does with information and business cases. It begins with tertiary institutions seeing these prospective students through the lens of their strengths and potential, rather than through a deficit-based model.

A single institution cannot deliver the whole 'journey' for any individual, only particular touch-points, experiences or messages along the way. Especially for institutions or community groups outside of schooling, the idea that they alone could provide a scaffolded, comprehensive, awareness/aspiration program across a number of years for large numbers or groups, is fanciful.

As well, acting alone runs the risk of the effort being undermined by counteracting forces such as low expectations within schools; myths and misunderstandings about tertiary study; low self-confidence and so on.

On a practical level, if each tertiary institution acted alone, without reference to others, then certain geographical areas, cohorts or schools might miss out – there would be, as there is now, both gaps and duplication. Also the opportunity for positive outcomes such as economies of scale and sharing best practice would be missed.

When it comes to increasing tertiary participation, whether we like it or not, we are already in partnership with the learners' schools, families and communities. The choice is whether to make those partnerships explicit and better-organised in the interests of widening participation.

The nature of the outreach task

In March 2009, a group of Queensland equity, marketing and recruitment practitioners, along with staff from Indigenous support units, met to discuss collaboration in outreach. These participants, from all Queensland's universities, agreed on a Communique□(Attachment 1). One of the background papers to the meeting outlined the differences between competitive marketing/recruitment (which seeks to sell the benefits of an institution to the "ready-to-choose" cohort) and widening participation activities (which seek to build aspiration and overcome barriers amongst those currently uninterested or under-represented in tertiary education). That background paper is attached (Attachment 2).

As the Communique□indicates, collaboration in outreach is not a green-field site and participants were keen to build on existing activity elements, "join them up", and make them sustainable. As confirmed at the Queensland Roundtable, working in partnership does not always mean jointly organising activities or jointly sharing resources. It can also mean establishing an agreed organisational framework within which institutions can take independent action.

Since then, it has become much clearer that, whilst different in kind, competitive recruitment activities and widening participation activities can happily co-exist; can develop synergies between them; and can share some organisational infrastructure.

Widening Participation activities by their very nature lend themselves to collaborative and coordinated approaches between institutions and sectors. If the focus is on stimulating demand by talking up tertiary participation, rather than on the location of the eventual enrolment, it is easy to see where shared business starts and ends. The focus is the learner, not the brand; the journey, not the choice; we are building, not selling. **The payoff is that, if we stimulate enough demand, all institutions will benefit from increased enrolments in the long run.**

The university contribution to widening participation

If tertiary institutions are contributing to a multi-layered process of aspiration-building, then there needs to be a consensus on what elements higher education is best-placed or uniquely-placed to contribute to outreach, compared to the contribution of schools, VET, families, or community groups.

Building on the thinking of the Queensland Roundtable, there are four clusters of activities that universities are best-placed to provide:

a) De-mystification experiences for first-in-the-family (including information/liaison sessions).

b) Encouragement/inspiration through role models, and awards/prizes

c) Value-adding to learning/achievement, especially with discipline connections

d) Alternative pathways for admissions, and scholarships.

Examples of each of these activities, already being undertaken by universities, are listed in the Communique (Attachment 2)☐

Universities are, of course, uniquely placed to contribute to widening participation by improving the retention of their enrolled low-income students. While the strategies for improving retention tend to be single-location efforts, the challenges are shared. In particular, the need to improve organisational culture,and teaching /learning and research practices so that a "sense of belonging" is created for all students, is a major challenge. It involves universities acknowledging the particular strengths and knowledges these new learners bring with them.

The VET contribution to widening participation

(Note - discussions with VET are incomplete.)

The VET sector is an important destination for school leavers and mature learners, including people from low socio-economic backgrounds and Indigenous people. Many are attracted to this sector because some of the courses are more affordable, it has entry points for lower achieving students, is practical, offers shorter-term courses, is familiar (through prior family association or in-school participation) and often has direct employment links. Within VET, low-SES and Indigenous students are mostly enrolled in Certificate level courses, rather than Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses.

Thus, the particular contribution of the VET sector to widening participation could involve attention to ways and means of increasing the numbers of students in higher-level VET courses, and the numbers of students in "pathway" courses such as the Certificate 1V in Adult Tertiary Preparation.

Connections with other social inclusion developments

Before focussing on education inter-sectoral partnerships, it's important to scan the national picture in order to locate tertiary activity within it.

- The **Social Inclusion Board** has developed a compendium of social inclusion indicators, some "Social Inclusion Principles for Australia", and has recommended to Government what regions/districts are the most disadvantaged in Australia. Professor Tony Vinson, an influential member of the Board, in his report "Dropping off the Edge" described how limited schooling/education triggers and sustains inter-generational poverty; how 'place' matters, with certain regions showing little change over many years; and how long-term (at least 7-8 years) intervention is required.

  More recently a toolkit for Social Inclusion in Policy Design and Delivery has been released.

  It is reasonable to assume that the Federal Government will be influenced by the Social Inclusion Board, and will use its recommendations to guide public policy. If so, tertiary providers in Queensland need to take account of this context, especially for their place-based work.

- **Youth Attainment and Transitions**
  Although our focus is both young people and adults, the Federal Government is making considerable changes in the at-risk youth area, which may have important partnership implications.

- **National Partnership on low-SES schools**

  The 131 Queensland schools who are part of this National Partnership have been announced and phase 1 and 2 are underway. This important program has the potential to contribute to the organisational approach for tertiary providers.

- **Lessons from the United Kingdom Widening Participation Experience**

  After 5 years of effort, the various reports from the United Kingdom's national program to widen participation contain valuable lessons and ideas. In particular their July 2009 guide – "Governance and Management in Aimhigher Partnerships" – is instructive.

- **Latest advice from the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education**

  DEEWR is in receipt of a large report from this Centre which outlines 'what works' in outreach and support, and provides a set of indicators for designing and measuring programs. This report will certainly be influential, and may inform the conditions and requirements of any grants from Government.

PART 2 – PROJECTS AND FUNDING

Sources of funds

- Each university has access to up-front funds from 2010 for expanding low SES enrolments and providing support. ("Enrolment Loading"). The quantum of such funds appears to be four times current HEESP in 2010, rising to ten times HEESP by 2012.

- Universities will also have access to "Partnership" funds, for intersectoral links, from 2010. Quantum is $17.5m in 2010, rising to $40m by 2012.

- Structural Adjustment funds may be available for widening participation work, as they were in 2009. New guidelines are awaited.

It is worth noting that the quantum available in all the three sources above is exceeded by the quantum of funds in the various National Partnerships, especially for low-SES schools, and YAT.

This suggests that perhaps strategic partnering with selected stake holder groups could deliver considerable value for money, more than would be gained by seeking to replicate their infrastructure and services.

Decisions at individual university level

Each university, once DEEWR confirms the amount of 'enrolment loading', will need to decide how these funds will be divided between outreach and support. Presumably, each university will devise internal partnership plans which allocate the new funds to new outreach activity and new support activities, which build on, and are integrated with, existing effort.

All universities will need to consolidate and/or grow an explicit Widening Participation capacity, both to undertake more work in this area, and to have a solid basis for inter-institutional and inter-sectoral work. Based on what is known about intra-university partnerships in Queensland, there is considerable scope for improvement at both operational and conceptual level. Typically, internal partnerships focussed on outreach involve elements of Equity, Community Engagement, Indigenous Support Units, Marketing/Recruitment, Admissions ,Faculties and kindred functions.

This discussion paper, whilst respecting the autonomy of each institution, seeks to influence individual university choices by suggesting that:

- a significant proportion of the "enrolment loading" funds be reserved for outreach activities.

- a proportion of the outreach activities be dedicated to Indigenous-specific work.

- the type of outreach activities undertaken be informed by the latest and best thinking around 'what works'.

- the location of outreach activities be informed by a State-wide approach which seeks to eliminate gaps and duplication.

- The core message of outreach activities be focussed on promoting post-school study per se, rather than merely promoting the relative merits of a particular institution.

The first proposed project is built on these suggestions, and requires further discussion and debate.

With regard to the support/retention activities, these tend to be more institution-specific than outreach work. However, institutions could more actively network to share good practice ideas, and to conduct research, especially on the challenging issue of ensuring institutions are socially and culturally inclusive Supporting formal networks of relevant officers is one way of supporting this challenging work in the retention area.

Collaborative activity

Several projects (numbers 2 to 6) requiring more of a joint approach, are suggested, including one focussed on Indigenous cohorts. Considerable discussion, refinement and prioritising are required before decisions can be made for 2010.

VET-university partnerships

The Working Group has discussed "tertiary" participation as a more appropriate, broader approach than "university" participation. This approach acknowledges the reality of existing VET-higher education partnerships; the logic of the market place; and the existence of national/state targets other than degree-holding and low-SES university enrolments.

However, VET institutes do not receive "enrolment loading" or "partnership" funds, and cannot apply for Structural Adjustment funds. The major incentives, obligations and potential funding rewards are located in higher education. In any projects with VET partners, this imbalance will need to be acknowledged and accommodated.

Evidence and compacts

In discussions with the "Evidence" Working Group, it was suggested that we may wish to track outcomes by individual school and by region, and not just by institutional enrolment. This would reflect the spirit of the outreach effort which is based on the notion that stimulating interest in post-school study is the primary goal, rather than a focus on where those learners subsequently enrol. Indigenous data will also need to be tracked by school, region and institution.

Similarly, retention rates at universities will be important, as preventing attrition is one way of boosting participation rates. However, the current DEEWR attrition measure counts as 'lost' those students who leave one institution to attend another. This artificially inflates the attrition of regional universities in particular. Consistent with the spirit of collaboration, it would be preferable to use a parameter that measures whether a student is retained in the system, and not just at the same institution.

With regard to compact negotiations, it may be possible to argue that all Queensland universities, having embarked on a State-wide, organised approach, should

- be measured and rewarded on an input parameter, being the degree of active participation in the Queensland plan, (particularly in the early years of compacts);

- be measured and rewarded on shifts in post-school destination data by school, or shifts in regional rates of tertiary participation; and not just on individual institutional enrolment figures.

As well, it may be possible to explore alternative parameters to the current low-SES postcode measure, (without becoming overtaken by this intransigent issue). A matrix of alternatives might include percentage of students in receipt of a means-tested Centrelink benefit, and/or percentage of students who are first-in-the-family, and/or low-SES status by home postcode at the point of enrolment.

There is an inherent tension between acting collaboratively for a broad State/sector/national outcome, and being measured and rewarded individually, and the Working Group needs to explore ways and means of resolving that contradiction with DEEWR.

Project 1 – Covering the field

Developing a coordinated approach to ensure all students in low SES schools have access to tertiary awareness and preparation.

- Low-SES schools (especially National Partnership schools) are mapped and grouped into 7 or 8 clusters (dependent on involvement by ACU).
- Each university takes responsibility for partnering with schools in their allocated cluster.
- Each university agrees to undertake, 'Widening Participation' activities such as:

  - *de-mystification experiences for first-in-the-family (including liaison/information sessions);*
  - *encouragement/inspiration through role models and awards/prizes;*
  - *value-adding to learning/achievement, esp. with discipline-specific connections;*
  - *alternative pathways for admissions, and scholarships;*

  with cluster schools, to the extent that **all middle school and senior school students have some access to tertiary awareness/preparation.**

- DET will provide links to low-SES and Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership schools, Youth Attainment and Transitions regional co-ordinators, and Youth Connections Providers.
- Universities will engage with students, parents, teachers and other staff in schools on the basis of partnerships brokered with individual school communities which take into account the different needs and priorities of each school.
- Each university is free to maintain traditional links with schools outside of the allocated cluster; to determine whether to include junior year primary school students; to determine the precise nature and volume of program activities; to determine whether to focus on 'low-hanging fruit' and/or the most disengaged; and to join up with other universities for multi-cluster activities as appropriate.
- Each university commits to ensuring that programs
  - are Indigenous-aware, include Indigenous staff, and complement Indigenous-specific strategies;
  - connect up with VET providers, parent and community groups within the cluster area, as appropriate;
  - stay 'on message' in terms of building aspiration towards post-school study in general, and not merely recruitment activities for a particular institution.

- The funding source for cluster outreach activities would be each institution's, 'enrolment loading' money.
- Additional funds would be needed for
  - high-needs clusters, especially those with large geographical distances, or where there is no obvious university partner;
  - joint research and evaluation activities;
  - networks for sharing good practice, developing joint materials etc, including Indigenous-specific networks.

  These additional funds could be sourced from "Partnership" funds or from Structural Adjustment Funds, depending on the guidelines. Of the $17.5 m in Partnership funds available in 2010, it would be reasonable to bid for $4m - $5m on the basis of Queensland's enrolment share.

- This project should seek to articulate an entitlement or guarantee for low-income middle/senior students which specifies the level of tertiary awareness/preparation each child is entitled to, and how universities will contribute to that entitlement.

Project 2 - Widening access, participation and success for Indigenous people

While all widening participation projects will have an Indigenous focus, , a separate set of Indigenous-specific projects will be developed to meet the specific needs of this group.

- Each university commits to allocating some of its "enrolment loading" funds to Indigenous-specific strategies, which nest with other activities, but are led by staff in the Indigenous outreach, engagement and support area of the university. These funds can anchor and sustain some visible and sustained human and other resources for Indigenous outreach and engagement work.
- The extent to which Indigenous-specific outreach and engagement is undertaken as single-institution activities or joint-institution activities is a matter for further discussion.
- Further discussion is also required with DET's Indigenous Education unit to facilitate coordination of outreach activities to schools and the VET sector.
- Potential Indigenous -specific proposals were discussed by representatives from Indigenous schooling, vocational education and training and the university sector in early October. These proposals included:
  - early and ongoing engagement with Indigenous school students their families and communities to build aspiration for higher education study;
  - A collaborative approach to school and community outreach and engagement programs including development of joint materials, vacation schools, social networking media; and sharing of resources;
  - Investigate ways in which universities can partner with community groups and elders to support students to become both academically confident and culturally robust;
  - Investigating ways to ensure strong, high quality and well resourced Indigenous outreach and support units. This includes supporting collaborative processes such as formal networks of ISUs, ITAS coordinators , and other Indigenous outreach and engagement staff;
  - investigate effectiveness of enrolment pathways , enabling and preparatory programs; and
  - develop and resource Indigenous staff to lead outreach and engagement activities.

  Further consultation is needed to develop and prioritise these ideas.

Project 3 – A focus on adult learners and VET connections

Encourage adults to undertake bridging programs and facilitate their transition to Diploma and university studies.

- QUT and Griffith are currently engaged in a DASA-funded project with a number of TAFEs and colleges to improve access, participation and success of adult learners in tertiary preparation courses and to facilitate their transition to university.

- This project could act as a pilot with potential expansion to other universities and VET providers - additional Structural Adjustment funding may be sought to achieve this.

- As a first and basic step, a more systematic approach to dual awards and credit arrangements could be explored, especially for Indigenous students.

Project 4 – Going deeper in places of need

Complementing the previous activities, more joined-up and intensive intervention is required for areas of highest disadvantage in Queensland.

- Using Vinson's work on disadvantaged locations, plus regional data on levels of post-school qualifications, select up to three areas of Queensland which are the most disadvantaged.

- Within each of these geographically-defined areas, establish joined-up, long-term (3-5 years at least) activity with education providers, business/industry, and community groups. Nest with any existing useful infrastructure such as the Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership.

- Focus on families and communities and a proactive problem solving approach.

- All universities, VET providers, schools , the LGA, and relevant community organisations within the area would be invited to participate in the partnership, plus other universities who may wish to contribute.

- Establish links between the different area partnerships such as joint research/evaluation strategies, and be guided by the approach recommended by the Social Inclusion Board.

- Sources of funds could be "Partnership" or Structural Adjustment funds. The latter would be more likely if the area activities could connect with other Government priorities e.g. a focus on STEM which would link to skills shortages.

Project 5 – Careers education and advice

Create a state-wide Careers Education and Advisory Unit which would work with cluster schools (project 1) and high disadvantage areas (project 4).

Note: QUT is likely to pursue this idea independently for its cluster area. This could act as a pilot for expansion to other areas.

- The unit would have two functions:

  1. An advisory safety net for individual low-income prospective tertiary students (both school-age and adult). Such prospective students may be from any part of the pre-enrolment spectrum ranging from those who need basic career awareness to those who are ready to choose a course/institution.

  2. To work in partnership with low-income schools to foster career education, such that a scaffolded program exists for middle school/senior school students. Could possibly be extended to VET providers with large numbers of low SES students.

- The Unit would be staffed by expert career counsellors capable of providing comprehensive, independent advice, with a mix of other skills including community engagement, and collaborative partnership-building, including Indigenous staff.

- Unit staff would work in partnership with relevant elements of Federal/State programs such as YAT, School Guidance Officers and Career Counsellors, School Transition Officers, QTAC, Centrelink Career Information Services and the corporate sector.

Project 6 – State-wide signature activities

Create some State-wide "signature" activities which are jointly designed, implemented and funded.

- Investigate the use of vacation-time residential and non-residential camps/schools for middle and senior school students and adults, building on the work already underway in a number of Queensland institutions and in the UK program.

- Investigate other opportunities for highly-visible aspiration-building activities including use of joint promotional materials and joint events (eg university challenges or roadshows).

Attachment 1

Communiqué

Arising from the Qld. Collaborative Outreach Roundtable 31/03/2009

Participants from Queensland universities at the inaugural roundtable meeting on collaborative outreach, held on 31/03/2009 in Brisbane, **agree as follows**:

Considering

- the need to enrol more students from low-income, rural, Indigenous, or first-in-family cohorts;

- that many potential students experience difficulties with affordability, aspiration and achievement;

- the low level of unmet demand and the need to encourage more school-leavers and adult learners to be interested in tertiary study;

- the research about the complexity of building aspiration and capacity in individuals and their communities;

- that success in lifting enrolment rates in each institution will require long-term collaborative effort from each institution; between institutions, and between sectors; **and**

Noting

- the degree of aspiration-building, non-competitive marketing and recruitment activity which already exists in each institution, and the degree of collaboration which already exists between institutions;

- and the enthusiasm of meeting participants for increasing effort in this area;

Resolve to:

1. explore ways and means of increasing, **in each institution**, the activity base designed to create interest in post-school study within under-represented groups, and to facilitate their transition to university (see examples overleaf).

2. explore opportunities to work collaboratively **within the higher education sector**, such as by sharing good ideas, by jointly organising activities, or by developing region-based or cohort-based agreements for widening participation which outline a rationale for, and details of, agreed activities.

3. monitor emerging opportunities to foster **system-level partnerships** with schooling and VET, and encourage senior officers of our institutions to pursue such opportunities.

4. bring to the attention of relevant officers in our institutions the meeting outcomes and this communiqué, and seek their **in-principle support** for its direction.

5. consolidate the inaugural meeting participants as an **on-going network** which shares ideas and promotes collaboration in widening participation.

Endorsed by participants at the Queensland Inaugural Roundtable on Collaborative Outreach held in Brisbane on 31/03/2009.

Activities universities can undertake as part of widening participation:

(see Communiqué point 1 under Resolve)

- De-mystification experiences for first-in-the-family
    - on-campus days
    - residential campus
    - vacation schools
    - video/print materials

- Encouragement/inspiration through role models
    - Student ambassadors
    - Mentors
    - 'Email a student'

- Value-adding to learning/achievement
    - Homework centres
    - Guest lectures in schools
    - Online tutoring
    - Academic skills seminars
    - Discipline connections (eg Scientists in Schools)

- Alternative pathways for admission
    - Tertiary entrance bonuses
    - Interview-based admission
    - School recommendation
    - Bridging/enabling courses

Attachment 2

QUEENSLAND COLLABORATIVE OUTREACH ROUNDTABLE

31/3/09

Background paper 2

Competitive and collaborative marketing

Traditional marketing/recruitment	Aspiration-building outreach
a. primarily competitive	primarily collaborative
b. material or activities primarily designed to promote an individual institution and maximise enrolments at that institution	material or activities primarily designed to promote post-school study or university study in general.
c. focused on an audience who is presumed to already aspire to university study, and who are deciding which institution/course to choose	focused on an audience that is <u>not</u> presumed to already aspire to university study or any form of post-school study; and who may experience real (and imagined) barriers to access.
d. tries to influence the choice of university by emphasising the unique or superior characteristics of the institution	tries to influence the life choices of the audience through myth-busting, encouragement, inspiration (e.g. role models), and practical assistance (scholarships/bridging programs etc)
e. focuses on a single choice	focuses on an aspiration-building journey which has steps and stages over time, and is different for each cohort.
f. core messaging - "choose this university, now"	core messaging – "any university, any time", or "post-school study is a good thing"

Reflections and discussion-starters – background paper 2

1. An individual activity can share characteristics of both aspiration-building <u>and</u> promoting the institution.

2. A single institution can undertake an activity which is primarily non-competitive, providing the messaging is focused on promoting post-school study (i.e. collaborative activity does not necessarily need to involve multiple providers)

3. Competition is not "bad", and collaboration "good" – they are merely fit for different purposes.

4. Traditional marketing/recruitment and aspiration-building marketing/recruitment can co-exist – one does not undermine the other, particularly if they are targeted at particular cohorts, age-groups, etc.

5. Many audiences tend to be mixed (and include privileged and disadvantaged), so activities often have to simultaneously run both messages. (QUT experience is that this is a bit clunky, but can be done)

6. From the point of view of the prospective students, their "journey" from being uninterested to interested in post-school study, will involve touch-points with multiple institutions along the way but (hopefully) end in an enrolment decision, which is an inherently competitive phase.

7. All universities are already engaged in aspiration-building marketing/recruitment of some sort. Every institution has something to offer. Every institution could do better.