



# Indigenous Education Strategy

2019



Gardens Point Campus

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Queensland University of Technology (QUT) acknowledges the Turrbal and Yugara, as the First Nations owners of the lands where QUT now stands. We pay respect to their Elders, lores, customs and creation spirits. We recognise that these lands have always been places of teaching, research and learning. QUT acknowledges the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people play within the QUT community.



Kelvin Grove Campus



## MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

QUT is known as 'the university for the real world'. We are a well-established Queensland university, with over 50,000 students studying a wide range of courses. We offer outstanding educational experiences and spaces to meet the needs of our students, academics and researchers. We work to provide real solutions for our changing world. Our two main campuses are within three kilometres of the Brisbane central business district, at Gardens Point and Kelvin Grove. We have a number of distributed sites primarily located across South East Queensland.

With over thirty years of history, QUT is proud of our continued connection to the Traditional Owner groups, the Turrbal and Yugara peoples. This connection, and our continued commitment, is demonstrated by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' enrolment, retention and completion rates, from undergraduate degrees through to higher degrees by research. We have enrolments across all faculties with undergraduate students and numbers increasing in business, science and engineering, health, law, education and creative industries. Improvements are also occurring at the postgraduate level. However, we recognise there is significantly more to do.

The Indigenous Education Strategy aligns with the University's vision and gives credence to our reconciliation statement by providing a platform to direct our efforts in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, research and employment, to meet the needs of the real world. The Strategy provides the necessary framework to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education an essential part of the University's core business. QUT is focused and ready to do our very best to work to ensure that QUT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are supported to reach their education potential.

**Professor Margaret Sheil AO**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



## RECONCILIATION AT QUT

### Recognition

QUT recognises that Indigenous Australian people are the custodians of the land, and have a traditional association with the land in accordance with their laws and customs. Further that this traditional association with, and respect for, land sustains Indigenous cultures, languages, spirituality, art, law, and all other aspects of life treasured by, and held sacred to, Indigenous Australian people. We acknowledge the social, political, economic and education disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australian people as a result of a history of colonisation, dispossession, and unjust legislation, policies and practices.

QUT also recognises that Indigenous Australian cultures are important to the heritage of all Australians. We are aware of the dynamic contribution made by Indigenous Australian people to the community and to the University and support the rights of Indigenous Australian people to self-determination, and equitable participation in the community and the University. Indigenous Australians have the right to equitable access to resources and services, and to be treated with respect. At QUT we acutely aware of the significance of the reconciliation process in building new relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

### Responsibility

QUT acknowledges that for reconciliation to be sustainable over time, local communities and institutions must support, and be involved in, the process. We are aware that educational institutions in particular have the responsibility to redress disadvantage through Indigenous Australian education and research. We must play a role in overcoming prejudice by educating the Australian community about the cultures and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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## PREAMBLE AND RATIONALE

QUT endorses Indigenous peoples right to education without discrimination (Article 14) and the right to have Indigenous cultures and aspirations reflected in education (Article 15) of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as endorsed by the Australian government in April 2009. Pivotal to implementing the Declaration is the recognition that Australia and its institutions have responsibilities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Thus QUT recognises the right to the dignity and diversity of Indigenous cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations. That this will be appropriately reflected in education and QUT public information. QUT also recognises and supports the right to have Indigenous cultures and knowledges protected, controlled and developed by Indigenous peoples (Article 31). The aspirations and rights embedded within the Declaration are incorporated within the Indigenous Education Strategy (IES).

The leadership of Professor of Indigenous Research, Distinguished Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson, is recognised as being instrumental in the development of Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy (UAIS), which designed and shapes the future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the higher education sector.

QUT is proud of the benchmark it has set for the sector.

QUT is a recognised leader in Indigenous higher education and research as summarised below.

- Distinguished Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson, is the President of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Committee (NATSHEC).
- Professor Peter Anderson is the Vice-President (Research), NATSHEC.
- QUT leads the implementation of NIRAKN which provides a platform for cross-institutional and multidisciplinary research designed to build the capacity of qualified Indigenous researchers to meet the compelling research needs of our communities.
- QUT led the development of the National Think Your Way portal. This national portal provides information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, parents and advisers on higher education study, in a culturally appropriate format.

The Indigenous Education Strategy 2019, is underpinned by the key recognitions and responsibilities and is aligned with QUT strategic plans, 'UAIS 2017-2020' and other Indigenous related strategic documents. QUT is committed to social justice and equal opportunity in education, employment and research, with a particular emphasis on strategies that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve excellent educational outcomes. The Strategy articulates the University's goals and priorities in respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching and learning, research, employment and cultural sustainability. The Strategy is designed to achieve greater coherence and co-ordination of QUT's efforts by providing a University framework.

The goals and actions outlined in the Indigenous Education Strategy are strategically aligned with:

- The Commonwealth's Indigenous Student Assistance Grants Guidelines (2017)
- Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy (2017-2020)
- QUT Aboriginal and Torres Islander Research Strategy and Implementation Plan (2016)
- Australian Council of Learned Academies Review of Australia's Research Training System (2016)
- QUT Blueprint 5 (2016)
- QUT Reconciliation Action Plan (2015)
- QUT Indigenous Employment Strategy (2019)
- QUT In2Knowledges Project: Action Plan (2013)
- The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Behrendt Review), Australian government (2012)
- The National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (2011)
- QUT Reconciliation Statement (2001).

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## QUT'S VISION

QUT aspires to providing outstanding real-world education through physical and virtual learning environments and innovative courses that lead to excellent outcomes for graduates, living in a diverse and complex environment characterised by rapid, transformative change.

Our real-world research priorities focus on being a globally leading university that delivers solutions to the challenges of today and of the future through high-impact research that spans discipline boundaries and works in partnership with end users, leveraging our deep technological strengths and alignment to the human capital and innovation needs of the global economy.

Reflecting our academic ambitions and our civic responsibilities, QUT will strengthen and extend partnerships with professional and broader communities to build our reputation as a source of knowledge that is applied to real-world challenges.

## QUT'S PRINCIPLES

- To focus on quality

We focus on quality and excellence, celebrate high levels of scholarship, ambition and achievement, and seek out opportunities to find and share new knowledge.

- To solve real-world problems

We seek solutions to real-world problems through education and research activities that span discipline boundaries and by working with the community.

- To optimise opportunities provided by technology

We ensure that technology pervades the University's education and research agendas, leveraging and optimising opportunities provided by digital technologies as these evolve.

- To use resources effectively and improve services

We seek out new ways to improve our products and services by efficiently utilising our resources and integrating environmental sustainability to address challenges and meet the needs of students and staff, as well as sustaining our strong commitment to client service and our sense of pride, in the University.

- To cultivate organisational agility

We cultivate organisational agility to rapidly transform, renew and adapt to global change, to find new opportunities and remain at the forefront of developments.

- To foster a culture of community

We capitalise on the goodwill of the University community, our mutual support and respect for one another and our ethical behaviour and practices, ensuring that these are sustained during transformative change. We promote social justice and equal opportunity in education, employment and research, with a particular emphasis on strategies that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve excellent educational outcomes.

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## GOVERNANCE

QUT recognises that a whole of University approach is essential to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education success. In order to ensure that the Indigenous Education Strategy has tangible outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and their communities it must be an integral part of the University's strategic directions. Locating the Indigenous Education Strategy and its implementation within an executive portfolio elevates the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education to a central position within university business and enables a concerted strategic approach to embedding it across the institution.

The Indigenous Education Strategy allows for the integration of QUTs Indigenous education portfolio. The goals and targets of the Indigenous Education Strategy will be monitored and progress reports made to: the Vice-President (Administration) and University Registrar; Provost; and Vice-Chancellor and President; the University's Executive Committee; the Indigenous Education, Research and Employment Committee; the University Research and Innovation Committee; the University Learning and Teaching Committee; University Academic Board; and QUT Council.

The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) (Indigenous Strategy), which sits within the Chancellery and reports to the Vice-Chancellor and President, has responsibility for implementing the Indigenous Education Strategy in concert other members of the University Executive.

The Director, Indigenous Research and Engagement Unit and Director, Oodgeroo Unit will report quarterly, with regard to their respective areas of the education strategy and responsibility, to the PVC (Indigenous Strategy). QUT's senior staff: the Executive Deans of faculties, the Executive Director, Human Resources and the Vice Presidents (Resources) and Chief Financial Officer, will provide a quarterly progress report to the PVC (Indigenous Strategy) on implementation of key performance indicators of the Indigenous Education Strategy and associated feeder policy documents.



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# RESEARCH, LEARNING AND TEACHING

## Research

Our real-world research priorities focus on being a globally leading university that delivers solutions to the challenges of today and the future. This is achieved through high-impact research that spans discipline boundaries and is pursued in partnership with end users, leveraging our deep technological strengths and responding to human capital and innovation needs of the global economy.

### QUT will aim to:

1. Build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research strengths and leadership.
2. Facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander transdisciplinary research.
3. Develop culturally competent research.
4. Establish research Partnerships and collaborations.

### To meet our goals QUT will:

- Establish an Indigenous Research and Education Institute to commence in 2020.
- Implement a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy to enhance capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research by 2019.
- Encourage appropriate and beneficial research of Indigenous issues; ensuring transdisciplinary research is developed in partnership with Indigenous communities, government and industry.
- Ensure research is conducted in accordance with relevant Indigenous protocols and ethical guidelines.
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher degree research students and senior researchers.
- Provide research capacity-building training and foster international, national and local research collaborations and opportunities.
- Achieve leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research impact and quality.

## Key Performance Indicators

- New Institute resourced and implemented from 2020.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy resourced and implemented by 2019.
- Increased share of domestic postgraduate students and senior researchers who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander on parity with national enrolments.
- Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher degree research completions.
- Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, government and industry research partnerships formed.
- Number of strategic transdisciplinary international, national and local research projects undertaken each year and total research income.
- Appointment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Professor.

## Learning

QUT provides a high quality and meaningful student learning experience that enhances Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation, progression and completion. QUT has built a vibrant and healthy community that is responsive to the educational aspirations of students, staff and other stakeholders. Community is at the heart of this experience paired with services involving student-centred goal setting to improve transition, success, and retention; and a commitment to a strengths-based approach through increasing access, participation, and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. QUT works in a whole-of-university approach with multi-disciplinary teams providing a range of services to assist students to engage with their learning and campus life, and to fulfil their academic and personal aspirations.

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**QUT will aim to:**

1. Improve retention and success rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students equal to those of domestic non-Indigenous students in the same fields of study by 2025.
2. Achieve equal completion rates by field of study by 2028.
3. Strive to achieve an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in parity with the overall Australian population figures.

**To meet our goals QUT will:**

- Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate fully in tertiary study by developing and implementing an Indigenous Student Success Plan that incorporates actions and targets.
- Establish processes that ensure all students will encounter and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content as integral parts of their course of study by 2020.
- Build student leadership capacity to actively contribute to and participate on working groups, reference groups and committees.

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Indigenous Student Success Plan resourced, developed and implemented by 2020.
- Increased share of domestic undergraduate students who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- Increased institutional growth rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' enrolment that are at least 50% above the growth rate of non-Indigenous student enrolment, and ideally 100% above by 2025.

**Teaching**

Our real world graduates benefit from QUT's distinctive learning experiences, delivered by outstanding teachers. We produce highly skilled, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprising graduates well suited to 21st Century employment and careers, who throughout their lives, will thrive in changing complex working environments.

**QUT will aim to:**

1. Strengthen students and staff cultural competence and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges.
2. Build strong and sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

**To meet our goals QUT will:**

- Augment the development and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges within the curriculum.
- Recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, provide opportunities for them to access a wide range of academic programs, and provide academic, social and cultural support services.
- Establish processes that ensure all students will encounter and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural content as integral parts of their course of study by 2020.
- Actively promote QUT's commitment to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation.

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Annually improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success, retention and completion rates in all award courses, with a view to eventually achieving rates that are equal to those of other QUT students.
- Increased number of courses that faculties and departments have implemented incorporating Indigenous Knowledges into their curriculum through the course renewal and accreditation cycle by 2020.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Strategy resourced, developed and implemented by 2020.

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## EMPLOYMENT

Achieving QUT's vision will require that we do things differently. We will need a high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and must continue to build our world-class education and research infrastructure. Listening to, and acknowledging the needs and aspirations of our Indigenous students and staff, and fostering QUT's proud sense of community and its aim of life-long engagement with our alumni will be critical for the success of this transformation.

### **QUT will aim to:**

1. Ensure QUT has a high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce that achieves exceptional results, and that it fosters an agile culture that encourages Indigenous students, staff and alumni to be agents of change and drivers of economic and social activity and growth.
2. Build a culturally competent and inclusive workforce.
3. Designate responsibility for the Indigenous Workforce Strategy within the Office of the Executive Director, Human Resources.

### **To meet our goals QUT will:**

- develop and implement an Indigenous Workforce Strategy in line with Universities Australia and the Indigenous Student Support Program (ISSP) targets
- develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Workforce Engagement Plan
- work towards increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to be 3% of QUTs workforce by 2020
- achieve Indigenous staff parity with non-Indigenous staff in continuing positions
- ensure current executive staff and all new senior staff

complete cross-cultural training programs from 2019

- promote work practices that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to meet their cultural obligations
- provide internal support, networking and mentoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to enhance their career pathways and professional development
- support current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to gain formal qualifications
- increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees' awareness and understanding of QUT's recruitment and selection policy and processes
- support current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to apply for internal vacancies.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Indigenous Workforce Strategy completed and implementation plan developed.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Workforce Plan developed and implemented.
- The appointment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and professional staff as an increased percentage of QUT's workforce.
- The number of professional staff enrolled in part time formal education courses.
- Increased entry level professional positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who have completed QUT's recruitment and selection training.
- The number of current executive staff and all new senior staff who have completed cross-cultural training.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural obligations identified and incorporated into flexible work practices.
- Non-Indigenous academic and professional staff to complete cultural competency training.

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## CULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Our real-world people, culture and sustainability priorities focus on developing the capabilities and performance of our people, while maintaining our strong organisational culture, financial viability and environmental sustainability.

### **QUT will aim to:**

1. Ensure that staff have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives so that they may contribute to Reconciliation.
2. Develop mechanisms that provide staff with appropriate understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other cultural perspectives.

### **To meet our goal QUT will:**

- Acknowledge the original people of the land on which the University is located, in ways deemed appropriate by the original people, after consultation with the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Recognition will include particular QUT ceremonies, promotional material in print, electronic and virtual media, and in a plaque or other visible monument on each campus.
- Promote activities to increase staff and student awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and to foster communication and collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students.
- Counter racism by promoting and implementing the University's policies on cultural diversity and racial discrimination and harassment, paying particular attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences.
- Create a University environment that acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and interests by ensuring participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peoples in appropriate planning and decision-making including appropriate accommodations in organisational practices.

- Build robust, respectful and collaborative partnerships between QUT and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities it serves.
- Take a community leadership role in promoting Indigenous higher education and building opportunities for wider community engagement in it.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members on QUT governance committees.
- Elders in-residence program developed resourced and implemented.
- Formal recognition of Traditional Owners embedded as convention in the opening of QUT ceremonies, meetings, activities and events.
- Formal recognition of Traditional Owners on the University's website landing page.
- Increased visibility and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across all campuses.
- Annual NAIDOC and Reconciliation activities held across all campuses.
- Executive leadership demonstrated in Indigenous higher education within Universities Australia and the broader higher education sector.
- The number of formalised collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities served by QUT.
- Achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and community members acknowledged through appropriate awards and media.
- The number of cultural diversity and racial discrimination and harassment workshops conducted, paying particular attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences.



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