

# FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT 2009

### SECTION 1: OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

#### 1.1 Flinders University Strategic Plan and Indigenous Education

Flinders University values and respects the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of its community and encourages inclusive practices in order to provide an environment that is creative, innovative, flexible and productive. The University recognises the unique position of Indigenous Australians as First Nations people and has made a commitment to Indigenous education within its strategic priorities as articulated in the *Flinders University Strategic Plan 2010-2014* in relation to: closing the gap in Indigenous education and health outcomes; respecting and recognising Indigenous perspectives; facilitating participation rates of Indigenous peoples; and significantly increasing the numbers of Indigenous students and staff by 2014. This commitment is outlined in the University's policies and procedures in Indigenous Education at Flinders: A guide to the principles and policy framework for education and teaching and learning is available at: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/education/edu.indig.htm>

#### 1.2 Flinders Indigenous Education Framework

A draft Flinders Indigenous Education Framework (FIEF) proposes commitment to:

1. Increase and retain Indigenous employment at all levels.
2. Improve support, participation, retention and attendance of Indigenous students.
3. Enhance and build new admission pathways.
4. Ensure that Indigenous knowledges and perspectives are embedded in relevant University teaching curriculum.
5. Develop quality Indigenous research and increase the number of Indigenous researchers.

These activities will be governed, monitored and evaluated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and reported to the Vice-Chancellor.

#### 1.3 IHEAC priorities and Indigenous education at Flinders

The University's suite of Indigenous education policies are consistent with the strategic priorities outlined by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, namely: valuing and sustaining Indigenous knowledge systems in teaching and research; closing the gap for Indigenous postgraduates and encouraging Indigenous research leadership in and beyond the academy; contributing to an Indigenous workforce strategy and capacity building by strategic employment and promotions policies; addressing matters of access to education through access to finance via scholarships; making Indigenous business core university business through the development of an Indigenous Education Framework; and pursuing a funding for success approach to all levels of education. (IHEAC submission to Bradley Review, July 2008) The University recognises the importance of exemplary Indigenous academic leadership in improving success rates, encouraging cultural enrichment and creating a strong Indigenous academic network.

#### 1.4 Flinders Policies and DEEWR Objectives

These approaches match the DEEWR objectives of:

- Implementing strategies for improving access, participation, retention and success of Indigenous Australian students;
- Increasing participation of Indigenous people in the University's decision-making processes; and
- Having an Indigenous employment strategy.

## 1.5 Yunggoendi First Nations Centre and Indigenous Education

Yunggoendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research is situated within and responsible to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. It plays a vital role in the University's contribution to Indigenous higher education outcomes in four inter-related ways, via: Indigenous student support; teaching; research; and administration - all with a community imperative.

The Centre has status of an Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) and is required to implement the *Flinders University Strategic Plan 2010-2014*. The University has made considerable efforts to support Yunggoendi faculty members in teaching, research and community activity in relation to Indigenous communities. This support has allowed Yunggoendi to maintain its commitment to:

- Work to improve the access, participation, success and retention of Indigenous students;
- Connect with Indigenous communities;
- Teach topics to the broader University student body on Indigenous education, culture, identities, reconciliation, history, social and political contexts, and research practices and protocols;
- Expand its local, national and international links with Indigenous organisations institutions and communities; and
- Develop a research profile through undertaking community-responsive, ethical research.

Yunggoendi academic and general staff members develop and implement strategies to improve higher education outcomes for Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate students via: Tjilbruke Student Services (TSS); topic coordination and delivery; postgraduate supervision; involvement in University governance; professional service and community engagement. These strategies are detailed on the Centre's website at: [http://www.flinders.edu.au/yunggoendi/yunggoendi\\_home.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/yunggoendi/yunggoendi_home.cfm).

## 1.6 Flinders University Indigenous Employment Strategy

Flinders University has implemented an Employment Strategy for Indigenous Australians (ESIA) with the aim of improving the representation, participation and retention of Indigenous Australian people within the University. The strategy is available on the University's website at:

[http://www.flinders.edu.au/employment/esia/employment-strategy-for-indigenous-australians\\_home.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/employment/esia/employment-strategy-for-indigenous-australians_home.cfm).

The University already enjoys a strong reputation for Indigenous community collaboration and is committed to actively supporting the aspirations of Indigenous peoples by providing study and employment opportunities. While our home campus is in the southern suburbs of Adelaide we are now a major player in regional South Australia and the Northern Territory. Further information on the Indigenous Employment Strategy is provided under AEP Goal 2.

## 1.7 Indigenous Perspectives

Indigenous perspectives are embedded throughout the *Flinders University Strategic Plan 2010-2014*. These include:

- Developing links and engaging in community-based research programs (broadly defined) for the mutual benefit of the University, students, South Australia, the Australian Indigenous community, the local community of the southern suburbs of Adelaide and other selected regional areas;
- Reviewing, refreshing and further developing a course profile that attracts an increased number of students (with a target of 20,000 enrolled students by 2014 and doubling Indigenous enrolments on 2009 figures) while also meeting community and employer needs;
- Subscribing to the national objective of increasing the number of university graduates and increasing university participation rates among less advantaged social groups, including Indigenous Australians;
- Reviewing and enhancing multiple admission pathways, including high-achiever pathways and programs, to facilitate the admission and support of potentially capable students from less advantaged social groups and regions, and enhanced access from the TAFE/VET sector;
- Graduate Qualities embedded across all courses (Inclusive Curriculum);
- Engaging with Indigenous communities by strengthening and consolidating the University's presence in regional South Australia and the Northern Territory; and

- Upholding the University's long-standing respect for and commitment to Australian Indigenous communities through the University Values of '*Fairness, integrity and respect for others; equity; collaboration and teamwork, both internally and externally; environmental sustainability; and respect and recognition for Indigenous perspectives*'.

Yunggorendi First Nations Centre engages with each of these perspectives. For example, in implementing Tjilbruke Student Services Strategic Plan for the operation of student support to enhance service provision, the Strategic Plan addresses one-to-one tutoring and the improvement of student life. Included is the recruitment of undergraduate and postgraduate students, retention and completion rates, academic and administrative support. Collaborative and innovative approaches taken by staff in the Centre in response to all aspects of Indigenous policy have been recognised and rewarded with: DEEWR Indigenous Education Partnership Award (2007) for the ongoing INSPIRE mentor program aimed at increasing retention and participation in education for at risk students in the southern suburbs of Adelaide; UNESCO Award for "excellence and innovation in teaching, recruitment and support of Indigenous students to higher education"; Indigenous Youth Leadership (2008); NHMRC (2008) and ARC (2009) community-based health and natural resources research; and infrastructure funding for Women's Leadership (2008) and Indigenous Literature (2007-2010).

Yunggorendi has built its reputation on student support and community engagement with Indigenous peoples to produce genuine outcomes in higher education based on respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility. The Centre is committed to improving overall student outcomes and success by encouraging staff to lead by example in all areas of university activity.

**Useful Websites:**

Flinders University Strategic Plan 2010-2014: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/about/our-university/strategic-plan.cfm>  
 Flinders University Indigenous Education Policy: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/education/edu.indig.htm>  
 The Yunggorendi First Nations Centre Strategic Plan: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/careers/inspirementor.html>

**SECTION 2: ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY GOALS IN 2009 AND PLANS FOR FUTURE YEARS**

***Goal 1: Establish effective arrangements for the participation of Indigenous peoples in education decision-making***

**2.1.1 Participation in University Committee Decision Making:**

Indigenous staff members sit on the following University decision-making and policy implementation committees:

- Academic Senate (ex officio member)
- Promotions and Academic Appointment Review Committee
- Flinders Northern Territory Medical School Indigenous Reference Committee
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Community) Community Engagement Reference Committee
- University Equal Opportunity and Diversity Committee
- Flinders University Student Services Committee
- Flinders Start Smart Committee
- Flinders University ALLY Committee
- School of Medicine Admissions Committee
- School of Education Teaching and Learning Committee

The roles of Indigenous leaders at Flinders University include:

- Director, Yunggorendi First Nations Centre
- Assistant Dean: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- Chair of the Flinders University Aboriginal Health Research Committee.

Reporting relationships and committee membership reflect the University's generic as well as specific responses to Indigenous Education. Yunggorendi First Nations Centre is a site of significant involvement in University governance. It is an Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) within the Central Administration Cost Centre. Its senior line manager is the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). Yunggorendi is represented on University committees and decision-making bodies (see above) at a number of levels and has had input into the shape and substance of University goals and strategic plans (see *Flinders Strategic Plan 2010-2014*). Yunggorendi will be represented on the University's Education Matters Advisory Group, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, in 2010. Yunggorendi provides advice to the University's Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (SBREC) on all University research that involves or impacts on Indigenous people. On average Yunggorendi reviews thirty, to thirty-five University ethics applications per year and provides comprehensive advice to the Chair of the committee.

Yunggorendi has substantial links with peak educational institutions and organizations through its networks and the professional connections of its staff (e.g. IRU, CRCAH, AIATSIS, SSABSA, NIHEN, etc). Yunggorendi staff members are also connected to over twenty Indigenous community controlled organisations.

### **2.1.2 Community Involvement in Decision Making:**

In supporting students and academic programs, the University involves Elders and community leaders as sources of information, advice and counsel, for purposes of consultation and negotiation. This occurs in all Yunggorendi core teaching topics in Education and the Humanities. In this way, the University honours and connects with the Indigenous community in relation to the educational needs and wellbeing of its Indigenous students and staff, as well as for the purpose of including Indigenous perspectives in teaching within its courses to the greatest extent practicable. The importance of Elders to Yunggorendi's philosophy and practice can be expressed as follows:

*Elders have an influence on working flexibility and how staff position engagement. The relationship affects work and definition and responsibilities. (Yunggorendi Staff Meeting 17.5.10: Notes)*

### **Goal 2: Increase the number of Indigenous peoples employed, as academic and non-academic staff in the Institution**

#### **2.2.1 Indigenous Employment Strategy**

Flinders University implemented an Employment Strategy for Indigenous Australians (ESIA) in 2006, the aim of which is to improve the representation, participation and retention of Indigenous Australian people within the University. (For further details contact J White, Director: Human Resources, Central Administration, [john.white@flinders.edu.au](mailto:john.white@flinders.edu.au)).

The Indigenous Education Strategy was developed from a report commissioned in 2005 by the Human Resources Division. The strategy is available online at [www.flinders.edu.au/employment/esia/](http://www.flinders.edu.au/employment/esia/) and is reviewed annually by the Indigenous Employment Advisory Group.

### **2.2.2 Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Encourage and foster Indigenous Australian employment and participation at all levels of work activity;
- Maximise staff development along with the transfer of job skills and information in order to increase Indigenous knowledge, independence, remuneration, job security and self sufficiency;
- Facilitate and encourage the direct involvement of Indigenous Australian staff members in determining their own career strategies, goals and objectives;
- Provide a platform to further introduce Indigenous Australian culture to the University;
- Share and participate in the exchange of cultural experience and knowledge (where appropriate); and
- Improve the relationship between Indigenous Australians and the wider community.

### **2.2.3 Supporting Strategies: Representation, Participation, Retention**

The supporting strategies of the ESIA include:

#### *i: Representation*

- Encourage and foster Indigenous Australian employment and participation at all levels of work activity;
- Consult existing Indigenous Australian staff members on Employment Strategy;
- Consult Indigenous communities, and identify and develop links with funding bodies offering grants; key organizations (government and non-government) and key University units that will be engaged in supporting the Strategy.

#### *ii: Participation*

- Maximize staff development along with the transfer of job skills and information in order to increase Indigenous knowledge, independence, remuneration, job security and self-sufficiency;
- Examine findings from consultative processes;
- Identify, establish and encourage opportunities for interactions between University staff and Indigenous communities e.g. NAIDOC week, hosting cultural events, etc.

#### *iii: Retention*

- Facilitate and encourage direct involvement of Indigenous Australian staff members in determining their own career strategies, goals and objectives;
- Examine findings from consultative processes;
- Ensure all Indigenous Australian staff members participate in the Academic Staff Performance Review Scheme or the General Staff Performance Review.

### **2.2.4 Strategies for increasing numbers of Indigenous Australians employed at the University.**

The strategies listed below build on the 'representation, participation, retention' objectives outlined in 2.2.3. They allow the University to continue to implement and support increases in employment of Indigenous personnel. The IEC's brief includes:

- Undertaking regular contact with Job Service Agency (JSA) providers in the metro and rural areas to develop a source of recruitment for prospective Indigenous employees;
- Developing a database of prospective Indigenous employees;
- Conducting community site visits throughout the year to identified organisations able to promote the job opportunities that exist at Flinders University and providing recruitment support to the Indigenous Employment Coordinator (IEC). These include community colleges, Indigenous organisations, and community service organisations such as Aboriginal Health Services;
- Developing ongoing relationships with agencies that can promote and support the recruitment of prospective Indigenous employees;
- Regularly advertising in the Koori Mail, promoting job opportunities at Flinders University;
- Locating the Indigenous Employment Coordinator (IEC) within the Human Resources Unit to increase mainstream inclusion of the role of Indigenous recruitment amongst other Human Resources staff;

- Holding regular employee luncheons to discuss issues and provide a support group for Indigenous employees within Flinders University;
- Encouraging participation in mentor training provided and funded by DEEWR in Adelaide to establish and develop an Indigenous mentor support base within the University. The aim is to provide training to Indigenous participants in the first instance then apply for funding to provide training for supervisors of Indigenous employees;
- Working towards a target of employing twenty Indigenous staff through the Structure Training and Employment Project (STEP) by December 2010;
- Securing a further contract with DEEWR for a new STEP program for 2010/2011.

Flinders continues to maintain strong working relationship with external organizations and communities including job networks, TAFE, government departments including the Aboriginal Employment Initiatives Department, and the other two South Australian Universities.

In line with these objectives the IEC regularly visits all work locations in his role and meets with all Indigenous employees to discuss their worksites and how they are enjoying their time within the University. In doing so, the IEC continues to offer his total support to all Indigenous employees engaged at Flinders University.

The IEC has met with the majority of the Executive Deans, Faculty and Division Directors and School Managers and has been invited to attend a School Managers meeting to present ideas and issues and to promote the ESIA to these individuals who are primarily responsible for recruitment into their areas.

To date the IEC has organised several luncheons for all Indigenous employees. This is ongoing initiative that enables Indigenous staff to meet and discuss issues and ideas and develop their network. During these meeting the IEC hopes to encourage more opportunities and support processes in the work sites to ensure that recruitment and retention become an ongoing practice within these units.

Some of the employment issues in need of attention and identified by the Indigenous Education Framework include:

- a lack of confidence by potential applicants in applying for work in a University;
- job availability;
- low compatibility to skills set;
- fear of the work environment; and
- a substantial lack of contact responses by many JSAs, particularly in the metropolitan area.

### 2.2.5 Current Number of Indigenous Employees

At the end June 2009, the University had 35 staff on its payroll that identify as Indigenous (in all categories of employment). This represents an increase on 2008 figures of 2 employees (25 in 2007 and 31 in 2006). These staff members are employed in the following employment categories:

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>ACADEMIC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>GENERAL</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Female	Level A	1	HEO 2	3
	Level B	3	HEO 3	2
	Level C	2	HEO 4	4
	Level D	2	HEO 5	3
	Part-Time Teaching	1	HEO 6	2
	RES A	3		

<b>ACADEMIC FEMALE SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>GENERAL FEMALE SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>14</b>
			<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALES</b>		<b>26</b>
Male	Level A	1	HEO 3		1
	Level C	1	HEO 5		1
	Level D	3	HEO 8		1
	Scholarship Holder	1			
<b>ACADEMIC MALE SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>GENERAL MALE SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>
			<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES</b>		<b>9</b>
			<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF IN 2009</b>		<b>35</b>

### **2.2.6 The role played by Yunggoendi First Nations Centre in improving Indigenous employment at the University**

Yunggoendi First Nations Centre continues to play a vital role in improving Indigenous employment at the University. This is evident not only in the numbers of Indigenous staff employed – from two full time staff members in 1990 to 8 full time and 2 fractional appointments in 2009 – but in the promotion of staff within the Centre against criteria which recognise Indigeneity as an asset to the University. In 2009 the Centre has academic staff at professorial, associate-professor, senior lecturer, lecturer and associate lecturer levels and general staff at HEO4 and 5. This profile encourages Indigenous employment by providing:

- strong incentive for capacity building
- supporting higher degree study among staff as a matter of highest priority;
- involving staff in leadership and decision-making across the institution;
- celebrating the achievements of Indigenous staff within and beyond the university;
- working closely with a range of communities;
- encouraging new and established staff members to act as role models for Indigenous students and early career Indigenous employees;
- working closely with Indigenous students to ensure academic success (ITAS and TSS Advisors) and social assurance within and beyond the university (TSS and all academic and research staff);
- collaborating with non-Indigenous staff to create a favourable employment environment for Indigenous employment; and
- creating opportunities for the employment of early career Indigenous staff by generating research and consultancy funds.

Yunggoendi staff members also take into account the long-term employment benefits of successful recruitment to the University by providing a context in which students and their families and communities can understand the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate study and thence to employment in: general administration, the Library, research, teaching and student advisory or tutoring positions. The public face of these initiatives can also be seen via Yunggoendi's collaboration with departments at Flinders and other South Australian Universities in presenting prominent annual public lecture series including: Elliott Johnston Tribute Lecture; Lowitja O'Donoghue Oration; and the Charles Duguid and Elford Lectures.

### **Goal 3: Ensure equitable access of Indigenous students to higher education**

#### **2.3.1 Commencing Indigenous Student Numbers**

Table 1: 2008-2009 Indigenous student enrolment compared to other domestic students

Students	Commencing Status	Year	
		2008	2009
Indigenous	Commencing	39	55
	Continuing	81	64
<b>Indigenous Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>119</b>
Non-Indigenous Domestic	Commencing	5107	5754
	Continuing	8271	8532
<b>Non-Indigenous Total</b>		<b>13378</b>	<b>14286</b>

Table 2: 2009 Indigenous student retention rates compared to other domestic students

	Enrolled in prior year	Completed in prior year	Continuing from prior year	ARR (Apparent retention rate)	Ratio ARR (equity group) : ARR other students)
ATSI students	119	3	118	1.02	0.98
Other students	13784	476	13766	1.03	
All students	13903	479	13884	1.03	

EQUIPAC Version 2010.02. Run on 1/06/2010

Further detailed statistics on access and participation are available at Appendix A.

#### **2.3.2 Programs to improve access**

The University is committed to ensuring equitable access to the University for Indigenous students. This is evidenced through its support for:

- the Indigenous Admissions Scheme (an alternative entry pathway);
- the establishment of quota places in competitive degrees such as the Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery, Nutrition and Paramedics;
- the INSPIRE Peer Mentor Program;
- the Indigenous Education Partnership Mentor Project; and
- specifically targeted recruitment strategies in remote, rural and urban South Australia and the Northern Territory.

An increasing number of Indigenous students are gaining entry to the University through the attainment of a Tertiary Education Ranking (TER) score and the completion of Certificate IV qualifications through TAFE, however the Indigenous Admissions Scheme remains integral to ensuring equitable access. Students continue to enrol in a broad range of degrees and this is strongly supported by all Faculties in the University. In 2009, there were 55 commencing enrolments and 64 continuing enrolments in a range of degrees. This represents an increase in commencing students of 41%, with prospects of commensurate pipeline increases, given the trending historical retention rate, in 2010 and beyond. This will offset an 18.5% retention rate decline in 2009. Current estimates of 75 commencements in 2010 support this analysis. The number of honours enrolments (7: 119 or 5.8%) provides an encouraging data sub-set in the light of NIHEN goals and objectives for postgraduate enrolment.



### **2.3.3 Outreach activities and their success in including and attracting Indigenous students.**

Staff members of the Centre continue to be involved in a range of outreach activities in schools, for local government in communities and in the public intellectual domain. Examples of activities are as follows:

At secondary schools:

- Guest lectures;
- Designing and implementing a semester-long Indigenous topic;
- Presentations.

At local government level, staff members have contributed to:

- Cultural workshops for the City of Onkaparinga;
- Inma conducted by senior Anangu women;
- Cultural information sessions for Women's Working Centre and Amnesty International;
- Cultural celebrations for the Narrunga community;
- Cultural Heritage Management;
- Heritage Assessment;
- Natural Resource Management, Indigenous Regional Development.

In the public intellectual domain staff members:

- Host or chair public lectures;
- Present keynote addresses;
- Negotiate with and advise government ministers responsible for formulating and articulating Indigenous policy in the areas of natural resource management, heritage, environmental management, water policy and management and education, within broader parameters of Indigenous policy in South Australia.

### **2.3.4 Indigenous-specific and other scholarships offered by the University.**

The University offers 23 undergraduate and 16 postgraduate scholarships for Indigenous students. Details of these scholarships are attached at Appendix B.

### **2.3.5 Promotion of scholarships to Indigenous students**

One of the primary factors for Indigenous students not undertaking or continuing with higher education is financial hardship. Yunggoendi responds to this hardship through vigorous promotion of scholarships to students in the following ways via:

- recruitment visits to schools, TAFEs and Aboriginal Community organisations;
- sending information packages to students who have listed Flinders University as a preference in their South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) application;
- sessions on scholarships, after enrolment, provided to students through the Orientation program. TSS staff also work with students to complete their application forms; and
- the Centre's student email newsletter.

In 2009, two students were awarded the Lowitja O'Donoghue Postgraduate Research Scholarship (tax free stipend of \$26,700 pa), four students were awarded the Reconciliation SA Postgraduate Scholarship (\$5,000 pa fte) and 13 undergraduate students were successful in receiving a Commonwealth scholarship.

**2.3.6 The role played by Yunggoendi First Nations Centre in seeking to improve Indigenous access.**

Yunggoendi’s role in improving Indigenous access to Flinders University is vitally important. In addition to initiatives mentioned under 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 the staff of Yunggoendi are heavily involved in a diverse range of communities and committees external to the University. This represents leadership in many contexts – community, state, federal and international – and serves to encourage Indigenous students, their families and supporters to engage with the institution and the larger concerns of Indigenous education and representation. Staff involvement on committees, working parties and representative bodies includes:

- National Curriculum Languages Reference Group Committee, The Australian Curriculum, Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA);
- Indigenous Education Reference Group for research Stronger Smarter Learning Communities (SSLC) Project;
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Scientific Reference Group;
- ARC Indigenous Research Reference Group on Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA);
- AIATSIS Research Advisory Committee;
- Narungga Native Title and ILUA Negotiation Committee;
- Co-Chair - Governing Board – United League of Indigenous Nations;
- Governing Board, Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority Inc. (NRA) (2007-);
- Council for the Care of Children, Government of South Australia;
- Joint working party of the SA Government Department of Environment and Heritage/Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC) and the NRPPU on the Murray Futures ‘Narrative plan’ and Business plan;
- International Repatriation Advisory Committee, ministerial appointed by the Federal Government Minister of Indigenous Affairs Jenny Macklin;
- Lead Flinders University Investigator, ARC LIEF Grant, BlackWords database, AUSTLit; and
- Lead Investigator Indigenous Academic Women in Leadership project.

This (incomplete) list of external activities includes contributions by every full-time academic member of the Centre in 2009.

**Goal 4: Participation of Indigenous students in higher education**

**2.4.1 Indigenous student enrolment**

Table 3: Total number of Indigenous student enrolment for 2009, compared to 2008 with an all student comparison.

Students	Year	
	2008	2009
Indigenous Students	120	119
Non-Indigenous Students	13378	14286

Further detailed statistics are available at Appendix C.

Commencements have increased from 39 to 55 and provisional figures for 2010 indicate a further increase. Variations in numbers between years and over time can be explained by: deferrals; relocation issues; financial difficulties; competition between institutions; pipeline effects and graduations; advent of new degree/course opportunities across the education spectrum, and changes in government as well as institutional policy.

Flinders University targets for the inclusion of students from low SES groups should have a beneficial net effect over time on improved Indigenous student enrolment, retention and completion. This approach will be underpinned by the IES and Flinders Indigenous Education Strategy.

## 2.4.2 Institutional strategies to address Indigenous participation

### **Indigenous Law Students Mentoring program**

Staff members in the Centre work closely with staff in the School of Law to link Indigenous Law students with members of the Law Society. All three South Australian universities are involved in this initiative which has proved to be highly beneficial to the students as they are able to develop networks and relationships which facilitate their law careers. The Centre also contributes financially to organised functions.

### **Collaboration with University student services**

As a part of the provision of services to Indigenous students, staff in Tjilbruke Student Services work collaboratively with staff in other student areas including: Health and Counselling; Student Learning Centre; Flinders Housing; administrative staff within the Schools and Faculties, Library and Flinders University Services. To further advocate on students' behalf, Tjilbruke Student Services have membership on University wide committees such as the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Committee, ALLY and the School of Medicine Admissions committee (see 2.5.2 below).

## **Goal 5: Graduation Rates for Indigenous Students**

### 2.5.1 Indigenous student completions

Comparison of completion rates over the period 2006-2009 indicate a stabilisation of outcomes. Gains were made in 2007 and maintained through 2008-2009. The dip in continuing student numbers in 2009 will have some effect on completions in the immediate future but improved enrolments in 2010 should correct this anticipated, cyclic decline.

Table 4: 2008 – 2009 Indigenous student completions compared to other domestic students

Course Level	2008		2009	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
PhD	1	66		93
PhD Coursework		7	1	4
Masters Research		8		9
Masters Coursework	1	197	1	232
Graduate Diploma		113	2	149
Graduate Certificate	4	419	6	457
Bachelor (Graduate Entry)	3	282		261
Bachelor (Honours)		235		244
Bachelor (Pass)	14	1536	12	1568
Diploma		6		13
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2869</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3030</b>

Further detailed statistics are available at Appendix D.

### 2.5.2 Support mechanisms

Yunggoendi First Nations Centre, through the Tjilbruke Student Services Strategic Plan, continues to provide a raft of support mechanisms for Indigenous students. These include:

#### **Resources**

Student common room, photocopier, computer lab and printer, specifically for Indigenous students.

#### *Academic Student Support Staff*

One on one tutoring including: essay writing; tutorial presentation; advocacy; time management; research; academic referencing; editing assignments; computer and technological mentoring; tutorial presentation.

### **Mentors**

To increase the capacity of a student's ability to succeed in their studies, TSS staff members work, liaise and recruit mentors from Faculties to provide discipline-specific assistance. Internal measures indicate this strategy to be highly successful and valuable to students studying within this environment.

### **University Student Services Liaison**

- TSS liaises with Student Services, Health and Counseling, Student Learning Centre, Flinders Housing, administrative staff within the Schools and Faculties, Library and Flinders University Services.
- TSS staff has membership on University wide committees such as Student Services, Equal Opportunity, ALLY and the School of Medicine Admissions committee.

### **Scholarships**

TSS manages several scholarships including the Aborigines Advancement League Scholarship with UniSA; Don Dunstan Foundation Bursary with Adelaide University and the Reconciliation Scholarship with both Adelaide University and the University of South Australia.

### **Liaison with Service Providers within the Wider Community**

As a part of providing quality services to Indigenous students, staff in TSS work with government and non-government and community organisations to develop cadetships, scholarships and to identifying graduate employment opportunities. This includes long-term involvement with the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia and the Catholic Education Office.

### **Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS)**

Yunggoendi administers ITAS to support and assist students in the successful completion of their degree courses. In 2009, thirty-two students engaged ITAS. Of these, twenty-three were first year students and nine were continuing students.



Indigenous student, Luke Hancock, was the winner of the University's Ken Wanganeen medal in 2009. The medal is awarded annually to an Indigenous student with the highest grade point average. Luke graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce.

Luke received ITAS tuition throughout the duration of his degree.

### **Postgraduate: Support of Higher Research Degree Students**

The pool of undergraduate Indigenous students is monitored by Yunggoendi for potential Indigenous postgraduate students and researchers. The Centre has appointed an academic adviser with a specific focus on the recruitment and retention of postgraduate students. This role includes:

- Delivering honours/postgraduate seminars yearly to third-year undergraduate students;
- Writing to graduates encouraging them to consider postgraduate study;
- Advertising postgraduate courses through the Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times;
- Developing postgraduate scholarships and establishing a postgraduate web information page;
- Mentoring, assisting and partnering postgraduate students in publication of their research in academic journals;
- Encouraging and supporting conference presentation;
- Supporting attendance at postgraduate workshops in SA and Interstate.

## **Goal 6: To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Indigenous traditional and contemporary cultures**

### **2.6.1 Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum**

The Draft Flinders University Indigenous Engagement Framework (FIEF) makes a University-wide commitment to ensure that Indigenous knowledges and perspectives are embedded in relevant University teaching curriculum. Goal 4 of the strategy emphasises embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in relevant University teaching curriculum for all students.

### **2.6.2 Cultural competency of staff and students**

Core topics on Indigenous Education, coordinated by Yunggorendi, are included in all undergraduate teacher education degree programs. Similarly, core topics on Indigenous Studies are included in International Tourism, Archaeology and Australian Studies. Indigenous perspectives are included in Law, Social Work, Medicine and Nursing.

Flinders has a Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit (CDIP) in place. The CDIP toolkit is used as a guide for academic staff to ensure that curricula, teaching and research practice are culturally inclusive. Further information on the Toolkit can be found at:

[http://www.flinders.edu.au/equalopportunity/cdip/cdip\\_toolkit/cdip\\_toolkit\\_home.cfm](http://www.flinders.edu.au/equalopportunity/cdip/cdip_toolkit/cdip_toolkit_home.cfm)

Non-Indigenous ITAS tutors are required to undertake cross-cultural awareness training. In addition, the University invites various Faculty and Yunggorendi staff to attend a number of events designed to celebrate Indigenous culture including Aboriginal Reconciliation and NAIDOC Cultural Week.

Yunggorendi staff members are involved in team teaching with non-Indigenous colleagues in all topics presented by the Centre. This represents a continuing, exemplary commitment to cultural competency in the University. In addition they provide a number of guest lectures in disciplines across the University including Politics, Women's Studies, Law and Health.

The University has introduced Graduate Qualities in all its courses. Yunggorendi teaching staff have addressed the cultural implications of this policy and adapted GQs to meet the needs of core topics, the courses in which they are located and the communities that will be affected and influenced by involvement with Flinders graduates.

### **2.6.3 The role of Yunggorendi First Nations Centre in enhancing the status of Indigenous knowledges and overseeing cultural competency at Flinders University**

The involvement of Centre staff with Indigenous community members to meet cultural competency goals is based on its commitment to a range of access, equity, cultural competency and support programs. Ethical, community-based research assists in the development of and respect for cultural protocols and practices and Yunggorendi staff members are increasingly involved in research as well as teaching and professional/community based pursuits – advised and guided by Elders and recognised community organizations.



3<sup>rd</sup> year Bachelor of Education (Junior Primary/Primary) student, Angelina Parfitt pictured with her aunt, at the launch of her mural at University Hall.



## **SECTION 4 HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

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## **SECTION 5 PUBLICATION OF THE STATEMENT**

The current Indigenous Education Statement is available on our website at:

<http://www.flinders.edu.au/yunggoorendi/indigenous-statement.cfm>