7. Indigenous Education Statement

Section 1 Objectives for Indigenous higher education at Swinburne

Swinburne University of Technology is committed to improving educational access, participation and outcomes for Indigenous individuals and communities. In this, the University is guided by the *Swinburne University of Technology Act 2010*, the *National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP)* and other Commonwealth and Victorian Government policies related to social inclusion in tertiary education. These, together with the University's *2011 – 2015 Social Inclusion Action Plan* and *Indigenous Employment Strategy* (Appendix 1) provide the framework for Indigenous engagement, participation and employment at Swinburne.

A 'dual-sector' institution, Swinburne offers a broad range of educational programs from Certificate to PhD level. In this context, the Indigenous Education Office within the University's School for Sustainable Futures plays a coordinating and support role in furthering the broad Indigenous agenda, across both the VET and higher education sectors. This agenda values:

- diversity, inclusiveness of cultures, and pride in Indigenous identity, tradition, knowledge and practice
- educational programs, delivery and support models that meet the expectations and needs of Indigenous individuals and communities
- appropriate employment, professional development and career opportunities for Indigenous individuals
- capacity-building for Indigenous communities

The importance of developing and implementing culturally-appropriate and supportive educational practices is well understood at Swinburne. For Indigenous students, success can be contingent on a learning environment and delivery models that cater to their preferred learning styles as they work to achieve nationally-recognized VET, undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

For these reasons, the University implements educational support programs such as the ITAS tutorial scheme and pathway programs. These initiatives ensure that current and prospective Indigenous students have access to both VET and higher education, and that they feel comfortable in the associated transitions. Community consultation is paramount in guiding policy development, to ensure that the needs of Indigenous students remain a focus of curriculum development, and that Swinburne's policies and practices support access, engagement, the successful attainment of academic qualifications, and sound employment, career and further study outcomes.

The work of the Indigenous Education Office in monitoring and advancing Indigenous education involves broad consultation with representatives of the traditional custodians of the Melbourne area and rural Victoria, representatives from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and Commonwealth and State Government departments. It also necessitates ongoing discussion and liaison with staff, students and senior managers from all parts of the University. To facilitate this level of engagement, Swinburne and Indigenous organizations work together through many different working groups, committees and partnerships (Appendix 2).

Section 2 Achievement of National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) goals in 2011 and plans for future years

2.1 To establish effective arrangements for the participation of Indigenous peoples in educational decision-making

Through the Indigenous Education Office, the University is in direct, ongoing contact with Indigenous agencies and communities. This facilitates ongoing consultation and ensures that Indigenous interests are represented in the deliberations of reference committees and other committees and working groups.

A particularly successful example of this in 2011 was delivery of community services training to 18 Indigenous students. This program built on a partnership developed in 2010 with Healesville Aboriginal Health Service, the Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Cooperative and the Melbourne Storm Rugby League Club. A number of the students who participated in the 2010 program wanted to develop their skills and qualifications further, and they worked with Swinburne and their local communities to recruit other young Indigenous people to enable a viable and vibrant group for 2011. This training developed the knowledge, skills and confidence of participants, and provided them with both an understanding of the community services sector and the qualifications needed to work within it. In recognition of this and other programs, Swinburne was nominated as a finalist in the University Category in the 2011 VAEAI Wurreker Awards.

As noted earlier, Swinburne is active in Indigenous forums and community groups. Indigenous staff members participate on the boards of various external committees of management with direct involvement in regional Indigenous education and employment. Examples include the Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association, Healesville Indigenous Arts Enterprise, Yarra Valley Community Health Service Aboriginal Advisory Committee, DHS Eastern Region Aboriginal Reference Group and the Eastern Indigenous Gambling Group.

In 2010, Swinburne also entered into formal agreements with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL) and the Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association (HICSA). Work through these partnerships continued in 2011, aimed at improving educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

The Executive Director of the School for Sustainable Futures led the development of Swinburne's *2011 – 15 Social Inclusion Action Plan*. Launched in 2011, the development of this Plan was guided by a Steering Committee that included the School's Director (Learning) and Indigenous Education Office staff representatives, as well as the University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (TAFE), Vice-President (Student & Corporate Services), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching) and Director (Human Resources).

Throughout 2011, the Director (Learning) of the School for Sustainable Futures was also a member of the University Council, the Council Campus Planning & Buildings Committee, the University's Academic Senate, the Swinburne Student Amenities Association Board and various other University management committees. She was also a member of the Toorong Marnong Committee which focuses its activities on boosting Indigenous participation in universities throughout Victoria.

Membership of these internal and external committees allows a sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources that will ultimately deliver improved education and employment outcomes for Indigenous communities. Indigenous programs at Swinburne continue to be informed via the work of these committees – courses designed through them take account of the needs of all stakeholders whilst maintaining cultural integrity in instructional design and resource development. As well, Indigenous committee members provide valuable input into the ongoing formative evaluation of delivery and assessment models.

2.2 To increase the number of Indigenous people employed as academic and non-academic staff in Higher Education institutions

In 2001, the University Council adopted a *Policy for the Employment of Indigenous Australians* to encourage and facilitate the employment of Indigenous people, but the following years saw only moderate success in terms of the Policy objectives. So, in 2007 Swinburne sought and obtained a STEP Grant to analyse performance in Indigenous employment and to re-develop the Policy through an appropriately consultative process. This project was conducted jointly by Swinburne's HR Unit and the Indigenous Education Office in 2008, under the leadership of Indigenous academic Dr Barry Judd. The resultant Indigenous Employment Strategy was approved by the University Executive Group in 2009 (Appendix 1). It has four strategic goals:

- To increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians via the provision of on-the-job training and the establishment of a supportive and diverse culture
- To increase the number of Indigenous employees at Swinburne
- To increase postgraduate educational opportunities for Indigenous Australians
- To increase awareness of cross-cultural and Indigenous issues through diversity awareness training

For each of these goals, the Strategy specifies several actions. Appendix 1 provides a full list of these, but actions directly related to boosting Indigenous employment include the following:

- Develop partnerships with feeder schools to capitalise on work experience programs and encourage Indigenous Australians to undertake work experience at Swinburne.
- Attempt to negotiate a more flexible Indigenous Employment clause in the Academic and General Staff Certified Agreement to enable the direct engagement of Indigenous Australians as both employees and students through the use of traineeships.
- Appoint a traineeship coordinator to oversee the Indigenous trainees.
- Source and support Indigenous school leavers to undertake traineeships in entry level positions in partnership with trainee employers such as MEGT (Australia) Ltd, feeder schools and the Indigenous Education Office.
- Contact Indigenous students who have completed study in the past 3 – 4 years in order to use their stories or engage them as role models/mentors – especially in traineeship and apprenticeship areas – and provide scholarships for them to complete "Training and Assessment" qualifications so that they can teach on a flexible basis.
- When vacancies arise or more staff are needed, convert trainees to employment positions.
- Use Indigenous Education Office networks and community knowledge to assist HR to appoint an Indigenous Australian to oversee the key actions detailed in the Strategy including Indigenous recruitment, the facilitation, coordination and establishment of Indigenous networks, and the provision of advice on the expansion of Indigenous education initiatives.
- Engage Indigenous leaders and elders as adjunct appointments within a relevant academic area such as the University's Institute for Social Research.
- Review recruitment and appointment processes to remove barriers to Indigenous applicants via more flexible processes, and to collect Indigenous recruitment and appointment data.
- Recruit an Indigenous academic to a relevant academic area.

- Define the Indigenous field in the Personal Details Form in Alesco (the core University HR system) to align with Commonwealth reporting requirements.
- Adopt employment conditions that better accommodate the specific cultural needs of Indigenous employees, such as the inclusion of provisions for cultural or extended family leave.
- In collaboration with educational leaders, identify areas of teaching and research where Indigenous Australian expertise can make a valuable contribution.
- Establish a recruitment pool of Indigenous Australians including past and current students, and students from feeder schools.
- Advertise relevant positions in national Indigenous media such as the *Koori Mail* and *National Indigenous Times*, and via local and regional email distribution lists.
- Partner with peak Indigenous employers to develop a secondment program to support Indigenous Australians to gain tertiary work experience for up to 12 months.

In total, nine individual Indigenous staff members were employed in continuing or contract positions at Swinburne during 2011 (Table 1). Data on casual employment are much less reliable (Table 2). In part this is because the ATSI status of the individuals employed on a casual basis is often unknown. Data are also incomplete for short-term casual work of various types undertaken in connection with research projects in remote parts of Australia.

Table 1 Indigenous staff members, continuing and fixed term positions, 2011

Organisational unit	Indigenous staff (n)	Indigenous academic staff (n)	Indigenous professional staff (n)
Faculty of Design	1	1	-
Faculty of Higher Education Lilydale	1	1	-
School for Sustainable Futures	4	2	2
School of Health and Community	1	1	-
Student Operations	2	-	2
Totals	9	5	4

Table 2 Indigenous staff members – casual positions, 2011

Organisational unit	Indigenous staff (n)	Indigenous academic staff (n)	Indigenous professional staff (n)
Faculty of Design	2	1	1
Faculty of Higher Education Lilydale	2	2	-
Faculty of Life & Social Sciences	4	-	4
School of Health & Community	1	1	-
School for Sustainable Futures	3	3	-
Totals	12	7	5

2.3 To ensure equitable access for Indigenous students to higher education

Swinburne facilitates access for Indigenous students through modified entry requirements via the Indigenous Special Admissions Scheme (ISAS), coupled with ongoing consultation to ensure that courses are relevant to community and individual needs. The ISAS allows Indigenous students to apply for special consideration of circumstances that include location, educational history, health and/or socio-economic disadvantage. (Students provide community and family contact details for the purposes of confirming Aboriginality.)

In 2011, 15 Indigenous students commenced study in higher education at Swinburne – almost double the level of 2009 commencements and a modest increase on 2010 (Table 3). Of these, 12 began study at undergraduate level, and 3 at postgraduate level.

Table 3 Students commencing in higher education at Swinburne, onshore, 2009 – 2011

	Commencements in higher education (n)		
	2009	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	8	14	15
Other domestic students	4,636	5,688	5,278
International students	3,148	2,588	2,170
Totals	7,792	8,290	7,463

The University has developed a niche, within the TAFE Division, offering higher level (AQF5) programs to foster skill development that should ultimately facilitate success in transition to higher education. The main target group is Indigenous workers in community organizations and government departments. The Indigenous Education Office is active in partnering with the organizations concerned to build workforce skills that will contribute significantly to community capacity.

The development of pathways from VET to higher education is important in improving access to further educational opportunities. Swinburne makes use of its 'intersectoral advantage' in this regard, successfully delivering TAFE programs (often in the workplace or through blended delivery options that incorporate residential and non-residential workshops) for Indigenous cohorts in areas including business, community development, education, youth work and governance.

To date, few Indigenous students have made the transition from TAFE to higher education at Swinburne. So, to provide an additional and more relevant pathway, a new Advanced Diploma of Community Leadership & Development was designed in 2010 and delivered for the first time in 2011. Developed and accredited under Swinburne's delegated authority from the VRQA, this course provides a high level qualification and a new pathway to higher education. Targeted primarily at existing workers in Indigenous agencies, government and the not-for-profit sector who already have certificate IV and/or diploma level credentials, the new course articulates to a Bachelor of Social Science degree with 18 months to complete. The first cohort of nine Indigenous students completed in 2011.

There is also a desire at Swinburne to increase access to postgraduate study for Indigenous people, and a targeted academic scholarship scheme is being implemented, beginning with the Faculty of Design, to overcome barriers to study at this level. Current Indigenous students are encouraged to apply for the scholarships, with mentoring offered to enable recipients to undertake sessional teaching and research. The intention is that some will develop the knowledge and desire to pursue an academic career post-completion (Appendix 1).

2.4 To achieve participation of Indigenous students in higher education at rates commensurate with those of other Australians

Swinburne is committed to building the participation of Indigenous students in tertiary education, via ongoing community consultation and the development and delivery of both 'Indigenous' and mainstream TAFE and higher education courses. In 2011, 295 Indigenous students (self-identified at enrolment) completed 88,660 student contact hours (SCH) of accredited VET training through Swinburne. Most of the enrolments were in community services/development, emergency/medical response, sport and recreation, social housing, youth work and general education/foundation skills.

Indigenous traineeships with qualifications from Certificate II to Certificate IV level are a feature of Swinburne's provision, in areas including financial services, business and IT. Effective liaison with employers ensured that these trainees developed important employability skills, and in 2010 a generic cross-cultural competency was added to all Indigenous traineeship programs. Delivery of this competency in 2011 featured a sharing of cultural experiences with Indigenous students in Canada.

Over recent years, participation by Indigenous students in higher education at Swinburne has increased, but slowly (Tables 4 & 5). Traditionally, most enrolments have been in Management & Commerce, but recent years have seen enrolments more evenly spread across the Creative Arts, Engineering, Management & Commerce and Society & Culture broad fields of education.

Table 4 Student enrolments in higher education at Swinburne, onshore, 2009 – 2011

	Student enrolments(n)		
	2009	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	27	30	32
Other domestic students	12,992	13,368	13,789
International students	5,367	6,634	5,768
Totals	18,386	20,031	19,589

Table 5 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander enrolments in higher education at Swinburne, onshore, by broad field of education, 2005 – 2011

Broad field of education	Indigenous enrolments (n)						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Creative Arts	4	4	3	5	6	9	7
Engineering, etc.	1	1	4	4	5	5	6
Health	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Information Technology	1	1	2	1	0	1	1
Management & Commerce	8	7	9	12	10	6	8
Natural & Physical Sciences	1	0	1	3	1	1	1
Society & Culture	12	9	9	6	5	8	9
Total	28	23	29	31	27	30	32

Notwithstanding the increased number of Indigenous student commencements in 2010 and 2011 compared with in previous years, access and participation rates at Swinburne remain low by Victorian and national standards (Table 6).

Table 6 Access and participation, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students in higher education at Swinburne, onshore, by broad field of education, 2006 – 2011

Access & participation at Swinburne[1]	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Access rate[2] (%)	0.24	0.39	0.28	0.17	0.25	0.22
Participation rate[3] (%)	0.20	0.26	0.27	0.22	0.22	0.29
Participation ratio[4]	0.36	0.46	0.48	0.40	0.39	n/a

[1] Data for undergraduate and postgraduate students are combined.
[2] Access rate = % *commencing* Indigenous students in the *commencing* domestic student population.
[3] Participation rate = % Indigenous students in the *total* domestic student population.
[4] Participation ratio = the participation rate of Indigenous students ÷ the proportion of Indigenous students in the relevant population.

As noted, Indigenous students participate in a range of mainstream programs delivered across the Swinburne TAFE Division, as well as in accredited programs offered through the Indigenous Education Office that are designed specifically to meet the needs of Indigenous Australians. In 2011, this training was provided in areas including community development, community services, training and assessment, youth work, sport and recreation, financial services, business administration and business governance – in addition to Certificate I, II and III in Mumgu-Dahl Tyama-Tiyt foundation studies.

The University's provision is also shaped through close collaboration with other organisations in support of *their* specific Indigenous employment strategies and training priorities. Examples are AFL SportsReady and the ANZ Banking Group. In the case of the latter, students undertake the Certificate II in Business while they complete Years 11 and 12. On completion, a number have been offered full time positions as Certificate III trainees with ANZ (currently the main recruiter of Indigenous trainees from Swinburne), and in 2011 the Certificate III in Financial Services was provided throughout rural Victoria to ANZ trainees. Only three of 29 commencing trainees did not complete.

Swinburne focusses on training at Certificate III level and above to increase opportunities for employment for Indigenous students, and also to capitalize on the pathway opportunities available in a dual sector university. As noted previously, the take-up of these pathway opportunities has been below expectations to date, but completion of the new Advanced Diploma of Community Leadership & Development in 2011 by an inaugural cohort of nine Indigenous students is an encouraging sign.

Continued development of pathways into TAFE, and from TAFE to higher education, will further enable Indigenous students to choose options that offer potential for ongoing, meaningful employment in various Indigenous and mainstream roles. Swinburne is committed to developing education-to-employment pathways, and the career-related benefits of tertiary education are widely promoted.

This work is complemented by the development and promotion of industry engaged learning and international mobility programs. For example, in 2011 nine Indigenous Swinburne students and two staff members (including one Indigenous staff member) participated in a mobility program organized through the Commonwealth's Endeavour Awards Scheme. This week-long study tour to Timor Leste complemented the participants' studies in community services and youth work.

2.5 To enable Indigenous students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in Higher Education as for other Australians

At Swinburne, the Indigenous Education Office works with the higher education faculties and TAFE schools to support Indigenous students via several support programs. These include advice and assistance at the time of course selection and enrolment, and tutoring through the ITAS tutorial scheme. As a result of these initiatives, Indigenous students feel more 'at ease' in their learning environment and better prepared to undertake and complete their studies. Thus, tutoring and mentoring programs are vital tools for the success of Indigenous students at Swinburne and in the wider community. The employment of Indigenous academics is also a key to providing a culturally-appropriate, supportive learning environment (Section 2.3).

Throughout Australia, mean Indigenous student success rates are usually 15 – 20 percentage points below those of domestic students generally (Figure 1). This has not been so at Swinburne – in most years Indigenous success rates have been close to those of other domestic students, though with more year-on-year fluctuation due to low enrolment numbers.

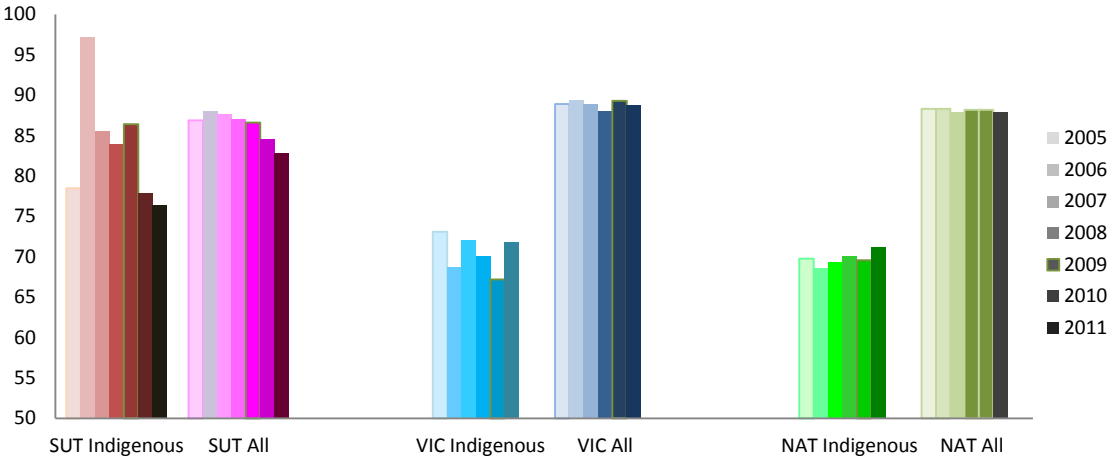

Figure 1 Success rate, Indigenous students versus all domestic students, 2005 – 2011

While comparative data for other universities and jurisdictions are lacking, grade point averages of domestic students have declined over the past couple of years at Swinburne, in line with a decline in mean success rates (Figure 2). The decline in grade point average appears to be marginally greater for Indigenous students than for other domestic students but, again, this may be an artefact of low Indigenous enrolments.

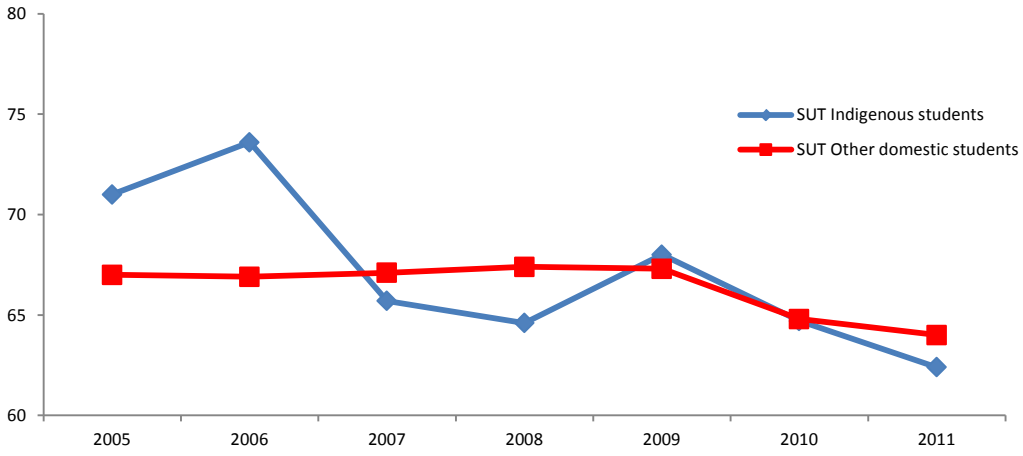

Figure 2 GPA, Indigenous students *v.* other domestic students, Swinburne, 2005 – 2011

DIISRTE publishes data on retention for various equity groups, including Indigenous students, but comparable statewide and national data for either 'all domestic students' or 'other domestic students' are lacking. These data are available for Swinburne, and they indicate Indigenous student retention rates to be below those of domestic students, but usually well above Victorian and national benchmarks for Indigenous students (Figure 3).

Retention of Indigenous students at Swinburne has been reasonably stable at around 70 – 75% in most years. The magnitude of year-on-year fluctuations in retention is likely to derive from low Indigenous enrolment numbers (Figure 3).

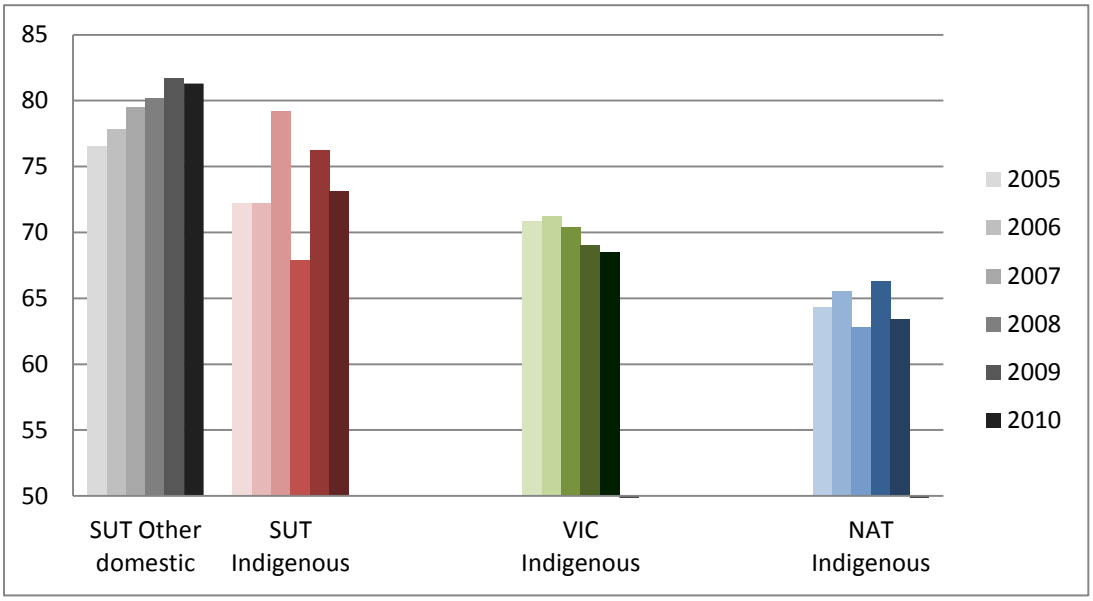

Figure 3 Retention rates in higher education, 2005 – 2010

Each year, 4 – 6 Indigenous students complete a higher education course at Swinburne (Table 7). In recent years, the majority of these completions have been for undergraduate degree courses.

Table 7 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander student completions, higher education at Swinburne, 2006 – 2011

Higher education courses	Completions (n)					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Indigenous students						
• Undergraduate	1	4	1	3	4	4
• Postgraduate	5	2	3	3	-	1
• Total	6	6	4	6	4	5
Other domestic students						
• Undergraduate	2,518	2,405	2,266	2,685	2,956	3,082
• Postgraduate	1,084	1,210	1,529	1,888	2,180	2,027
• Total	3,602	3,615	3,795	4,573	5,136	5,109

Partly to strengthen participation and academic achievement for Indigenous students, the University has developed a comprehensive *2011 – 15 Social Inclusion Action Plan.* This Plan includes strategies and targets for Indigenous education and employment at Swinburne.

Through its Strategic Planning & Quality Unit, Swinburne ensures that Indigenous student participation and performance data provide an accurate basis from which to target, develop and evaluate support activities. As well, the Indigenous Education Office continues to monitor and evaluate national and state programs to provide accurate benchmarks and reference points for the provision of culturally-appropriate support and study assistance.

2.6 To provide all Australian students with an understanding of, and respect for, traditional and contemporary Indigenous cultures

Swinburne is committed to the teaching of Indigenous studies and cultures, as evidenced by the development and delivery of Indigenous-specific programs and units. These units include LIN101 *Indigenous Australian Studies* and two new units first delivered in 2011: LIN200 *Indigenous Representations* and LIN201 *International Indigenous Perspectives*. Another unit, LIN300 Indigenous Enterprise & Entrepreneurship, was developed in 2011 for initial delivery in 2012. The four units now form a minor study sequence in degree courses available through the Faculty of Higher Education Lilydale.

Using the skills of Indigenous elders, academics and teachers, the promotion of culture within programs and units is in line with community expectations for Indigenous education. Moreover, it contributes to a rewarding and successful learning experience for cohorts that include a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

The adoption of the *Indigenous Employment Strategy* in 2009 (Section 2.2, Appendix 2) means that managers are encouraged to employ Indigenous staff in mainstream positions, including teaching positions. An important bi-product of an increasing Indigenous teaching presence should be elevated student awareness of Indigenous cultures and issues, across the disciplines, in both TAFE and higher education.

The University's work in this area extends to community-engaged research and consultancy. Examples of 2011 work in this area include:

- PhD research conducted by Ms Skye Krichauff on relations between Indigenous people and settlers in colonial South Australia
- research conducted by postdoctoral fellow Dr Martine Hawkes on the 2008 Apology
- convening the international Historical Justice and Memory Research Network through Professor Klaus Neumann of Swinburne's Institute for Social Research (ISR)
- ARC Linkage funded work, led by ISR Director Professor Julian Thomas and Deputy Director Associate Professor Ellie Rennie with: 1) Goolarri Media Enterprises (a Broome-based NFP community radio and television broadcaster) on the use of digital media in social innovation; and 2) the Central Land Council and Centre for Appropriate Technologies on home internet services in remote communities and their outstations
- National consultation undertaken on behalf of Innovation & Business Skills Australia, funded by the Office for the Arts, on the training needs of the Indigenous visual arts industry, conducted by Ms Christine Hayes and Ms Anne Jenkins from Swinburne's Centre for Lifelong Learning
- research led by Dr Karen Hughes on: 1) cross-cultural exchange and historical agency in the Roper River basin during 1890 – 2010, with the aid of an AIATSIS grant; and 2) Ngarrindjeri and cross-cultural histories, exploring the multiple layers of exchange relationships between Ngarrindjeri and settlers in southern Australia

The University also provides cultural recognition through staff, student and organizational participation in cultural activities including the Day of Healing, and Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks. Through involvement in these and other events, Swinburne students become more aware of traditional and contemporary Indigenous concerns, and it is hoped that this heightened awareness will build mutual respect for Indigenous culture and heritage – and a growing respect for the ongoing role of Indigenous communities in Australia today.

Section 3 – Expenditure of Indigenous Support Program Grant

	INCOME for Indigenous Support Program for 2011	
1	2011 ISP grant	$ 117,160
2	Unspent 2010 ISP funds, carried over to 2011 – as reported in 2011 audited annual financial statements.	nil
3	TOTAL ISP income for 2011	$ 117,160

4	EXPENDITURE of Indigenous Support Program (ISP) 2011 (from Item 1)	
4a	Operating costs, including salaries, for Indigenous support services. - Salaries - Travel (estimated)	 $ 117,160 $ 250
4b	Capital Items – major items purchased for Indigenous student/staff use only	
4c	Higher education provider overheads (on-costs calculated at 25% of salaries).	$ 29,290
4d	Other Indigenous Support Program expenditure	nil
4e	Total Indigenous higher education expenditure for 2011	$146,700

5	EXPENDITURE of Indigenous Support Program carry over funds 2011 (from Item 2)	
5a	Operating costs, including salaries, for Indigenous support services.	n/a
5b	Capital Items.	n/a
5c	Higher education provider overheads.	n/a
5d	Other Indigenous Support Program expenditure.	n/a
5e	Total expenditure of carry over funds.	n/a

6	INCOME for Other Indigenous funds provided in 2011[1]	
6a	Other funds provided to Indigenous higher education (non ISP funds, including other Commonwealth grants, state government grants & privately sourced funds).	n/a
6b	Total Indigenous higher education income for 2011	n/a

[1] Excludes ARC and ITAS funding.

7	EXPENDITURE of Other Funds in 2011 (Item 6b)	
7a	Expenditure of other funds provided to Indigenous higher education (non ISP funds including other Commonwealth grants, state government grants & privately sourced funds).	n/a
7b	Total Indigenous higher education expenditure for 2011	n/a

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Section 5 – Publication of the Statement

The 2011 Indigenous Education Statement will be placed on the Indigenous Education Office webpage at the following address: http://www.swinburne.edu.au/indigenous/

Appendix 1

Swinburne University of Technology
Indigenous Employment Strategy

Background

The development of this Strategy was coordinated by Dr Barry Judd in order to provide a framework for improving the involvement of Indigenous Australians in the Higher Education sector of the University. The Strategy focuses on ways to increase and support Indigenous Australians in their educational and employment endeavours.

The social and economic marginality experienced by Indigenous Australians extends to their ability to access, participate and succeed in Higher Education, both as students in undergraduate degree and postgraduate level study programs, and as members of the Higher Education workforce where they are currently under-represented in academic and professional roles.

Swinburne's highly successful Indigenous TAFE education program, which generates approximately $800,000 in income annually, is an example of an initiative that addresses Indigenous issues whilst delivering organisational benefits. It is expected that advancing Indigenous Australian employment across the University will deliver similar organisational benefits. For example, increasing the number of Indigenous academic positions should enhance Swinburne's ability to undertake Indigenous-focussed research, and attract competitive grants from the ARC and other bodies to support such work.

The paper recommends a number of short and longer term actions to improve Indigenous engagement within Swinburne.

Objective and goals

Swinburne's objective is to increase the educational and employment opportunities of Indigenous Australians. Four goals have been identified to aid strategic planning, and these are to:

1. Increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians through the provision of on-the-job training and establishment of a supportive and diverse culture
2. Increase postgraduate educational opportunities for Indigenous Australians
3. Increase Indigenous employees at Swinburne University
4. Increase awareness of cross-cultural and Indigenous issues through diversity awareness training.

These goals reinforce each other and should work towards achieving the proposed objective for the University.

Goal 1 Increase employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians through provision of on-the-job training and establishment of a supportive and diverse culture

According to 2006 ABS census data, Indigenous Australians are under-represented in the Australian workforce. Though the Indigenous employment rate has improved in recent years, it remains three times higher (14%) than the national rate (5%). The recommendations that follow lay the foundations for Indigenous Australians to engage with Swinburne and increase their skills and future employment prospects. In particular, work experience and traineeship programs support the transition of Indigenous Australians from secondary to post-secondary education and employment.

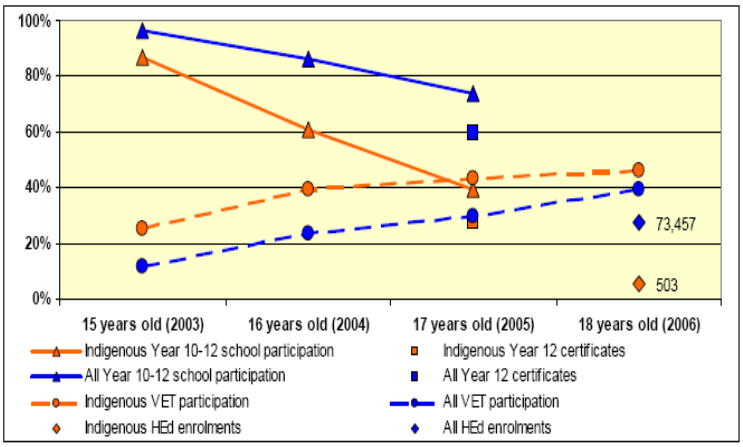
Recommendations

- Develop partnerships with feeder schools to capitalise on work experience programs and encourage Indigenous Australians to undertake work experience at Swinburne.
- Attempt to negotiate a more flexible Indigenous Employment clause in the Academic and General Staff Certified Agreement to enable the University to directly engage Indigenous Australians as both employees and students through the use of traineeships.
- Appoint a traineeship coordinator to oversee the Indigenous trainees. This position could take responsibility for the coordination of all trainees at Swinburne. This role is currently being informally managed by the Business Manager, TAFE Engineering Business Operations.
- Source and support Indigenous school leavers to undertake traineeships in entry level positions, in partnership with trainee employers such as MEGT and feeder schools.
- Contact Indigenous students who have completed study over the past three or four years in order to use their stories or engage them as role models or mentors, especially in the areas of traineeships or apprenticeships, as we can provide scholarships for them to complete “Training And Assessment” qualifications and then teach on a flexible basis.
- Where vacancies arise or additional staffing is needed, convert trainees to employment at Swinburne.

Goal 2 Increase post graduate educational opportunities for Indigenous Australians

Education is a key to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with many studies showing improved health and socioeconomic status to be directly linked to educational participation and achievement. Indigenous students currently engage in education and training at lower rates, and achieve lower levels of educational attainment, than do Australian students generally.

Transition of a cohort of students through secondary school, VET, completion of a Year 12 certificate and commencement of Higher Education.



Source: DEEWR Paper provided to IHEAC, Feb 08

A range of issues affect participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in education, particularly at post graduate levels, including: access to educational institutions; financial constraints; and community expectations. An academic scholarship scheme at Swinburne would support Indigenous Australians overcome some of these barriers and enable Indigenous Australians to undertake post graduate study. Current Indigenous students should be encouraged to apply. Further support and mentoring could be offered to enable scholarship holders to undertake sessional teaching and research work with a view to developing the necessary skills to undertake an academic career at Swinburne upon completion.

Recommendations

- Implement a targeted academic scholarship scheme for Indigenous Australians undertaking post graduate qualifications.
- Encourage and enable scholarship holders to undertake sessional teaching and research work to build an academic skill base.
- Consider instituting an Indigenous Research Methodologies Master Class.

Goal 3 Increase Indigenous employees at Swinburne University

Indigenous Australians are acutely under represented within the Victorian Higher Education workforce. The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council data suggests that while some positive gains have been made through the employment of Indigenous academics occupying teaching only roles, those engaged in research only and research and teaching positions are in decline since 2006.

While the employment of Indigenous Australians in academic roles, especially research only positions, is critical to Indigenous Australian participation in Australia's higher education sector, the employment of general staff is as important in attempts to create a critical mass of Indigenous Australians in the sector. The enhancement of employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians also has the potential to generate additional income insofar as increases in Indigenous staff numbers are likely to attract increases in Indigenous students to an institution.

Swinburne's aim is to increase the number of Indigenous employees to better reflect the population percentage of Victorian Indigenous Australians and hopefully support the establishment of a highly visible and vibrant Indigenous Australian presence on campus. The Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 estimates the Indigenous population to represent 0.6% of Victoria's total population.

To support this goal Swinburne must increase its reporting capabilities to address current challenges in the collection and reporting of accurate Indigenous employee data. A number of factors impede Swinburne's ability to capture and report meaningful Indigenous data including whether successful applicants and current staff identify as Indigenous Australians, system constraints and varied methods of engagement such as consultancies and traineeships.

Recommendations

- Utilise Office of Indigenous Education networks and knowledge of Indigenous communities to assist Human Resources to appoint an Indigenous Australian to oversee the key actions detailed in this strategy including Indigenous recruitment programs, the facilitation, coordination and establishment of Indigenous networks and the provision of advice on the expansion of Indigenous education initiatives.

- Recruit an Indigenous academic to a relevant academic area.

- Engage Indigenous leaders and elders as adjunct appointments within a relevant academic area such as ISR.

- Review recruitment and appointment processes to collect indigenous data and remove any barriers to Indigenous applicants by introducing more flexible appointment processes. For example the lack of Indigenous representation on selection panels may deter Indigenous applicants.

- Define the indigenous field in the personal details form in Alesco to align with DEEWR reporting requirements.

- Adopt employment conditions that reflect and better accommodate the specific cultural needs of Indigenous employees such as the inclusion of cultural or extended family leave.

- In collaboration with educational leaders, identify areas of teaching and research where Indigenous Australian expertise can make the valuable contribution to the University.

- Establish a recruitment pool of Indigenous Australians including past students, secondary students from feeder schools and the Indigenous students currently receiving tuition at Swinburne (currently 130 students).

- Advertise all relevant positions in national Indigenous media (for example, the *Koori Mail*, *National Indigenous Times*), and through local and regional email distribution lists).

- Attempt to negotiate a more flexible Indigenous Employment clause in the Academic and General Staff Certified Agreement to better enable to University to engage Indigenous Australians as employees.

- Partner with peak Indigenous employers to develop a secondment program that sees Indigenous Australians supported in gaining tertiary work experience for up to 12 months.

Goal 4 Increase awareness of cross-cultural and Indigenous issues through diversity awareness training

In the 2007 DEEWR Indigenous Education Statements, 25 of 39 Australian universities reported that they have an Indigenous member on the University Council or Senate, 30 out of 39 universities reported that they have an Indigenous advisory committee to advise senior management on Indigenous matters, and almost all universities report Indigenous representation on academic and management committees.

To maximise the opportunities to attract and retain Indigenous staff and students, Swinburne should consider having Indigenous representation in University governance to ensure cross-cultural and Indigenous issues are explored and addressed.

Recommendations

- Consider having Indigenous representation in University governance through the use of Cultural Chair (Professorial or Adjunct) appointments.
- Ensure all managers receive cross-cultural and Indigenous awareness training as part of compulsory diversity training.
- Review relevant HR policies to ensure that Swinburne's commitment to diversity and inclusive practices is explicit (for example, in the Appointments Policy).
- Review HR procedures to include flexibilities in recruitment, selection and appointment practices (for example, in the Recruitment Strategy).

Appendix 2

Examples of Indigenous agencies and committees with which Swinburne worked in 2011

1	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
2	Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation
3	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria Local Indigenous Network (LIN) Broker Community Planning Steering Group
4	AFL SportsReady Traineeship Program Partnership
5	Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Service
6	Central Land Council
7	Eastern Indigenous Gambling Group
8	Goolarri Media Enterprises
9	Healesville Indigenous Arts Enterprise
10	Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association
11	Inner Eastern Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)
12	Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative Ltd
13	Ngwala/Melbourne Storm Youth Work Training Working Group
14	Stronger Smarter Institute, Queensland University of Technology
15	Toorong Marnong Initiative
16	Woordungin Committee
17	Yarra Valley Community Health Service Aboriginal Advisory Committee
18	Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd
19	Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Wannik Unit
20	Victorian Department of Human Services Eastern Region Aboriginal Reference Group