

# GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT 2011

Griffith University  
GUMURRII Student Support Unit

## SECTION 1: OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

Griffith University's strategic planning framework re-affirms its founding commitment to diversity, social justice and community engagement, and embeds specific objectives towards improving opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous Australians.<sup>1</sup> Interlocking plans across all University academic and business unit activities specify the expected outcomes of the University's strategic goals and strategies as well as the performance indicators and targets for each of these goals. These plans include and prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student advancement initiatives, and promote reconciliation and reinforce the responsibilities of all elements of the University for implementation of strategies and goals relating to Indigenous higher education.

The *Griffith University Strategic Plan 2009–2013*<sup>2</sup> states the University's responsibility to 'promote social inclusion.....and to increasing participation and success in tertiary studies of Indigenous students' (pg. 10), and to develop cultural competencies by enabling students to 'explore the international and Indigenous aspects of their disciplines through course content' (pg. 7). The *Griffith University Equity and Diversity Plan 2011–2013*<sup>3</sup> is aligned with these strategic priorities, identifying specific expectations and responsibilities for planning and implementation and providing important contextual information and guidance. Collectively, these strategies support the realisation of the aspirations of the *Griffith University Statement on Reconciliation*.<sup>4</sup>

In 2011, Griffith continued to develop the structures, policies and cultural framework underlying its commitment to Indigenous education and reports the following key achievements:

- 4 students were selected to participate in the Charles Perkins trip to Oxford and Cambridge
- 1 student was successful in receiving the Charles Perkins Scholarship
- 1 student was the recipient of the Governor-General's Indigenous Student Teacher Education Scholarship
- 2 students participated in the Queensland Indigenous Student Ambassador tour of British Columbia, Canada
- The formation and implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding which incorporates an Indigenous Exchange Agreement with First Nations People, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Indigenous' remains in this report consistent with DEEWR terminology; but should be read as 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' as preferred by Griffith Indigenous community representatives and staff

<sup>2</sup> For details, see <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/pdf/strategic-plan-2009-2013.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> For details, see [http://www.griffith.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/299407/griffith-university-equity-diversity-plan-2011-2013.pdf](http://www.griffith.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/299407/griffith-university-equity-diversity-plan-2011-2013.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> For details, see <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/governance/mission-statement/statement-reconciliation>

- Griffith's Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Partnerships (ICEPP) area has extended its networks nationally and internationally as well as with local and state government departments and schools. For example: the Professor of ICEPP and Griffith's Elders were inaugural signatories for a Partnership Agreement between local Indigenous communities and the Department of Communities; ICEPP formalised partnerships with Metropolitan South Institute of Technology, and local high schools such as Loganlea, Shailer Park, and Capalaba; and an agreement was finalised with Amnesty International and St John's Cathedral to support Indigenous education programs.

## SECTION 2: ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY (AEP) GOALS IN 2011 AND PLANS FOR FUTURE YEARS

### 2.1 Establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decision-making

**TABLE 1: Membership of Griffith University decision-making bodies**

<i>University Governing/Policy Determination Bodies:</i>	
University Council	Includes an Aboriginal Elder in its membership.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee <sup>5</sup>	This committee is currently the University's principal policy advisory body on Indigenous issues and represents Indigenous interests in University Indigenous strategy development. Membership includes representatives from DEEWR, Indigenous staff and students, Community Elders (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), and Equity (staff and student) representatives.
Equity Committee	Includes Indigenous staff representatives – the Head of the GUMURRII SSU and the Coordinator of the Indigenous Research Network. An Indigenous student, nominated through the Griffith Indigenous Student Association (GISA) is also a member.
Student Orientation and Engagement Committee (SOEC)	Includes the Head, GUMURRII SSU and sponsors initiatives to improve early education experiences for Indigenous students. GUMURRII is represented on the SOEC which then links into broader University activities.
The Cape York Institute (CYI)	A strategic initiative to facilitate the development, engagement and sustainability of communities in the Cape York region.
Academic Committee	The Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement, Policy and Partnerships (ICEPP) sits on this committee.
<i>Examples of School/Faculty Initiatives:</i>	
Faculty and administration equity sub-committees i.e. Academic Administration, Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Education	Specific interest areas include the coordination of cross-cultural awareness raising sessions (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures), developing other local reconciliation strategies, and providing assistance for students experiencing financial hardship.
Advisory committee, Faculty of Nursing and Health	Has ongoing Indigenous representation; the Logan-based Learning Assistance Officer is the GUMURRII Student Support Unit representative.

<sup>5</sup> For details, see <http://www.griffith.edu.au/ua/aa/secretariat/committees/>

Health Steering Group	This is a steering committee established to help guide the Cherbourg health initiatives.
<i>Indigenous staff/community representation on:</i>	
Elders-in-Residence Program, Office of the Provost (Logan/Gold Coast campuses)	Four Indigenous Elders are appointed to: provide cultural mentoring and support for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff in the areas of teaching, research and learning; engage with local Indigenous school students and their families to encourage participation in tertiary education and to participate in various University forums and activities.
Executive Board of the World Indigenous Higher Education Network Consortium (WINHEC)	The Professor of Indigenous Policy, Community Engagement and Partnerships is Co-Chair and currently holds the international portfolios for the Academic and Research Working Parties.
National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN)	2 positions — Deputy Chair, Member
Griffith University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development Working Party	Co-chaired by an Indigenous academic, the working party includes other Indigenous staff and is guided by a Reference Group of Community Elders and senior managers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous).
Griffith Annual Senior Staff Development Workshop	Includes the Head, GUMURRII Student Support Unit and the Professor of ICEPP as participants.
Gold Coast Campus Advisory Committee	Elder in Residence, a Senior Elder of the Kombumerri (Gold Coast) people is a member.
Human Research Ethics Committee	The Professor of ICEPP and the Coordinator of the Indigenous Research Network currently hold membership.
Staff selection committees	Include Indigenous representation whenever an identified position is advertised.

Structurally, there are five (5) areas of activity dedicated to the advancement of Indigenous education within Griffith, all led by Indigenous staff:

1. The GUMURRII Student Support Unit (SSU) has a major responsibility and commitment for providing access to University study for Indigenous people and its main focus is the recruitment and support of Griffith's Indigenous students. GUMURRII SSU provides a leadership role in promoting cultural awareness and social justice for Indigenous people, and is represented in a range of University forums, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee.
2. The work of the Professor of Indigenous Policy, Community Engagement and Partnership Office focuses on providing advice and consultancy in key policy areas—internally and externally—and developing community engagement and partnerships that will enhance life opportunities for Indigenous peoples. Professor Boni Robertson holds this position and has a strong reputation and profile within Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities for her enduring commitment to improving race relations in the Australian context, and developing initiatives at the local, national and international level to enhance educational outcomes for Indigenous people.

Professor Boni Robertson was invited by the International Organizing Committee for World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) to be the keynote for Australia at the 2011 WIPCE Conference. The theme of the paper was *Cultural*

*Innovation and Partnership for Indigenous Peoples in Higher Education* and part of the paper addressed the need for the positioning of Elders both at the local and international level within higher education. The formal proposal to establish an International Indigenous Elders Alliance was tabled at the 2011 WINHEC Executive Committee meeting in Peru for discussion. This proposal was endorsed by WINHEC and will be formally launched at the 2012 WINHEC meeting in Taiwan. Two hundred and forty-three Elders from across the world have expressed an interest in being members of the Alliance. The discussion also led to a number of universities taking up the initiative to formally engage Elders either as Elders-in-Residence or on a committee or advisory board within the sector.

The proposal developed by Griffith through ICEPP and the Council of Elders was also supported and strengthened by a partnership that has been established with the PVC International at Griffith whose financial support enabled the GU Elders to travel with Professor Robertson to Peru to speak to the proposal. The partnership has also led to Griffith hosting the Inaugural National Indigenous Elders Think Tank which resulted in 75 Elders from universities across Australia attending. The Think Tank has resulted in 5 Elders who attended the forum negotiating to have a Council of Elders established within their respective universities.

This has led to a commitment for Griffith University through the Council of Elders and ICEPP and the PVC International to host a Pacific Rim Indigenous Elders forum in either late 2012 or early 2013.

The Council of Elders has been actively involved in initiatives developed across Griffith and by external stakeholders around Indigenous Studies, leadership, domestic violence, developing partnerships with communities, art, community engagement, child safety and development of policies. A scan of Elders activity through the Council of Elders or the Elders-in-Residence has indicated that since mid-2011, the GU Elders have actively engaged in 94 initiatives, met with 31 staff and students who have sought their counsel on various matters, performed the Cultural Welcome or Acknowledgement for 49 functions and co-hosted 4 forums.

The Professor of Indigenous Policy has been invited to deliver the keynote address at 14 national and international forums on issues pertinent to Indigenous education, policy development, violence prevention, the United Nations, human trafficking, child safety, youth justice, human rights and cultural heritage and protection.

3. The Indigenous Research Network provides postgraduate research and career support to all Indigenous scholars at the University, while developing a community-based research focus.
4. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development Working Party is developing a “whole-of-university” approach to Indigenous curriculum that will be offered to all Griffith students. Dr Chris Matthews is the Indigenous Co-Chair and is an academic in the field of applied mathematics and mathematics education.
5. The Indigenous Employment Strategy continued to be overseen by the Indigenous Employment Officer and complements Indigenous student employment and professional development strategies facilitated by the Indigenous Cadetship Scheme administered by Student Services.

Griffith has always sought the advice of community Elders, and has established both the Griffith University Council of Elders, and an Elders-in-Residence program. The Council of Elders aims to work closely with staff and students to help make Griffith a place that is culturally aware and progressive, and encourages partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within Griffith and the wider community. By working together with students and staff, the Council has been able to position Griffith as a place which

encourages Indigenous people to study and work at the University in the spirit of partnership, reconciliation and respect.

Griffith also continues to develop and/or participate in programs that develop Indigenous students as future leaders i.e. the Griffith Indigenous Student Association (GISA), the Cape York Institute Higher Expectations (Tertiary) program, mentoring programs etc.

## **2.2 Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed, as academic and non-academic staff in higher education institutions**

Griffith finalised its revised *Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES) 2009–2012*<sup>6</sup>, following a review of the former IES in 2008 with all stakeholders.

Meeting our Indigenous employment target means improving the way our business is undertaken and to look further afield to ensure Griffith is seen as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Promoting Indigenous employment opportunities across the University is a continual commitment which forms a framework of social inclusion as outlines in our current Equity and Diversity Plan.

To ensure the plan meets its overall objectives, Griffith recently established a network of volunteer staff “Equity Champions”, who assist Griffith to fulfil its equity and diversity objectives.

Currently in development through our Office of Human Resource Management is an Indigenous recruitment tool which will allow Indigenous Australians considering employment at the University to lodge an expression of interest for upcoming vacancies. This expression of interest will be held on file for a period of twelve months and actively matched against any suitable position that may arise during this time.

It is important to note that whilst every attempt is made to increase our Indigenous representation across the University there is a formal recruitment process to follow. These processes can be modified to increase the University’s commitment to Indigenous employment, but direct appointments cannot be made without a selection process.

As of June 2012 the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff currently working in identified positions is 15. Out of the 15 identified positions 14 are employed within the Indigenous Student Support Unit, GUMURRII and the remaining position is employed in the Office of Human Resource Management.

### GUMURRII Student Support Unit staff

- 1 x Unit Head HEW Level 9
- 1 x Indigenous Partnership Officer HEW Level 7
- 9 x Learning Assistance Officers HEW Level 6
- 1 x Administration Coordinator HEW Level 6
- 1 x ITAS Coordinator HEW Level 5
- 1 x Unit Secretary HEW Level 4

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<sup>6</sup> See [http://www.griffith.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/174440/indigenous-employment-strategy.pdf](http://www.griffith.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/174440/indigenous-employment-strategy.pdf)

Office of Human Resource Management staff

1 x Indigenous Employment – Equity and Diversity Project Officer HEW Level 7

As of June 30<sup>th</sup> 2012 the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff currently employed in continuing and fixed-term positions at Griffith is 50.

The total number of Indigenous academic staff in continuing positions including the newly appointed Professor of Indigenous Research is 16, which represents 1.06% of the total staff cohort.

**TABLE 2: Academic staff distribution**

<b>ACADEMIC GROUPS</b>	<b>Non-Indigenous Staff</b>	<b>Indigenous Male Staff</b>	<b>Indigenous Female Staff</b>	<b>Indigenous Staff Total</b>
ARTS, EDUCATION AND LAW	397	4	2	6
GRIFFITH BUSINESS SCHOOL	271	1	1	2
ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES	42	Nil	3	3
HEALTH	382	2	1	3
SCIENCE, ENVIRONMENT, ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY	416	1	Nil	1

The total number of Indigenous professional staff in continuing positions is 34, which represents 1.49% of the total staff cohort.

**TABLE 3: HEW level professional staff distribution**

<b>HEW LEVELS</b>	<b>Non-Indigenous</b>	<b>Indigenous Males</b>	<b>Indigenous Females</b>	<b>Total Indigenous Staff</b>
HEW 1	20	1	Nil	1
HEW 2	30	1	1	2
HEW 3	180	1	2	3
HEW 4	427	Nil	4	4
HEW 5	568	2	2	4

HEW 6	356	3	10	13
HEW 7	287	2	1	3
HEW 8	202	1	1	2
HEW 9	86	Nil	1	1
HEW 10	64	Nil	Nil	Nil
Outside Award	60	Nil	1	1

The majority of Griffith's Indigenous staff are employed within mainstream positions across the University. These positions have not been specifically identified and the individual staff member has been successful with winning their appointment on merit.

The 2011 – 2013 Equity and Diversity Plan has been conceptualised within a framework of social inclusion, and builds on Griffith's history of an enduring commitment to equity and diversity.

Under the Plan Indigenous employment is a key element supported by Griffith University's Indigenous Employment Strategy, which sets out a commitment to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the provision of pathways to employment, professional development and retention strategies.

Indigenous Employment - Equity and Diversity Officer (previously known as the Indigenous Employment Coordinator), fully funded by the University since 2001, is employed to oversee the IES implementation, supported by a monitoring group which reports to the DVC and Provost.

The overall aim of the IES is to develop opportunities for Indigenous Australians to:

- improve access to continuing employment;
  - improve participation in a wide range of work areas;
  - improve representation at all levels of employment, and;
  - provide career development opportunities.
- The IES outlines employment initiatives to be undertaken at Griffith and maintains a target rate of 2% Indigenous employment in continuing and fix term positions across the University. Indigenous staff employment is 1.31% of overall staff.
  - Currently the University employs 50 Indigenous Australians out of a total of 3788 staff – 16 academic staff and 34 professional staff.
  - The University, through the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost, committed funding between 2010-2012 to recruit an Indigenous Level B/C academic staff member in each of our four academic groups in a continuing position.
  - GUMURRII SSU staff are actively encouraged to further their professional and career development, and develop links with other services through participation in joint activities.
  - All Indigenous staff within the University have the opportunity to participate in the University's many professional development/up-skilling courses conducted throughout the year.
  - An Indigenous academic network continues to operate within the University, formalised as the Griffith University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Network with the appointment of the Professor of Indigenous Research in July 2012.

**Table 4: Continuing and fixed term positions (Indigenous staff)**

Faculty/Institute/Section	Staff	Academic	Professional
	50	16	34
<b>Totals</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34</b>

**Table 2 - Casual positions**

Faculty/Institute/Section	Staff	Academic	Professional
	21		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21</b>		

Indicative student data shows an increase in commencing student numbers for 2011 - 215 students compared to the 155 who commenced in 2010. Griffith again secured the highest number of QTAC (Queensland) first preferences for the 2012 intake – 108 applicants of the first-preference pool of 270 (40%).

GUMURRII Student Support Unit activities included:

Prioritisation of its student recruitment and support functions, including:

- Implementation of building plans for a new student support unit on the Gold Coast Campus. The facility is scheduled for completion in December 2012 and will improve access and cater for increased student demand and support.
- Production and dissemination of a new suite of information resources for potential students.
- Greater collaboration with other University outreach activities (i.e. Uni-Reach, Griffith Connect schools program).
- Visibility at key community events e.g. the NAIDOC Family Day in Brisbane's Musgrave Park.
- Continuing collaborative work with agencies such as Queensland Health to develop access initiatives for specific student cohorts – for example, two students are now studying at Griffith as an outcome of GUMURRII SSU links with the Health Job Ready Program: Queensland Health.
- The Alternate Entry Program, a special admissions scheme administered by GUMURRII, continues to offer access to the University.
- GUMURRII has developed and presented information sessions for the Northern New South Wales Partnerships Program in 2011 (Griffith Connect) to increase access for targeted sectors in the region for the 2012 intake.
- In collaboration with Student Equity Services, links were established with the Regional Indigenous Education Working Party (DET) to inform outreach work and strategies to support school-based Community Education Counsellors in their work with Indigenous high school students who have tertiary study aspirations.
- GUMURRII extended its involvement in outreach and transition support strategies for Aboriginal secondary students in the South-East Queensland Region in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) "Live the Dream" initiative.



- GUMURRII developed and implemented a Showcase program in 2011, which enables potential applicants (Year 11 and 12) to participate in interactive sessions on campus. The activities are designed to raise awareness and stimulate interest in tertiary programs. For example, participants are involved in a Moot Court scenario, CPR and health-related activities with simulation dummies, building models in architecture and visual art activities. This has proved to be a successful program with positive initial feedback from participants which has resulted in some participants applying to Griffith University.

Examples of other initiatives:

- Griffith's partnership agreement with The Smith Family includes Indigenous students in its framework for encouraging student aspirations and access, as does the Uni-Reach Program (an outreach program for targeted schools in the University's catchment area).
- GUMURRII conducts outreach programs throughout secondary schools in the Brisbane, Gold Coast and the northern New South Wales corridor. Promotional activities are also implemented through the Former Origin Greats (FOGS) Career Markets which have extended catchment areas throughout Queensland.
- GUMURRII participated in the All Stars and the inaugural Murri Carnival in 2011. In collaboration with Griffith Health, students provided medical assistance through the supervision of medical staff in the injury tent, in addition to a separate careers stall for potential applicants.

Other external outreach initiatives, undertaken by the Professor of ICEPP in partnership with Griffith's Elders, that have continued in 2011 included:

- The Brisbane and Cleveland MURRII Court.
- The COOEE Indigenous Community and Family Education Resource Centre in the Redlands Shire and adjacent bay islands supporting 'at risk' Indigenous youth and their families.
- The Aboriginal Education Clinic facilitating pathways to assist disengaged Indigenous students to re-engage in secondary schooling, TAFE, tertiary study or life skills programs.
- The Doomadgee Community Rejuvenation Project.
- *MURRII Makeovers*, focussing on the wellbeing and development of Indigenous women and providing practical assistance in accessing resources.

Engaging communities through collaboration and partnership is an important aspect of Griffith's approach to Indigenous education, with initiatives such as these being an important avenue for promoting and enhancing educational opportunities for Indigenous people.

Scholarships are available to Indigenous students within the equity scholarships framework which consists of the Chancellor's Scholarships Scheme augmented by the Commonwealth Scholarships Scheme (CS). These scholarships are offered to students, commencing and continuing, as a student attraction and retention strategy. Scholarships are promoted via the web (<http://www.griffith.edu.au/scholarships>), promotional brochures, Open Day and Tertiary Expos, Careers Markets, School Outreach Programs. The take up rate is 100%, the Indigenous Learning Assistance Officers are proactive in advising students of scholarships available to them. The table below represents the scholarships paid in 2011:

**TABLE 5: Scholarships for Indigenous students**

Scholarship	Number paid	Amount per semester	Total (2010)
Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships (CAS)	12 paid semester 1 7 paid semester 2	\$2,237.00	\$42,503
Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships (CECS)	17 paid semester 1 12 paid semester 2	\$1,188.50	\$34,466.50
Commonwealth Indigenous Access Scholarships (IAS)	35	\$4,485.00	\$156,975.00
DELL Scholarships	1	\$2,500	\$2,500.00
Neville Bonner Scholarships	1	\$2,500	\$2,500.00
Patience Thoms (Honours/Postgraduate)	5	\$2,000	\$10,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$243,945</b>

- Additional awards from the University's Neville Bonner Scholarships and DELL sponsored scholarships increased opportunities for undergraduate Indigenous students. The Patience Thoms Indigenous Australian Scholarships scheme represents a targeted scholarships strategy to encourage and support student progression into postgraduate studies (and potentially academic careers) – eight scholarships are set aside each year and, if funds are not fully acquitted, any surplus is carried forward to the following year.
- The Uni-Start Equity Admissions and Scholarship Scheme includes integrated processes for Indigenous students; 37 applicants successfully applied through this pathway in 2011 (compared with 28 in 2010) and each applicant was offered a place at Griffith University. Uni-Start applicants receive scholarships and a Uni-Start Start-Up benefits package providing other resources.

**TABLE 6: Commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**

	2010	2011
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	155	215
Non Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students		

## 2.4 Achieve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of other Australians.

**TABLE 7: Student enrolments**

Enrolments	Student	2010	2011
ATSI	Commencing	155	215
	Continuing	381	346
ATSI Total		536	561
NON ATSI	Commencing	18012	17071
	Continuing	24071	25102
NON ATSI Total		42083	42173

Grand Total		42619	42734
Ratio		1.3%	1.3%

GUMURRII is a dedicated student support unit for Indigenous students, located on all five campuses and offering individual consultations, the ITAS tutorial support program, a pre-orientation program (*Hands Up!* Tertiary Preparation Program), student mentoring, study resources, referrals to community services and external agencies through its Learning Assistance Officers. Its activities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation include:

- The GUMURRII Strategic Plan has focused on a number of strategies to support student participation, including collaboration with other support services and academic areas, particularly First-Year Advisers.
- Two editions of GUMURRII news were produced in 2011 to highlight its activities as well as Indigenous events across Griffith's campuses that connect with local communities, staff and students.
- The 2011 Pre-Orientation Program (conducted by GUMURRII) was modified on the basis of 2010 student feedback with campus-based activities over a five-day period. The program was designed to assist students with their transition to university and introduced students to the skills necessary for a successful University experience. The program also included a family day which allowed students to bring family members for a social gathering and included participation in some traditional games taught by Elders of the surrounding community. Feedback gathered during the implementation indicated the need for a more intensive preparation program which was implemented for the 2012 intake. The 2012 program was run over a 10-day period and included more discipline-specific preparation for participants.
- The ITAS tuition provided in 2010 was of a high standard, with an increased level of effectiveness. The first indicator of tutor effectiveness is the "Student Assessment of Tutor's Performance". Overall, students were satisfied with their respective tutors. Most students indicated that their tutor/s were excellent and would like them again if they require assistance. One possible reason for this response was that GUMURRII SSU had previously advertised for new tutors and the calibre of applicants were of a high standard (tutors are required to have a minimum GPA of 5.5 and required to be at least two academic years above the applicant). The second means of identifying tutor effectiveness is through the number of students who passed and failed the units they had undertaken throughout 2011. Out of the possible outcomes (e.g. pass, fail, withdraw, other), students passed 823 units and failed 159 units, which is an increase from the previous reporting period. The remainder withdrew, deferred or were not graded for units they had undertaken. This demonstrates that out of all the possible outcomes, students passed 75.1% of the units for which they had received ITAS. This represents a significant increase from the previous year (65.61%), which indicates that tutor effectiveness has improved overall and students' academic performance has improved since the last reporting period.

- Due to the extensive review undertaken in 2008, implementation of the strategies to identify and address issues include: (1) standard of work programs (2) students' needs assessments (3) tutor's contracts (4) matching of students (5) limited number and quality of tutors employed (6) documentation required upon recruiting. Tutors are now expected to develop work programs congruent with the students' needs assessments, and develop comprehensive weekly work programs for each course contracted with the student and staff member. This has resulted in a more focused output and orientated approach by the tutor in the provision of services to the student. As in previous years, we continue to limit the tutors to a maximum of 16 hours per week in which they could provide tuition. This continues to produce better outcomes and a better quality of tuition for the students. More hours were also allocated to students in 1st and 2nd year which assisted in the retention of these students into subsequent semesters. The continuing development of the *First Peoples* website on the University home page and of the GUMURRII website ensures a visible Indigenous presence to the Griffith site, an important avenue for communication of study-related information and Griffith's principles for Indigenous higher education. GUMURRII's website has an online application which allows potential applicants to receive information on course and enrolment, and generates a follow up process from Unit staff.
- The Griffith Indigenous Student Association (GISA) was established in January 2009 and continues to enhance the learning experience of Indigenous students in 2011 by creating social cohesion, facilitating cultural empowerment, academic growth, and providing opportunities for professional development through an industry network.
- Learning Assistance Services supports Indigenous students seeking help with academic skills and strategies.
- Uni-Key Program — Indigenous students continue to be represented in this transition program.
- The unacceptability of racism in any form is reflected in policies and procedures implemented to inform and regulate staff and student behaviour in the areas of harassment, discrimination and grievance resolution. Griffith staff inductions include this information, and it is highlighted through campus activities such as Harmony Day celebrations.
- The Elders, TAFE and Griffith Pathways Project in the Redlands has been successful in assisting Indigenous school students to re-engage with the secondary school system, to complete year 12, to advance on to TAFE, University or alternate life development pathways. This program has assisted a total of 75 Indigenous students to get into TAFE, traineeships, apprenticeships, or university – four students have graduated from Griffith and one student is currently enrolled in law.

**2.5 Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in higher education as for other Australians.**

**TABLE 8: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student completions (summary)**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	84	100
Non Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	10510	10772

**TABLE 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student completions (detail)**

<b>Completions</b>	<b>Academic Career</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
ATSI	Postgraduate	16	20
	Research Higher		
	Degree	1	1
	Undergraduate	67	79
ATSI Total		84	100
NON ATSI	Postgraduate	3822	3608
	Research Higher		
	Degree	172	201
	Undergraduate	6516	6963
NON ATSI TOTAL		10510	10772
Grand Total		10594	10872
		0.79%	0.92%

The GUMURRII Student Support Unit provides a culturally appropriate support service with units located on each of the five campuses. Each unit is staffed by Indigenous Learning Assistance Officers and Administration staff to assist in promoting access, participation and retention of Indigenous students at Griffith University. The student support unit provides the following services for Indigenous students:

- Access to computing and printing facilities.
- Laminating and binding self-service areas.
- Facilitation and coordination of career information sessions for graduating students on each campus from State and Federal Departments (e.g. Department of Foreign Affairs, Queensland Health).
- Regular social activities designed to engage internal and external communities.
- Individual advocacy and referral service for final year students in preparing for practicum and exhibits including resource and financial assistance.
- Provision of a secure and safe environment by ensuring that students have after-hours access to facilities. All units have upgraded security and access by means of electronic swipe cards. This enables final year (and continuing) students with a conducive learning environment that provides quiet and secure areas to complete assessments necessary to graduate.
- In 2011 a milestone was met with 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students graduating from a broad range of disciplines. Griffith's culturally distinctive graduation stoles, launched in December 2008, have been lauded by students, staff, families and community representatives at 2011 graduations.
- GUMURRII hosted the 2011 Valedictory Dinner to celebrate the success of graduates from a wide range of disciplines. The event was successful at full capacity with 140 guests in attendance. The event also marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Griffith University
- Griffith offers its suite of Patience Thoms Honours/Postgraduate Scholarships to Indigenous students to encourage progression from undergraduate to postgraduate studies. Dual scholarships can be allocated to alleviate study costs, especially if students have family responsibilities.  
Our Elders-in-Residence and local community elders have played a special mentoring role for students at Griffith.

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

Griffith University is currently in the process of implementing an Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) Grant entitled *Facilitating a whole-of-university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Curriculum Development: Leadership Frameworks for Cultural Partnership*. The focus of the project is to develop leadership structures within the University for the sustained development and implementation of an Indigenised curriculum across the university. To achieve this, a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics (15 members) from across the four main academic groups of the University meet regularly to share ideas and develop new initiatives. The group is currently working on three main ideas:

- 1) A new Indigenous Studies model that will network courses across the University enabling students to select course from inside and outside their chosen discipline to create a major in Indigenous Studies. Note that this is a whole-of-university model that will set a framework that the various schools across the University can choose to engage with;
- 2) Three main case studies that will be situated within a particular school such as School of Law or Griffith School of Environmental Sciences. As an example, within the Griffith School of Environment we are currently trialling the idea of a “community of practice” around the issue of an Indigenised curriculum in an attempt to develop sustained leadership within that School; and
- 3) Exploring student and staff perception (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) around an Indigenised curriculum.

It is important to note that Griffith has 48 courses that deal with Indigenous perspectives/content. The processes outlined above will be exploring the current structure of these offerings and determine whether they can be part of a network of course for an Indigenous Studies major, and identify (or create) a local model that structures learning across these set of courses and explore opportunities for new courses.

In terms of cultural competency, Griffith University is working from the principle of creating productive working relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff particularly with staff who are committed to the notion of an Indigenised curriculum. However through Griffith’s new Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Griffith is committed to developing induction course for all new and existing staff at Griffith University.

One of the outcomes of the OLT Grant is that many academics have already developed working partnerships with Indigenous communities in both research and teaching and learning. As an example, the Griffith School of Environment has identified a community visit to be part of the structure of an Indigenised curriculum. The process now is to consolidate existing partnerships and/or create new partnerships built on the notion of reciprocal respect.

The curriculum development and implementation project (which the OLT Grant is a part of) is overseen by a reference group that includes a member of Griffith’s Council of Elders (co-chair), DVCA (co-chair), representatives from the Deans Teaching and Learning, Professor of Indigenous Research, Professor of Indigenous Community Engagement and Policy, Director, Griffith Institute of Higher Education, an Indigenous Community representative and an Indigenous and non-Indigenous co-chairs of the working party mentioned above.

The Griffith University Reconciliation Action Plan endorsed by Reconciliation Australia will be instrumental to implementing a number of key actions and initiatives. Our Reconciliation Action Plan is guided by the statement – “Acknowledging the past and creating the future which reflects the way the University undertakes its business across the University and within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.”

The GUMURRII Student Support Unit is the corridor to the Indigenous community with a focus on active engagement of parents, and the community sector including primary and secondary schools. GUMURRII provides culturally appropriate advice and support to current and future students to enhance student learning and completion of a formal qualification.

- Indigenous staff assist non-Indigenous students seeking advice as they become aware of the need to provide informed rather than stereotypical responses to Indigenous issues.
- GUMURRII Student Support Units on each of our campuses are an essential contact point for non-Indigenous student and staff seeking advice or information relating to Indigenous issues.
- Key Indigenous staff are consulted, through the ethics approval process, on research proposals involving Indigenous people or issues.
- University staff, students and stakeholders participate in major Indigenous events presented in the community or on campus, including NAIDOC, Sorry Day, Harmony Day, and reconciliation functions.
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students actively participate in reconciliation and healing forums sponsored by our Multi-Faith Centre.
- University events increasingly include an acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians and where possible, a Welcome to Country by Elders from local communities, in addition to cultural performances.