

Indigenous Student Success Program

2019 Performance Report

Organisation	VICTORIA UNIVERSITY		
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1. Enrolments (Access)

In 2019 VU committed to various outreach activities and work to externally improve access to university via sharing information on supports and pathways for prospective Aboriginal students and their families. This included the following tasks and activities:

- Collaboration with multiple secondary schools in the western suburbs of Melbourne. Engagement involved visits to schools, speaking with students/careers teachers directly and responding to enquiries related to supports and pathways, to enable students to make informed decisions on their future.
- Collaboration with Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESO) employed by the Department of Education and Training to attend external visits with potential students.
- Attending various external career expos and other engagements, including involvement within the Toorong Marnong program, presenting at the Wyndham Careers Practitioners schools workshop, attending Local Aboriginal Network meetings.
- Facilitating multiple on campus visits for potential Aboriginal students and their families, including a large group of senior students from the Clontarf Foundation in June 2019 for a campus tour and multiple VU Sport themed tours for potential sport/fitness students within the Melbourne Storm NRL Schools to Work program.
- Continued engagement with Aboriginal community through the Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Centre in Wyndham, attending the Western Metropolitan RAJAC meetings, Co-Chairing the Footprints for Success Program, and attending the Indigenous Advisory Group of FCAC.

The above activities are absorbed into various Moondani Balluk staff workloads and funded by the University. Specifically the Aboriginal Student Support Officer role in Moondani Balluk is to provide the following supports:

Financial (ISSP)

- Payment of textbooks, stationery and any other course materials as required (lab coats, uniform etc.)
 - Transport (Myki etc.)
 - Purchasing laptops for student loan
 - Moondani Balluk student grants (granted on a case by case basis,)
 - Scholarships (VU Indigenous Commonwealth scholarships)
 - Payment of various start-up costs for on campus student accommodation.

Access (University funded)

- Initial contact from Moondani Balluk staff upon a course application/assist with course application
- Attending information/enrolment/orientation to support student/applicant
- Various preparation/introduction upon enrolment
- Informal progress meetings on campus, daily 'catch ups'
- Linkage to further supports/community organisations
- Assisting with accessing various VU systems and tools
- Recommending/referral to general, mainstream services where appropriate
- Collaborate with other VU student areas where needed to support and advocate for student/s, such as Accessibility & Disability Services, Learning Hub, individual Course areas/Colleges, etc.

- Assistance with external scholarships (applications and providing references)

In 2018 our EFTSL dropped to 85.88 from 88.13 in 2017. While this number overall is minimal it may reflect that in 2018 Moondani Balluk work on participation was concentrated on the implementation of the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy action to work with VU Marketing and Future Students to design a specific Aboriginal recruitment strategy and related marketing collateral.

We also note that the 2016 ABS data states that in the West of Melbourne a total of 471 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people in a total population of 4,957 were attending secondary schools. Further, that in the related age brackets for people aged 11 – 18 there will be less than 100 Indigenous persons completing year 12 across the Western region of Melbourne each year.

Table 1 ISSP Scholarships - breakdown of 2019 payments^{1 2 3}

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		TOTAL (of preceding columns)	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling ⁴								
Undergraduate ⁵	\$19,089	9	\$30,008	6	\$15,384	3	\$64,481	18
Post-graduate ⁶								
Other								
Total	\$19,089	9	\$30,008	6	\$15,384	3	\$64,481	18

- Number of enabling Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship:
- Number of undergraduate Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship:
- Number of post-graduate Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship:
- Number of other students that received any form of ISSP scholarship:
- Total number of Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship⁷:

2. Progression (access and outcomes)

Commencing in 2018, the VU First Year Model will be implemented by the First Year College (FYC). It was aimed at delivering the first year of bachelor degrees and integrated personal support to our first year students. The model is intended to ensure a sense of belonging, learner sophistication and the other known predictors of learning gain. It means that students will be able to focus on a single subject, rather than juggling multiple units with competing demands and deadlines; to immerse themselves in each unit, learning through discussion and group interaction; to form strong peer connections; to get to know and be known by their educators; to receive timely and targeted support; and, crucially, to achieve success early to build confidence and motivation. In 2018 VU saw an increase of Indigenous student unit success rate jump to 80% from a 2017 rate of 59%. In 2019 and beyond all units were being progressively moved to the First Year Model delivery mode.

Other activities undertaken specifically by Moondani Balluk include:

- Consolidation of VU's first Aboriginal student club, Bundima, as an extra layer of support to enrolled students. (university)
- Position Bundima as an avenue for students to engage and meet others in a culturally safe environment. (University)
- Establishment of a Bundima and Moondani Balluk foodbank for our students. (ISSP & University)
- Establishing a small pool of emergency relief funding available for our students. (University)
- Organising fundraisers, for Indigenous organisations, such as the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. (University)
- Access and furnishing of new student space at St Albans campus. (ISSP & University)

- Work with internal stakeholders such as Student Advising, Accessibility Services and Learning Hub etc. and other areas to improve visibility of Aboriginal support services and to ensure Aboriginal students are appropriately supported. (ISSP & University)
- The addition of Aboriginal support services tile on MyVU student portal home page. (University)
- Aboriginal Student Support Officer access to Show Cause/student progress list, which identifies any students at risk of being withdrawn from the course due to repeated fails. (University)
- Inclusion of Moondani Balluk into the Second Year Advising questionnaire and as an available service by Student Advising. (University)

Moondani Balluk forms the backbone of all Aboriginal education, research, community engagement and student support at VU. In 2019 it comprised 5 general staff members, 4 academic staff, 2 research staff, and a number of sessional academic staff. One of the general staff is employed into the Aboriginal Student Support Officer role, two were employed as casual recruitment and engagement officers, one a Senior Administrative Officer and the last the Director position. The Aboriginal Student Support Officer is charged with supporting enrolled Aboriginal students at VU.

Table 2a Tutorial assistance provided in 2019

Level of study	Number of students assisted	Total hours of assistance ⁸	Expenditure ⁹ (\$)
Enabling			
Undergraduate	2	92	4056.28
Post graduate			
Other			
Total			

Table 2b Indigenous Support Activities provided in 2019¹⁰

Activity ^{11 12}	Number of student participants	Expenditure (\$)
Academic support via Aboriginal Student Mentor, employed by Learning Hub services	8	357.72
Bundima Aboriginal student club	13	-
Internal Sponsorship of students' tuition and SSAF fees to relieve financial burden	27	
Student grants & class equipment/materials	78	25,021.87
Outreach Activities – Community engagement		
Career Guidance – advising students on course selection		

3. Completions (outcomes)

The work of Moondani Balluk and the Bundima Student Club as outlined in Section 2 combine to help Aboriginal students to be engaged and actively involved in their courses to enable completion. Coupled with this is our range of tutoring assistance, via Moondani Balluk and the VU Learning Hub services, and mentoring of Aboriginal students by Aboriginal students; that can assist in course completion. ISSP funds direct student tutoring and the University funds the Learning Hub mentoring programs.

Our 2018 data shows a small growth in course completion from 2017 and a maintained growth from our 2015 and 2016 data. It is difficult to ascertain whether our strategies/work as outlined in Section 2 is a direct result of

the growth in 2017 and 2018 given the overall numbers of enrolled Aboriginal students compared to the numbers of these who engage with Moondani Balluk and Bundima. As VU moves to Block model delivery across all of its undergraduate courses year levels we expect to see a continued improvement of unit success rate and therefore course completions.

In regard to graduate employment opportunities the Aboriginal Student Support Officer, in collaboration with the Aboriginal Employment and Community Liaison Officer, advertises opportunities on internal and external programs and vacancies to relevant cohorts of students. Students are strongly encouraged to work with Moondani Balluk to apply for external graduate traineeships and graduate positions; or continue on to postgraduate study. Where ISSP funds are available Moondani Balluk will employ students on a casual or sessional teaching basis dependant on the availability of project work or teaching available. The other work is provided by the abovementioned positions that are funded by the University.

4. Regional and remote students

We note that our regional and remote EFTSL figures are low. Victoria University is disadvantaged in the recruitment of regional and remote students, as other Victorian universities currently offer greater infrastructure, services, programs and funding to attract regional Indigenous students.

Table 4 Scholarship data for remote and regional students^{13 14}

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		TOTAL (of preceding columns) ¹⁵	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2018 Payments			21,420	4			21,420	4
B. 2019 Offers +continuing commitments ¹⁶			30,008	6			30,008	6
C. Percentage ¹⁷ (C=B/A*100)							140%	
2019 Payments							51,428	10

4a. Number of Remote and Regional students that received a scholarship in 2019¹⁸:

5. Working with Vulnerable People Requirement¹⁹

	Yes/No
Has the provider completed a risk assessment?	Yes
Have staff involved in ISSP activity received training?	Yes
Does the provider have a compliance process in place?	Yes

6. Eligibility requirements

6.1. Indigenous Education Strategy

The University has its [Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy](#) 2017 – 2020. VU does not have a RAP as reconciliation is work that non-Aboriginal people need to do; our Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy is an integrated method for Moondani Balluk to work collegially with VU's Senior Executive to improve the access, participation, and success of Aboriginal students; and to engage respectfully with Aboriginal community. Our Strategy is led by the Vice Chancellor, the associated Action Plan is implemented by Senior Responsible Officers and Moondani Balluk through the Vice Chancellors Indigenous Leadership Steering Committee.

Our 2019 milestones included collaborating with VU Marketing on the new Brand and collateral for Indigenous student recruitment, installing Aboriginal art at our Sunshine and Western Health campuses/locations; launching a refreshed Yannoneit Employment Strategy; engaging in the opening of the new purpose-built Wungurrwil Dhurrung Centre in Wyndham Vale. Staffing changes limited the ability of Moondani Balluk to collaborate with Marketing and Future students to finalise an Indigenous Recruitment Plan. Our 2019 major actions included:

- ARC LIEF Aboriginal History Archive project's digitisation complete and a webpage made available to a limited audience.
- Space planning enabled the allocation of specific rooms at the Footscray Park, St Albans and Footscray Nicholson campuses for Moondani Balluk staff and Aboriginal students.
- Approval was given in for our 2020 budget to include the appointment of two Academic Level C positions to grow our teaching and learning and research opportunities and activities.
- Agreement and endorsement for the Vice-Chancellor's Office and Moondani Balluk to refresh the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy in 2020.

6.2. Indigenous Workforce Strategy

In 2019 the University published and launched a revised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy (YES) which outlines actions covering five Recruitment, Induction, Retention & Wellbeing, & Development. The Strategy was launched by the Vice-Chancellor and Aunty Di Kerr. Representatives from the community also attended as well as senior University staff.

Implementation of the activities under the Employment Strategy has commenced including:

- Provision of detailed information for hiring managers on creating a culturally safe space for Aboriginal staff. This information is available on the website and includes a definition of a culturally safe space.
- Ensuring Aboriginal applicants for roles are flagged in the system and offered tailored support with completing an application for appropriate roles
- Ongoing liaison with People and Culture Business Partners to support Aboriginal staff and ensure the work environment is inclusive and safe
- Working one on one with managers to assist with hiring and retaining of Aboriginal staff, including identifying and obtaining appropriate professional development opportunities
- Liaising with Recruitment to ensure training for hiring managers includes appropriate information of ways to adequately source, support and hire Aboriginal candidates

<https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/vu-yannoneit-strategy-2019-2020.pdf>

Table 6.2 Indigenous workforce data (2019 breakdown)^{20 21 22 23}

Level/ Position	Permanent/>1Yr		Casual/<1yr	
	Academic Level	Non Academic Level	Academic Level	Non Academic Level
Academic Level B	1			
Sessional			1	
Teaching Focused Academic A	1			
Teaching Focused Academic B	1			
Academic Level A			1	
Academic Level B	2			
Academic Level E	2			
Sessional			3	
Academic Level Total	7		5	
Higher Education Professional 7		1		
Higher Education Professional 8		1		
Higher Education Professional 6				1
Higher Education Professional 6		2		
Higher Education Professional 7				1
Senior Staff Contract		1		
Higher Education Professional 3				1
Higher Education Professional 4		1		1
Higher Education Professional 6		1		
Higher Education Professional 1		1		
Higher Education Professional 9				1
Higher Education Professional 5		1		
Higher Education Professional 5		1		
Higher Education Professional 6		1		
Higher Education Worker Total:		11		5
Total Indigenous workforce: 29				

6.3. Indigenous Governance Mechanism

The Vice Chancellor’s Indigenous Leadership Committee was established in 2016 and is responsible for the oversight of the University’s Indigenous Participation Strategy. The Committee meets twice a year to finalise the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy and its associated Action Plan. It also advises, reviews and monitors the work of Moondani Balluk in regard to student support activities, community engagement, and recruitment for which ISSP resources/funding are utilised.

NAME	POSITION	YEARS OF SERVICE	ABORIGINAL
Professor Peter Dawkins	Vice-Chancellor (Chair)	6.3	
Shaun Eltham	Vice-President, People and Culture	2.4	
Professor Rob Strathdee	Vice-President, Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities and Dean, College of Arts and Education	2.3	
Naomi Dempsey	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Students)		

Richard Constantine	Vice-President, Students, Infrastructure and Digital Technologies	3.3	
Professor Corrine Reid	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Research Training	0.8	
Mark Farrell	PVC, Business and Law and Dean, VU Business School		
Wayne Butson	Director, Service Industries & Transitions, VU Polytechnic	27.8	
Karen Jackson	Director, Moondani Balluk	22.0	YES
Irene Sazdov	Indigenous Community Liaison Officer, People and Culture	1.7	YES
Professor Gary Foley	Moondani Balluk	13.1	YES
Karen Dodd	Vice-President, Health, Sport and Active Living and Dean College of Health and Biomedicine		
Rowena Price	Koori Liaison Officer, VU Polytechnic	8.1	YES
Tracey Cooper	Lecturer, College of Arts & Education	8.1	YES
Marcus Brooke	Aboriginal Student Life Liaison Officer	4	YES
	Student representative	-	YES
Shane l'Anson	Student representative	-	YES
2 External community nominees	Not filled in 2018		YES

In regard to the involvement of Aboriginal people in the decisions of the university, the Director Moondani Balluk an appropriately qualified employee and in 2019 is a member of the following governance bodies and groups:

- SDVC Portfolio, Senior Leadership Group and Deans Meetings
- Academic Board – with attendance at Learning & Quality Teaching Committee & Research & Research Training Committee to talk to Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy
- First Year College Leadership Group
- Course Advisory Groups and Program Advisory Committees – Colleges of Arts & Education & College of Health & Biomedicine

6.3.1. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

The VC's Indigenous Leadership Committee noted and endorsed the 2018 performance and acquittal reports and will provide relevant feedback and direction on the 2019 performance and acquittal reports at its second meeting in 2020. Due to the impact of COVID-19 a draft was unable to be provided to the April 2020 meeting.

Additional information for completing the template

¹ Only payments made during 2019 can be included in this table. For multi-year scholarship agreements, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded in the performance reporting for the relevant future grant year.

² Record the number of students (head count) not EFTSL.

³ Include both preserved and new ISSP scholarships.

⁴ Include payments to all enabling students, including remote and regional students.

⁵ Include payments to all undergraduate students, including remote and regional students.

⁶ Include payments to all postgraduate students, including remote and regional students.

⁷ Total of the four questions above.

⁸ Record only hours of instruction received by the students (do not include staff planning or organising time).

⁹ Include any costs associated with providing tutorial assistance, including staffing costs, materials, facilities etc.

¹⁰ Add more rows if necessary.

¹¹ Include a brief description of the activity.

¹² Providers can either provide a breakdown of the major activities or a total for all the activities undertaken. Examples of activities may include mentoring, outreach activities, promotion of scholarships, events, elder-in-residence, career guidance etc.

¹³ Only record amounts which would/did require payment during the 2019 calendar year. For multi-year scholarship offers, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded against the reporting for the relevant future grant year.

¹⁴ Note the data in this table is a subsection of the all student scholarship data provided in Table 1.

¹⁵ This figures in this column should be the sum of the relevant row.

¹⁶ Record the value of all verbal and written scholarship offers for the 2019 calendar year, including those offers that were not accepted by the student. Record the 2019 component of new scholarship offers and the planned 2019 value of previously awarded scholarships (including continuing scholarships and preserved scholarships). The recording of offers recognises provider efforts to support regional and remote students but also that universities cannot control whether students choose to accept offers of assistance.

¹⁷ This data confirms the provider's compliance with Section 21(3) of the Guidelines.

¹⁸ This question provides information on how many regional and remote students received scholarships rather than the total number of scholarships awarded or offered for 2019 (which is recorded in Table 4 above). This is required because a student can receive more than one scholarship in a year.

¹⁹ This section confirms that the provider complies with Section 35A of the Guidelines.

²⁰ While universities report on the number of Indigenous staff members through mainstream reporting requirements, the additional information provided in this section provides enhanced monitoring of the university's efforts in building its Indigenous workforce.

²¹ Record all Indigenous staff employed by the provider, including those not working on ISSP-related activities.

²² The numbers recorded here should be a headcount of staff and not the full-time equivalent.

²³ There is no longer a requirement to break up these by faculty. Please group together results by level.