

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMME – 2017 Performance Report

<b>Organisation</b>	Victoria University		
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### 1. Enrolments (Access)

In 2017 the Dean of Students and Moondani Balluk supported the Aboriginal Student Life Liaison Officer position. The overall purpose of the Aboriginal Student Life Project Officer is to provide first-contact support, engagement, information and referral to current/future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to help them successfully navigate university life and processes. Part of the activities for this Project Officer was to seek out contacts and information on secondary schools in the West of Melbourne where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled. The process agreed to was to firstly create and maintain relationships with Careers Teachers in schools from which to grow relationships with VCE students with the aim of increasing the access to VU programs and pathways. This position was funded 50% by the Dean of Students and 50% by Moondani Balluk through other university resources.

As noted in our previous report for the 2016 calendar year, the University was in the process of reviewing its Indigenous Participation Strategy in 2017. The new strategy was renamed Bathelmun Yalingwa (shine bright) Strategy and was launched in November. This Strategy encompasses all aspects of University activity and aims to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students and staff. It has adopted the UA objectives and privileged success as a key outcome. In regard to access it is framed across three aspirations and Gamadji (Grow) is relevant here. This aspiration aims to grow the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people participating in tertiary education and assuring their success by being an open and excellent university. Bathelmun Yalingwa's long-term target is to grow our enrolment to at least 50% above the growth rate of non-Aboriginal student enrolment. As part of the review of the IES the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy will be included into the VU Annual Plan and White Paper. The Annual Plan commits us to increasing the number of students enrolling into higher education programs.

The specific objectives of our Grow aspiration on access are:

- Create demand through an Aboriginal Student Recruitment Plan, supported by an engagement and communication plan targeting industry, community, schools and Aboriginal media.
- Increase our brand and reputation by developing a media and communications plan to promote Aboriginal opportunities at VU.
- Provide foundation studies with culturally specific courses for delivery in Aboriginal community settings that pathway into further education and employment.

The review of the IPS and creation of the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy was undertaken by staff in the Vice Chancellor's Office (VCO) and Moondani Balluk. The Launch event was funded by the VCO.

Whilst EFTSL remains low in all categories in comparison across all institutions, we did see a significant increase in 2015 of 15.8 EFTSL with a further increase in 2016 of 4.3 EFTSL to be 85 EFTSL. This occurred without the assistance of a specific marketing strategy or program and with minimal recruitment activity by Moondani Balluk. We note that our regional and remote EFTSL figures are low. VU is disadvantaged in the recruitment of students from this cohort as we cannot compete with the infrastructure, services, programs and funding made available at other Victorian universities.

### 1a Scholarships (2017 breakdown)

Student category	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total/ Students Assisted	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
From Regional/ Remote	3955.50	2	13,190.00	3	4977.00	1	22,122.50	6
Undergraduate	18,459.00	10	15,828.00	4	9,954.00	2	44,241.00	16
Post-graduate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,414.50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29,018.00</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14,931.00</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>66,363.50</b>	<b>22</b>

Value of Scholarships awarded by the university to <b>remote or regional students</b> in the <b>2016</b> academic year (Section 21(3) in the Guidelines refers)	<b>\$4904.00</b>
Value of Scholarships offered by the university to <b>remote or regional students</b> in the <b>2017</b> academic year (Section 21(3) in the Guidelines refers)	<b>\$22,122.50</b>

## 2. Progression (access and outcomes)

The University commenced an extensive body of work in 2017 to improve success and retention rates of all students. This included the creation of Student Support Centres, Student Ambassadors and Academic Support staff, as well as agreeing to move to the new First Year Model in 2018. The incumbent of the Aboriginal Student Life Liaison Officer position was previously a Student Ambassador and his experience in the process and access to programs and assistance was helpful to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These activities were funded by the university.

Over recent years the University has been progressively investing in the first-year experience to improve our students' ability to successfully transition into and succeed in higher education. This has included substantial curriculum reform and a systematic approach to student engagement through the appointment of first-year champions, the use of peer mentoring and the provision of additional learning support in areas such as literacy and numeracy. It has also involved a revised promotions policy designed to recognise and reward high-quality teaching and scholarship. In addition, Moondani Balluk works hard with any Aboriginal student who enrolls in our programs to provide the best advice and information to enable improvement in success and retention rates.

Despite these efforts outlined above, the educational disadvantage of many of our Indigenous students has proved difficult to ameliorate and the success rate of our Indigenous students has varied considerably between 2013 and 2016. Institutional research and experience demonstrates that VU's students are increasingly diverse in their preparedness for higher education and would benefit from a more tailored, inclusive and personalised approach to the first year that helps build their capability, confidence and likely success. To achieve this objective, VU has undertaken an extensive review of undergraduate student retention and success initiatives in 2017 and established a First Year College (FYC) to deliver the first year of bachelor degrees for 2018.

This work resulted in the development of a more coherent and strengthened approach to student success across VU represented by the:

- development of the 2018 – 2020 Student Retention Strategy endorsed by the Academic Board in October, 2017;
- consolidation of Student Retention and Success Policy and Guidelines with clear accountability under the Vice-President Learning and Teaching;
- clarification of the connection between and accountability for the Student Retention and Success Policy and the Academic Progress suite of policies;
- development of the 2018 annual Student Retention Implementation Plan using strong project management discipline for all initiatives, setting agreed targets, milestones and accountabilities for action and reporting.

The First Year College is designed to provide integrated personal support and guidance to our first year students. A key feature of the learning model is delivery in a 'block mode' where students study individual subjects sequentially, rather than concurrently. Early results are very positive: the failure rate dropped to just 9 per cent this year, down from 32 per cent in 2017, despite the standards of testing remaining the same. The model has also improved student engagement, with greater class attendance (around 90 per cent), and satisfaction levels of 88%. This is the University's commitment to retaining and progressing students through to completion of their higher education programs.

As you are aware, Moondani Balluk is a combination of student support, academic teaching and research activity. Our work in the later stages of 2017 enabled the provision of Aboriginal curricula and teaching practices to be embedded in four Aboriginal units in the First Year College. We are expecting that this model will be transposed onto the delivery of units within the Discipline Colleges. In regard to graduate attributes the University CGA includes the following; that graduates are responsible and ethical citizens who use their inter-cultural understanding to contribute to their local and global communities.

In regard to student support the Director and the Aboriginal Student Life Liaison Officer are responsible for the conduct and provision of student support activities. In 2017, we established the university's first Aboriginal Student Club and provided them with a place to meet and gather. Moondani Balluk assisted enrolled students through the direct use of ISP funding with:

- Fees payments
- Textbooks, lease of computers and other class materials
- Payment of administrative fees associated with accommodation in UniLodge.
- Access to Students as Staff program
- Mentoring and tutoring assistance as required

ISSP funding expenditure for tutorial assistance amounted to \$1,538, for the other activities expenditure was \$8,846 and \$33,838 for salaries of staff undertaking these activities (based on hourly rates for staff delivering activities).

As outlined in previous year's reports, Moondani Balluk, as a collaborative entity provides culturally safe spaces for students and staff at the University. In 2017, this proved difficult because we moved from the St Albans Campus to the Footscray Park Campus and our space allocation was much less. We invited students to our new space and engaged with them in cultural activities as time and space allowed. These activities were funded by the ISSP allocation.

Victoria University provides two Indigenous culture awareness programs targeted to staff that are funded by the University. The University provides Yulendj Wurrung, meaning 'knowledge of the language', the first of its kind to be developed in the sector. Over 400 current staff have completed Yulendji Wurrunga training as at 04 January 2018. In addition, the University provides the "The Story Teller" Aboriginal Cultural Awareness face- to face training. This full-day training course is facilitated by an experienced Indigenous facilitator (who is also a sessional staff member). It provides an overview of the key concepts of Indigenous knowledge and includes activities to raise cultural awareness and understanding of participants. Moondani Balluk has been working closely with a group of Indigenous students to establish an Aboriginal student club. This club aims to provide all students access to events and activities that promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal people in South East Australia. This club complements the availability of FYC Aboriginal units and the Aboriginal Yulendj & Community minor that promotes cultural competency.

**2a Tutorial and other assistance provided (2017 breakdown)**

Assistance type	Level of study	Number of students assisted	Hours of assistance	\$
Tutorial assistance	Undergraduate	3	150	\$ 8,792 (\$1,538 ISSP) (\$7,254 VU estimated)
	Post graduate			\$0
	Other			\$0
	<b>total</b>	3	150	\$8,792
General academic support	Undergraduate, postgraduate, other	30	300	\$42,750 VU estimated
Indigenous Support Unit or other Indigenous student support activities	Indigenous Uni Games Aboriginal student club Indigenous social sport sessions	20	500 – across all areas listed	\$33,838 ISSP estimated for support, mentoring and assistance based on allocation of ISSP funded salaries of staff time to activities \$8,846 ISSP for text books, incidentals and administrative fees for accommodation
	Indigenous student LANTITE preparation workshops Indigenous student leadership Award	4		
	Assistance with course applications and enrolment, current and potential students	25		
	Assistance with job applications, resumes, graduate programs, scholarship applications and	15		
	Financial assistance for text books, incidentals and administrative fees associated with accommodation	20		
	Referral and collaboration with other areas/departments of the university to assist student/s (Student services, Scholarships office, Student Wellbeing, Student Life, Colleges, Learning Hub, miscellaneous staff, etc.)	10		
	Referral and collaboration with external entities	10		
	<b>Total</b>	104	1000	\$85,434 estimated

### 3. Completions (outcomes)

Our completion rates are low in comparison across the institutions. In 2017, we spent time developing our university-wide Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy and specific actions to improve course completion have not yet been designed. Our Strategy does talk to assuring the success of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and as graduates; and to celebrate our alumni success. It is worthy of note that many of our current Aboriginal staff in Moondani Balluk are graduates of our educational programs.

As part of the 2018 implementation plan, student retention initiatives are planned around the student lifecycle and use learner analytics, to identify those students who are at risk of attrition at various stages including pre-census, post-census and throughout their study program. Those students identified as at risk are contacted through call campaigns, student transition mentors or student advisors, at appointed times during the lifecycle. These interventions are mapped out on a student lifecycle calendar and capitalise on inputs from across the university.

The Student Retention Steering Committee and the Student Retention Operations Group provide the overarching governance structure, reporting on their work through to the Vice-President Learning and Teaching and periodically to the Academic Board.

VU will continue to monitor progress and retention rates to determine the success of these and the First Year College initiatives over time. As stated in section 2, early indications of the new approach to first year are positive and should this success continue, and with the improved transition to University, better final completion rates over time.

Further work on retention and progression, connecting graduates to employment and to monitor student outcomes after graduation will be added to our Bathelmun Yalingwa action plan in 2018. The Vice-President People and Culture is reviewing the Yanneit Employment Strategy to enable this to occur. This will be done in collaboration with Moondani Balluk. Also note the projects outlined in Section 5 of this report.

### 4. Indigenous Education Strategy accessible by public

The Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy is available on the VU website. - see: <https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/indigenous-strategy.pdf>. The University launched the strategy in November 2017 having spent the year collaborating across university departments and colleges to review the 2013 Indigenous Participation Strategy and gain agreement to the key aspirations and objectives. We also ensured that Bathelmun Yalingwa is aligned to the University's Strategic Plan.

In 2018 each portfolio area of the university will undertake one or more priority projects for Indigenous participation and cultural awareness. The full implementation of Bathelmun Yalingwa and completion of these projects is an objective of the University 2018 Annual Plan. Implementation and evaluation will be undertaken by the Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Leadership Committee and progress will be also monitored by the University Council.

### 5. Indigenous Workforce Strategy accessible by public

Victoria University in 2017 developed Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy 2017 – 2020 (Shine Bright) as an overarching Indigenous education and employment strategy. Bathelmun Yalingwa incorporates a 3% of total workforce Indigenous employment target and at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in a senior leadership role. Bathelmun Yalingwa also provides the high-level objectives to:

- Encourage the recruitment and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workforce by providing opportunities to gain professional qualifications, work skills and experience in a wide range of jobs at our various campuses.
- Provide induction for all new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and ongoing cultural safety support
- Provide professional development opportunities and specialist targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

- Recognise the additional workload of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in pastoral care, community engagement and cultural load, and reflect this in workload planning, performance assessments and promotion processes

The Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy is available on the VU website - see:

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

Following the launch of Bathelmun Yalingwa, the University is currently revising the Indigenous employment strategy, entitled Yannonait Employment Strategy (YES), for implementation in the first half of 2018, to align with the targets and objectives established in Bathelmun Yalingwa. The aims of the Yannonait Employment Strategy are published on the University website: <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/administration-governance/careers-at-vu/indigenous-careers-strategy>. The revised Yannonait strategy will also be published on this webpage once finalised.

The Victoria University Annual Plan for 2018 incorporates the implementation of Bathelmun Yalingwa, that each portfolio area of the university must complete priority projects for Indigenous participation and cultural awareness for 2018. The Indigenous workforce strategy priority projects for 2018 for the recruitment and career development of Indigenous people in the workforce are:

- Introduce a new traineeship program that targets community members to work within specific disciplines across the University (discipline areas to be confirmed and subject to budget approval).
- Work with Moondani Balluk and the Aboriginal Student Life Project Officer to identify potential students to participate in employment placements that are suitable and appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the Students-as-Staff Program
- Develop a targeted employment approach that creates alignment between prospective staff (registered on the database) and recruitment processes and practices.
- Provision of informal, one-on-one induction for all new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and ongoing cultural safety support (through the Indigenous Community Liaison Officer).
- Removal of barriers to participate in professional development opportunities and specialist targeted support is provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to enable participation, including the SPP and Academic Promotion processes.

The Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Strategy Leadership Committee as Victoria University's Indigenous Governance Mechanism and the University Council will monitor the implementation of these priority projects.

In 2017 in the implementation of the new University faculty, the First Year College, the employment of Indigenous academics was prioritised. This enabled the University to grow the Indigenous workforce from 0.9% in September 2017 to 1.1% in March 2018 with the implementation of the new College. The employment of the Indigenous employment and recruitment community liaison officer position enables the University to provide one-to-one recruitment and career development guidance to Indigenous applicants and employees.

In 2017 the University undertook a number of activities and improvements for Indigenous recruitment and employee career development:

- Informal, one-on-one induction for all new Indigenous staff and advice on entitlements regarding specific cultural leave, options
- Mentoring and support as required to fulfil the requirements of their roles.
- Cultural Awareness Training in the Glenn Shea Story Teller Program – 3 sessions in 2017
- Promote online and face-to-face, Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training to VU staff.
- Revise and review prospective staff database and actively promote employment opportunities to suitably qualified staff
- Weekly vacancies, advertise vacancies to Indigenous community and organisations via Aboriginal Community Broker
- Engaging with community and promote VU as a supportive, viable and safe place to work at.
- Indigenous Application Tool was reviewed and updated in 2017. Tool is a guide to assist Indigenous jobseekers with the employment process and selection criteria.
- Website was updated in Indigenous Employment section with links for easier access, friendly user interface
- Staff 1 on 1s support and mentoring

**5a Indigenous workforce data (2017 breakdown)**

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

Faculty	Level/position	Perm/ >1yr		Casual/ <1yr	
		Aca	Non-aca	Aca	Non-aca
COLLEGE OF ARTS & EDUCATION	Academic Teaching Scholar Level A	1			
FIRST YEAR COLLEGE	Academic Teaching Scholar Level A	1			
MOONDANI BALLUK	Academic Level A	1			
COLLEGE OF ARTS & EDUCATION	Academic Level B	2			
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS	Academic Level B	1			
MOONDANI BALLUK	Academic Level B	2			
MOONDANI BALLUK	Academic Level E	2			
MOONDANI BALLUK	Academic Sessional			1	
PEOPLE & CULTURE	Academic Sessional			1	
<b>Academic Total</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>2</b>	
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS	Higher Education Worker 5		1		
COLLEGE OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCE	Higher Education Worker 6		1		
COLLEGE OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCE	Casual				1
MOONDANI BALLUK	Higher Education Worker 6		2		
MOONDANI BALLUK	Higher Education Worker 10		1		
PEOPLE & CULTURE	Higher Education Worker 3		1		
PEOPLE & CULTURE	Higher Education Worker 4		1		
PEOPLE & CULTURE	Higher Education Worker 6		1		
MARKETING AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS	Higher Education Worker 7		1		
LEARNING, INNOVATION AND QUALITY	Higher Education Worker 9		1		
<b>Higher Education Worker Total</b>			<b>10</b>		<b>1</b>

## 6. Indigenous involvement in decision-making

The Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Leadership Committee was established in 2016 and in 2017 was responsible for the oversight of the University's Indigenous Participation Strategy. The Committee met twice in 2017 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)	7.3	
Shaun Eltham	Vice-President, People and Culture	1.4	
Professor Rob Strathdee	Dean, College of Arts & Education	1.3	
Teresa Tjia	Vice-President, Planning and Registrar	4.6	
Richard Constantine	Vice-President, Students, Infrastructure and Digital Technologies	2.3	
Professor Warren Payne	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Research Training	7.9	
Rob Brown	Executive Director, Marketing and External Relations	13.5	
Wayne Butson	Director, Service Industries & Transitions, VPoly	26.8	
Karen Jackson	Director, Moondani Balluk	21.0	YES
Irene Sadzov	Indigenous Community Liaison Officer, People and Culture	0.7	YES
Professor Gary Foley	Moondani Balluk	12.1	YES
Kathy Trangalakis	College of Health & Biomedicine (Dean's representative)	23.2	
Rowena Price	Koori Liaison Officer, VPoly	7.1	YES
Tracey Cooper	Lecturer, College of Arts & Education	7.1	YES
At least one student representative <sup>12</sup>	Not filled in 2017		YES
External community nominee	Not filled in 2017		YES

In regard to the involvement of Aboriginal people in the decisions of the university, the Director Moondani Balluk an appropriately qualified senior executive employee and in 2017 is a member of the following governance bodies and groups:

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



#### **6a. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism**

As a Vice Chancellor who has seen first-hand the transformative power of education to individuals and to society, and as the Chair of the Indigenous Leadership Committee, I am excited to enact the objectives of the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy and I look forward to seeing what we can achieve by 2020.

At the December meeting of the Academic Board the Vice-Chancellor noted his appreciation to Ms Jackson, Director Moondani Balluk, and her Moondani Balluk colleagues for their assistance in developing the *Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy*. The Board could consider how to achieve the Strategy objective of “*promoting Indigenous culture and learning and fostering increased participation of indigenous students and staff at VU*”. Ms Jackson was also assisting in increasing the recruitment and employment of Indigenous staff to the First Year College.