

Australian National University
DRAFT Reconciliation Action Plan: 2020–2021

Our vision for reconciliation

The University's vision is to be a place that facilitates learning that respects and values diversity: a place where all Australians come together to engage with their chosen disciplines in culturally rich learning and research environments. We seek to embed reconciliation into our core business practices and decision making at all levels.

ANU is a place where First Nations cultures are respected, celebrated and reflected in our research and education. We are dedicated to advancing reconciliation by further promoting greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories; increasing participation in higher education; and fostering partnerships in Indigenous education, research, wellbeing, advancement and development. ANU will provide an environment for debating the big issues to advance the status, recognition and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For tens of thousands of years, hundreds of generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived in Australia. These Traditional Owners and custodians of Australia have developed complex societies with many languages, cultural practices and religious and spiritual traditions, which continue to be passed down from generation to generation. The arrival of Europeans in Australia led to two centuries of conflict and violence. Through deliberate government policy First Nations peoples were isolated and marginalised within their own Country, resulting in significant economic and social disadvantage. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are still fighting to maintain the languages and cultures which sustain First Australians' way of life and have shown incredible strength and resilience in the face of disadvantage and discrimination.

Institutions like ANU benefit enormously from the opportunity to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. The past two centuries of dispossession and systemic racism have profoundly impacted all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life, including access to institutions like ANU. This is the legacy that ANU recognises, acknowledges and seeks to redress. This Plan is testament to the University's conviction that it has an important role to play in righting these wrongs. It recognises that meaningful relationships must be founded on mutual respect and meaningful partnership between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians.

As the National University, we have a responsibility to ensure our student and staff cohorts represent the diversity of our nation. With this in mind, we strive to build a strong cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff and students feel welcome, and are supported within a community on our campus are our top priorities. There are five core themes which this plan focuses upon:

Students: We will provide the best educational and campus experiences so that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may successfully complete their degrees and fulfil their aspirations. Our students are the future leaders of our nation.

Staff: We will develop appropriate recruitment mechanisms and pathways for career progression and professional development to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to succeed in their chosen field by providing a stimulating, supportive, enriching environment and community of support at ANU.

Research & Policy Development: We seek to transform Australian society with impactful, collaborative, Indigenous-led research and policy development.

Education: We have so much to learn from the cultures, histories and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and are committed to ensuring that an education at ANU celebrates and embeds First Nations knowledges, principles, and ways of learning.

Community Engagement: Our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will provide the University with the opportunity to listen and learn about the historical and modern circumstances for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and provide space for articulating a vision for the future.

Our business

ANU is Australia's national university and a strategic endowment for our nation. It was established by an Act of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1946 to support the development of national unity and identity, to improve Australia's understanding of itself and its neighbours, and to contribute to economic development and social cohesion. Since its establishment, ANU has built an international reputation for excellence in research and education and advancing knowledge through original inquiry and intellectual discourse. ANU undertakes research of the highest quality in fields of particular importance to the nation. The University is a leader in quality teaching and learning, and our profile of graduate destinations demonstrates that ANU prepares students well for workforce participation and for being valuable contributors locally, nationally and globally. With the multidisciplinary capacity created by the Colleges, ANU advances knowledge through community engagement by enhancing understanding of Australia – its economy, society, culture and environment – and its position in the region and the world. As the Commonwealth's university in the nation's capital, ANU plays a leading role in the public policy community by exploring the important problems and issues that confront the nation, the region and the world, working to provide solutions through evidence-based policy analysis and informing the public through leading open discussion of those issues. We want to be a university that brings together students and scholars from across the country, the region, the world, and from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds.

The University is located in central Canberra, with small facilities elsewhere in the ACT, New South Wales and the Northern Territory with regional offices in China, Singapore and the USA. The University employs approximately 4400 staff of which 51 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. A commitment by ANU to achieve the vision and targets set out in this RAP will enhance the quality, diversity and experience of the University's staff and student bodies. Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives across all areas will help ensure that courses are more responsive to international, national, community and professional expectations.

ANU is fully committed to the values of academic inquiry in the pursuit of knowledge, integrity in all its activities, collegiality in its relationships, diversity in its staff and students and engagement with its communities and the nation. ANU is uniquely placed to contribute both to the national reconciliation agenda and to supporting the aspirations of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The University has a long-standing commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and cultures, and has already taken a number of significant steps towards reconciliation.

The University has a number of organisational units with a singular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus. The Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre provides a meeting place and support base for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying at ANU. Tjabal staff and students are strongly committed to improving education outcomes and achieving study and career goals that positively impact communities.

Other areas of the University that have a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus include:

- The National Centre for Indigenous Studies (NCIS) which promotes and initiates cross-disciplinary research in a wide range of areas of relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Through this research NCIS aims to deepen Australia's understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories and ensure these knowledges, perspectives and experiences are respected, valued, accessed and incorporated into all learning environments and beyond.
- The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) is Australia's foremost social science research body focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic and social policy from a national perspective. CAEPR aims to undertake social science research that informs intellectual understanding, public debate, policy formation and community action.
- The Australian Centre for Indigenous History conducts collaborative and individual research projects on Australian, comparative and trans-national Indigenous histories. The Centre hosts the journal, *Aboriginal History*, which is co-edited by two staff members, and offers an undergraduate course on Indigenous histories.
- The National Centre for Indigenous Genomics aims to create a repository of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander biospecimens, genomic data and documents for research and other uses that benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander donors, their communities and descendants, and the general Australian community.
- The National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health includes a program in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing.
- The ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language has a major focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, supported by a Chair of Indigenous Linguistics. ANU students have the opportunity to learn an Aboriginal language.
- The School of Music's Indigenous composer initiative, in partnership with other arts organisations, provides mentoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander composers.
- The University has close relationships with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the National Museum of Australia, both located adjacent to the University.

Our RAP

The University's first RAP was launched in 2009 but by 2012, the central RAP Committee had ceased to function. The RAP Committees of some Colleges and administrative units continued to implement actions and made some very significant advances, particularly in trying new models for recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional staff. In 2017, under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Brian Schmidt and with the launch of our new strategic plan, ANU renewed its commitment to reconciliation through the development of an [Innovate RAP](#). There have been many achievements in implementing our 2018-19 RAP, in particular a reinvigorated RAP Working Group which has driven action across all levels at ANU. The Working Group is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and members include representatives from each of the Colleges and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives including the Directors of Tjabal and NCIS.

Other achievements include beginning all major ANU public events with a Welcome to Country; the inclusion of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person on high level decision-making bodies of the University including ANU Council; an enhanced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

presence at graduation ceremonies, including flags and stoles for graduates; the ANU Indigenous Heritage Trail; the establishment of staff Reconciliation awards; implementation of the Core cultural learning program for staff and students; and an increase in the number of artworks and symbols displayed across the University. A number of these actions have helped to establish a sense of place and belonging across our campus. We still have a long way to go to reach our goals of parity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student numbers however there is enormous goodwill across our community to continue our work towards reconciliation.

In developing this current plan we explored the challenges of the previous plan, including committing to too many actions and deliverables without the required support, communication and resources, and have thus refocussed on five key priorities, while maintaining a list of our ongoing commitments. The plan has been developed by our RAP Working Group, led by the Vice-Chancellor, in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students and academic and administrative units of the University. The RAP Working Group is comprised of professional and academic staff representing all seven Colleges, representatives of key service divisions, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student representatives. A draft version was also sent to all ANU staff, students and the Indigenous Alumni Network for comment. The final plan will be provided to ANU Council for endorsement and submitted to Reconciliation Australia for approval.

The organisation of the University resembles a federalist structure which is used as a framework for the implementation of this document. The RAP Plan is intended to set a benchmark for initiatives that are to be implemented at a University-wide level and to create a holistic approach to advancing reconciliation. It informs all Implementation Plans that follow it at College and Division levels while permitting them the flexibility to be creative in actions that are especially adapted to those units. The RAP signals an ambitious systemic shift in the University's culture and its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The University recognises the importance of reconciliation for all members of our University and that initiatives to promote reconciliation must be framed within a respectful environment for all.

Opportunities				
The University aspires to enrol Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in proportion to the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the overall population. To do so, we will focus on providing a culturally appropriate, stimulating, enriching and supportive environment to study and work.				
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Senior Lead	Resp. for delivery
1. Establish ANU as a preferred university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander student enrolments by 10% annually up to parity; and focus on maintaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander completion, retention and satisfaction rates at, or above, the rates for non-Indigenous students through development, implementation and promotion of a recruitment and support strategy. 	January 2021, 2022	Director Tjabal, PVCUE	Deans, GMs, VP Advancement, Director Marketing & Student Recruitment, Tjabal Recruitment officer.
2. Establish ANU as a preferred university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and professional staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander employment by 10% annually up to parity through development and implementation of a recruitment, retention and professional development strategy for both academic and professional staff. 	January 2021, 2022	VC (academic), COO (professional)	Director HR, Deans, RS Directors, (academic), GMs, SDDs (professional)

Relationships				
As the national university, one of our defining roles is to contribute to the advancement of First Nations peoples. Building broader and deeper relationships and collaborations with First Nations peoples will enable the University to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments and graduates; undertake more effective teaching, learning and services; undertake research in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; provide an environment for discussion and action regarding issues which advance the status, recognition and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and give back to the communities that we engage with.				
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Senior Lead	Resp. for delivery
3. Establish and build on mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a team within NCIS to provide leadership and advice to staff across ANU regarding the University's engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. 	July 2020	NCIS Director	Community Engagement NCIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a new Indigenous-led Human Research Ethics Sub-committee. 	December 2020	DVCR/ NCIS Director	DVCR office
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an engagement plan to guide our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders which will inform our research agenda, education content and practices. 	December 2020	NCIS Director	Community Engagement, NCIS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and strengthen the University's Indigenous Alumni Network to share their experience, expertise and contributions, and to enhance Indigenous education and research and in support of the RAP. 	December 2020	VP Adv	Director Alumni Rels / College Heads of Advancement & Alumni Managers / Res. Colleges
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed recognition and reconciliation across annual alumni events (e.g. Alumni Awards; Alumni Weekend) 	December 2020	VP Adv	Director Alumni Rels

Respect :				
<p>The knowledge, cultural expression and lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians should be acknowledged and celebrated by all in our community. The perspectives which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bring to intellectual inquiry enable them to make valuable and unique contributions to the University's research and educational programs and the generation of new knowledge. Respecting and valuing these knowledges, cultures and experiences is therefore fundamental to the business of the University and its goals in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, research and employment.</p>				
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Senior Lead	Resp. for delivery
4. Increase staff and student understanding, valuing and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning in our education and research programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategy that includes a review of the curriculum to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, principles and other content into undergraduate and graduate coursework in every College where applicable. 	July 2021	DVCA / PVCE / Deans / NCIS Edu lead	NCIS Education / College ADEs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research strategy to ensure research and policy development at ANU aligns with national and community priorities to make a significant impact. 	December 2020	DVCR / Deans / NCIS Research lead	NCIS Research / PPSI Hub / College ADR

Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting				
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Senior Lead	Resp. for Delivery
5. Provide appropriate governance and support for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to convene the RAP Working Group quarterly, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and utilise Strategy Dot Zero system to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	Quarterly 2020, 2021, 2022	VC	RAP Secretariat

effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation at Central and College levels. 	September 2020	VC, COO, Deans	RAP WG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create RAP section of College/Division 'implementation' plans to outline specific actions at the local levels to implement the RAP and to improve coordination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives between Schools, Colleges and the centre. 	September 2020	Deans / COO /VC	RAP Secretariat, GMs, SDDs
6. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish accountability mechanisms to empower and hold accountable Executives, College Deans, Service Division Directors. 	September 2020	VC / RAP WG	PPM / GMs / SDDs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to ANU Council and senior leaders biannually and publicly report our achievements and learnings annually. 	January, July 2020, 2021, 2022	VC	RAP Secretariat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	September 2020, 2021	VC	RAP Secretariat
7. Review, refresh and update our RAP as part of our reconciliation journey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. 	November 2021	VC	RAP WG

Ongoing Commitments

The actions listed above highlight the priority areas for action under this RAP. Under our previous RAP, we undertook a number of other initiatives that we are committed to continuing and to not lose sight of as we continue on our reconciliation journey.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Senior Lead	Resp. for delivery
8. Promote reconciliation as part of the University's core business through building a culture among staff and students whereby everyone has a role to play in reconciliation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation 	Dec 2020	VC	Executive, Deans, SDDs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly 	February 2021, 2022	Director SCAPA	SCAPA, College Comms Teams
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and build robust and collaborative partnerships with other universities to collectively advance reconciliation. 	Dec 2020	VC	Director NCIS
9. Engage employees and students in cultural awareness/competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events each year including graduations, State of the University and Commencement. 	Dec 2020	Director SCAPA	Events Officers

programs to ensure a shared understanding of the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make available an online Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course for all staff and students and utilise incentives to increase uptake. 	Dec 2020	Director HR	Equity & Diversity, HR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult local Traditional Owners on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy which is communicated to all staff. 	Dec 2020	Director HR	Equity & Diversity, HR, Comm Eng NCIS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a cultural protocol document, support and training to enhance cultural competency and understanding for the entire University community to ensure delivery of an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important meetings. 	July 2021	Director HR, Registrar	HR training, DSA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Australia flags at significant events and on University grounds. 	July 2020	Director F&S, Director SCAPA	Director F&S, Director SCAPA
10. Build relationships and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by engaging and promoting annual celebrations such as National Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a calendar at the beginning of each year of annual events to plan lectures, forums and workshops to mark NRW and NAIDOC weeks and other important events nationally and actively promote internally and externally. 	January 2021, 2022	Director SCAPA	SCAPA / Events Officers / Marketing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff and register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. 	May 2021, 2022	Director SCAPA	SCAPA / Events Officers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise at least one NRW event each year and encourage staff to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW and NAIDOC. 	May 2021, 2022	Director SCAPA / Deans	SCAPA / GMs
11. Establish ANU as a preferred university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and professional staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise all professional staff vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and appropriate academic vacancies. 	July 2020	Director HR	A/D Recruitment / College recruitment staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network for academic and professional staff. 	July 2020	NCIS / Tjabal Directors	Events Officer
12. Increase opportunities to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers to support improved economic and social outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create better opportunities for the University to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply its goods and services. 	July 2020	Chief Procurement Officer	University Procurement and Contract Office (UPCO)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate to staff avenues to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	Dec 2020	Chief Procurement Officer	SCAPA/ UPCO

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