

Indigenous Student Success Program 2020 Financial Acquittal

Organisation

The University of Queensland

1. Financials – income and expenditure

Table 1a ISSP income available to support Indigenous students in 2020 (excluding GST)¹

Item	(\$)
A. ISSP Grant	
ISSP Grant 2020 (flexible component)	1,907,828.65
ISSP Grant 2020 for preserved scholarships	1,377.50
Subtotal ISSP Grant 2020	1,909,206.15
B. Other ISSP Related Income	
Rollover of ISSP funds from 2019	
Interest earned/royalties from ISSP funding	2,235.90
Sale of ISSP assets	
Subtotal other ISSP related income	2,235.90
Grand total for 2020	1,911,442.05

Table 1b Other funding available to support Indigenous students in 2020 (excluding GST)²

Item	(\$)
A. Other non-ISSP funds	
Other funding provided under HESA ³	384,626.00
Other Commonwealth Government funding	
ATO cash flow boost voluntarily allocated by you to this activity	
Funds derived from external sources ⁴	1,329,800.33
Total of other non-ISSP funds for 2020	1,714,426.33

Table 1c Expenditure on support for Indigenous students during 2020 (excluding GST)⁵

Item	Actual ISSP (\$) ⁶	Estimate other funds (\$) ⁷	TOTAL (\$) ⁸
Preserved scholarships	1,377.50		1,377.50
“New” scholarships from flexible ISSP funding	168,250.00		168,250.00
Teaching and learning ⁹		585,069.60	585,069.60
Salaries for staff working on ISSP activities (excluding JobKeeper payments) ^{10 11 12}	1,406,025.23	586,441.58	1,992,466.81
Administration for staff working on ISSP activities ¹³	125,708.09	87,551.96	213,260.05
Travel – domestic (airfares, accommodation & meals)	-28.36	43,125.04	43,096.68
Travel – international (airfares)			
Travel – international (accommodation and meals)			
Conference fees and related costs ¹⁴	1,423.24	2,356.69	3,779.93
ISSP Asset purchases made during 2020 ¹⁵			
Other (including other ATO cash flow boost expenditure not included in above figures *Professional & other services *Student Computer (non asset) replacement & other non asset purchases *Hospitality & student events *Scholarships	9,660.99 18,903.97 33,672.33	18,453.51 19,773.97 25,027.31 377.92	28,114.50 38,677.94 58,699.64 377.92
A. Total Expenditure 2020	\$1,764,992.99	\$1,368,177.58	\$3,133,170.57
B. Unexpended 2019 ISSP funds approved for rollover into 2020 grant year			
2020 ISSP funding committed (A + B)	1,764,992.99		
D. Other unexpended 2020 ISSP Funds to be returned to PM&C¹⁶			
C. Unexpended 2020 preserved scholarships funds to be returned to PM&C			

For NIAA information only	
JobKeeper payment/s received and expended on this activity (value \$)	

2. Rollovers

Table 2 Rollovers agreed

	Rolled over (\$) (A)	Expended/committed ¹⁷ (\$) (B)	Excess to be returned to the Department ¹⁸ (C) (C = A – B)
2019 funds rolled over into 2020			
2020 funds approved for rollover into 2021	146,449.06	146,449.06	

Please provide details of rollovers outlined in Table 1d above:

- the expenditure of 2019 ISSP funds rolled over into 2020.
- progress towards expenditure of 2019 funds rolled over into 2020.

[Please delete this box if no roll-over was agreed]

3. Goods and Services Tax

Table 3 Goods and Services Tax (GST) paid under ISSP - 1 January – 31 December 2020¹⁹

1. GST received by you in 2020 as part of the Indigenous Student Success Program funding under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> ²⁰	\$
2. GST remitted or committed for payment to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) (in the remittance instalments shown below) ²¹	\$
Amount remitted: \$ Date remitted: / /	Amount remitted: \$ Date remitted: / /
	Amount remitted: \$ Date remitted: / /

4. ISSP Assets

Table 2a ISSP Assets inventory²²

Asset Description/ category	Adjustable Value ²³	ISSP contribution ²⁴

Table 2b ISSP Assets - purchases during 2020

Asset Description/ category	Purchase Value	ISSP contribution


Table 2c ISSP Assets - disposals during 2020

Asset Description/ category	Adjustable value	Disposals/ Sale Price ²⁵	ISSP component ²⁶	Disposals Age ²⁷

5. Endorsement of the Financial Acquittal²⁸

2020 Financial Acquittal supported and initialled by:

Andrew Flannery
(Print name of relevant officer)
Chief Financial Officer
(Print position title)

 14/04/21
(Signature and date)

Telephone contact: 07 3365 2391 E-mail: cfo@uq.edu.au

INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMME 2020 CERTIFICATION

Complete this certification after reading the completed 2020 Performance Report and 2020 Financial Acquittal for the Indigenous Student Success Programme.

I certify that:

- (i) the Institution has met the eligibility requirements of the Indigenous Student Success Programme as set out in guidelines and the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*; and
- (ii) the 2020 Indigenous Student Success Programme Performance report presents an accurate summary of the Institution's use of program funds and of other activities undertaken by the Institution to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes; and
- (iii) the 2020 Indigenous Student Success Programme financial acquittal represents a complete, true and correct summary of transactions that took place during 2020 under the Indigenous Student Success Programme; and
- (iv) Indigenous Student Success Programme Funds, and any interest earned or royalties/income derived from these Funds, was expended on activities consistent with the Indigenous Student Success Programme guidelines and the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

I understand that:

- (i) the Minister or the Minister's delegate may seek further information to support this certification; and
- (ii) in the event that I have not remitted GST paid under the Agreement to the Australian Taxation Office, that it is my obligation to remit those amounts, as required under the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*; and
- (iii) it is an offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* to provide false or misleading information.

Certification recommended by university's Indigenous Governance Mechanism:

Name:
Title:
Signed: Date:

Certification made by Vice-Chancellor or equivalent delegate:

Name:
Title:
Signed: Date:

Indigenous Student Success Program

2020 Performance Report

Organisation	The University of Queensland		
Contact Person	Jason Curtis, Executive Officer, Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement)		
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1. Enrolments (Access)

Indigenous Student Success Program	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position
EFTSL	313.35	15	318.45	16	309.96	17	347.53	16

Table 1. Indigenous student data provided to the Vice Chancellor in 2020 regarding enrolments - Performance and comparative position. Data derived from Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS) data.

Improving access to university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UQ begins with The University of Queensland Strategic Plan 2018-2021 which commits to "activities that attract, support and retain a diverse and inclusive community of high achieving staff and students" and states that it will "support the building of respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader community through the Reconciliation Action Plan". Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student representation within UQ is a key performance indicator in UQ's Strategic Plan, and also in its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which commits the university to "engage in a UQ-wide approach to increasing representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education".

Current figures suggest that there was a (6.14%) decrease in the number of commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments from 2019-2020. A corresponding decrease in the EFTSL and headcount of commencing Indigenous students was observed across the majority of program levels (Table 3, Table 4). There was an increase (7.89%) in continuing student enrolments over the same period, as noted below in Table 2. This suggests that in 2020, retention was actually improved amongst existing students. Qualitative data from the Student Support team in UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ATSIS) Unit indicated commencing students may have decided to defer studies in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and sudden move to online learning. Interestingly, the majority of the decrease in commencing student enrolments was at the Gatton and Herston campuses (Table 4), where the Aboriginal and Torres and Islander Studies (ATSIS) Unit was either closed due to COVID-19 in Semester 1 (Gatton) or non-existent. While UQ did experience campus closure in Semester 1, 2020, this data may suggest that in-person student support and a greater sense of connection may help mitigate the impact of adverse events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. ATSIS Unit Student Support team is funded in the majority by ISSP funds.

Commencement Status	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Commencing	157	156	156	179	168
Continuing	242	263	277	279	301
Total	399	419	433	458	469

Table 2. Whole year enrolments of Indigenous students at UQ, 5-year trend, internal data.

Program Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Bachelors	87.0	79.1	79.6	93.5	86.6
Cross-Institutional and Non-award	1.4	1.3	1.6	2.3	2.5
Enabling	4.4	3.8	9.9	9.2	12.2
HDR	2.3	6.4	4.3	8.5	6.4
Postgraduate Coursework	21.9	22.0	15.1	23.9	14.9
Total	117.0	112.6	110.4	137.3	122.6

Table 3. Whole year EFTSL of commencing Indigenous students at UQ, 5-year trend. Slight drop in continuing EFTSL across all programs. Internal UQ data.

Program Level Group	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Postgraduate Research	4	9	6	16	11
Postgraduate Coursework	35	41	27	36	31
Undergraduate	106	99	112	114	109
Non-Award	5	3	1	2	3
Enabling	7	4	10	11	14
Total	157	156	156	179	168

Table 4. Commencing students, whole year enrolments, headcount, 5-year trend. Internal UQ data.

Student Campus	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
St Lucia	135	133	134	146	147
Gatton	12	11	13	13	10
Herston	10	12	9	20	11
Total	157	156	156	179	168

Table 5. Commencing students, Whole Year enrolments by campus, 5-year trend. Internal UQ data.

1.1. Student Support Services

Undergraduate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Admissions Pathway

The University of Queensland and the ATSI Unit administers an Admissions Pathway designed to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants who are applying for undergraduate study at UQ. The Admissions Pathway considers results from formal education and a range of other factors such as employment history and references. Students may apply for this pathway as outlined below:

- The applicant's [entry score or ATAR](#) is too low for admission into their preferred program.
- The applicant is applying for a very competitive program that accepts a limited number of students (Veterinary Science, Dental Science, Physiotherapy and more); the Admissions Pathway applicants meeting the criteria for admission are given first preference for admission to these programs.
- The applicant does not meet the [subject prerequisites](#) for the program but has extensive relevant work experience and/or training that may suffice.

- The applicant did not complete the [UCAT](#) (Dentistry and Provisional MD applicants) or the [situational judgement test](#) (Veterinary Science).

The Admissions Pathway improves access to undergraduate programs by rendering applicants eligible for up to an additional [5 adjustment factors or ATAR equivalent](#) to assist students with meeting the rank requirement for entry into their preferred program. The pathway also allows students to be admitted to their preferred program where they may not have completed the prerequisite but have extensive relevant work experience and/or training that may be considered equivalent.

In 2020, 23 undergraduate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students were admitted through forced offers associated with this admissions pathway (ATSIS Unit internal data). This accounted for 21% of all commencing Indigenous undergraduate students, illustrating the importance of this pathway in enabling access to tertiary education.

Provisional and Graduate Entry Admissions Pathway for the Doctor of Medicine

In addition to the Undergraduate Admissions Pathway, the ATSIS Unit coordinates two admissions pathways designed to increase the participation of Indigenous students in the Doctor of Medicine.

The Provisional Entry pathway holistically assesses Year 12 school leavers for their eligibility to obtain a provisional place in the Doctor of Medicine. Provisional entry is highly competitive, however in 2019 the ATSIS Unit received only 1 application from a prospective student (for 2020 entry), despite email and SMS communications to the 8 applicants listing the Doctor of Medicine (Provisional Entry) program on their QTAC application. It is suspected that as applications close early (August), students may not have realised they could apply. In 2020, the ATSIS Unit collaborated with the Faculty of Medicine to better market the admission pathway and received 5 applications for 2021 admission, all of whom were made offers (3 accepted). This illustrates that thoughtful promotion of these pathways is key.

The Graduate Entry Admissions Pathway facilitates the admission of Indigenous students who have completed an undergraduate degree and wish to complete the Doctor of Medicine. This pathway is crucial to enabling access to this highly competitive program and is administered by the ATSIS Unit. In late 2019, the ATSIS Unit received 9 applications for 2020 admission to the MD program through this pathway; 5 of these applicants were made direct offers and 4 were made conditional offers, dependent on completing foundation science courses in the Diploma of Science (or equivalent at UQ). In late 2020, the ATSIS Unit received 16 applications for 2021 admission to the MD program through this pathway; 10 of these applicants were made direct offers and 3 were made conditional offers, dependent on completing foundation science courses in the Diploma of Science (or equivalent at UQ) over the following year. The Faculty of Medicine reported a similar growth in the number of applicants in 2020.

Together, this data demonstrates that Admissions Pathways for Indigenous students are key to enabling access to tertiary education, particularly to highly competitive programs that accept a limited number of students.

1.2. Enabling pathway: UQ College

UQ College offers a range of tertiary preparation programs and an Associate Degree in Business. The preparation programs aim to equip students with the skills and attributes needed to go on to further university studies. Students have a choice of studying a full tertiary preparation program (where they

have not received an OP/ATAR or completed Year 12) or choosing individual courses to meet their prerequisite study needs. Students who complete the whole program are eligible to apply for a QTAC rank. UQ College was actively marketed as a pathway option by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit's Outreach & Engagement and Student Support teams when consulting with future students; at events such as UQ's Virtual Open Day and in new online promotional material in 2020. Student Support team members also work actively with prospective students in collaboration with UQ College to help applicants find an appropriate pathway into university (which may include a VET qualification). This tailored approach is key for such students, particularly those that may be struggling to find information across a range of institutions.

1.3. Outreach and Engagement Activities

InspireU Program

The InspireU program is a tertiary aspiration-building program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth administered by the ATSI Unit's Outreach and Engagement team. The program engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 11 and 12 studying at schools across Australia (although predominantly in Queensland). The InspireU Junior STEM program is designed to cater for students in years 9 and 10. The program involves a series of residential camps themed around the professional disciplines of Engineering/STEM, Education, Law, Business and Health Science. Program participants attend 'on campus' residential camps, take part in interactive workshops and lectures, workplace/industry visits and receive guidance from UQ and industry experts about study and career opportunities. Participants also attend a session presented by the ATSI Unit Student Support team who provide an overview of entry requirements, application processes and the Admissions Pathways as well as outlining the kinds of services offered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UQ.

In addition to camp activities, program participants enjoy a number of additional benefits including academic skills workshops, information sessions at University Open Days, and regular communication from the program coordinators about upcoming opportunities. InspireU is delivered in collaboration with UQ faculties and schools, industry partners and community.

In 2020, only 2 InspireU residential camps were hosted in the areas of Engineering/STEM as a result of COVID-19. 41 students participated in the program in 2020, across a range of schools. Several partners contributed to the funding and the delivery of the camps, including UQ's EAIT and Science Faculties, Boeing Defense Australia and Rio Tinto. The Outreach and Engagement team is made up of 4 professional staff; this is inclusive of a team leader, one program coordinator and two project officers. In addition to the Outreach and Engagement Team, a team of current Student Ambassadors was employed to assist in the administration of the program.

InspireU activities in 2020 were funded from a mixture of Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) and ISSP monies.

Community promotion

In 2020, staff of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit participated in several community events to promote UQ, the ATSI Unit and pathways into university. These events included hosting a virtual booth at UQ Open day, participating in a virtual booth for promotion of the Bachelor of Arts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Major, participating in the UQ NAIDOC

celebrations and the holding a virtual booth at the UQ ATAR Advice Event. These activities were funded in part by ISSP funds, which support the salaries of staff involved in these activities.

Scholarships

In 2020, the AT SIS Unit worked with UQ Student Services to promote and provide specific funding to students impacted by COVID-19.

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling		0		0				0 ¹
Undergraduate	59,127.50	28	70,000.00	19			129,127.50	47 ²
Post-graduate	12,750.00	6	3,750.00	1			16,500.00	7 ³
Other		0		0				0 ⁴
Total	71,877.50	34	73,750.00	20			145,627.50	54 ⁵

Table 6. Scholarships – breakdown of 2020 payments

¹ Number of enabling Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship

² Number of undergraduate Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship

³ Number of post-graduate Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship

⁴ Number of other students that received any form of ISSP scholarship

⁵ Total number of Indigenous students that received any form of ISSP scholarship

2. Progression (access and outcomes)

Indigenous Student Success Program	2017		2018		2019	
	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position
Success Rate (units passed/units attempted)	82.88	7	82.57	10	83.25	10

Table 7. Data provided to the VC in December 2020 shows that UQ maintained a relatively consistent unit success rate of Indigenous students between years. The comparative position of the university remained the same across this period.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced significant changes as UQ's teaching went entirely online from March 2020. It was anticipated that many students would withdraw and that there would be a significant impact on student success. However, internal UQ data suggests that while there was an increase in the number of courses withdrawn from after census date, there was a decrease in the number of courses failed (by approximately 2%, 60 courses). This suggests that students employed good risk mitigation and were well-supported in doing so.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Grades	2,286	2,387	2,309	2,564	2,550
Total Pass	1,801	1,875	1,815	2,026	1,870
Total 6 or 7	644	756	759	862	815
Total Fail	289	310	251	304	246
Total N/A	71	103	94	101	133
Total W	125	99	149	133	301
% Pass	78.78%	78.55%	78.61%	79.02%	73.33%
% 6 or 7	28.17%	31.67%	32.87%	33.62%	31.96%
% Fail	12.64%	12.99%	10.87%	11.86%	9.65%
% N/A	3.11%	4.32%	4.07%	3.94%	5.22%
% W	5.47%	4.15%	6.45%	5.19%	11.80%

Table 8. UQ Internal data reveals that more students withdrew after census date in 2020 relative to 2019, which was expected due to COVID-19. However, there was a 2% reduction in the rate of courses failed, which suggests that those students that persisted maintained academic excellence and were well-supported. The decrease in the number of students passing can be attributed to increased withdrawals or incomplete grades. In over 31% of courses attempted, Indigenous students received a Distinction (Grade of 6) or High Distinction (Grade of 7). This suggests that not only are Indigenous students at UQ passing, but they are excelling. Pass = a Grade of 4 or above or 'P', Fail = a Grade of 3 or below or non-graded fail, N/A: course was listed as in progress or incomplete.

The AT SIS Unit offers advice and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of the University from enquiry/application to enrolment, graduation and beyond.

The AT SIS Unit provides a Student Support team, funded by ISSP funds, consisting of two full-time Student Support Coordinators and two full-time Academic Student Support Coordinators who are all based at UQ's St Lucia campus. The team places particular emphasis on supporting students in the early years of their study and on the transition from High School or other learning environments into UQ. The team also supports students with the transition into post-graduate study, to gain internships and/or paid employment and works closely with the Indigenous Engagement Division and UQ's Alumni Relations office to engage with UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni.

Although the Student Support team is based physically at the St Lucia campus, they also offer support to students studying at other UQ locations such as the Gatton Campus. Whilst the team regularly visit other campuses to meet with students face-to-face, due to COVID-19 impacts these visits did not occur in 2020. The types of service delivery for these campuses include face-to-face and remote support (by telephone, email and Zoom). During a 6-week lockdown in 2020 where most AT SIS Unit staff worked from home, the Student Support team made phone calls to all 393 undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students enrolled at UQ to check on their welfare. The team also sent regular bulk emails, reminding students of the support on offer and recorded motivational video messages from several key, student-facing staff which were uploaded to Facebook.

The team takes a student-centric approach to service delivery, offering integrated, holistic support to students by maintaining an 'open door' policy. Their approach is to develop relationships with students and foster a sense of 'belonging', both of which are integral aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This approach also encourages the development of independent learners. The Student Support team monitor student progress and implements appropriate action to support those

students where required. A whole-of-university case management model has been adopted to improve the retention and performance of Indigenous students at UQ. This is a coordinated effort involving the support of, and collaboration with, a range of UQ organisational units including faculties, schools, Student Services, UQ (Student) Union and central administrative units. Internal data indicated approximately 44% of UQ's undergraduate and postgraduate by coursework Indigenous students engaged with the ATSiS Unit Student Support Team either online or in person in 2020. 28% of students accessed ITAR.

COVID-19 presented students with significant challenges, not least of which was the loss of primary and secondary income as casual employees were stood down. In addition, many students reported that they were supporting their family and friends financially during this time. To respond to the significant financial burden, the ATSiS Unit introduced the Student Emergency Relief Grant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This grant was intended to support those experiencing temporary financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and funds from this Grant were to be used to purchase goods related directly to university study or to support the provision of essential items such as food, rent, transport and utilities. Special circumstances and departmental consultation allowed for the disbursement of this grant. The first round of COVID-19 grants occurred in April with 31 students being approved. The approved amount for each student was \$500, with a total of \$15,500.

The ATSiS Unit also partnered with UQ Student Services to offer hardship grants in 2020. 72 students received grants of up to \$2,000, depending on their needs. Central funds also enabled the purchase of 95 Coles vouchers of \$100 value, all of which were given to students in need. In addition, the ATSiS Unit partnered with the Laptop Initiative Equity Program from UQ's Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITALI) to supply 22 students with free or low-cost laptops in 2020. The first round of grants in April 2020 was supported by ISSP funds, with subsequent rounds and initiatives supported by donor and UQ funds.

Pre-Orientation Program

To assist new students with their transition into university study, the ATSiS Unit Student Support team organises orientation programs for new students at the beginning of each academic semester. The programs provide students with an opportunity to meet staff, become familiar with the facilities and experience campus and university life. Students and their family members are welcomed with an evening BBQ event where they meet current academic and professional staff as well as current students and alumni. New students also participate in interactive workshops ranging from academic preparation, networking opportunities with existing students, cultural immersion activities and financial and scholarship information sessions. Outside of this program, commencing Doctor of Medicine students are provided with a separate Pre-Orientation workshop involving key staff from the Faculty of Medicine who provide advice and support in relation to UQ's Medicine program.

A strong focus of the pre-orientation programs is to facilitate community building and academic resilience.

Pre-Orientation activities in 2020 were supported by ISSP funds.

Other activities

The team also provides a range of social and cultural activities for students, encouraging participation which in turn also creates a strong sense of connection and belonging. Activities such as regular,

catered student lunches for students were curtailed by COVID-19 restrictions in 2020, however the Student Support Coordinators ran a regular online Yarning Circle style mental health awareness session, arranged for visits to the ATSI Unit by Indigenous Elders (via Zoom and phone during COVID-19), and student versus staff sporting games were undertaken on a regular basis. The team works closely with the UQ Indigenous Student Collective, Goorie Berrimpa, to facilitate these activities.

Activity	Number of student participants	Expenditure (\$)
Pre-Orientation Program	15	3,158
Endnote Referencing Training online	6	0
Librarian online Consultations	11	0
Student Services Counselling/Disabilities Advisor Referrals	18	0
Cultural Sashing Ceremony (Graduation)	32	13,863
Zoom Yarning Circles	10	0
Coles vouchers (\$100 each) in response to COVID-19 pandemic	35	9,500
Student Emergency Grants (COVID-19)	31	15,500

Table 9. *Indigenous Support Activities provided in 2020.*

Engagement activities in 2020 were funded from a mixture of Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) and ISSP monies.

Academic Support and the Indigenous Tutoring and Retention (ITAR) Program

The two Academic Student Support Coordinators (ASSCs) employed by the ATSI Unit coordinate the Indigenous Tutorial and Retention program (ITAR). The ASSC's work with students to co-create individual, tailored support plans and collaborate with the students to seek solutions to problems and dilemmas which may include learning advice and additional tuition. Students are provided advice in a range of areas, including essay writing and time management. In 2020, ASSCs engaged with 192 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (46% of all enrolments) on a range of topics including, but not limited to program admission, course selection, time management, motivational strategies and assignment writing and academic progression issues. This support was delivered in-person prior to COVID-19 disruptions and via Zoom, email and phone during lockdown. As a number of students remained external or studying in flexible delivery mode, ASSCs continued to provide mixed mode support, at the students' preference. Engagement is defined as a minimum of one reciprocated contact via any mode of communication during 2020. In addition, the ITAR program provides students with course-specific tutoring tailored to each student's needs. According to ATSI Unit internal data, 121 of UQ's 426 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in a coursework program (28 %) applied for an ITAR tutor.

Faculty	
Business, Economics & Law	16
Engineering, Archi & Info Tech	22
Health & Behavioural Sciences	39
Humanities and Social Sciences	41
Medicine	30
Science	42
Other (postgrad/cross-institutional/non award)	2
Total	192

Table 10. Headcount of the number of Indigenous students who engaged with Academic Support Service Coordinators (ASSCs) in 2020. ATSSIS Unit internal data.

Level of study	Number of students assisted	Total hours of assistance	Expenditure (\$)
Enabling	4	216.75	
Undergraduate	157	3914.75	
Postgraduate	25	813.00	
Total	186	4994.50	\$392,310.98

Table 11. Tutorial assistance provided in 2020

The ASSC's recruit and coordinate a large pool of tutors. In 2020, the program employed 157 casual tutors across diverse subject areas. Adopting a strategy to employ a larger number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander tutors to build community connection and a sense of belonging in the program, in 2020, 25% of all our tutors identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and were high-achieving current students. Anecdotally, students have indicated that they find working with Indigenous tutors particularly valuable, and their employment also provides a pathway to casual employment for high performing students.

Cultural Competency and Community Building

The strategy to improve the cultural competence of UQ staff is a deliverable in UQ's Reconciliation Action Plan.

Culturally responsive staff both within and outside the ATSSIS Unit are vital to cultivating a sense of belonging and ensuring that Indigenous students feel welcomed and supported.

In late 2020, UQ launched its Core Cultural Learning program, requiring all UQ Staff members to complete at least two compulsory modules from the [Core Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Learning](#) (a program developed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)). The Senior Executive also undertook a face-to-face cultural training session in late 2020.

Another key aspect of UQ's efforts to increase cultural safety within the University has been the rapid growth in Indigenous employment in recent years (see Section 6.2). The increase in Indigenous staff has strengthened UQ's capacity to provide culturally safe and appropriate experiences for Indigenous students.

3. Completions (outcomes)

Indigenous Student Success Program	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position
Completions (head count)	79	7	82	8	72	13	82	14

Table 12. Data provided to the VC in December 2020 indicates that in 2019 there was an overall increase in the number of completions by Indigenous students relative to 2018, but a decrease in position, likely due to increased completions at other institutions.

Program Level	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Doctorate by research	1	2	-	2	1
Masters by research	-	-	-	2	-
Doctorate by coursework	-	-	-	-	1
Masters (Extended)	-	-	5	7	6
Masters by coursework	10	7	11	11	13
Graduate Diploma	3	7	2	1	2
Graduate Certificate	9	7	7	4	-
Bachelor's Honours	17	18	13	16	15
Bachelor's	37	40	30	38	29
Other Undergraduate	1	-	2	1	-
Total	77	78	70	80	67

Table 13. Internal UQ data shows that reduced completions are expected in 2020. This may be due to a number of impacts from COVID-19, such as a decision to delay graduation due to economic uncertainty.

Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Female	41	48	48	47	46
Male	35	30	22	33	21
Other	1	-	-	-	-
Total	77	78	70	80	67

Table 14. Internal UQ data shows the reduction in completions was almost entirely within those of a male gender.

Pathways to employment

While the Student Support team focusses on assisting students to complete their degrees, the team also works to connect students with internships, cadetships and broader work experience opportunities as a pathway to post-university employment. Team members worked to develop relationships with UQ services such as UQ Employability to make sure students are up to date with the latest opportunities. They also sought out, developed and maintained relationships and collaborations with external organisations such as CareerTrackers, KPMG, Jacobs Engineering, The Port of Brisbane, Shell, Urbis, and Shine People Solutions amongst others. Anecdotally, it appears that early employment experience helps students develop a vision for their future after graduation and supports progress towards degree completion. The Student Support staff were funded by ISSP monies in 2020.

Celebrating achievement

In 2019, the ATSI Unit hosted the inaugural Cultural Sashing ceremony, where graduating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students received their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander sash to wear during graduation. This event has become a highlight of the year for many. In 2020, the Cultural Sashing Ceremony was attended by 32 graduands, their families and many distinguished guests including the Vice-Chancellor, representatives from UQ's senior leadership team including the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) and a range of external and philanthropic partners. While the focus of this event is on celebrating the graduands, hearing about the achievements of the students also serves to strengthen partnerships, both internally and with external partners. The cultural sashing ceremony was funded by ISSP funds in 2020.

Staying connected

In 2019, the Office of the PVC (IE) established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alumni Reference Group) - a committee that provides advice on strategies to engage and activate UQ's Indigenous alumni community. The Indigenous Alumni Network was also launched - a Facebook page to promote opportunities for connection and development for alumni.

The Alumni Reference Group met regularly in 2020 via Zoom to discuss alumni/community engagement strategies. Unfortunately, many planned engagement events with alumni were postponed and then subsequently cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

4. Regional and remote students

Indigenous Student Success Program	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position	Actual	Position
EFTSL – Regional & Remote	72.52	22	76.76	22	68.5	24	73.56	23

Table 15. Data provided to the VC in December 2020 indicates that UQ remains relatively consistent in the number of regional and remote students enrolled.

Remoteness Area	2019		2020		2021		Growth (%)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	(2019-2021)	(2020-2021)
Major Cities of Australia	258	60.8%	205	56.2%	271	56.0%	5.0%	32.2%
Inner Regional Australia	80	18.9%	75	20.5%	99	20.5%	23.8%	32.0%
Outer Regional Australia	60	14.2%	68	18.6%	88	18.2%	46.7%	29.4%
Remote Australia	8	1.9%	8	2.2%	13	2.7%	62.5%	62.5%
Very Remote Australia	17	4.0%	8	2.2%	12	2.5%	-29.4%	50.0%
Unknown Remoteness Area	1	0.2%	1	0.3%	1	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	424	100.0%	365	100.0%	484	100.0%	14.2%	32.6%

Table 16. Internal UQ suggests that UQ is experiencing significant growth in the number of QTAC (undergraduate) applicants from inner and outer regional Australia in 2020 for 2021 admission.

Faculty	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Business, Economics & Law	7	11	7	5	6
Engineering, Archi & Info Tech	8	10	10	13	14
Health & Behavioural Sciences	9	13	12	8	16
Humanities and Social Sciences	19	26	25	33	20
Medicine	7	9	8	5	6
Science	32	25	25	26	22
University Graduate School	-	2	4	6	8
Other	3	1	1	2	3
Total	85	97	92	98	95

Table 17. *Internal UQ suggests that regional/remote enrolments had not yet increased in 2020. An increase is forecast for 2021 based on the increase in QTAC applicants from regional remote areas.*

Advice on Admissions, Accommodation and Financial Aid

The Student Support team contributes to supporting regional and remote future students by providing online, phone and email advice about UQ Programs, UQ Admissions pathways, OP/Rank requirements, accommodation, scholarships, and other relevant information. Current students coming from regional and remote areas are supported by the Student Support team to find suitable accommodation at either one of the many UQ Residential Colleges or elsewhere as appropriate. The team has built strong relationships with UQ's colleges. The Student Support team members also assist students to source scholarships and financial aid to alleviate the additional costs of being away from home.

Regional and remote students can also apply for the Indigenous Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship to assist with relocation costs (This scholarship is funded entirely through ISSP funds). The ATSI Unit Student Support team also assists students in finding other scholarships for which they may be eligible.

Academic Support

Academic Support Service Coordinators work with Faculties and Schools to develop approaches to an individual student's needs, including the development of online learning and support resources for students who are studying in regional and remote areas. These may be in the form of short instructional videos, pdf documents or flipbooks accessed from the ATSI Unit website. ASSCs are undertaking professional development to increase their skills and knowledge in online education and resource development (video making, presentation), with the view of rendering these resources available through the ATSI Unit webpage and other platforms.

The Academic Support Service Coordinators also manage the Indigenous Tutorial and Retention program and work with students to find them a supplemental tutor who meets their individual study needs.

The Academic Support Coordinators are directly funded by ISSP.

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2020 Payments	44,250	20	73,750	20			118,000	20
B. 2020 Offers		20		20				
C. Percentage (C=B/A*100)							100%	100%
2020 Payments	44,250	20	73,750	20	0	0	118,000	40

Table 18. Scholarship data for remote and regional students

5. Working with Vulnerable People Requirement

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

6. Eligibility requirements

6.1. Indigenous Education Strategy

UQ's requirements in relation to section 13 of the ISSP guidelines - 'Indigenous Education Strategy' are contained in Section 12 of the UQ Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022. The RAP includes the following section in relation to Indigenous Education Strategy:

12. Engage a UQ-wide approach to increasing representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education.	12.1 Enhance and increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students to attend UQ and/or university through targeted community engagement, including through domestic student recruitment, faculty-specific, Future Students and InspireU programs, and competitive admissions pathways.	12.1 from July 2019	12.1-12.3 Provost, PVC(IE)
	12.2 Develop opportunities to increase student enrolments from non-school leaver populations, such as current UQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and mature-age students in Community.	12.2 January 2020	
	12.3 Review and strengthen collaborations between the ATSI Unit and Admissions, Scholarships, Graduate School, Accommodation, Counselling and other mainstream student services to increase cultural competence of services and safety among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	12.3 from July 2019	
	12.4 Work with faculties, schools and institutes to engage with the ATSI Unit to review and, as appropriate, pilot and strengthen actions and programs to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to successfully complete their program of study at UQ.	12.4 January 2019	12.4 Faculty executive deans
	12.5 Build relationships with alumni and work with industry partners to seek opportunities to support and foster improved academic and career outcomes, including further study, among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	12.5 from July 2020	12.5 Provost, PVC(IE)

The RAP also provides for the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledges in curricula, graduate attributes and teaching practices (section 14).

<p>14. Review and facilitate UQ-wide approach to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum and inclusive teaching practices in programs.</p>	<p>14.1 Develop a staged, UQ-wide plan to review and Indigenise curricula in line with five-to-seven-year Academic Program review cycles. Plans to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14.1.1 establishing priority programs for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum in, and inclusive teaching of, courses, e.g. programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Accreditation Standards - 14.1.2 identifying location and teaching resources of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, perspectives and pedagogies, as well as inclusive teaching and learning training and practice - 14.1.3 appropriate resourcing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and/or non-Indigenous staff with specialist knowledge in Indigenous curriculum innovation and support, to work with school and faculty course and program coordinators - 14.1.4 linking to existing curriculum innovation resources, e.g. Journeymaker, and developing resources such as templates and exemplars of good practice and processes. <p>14.2 Establish a network of Associate Deans (Academic), as well as school-based Directors of Teaching and Learning and academics, to encourage staff to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum in their courses.</p> <p>14.3 Investigate inclusion of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander core course in UQ programs.</p> <p>14.4 Investigate piloting the cultural education modules for teaching Indigenous health with non-health-related teaching staff.</p>	<p>14.1 plan developed and resources in place by December 2019</p> <p>14.2 first meeting held by June 2019</p> <p>14.3 recommendations to Academic Board by March 2020</p> <p>14.4 recommendations to executive deans by June 2020</p>	<p>14.1-14.4 Office of DVC(A), PVC(IE), Provost</p>
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The Office of the PVC(IE) works with the UQ Provost, DVC (Academic) portfolio and Faculties and Schools to manage implementation of the above-mentioned actions. A RAP governance committee provides oversight of the implementation of these initiatives.

6.2. Indigenous Workforce Strategy

The University of Queensland meets its requirements under section 12 of the ISSP Guidelines by including the following key performance indicators in [UQ's Indigenous Employment Strategy 2019-2022](#), [UQ's Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021](#) and [UQ's Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022](#):

- i) *UQ aims to achieve three percent (3%) full-time equivalent (FTE) representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engaged in professional, academic and leadership roles.*
- ii) *To support UQ in reaching the aspirational target of 3%, the University will increase its representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff to at least 25 Academic FTE and 100 Professional FTE staff members by 30 June 2021.*

(Section 14, Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021)

The guiding principles of UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2019-2022 are as follows:

- *Employment programs, policies and initiatives must be designed and implemented with the full and direct participation of, and/or leadership by, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This principle is fundamental to future success.*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is everyone's business; all members of staff are accountable and responsible, with supervisors, managers and University leaders holding particular responsibilities that are detailed in the Strategy.*
- *Visible leadership commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, enacted by courage, innovation, action and change, is vital to the success of the organisation.*
- *Significant and sustainable change has not, and will not, occur without intervention. The success of this change is predicated by the provision of adequate resources, staffing and leadership engagement and support.*

- *Mutual respect and cultural diversity are core values of the University and must be applied to all University business.*
- *Recognition that intersectionality is crucial to the success of positive social change for all people.*
- *Change cannot occur in isolation and UQ needs to leverage from the significant ongoing efforts of other organisations and share our own efforts, understanding and knowledge with the wider Australian community.*

(UQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy, p3)

UQ continues to demonstrate its creativity and innovation with the development of new employment strategies to position UQ as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The development and launch of UQ's new overarching Indigenous Employment Pathways scheme has contributed to an increase in the representation of Indigenous academics and provided additional professional development and career advancement opportunities for Indigenous academic staff at the university.

UQ's Indigenous Employment team supports UQ-wide recruitment activities including; position description/booklet development; guidance on strategic recruitment including the use of Identified Positions, marketing and media support and selection panel activities; Cultural competency training for supervisors to support pathway programs; marketing and media activities including NAIDOC Family Fun Day, careers fairs and other cultural events; managing UQ's growing Indigenous Staff network and providing training to upskill HR staff concerning all aspects of Indigenous employment.

In 2020, UQ increased its representation of permanent Indigenous academic staff from 1 to 8 and doubled its number of casual/contract/fixed-term Indigenous academics. Additionally, UQ increased its representation of Indigenous FTE Staff to 1.25%.

UQ continued to action a number of key initiatives from UQ's Indigenous Employment Strategy in 2020. These actions included:

- Encouraging work areas to consider Honorary and Adjunct Titles to attract Indigenous talent to UQ, with an intent towards creating continuing employment opportunities.
- Enhancing and streamlining the UQ Temps process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.
- Continuing to identify high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate students and commencing career conversations about different academic career pathways available.
- Encouraging work areas to appropriately use identified positions in accordance with the UQ Indigenous Recruitment Guide.
- 4.6 Developing Fellowship programs for early and mid career academics, including those completing HDR.

Relevant links associated with the Indigenous Workforce Strategy at UQ include:

- i) UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2019-2022: <https://staff.uq.edu.au/files/24066/uq-indigenous-employment-strategy>
- ii) UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career's website: <https://careers.uq.edu.au/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-employment>
- iii) UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff website: <https://staff.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/human-resources/diversity/aboriginal-torres-strait-islanders>
- iv) UQ's Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021: <https://staff.uq.edu.au/files/20908/enterprise-agreement-2018-2021.pdf>

v) UQ's Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022: <https://about.uq.edu.au/files/535/UQ-RAP.pdf>

Level/Position	Permanent		Casual/Fixed-Term	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
Academic A			19	
Academic B	4		36	
Academic C	2		3	
Academic D			3	
Academic E	2		1	
HEW 1-5		17		91
HEW 6 & Above		10		31
Senior Academic			1	
Senior Professional				1
Total	8	27	63	186

Table 19. Indigenous workforce data (2020 breakdown)

Nb. Please note that all 2020 casual data are projected based on 2019 figures. UQ's Indigenous Workforce data provided in table 6.2 is the number of positions filled by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples and may include duplication.

6.3. Indigenous Governance Mechanism

In relation to section 6 of the ISSP guidelines, UQ employs a Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement). Professor Bronwyn Fredericks has been employed as UQ's Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) since April 2018.

The PVC(IE) is responsible for the development and implementation of Indigenous Engagement strategies at The University of Queensland. The PVC(IE) role is part of UQ's University Senior Leadership Group (which includes VC, Provost, DVCs, PVCs, Directors and Executive Deans), reporting both to UQ's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement) and Vice-Chancellor and President. She is not part of the University Senior Executive Team (USET).

The PVC(IE) also holds responsibility for planning and expenditure relating to the ISSP program.

6.3.1. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

UQ continues its strong performance in relation to Indigenous student participation, progression and completions with continued growth across all of these three categories (based on 2019 national data).

Strategies to increase student recruitment and success include strategic marketing, more attractive scholarship offerings, increased accommodation opportunities and high-quality student and administrative services.

It is anticipated that UQ's performance in these categories in 2020 will be affected by the impacts of COVID-19, but also by an unusually small Year 12 cohort of Qld school leavers who completed in 2019. Despite these obstacles, internal data would suggest that UQ's performance in 2020 remained solid.

Recruitment of regional and remote students continues to be a priority for UQ going forward and its ATSiS Unit works closely with schools and partner organisations to build strong relationships with regional and remote communities. The centrepiece of UQ's work in this area is the InspireU tertiary aspiration-building program which has a high proportion of participants from regional and remote areas. Start-up scholarships are also a key feature of UQ's strategies to increase regional and remote participation and it has mobilised its Advancement team and donor base to support this important work.

UQ has performed exceptionally well in Indigenous employment in recent years, almost doubling its Indigenous staff FTE, with particularly growth in academic employment. Central to this has been the development of recruitment/pipeline programs and an emphasis on nurturing and developing current staff. This increase in Indigenous staff will be a key driver in both student recruitment and retention in future years.

Overall, much of UQ's success can be attributed to the comprehensiveness of its Indigenous strategy and a willingness from its senior leadership group to take responsibility and lead within their respective areas. This strong foundational work will be expanded upon in 2022 with the next iterations of UQ's Strategic Plan, RAP and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy. This strategic framework will position UQ to be a leader in Indigenous student outcomes in years to come.