

Indigenous Employment Strategy

2012 - 2015

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The 2012 – 2015 Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES) was developed by the Indigenous Employment advisory working group under the guidance of the Director, Human Resources.

Feedback on the development of the IES was invited from all staff at Southern Cross University. Consultation with staff on the draft IES occurred through the Indigenous Employment advisory working group.

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INTRODUCTION

Southern Cross University is proud of its achievements in the area of Indigenous employment and is committed to building on its existing strong foundation in this area. Through the strong commitment and cooperation of all parts of the University, our 2012 – 2015 Indigenous Employment Strategy is designed to further develop our success in Indigenous employment through higher levels of Indigenous employee participation, stronger results in the retention of Indigenous staff, and the provision of professional development opportunities.

Southern Cross University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which its campuses are located. We encourage our staff and students to acknowledge our Indigenous communities at the start of public events and events of significance.

From 2000-2009, the numbers of full-time and fractional full-time Indigenous staff in higher education increased as follows:

Teaching Only	65% increase (N 23)
Research Only	60% increase (N 58)
Teaching and Research	29% increase (N 243)
Other / Professional / General	47% increase (N 587)
Total Increase	43% increase (N 911)

Yet despite these increases, Indigenous people are under-represented as employees in Australian higher education institutions at all levels. According to Universities Australia (2011), Indigenous staff numbers in academic teaching positions and professional positions need to increase by a factor of between two to three to reach population parity, while staff numbers in research only roles need to increase by a factor of over six.

On this basis, the Guiding Principle for Human Resources is that Indigenous staffing should be increased at all appointment levels and, for academic staff, should cover a wider variety of academic fields (Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competencies in Australian Universities, 2011).

SCU is implementing Recommendation 1 from the Report: Develop an Indigenous Employment Strategy which contains Key Performance Indicators and strategies to recruit and appoint Indigenous staff across all academic faculties and general divisions of the university to achieve population parity, both in number and level of classification (Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competencies in Australian Universities, 2011:16).

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Southern Cross University, through its Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015, Equity and Diversity Plan 2011 - 2015 and 2010 Enterprise Agreement is committed to establishing and supporting a culturally diverse workplace with a culture of recognising and rewarding high performance and quality teaching, research and service.

SCU Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015

Goal 3: We will develop a high performance culture in an environment which encourages collaboration and the free exchange of ideas.

- Attract, develop and retain a workforce with the capacity to achieve our strategic goals.
- Develop a staff profile that reflects the diversity of the University's students and the general community, including its Indigenous communities.
- Engage with our geographic communities and communities of interest for mutual benefit.

SCU Equity and Diversity Plan 2011 - 2015

Goal 2: We will strive for a diverse workplace that has in place sustainable strategies to support and promote our staff in equity groups.

- Promote programs and strategies to recruit, support and promote staff in EEO groups.
- Use the SCU website to promulgate the University's equity and diversity programs, policies and support initiatives for both prospective and existing employees ongoing.
- Deliver employee information and awareness raising activities on the University's equity and diversity programs, policies and support initiatives ongoing. Improve the representation, retention and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
- Develop an Indigenous Employment Strategy by end 2011.

INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY 2012 - 2015

Southern Cross University established its first Indigenous Employment Strategy in 1995 in a move to address the disproportionate unemployment figures experienced by Indigenous Australians compared to that of the general Australian workforce. As a direct result of the first Strategy and the 2005 – 2010 Strategy, Southern Cross University now employs 26 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, representing approximately 2.8 percent of the University workforce.

The 2012-2015 Indigenous Employment Strategy aims to build on the positive work of previous Strategies by supporting the advancement of Indigenous staff and continuing to create quality and sustainable work opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The 2012-2015 Strategy focuses on three key areas of employment:

- Recruitment and Retention of Indigenous Australian employees across all levels of employment;
- Development of Indigenous Australian employees;
- **Development of Indigenous Cultural Competency** for non-Indigenous Australian employees.

Definitions

Southern Cross University's Indigenous Employment Strategy applies to people who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or both, and are accepted by the community with which they are associated.

Various names are used throughout this paper to incorporate this definition and they include Indigenous peoples and Indigenous Australians; these terms relate to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For the purpose of this document, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be respectfully referred to as 'Indigenous' or 'Indigenous Australian'.

Objective 1 – Increase the number of Indigenous Australian employees through enhanced recruitment and retention practices

A	ction	Responsibility	Timeline	Performance Indicator
1.	Research and communicate to all SCU managers relevant government Indigenous employment programs	HR Services, SCU academic schools	Twice yearly during term of Strategy	SCU Managers are aware of available programs
2.	Identify vacant positions including future positions that may be identified, in partnership with SCU managers	HR Consultants	Annually by December	Workforce planning summary completed for all work units
3.	Promote Indigenous traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships in workforce planning meetings with SCU managers	HR Consultants	Annually	As above
4.	Develop an Indigenous-specific advertisement template for use in Indigenous media such as The Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times	HR Services	July 2012	Template developed and available
5.	Develop a Job Application Form for Indigenous professional staff vacancies (HEW 1 to HEW 5 levels)	HR Services	July 2012	Form developed and available on HR Services website
6.	Develop a standard process and suite of information to be provided to potential Indigenous job applicants	HR Services	July 2012	Process developed and communicated to SCU Managers
7.	Identify possible recruitment sources for Indigenous job vacancies such as SCU students, graduates, school leavers, and develop a communication plan for connecting with these groups	HR Services, Student Services, Alumni Relations and Gnibi	By end of 2012	List of groups and method of contact/communication re job vacancies identified

8.	Work with Division of Research to identify and connect with Indigenous HDR students to identify potential academic job pathways	HR Services, DoR and Heads of Schools	Initial outline by September 2012 and annually	Process developed and communicated to relevant stakeholders
9.	Develop a tailored Indigenous employee induction and orientation program and communicate to SCU managers	HR Services	December 2012	Induction program developed and communicated
10.	Host a forum twice yearly for SCU Indigenous employees to meet and discuss workplace issues	HR Services	The first to be held before end of 2012	Forum held
11.	In consultation with Indigenous Australian Student Services (IASS), consider options for work experience and trainee placements at SCU for Indigenous students in all sections of SCU	HR Services, IASS, work unit managers, and relevant internship officers	By end of 2012	Proposed process developed and consultation with stakeholders undertaken
12.	HR Services staff to offer support to SCU managers in undertaking the annual PMDR review and developing Academic Staff Portfolios for Indigenous employees	HR Services and relevant managers	Annually	Contact made with managers advising the availability of support from HR Services in the PMDR and Academic Portfolio process
13.	Promote awareness of Indigenous employee achievements through Discover SCU and enhance awareness of Indigenous employment matters through the "HR Update" newsletter	HR Services, work unit managers, and the Media and Publications Unit	Regularly	Increased promotion of achievements by Indigenous employees

Objective 2 – Increase the participation of Indigenous Australian employees in training and development programs

Ac	tion	Responsibility	Timeline	Performance Indicator
1.	Research and communicate to SCU managers the available internal and external professional development programs and work with managers to develop individual development plans for Indigenous employees, and link plans to PMDR goals	HR Services and work unit managers	Annually	Enhanced professional development through individual plans
2.	In consultation with relevant managers, identify and nominate Indigenous employees for appropriate leadership and management development programs and linking programs with PMDR goals	HR Services in consultation with relevant work unit managers	Annually	As above
3.	In consultation with relevant managers, appoint mentors for new Indigenous employees	HR Services in consultation with relevant work unit managers	Annually	Increased retention through effective mentoring relationships
4.	Work with Equity and Diversity Unit to regularly schedule a senior Indigenous female speaker at the "Promoting SCU's Women" networking forums	Equity and Diversity and HR Services	Annually	Enhanced development of indigenous employees through exposure to successful role models in leadership roles
5.	Develop a research network for Indigenous staff and students within and external to SCU	Head, Gnibi, Directors of Research Centres, and Directors of Research	Annually	Improved retention and development of Indigenous academic employees and attraction of potential academic candidates
6.	Promote the participation of Indigenous staff on SCU committees and working groups	HR Services, Heads of Work Units	Annually	Increased participation rates

Objective 3 - Develop and Strengthen Indigenous Cultural Competency in non-Indigenous Australian employees

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Performance Indicator
Implement Indigenous cultural competency training for new staff as part of induction program.	HR Services in consultation with Gnibi	Annually	Improved levels of Indigenous cultural competency in staff
Develop and make available to all staff Indigenous cultural competency training.	HR Services in consultation with Gnibi	Annually	As above
Ensure all employees with supervisory responsibilities complete Indigenous cultural competency training.	HR Services in consultation with Gnibi	Annually	As above

Evaluation and Review

The Indigenous Employment Strategy will operate until December 2015 and will be reviewed annually to ensure that objectives and initiatives are aligned with the current higher education Indigenous employment environment and the University's Strategic Plan. The Strategy's outcomes will be reported annually to the University's Executive through the Vice Chancellor.

Feedback and updates on the implementation of the Strategy will occur through the Indigenous staff network, and relevant Indigenous organisations to ensure continued progress and success of the Strategy.

References

Universities Australia (2011), 'Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competencies in Australian Universities' p. 16 http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/lightbox/1313