



2010

Institutional Performance Portfolio

Information Collection

Endorsed by

**Professor Peter Lee
Vice Chancellor**

1. BENCHMARK GROUPING

The Vice Chancellor wrote to DEEWR and DIISR on 30 June 2010 confirming that Southern Cross University was seeking to be benchmarked against the following institutions:

- University of New England
- University of Southern Queensland
- Charles Sturt University
- University of Canberra
- La Trobe University
- Deakin University

2. STUDENT LOAD PLANNING

The load profile of Southern Cross University continues to focus on professional degree programs, most notably in education, allied health, business and law. Niche discipline areas such as environmental and marine science, visual arts and contemporary music add to the suite of course offerings for students in the SCU footprint. The 2009 Southern Cross University student load continued an upward growth trend and 2010 is on target to meet an increased load target. Following the opening of the Gold Coast campus in early 2010, strategic developments have focused on planning for expansion that will build on initial offerings, and incorporate increased demand through the offerings of courses in Nursing, Midwifery, Early Childhood Education and Occupational Therapy.

Changes in the health sector with the introduction of National Registration in Nursing and Midwifery have resulted in a review of the suite of post graduate offerings in clinical science and a potential change from CGS funding to fee paying. The introduction of Masters Courses in exercise science and osteopathic medicine will offset the nursing CGS places.

The University is working more closely with its local TAFE institutes to introduce a more seamless articulation process for TAFE graduates delivering a sustainable increase in student load to SCU and meeting the widening participation agenda.

The University continues to closely monitor student load not only at an institutional level but also at the individual student level. A range of interventions, based on changes to Academic Board policy, have been put in place to identify students at risk and to alert such students to the need to seek help with their studies.

A significant challenge of the regional footprint is the higher proportion of the population with low SES and a consequential lower participation in higher education. The introduction of the three session academic calendar has seen an increase in unit offerings to students and an increased capacity for the University to provide study options across the calendar year to allow students greater choices in regard to the length and intensity of their degree program.

The University has channelled resources to add to the enabling load and increase the offering of the Preparing for Success Program which targets potential students from non-traditional pathways of secondary education or TAFE.

Priorities in core teaching activities over the medium term (i.e. next 2 to 3 years) will remain focused on the courses currently offered with an expansion in the portfolio in the area of allied health (B. Biomedical Science, B Speech Therapy, B Podiatry/Perdothics, B Pharmacy). These increases in offerings should see the University well positioned to increase load in line with the 2012 "open market".

Shifts between undergraduate and postgraduate provision (in general and/or in particular disciplines)

The profile of Commonwealth-supported load for SCU for 2009 reflects that of previous years. A review of cluster distribution of load is underway as a result of the introduction of new courses in allied health.

Changes in international student load (e.g. response to international student market changes or new developments)

The 2009 International student load showed a moderate increase on 2008, in the face of the global financial crisis and (GFC) and swine flu epidemic and reduced market demand. The trend for 2010 is indicating that this increase may not be wholly sustained. The impact of the three session calendar on International load is yet to be fully determined.

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING

While SCU has performed reasonably well financially as evidenced by the performance indicators defined in DEEWR's manual for Australian Universities' (see table below), both the Operating Budget and Capital Planning Budget processes have identified the need to allocate funding to address the changed environment in which universities will operate in 2012 and beyond. SCU will be seeking support through the Structural Adjustment Fund for capital and non-capital financial assistance. SCU's proposal is based on a set of integrated strategies aimed at retaining SCU's diverse student cohort and growing student numbers in the face of increased competition and the challenges of providing higher education at regional campuses with courses and delivery options that are relevant to the changing market .

Performance Indicator	SCU 2009	Benchmark/ Good Practice
Current Ratio	1.5	1.5 to 3.0
Australian Government Grants as a % of Total Revenue	44.5%	Below 50%
HECS as a % of Total Revenue	22.4%	Below 50%
Fees and charges as a % of Total Revenue	15.6%	Below 50%
Employee Benefits and on-costs as a % of Total Revenue	55.9%	50% to 70%
Operating result as a % of Total Revenue	1.4%*	To be positive with a safety margin

*The Operating result was heavily impacted by the timing of receipt and expenditure of grant income, however still falls within the benchmark.

Satisfactory performance in CGS enrolments resulted in a over-enrolment of 390 EFTSL in 2009 on a target of 6,150. This was combined with improved performance from international revenue both onshore and offshore; however, the current rate of growth of revenue is not expected to be sustained in the current environment.

To ensure continued financial sustainability SCU engages a planning process which directly links the Strategic Plan to Functional and Operating plans via the Vice Chancellor's Planning Priorities. This enables a prioritisation and focus on specific needs identified by the annual University Review process. The Strategic Plan is current being revised, with consultation and input from staff, management and the University Council. With strong linkages to the Strategic Plan, budgeting for SCU is performed on three key aspects which are co-ordinated via the details of the Functional and Operating plans.

1. **Operating Budget** - focuses on cost allocation or levying of expense by means of drivers against the income streams of the University. Existing and potential new income streams are projected forward with reference to price escalation, volume growth and associated risks. The use of drivers to levy expenses produces an environment of heightened cost awareness and management.
2. **Research Budget** – focuses on funding a co-ordinated approach to delivery of research outcomes to improve both the University's research profile and research funding for targeted research which is relevant to our region.
3. **Capital Planning Budget** – focuses on the allocation of reserves to the creation and maintenance of key infrastructure investments which include information technology, physical infrastructure and courses. Currently the University is finalising planning and arrangements to enable the building of a second and third building on the Gold Coast Campus to address the current under supply of Higher Education places in this high growth corridor.

4. CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT

Refer to Attachment A (electronic file) for full CAMS response.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement team at Southern Cross University helps facilitate university outreach in support of engaged teaching and research. It sits within the newly formed Community and Corporate Relations Directorate, along with Marketing and Recruitment, Development and Alumni Relations, and Communications and Publications. SCU is currently hosting the Executive and Secretariat of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA).

SCU's community engagement supports its teaching and research by encouraging participation in higher education; providing public access to the people, knowledge and facilities of the University for mutual benefit; and drawing on its regions to develop research of international standing. The University's High School Outreach Program is delivered by student recruitment officers based at each campus. The program of in-school visits engages with students from the beginning of the Year 10 subject selection process through to their transition to university at the end of Year 12. Annually more than 15,000 students are reached from more than 150 high schools, across a geographic region from the southern Gold Coast in the north, south to Bulahdelah and west to Tamworth and Moree.

Secondary school students are invited onto campus for aspiration-building activities such as the Science and Engineering Challenge and HSC Music Weekend. An HSC Studies Day and Legal Studies Day are held to support teachers and students sitting the HSC. An annual event is held for more than 1,000 year 11 students to develop a richer understanding of the options open to them. Other universities are partnered in a 'university roadshow' experience for students at the start of Year 12, providing access to a number of institutions in a one-stop-shop environment.

Staff and students actively engage in community collaborations to inform and enhance SCU's teaching. Industry and community links provide support for scholarships, and opportunities for work integrated learning, internships and work placements. An example of this active engagement is the new Southern Cross University Health Clinic at the Lismore campus, providing health practitioner students with clinical preparation, health academics with the opportunity to engage in practice and the local community with access to multi-disciplinary health services. SCU contributes to the cultural life of its communities. In the creative and performing arts, student works are exhibited publicly. The University supports the region's premier performing arts organisation to tour works to schools in its footprint and the regional writers' centre to provide students with access to outstanding authors.

The University is as a catalyst for new ideas, engaging with its regions to create and contribute knowledge through research. It is a neutral facilitator which brings people to the table in a range of forums. In 2010 its Regional Futures Institute delivered a series of symposiums which explored the challenges and opportunities facing the Northern Rivers region. Visiting experts were made available to the community, and a series of staff professorial lectures provided an opportunity for communities of interest to explore discipline-specific issues at the deepest level.

The production of quality graduates helps to address local labour needs. Alumni chapters and a rich program of engagement keep alumni connected with the University. The 2010 Alumnus of the Year was Gordon Fraser-Quick, an environmental science graduate who among his many achievements has revolutionised waste management for the city of Lismore. The professions are strengthened through the provision of local opportunities for continuous professional development and lifelong learning.

6. EQUITY

Refer to Equity Report at Attachment B.

7. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT

Indigenous Education Statement submitted to DEEWR on 2 July 2010 and is at Attachment C.

7. RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

1. What are the key features and achievements of the institution's research performance during 2009?

The Research Income in 2009 was higher than 2008 (\$9,928,000) and is reported in Table 1. The total number of publications was also considerably higher (Table 2) which reflects the increased activity of research staff and students during 2009.

Of note is Southern Cross University's commitment to growing research activity in key areas of research strength. Two Special Research Centres, Southern Cross Geoscience and Centre for Plant Conservation Genetics, were formed and demonstrate a strong performance in the environmental and plant sciences. A particular highlight was the awarding of the prestigious ARC QEII Fellow to Associate Professor Andrew Rose, as well as the first ARC Future Fellow for Southern Cross University, Associate Professor Anja Scheffers.

Further capacity building across disciplines has led to the formalisation of seven new research centres and five research clusters.

Research Centres

Centre for Tourism, Leisure and Work
Centre for Gambling Education and Research
Centre for Phytochemistry and Pharmacology
Centre for Children and Young People
Marine Ecology
Environmental Innovations Research
Centre for Coastal Biogeochemistry Research

Research Clusters

Health and Wellbeing
Higher Education Policy and Practice
Enterprise and Regional Development
Health e-Regions
Neuroscience

During 2009 Southern Cross University was an active participant in eight CRCs in the areas of Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment; National Plant Biosecurity; Grain Foods; Sugar Industry Innovation through Biotechnology; Forestry; Desert Knowledge; Sustainable Tourism and Rail Innovation. Also during 2009 Southern Cross University was involved in three new CRC bids that were successful in being awarded funding for commencement in 2010, and of which Southern Cross University will be a core participant.

Table 1: Research Income by Category for 2009

NCG	Public Sector	Industry & Other	CRCs	Total
\$ 2,022,034	\$ 2,827,538	\$ 2,566,177	\$ 2,598,645	\$ 10,014,394

Table 2: Publications

Year	Arts & Sciences	Business & Law	Graduate Research College	Other	Total
2008	156.18	80.53	37.51	3.92	278.14

2. What are the key features and achievements of the institution's research training performance during 2009?

In 2009 the total number of Higher Degree Research completions for Southern Cross University was 52 comprising of 36 PhD and 7 Masters and of note is that this was an increase compared to 2008 (49). The total HDR enrolment for 2009 was 241 and the breakdown is shown in Table 3.

The Graduate Certificate in Research Management is still on offer to HDR students and places are funded through the Commercialisation Training Scheme. In 2009 39 HDR students participated in the Graduate Certificate and 77 units were completed. The feedback from HDR students is that the training in project management, IP and commercialisation, research organisation and academic portfolio enhances their success for employment.

Table 3: Breakdown of HDR Student Enrolment 2009

Research Degree	Candidature type	Number of enrolments
PhD	Internal Full time	81
	Internal Part time	49
	External Full time	32
	External Part time	40
PhD Qual	Internal Full time	3
	Internal Part time	2
	External Full time	1
	External Part time	4
Masters	Internal Full time	13
	Internal Part time	7
	External Full time	1
	External Part time	7
Masters Qual	Internal Full time	0
	Internal Part time	3
	External Full time	0
	External Part time	2
	Total	245

3. What are the key features and achievements of the institution in contributing to innovation in 2009?

Southern Cross University increased its focus on developing collaborations with peer research institutions and with industry partners through 2009. Southern Cross University was involved in leading two of the three Cooperative Research Centre bids in this period and as a consequence developed enduring partnerships with key groups in the US and nationally. These include formal relationships with Joint BioEnergy Institute (US Department of Energy), Chevron Technologies, ArborGen and GMH to name just a few.

The University reviewed and expanded its areas of research strength during the period by leveraging existing capability and investing in facilities and attracting key staff into these areas. A significant focus has been applied to business and policy areas and the establishment of a number of new Research Centres as outlined in the response to Q1.

The Division of Research has implemented a range of strategic research initiatives during 2009 to better develop the capacity and administration of research across the University. The Division itself restructured and appointed senior positions (Directors) to manage University-wide Higher Degree Research and Training and better provisioning of Research Services.

Other significant innovations during 2009 include:

- Research Centre policy and implementation providing models to increase and improve capability, with a focus on quality of academic staff, publications and research grants
- Research Management System that has provided key data for management on all aspects of the University research performance and administration of all research arrangements
- Research and Commercialisation Unit providing service focus to research staff and their partners including a grants team and support
- Commercialisation focus and support that includes IP Management and collaborations with industry for commercialisation pathways.

4. How many research collaborations and partnerships was the university involved with in 2009

	Number of Research collaborations and Partnerships
(a) Other Australian universities and research organisation	36
(b) Universities and research organisations overseas	17
(c) Industry and other partners in Australia	303
(d) Industry and other partners overseas	22

ATTACHMENT A: CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT SURVEY

Refer to electronic file.

ATTACHMENT B: EQUITY REPORT

Section A. 2009 ESP Funded Initiatives

Initiative Title	Scope of Initiative	Impact of Program
Equity High School Outreach Program	<p>The program seeks to demystify university and encourage the interest and aspiration of secondary school students from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are under-represented in higher education.</p> <p>The school students are offered a small-group, experiential program designed to assist them to overcome real or perceived barriers to attending tertiary education. University students and staff work together to facilitate the program, visiting the secondary schools and hosting visits to the University by the participating secondary school students.</p> <p>The program works with schools identified as Priority Schools as part of the New South Wales Priority Schools Program serving high concentrations of low socio-economic status (SES) communities. The University has partnered with the following schools since 2006/2007:</p> <p>Casino High School Kempsey High School Kyogle High School Nambucca Heads High School Nimbin Central School Richmond River High School Woodenbong Central School</p>	<p>In 2009 University staff and students worked with 208 high school students at their school, who were given the opportunity to find out about university life, courses, careers, support services, scholarships and entry programs. Small group activities were conducted during the visits and the participants workshopped ideas around the differences between university study and school, and looking at university as an option 'for everyone'.</p> <p>In 2009, 93 of these high school students visited the University allowing them a 'hands on' experience of university student life.</p> <p>In 2009 the program expanded to work with the TAFE sector. University staff visited Ashmore TAFE to advise on progression to university, and the various SCU programs – Preparing for Success, the Student Mentoring Program and other Student Support Services.</p>
Student Mentoring Program	<p>The program's objective is to increase the participation and success of commencing students to the University, particularly those students who are underrepresented in higher education including students from low SES backgrounds and/or who are the first in the family to attend university, students from regional and remote areas, students from non English speaking backgrounds and students with disabilities.</p>	<p>In 2009 310 new students across the University were matched with a student mentor during their first session of study. A Student Mentor is a student who has successfully completed one year of study. New students, where possible, are matched with mentors from the same or similar course. The retention rate of new students participating in the mentoring program in 2009 was 92% (compared with the first year domestic student attrition rate of around 28%).</p>
"Enhancing a Culture of Equity:	<p>The project aimed to gauge how well Southern Cross University's culture supports students in equity groups, and explored ways</p>	<p>The project gathered qualitative data from potential, current and past SCU students in</p>

<p>Understanding the Student Experience"</p> <p>ESP Funded Project undertaken in the School of Arts and Social Sciences and Centre for Peace and Social Justice</p>	<p>to further develop Southern Cross University's 'equity culture'. As part of this project a one day symposium titled <i>Inclusive Futures: Visions for Student Equity in Higher Education</i> was held on Friday 17 July 2009. Participants included university students, staff, local high school students and community members. The symposium included a report of the research findings: <i>Enhancing a Culture of Equity</i>, a student panel on <i>Student Perspectives on Equity and Inclusiveness</i> and a panel on <i>Visions for Equitable and Inclusive University Cultures</i>.</p>	<p>equity target groups on their perceptions and experiences of enablers and barriers to gaining a university education. This information is informing the development of SCU's future equity-targeted initiatives.</p>
<p>Language Support for students from non English speaking backgrounds.</p>	<p>The Academic Skills Development Unit implemented a program in 2009 to assist students from non-English speaking backgrounds to develop their English language skills. The program works with the students through group and individual tutorials.</p>	<p>The program gave students the opportunity to check their understanding of the expectations of the classroom and the assignment tasks. The program gave these students through tutorials and workshops support to provide them an equitable chance of success.</p>

Section B. Higher Education Disability Support Program (DSP) 2009 Funded Initiatives

Initiative title	Scope of initiative	Impact of program
<p>Disability Project Officer</p>	<p>To co-ordinate, undertake projects and programs and implement strategies to increase the access and support to students with disabilities in accordance with the objectives of the Performance Based Disability Support Funding.</p>	<p>The project officer met with high school students and their parents, as well as other prospective students, to discuss options available to them at the University including the need for possible adjustments. During 2009 Disability Contact Officers were appointed within the Schools and units across the Campuses.</p> <p>A new initiative of staff disability awareness training was developed during 2009 and will be implemented in 2010.</p> <p>A Project to review web access for students with visual impairments was undertaken in 2009. The review is ongoing and will be evaluated towards the end of 2010.</p> <p>Late 2009, a project was implemented to review communication strategies with students and staff with disabilities. This is an ongoing initiative with a number of positive amendments to date being made.</p>

The Disability Discrimination Act seminar	Staff at the University worked with the Regional Disability Liaison Officer during 2009 to assist with a seminar – <i>Disability Discrimination Law which Education Employment Service Providers Should Know</i> - offered in 5 regional areas using videoconferencing facilities.	The Disability Discrimination Act seminar was held on Thursday 26 November 2009 and attended by a total of 110 people. The seminar was video-linked between Lismore, Tweed Heads and Coffs Harbour Campuses to two external sites, UNE (Armidale) and Charles Sturt University (Bathurst). The attendees included staff from schools, TAFE, the 3 universities and Disability Employment Services.
Conference Attendance - EOPHEA conference, Sydney 2009	Two disability support staff attended the Equal Opportunity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EOPHEA)conference.	The staff members attended different presentations and worked with other equity practitioners gaining valuable knowledge and information in the area of disability access and support.

Section C. Commonwealth Scholarships

In 2009, Commonwealth Scholarships further diversified in nature and became increasingly complex to administer. The criteria in each category were difficult to differentiate and apply, where more simplistic criteria would have achieved similar outcomes. However, overall, the impact in supporting students from target equity groups, including Indigenous students has been significant with most recipients reporting that they would have great difficulty in remaining engaged in study without the scholarship.

While most Commonwealth Scholarships allocated by DEEWR to Southern Cross University were awarded, there were exceptions in the Indigenous Enabling and Associate Degree categories.

2009 New Offers Commonwealth Scholarships

	New 2009 DEEWR Allocation	Pipeline Funded Scholarships	Total	Confirmed new Offers Sem1	Confirmed new Offers Sem 2	Total 2009 confirmed new offers	Unfulfilled from New 2009 DEEWR allocation
Ordinary CECS	(51+25) 76	3	79	39	30	69	7
Ordinary CAS	(55+25)80	47	127	65	62	127	0
Associate Degree CECS	30	2	32	1	2	3	27
Associate Degree CAS	10	1	11	0	0	0	10
Indigenous Enabling CECS	25	0	25	0	1	1	24
Indigenous Enabling CAS	5	0	5	0	0	0	5
Indigenous Access Scholarships	12	2	14	7	3	10	2
National Priority Scholarships	43	0	43	0	40	40	3
National Accommodation Scholarships	57	0	57	0	55	55	2

Only two Associate Degree entry points were available in 2009 with the student demographic in those courses demonstrating that many were working whilst studying and therefore did not meet financial criteria, and /or the relocation requirement for CAS eligibility (ie were external

students and not relocating to study internally). Enrolments and eligible applications by Indigenous students in the Preparing for Success program were not high enough to match allocated funding, resulting in an inability to offer all scholarships.

Section D. 2009 Institutional Equity Scholarships

Southern Cross University has continued to offer Institutional Equity Scholarships and in 2009 made available:

- 80 Southern Cross University Equity Scholarships valued at \$1500 each as one-off payments and
- 135 Equity Book Bursaries valued at \$250 each as one off vouchers.

All Institutional Equity Scholarships were allocated successfully. Criteria aligned with Commonwealth Scholarship criteria in targeting students from low socio-economic and other disadvantaged situations for example single parents, carers, students with disabilities etc.

Section E. Equity Group Focus and Key Equity Strategies

The University plays a major role in providing access to tertiary education for students from regional areas. SCU has an equity profile in which 60% of the student population is in at least one equity group. The participation of students from regional areas accounts for 60% of all students, significantly higher than the national average of 18.08%. The participation rate for students from low socio-economic backgrounds accounts for 22.36% of the student population, compared with 16.05% across the sector. These two areas of focus drive planning and service provision, as well as identifying targeted programs.

Programs such as the Equity High School Outreach Program targets students who experience financial disadvantage and often multiple disadvantage in aspiring to, accessing and participating in higher education. Participants in these programs include students from regional and remote areas, students from low socio economic backgrounds and Indigenous Australian students.

As part of the Outreach Program the Disability Outreach Scheme works with high school students to provide a smooth transition to the University for those students with a disability. The participation of students with a disability has risen over five years to 4.43%, which is well above state and national figures.

All high schools participating in the outreach program in New South Wales are identified as Priority Schools as part of the New South Wales Priority Schools Program serving high concentrations of low socio-economic status (SES) communities. The participating schools are all in regional areas. One of the issues faced by school students in regional areas is the lack of available transport and services. The Equity High School Outreach Program provides opportunities for school students to attend activities at University campuses and staff and University students also visit the schools to provide information and build attainment and aspiration towards university study. The University's library runs a School Access Program which gives high school students in the region the opportunity to borrow from and utilise the library's facilities.

Section F. Equity Planning and Management in 2010

In 2009 a review was undertaken of the University's Equity Support Programs. The review considered how Southern Cross University might move forward following the Bradley Review

and the Commonwealth government's response in the paper *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System*. The review looked at current and future initiatives for assisting the access, participation and success of students from low socio economic backgrounds and other student groups under-represented in higher education. The report and its recommendations were presented to the Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee. The recommendations focussed on developing and implementing strategies to widen participation of students from low SES backgrounds. A number of the recommendations were implemented during 2009, and is ongoing into 2010.

The Widening Participation through Outreach to Students from Low Socio Economic Backgrounds Working Party was established by the Equity and Diversity Committee in March 2010 to examine its current Equity High School Outreach Program and to look at further activities and strategies to assist in improving higher education aspirations, access and outcomes for people from low socio economic backgrounds. The report and recommendations from the working party are being presented to the September meeting of the University's Equity and Diversity Committee.

The University's Equity and Diversity Committee chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor plays a key role in student equity and in particular advising on strategies for improving access and participation to students from low socio economic backgrounds and other disadvantaged student groups.

In alignment with its University Strategic Plan 2005-2010, the University's Equity and Diversity Plan 2008-2010 includes objectives around widening participation to students from low socio economic backgrounds.

Section G. Performance of Equity Groups in 2008

Group	Relevant Indicator	Key Trend or Shift in the Data	Explanation
Regional and Remote	The access and participation of this group remains consistently and significantly above the state and national average.	The access and participation of regional students remained consistent from 2007 to 2008.	This group remains high due to the location of the University in a regional area with a wide rural and isolated feeder region.
Low SES	The access and participation of this group remains consistently and significantly above the state and national average.	The access and participation of students from low SES backgrounds continues. From 2007 to 2008 there was a significant increase of almost 1.5% (22.7%- 24%) in the access rate. SCU's participation rate (22.36%) remains higher than the sector (15.09%) and the differential continues to grow.	Two equity programs that target the access, participation and the success of this group of students were implemented in 2006 and have been enhanced and expanded in 2009.

Disability	The access and participation of this group in 2008 remains above the state and national average.	The longer term trend in growth in the access and participation for students identifying with a disability continues.	Proactive strategies have been put in place to ensure new students are aware of the services available for students in this group. The disabilities outreach program links with high school students in their transition to the University.
Non-English speaking background	Access well below state and national averages (national average is at 4.3%)	Access has increased over five years from 0.35% to 0.63%	The proportion of students from non English speaking backgrounds remains low. The Student Mentoring Program works with this student group as does as the Equity High School Outreach Program.

Section H. University Contact Officers

	Name & Title	Phone	Email
ESP Contact Officer:	Rachel Callahan Manager, Equity and Diversity	02 66269110	Rachel.Callahan@scu.edu.au
HEPPP Contact Officer: (if different to ESP)			
DSP Contact Officer:	Jonathan Munro Manager, Student Health and Support	02 66203943	Jonathan.Munro@scu.edu.au
CS Contact Officer:	Jane Drury Scholarships Officer	02 66203313	Jane.Drury@scu.edu.au

ATTACHMENT C: INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT

SECTION 1 OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

1.1 SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY's approach to improving higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians and how this is being implemented

Southern Cross University seeks to improve higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians via a broad based, flexible and highly consultative approach. This includes supportive alternative entry pathways into higher education, student scholarship opportunities, student mentoring and the involvement and input from the local, regional and national Indigenous community.

The Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples is a multidisciplinary, multifaceted educational and research institution established in 2003. Within the College are six separate but interrelated functions:

- A Keeping Place for the safe protection of Indigenous Intellectual and Cultural Property and the advancement of shared scholarship with Bundjalung Elders.
- An Indigenous Student Support Centre servicing Indigenous Australian students from across all Schools within Southern Cross University.
- A School of Indigenous Studies delivering both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The Indigenous Studies curriculum includes a focus on trauma and healing.
- A Community and Professional Multiskilling Program in partnership with relevant government agencies and departments.
- A Collaborative Indigenous Research Centre for Learning and Educare (CIRCLE) in partnership with a number of Cooperative Research Centres (CRC's) and other universities.

Through the Indigenous Student Support Centre, Gnibi College is able to provide quality support to all Indigenous students at the University. The Centre's principal objectives are to help Indigenous people gain access to higher education, increase Indigenous participation in the life of the University, promote equity and enhance academic and social outcomes. The support roles are multi-functional and cover:

- Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme, which provides Indigenous students with individual or group tutorial support in their academic assessment and study tasks.
- Academic Support, which provides Indigenous students with generic assessment structures to grasp content philosophy and ideology, familiarise themselves with the practice of writing for and understanding language use of academia.
- A range of other services including:
 - Pastoral support for distance education students and incarcerated students.
 - Counselling and referral of student needs.
 - Promotional visits to Aboriginal communities, high schools, TAFEs and the wider community.
 - Marketing of Gnibi and Southern Cross University programs through participation at Open Days, Career Days and Aboriginal cultural events.
 - Organisation of Aboriginal cultural and social events such as NAIDOC day, student orientation, barbecues, graduation lunches and Aboriginal art exhibitions.
 - Liaison with Elders and Aboriginal communities on forthcoming events and student excursions.
 - Information technology support within the Indigenous Student Computer Laboratory equipped with the latest iMac computers and printing facilities.

- Provision of common room facilities.

In April, 2010, the Review Report of Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples, was completed. Significant recommendations were made in the areas of organizational unit structure, staff profile, management structure, succession, the distribution of Gnibi activities across the University's campuses at Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Tweed/Gold Coast and the relationship between Indigenous Student Support and other student support functions of the wider University. An active program of implementation of these recommendations is now underway.

1.2 Embedding of Indigenous perspectives into strategic plan and other key institutional documents

Southern Cross University's Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010 (Mid-term review: 2008) is available at <http://www.Southern Cross University.edu.au/pqr/index.php/8/>. The Plan embodies an ongoing commitment to equity and cultural diversity, including a focus on Indigenous Australian Peoples. This is articulated in the specific strategy *"To improve our Indigenous and Equity profiles and promote a culture of social inclusion"*, which relates to Objective 1 in the Plan, namely to be the university of first choice for our students. This strategy is further reinforced by the embedding of *"Cultural awareness Including an informed respect for cultural and Indigenous identity"* as a Graduate Attribute in all courses. The Vice-Chancellor provides regular updates on progress against all targets in the Strategic Plan to Council, and the University monitors the embedding of graduate attributes.

In 2008, the University's Equity and Diversity Plan 2008 – 2010 (available at http://www.Southern Cross University.edu.au/pqr/index.php/dds?cat_id=432#cat432) was released. This Plan is a University-wide Functional plan that is specifically aligned with the University's Strategic Plan. Five of the seven Goals/Objectives of the Equity and Diversity Plan includes strategies for building the numbers and prospects of Indigenous staff and students:

Objective 2: To increase Indigenous Student participation in the University

Objective 3: To improve the access, participation and success of [inter alia] Indigenous Australian students.

Objective 4: To promote an inclusive culture for staff and students, that embraces and supports a knowledge of and respect for equity and cultural diversity, safety and security and which is free from harassment and discrimination.

Objective 5: To ensure ongoing and sustainable strategies are in place to support staff in equity target groups which include.. [inter alia] Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

Objective 7: Increase indigenous staff employment, retention and career development opportunities.

The Equity and Diversity Plan is monitored by the Equity and Diversity Committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

In addition, during 2008 and early 2009, the staff at Gnibi focussed on updating Gnibi's Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan identified the qualitative and quantitative goals for Gnibi to pursue over the period 2009 – 2013. This Plan will remain the foundation of the University's efforts to improve higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

SECTION 2 ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY (AEP) GOALS IN 2008 AND PLANS FOR FUTURE YEARS

AEP Goal 1: Effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decision making

The roles and responsibilities of Indigenous leaders at Southern Cross University include:

- Professor Judy Atkinson, Head of Gnibi College, Director CIRCLE, Postgraduate Supervisor, Course Coordinator Diploma of Community Recovery
- Mr Glenn Woods, Head of School, Indigenous Student Support Coordinator, Course Coordinator, Graduate Certificate in Working with Indigenous Communities. (To April, 2010)
- Ms Rachel Lynwood, a/Head of School, Indigenous Student Support Coordinator. (From May, 2010).
- Dr Jeff Nelson, Research Director, Healing CIRCLE
- Ms Mareese Terare, Course Coordinator, Bachelor of Trauma and Healing
- Ms Loretta Kelly, Course Coordinator, Bachelor of Indigenous Studies

- In terms of participation in educational decision-making, Indigenous staff are represented on numerous Southern Cross University committees and working groups. In particular, Professor Judy Atkinson and Ms Rachel Lynwood are members of the Academic Board, the University's principal academic decision-making body; and Professor Atkinson is a member of the Equity and Diversity Committee chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor as well as the Staff Policy Committee established in 2009 and also chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Ms Lynwood also sits on the Faculty Executive Management Committee; Student Appeals Committee; the Bachelor of Nursing Advisory committee and the First Year Student Experience Committee.

- Bundjalung Elder, Mrs Irene Harrington, is employed as a Cultural Consultant and is a member of the Southern Cross University Council.

- Gnibi College is one of the five Schools in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and one of nine Schools/Colleges across the University. The Head of School reports directly to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Arts and Sciences who is a member of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Committee.

AEP Goal 2: Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed, as academic and non-academic staff in higher education institutions

- In 2009, Gnibi College increased their Indigenous staff by one position, while for the University as a whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff (FTE) decreased from 10 in 2008 to 9 in 2009 and general staff increased from 15.8 to 17.4. In terms of employment outcomes, Southern Cross University continues to have one of the best outcomes in the sector with 2.84% of our academic staff and 3.23% of our general staff being Indigenous (casual staff excluded)
- Objective 7 of the Equity and Diversity Plan 2008 - 2010 (*Increase indigenous staff employment, retention and career development opportunities*), includes the following two strategies that relate to the University's Indigenous Employment Strategy:

Action the initiatives as identified in the Indigenous Employment Strategy (2005 – 2008) across the five key areas of:

- *Recruitment*
- *Retention*
- *Career Development*
- *Development of non-Indigenous staff capabilities*
- *Strengthening community relationships and partnerships*

Evaluate and review the Indigenous Employment Strategy to take forward to 2010, aligning with the Equity and Diversity Plan.

The review of the Indigenous Employment Strategy has been undertaken, with achievements across the five key result areas identified above. The University is about to commence the development of a new Indigenous Employment Strategy.

- As part of the current Indigenous Employment Strategy, an Indigenous Focus Group was established with the first meeting convened in August 2008. The Focus Group was an open forum welcoming participation from all staff. The primary objective of the Focus Group was to design and schedule the implementation of training material on cultural awareness and cultural safety. This culminated in a training event on Cultural Safety for the University's senior management team in February 2009. Other objectives of the Indigenous Focus Group include delivering training to the broader staff base and investigating an online resource.

AEP Goal 3: Ensure equitable access of Indigenous students to higher education

AEP Goal 4: Achieve the participation of Indigenous students in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of other Australians

AEP Goal 5: Enable Indigenous students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in higher education as for other Australians

- In early 2009, Southern Cross University engaged the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME), an Indigenous not-for-profit corporation, to run its program from the Coffs Harbour campus. The program involves volunteer university students providing mentoring on a one-on-one basis with Indigenous students from years 9 to 12. The aim was to involve up to 170 Indigenous students from high schools in Coffs Harbour, using 100 mentors from Southern Cross University.
The University's engagement with the AIME program at Coffs Harbour has already seen improvements in Indigenous students' progression at school leading to improved Year 10 and Year 12 completion rates and will lead to increased access and participation in higher education over the longer term. In 2009, after only one year of AIME working in Coffs Harbour, 100% of AIME year 11 students progressed to year 12. The state average for Indigenous students was 63%. By early 2010, around 400 Southern Cross University students had signed up as mentors for the program, which matches our students with Indigenous high school students for an hour a week over the course of a 17 week program.
- 2008, Gnibi College commenced a comprehensive review of Indigenous student recruitment and retention at Southern Cross University. Outcomes of this review informed a comprehensive Indigenous education strategy that was completed in 2009.
- Gnibi continues to work with Indigenous students in a number of local and rural schools in the Making Tracks and Tracking It Schools Program. Courses are marketed to Indigenous students via a direct marketing campaign to schools, Indigenous events and through a public awareness campaign. Prospective students can apply directly to Southern Cross University and Gnibi provides admission and enrolment support.
- Prospective Indigenous students also participate in the outreach programs to schools in the region. These include the STAR Entry Scheme, offered to students at senior secondary schools across the feeder region, which provides bonus points to Year 12 students to assist them gain entry to university studies.
- The Equity High Schools Outreach Program seeks to encourage the interest and aspirations of local high school students who are usually under-represented at university, including Indigenous Australians. The aim of the program is to de-mystify tertiary education, explain the support services offered and encourage students to see university as a real option to consider.
University staff and students visit the school and talk with students about how university differs

from school, how to find out about courses, support services, scholarships and alternative entry pathways. Students also visit Southern Cross University to learn about the facilities and support services. The school students - indigenous and non-indigenous spend time at Gnibi when they visit the campus.

- The *Preparing for Success* foundation program targets access and participation at university by being open to people who have been out of school for a while and who may not meet the formal entry requirements for the course they want to study. The Program is offered at all three campuses and by distance education.
- As for the 2009 edition, the 2010 Good Universities Guide for Entry Flexibility and Indigenous Participation awarded Southern Cross University five stars. This recognises Southern Cross University's commitment to ensuring equitable access to educational opportunities for Indigenous peoples.
- In 2009, Indigenous students accounted for around 2.5% of total domestic commencing students (127 students, a slight decline from 130 in 2008); and just over 2% of the total number of domestic students (273 in 2009, up from 240 in 2008).
- There were 23 Award completions (Bachelor and above) to Indigenous students in 2009, and 29 such completions the year before.
- Indigenous students receive academic support through Gnibi College, in addition to having access to the general student support services at Southern Cross University. Refer to the response for section 1.1 regarding the support services offered through Gnibi College.
- The Collaborative Indigenous Research Centre for Learning and Educare (CIRCLE) aims to develop an integrated approach to Indigenous action based research and research training.

AEP Goal 6: To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Indigenous traditional and contemporary cultures

- In 2008, the Graduate Certificate in Working with Indigenous Communities and the Diploma of Community Recovery were approved by Academic Board and were first offered in 2009. These qualifications are aimed at addressing the education and training needs identified through extensive consultation with Indigenous communities, NGOs and government organisations.
- The Diploma of Community Recovery was developed for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to enhance their abilities to work 'on the ground' in communities in need of services in counselling, trauma and violence recovery.
- The Graduate Certificate in Working with Indigenous Communities is designed to provide people working with or within Indigenous communities an opportunity to focus on and improve their individual and organisational capacity to help improve the socio-economic outcomes for these communities.
- Southern Cross University's Indigenous Events Coordinating Committee (Southern Cross University IECC), which includes staff and student representatives across the University, supports awareness and educational activities such as NAIDOC Week program and the Sorry Day Lecture. The 2009 NAIDOC Week program included activities such as a panel discussion; Community and Elders lunch; and a variety of art, dance, music, bush tucker and other workshops.

- Southern Cross University 's Graduate Attributes across all its undergraduate courses includes *an informed respect for cultural and Indigenous identity*. The Graduate Attributes embedding program is aimed to ensure that all students are able to demonstrate the achievement of each of the Graduate Attributes through the assessment tasks in their course at least once during the course of their award.
- The University offers University-wide Majors which include:
 - (i) An Education Major, which offers a Unit in Indigenous Australians in Education; and
 - (ii) A Sustainability Major, which offers Units in Appropriate Technology I: Technacy in Indigenous and Developing Communities; and Caring for Kuntri: Indigenous Environmental Management.

Constraints on the ability to achieve AEP goals

- As a relatively small regional University, Southern Cross University is limited in the availability of its resources outside of ISP that can be directed towards achieving AEP goals. To this end, staff involved in the management and planning of implementing and achieving AEP goals (including senior staff in Gnibi College) must spend considerable time seeking and negotiating alternative funding and resources. This is a time-consuming activity and takes away from the capacity to achieve AEP goals most effectively. The University is aware that while it continues to perform comparatively well in regards to Indigenous education initiatives, there remains a potential for far greater success if further funding and resources could be secured.
- A related issue is that the University's 'footprint' extends from Port Macquarie in the Mid-North Coast region of NSW to the southern end of the Gold Coast (a new campus opened at Coolangatta in 2010). This makes it a challenge for the University to engage with all schools across our regional footprint.

Plans for future improvement to existing strategies or new strategies to meet each of the AEP goals relevant to higher education

- The new Gnibi College Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013 was released in 2009, drawing together the strategic directions of Gnibi in the context of the strategic directions of Southern Cross University and of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. It is recognised that there is a need to strongly focus on developing staff and broadening their academic skills and qualifications in order to provide students with continued academic and other support.
- A comprehensive AEP goals strategy was established at a whole-of-institutional level during 2008/2009. This document was released for whole-of-university review and consultation in late 2009.
- During 2009, the University increased capacity to meet the AEP Goals via incoming Indigenous academic staff, in particular the Research Director Healing Circle; and the first student intake into the Diploma of Community Recovery and the Graduate Certificate in Working with Indigenous Communities.
- With the development of the Gnibi Strategic Plan and Gnibi's commitment to new course and research developments, it has become evident that Indigenous Student Support funding will need to be deployed differently across the Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Gold Coast campuses if benefits for Indigenous students are to be maximized. As indicated in section 1.1 above, the Gnibi College Review has been completed and a restructure suggested and supported which will increase the range and quality of Indigenous student support and provide Indigenous Student Support staff with career development opportunities not previously available.

- As mentioned earlier in this Statement, the University's engagement through the AIME program at Coffs Harbour has already seen improvements in Indigenous students' progression at school and will lead to increased access and participation in higher education over the longer term.
- The roll-out of the Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Safety Training during 2009 for staff across the University was important for enhancing the understanding and respect by staff of Indigenous cultures and values.
- One of the key outcomes of the University's Equity and Diversity Plan (2008-2010) was a recommendation for the revision and redevelopment of its Indigenous Employment Strategy, now due for completion in 2010.
- The University reviewed its Equity and Diversity programs in 2009, particularly in light of Australian Government's commitment to 20% participation by equity students by 2020.
- Staff from Gnibi, Human Resources and Equity and Diversity jointly delivered the Cultural Safety Workshop for Executive and senior managers in February 2009. Mr Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and Race Discrimination Commissioner, was the guest speaker, in addition to Gnibi and HR staff. The themes from the Workshop are informing Southern Cross University's continuing initiatives and strategies in this area for staff.

SECTION 3 EXPENDITURE OF INDIGENOUS SUPPORT PROGRAM GRANT

Please provide a report on the expenditure of the provider's ISP grant for 2009. Where ISP expenditure does not match the audited annual financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2009 provided under section 19-10 of *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, please provide a reconciliation.

This ISP report is a legislated requirement, through the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* –

[Other Grants Guidelines \(Education\) 2008 \(DEEWR\)](#).

Use the following format (or similar), expanding to provide details on items where appropriate. Advice for completing items 3 and 4 is provided below.

Indigenous higher education expenditure 2009

	INCOME for Indigenous higher education purposes	
1	ISP 2009 grant only	\$739,000
2	Unspent 2008 ISP funds, carried over to 2009 – as reported in your providers 2009 audited annual financial statements	\$ 79,000
3	TOTAL ISP income for 2009	\$ 818,000
4	Other funds provided to Indigenous higher education (non ISP funds, including other Commonwealth grants, state government grants, privately sourced funds)**	
	Commonwealth Operating & Research Grants	\$1,301,535
	Tuition fees	\$229,672
	Other revenue	\$29,628

	Total other funds (NB: Funding shown here represents the funding available to Southern Cross University's Indigenous Education Unit, The Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples, to cover the functions of the College in Section 1 and goals in Section 2 above.)	\$1,560,834
5	Total Indigenous higher education income for 2009	\$2,378,834

6	EXPENDITURE of Indigenous Support Program (ISP) 2009 grant only (from Item 3)	
6a	Operating costs, including salaries, for Indigenous support services	\$436,457
6b	Capital Items – list any major items purchased for Indigenous student/staff use only and briefly describe how they were committed to Indigenous Education. New computers in the ISU 3 x Apple Macbooks \$5,307; Laserjet Multifunctional Printer \$4,500; Furniture Purchases \$6,207.	\$16,014
6c	Higher education provider overheads.	\$55,677
6d	Other Indigenous Support Program expenditure (please list major items publications and program costs).	
6e	Total Indigenous higher education expenditure (ISP) for 2009	\$ 508,148

7	EXPENDITURE of Other Funds in 2009	
7a	Expenditure of Other funds provided to Indigenous higher education Item 4 (non ISP funds, including AIME funding \$110,000, other Commonwealth grants, state government grants, privately sourced funds).** **Recoupment of staffing costs initially incurred by ISP	1,336,860
7b	Total Indigenous higher education expenditure (other) for 2009	\$1,336,860

*** Item 3**

- Where possible, this expenditure report should indicate where funds were managed by your IEU/Faculties.
- Where total ISP funds for 2009 (Item 3) are not fully expended, a separate letter to DEEWR signed by the Vice-Chancellor/Chief Executive is required requesting carry forward of unspent 2009 ISP funds, specifying the purpose the funds will be used for in 2010.

**** Item 4**

- Please provide a breakdown of and detail regarding other funding to Indigenous higher education.

SECTION 4 HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Please nominate contact officers for all policy and operational matters regarding your Indigenous education statement, including name(s), position title, phone number and email address.

Where your IEU has been consulted in the development of this Indigenous Education Statement, please provide the contact details of the relevant IEU staff member.

Ms Rachel Lynwood
a/Head of School, Gnibi College
Southern Cross University
Ph: (02) 6620 3955
Email: rachel.lynwood@Southern Cross University.edu.au

