

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMME – 2018 Performance Report

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Organisation	Indigenous Education & Research Centre (IERC) , James Cook University		
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### 1. Enrolments (Access)

JCU University Plan 2018-2022 identifies improved participation of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as one of the ten measures of success. To facilitate this the IERC has initiated a highly supportive model with earlier and more focused academic and pastoral support, and capacity building pre-entry and admission programs.

- At the point of application the IERC student support staff contacted all Indigenous applicants to provide assistance with the application process, pre-requisite information, Abstudy, accommodation options and scholarships including advising them of the IERC scholarships of \$1000 to all commencing full time students.
- Indigenous Student Ambassadors were employed at open days and information events as well as during the IERC's Winter and Summer Programs. These residential programs are very successful in delivering study experiences where high school students can explore their capacities and potential for university studies, and develop awareness of the important alignment of school subjects to higher education courses.
- Orientation days were held on both the Townsville and Cairns campuses where students were provided with information regarding, enrolment and support services including the availability of tutoring.
- Students studying externally received a welcome pack that included information on the services provided by both IERC and JCU more broadly.
- A scholarship of \$1300 was provided to continuing full time students with a previous semester GPA of 4 or above. This strategy is designed by IERC to encourage full time enrolment and academic achievement. Academic achievement is further encouraged through the annual Indigenous Academic Achievement Awards. The event is attended by IERC staff, JCU College staff, students, and community members. The awards recognises one male and one female student with the top academic results in each discipline with an Achievement Certificate and \$1000. In addition to the academic awards two students were presented with the Spirit Award for demonstrating perseverance, persistence and commitment to their studies. In 2018, IERC hosted the JCU Indigenous Winter School program targeting year 10, 11 & 12 Indigenous students from across the country, the majority coming from North Queensland but participants from Tasmania, Canberra and Regional NSW and Northern Territory also attended. The Winter School offered students the chance to experience university life, taking part in academic lectures and tutorials, presentations, study sessions and team building activities. This was a one week residential program on-campus course, designed to deliver study experiences for students to better understand their potential and capacities for university studies, as well as form bonds with other Indigenous students in the program. IERC provided a safe and friendly environment and JCU covered the cost of travel and accommodation.

- In 2018 IERC hosted a 3-week summer university pre-program for students who have completed Year 12 QCE or HSC requirements and were interested in pursuing further study. This was a new initiative of the IERC, in partnership with the JCU academic Colleges. The pre-program also serves as an alternative selection process for students who may not achieve the required OP, ATAR or HSC score for their preferred course of study. The program included attending structured course of lectures, submitting assignments, and receiving feedback from lecturers. Study techniques and student finance sessions are also part of the program as well as familiarising students with on campus living and the facilities.
- In 2018 Indigenous students comprised 5.5% of JCU enrolments, of these 96% listed a regional or remote location as their primary address.
- In 2018 JCU achieved a total EFTSL count of 501.504 Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This is a slight reduction from 2017.

Year	AA & TSI Status	Enrolments	EFTSL
2018	Indigenous	815	501.504
2017	Indigenous	826	508.286

- ISSP funded the IERC Scholarships and Academic Achievement Awards.
- ISSP funded the casual tutors and the full time student support roles in IERC.
- The hosting of the Indigenous Student Awards Night was funded by JCU.
- The Winter and Summer School programs were funded by JCU and the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP)
- JCU funded the administrative staff who provide support with the centre events and supporting administrative activities of the Teaching and Student support staff.

### 1a Scholarships (2018 breakdown)

Student category	Education Costs		Accommodation Costs		Reward		Total/ Students Assisted (headcount)	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	No.	\$
<b>Undergraduate</b>	190,100	156		3	146,900	113	272	352,600
<b>Post-graduate</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Other</b>								
<b>TOTAL</b>								352,600
Value of Scholarships <u>awarded</u> by the university to <b>remote or regional students</b> in the <b>2017</b> academic year (Section 21(3) in the Guidelines refers)							<b>\$135,200</b>	
Value of Scholarships <u>offered</u> by the university to <b>remote or regional students</b> in the <b>2018</b> academic year (Section 21(3) in the Guidelines refers)							<b>\$358,000</b>	

## 2. Progression (access and outcomes)

IERC has a comprehensive approach to improving retention of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

- The IERC employs Academic Support Advisors who develop and implement effective learning support strategies for Indigenous students to ensure they progress and complete their degree programs. The Academic Advisors work within a coordinated academic learning support team that utilise data analytics to track and monitor student's academic progress. Individual learning support plans are developed for each student and the effectiveness of early intervention strategies are evaluated and refined following each major study period.
- Student Support Advisors provide pastoral care and support for students transitioning to university, the majority of whom are first in family to attend a university. For students at all year levels the Indigenous Student Support Advisors assist students to resolve and overcome personal challenges and to persist with their course of studies. They are the key point of contact for all Indigenous students for the duration of their courses, and provide ongoing mentoring, advice, advocacy, and referrals where required to other support services, including but not limited to advice on;
  - Preparing for exams
  - Living away from home
  - Dealing with stress and anxiety
  - Accessing scholarships
  - Accessing Abstudy
  - Prioritising study load
  - Maintaining health and wellbeing
  - Keeping focused on their passion and direction
- IERC provide 24 hour a day security access to the centres on both the Townsville and Cairns campuses. The facilities include study areas, computers, printers, textbooks and kitchen facilities. Healthy snacks such as Fruit & Nuts, Tea, Coffee, milk etc are available 24 hours a day.
- IERC holds several events throughout the semesters to provide opportunity for students to connect with Centre staff and the support services. Events allow commencing students to connect with other students and develop friendships and support networks, the Indigenous Student Ambassadors employed by IERC play an important role in fostering these support networks.
- JCU provides resources to staff to ensure the university offers a culturally safe and enriching environment through the cultural protocols <https://www.jcu.edu.au/marketing-toolkit/archived-content/events-toolkit/cultural-protocols-guide> This portal links to informative and practical information to support engagement with Australian Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples in a way that is culturally respectful.
- In 2018 JCU graduated 104 Indigenous students. This is a **28% increase** on the previous year. The attrition rate was halved in 2018, which resulted in a slight increase in the retention rate. Importantly, the number of subjects attempted and subjects completed in 2018 increased by 9%.

### Completions

Year	Indigenous Graduates
2018	105
2017	75
2016	54

### Attrition:

Friday of Week one to day after Census	Semester One	Semester Two
2018	-3.65%	-2.75%
2017	-4.37%	-6.35%
2016	-5.96%	-5.95%

### Progression:

Successful Subject Completions	Semester One	Semester Two
2018	59%	68%

Students at Good Standing	
2018	59%

### Retention:

Course Retention	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Indigenous	62.80%	64.00%	64.60%	65.50%

### 2a Tutorial and other assistance provided (2018 breakdown)

Assistance type	Level of study	Number of students assisted	Hours of assistance	\$
Tutorial assistance	Undergraduate	557	5,550.68	
	Post graduate	-	-	
	Other			
	<b>total</b>			<b>\$286,747</b>
Indigenous Support Unit or other Indigenous student support activities	Student Orientation Programs	110	Full day program on each campus each semester	\$1,000

	Annual Awards Night	26 Academic Merit Awards presented. Total attendance at the awards night was 250	Annual event	\$26,000
	Student social functions – funded by JCU Student Support Amenities Fund	850	Meet & Greet BBQs twice a semester on each campus + other events such as: International women’s day, International Day of Indigenous People,	\$11,200
	<b>total</b>			

### 3. Completions (outcomes)

In 2018, as noted above, JCU graduated 104 Indigenous students a **28% increase** on the previous year. IERC continues to develop the support strategies introduced in 2018 to further the rise in completion rates.

#### Completions:

Year	Indigenous Graduates
2018	105
2017	75
2016	54

IERC and JCU have a number of initiatives designed to assist graduates:

1. JCU and the Indigenous Centre monitors Indigenous Alumni. Alumni are invited to IERC events, and individuals are encouraged to become tutors to current Students.
2. JCU monitors graduates through its participation in the Graduate Outcomes Survey. This survey showed higher than sector average in the areas of Student Support and Graduate employment for JCU alumni.
3. Student Support Advisors are available to provide assistance with job applications, addressing selection criteria and interview tips.

4. Staff at JCU Career and Counselling provide assistance to students with job applications for up to one year after graduation.
5. University Specialist Employment Partnership (USEP). USEP is a free, on-campus employment service that supports graduating or graduated students with a disability (including mental health conditions) who are seeking a final year placement or graduate employment. The service is available to JCU students in their final year or within one year of graduation who have identified as having a disability and/or who access support from the University due to their disability.
6. JCU Alumni are welcome to join the library to support their career, their professional development, and life-long learning. There is no charge for this membership.
7. JCU Alumni are entitled to a range of benefits and discounts encompassing travel, accommodation, car rental, entertainment, printing, photocopying, stationery, computers, finance, fitness and library services.

Of the above services ISSP funds are utilised by IERC staff to provide Items 1 & 3 while the remainder of the list are funded by JCU.

#### **4. Indigenous Education Strategy accessible by public**

JCU website provides a number of documents outlining strategies for improving access, participation, retention and success of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, these are:

- JCU Annual report <https://www.jcu.edu.au/about-jcu/annual-report>
- JCU's University Plan <https://www.jcu.edu.au/about-jcu/university-plan>
- JCU's Statement of Strategic Intent <https://www.jcu.edu.au/about-jcu/strategic-intent>
- JCU Reconciliation Plan <https://www.jcu.edu.au/about-jcu/reconciliation>
- Indigenous Education and Research Centre's web page <https://www.jcu.edu.au/ierc>
- JCU cultural protocols <https://www.jcu.edu.au/marketing-toolkit/archived-content/events-toolkit/cultural-protocols-guide>

The Indigenous Education and Research Centre has a University-wide remit to deliver key elements of the University's Statement of Strategic Intent to embrace diversity and bring about enduring benefits for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To meet the goals of the University, and to become a destination of choice for future students and staff, the Indigenous Education & Research Centre undertook some new projects 2018 while continuing with long term strategies:

- Curriculum Refresh: To help prepare non-Indigenous graduates of the University for Professional Work with Indigenous communities in the tropics IERC refreshed the curriculum on Indigenous studies, developing a major and minor stream be available in 2019, and Master of Philosophy (Indigenous) is in the development phase.
- New Facilities: IERC has created an inspiring and supportive environment that celebrates the heritage, diversity and achievements of Indigenous people and provides a welcoming space for students to study and interact with other students & staff. In 2017 IERC opened the newly refurbished Centre on the Cairns campus, and in February 2018 the staff at the Townsville campus moved into a newly refurbished and more centrally located Centre. Both

Centres offer 24-hour security access to study areas, computer and printing equipment and kitchen facilities for students. In 2018, IERC processed 347 applications for after-hours access to the facilities from Indigenous students. The Centres were designed to maximise staff and student interactions and have resulted in increased numbers of students visiting the facilities and building relationships with the Centre staff.

- **Staff Support:** IERC increased the number of Student Support staff to 13, to assist Indigenous students to confidently participate in the academic and cultural life of the University, the staff monitor academic performance facilitate individual tutoring and provide ongoing mentoring, advice, advocacy.
- **Inspire Students:** IERC research staff engage in high quality research, intellectual scholarship, and research training in ways that enhance the traditional knowledge of Indigenous people and sustainable living practices for the tropics. The research staff based in the Indigenous Centre are providing positive role models and can inspire students to continue into post-graduate study.

The 2017-2019 Operational Plan of the IERC identified a number of key activities designed to provide high quality learning support services to enhance indigenous students' capacity to complete their studies. The Operational plan also identified a target of 800 Indigenous student enrolments.

The strategies introduced were:

- Reinvigorate pathway programs – Introduction of Winter & Summer school programs
- Build on existing outreach programs
- Redesign pastoral and learning support services
- Introduce Individual Learning Support Plans
- Design early intervention strategies
- Monitor and track students from their early outreach activities to completion of degrees
- Encourage higher participation rates in tutoring services

The above strategies have all been implemented and have proved successful in improving retention and completion rates as detailed in section 2 and 3 of this report. The target for student enrolments was exceeded in 2018, with a end of year total of 816 Indigenous students.

## **5. Indigenous Workforce Strategy accessible by public**

The JCU Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2015-2020 can be found at [https://www.jcu.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/122176/jcu\\_148154.pdf](https://www.jcu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/122176/jcu_148154.pdf)

*During Enterprise Agreement discussions in 2017 a target of 3% of FTE Indigenous staff was set.*  
[www.jcu.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/123472/Enterprise-Agreement.pdf](http://www.jcu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/123472/Enterprise-Agreement.pdf)

The Enterprise Agreement acknowledges that where being an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is a genuine requirement of a position, the position will be filled by a suitably qualified Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person who meets the selection criteria for the position. Where an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is not immediately available to fill a designated position, the position may be filled on a fixed-term basis for a maximum of 5 years, until an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person can be recruited.

Within the Indigenous Education and Research Centre, to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the Centre all Student Support positions are classified as requiring an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres

Strait Islander as a genuine requirement of a position. Appointment of non-Indigenous Australian are made only where Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates are not available. Selection committees for positions within the IERC include at least 50% Indigenous Australian where suitably qualified panel members are available.

JCU considers its Indigenous staff to be its primary connections to the Indigenous community and is fortunate to have Traditional Owners on staff. This connection to community is an important aspect in increasing the Indigenous workforce of JCU, the university engages with the local community through:

- Inviting members from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to join IERC staff and students at events of cultural significance;
- Inviting community elders to deliver Welcome to Country at IERC events;
- Inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from community to be guest speakers at lectures to educate in their area of expertise that improves students' level of cultural understanding; and
- Recognising and participating in events organised by the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

#### 5a Indigenous workforce data (2018 breakdown)

FACULTY	Level/Position	Perm/>1yr		Casual/<1yr		Grand Total
		Academic	PandT	Academic	PandT	
Cairns Institute	HEWL01				1	1
College of Arts, Society & Education	AC-A			12		12
	AC-B	2				2
	HEWL01				1	1
	HEWL06		1			1
	HEWL09				1	1
	Other			1		1
	College of Business, Law & Governance	HEWL06		1		
College of Healthcare Sciences	AC-A			2		2
	AC-C	1				1
College of Medicine & Dentistry	AC-A			4		4
	AC-B	2				2
	AC-C	2				2
	AC-D	1				1
	AC-E	1				1
	HEWL01				1	1
College of Public Health, Medical & Vet Sciences	HEWL02				6	6
	HEWL04		1			1
	HEWL05				2	2
	HEWL06				2	2
	AC-A			1		1
	AC-B	1				1



	HEWL05		1			1
	HEWL08		1			1
College of Science & Engineering	HEWL04				2	2
Division of Tropical Environments & Societies	HEWL02				1	1
	HEWL07				1	1
Division of Tropical Health & Medicine	AC-A	2				2
	AC-B			3		3
	AC-D	1				1
	HEWL02				1	1
	HEWL03		2			2
	HEWL05				1	1
Domestic Recruitment & Engagement	HEWL01				2	2
	HEWL05		1			1
Estate	HEWL03				1	1
Human Resources	HEWL04				1	1
	HEWL08		1			1
Indigenous Education & Research Centre	AC-A	1		13		14
	AC-B	1				1
	AC-C	1				1
	AC-E	1				1
	HEWL01				9	9
	HEWL02				2	2
	HEWL03				2	2
	HEWL04		2			2
	HEWL05		3		1	4
	HEWL06		5			5
	HEWL07				1	1
	HEWL08		4			4
	Senior	1				1
Information & Communications Technology	HEWL04		1			1
	HEWL06		1			1
Library & Information Services	HEWL03				1	1
	HEWL05		1			1
	HEWL06		1			1
Research Infrastructure	HEWL06		1			1
Student Services	HEWL02				1	1
	HEWL05		1			1
	HEWL06				1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>125</b>

## 6. Indigenous involvement in decision-making

During 2018 Pro-Vice Chancellor (Indigenous Education & Strategy) was a member of a number of committees tasked with decision making at JCU and/or providing advice to the Vice Chancellor:

- Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee
- Broderick Review Report Implementation Working Group
- Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre Management Committee
- JCU Academic Board
- JCU's Senior Management Group
- JCU Student Advisory Forum
- JCU Master Planning Committee
- Indigenous Reference Group, future campus master plan.

The **Head of the Centre's Teaching Program** is responsible for the teaching and learning program, the incumbent retired in July 2018. The position which is currently vacant has been advertised nationally. During 2018 the Head of the Centre's Teaching Program was a member of the following governance committees, these roles were temporarily filled by other teaching staff during the second half of 2018:

- Indigenous Education & Research Centre Management Committee
- Indigenous Education & Research Centre Research Committee
- Indigenous Education & Research Centre Education Committee
- JCU Academic Board
- JCU Education Committee
- JCU Ethics Committee
- Division of Tropical Environments and Societies Board of Studies

The **Head Indigenous Student Support Services** was responsible for student support services and community engagement, and was a member of the following governance committees:

- Indigenous Education & Research Centre Management Committee
- JCU Student Advisory Forum
- JCU's Community Indigenous Scholarships committee
- Broderick Review Report Implementation Working Group
- College of Medicine & Dentistry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Strategic Committee
- Indigenous Medical Student Interviews

The IERC is managed by a Management Committee with a majority of Indigenous members and there are more females than men. The Committee meets monthly to consider the progress of the Centre against the Centre's Plan, the Year-to-date budget, Staffing and operational issues. They also provide advice and guidance to the PVC on the Indigenous priorities and student affairs.

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

The Indigenous Governance Mechanism of the Indigenous Education and Research Centre is the IERC Management committee consisting of;  
Professor Martin Nakata, Pro-Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education & Strategy  
Vacant: Head Curriculum Development & Teaching Programs  
Mrs Toni Peachey, Manager Centre Operations  
Mrs Virginia McHugh, Head Indigenous Student Support Service  
Vacant: Head Indigenous Research

The Management committee confirms that the information provided in this report is accurate



Prof N M Nakata  
Pro-Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education  
& Strategy

