

WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY



SCHOOL OF  
PSYCHOLOGY



# Indigenous Strategy

2020-2025

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands (Greater Western Sydney and beyond).

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COVER IMAGE:  
CHRIS EDWARDS  
SWIMMY CREEK  
MIXED MEDIA ON LATVIAN LINEN  
100 CM X 145 CM  
2010  
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTION  
IMAGE REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF ARTIST



# INTRODUCTION

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**The School of Psychology is committed to enhancing and strengthening our Indigenous Australian curriculum, research areas, student staff engagement, and authentic community collaboration.**

The School of Psychology's Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 is a reflection of the School's commitment to further developing our relationship with Indigenous Communities. Our goal is to enhance and strengthen our curriculum, generate increased collaboration for research, and to be authentic in our engagement within the Community.

The School is committed to attracting, retaining and graduating Indigenous Australian student through participation and conversation; and by providing a supportive and inclusive student learning environment. As a School of Psychology, we are committed to developing job-ready graduates, by offering the opportunity to learn and develop complementary knowledge and skills that prepare our students for a diverse range of professional careers and workplaces.

The School's Indigenous Strategy follows the University's plan in focusing on strategic objectives in seven areas:

- 1** Indigenous Students
- 2** Indigenous Employment
- 3** Indigenous Research
- 4** Learning and Teaching
- 5** Community Engagement
- 6** Indigenous Leadership
- 7** Cultural Viability and Knowledge.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the School's Indigenous Advisory Committee and the Equity and Diversity Working Party for their contribution to the Indigenous Strategy.

**Professor Tanya Meade,  
Dean, School of Psychology**

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE

# INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

Provide opportunities for Indigenous Australian students to learn and succeed in an environment that promotes Indigenous excellence.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Identify the range of issues and challenges that may impact or deter Indigenous Australian students from studying psychology or pursuing careers in psychology.
- 02** Develop a targeted Indigenous students recruitment marketing strategy plan to achieve key success measures.
- 03** Develop a recruitment strategy that addresses the specific challenges facing Indigenous students and positions psychology as being accessible, valuable, and rewarding career path for Indigenous Australians.
- 04** Explore opportunities for relevant community-based experience to be recognised as part of the criteria for entry into psychology programs.
- 05** Work collaboratively with the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Advancement) to promote psychology at Western to Indigenous high school students, predominately from Western Sydney.
- 06** The proportion of Indigenous Australian students in psychology programs has increased from 1.9% in 2018 to 2.7% in 2020. Continue this trajectory, with a focus on reaching population parity of 3% Indigenous students in psychology programs.

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#### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

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| <b>07</b> Identify retention and progression patterns for current Indigenous Australian students.  | In line with population parity, 3% of students enrolled in psychology degrees are Indigenous by 2025.   |
| <b>08</b> Develop transition, retention, and progression initiatives for Indigenous students in years 1-3 to enhance progression planning into the Honours year. | Retention and completion rates of psychology degrees by Indigenous students is consistent with retention and completion rates of non-Indigenous students.                             |
| <b>09</b> Engage current Indigenous students in Honours year to cultivate interest in postgraduate study and higher degree research.                             | The Dean's Indigenous Master of Professional Psychology Scholarship continued as an annual award, with a new Indigenous student recipient each year until 2025.                       |
| <b>10</b> Develop scholarships to support Indigenous students in psychology programs.  | A new 4th year scholarship that funds tuition fees for a high achieving Indigenous Australian student enrolled in the Honours year of the Bachelor of Psychology established by 2022. |

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO

# INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

Position Western Sydney University as a place of choice for Indigenous Australians to work in an environment that supports and nurtures their careers.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Develop a recruitment strategy to attract more Indigenous staff to the School of Psychology.
- 02** Provide tailored, culturally appropriate support for Indigenous staff.
- 03** Offer professional development opportunities for Indigenous staff through mentorship and support.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Recruitment of at least two identified Indigenous positions to the School by 2025.

Alignment of new, identified Indigenous positions with both undergraduate and postgraduate psychology programs.

In line with population parity, 3% of staff in the School are Indigenous by 2025.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE

# INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

Develop the breadth and depth of Indigenous Research with a vision to promote research that empowers Indigenous Australians.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Prioritise research that is informed and conducted based on the needs of the Indigenous Australian community (community-identified research).
- 02** Provide tailored, culturally appropriate support for Indigenous researchers and HDR students.
- 03** Support preferences for Indigenous academics to be part of the HDR supervisory panels of Indigenous students, or to preside on panels with a focus on Indigenous Australian research.
- 04** Provide professional development opportunities for supervisors who are currently supervising, or will be supervising, Indigenous Honours and HDR students, including access to the 'Supervising Indigenous Higher Degree Research' micro credential offered via UTS online.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Increase in the number of Indigenous research partnerships by 2025.

Increase in the number of funded research projects focused on community-identified issues concerning the Indigenous Australian community by 2025.

At least two academic staff members participate in the UTS online 'Supervising Indigenous Higher Degree Research' micro credential each year.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR

# INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

Ensure all students develop understanding and knowledge about Indigenous Australians through the Graduate Attribute.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Provide tailored, culturally appropriate support for Indigenous students.
- 02** Secure strategic industry partnerships that create additional career pathways and secure exemplary graduate outcomes for Indigenous students.
- 03** Work collaboratively with the Office of People and Success to establish psychology alumni groups and networks and encourage peer mentoring and networking between current Indigenous Australian and non-Indigenous students.
- 04** Increase guest lectures from the Indigenous community to enhance curriculum delivery and the student learning experience.
- 05** Consult with Indigenous peoples, in course development processes to further enrich and develop the curriculum.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Partnership with the Department of Communities and Justice formalised, and Aboriginal Cadetship opportunities for Western students secured by 2022.

Indigenous Australian Alumni Network established by 2022 and one Alumni event hosted each year.

At least one lecture from an Indigenous Australian community member per academic level (1-6) per year by 2022.

Curriculum review and incorporation of a more inclusive curriculum by 2022.



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FIVE

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Promote Western Sydney University as a place that works with and for the Indigenous Australian community.

## STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Participate in Phase 2 of the Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project administered by University of Western Australia to support the implementation of Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) Standards in relation to Indigenous Australian knowledges in the Psychology curriculum.
- 02** Continue to build our relationship with 'The Shed' and the Men's Health Information and Resource Centre (MHIRC) to address the social determinants of male health and illness, with a primary focus on Indigenous Australian men and suicide prevention.
- 03** Identify and facilitate opportunities for all students to work within Indigenous communities through postgraduate placements and research projects.
- 04** Identify how the Psychology Clinic can address the needs of the Indigenous community.

## KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Number of strategic course variations and curriculum enhancements in line with Indigenous Australian knowledges by 2025.

At least one lecture from an Indigenous Australian community member per academic level.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SIX

# INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

Provide leadership opportunities for Indigenous Australians across staff, students and community throughout Western Sydney University.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Promote within the School University-wide leadership opportunities for Indigenous Australians.
- 02** Identify career pathways for Indigenous staff, with a focus on professional development opportunities, mentorship, and opportunities for promotion.
- 03** Provide opportunities for Indigenous students to sit on School Committees.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

At least one Indigenous staff member appointed to a senior leadership or governance position in the School by 2025.

Increased Indigenous student representation on School Committees.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE SEVEN

# CULTURAL VIABILITY AND KNOWLEDGE

Build Indigenous viability and knowledge across Western Sydney University.

### STRATEGIC SCHOOL ACTIONS

- 01** Establish an Indigenous Australian Advisory Committee to inform discussions around curriculum (re)design, research initiatives, collaborative opportunities, and cultural awareness and skill development training.
- 02** Facilitate a range of cultural awareness and skills development training opportunities for staff
- 03** Develop micro-credentials and bespoke units to address Indigenous Australian community needs, including training opportunities that are tailored to address the needs of Indigenous Australian Communities.
- 04** Include links to resources about Indigenous Australian histories on the School of Psychology website and vUWS sites providing context for Acknowledgment/Welcome to Country as well as the cultural conditions of Australia.

### KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

Indigenous Australian Advisory Committee established by 2022 and at least four meetings held each year.

At least two internal or external cultural awareness and skills development training opportunities held each year, with at least 50% of staff in attendance.

Website and vUWS updates actioned in 2021 and proactively maintained until 2025.

Cultural responsiveness standards embedded across at least 50% of unit content and assessments in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs by 2025.

Indigenous Australians' knowledges, challenges and experiences embedded into the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum by 2025.

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