



Indigenous Strategy Annual Report 2021

Welcome to Country

On behalf of the Dharug people, I welcome you to this country of the Wallumattagal clan of the Dharug Aboriginal Nation.

“Quai bidja, jumna paialla Janwai - Come here, we speak together.”

I pay my respects to the local Aboriginal Elders past and present and to the ancestors of the Land, the knowledge and the culture. We welcome peoples of all nations and all faiths.

We celebrate with you our ongoing attachment to and custodianship of this country. Help us to respect the Aboriginal history and to protect the fragile environment.



Auntie Julie Janson delivering the Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. Auntie Julie is of the Burruberongal clan of the Dharug Nation – Hawkesbury River people



Terminology There is no universally agreed upon terminology for referring to the many diverse groups who comprise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. In this document, we use primarily the term ‘Indigenous’ to refer to all peoples and groups whose ancestors predate colonisation and who identify as such; ‘Aboriginal’ and ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander’ are also used where appropriate.

Please note Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs or printed material.

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Introduction from Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy)

2021 saw another challenging year for the tertiary sector with ever changing restrictions and disruptions to university life for both staff and students. Macquarie University did, however, continue to progress and expand our Indigenous Strategy 2016-2025.

Some of the most notable achievements included a substantial increase in student numbers with 417 in 2020 compared to 497 this year. We celebrated our first on-campus Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduation with a record 66 graduates compared to 57 in 2020. The Manawari Corporate Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training Program was also initiated.

The start of 2021 saw Walanga Muru return to campus, and we were able to host modified versions of our pathways' camps for prospective students and our orientation camp for new students. Community lunches returned and during reconciliation week we hosted a student art exhibition and our first in person Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduation celebration. Abruptly moving online for Session 2, Walanga Muru continued to promote a strong online engagement campaign and developed innovative ways to stay connected.





A range of online activities and opportunities to connect were provided throughout Session 2 such as weaving classes, trivia, bingo and weekly online community lunches. The provision of monetary and equipment grants continued and helped students to relocate their study spaces to home environments and to obtain other necessary resources.

Our collaboration with the Wuyagiba Study Hub continued in 2021. Macquarie University approved two micro-credentials - ACOM1001 and ENVS1000. These were delivered onsite at Wuyagiba by two Macquarie University academics with two Indigenous Science and Knowledges units delivered by community Elders and Knowledge Holders. Restrictions impacted students attending campus in 2021, therefore, seven students completed their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry program interviews via zoom with six successfully receiving offers to begin their study in 2022. Including returning Wuyagiba students there are 12 students from this partnership enrolled to study in 2022.

Walanga Muru continued to deliver targeted programs engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students in academic, cultural and leadership activities which are highlighted within this report.

In 2021 the Department of Indigenous Studies established the Centre for Global Indigenous Futures which was announced as a Faculty Research Centre later in the year. The Department of Indigenous Studies continued to publish issues in the Journal of Global Indigeneity as well as increasing partnerships with international Indigenous scholars through publications.

*Dr Leanne Holt
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy)*



Aboriginal leadership and voice

Dr Leanne Holt as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy) continued to champion a whole-of-University focus to embed Indigenous principles into the University footprint throughout 2021 leading to the development of a framework for a [Whole of University Approach to Indigenous Higher Education](#) focusing on the continuation of strengthening future outcomes.

The following Macquarie Indigenous-led committees advise on and guide in embedding Indigenous principles within the University.

Wallumattagal Bunyuwal Aboriginal Advisory Committee

This all-Aboriginal committee, many of whom are from the local Dharug Community, is central to seeking informed decisions on Indigenous education at the University, providing a two-way dialogue between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and the University.

Patyegarang Indigenous Strategic Committee

This overarching committee contributes to strategic planning and decision making for Indigenous education and research at the University. Membership includes key Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders from across the University. Chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy), this committee gives the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Executive Group ongoing advice on emerging policy and implementation matters related to Indigenous strategy.

Due to a number of factors such as COVID-19 and the restructure of faculties within the University, these two key strategic committees did not meet throughout 2021. Instead, Dr Holt worked collaboratively and in partnership with key members of each committee to review the membership and terms of reference for recommencement in 2022.



Baduwa (aspire): Unlocking capacity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and outreach

Walanga Muru continued to deliver targeted programs engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students in academic, cultural and leadership activities. Unfortunately, in 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions a number of programs were cancelled or modified.

Rising Stars Leadership Camp

This camp enables Year 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from across New South Wales to experience activities that develop their leadership skills and cultural knowledge and to give a taste of university life on campus. The camp was cancelled but the pathways team did deliver an online session for students in order to remain engaged and provide further information about Walanga Muru and Macquarie University. Eight students attended the online event, and although numbers were low, feedback from post event surveys were all positive.

Camp Aspire

This camp enables Year 11 and 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to experience activities across the University's faculty areas and provides them with knowledge and experiences about tertiary options. Four small sessions were planned throughout the year, during April, June and July where 25 students attended (both the June and July sessions were cancelled). Although a smaller format was delivered, those that attended showed a high level of engagement and provided positive feedback in the post camp survey.

“So good getting to meet people and also staff but good to see my options for the future.”

In School Cultural Leadership and Scholarship (CLS) Engagement Program


This program is structured around the 3 pillars of Culture, Leadership and Scholarship. This innovative program aims to inspire Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 7-10 to become proud leaders, develop their cultural understanding and knowledge whilst also encouraging them to aspire to tertiary education. This program reached 450 students across 21 schools, however, restrictions affected the successful completion.

Online Presentations and Events

In the early months of 2021, the pathways team were able to attend the Barker College Tertiary Information Evening, MTC Australia Indigenous Careers Exhibition event, and South Cares Wellbeing and Employment Exhibition event. In addition, the Pathways Team participated in online events including a presentation to Jamison High School's senior students and the LEAP to the HSC Webinar series.

*Camp Aspire students
2021*





In 2021 Macquarie University continued to reach record numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through the implementation of initiatives and programs directly benefiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities. The overall number of commencing student enrolments for 2021 was 128. Two of the main entry pathways are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry Pathway and the Critical Thinking Unit Pathway.

These two pathways accounted for 55 student enrolment numbers, which is slightly higher than the previous year, which had 49 students. The remaining 73 students came through other Macquarie entry pathways. These figures show that 42.96% of new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments chose Macquarie because of our connection and engaging pathways. It should also be noted that a number of the 73 other students also had connections with Walanga Muru but chose other entry pathways for reasons such as attached scholarships or the opportunity to access other entry pathways offered by Macquarie University.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry Pathway (ATSIEP)

ATSIEP provides a pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for admission into an undergraduate course based on an online application and interview. In 2021 ATSIEP received 66 applications – 55 applicants were interviewed, and 54 students were offered entry to study in 2022.

Critical Thinking Unit Pathway

This pathway allows Year 11 students the opportunity to partake in a university unit whilst completing high school. As the program has been successfully running for a number of years, we are starting to see the transition of students from the Critical Thinking Unit Pathway into Macquarie University. From the 2019 cohort, 19 offers to study at Macquarie were awarded, with 15 students completing the Direct Entry Form to process their offer. From the 15 with official offers, 13 students commenced study in 2021, with an additional 2 students commencing from the 2021 cohort due to completing the program whilst in year 12. Therefore, a total of 15 students commenced in 2021 with a Critical Thinking Unit Pathway offer.

“This unit was a great experience as it taught me valuable life skills such as time management. It also provided me with an insight into what Uni is like.”



Indigenous research

The Macquarie University Indigenous Research Plan 2020–2025 continues to create a platform for excellence in Indigenous research and innovation at a local, national and global level. It also recognises the unique perspectives, knowledge production and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2021 the Department of Indigenous Studies established the Centre for Global Indigenous Futures which was announced as a Faculty Research Centre later in the year. The Department of Indigenous Studies continued to publish issues in the Journal of Global Indigeneity as well as increasing partnerships with international Indigenous scholars through publications.

The Vice-Chancellors Research Awards recognised the excellent level of Indigenous research being undertaken at Macquarie University. The Department of Indigenous Studies winning the *Excellence in Research: Five Future-shaping Research Priorities – Resilient Societies Award*; Dr Corrinne Sullivan winning the *Excellence in Higher Degree Research Award*; and the Indigenous Hearing project team being finalists for the *Five Future-shaping Research Priorities – Healthy People Award*.

Professor Liz Cameron, Dharug woman and Macquarie University Alumni and Zac Roberts, Yuin Scholar and Phd candidate in the Department of Indigenous Studies were recipients of the 2021 ECR Indigenous Australian Research Fellows.

Postgraduate/Higher degree research students

2021 saw a steady increase in postgraduate numbers, with 25 higher degree research students (HDR) (Bachelor of Philosophy, Master of Research and Doctor of Philosophy programs) and 93 students studying other postgraduate courses. This increase highlights the significant work being done by the dedicated Post Graduate Student Engagement Officer and the continued collaborations between Walanga Muru and the Department of Indigenous Studies to encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to pursue postgraduate study.

Centre for Ancient Culture Heritage and Environment welcomed Zac Roberts as one of their 2021 ECR Indigenous Australian Research Fellows.

Zac is a Yuin scholar and PhD candidate in the Department of Indigenous Studies at Macquarie University conducting transdisciplinary research across the fields of history, archaeology, and Indigenous studies.

Zac's fellowship project will consider approaches towards an Indigenist model of research in Australian archaeology. This work extends upon his Masters of Research thesis, completed at Macquarie University in 2020, which presented an Indigenist critique of noted mid-20th century anthropologist Frederick McCarthy and his rock art research at Mount Grenfell, NSW.

Through this study, Zac identified limitations in current approaches to archaeological research of Indigenous ancestral sites. Despite recent efforts to centre Indigenous peoples, understandings, and concerns in Australian archaeological practices, Zac found that Indigenous contributions are under-theorised and Western archaeological knowledges remain dominant.

His fellowship provides the opportunity for him to explore these issues in more depth and present through publication a research model that allows for the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty and not just Indigenous collaboration.





PUBLICATIONS BY INDIGENOUS STAFF

(Indigenous staff names highlighted in bold)

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AWARDS RECEIVED BY INDIGENOUS STAFF

EES 2021: ECR Enabling Scheme: Community Engagement Rey, J.

Macquarie University: AUD2,340.00
1/07/21 → 31/12/22

FT200100525: Saving Lives: Mapping the influence of Indigenous LGBTIQ+ creative artists O'Sullivan, S.

Australian Research Council: AUD1,017,068.18, Macquarie
University: AUD436,644.00, Macquarie University:
AUD99,900.00
7/12/20 → 6/12/24

LiLAC: Listening & Learning in Aboriginal Children

McMahon, C., Gwynne, K., **Holt, L.**, Leigh, G., Hungerford, J.,
Harkus, S., Fitzpatrick, M., McKeown, J. & Pellicano, L.
Department of Health (Commonwealth): AUD735,921.40
21/06/21 → 30/06/23

Exploring the benefits of University level Indigenous Science 'Yalbilinya nguram-bang 'Learning on Country' units/programs

Ens, E., Cawthorne, R. & **Holt, L.**
Wuyagiba Bush Hub Aboriginal Corporation: AUD13,000.00
7/11/21 → 2/09/22

Lowitja Institute Postgraduate Scholarship

Tynan, L., Suchet-Pearson, S. & Lloyd, K.
Nat Inst for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Res LTD:
AUD40,000.00
30/06/21 → 30/10/22

Early Childhood Education Scholarships Mentoring Program – Grants Programs

Andrews, R., Hadley, F., Waniganayake, M., Hay, I. & **Holt, L.**
NSW Department of Education: AUD118,131.55
1/01/22 → 31/12/22

Aboriginal Workforce Development



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Plan 2018–2021 aims to build, foster and enhance a sustainable cohort of Indigenous academics, researchers, professional staff and senior staff at Macquarie University through a multifaceted approach. To achieve the objectives and targets stated in this plan investment was undertaken in resources and strategies to attract, retain and develop Indigenous talent.

2021 saw an increase in Indigenous staff at the university with 76 in total compared to 50 in 2020. The improvement of culturally appropriate and consistent recruitment messaging and promotion could be seen as a factor in this increase. A monthly workforce e-newsletter was also initiated to ensure these staff are retained and strengthened by an environment that values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture and customs.

We also continued our strong connection with the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program to ensure our students' academic and professional success.

Meet Olivia, a Dharug woman and one of our amazing students in her final year of the Bachelor of Marketing and Media. Through hard work and perseverance, Olivia has secured a position in a graduate program for 2022. Olivia has been a part of the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program for five years, currently working at an advertising agency to further develop her skills.

"I would recommend that you do everything you can to make the most of your university experience. Join organisations such as the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program to broaden your skill set and lastly have a long term plan to secure yourself graduate employment at the end of your degree. Do as much networking as you can now to create valuable relationships which will help you advance towards your future plans."



Meet James, a Yorta Yorta man who is currently undertaking his 2nd year with CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program having previously started with Accor and now working with Telstra. James has a passion to one day start his own business and takes inspiration from his mum.

"My mum is my hero. Bringing up three kids under four at one stage, being able to handle that and still be the backbone of the family business is something I look up to... if that's something that I could do myself, that would be pretty cool too."





Manawari (discover): Develop Cultural Capability

Manawari Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training

Manawari Training provides participants with a foundation to build a positive knowledge position leading to a greater appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal cultural values, histories, beliefs, practices, knowledges and philosophies. Completion of the training has a positive impact on confidence in establishing appropriate and sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. It also provides participants with the ability to contribute to societal change management impacting on the development of strength-based attitudes and societies free of racism and discrimination.

During 2021 **Manawari Staff Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training** was delivered by Aboriginal presenters in a mixed-mode form including online learning and, due to COVID-19 restrictions, interactive zoom sessions. The following modules were included:


- Module 1 – Welcome to Country and Introduction (online)
- Module 2 – Walk through Country: Dreaming, Language, Country (online)
- Module 3 – Invasion/Colonisation (online)
- Module 4 – Black Lives Matter (online)
- Module 5 – Working with Aboriginal People and Communities (online)
- Module 6 – Walking Together (online)
- Debrief/Discussion (interactive zoom)

Once training was completed a micro-credential was awarded.

Manawari Corporate Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training was also delivered to staff at Cochlear Limited in 2021.
Manawari Student Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training was also piloted to a number of student cohorts in 2021.



98
Macquarie
University Staff
completed
training in 2021



Some reflections from the Manawari Training –


“I found this training enhanced my knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and helped me further appreciate the diversity of First Nations peoples’ culture that exists within Australia today. The training really enhanced my understanding of the trauma Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were subjected to, both the past and present, and gave me a better picture of their fight for recognition and equal rights.”

“This training has allowed me to reflect on my own privileges, the advantages, whether small or large, I may have unknowingly been awarded, and the education, learning and how I can use my voice to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be supported in accessing the same quality of life, opportunities and experiences I have – and to elevate their stories, voices and experiences ...”.

“I look forwards to working together to follow our path in making Macquarie University a place which is culturally inclusive and integrates Indigenous knowledge and perspective into our community and teaching”

Mudang Dali – Indigenous Connected Curriculum

In 2021 Academic Senate reviewed the implementation of the Indigenous Connected Curriculum in alignment with the Curriculum Architecture Undergraduate Principles. It also considered inclusion of a comparable principle within the Curriculum Architecture Postgraduate Principles to enable delivery of an Indigenous connected curriculum across the full coursework suite at Macquarie University.



Djurali (evolve): Support for Indigenous success

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Engagement

The start of 2021 saw a return to the office for the Walanga Muru staff and a glimpse of a new normal for Semester 1

497

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander students
enrolled at
Macquarie
University in 2021

Orientation Program

This program for commencing students included personalised enrolment sessions, mixer dinner and an orientation camp which was held at Lane Cove National Park over three days and included a variety of academic sessions, bonding activities and extra-curricular events to bring the cohort together. 36 students attended the camp. The evaluation showed the camp to be highly successful with students. Some reflections below:

“It was amazing meeting new people and creating new friendships”

“You’re all very lovely and friendly people. I felt very comfortable the whole time and didn’t feel uncomfortable asking questions”

“Thoroughly enjoyed Cultural Session (Dancing and talking night 1); Survivor Games; Balmoral Beach trip; Weaving; Painting; UNI101; First Year Advisor Info and meet and greet; everything!”



Orientation Camp Students



Semester One "Welcome Back" Community luncheon

Cultural and Wellbeing Officer

This new role, within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student engagement team commenced in 2021 providing extra-curricular activities and engagement for the students to work together with the academic engagement officers. This role provided access to a number of new opportunities with one of the most successful being the introduction of 'family history/identity workshops' with the assistance of Relationships Australia.

The Cultural and Wellbeing Officer was always available for a yarn and was an ongoing support mechanism for the students here in Semester 1. This included yarns but also gym sessions and a commitment to ensuring a well-rounded approach to their wellbeing.



Tutoring Program

Our regular tutoring and advising for all students began again in 2021 with a number of students returning to face to face sessions with their tutors. There were also a number of students who continued in an online capacity, one of the benefits of COVID, where students and tutors have developed more flexible learning environments to cater to their individual needs.

Student Engagement Activities

Throughout the semester there were ongoing opportunities for students to be involved with the Walanga Muru community including a welcome back event, weekly community lunches, social sport, art activities, writing competitions, trivia, student art exhibition/art sale and Indigenous Nationals.

The student art exhibition was held during reconciliation week and it was an opportunity for our students to showcase and sell their art. This event was a huge success and saw a large number of students able to promote their many talents.

Indigenous National was held in Newcastle where two Macquarie teams competed. The teams did really well placing 2nd and 16th overall in the competition.



Indigenous Nationals Team



Weaving workshops

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, semester two saw the engagement team moved back online and reinstated the slogan:

**STILL STRONG,
STILL DEADLY
BUT ONLINE!** 

Online engagement activities included weaving classes, trivia nights, bingo, community lunches, study skills workshops and our annual Deadly Ball. Additionally, as in 2020, grants and financial support were offered to all those able to demonstrate need.



The 6th Annual Deadly Ball

This event was held online again in October 2021 where 37 attendees enjoyed the evening, with the evaluation highlighting people appreciating the effort of receiving a gift pack with party goods for the evening and the games and presentation that were held throughout the night.

18 students received awards sponsored by the Student Representative Council. Recipients were:

- Deadly Leadership Award- Ally Carter
- Deadly Community Engagement Award- Zac Roberts
- Deadly Contribution Award- Elijah Smyth
- Deadly Creative Arts Award- Olivia Anderson
- Deadly Sport Achievements Award- Dwayne Darcy
- Deadly Award – Natasha Balsdon

These students were recognised for academic excellence among their relevant year and study cohorts:

- First Year overall highest academic achievement – Allie Harris
- First Year 2nd overall highest academic achievement – Ti Pham
- Second Year overall highest academic achievement – Tamara Jackson
- Second Year 2nd overall highest academic achievement – Caitlin Woods
- Third Year or above overall highest academic achievement - Elizabeth Cappellazzo
- Third Year or above overall highest academic achievement - Dylan Barnes
- Postgraduate coursework overall highest achievement – Nicole Marshall
- Master of Research overall highest submission – Isaac Roberts
- PhD submission of the year – Jodi Edwards
- Highest grade in a unit - Rhiannon Bennett: STAT1170 Mark: 95; Georgia Peters: EDUC3620 Mark: 95
Kristopher Wilson: MEDI8102 Mark: 95



Support for Internal (Relocated) Rural and Regional Students:

Specific corporate and community scholarship schemes were promoted, particularly by the Academic Engagement Coordinator for First Year Students (ie. Rural/Regional Enterprise Scholarships and the Community Banking Sector Rural/Regional Scholarships).

Early move-in exemptions were sourced by the First Year Academic Engagement Coordinator to students relocating to on-campus residence, to allow for additional time to settle in, adjust to life in Sydney and attend the Walanga Muru Orientation Camp. The First Year Coordinator also assists students on a case-by-case basis to connect with the Aboriginal Medical service and other health services close to campus.

2021 saw the continuation of a large cohort of regional and rural students at Dunmore Lang College where the students have access to the Mingaletta Elders on the Central Coast and an assistant Dean who facilitates academic support, cultural activities and trips as well as supporting the transition from being away from home communities. Regular meetings and communication were held between the Academic Engagement Coordinators and Dunmore Lang College to ensure holistic support of students.

Graduation

66
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander
graduates in
2021

2021 saw the largest ever number of graduates in a year, a goal that we continue to aim to beat every year. Walanga Muru was able to host a graduation celebration for all of the graduates in May 2021. This was the 2nd time this event has been held however this time we were able to host the celebration in person (with an online live streaming option for those unable to attend). There were over 130 people including students, staff, families and friends in attendance.



Meet Claire, our deadly Bundjalung alumni, who has just handed in her final assignment for another degree - a Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship)! Claire works with Koorie Services Centre, using all her knowledge from university to help make education accessible for all mob in Victoria.



I really loved the Walanga Muru community at Macquarie University, and I've definitely particularly focussed on fostering a similar community amongst my students where I work now, as I understand how the feeling of belonging can positively impact study

Meet Olivia, a proud Gamilaroi woman. During 2021 Olivia immersed herself in the university lifestyle joining the Walanga Muru social basketball team, displayed some beautiful artworks at the reconciliation week showcase (and sold many) and was selected to compete in Indigenous Nationals and received overall female MVP for Basketball!





2021 Indigenous graduates

**If you would like to engage with Walanga Muru
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