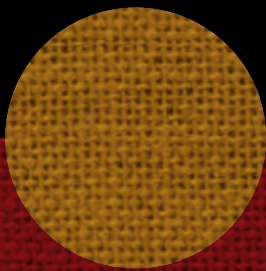


2023 Indigenous Strategy Annual Report

November 2024



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Acknowledgement

We honour and respect the Indigenous peoples who have been, and continue to be, the Custodians of the lands, skies, and waterways upon which we at Universities Australia, and our member universities, live and work.

We acknowledge that Indigenous Elders and knowledge holders maintain and nourish Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. That research, teaching, and the academy, both locally and abroad, have benefitted from the enrichment and innovation these gifted knowledge systems grant.

We recognise all Indigenous staff and students who work and study at Australian universities. The significant contributions they make within the higher education sector impact far beyond the footprint of their institutions.

We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and that connection to Country and Culture has been maintained, nourished, and continues to thrive.

We pay respect to Elders and knowledge holders, past and present, as we listen carefully, tread lightly, and nurture those who are our future.

Indigenous peoples should be aware that this document may contain images and/or names of deceased persons.

Foreword

On behalf of Universities Australia's members, we present to you the second annual report required by the Universities Australia's Indigenous Strategy 2022–2025.

Universities Australia, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Committee, and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium would like to acknowledge the significant contributions UA's members undertook in completing this year's annual survey, using the new survey software and data collection method.

We are pleased that the findings of this report provide further evidence of the significant contributions Indigenous peoples are continuing to make in the higher education sector. Many colleges and schools are experiencing the benefits of incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being into their curricula. Additionally, an increasing number of Senior Executive teams are benefiting from the inclusion of Senior Indigenous leaders and their expertise.

Aligning with the 2024 Reconciliation week theme, *Now More than Ever*, Indigenous Peoples' priorities remain core business for the sector. The *UA Indigenous Strategy 2022–2025* continues to serve as a valuable reference for building and sharing good practice. We are confident that the next iteration will also be a valuable resource for the sector, further building momentum in recognising and supporting Indigenous Australians across the higher education sector.

With this report, we celebrate the ongoing outcomes of the Indigenous students, workforce and communities within the higher education sector, as well as the many allies that lend their support.



Mr Luke Sheehy
Chief Executive
Universities Australia



Professor Michelle Trudgett
Chair
DVC/PVC
Indigenous Committee



Assoc. Professor Sadie Heckenberg
National President
NATSIHEC

Executive summary



University of Wollongong embraces Aboriginal cultural practices with their academic traditions. Layne Brown participates in traditional ceremony integrated into the 2023 graduation ceremonies.

Overview

The 2023 report reflects the sector's development in progressing commitments under the strategy, moving from aspiration to implementation and change under the strategy's five key themes.

This report is separated into two parts.

Part 1 reports the results, institutions responses to the five key themes of the 2023 survey, and Part 2 outlines UA's responses to its commitments under the strategy.

Part 1

Part 1 of this report focuses on each institution's activities in addressing the five key themes of the strategy. These responses focus on each institution's strategic documents, student and staff success, Indigenous advancement, racism and cultural safety, and embedding and advancing Indigenous knowledges.

Strategic documents

The 2023 survey asked institutions to report on all strategic documents that specifically support the advancement of Indigenous peoples in and through universities. Data reported in these documents demonstrates that all institutions had at least one strategic document and reporting institutions had an average of four Indigenous-specific documents. Indigenous workforce strategies were the most commonly reported documents and Indigenous-specific anti-racism statements were the least commonly reported.

Student success

Data on student numbers and success continue to show considerable variation amongst institutions' Indigenous student cohorts. The five institutions with the greatest number of reported enrolments made up over half (55.7 per cent) of the sector's total enrolments. However, the responses that provided the greatest enrolments for each of the four degree levels (enabling, undergraduate, postgraduate coursework, and doctorate) were reported by four different institutions. Further data collection could consider how other institutions are focusing on delivery or support for students at these degree levels.

Programs or initiatives aimed at supporting Indigenous students to complete were broadly similar to what was reported in 2022, providing academic and pastoral support to Indigenous students. However, in 2023, institutions often described programs that had targeted personalised aspects rather than general supports. Also compared to 2022, more institutions reported specific programs or initiatives situated outside the Indigenous centre, most often reporting designated roles or teams whose roles included support for Indigenous student success.

Staff success

Data on staff numbers from 2023 indicates that new Indigenous-identified positions continue to be created. However, the increase in Indigenous positions is more common in professional roles than in academic roles. Furthermore, more than a fifth (eight) of responding institutions did not have an Indigenous position at Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Indigenous equivalent or higher.

Two-thirds (24) of responding institutions had developed, or were developing, formal promotion pathways or career advancement mechanisms available for Indigenous academic, professional, and executive staff. Despite this, nearly all (32) of responding institutions reported challenges in meeting their academic staffing targets and roughly three-quarters (28) reported challenges relating to professional staffing targets. A highly competitive job market was cited as the main challenge for both attracting and retaining Indigenous academic and professional staff. An inability to match or compete with industry or government employment offers was a key underlying cause for this issue.

While practices for building the pipeline of Indigenous academics and researchers is a topic of current research, it is outside the scope of this report but could be considered for future iterations.

University responsibility for Indigenous advancement

Over 100 Indigenous representatives were reported across senior governing bodies, with the highest presence in academic senates or equivalents. Many (33) institutions reported mechanisms, such as advisory groups, to ensure Indigenous perspectives were included in key decisions, and over half (22) reported that their senior Indigenous leader had a direct line of reporting to their Vice-Chancellors.

Significant progress has been made in developing Indigenous procurement policies, with two-thirds (25) of institutions actively implementing or creating such policies. While some institutions have clear policies in place, others reference Indigenous engagement guidelines within broader procurement strategies.

Racism and cultural safety

The majority (28) of responding institutions had racism reporting mechanisms, and many of those who did not were either reviewing or developing mechanisms. In comparison to 2022, more institutions are now offering cultural safety training with 32 reporting training for staff and 25 for students.

All responding institutions reported having at least one mechanism in place to provide a culturally safe environment, and the majority had working groups specifically tasked with promoting culturally safe environments.

Recognising the value Indigenous peoples and knowledges bring to the university and embedding Indigenous value systems and knowledges into university structures

There was a notable shift from 2022 to 2023 in how institutions reported and embedded Indigenous value systems and knowledges into university structures. In 2022, assigning specific roles for incorporating Indigenous content into curricula was most common. This shifted in 2023 to fostering better practices, including professional development for staff, course audits, and the establishment of working groups focused on integrating Indigenous knowledges.

Additionally, institutions identified multiple mechanisms beyond Indigenous Research Strategies for promoting Indigenous research, including dedicated funding schemes, Indigenous research committees, and specialised training programs.

Part 2

Part 2 of this report lays out the work of UA in 2023 against its commitments under the strategy to advocate to the public and government. Notably, in 2023 UA:

- provided a formal submission to the Review of Closing the Gap,
- through the Universities Accord process, called for demand-driven funding for all Indigenous students, an increased focus on supporting Indigenous student participation at university and greater pathways and supports given to Indigenous researchers and staff within universities, and
- as part of the 2023 UA annual conference had an Indigenous-led session, as well as Indigenous representation across a range of policy-topic areas.

The UA DVC committees also progressed each of their commitments. In 2023:

- **The DVC Indigenous Committee** made significant contributions to the Universities Accord process, including emphasising the need for a strategic plan to double Indigenous enrolment and enhance student capacity and success.
- **The DVC Academic Committee** shared best practice in the sector and is considering the establishment of a working group in 2024 to progress and prepare guidance material on best practices in five key areas responding to the strategy.
- **The DVC Research Committee** working group started a successful series of workshops on Ethical conduct on "Ethical Conduct and Engagement in Indigenous Research" on 26 July 2023. A follow up session took place on 6 October 2023 to allow participants to share best practises and reflect on the workshop.
- **The DVC International Committee** working group met four times in 2023. Discussions focussed on enhancing and tailoring international mobility opportunities for Indigenous students, researchers and staff, and sharing good practice and resources between Australian universities.
- **The DVC Corporate Committee** working group completed a final draft of the UA Indigenous Employment and Procurement guidelines. Crucial to the drafting process was a series of workshops held at Curtin University, Swinburne University, The University of Sydney, and James Cook University by members of the working group.

Part 1

Results of the 2023 UA Indigenous Strategy Annual Survey



Part 1 reports findings from the 2023 survey.

The 2023 survey asked institutions to report on activities and data related to the Indigenous Strategy's key themes. Each theme is presented in a chapter that details the responses provided under that theme.

Examples pulled directly from survey responses appear like this throughout Part 1 to support discussion of the findings.

1. Strategic documents

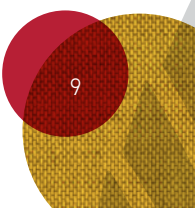
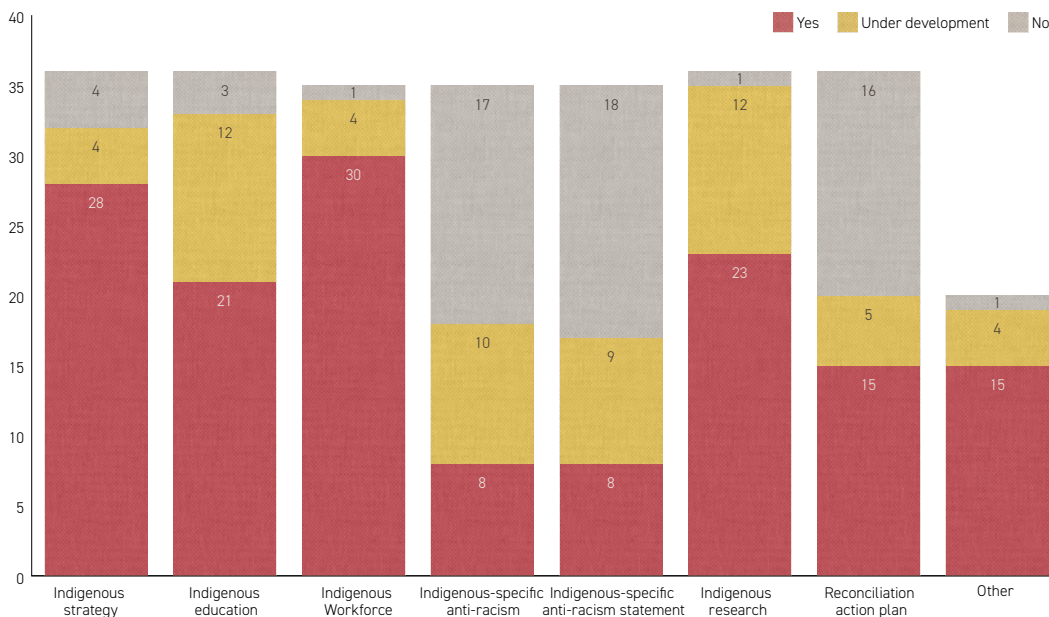
For the first survey against the strategy in 2022, institutions were asked to only report on strategic documents for Indigenous Student Recruitment Strategies and Indigenous-specific Anti-racism Strategies. In 2022, most institutions reported having formal, written strategies in place that referenced a coordinated approach to Indigenous student recruitment across the institution and some form of anti-racism policy statement or framework, but not necessarily Indigenous-specific. Data was not collected for other strategic documents or planning across responding institutions.

In response to member feedback, UA expanded the 2023 survey selection to include Indigenous Strategies, Indigenous Workforce Strategies, Indigenous Research Strategies, Indigenous Education Strategies, and Reconciliation Action Plans. These changes mean that UA can report information that better reflects the activities of UA members in meeting their commitments under the Indigenous Strategy.

The 2023 survey asked institutions about all strategic documents that specifically support the advancement of Indigenous peoples in and through universities. Data reported in these documents demonstrates that all institutions had at least one strategic document and reporting institutions had an average of four distinct documents. Indigenous workforce strategies were the most commonly reported documents with 30 institutions reporting having such a strategy in place and an additional four reporting a workforce strategy was under development. Figure 1 shows all strategic documents reported in 2023.

In the 2023 survey, institutions could report on Indigenous-specific anti-racism strategies and statements. These documents were the least commonly reported. Four institutions reported having both a statement and a strategy, four reported only a statement, and four reported only a strategy. Additionally, 10 institutions were in the process of developing an anti-racism statement, and nine were developing an anti-racism strategy. Only seven publicly available links were provided and of these, only four specifically addressed racism against Indigenous peoples. The remaining were generic anti-discrimination policies. For further discussion on programs and initiatives concerning racism and cultural safety, see chapter five.

Figure 1: Strategic documents reported by institutions



Just under two-thirds (21) of responding institutions had a specific Indigenous Education Strategy or equivalent. A further 12 universities were developing one. The large number of formal documents specifically addressing the recruitment of Indigenous students is a considerable improvement compared to 2022 when such documents were the least commonly reported.

There was nearly an equal split between responses that had a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and those that did not. Fifteen institutions had a RAP, 16 did not, and six noted that they had a RAP under development. Some responses indicated that consultation with their Indigenous communities indicated a shift, over the last few years, away from a RAP and towards an Indigenous Strategy.

Other strategies that include an Indigenous-specific section

Institutions could volunteer other Indigenous-specific strategic documents developed by their intuitions that did not fit into the above categories. There was a wide variety reported including:

- Indigenous goods and services procurement strategy
- Place and Community Framework
- Indigenous Internationalisation Plan
- Cultural Competency Framework
- Individual Indigenous Strategies for schools (e.g., School of Law Indigenous Strategy)

2. Student success

The first section of this chapter reports on student numbers and different types of cohorts. 2023 survey responses continue to demonstrate institutional differences in the Indigenous student cohorts. No single institution could be considered a 'leader' across all cohorts, which reflects each institution's distinctive profile.

The second section focuses on student services. Survey responses indicate that while individual institutions introduced new programs, across the sector programs in 2023 are broadly similar to what was reported in 2022.

Statistics about students¹

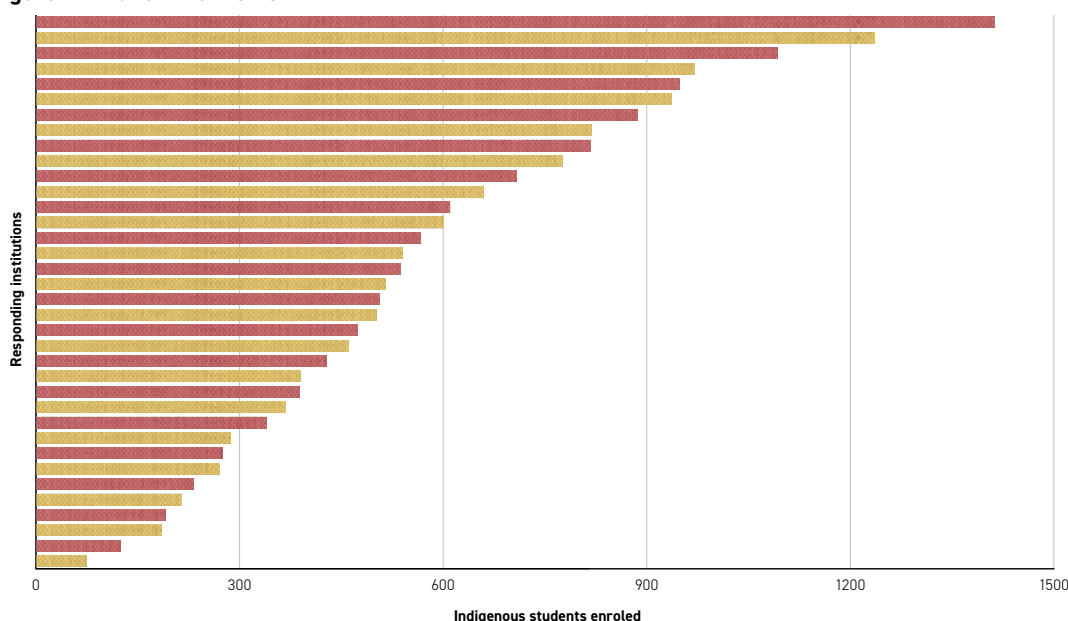
This section reports headcount numbers for Indigenous students who were enrolled, completed, withdrew², or articulated, broken down by degree level.

Moving away from using Department of Education data, the 2023 survey allowed a closer look at institution-level enrolment figures. This change means direct comparisons between 2022 and 2023 data cannot be drawn. Consequently, this section reports on sector student figure totals and the range of student data reported by the institutions that responded. Table 1 shows totals for all degree levels reported.

Table 1 Sector student data totals

	Enabling	Undergraduate	Postgraduate Coursework	PhD	Sector Total
Enrolments	1,953	14,447	3,219	717	20,336
Completions	620	1,879	977	79	3,555
Withdrawals	979	2,735	723	50	4,487

Figure 2.1: 2023 Enrolments



¹ Regarding this section, UA sent out the following clarifications:

1. identify headcount numbers, not enrolments or FTE, across all questions in the section on Students.
 2. Do not include non-award courses, micro-credentials or undergraduate short courses in your response.
- ² In the UA survey, the definition of 'withdrawal' aligned with the Department of Education's definition of 'attrition' (which includes discontinued/suspended, withdrawals and non-completions). With this definition it is possible some of these students moved to a different institution to complete or changed degree within their institution.

Total enrolments

Valid survey responses show there were 20,336 Indigenous students enrolled at responding institutions in 2023 across all cohort groups.

The five responding institutions with the greatest number of reported enrolments made up over half of total enrolments at 55.7 per cent. The institution enrolment headcount average was 565 students, with a range of over 1,300 enrolments between the institutions reporting the greatest (1,413) and the fewest (74) total enrolments. Figure 2.1 provides an enrolment figure from each responding institution.

Considering breakdown by degree type, undergraduate programs continue to make up the majority (71 per cent) of the sector's Indigenous student enrolments — a continuation of trends seen in 2022. See total for all degree types in Table 1.

The wide range of institutions' total enrolments is also seen when broken down by degree level. For instance, the institution with the greatest number of enrolled PhD students reported 70 students, while the institution reporting the fewest had zero PhD students. However, the responses that provided the greatest number of enrolments for each of the four degree levels were reported by four different institutions.

Completions

A total of 3,555 completions were reported across the sector. This is a slight increase in completions reported in the 2022 report when slightly fewer than 3,500 completions were reported. Noting the difference in collection methods, the actual increase in completion is likely different³.

Overall completions were spread more evenly than enrolments across responding institutions. The five institutions that reported the greatest number of completions comprised 28.8 per cent of total reported completions. Responding institutions averaged 102 completions with a range of 258 between the greatest (282) and fewest (24) total reported completions.

Undergraduate completions made up over half (52.9 per cent) of all completions and was the only degree type for which all responding institutions reported at least one completion.

Withdrawals

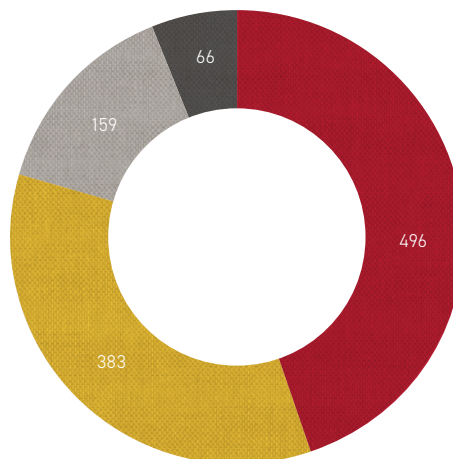
Survey responses⁴ indicate around 4,500 students withdrew from responding institutions in 2023. This does not equate to the number of students who left the sector, as these figures may include students who changed courses within their institutions, transferred to a different institution to complete their studies or temporarily suspended their studies. Three of the five institutions that reported the highest number of withdrawals were among the five institutions with the highest number of enrolments.

The average number of withdrawals reported was 128 with a range of 550 between the institutions reporting the greatest (461) and fewest (11) number of withdrawals.

Articulations

Responses⁵ indicate that 1,104 Indigenous students articulated within their institutions⁶. As Figure 2.2 illustrates, students articulating from enabling programs or pre-undergraduate to undergraduate programs made up nearly half (44.9 per cent) of total articulations and students articulating from undergraduate programs to postgraduate coursework made up roughly one-third of all articulations.

Figure 2.2: Articulations



- Enabling/pre-undergraduate to undergraduate
 - Undergraduate to postgraduate coursework
 - Undergraduate to Honours
 - Into Doctorate
- Honours to Doctorate/PhD: **8**
Postgraduate coursework to Doctorate/PhD: **37**
Postgraduate research to Doctorate/PhD: **21**

3 For completions, one response was removed due to invalid entry. Total valid responses equaled 35.

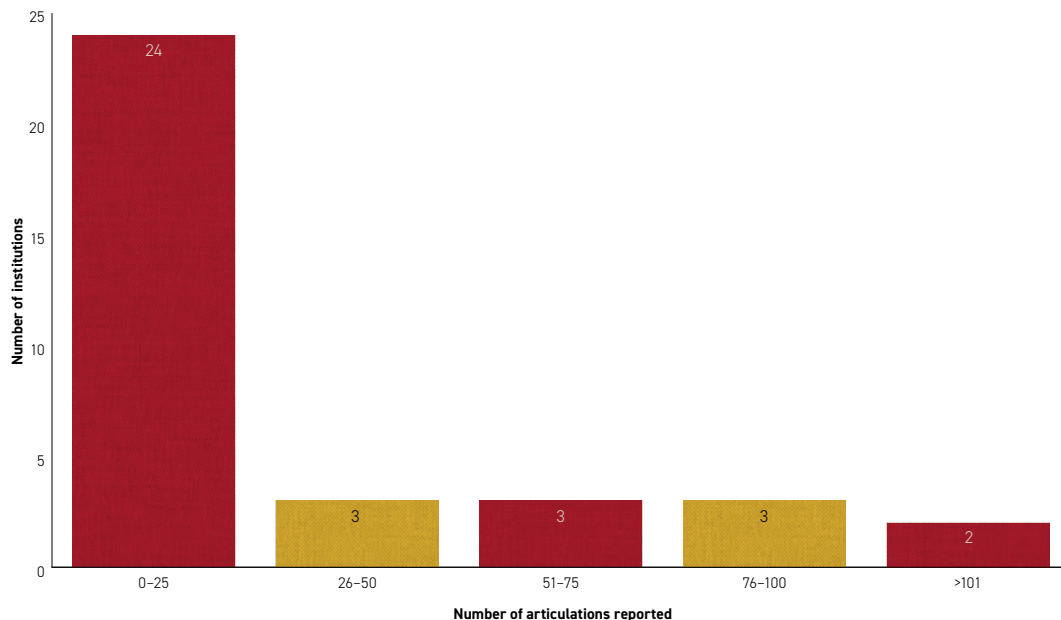
4 For withdrawals, one response was removed due to invalid entry. Total valid responses equaled 35.

5 For articulations, one response was removed due to invalid entry. Total valid responses equaled 35.

6 This would not include students who completed a lower award at one institution then began another higher award at a different institution.

Once again, there is a wide range among institutions reporting the greatest (177) and fewest (0) total articulations. Across the sector, articulations trended toward the lower end of the range. As shown in Figure 2.3, just over two-thirds (68.6 per cent) of responding institutions reported 25 or fewer articulations and two institutions reported more than 100.

Figure 2.3: Institutions reporting articulations



Study type

Just over half (52 per cent) of the sector’s reported Indigenous students were enrolled full-time in 2023. Rates of full-time and part-time students varied significantly by institution, with the two extremes reporting 20 per cent part-time enrolment and 81 per cent full-time enrolment. However, the majority (28) of institutions reported between 41 and 70 per cent full-time enrolment (see Figure 2.4).

There did not appear to be a correlation between study type and completions; however, there was a slight negative correlation between full-time enrolment and withdrawals, as Figure 2.5 illustrates. Institutions reporting higher proportions of full-time enrolments were slightly more likely to report fewer withdrawals.

Figure 2.4: Institutions reporting full-time enrolment

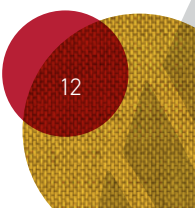
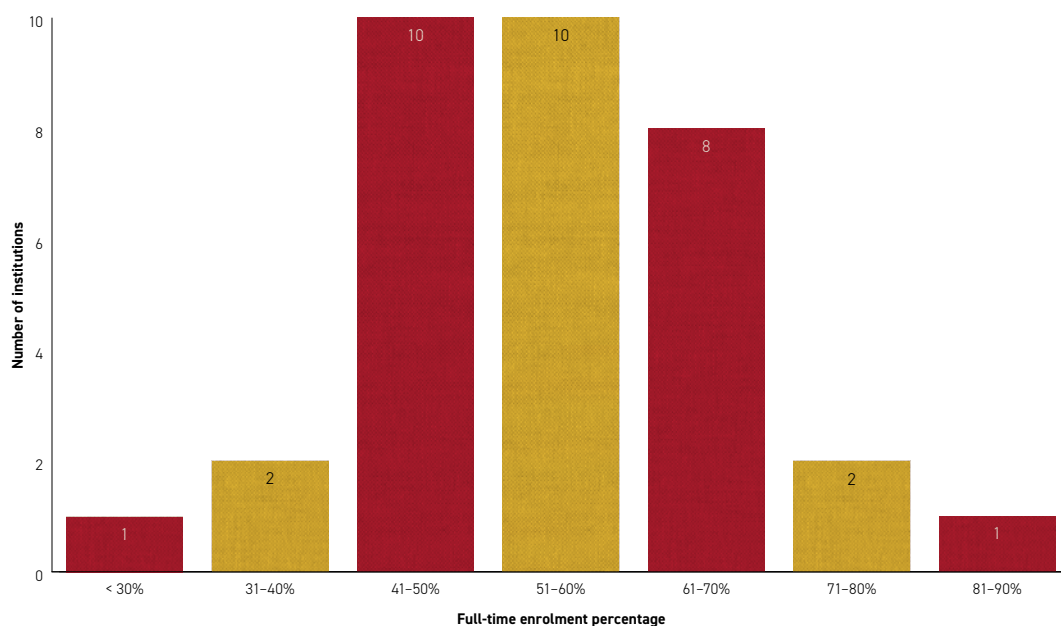
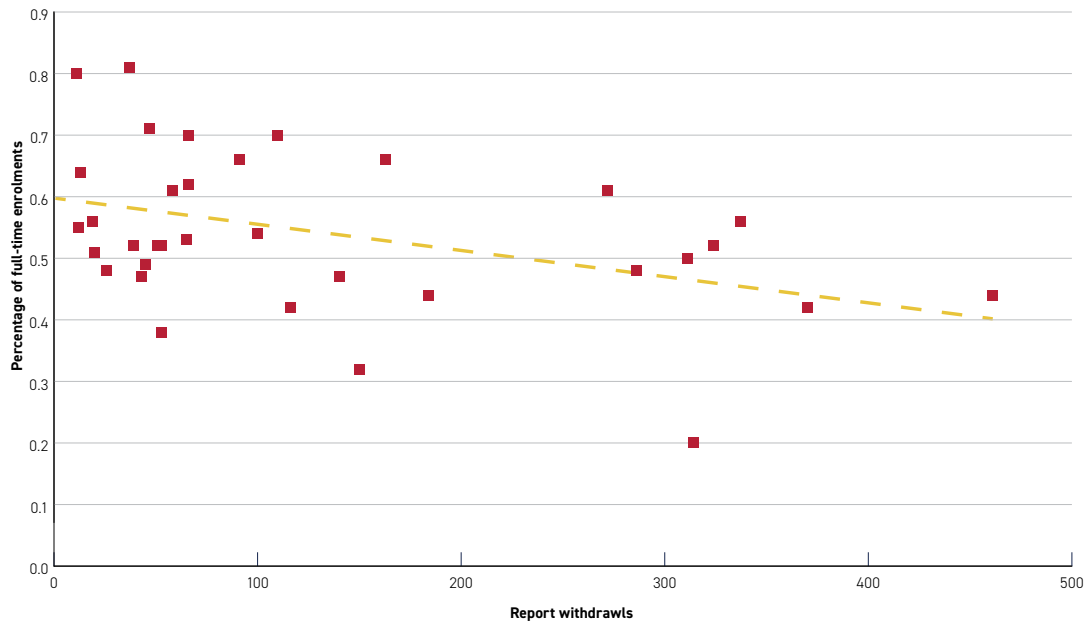


Figure 2.5: Withdrawals and full-time study



Student services

In the 2023 survey, institutions were asked to report on programs that support Indigenous student success, focusing on improvements to existing initiatives or those newly introduced in 2023.

Sharing responsibility for student success beyond Indigenous Centres

Institutions were asked how responsibility for student success was shared across the institution. Designated roles or teams outside of Indigenous Centres were the most common examples provided by institutions. Roles described by institutions worked across the university or within specific faculties on matters related to student success. The designated roles identified were diverse, including areas of work in:

- Cultural awareness and training
- Curriculum and education materials
- Student counselling
- Scholarship
- Academic support
- Wellbeing support
- Student outreach and communication
- Internal and external engagement activities
- Facilitating connections with Community members

Role integration and collaboration, sometimes as part of designated roles, were also often described. This included Indigenous student support roles being integrated with student success or wellbeing roles and teams collaborating with Indigenous Centres.

*In 2023: the integration of Indigenous student support **within the Student Academic Success (SAS) team**... [the institution's Indigenous Institution] **collaborates with the SAS team** to refer at-risk Indigenous students for personalised consultations, ensuring comprehensive support to develop essential academic skills.*

*The Student Experience Strategy sets about improving student experience through a range of initiatives ... **These services interact and hold key relationships with the [institution's Indigenous Centre]** as well as leadership, faculties and schools.*

*In 2023 our Indigenous Student Support Centre launched an initiative to strengthen support systems, **including collaborations with student wellbeing counsellors, and Learning Access Plans (LAPs)**...*

Initiatives concerning curriculum and pedagogy were also often cited, the most common examples were initiatives to embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives into curricula and initiatives to improve upon staff pedagogy or cultural capacity. These examples varied from institution-wide to subject-specific levels.

*The [University's] Education Plan undertakes actions to provide innovative learning programs **that embed First Nations perspectives and knowledges** across the curriculum and intentionally designed programs for First Nations students **reflecting community needs and industry demands**...*

*The School of Architecture and Built Environment have employed 5 Aboriginal academics. These staff members are working with the School to apply the 4 pillars of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Framework. This includes **building the cultural capacity of staff** and supporting the **Indigenisation of curriculum**. A new course has also been developed around place-based design principles, in collaboration with local community and local industry partners.*

The Office of the Provost team created the role and appointed a Manager, First Nations Cultural Education. The role **assists with the cultural awareness and training initiatives for the University** and contributes to curriculum, and educational resources to ensure that **First Nations knowledge is available to all University staff and students.**

[Units audits] for Indigenous perspectives as well as work with Academic staff to build **on their ability to embed different methods into their pedagogy** to improve Indigenous students understanding of content.

The First Nations Student Success program is a faculty-based program, coordinated by Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning. The program provides a pathway to career academia for Indigenous postgraduate students through mentorship and professional development. Participants also support academic **staff to embed Indigenous knowledges and culturally appropriate content** into their learning activities. In 2023, the program engaged 4 Indigenous students, in its first full year of operation.

Improving completion rates of Indigenous students

Institutions were asked to describe efforts to improve completion rates of Indigenous students. Though individual institutions may have reported new or improved programs, at the sector level efforts described were similar to those reported in 2022. There was a continuing trend in 2023, the most common example of work to enhance completions being student support measures. Compared to 2022, in 2023 the student supports described more often included a personalised component including personalised study plans, tutoring, internships, financial assistance, pastoral support, and peer mentoring.

The First Nations Learning Advisors integrate First Nations ways of knowing into curriculum and **provide culturally responsive one-on-one academic support...**

*[The institution] established a buddy program for Indigenous students, which **pairs students with experienced peers...***

*[The institution] has invested in a 3 Engagement coordinators to provide opportunities for and support students in First year, Second and Third year, and Final Year/post grad. These coordinators **work with students** closely to improve the student experience as well as provide them with **mentoring and specific advice** around University life.*

... One key aspect of this support is **providing personalised academic guidance.** This helps students comprehend university systems, understand their course requirements, and manage academic deadlines effectively, ensuring they remain on course for the duration of their degree.

*[The university] employed an Aboriginal Wellbeing Coordinator within the Aboriginal Education Centre with major procedural changes including **students having an Aboriginal Wellbeing Plan** completed by an Aboriginal Student Success Officer or the Aboriginal Wellbeing Coordinator recognised under Special Consideration as well as other major procedural changes.*

Slightly more than a quarter of responses (27.8 per cent) specifically mentioned Indigenous Centres, though some of these responses included collaboration between faculties or student success teams and the Indigenous Centre.

The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) is a crucial academic support mechanism available for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the University. This program is **overseen by the Learning Officer at the [Indigenous Centre]** and is supported by a combination of University and ISSP funding streams. ITAS facilitates access to supplementary tutoring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, delivered in one-to-one or small group sessions.

The school of Social Work and Nursing work closely with [the Indigenous Centre] to ensure that their students are succeeding and completing. We have developed a Social Work Pod (group) and a Nursing Pod (group), where commencing students are **paired up with existing students** to demystify the course ahead, provide lived experiences and mentor the commencing students. **Staff from the school have also provided panel discussions and assisted** to find non-Indigenous student mentors to work with our new students.

A small number (three) of institutions described data-informed initiatives and how they were investing in increasing this capability.

After **reviewing the University's retention data,** it became clear that the College of Engineering, Science and Environment needed to be a focus. **A working group was established** with staff from the College, Aboriginal Alumni and members of the student's advancement team from the [Indigenous Centre]. A number of initiatives have been planned for implementation in 2024.

To **improve data-informed support** [in the Indigenous student centre], a new data translator was appointed, working with Analytics and IT.

3. Staff success

This chapter provides information on staffing figures and professional progression and development procedures. Moving away from using the Department of Education's data, the 2023 survey allowed a closer look at institution-level staffing figures.

The first section of this chapter focuses on sector staffing totals. The 2023 data shows that there continue to be new Indigenous-identified positions created, though increases in Indigenous positions are more likely to be in professional roles than academic roles. Additionally, eight institutions still do not have a Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) equivalent or higher Indigenous position.

Expanding upon the 2022 questions, the 2023 survey gathered more detailed information on challenges related to Indigenous staffing. In the second section, institutions indicated that competition for university-educated Indigenous peoples has been fierce, pitting universities against each other and the private sector.

With new questions on leadership and executive positions and recognising additional workload, the final two sections of this chapter illustrate that more institutions in 2023 have or are developing career advancement mechanisms, formal promotion pathways, and formal supports for additional workload for Indigenous staff.

Statistics about Indigenous staff

Current Indigenous-identified senior leadership positions

The 2022 report utilised Department of Education employment data. As the 2023 survey collected similar but not identical data points, direct comparisons with 2022 are not available, except in one case where 2022 levels were calculated from provided survey data.

In 2023 there were 11 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) positions, and 23 Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) positions reported. Three institutions had both a DVC Indigenous and PVC Indigenous, one of which had two PVC positions. Eight institutions had neither an active DVC nor PVC. Of those eight, one had a vacant PVC position and one had a PVC position underdevelopment (see Table 2).

Table 2

	Active	Vacant	Under development
Deputy VC	10	1	0
Pro VC	21	2	2
Other	74	5	2

A total of 25 institutions reported almost 80 other Indigenous-identified senior leadership positions (see Table 2). In some instances, multiple examples of 'other' senior positions were provided including:

- four Deans
- six Associate Deans
- 17 directors (collection of positions sometimes just referred to as 'Director' or as Director of institutes, centres, units, etc)
- four Academic Directors
- two Executive Directors
- three Professors (Level E)
- three Associate Professors (Level D).

Among the remaining roles were a Council member, Associate DVC, Special Advisor to the VC, Vice President, Deputy Vice President, Provost, Head of College, Head of School, Elder in Residence, and a Senior Educator.

New Indigenous-identified senior positions for 2024

Of the institutions that described plans to create new senior leadership positions, four indicated that they had implemented plans to appoint a new PVC but not all had made an appointment at the time of the survey. Four had plans in place to create new senior positions below the level of PVC. One institution reported early discussions about a new DVC role and a further five were reviewing or were in early discussions about new PVC positions. Six institutions did not have a DVC or a PVC and had no plans to create these positions in 2024.

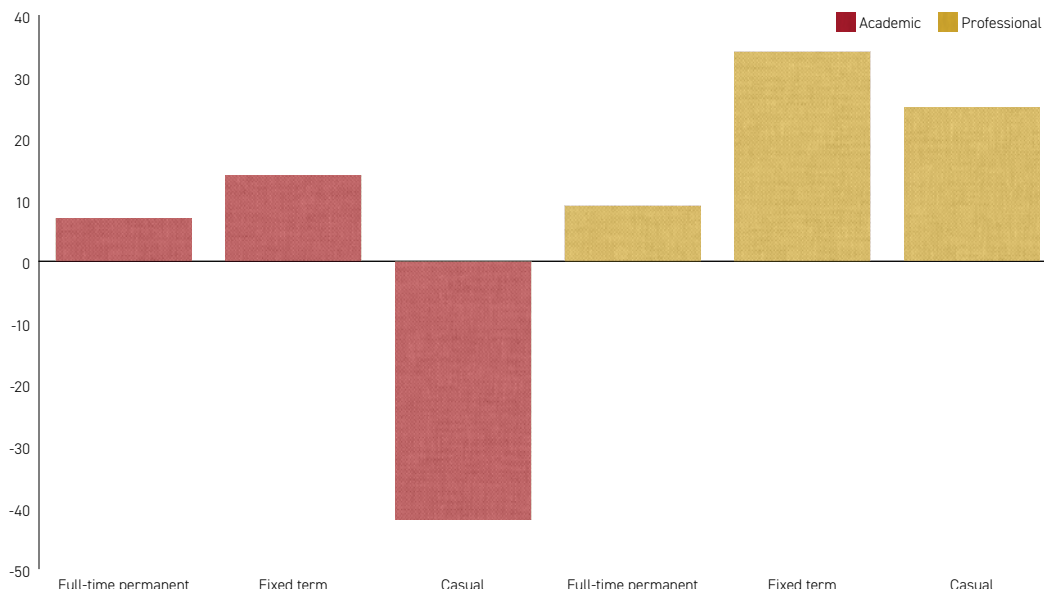
Growth in Indigenous positions among academic and professional staff

Using the information provided by responding institutions, UA calculated the number of 2022 positions and compared them with 2023, according to the type of work agreement.

2023 data suggests that both full-time permanent and fixed term academic positions increased by seven per cent and 14 per cent respectively from 2022 to 2023. In contrast, casual positions decreased by 42 per cent. Professional staff across all three categories increased: full-time permanent (nine per cent), fixed term contracts (34 per cent) and casual (25 per cent) (see Figure 3.1).

This suggests a growth in Indigenous positions among academic and professional staff. It is unclear whether growth in full-time permanent and fixed term contracts for academic staff is a result of casual staff transitioning to these contracts or other pathways. More data could be collected in the future to further understand movement of academic employees within institutions and across the sector.

Figure 3.1 Percentage change in academic and professional Indigenous staff 2022 to 2023



Junior Indigenous academic staff

The majority of entry-level academic staff at universities are appointed at Level A or B. Responding institutions reported over 800 Level A and B academic staff. Slightly less than a third were appointed full-time, slightly more than a third were on fixed-term contracts, and a third on casual contracts. Table 3 shows total sector counts.

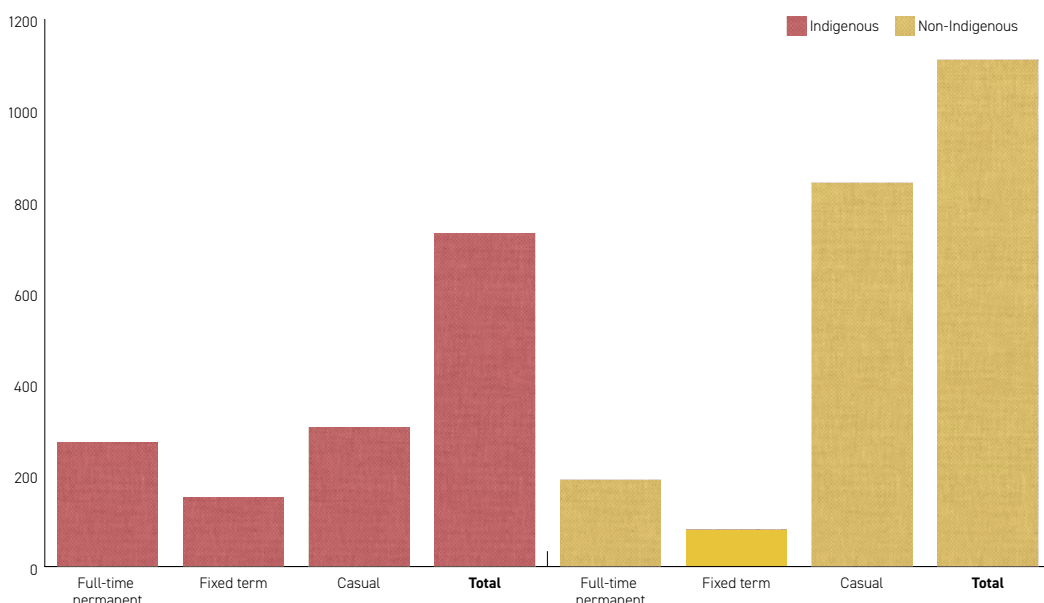
Table 3

	Total count	Per cent
Full-time permanent	241	29.43
Fixed term contract	304	37.12
Casual	274	33.46
Total	819	100

Indigenous Centre staff

Indigenous Centres employ both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, with non-Indigenous staff outnumbering their Indigenous colleagues by around a third. However, the proportion of Indigenous staff on full-time permanent or fixed-term contracts is proportionately greater compared with non-Indigenous staff, as illustrated in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff in Indigenous centres



Challenges in meeting staffing targets

Academic targets

Expanding upon the 2022 report, which described how institutions were setting staffing targets, the 2023 survey sought to understand the challenges institutions faced in meeting those targets. Responses showed that a significant majority of institutions (32) experienced challenges meeting their academic staffing targets in 2023. Supply and demand were often cited as major hurdles but certain structural factors such as funding and university decisions also affected recruitment and retention. For example:

*The Studies Unit **struggled to fill critical junior and senior teaching and research academic roles** due to the following: Indigenous academic labour market is small; developmental pipeline has been underdeveloped for a long period; ISSP funding no longer funding academic positions simultaneous to the University not prioritising budget for Indigenous academics; Competitors offer better work conditions including remuneration and work/life balance.*

The most common challenge reported was the competitive job market. Institutions described recruiting from the same pool as the private sector and other universities. In several examples provided, candidates had multiple employment opportunities and took the one with conditions (e.g., better remuneration or work life balance) most suitable for them.

*A **competitive market**, especially against the private sector and other universities.*

*[The institution] faces **competition from the high salaries** offered by the mining industry.*

*In 2023, we opened a position for a Senior Advisor for First Nations. Although we received applications, many candidates **secured other positions before we could schedule interviews.***

Some institutions volunteered that challenges related to strong competition was their experience for both attracting and retaining Indigenous academic staff.

Responses indicated that competition occurred at all levels. As one respondent reflected, universities face "intense national competition for a limited pool of Indigenous academic talent." Different institutions reported different nuances to similar challenges. Urban institutions described the pressure of other urban universities, while the regional universities reported difficulty attracting to regional areas.

*The challenge with attracting Indigenous academic staff is supply and demand, particularly in urban areas, is that we are all competing **for the same small pool.***

*We have experienced difficulty in attracting talent to a regional area... The oversupply of Indigenous academic roles within the sector has led to a highly competitive market which potential candidates can negotiate conditions **we have been unable to match.***

The second most common theme was a limited pool of candidates.

*Not enough qualified staff for higher level roles applying for positions. **We advertised our Academic Director role 3 times** in 2023.*

*When recruiting academics for identified roles located in various schools, there were occasions where there were either **no candidate** applications or the candidates **needed additional experience and growth** to meet the requirements of the advertised positions.*

*Limited candidate pool in specialised disciplines and research fields, who also **hold essential qualifications** (for example, PhD).*

*There were other applicants who seemed to have experience in the research space, however, their **Aboriginal identity was not strong**, and this is a non-negotiable part of our employment process for identified roles.*

These issues were compounded by a variety of systemic issues, as one respondent explained,

*Challenges in recruiting and retaining Indigenous academics are rooted in systemic issues and historical inequities contributing to a **lack of pipeline**, particularly in some areas. Sector wide competition, an **absence of identified positions** within disciplines and the **cultural load** carried by many Indigenous academics further aggravates attraction and retention.*

In addition to challenges, two institutions expanded and shared plans to "grow" their own talent in the face of recruitment challenges.

*[The institution] has committed to growing our own Indigenous Australian academic staff by implementing the Indigenous Australian **PhD/Professional Doctorate to Postdoctoral Fellowship (P2P)** Program and supporting Indigenous Australians to gain doctoral research qualifications and pursue a pathway into academia.*

*Though we face the challenge of talent attraction we have created a number of employment and 'grow your own' initiatives that allow us to ensure we are providing unique employment opportunities for Indigenous people based in our state. These include Indigenous student employment pathways such as **internships and cadetships**. We have established research assistant programs and are creating **more pre-doctoral research fellow positions** to support PhD students who grow our academic workforce.*

Additionally, insufficient resources were a problem described by many institutions. These resourcing problems included being out-resourced by other universities or the private sector, and being unable to match the conditions offered by these groups.

Competitors offer **better work conditions** including remuneration and work/life balance.

We had a suitable applicant in the school, and they turned down the job to go to another university in the region even though they lived in the area. They went to a **higher position** and now they commute.

The retention of casual academics, and conversion to fixed term or permanent employment [was not possible], due to **limited positions and/or budget**.

Some institutions volunteered that they were reviewing the capacity for the recognition of experience outside of traditional academic requirements, while ensuring the staff member was set up to succeed.

Professional targets

Over three-quarters of responding institutions (28) experienced challenges in meeting targets related to professional staffing numbers in 2023. Only eight institutions did not report any difficulties meeting their targets. Supply and demand mismatches were again reported as the most common challenge, with institutions highlighting the difficulties of competing with the private and government sectors.

Competition for Indigenous talent is fierce, some external roles offer **attractive remuneration and opportunities exceed available people**.

Competition between the University and **Australian Public Service (eg SES100 initiative)** has made it difficult to recruit senior Indigenous professional staff.

One of our staff members really wanted to stay at the university but was **head hunted by a law firm**. As the cost of living had increased, he took the offer. Universities are poaching staff from each other.

One institution expressed concern that universities needed to be careful not to drain the community sector of their workforce.

We need to be careful however that we are not taking all of our skilled workers away from community organisations that benefit from the same expertise.

Cultural safety was raised as a challenge several times.

It has been challenging attracting suitably qualified professional staff. As a sector we have now spent a few decades promoting universities as a place to study for Indigenous students however there needs to be similar **promotion of universities as a positive place to work**.

Whilst identified roles are generally easy to attract candidates for when they are advertised in culturally safe areas of the institution, we have seen other **areas where there is a known history of existing structural western hierarchies such as the medical and health**, have no internal candidates apply for roles. We have seen internal Indigenous professional staff not apply for career progression opportunities in other areas and **opted to stayed in culturally safe pockets of the Institution**.

Due to the intense competition for talented Indigenous staff from various sectors, including corporate, other universities, government and community organisations, a focus on recruitment will not be enough to reach parity. Creating a **culturally safe work environment**, as well as providing a staff experience that ensures retention and progression, creates a compelling recruitment proposition.

Senior executive targets

Eight institutions reported challenges in meeting targets related to senior Indigenous leadership staffing numbers in 2023. They referred to the same supply and demand issues discussed earlier. Some universities reported considering more innovative solutions to increase the pool of applicants through specific leadership training for early- or mid-career researchers.

We have recruited to the position of Deputy Vice Chancellor, Indigenous twice however, **both successful applicants were successful at interview for other positions as well**.

Though we do not yet have a PVC and DVC, portfolio/faculty senior Indigenous roles have been filled. We are continuing to shape critical leadership and perspectives regarding Aboriginal governance, and [the University] hopes to establish a **formal Indigenous leadership governance structure in 2024**.

The notion of **"grow our own"** is being strongly considered here as we work to create a pool of Vice Chancellor's Indigenous early or mid-career researcher's post-Doctorate and perhaps invest and develop for them for next PVC.

Career development

Academic staff

Fifteen institutions had formal promotion pathways or career advancement mechanisms available for Indigenous academic staff, professional staff, and executive staff. Nine universities were in the process of developing one or two policies before they would have formal documentation for all three staffing groups. One-third (12) had no formal documentation.

The most common formal documentation was promotion guidelines, processes or policies. Other documents included enterprise agreements, an Academic Career Framework (ACF), and Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARTO) guidelines with specific reference to Indigenous academics. Formal documentation, including the option to have an Indigenous member on the promotion panel, was also commonly reported. Some institutions reported plans that involved further consultation, looking at non-traditional research outputs and refreshing existing strategies.

Other programs outside these categories were also reported. For example:

*The institution has established an **Indigenous Fellows program**, enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HDR students to become academics during their studies. This program inherently recognises and promotes the unique expertise and experience of Indigenous academic staff, fostering career progression and diversity in the institution's academic community.*

*There have also been **formal mentoring programs** for Indigenous Academic staff seeking promotion... The University has created a **Senior Project Officer Workforce Development**, who has a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Academic recruitment, progression and retention.*

*The Indigenous Employment Framework was very recently endorsed. One of the pillars of this framework is the development, retention and support for Indigenous staff. A **specific initiative** listed is "Support all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to develop an annual Performance Development Plan, with clear professional and career development goals and actions".*

Professional staff

Almost three-quarters of responding institutions either had (12) or were developing (14) career advancement mechanisms for professional staff. Strategies included allocating funds for professional development, creating professional development plans, and reviewing existing policies and procedures. Culturally appropriate coaching and training, and Indigenous networks were mentioned by several institutions.

*The **Indigenous Career Development Coaching Program** is designed to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by providing personalised, strengths-based development plans and expert career coaching support... Participants of the program then have access to the career development funding pool for further career development opportunities.*

*This program includes targeted leadership development training complemented by **personalised coaching** for a duration of six months.*

*The University has engaged... an Aboriginal company to ensure our Aboriginal staff, who have aspirations for advancement, have access to **culturally specific leadership training**. Feedback from the staff who have participated in this training has been extremely positive.*

*"Establish an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network** that meets regularly and hosts internal events" and "Connect new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with **internal networks** and resources through the onboarding process".*

A few (six) institutions provided information on established pools of Indigenous staff positions to work across their organisations or on making additional funding available.

*[The institution] resourced a dedicated **First Peoples Employment Partner** to work across the university to facilitate... Indigenous employment advancement goals, including coordinating the **First Peoples Talent Network** to identify potential roles and opportunities across [the university] that align with career aspirations and promotion opportunities for Indigenous staff.*

*[The institution's EA ensures that Indigenous staff receive] a one-off allocation at the time of appointment [to] **provide for access to development measures**, including financial support, time away from the workplace, mentoring, workplace shadowing, equivalent to ten (10) % of the staff members salary.*

*The **Indigenous Candidate Pool** notifies Indigenous staff of job opportunities in advance, enhancing career opportunities. Additionally, we **eliminated the FTE Cap for Indigenous Australians**, facilitating appointments regardless of FTE workforce caps.*

*Our institution has significantly enhanced its career advancement mechanisms to better recognise and nurture the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous professional staff. One notable improvement is the **introduction of a comprehensive leadership development program for middle management**.*

Senior executives

Fewer than half of institutions (Yes = 13, Under development = three) indicated that they had career advancement mechanisms to recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous senior executive staff. This was an increase from 2022 when most institutions did not identify a formal promotion pathway.

The most commonly reported way of recognising Indigenous experience and expertise was to create a new role, promote the incumbent to a higher role, or reclassify a role at a higher level, including elevating a PVC to DVC, and directors to PVC positions. Institutions also mentioned existing funding, coaching and leadership programs as ways of advancing staff.

Funding of Indigenous Executive Leadership programs.

Recently launched, managers and supervisors can nominate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who are in leadership roles or have the qualities and aspirations to be in a leadership role in the future. Programs are available for staff across all levels.

*[The institution] provides **executive coaching** in support of Indigenous Senior Executive staff professional development and career advancement.*

*[The institution intentionally includes] talented First Nations Senior and Executive staff in its **leadership programs and exposure to leadership opportunities** (such as key committees); whilst acknowledging the cultural load this may add.*

For institutions that did not report formal career advancement mechanisms that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous Senior Executive staff, many (12 of 18) discussed reviewing existing strategies and mechanisms. These strategies included introducing senior executive coaching and developing a mentorship program.

Indigenous workload

Formal supports for the additional workload unique to Indigenous staff

A new reporting area in 2023, responses showed around half (18) of institutions had formal supports for the additional workload unique to Indigenous staff in their HR policies. Ten additional institutions said they were in the process of developing the relevant HR policies. Eight reported not having a formal, documented support.

Just over 50 per cent of responding institutions (19) indicated that their enterprise agreement referenced the additional workload of Indigenous staff. One of these agreements included the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Joint Consultative Committee.

Other formal processes included cultural leave policy, staff agreements, and academic workload models.

*Our **Cultural Leave Policy** reflects our commitment to supporting Indigenous staff in balancing professional responsibilities with cultural commitments. Staff may take designated leave for cultural activities, ceremonies, and community engagements **free of their annual leave or other entitlements**. There is a total of **15 cultural leave days per year available to Indigenous staff**.*

*In 2023, the institution formally supported the additional workload unique to Indigenous staff through specific provisions in the **staff agreement**. Sections 11.4 and 11.5 of the agreement acknowledged and incorporated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees' cultural commitments and duties into their workload allocation. The institution also provided **allocated time and pre-approved cost reimbursement for additional cultural services** provided by Indigenous staff.*

*The **Academic Workload Model** enables First Nations staff to incorporate **cultural responsibilities** within the Service component. These responsibilities are discussed and agreed upon between the employee, their Head of School, and Dean, and are monitored throughout the year.*

Processes to address the additional workload experienced by Indigenous staff included additional days of cultural and family care leave, language allowances, cultural loading, and recognition of workload in role descriptions and workloads. Two institutions provided additional leave following the 2023 referendum.

Some institutions that were developing formal support, or did not have any, noted policies that applied across the institution's staff that could be applied to the circumstances of Indigenous staff.

*The [institution] **has policies and procedures** that assist managers and staff to understand and appropriately manage workload (e.g., the psychosocial risk management tool and flexible work policy), these policies and procedures are not exclusively for the purpose of providing formal support for additional workload unique to Indigenous staff, however, would extend to them for this purpose.*

***Workloads are negotiated individually** with the staff members supervisor. All supervisors have been instructed by senior leadership to take into account any unique cultural load for indigenous staff members.*

One institution was also providing training to managers on how to understand and respond to requests for cultural loading.

*HR have developed a **cultural load training package** which includes workshops to inform managers of identified staff about cultural load. This training package is due to commence mid-2024.*

4. University responsibility for Indigenous advancement

This chapter describes steps taken by institutions to incorporate Indigenous input into decision-making and if institutions had an Indigenous procurement policy. Building on the 2022 survey, institutions were asked more detailed questions about Indigenous input into decision making to better understanding how institutions incorporate Indigenous input throughout the policy lifecycle.

In addition to the representation collected in the survey, in 2023 there were two Indigenous university Chancellors and no Indigenous university Vice-Chancellors.

Indigenous representation in senior governing bodies

Responses showed that at the time of the survey, there were over 100 Indigenous representatives on senior governing bodies (university council, academic senate, and senior executive group or equivalents). Academic senates or equivalent had both the highest total number of Indigenous representatives across the sector and the greatest frequency, with only one institution reporting no Indigenous representation (see Table 4). University councils were the least likely to have Indigenous representation with more than half (15 of 29) of responding institutions reporting no Indigenous representative on the university council or equivalent.

Table 4 Indigenous representation on senior governing bodies

	University Council	Academic Senate	Senior Executive Group
Sector total Indigenous Representatives	22	78	27
Number of Institutions reporting one or more Indigenous representative	18	35	23

Direct line of reporting to the institutions' Vice-Chancellor

A new question in the 2023 survey, institutions were asked if their senior Indigenous leader had a direct line of reporting to the institutions' Vice-Chancellor. This question was added to expand upon senior Indigenous leaders' role in decision-making processes. 22 institutions reported a senior Indigenous leader having a direct line of reporting to the institution's Vice-Chancellor.

Key decision-making processes

Beyond representation on senior governing bodies, nearly all (33) institutions reported their institution had other steps in place to ensure Indigenous views were represented in key decision-making processes.

Examples of steps taken were primarily designated boards, groups, committees or representation. The majority of examples referred to Indigenous staff-specific roles and representation; however, one institution reported additional Indigenous student representation. A small number of institutions described representation other than student or staff, which included an Elders advisory group or Board being the most common example.

*Indigenous Governance Mechanism, including: **Traditional Owners and Elders Advisory Group** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee Indigenous Strategy Advisory Group Committee of Associate Deans and Delegates Indigenous.*

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from throughout the University are active participants in a range of other decision-making activities... including Member of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), two members of the Curriculum Committee Member of the Education Strategy and Innovation Committee, **The First Nations Council of Elders and Leaders**, whose membership is entirely Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Three external community representatives on RAP Committee.*

Adherence to strategic documents or governance models were also commonly mentioned as a mechanism for ensuring Indigenous views were represented in key decision-making processes.

*[This institution] is committed to an Aboriginal governance and engagement model to bring focus and attention to outcomes that benefit Aboriginal Peoples and their communities. The model reflects an Aboriginal approach to governance and enables a two-way exchange of knowledge that is centred on relationship building. It complements **and connects into [the institution's] formal governance structure** in a way that builds understanding, enacts good governance, promotes reciprocity, and respects Aboriginal self-determination.*

*The University ensures Indigenous views are represented in key decision-making processes through the **adherence to our Indigenous Strategic Plan**. A key document of the University, the Indigenous Strategic Plan incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledge, and culture into decision-making, promoting inclusivity and respect.*

The three institutions that did not have other measures or for whom measures were under development identified recruitment for new senior leader roles and development of governance frameworks as steps being taken in 2023.

Policy implementation

Another new question to the 2023 survey, institutions were asked about policy implementation to get a better understanding of how Indigenous input is used beyond decision making. 29 institutions reported there were processes in place to ensure Indigenous input into policy implementation, not just development.

Of the institutions that reported there were processes in place, over half (16 of 29) described a consultation or advisory process with Indigenous leaders, staff or students. Endorsement processes were also described but to a lesser extent (3). Designated groups, committees, or Boards were commonly cited.

*[The senior advisory body is core to [the university's] Aboriginal governance and engagement model. The **senior advisory body** is Aboriginal-led and maintains an Aboriginal majority, and **provides leadership and strategic advice** on all Aboriginal policy matters and their implementation at [the university]. [The body] provides advice to the University community, PVC: Aboriginal Leadership and Strategy, Enterprise Leadership Team, Academic Board, and Council.*

*Through **formal consultation** with the First Nations staff network. Indigenous senior staff participating in focused Executive Leadership Team meetings to **gather input and determine implementation approaches**.*

*Authors of new policies or policies being reviewed **must consult** with the Indigenous Education, Research & Engagement unit on the level of input the unit needs to have during the review/development process. [The university] has implemented a **Sustainability & Equity Evaluation Tool** to help policy authors assess whether their policies may have a positive or negative impact on Indigenous staff, students and community. Policies will be identified annually to participate in a facilitated workshop using the tool.*

*Indigenous **staff and students** are part of the **consultation leading into implementation** of a relevant policy for example, the Student Support Policy.*

Of the institutions that reported no current processes in place, they noted ongoing reviews or development of strategies and frameworks to address this gap.

*in 2024 [the institution is] **undertaking an Indigenous Commission process** that ensures Indigenous input into policy implementation. Currently being implemented, the University is undertaking a co-design process and holding dedicated workshops for Indigenous staff, providing a platform for their perspectives, insights, and feedback into key priorities, direction, and strategies at the University. An Indigenous Charter will be a key outcome of this process and will be embedded in the **next University Strategy**.*

*[The university] has established a group of senior Indigenous leaders, consisting of Deans Indigenous in each faculty; the Associate DVCA, Indigenous Advancement; Lead, Indigenous Cultural Capability and; Director, Centre of Aboriginal Studies. This group is **tasked with establishing an appropriate governance framework** to support decision making across the institution in relation to Indigenous matters (whether direct or indirect).*

*All policies and procedures **undergo consultation** with the senior leadership team, which includes input from Indigenous representatives.*

Procurement policies

Indigenous procurement policy

Compared to 2022 when less than half of institutions had a specific procurement strategy, in 2023 just over two-thirds of institutions⁷ had or were developing an Indigenous goods and services procurement policy. 12 institutions reported having a policy and an additional 13 reported a policy was under development.

Of the 10 institutions that noted there was not a procurement policy in place, eight noted sections, statements or guidelines in larger policies concerning procurement or engagement with Indigenous businesses.

⁷ One response was removed due to an invalid entry. Total valid responses for this question were 35.

5. Racism and cultural safety

This chapter reports on specific measures institutions took in 2023 to combat racism, particularly racism towards Indigenous people. Questions in the 2023 survey aimed to gather a better understanding of diverse approaches to addressing racism across the sector.

Compared to 2022, more institutions offered cultural safety training. All responding institutions reported at least one mechanism to provide a culturally safe environment the majority had working groups tasked with culturally safe environments.

Anti-racism activities

Eighty per cent (28) of institutions⁸ reported having formal racism reporting mechanisms. Eight institutions specifically noted electronic reporting options including portals, websites, electronic data interchanges, and an app. The names of these electronic spaces tended to explicitly promote safety.

*The university **Safer Campus Community** website includes a reporting portal that supports individuals to raise concerns with the University about a broad range of inappropriate behaviour, including racism. Reporters can choose to be identified or anonymous.*

Racism complaints can currently be made via our public forum. [The institution] will soon launch a new webpage, Reporting Inappropriate Behaviour, with a link for reporting and racism as a specific report type.

*[The institution] has developed the **safer campuses** portal in which students can report cases of racism.*

*FUSE (**Forging United Safe Environments**) is a new EDI Network committed to celebrating diversity and creating culturally safe campuses. Their aim is to ensure that incidents of racial discrimination and harassment are consistently dealt with and addressed.*

*Students and staff members can formally report instances of racism through our **Safer Community service**. Safer Community is a free, confidential support service for those who experience concerning, threatening, inappropriate or uncomfortable behaviour. Reports can be made online.*

*This is completed through the Dean of Students, **Well-being** area. There is a link in the App*

Institutions without a specific Indigenous anti-racism mechanism referred to policies and procedures, codes of conduct, specific units, and online advice about reporting procedures, which may have included the option of reporting electronically.

Two institutions reported anti-racism policies. Only one respondent explicitly mentioned Indigenous specific racist complaints.

Most institutions without a formal racism reporting strategy (4 of 6) noted that they had review and development work underway. The remaining two referred to other institutional documents, including a Staff Complaint Handling Process and Prevention of Discrimination, and a Bullying and Harassment Complaints Policy.

*In 2023, the DVC took a proposal to the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee to develop [the institution's] overarching approach to anti-racism, including necessary governance, policy and resources. This work is under development, actively informed by resources and knowledge gained through membership of AHRC's 'Racism. It stops with me.' campaign. It is envisaged that this will **include the establishment and implementation of a formal racism reporting mechanism**.*

*As identified in the [institution's] Cultural Capability Strategy, the PVC Indigenous will collaborate with senior executive staff to lead the **development of a Zero Tolerance to Racism framework**.*

*[The institution] has engaged an external consultant to undergo a **workplace cultural review** in 2023–2024, before co-designing a set of workplace values and behaviours for our university community.*

*The University is **working with the EDI team to embed a formal racism process** as part of the EDI strategy and policy.*

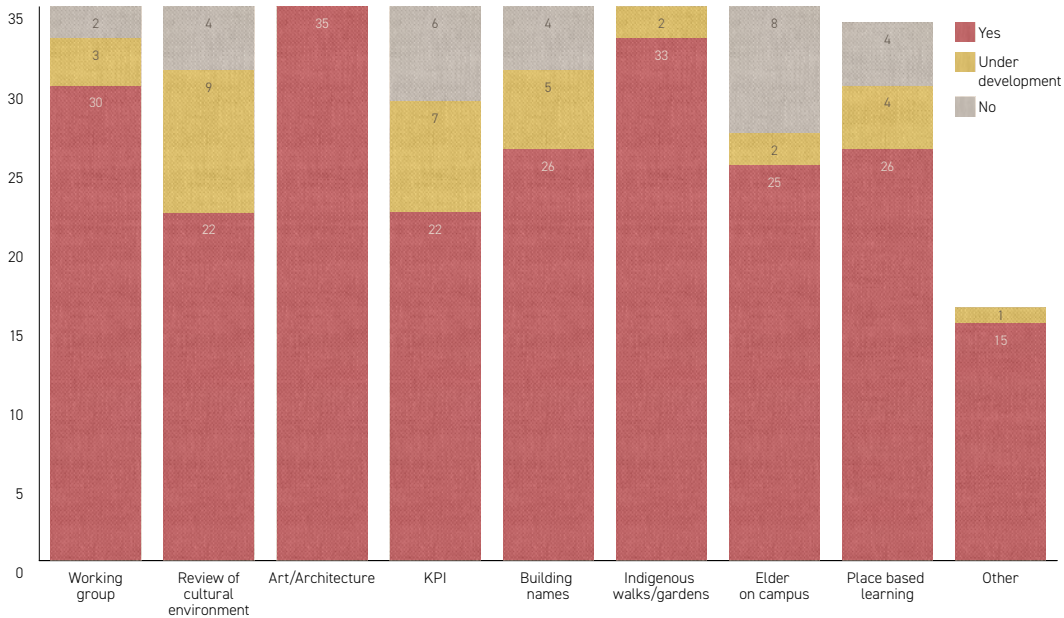
⁸ Only 35 respondents provided an answer.

Cultural safety

Creating culturally safe environments

Most institutions (30) indicated they had working groups related to promoting culturally safe environments. Building names and place-based learning were the next most common mechanisms. Embedding cultural safety within key performance indicators (KPIs) and having Elders on campus (22) were also common strategies. See Figure 5.1 for total mechanisms in place and under development.

Figure 5.1: Mechanisms to create a culturally safe environment



The most common 'other' example reported was areas on campus specifically designed to encourage cultural safety and sharing, including for art and cultural events.

Reception areas are being developed using local language.

[A] library space offering a collaborative and immersive environment that invites engagement with Indigenous Knowledges and fosters a sense of community and belonging.

A cultural teaching space, a central area for students and the wider community to meet, to provide cultural meaning and educate users on Indigenous culture and history.

[The instituted] currently has installed bee hives, bird and butterfly attracting plantings to create a natural environment that respects the cultural heritage of the land on which the university now stands.

The University also employs Aboriginal artists to undertake artwork for various projects on various campuses.

Holding lecture series and celebrating significant events and achievements were also often provided as pathways to support cultural safety.

Celebration and promotion of all significant Indigenous Australian dates and events.

Indigenous graduates have a ceremony where they are issued Indigenous sashes to wear for their graduation ceremonies.

NAIDOC events, Yarramundi lecture, and Yarning Circle magazine celebrating Indigenous achievement.

Initiatives to increase Indigenous language use on campuses, such as... [using local] language at graduations and on signage.

Regular Indigenous showcasing of Indigenous learning and teaching in... Learning and Teaching Week and School of Social Sciences annual showcase.

Cultural training and safety initiatives

Most (32) institutions provided cultural training for their staff and over two-thirds (25) provided it for students. A further three institutions were developing training for the staff and five for students. Five institutions reported no plans to provide training for students.

Institutions were asked about a range of cultural safety initiatives for staff and students. Overall, there were more initiatives in place for staff (246) than for students (176). Modules, Indigenous facilitators, and in-person, voluntary and co-designed training were the top five initiatives offered to both staff and students. Staff initiatives most often included an Indigenous facilitator (see Figure 5.2), while student initiatives most often involved a co-designed process (see Figure 5.3).

Some of the other initiatives reported as 'other' included staff cultural intelligence training, experience with community, and cultural events and programs.

Figure 5.2 Reported cultural safety initiatives for staff

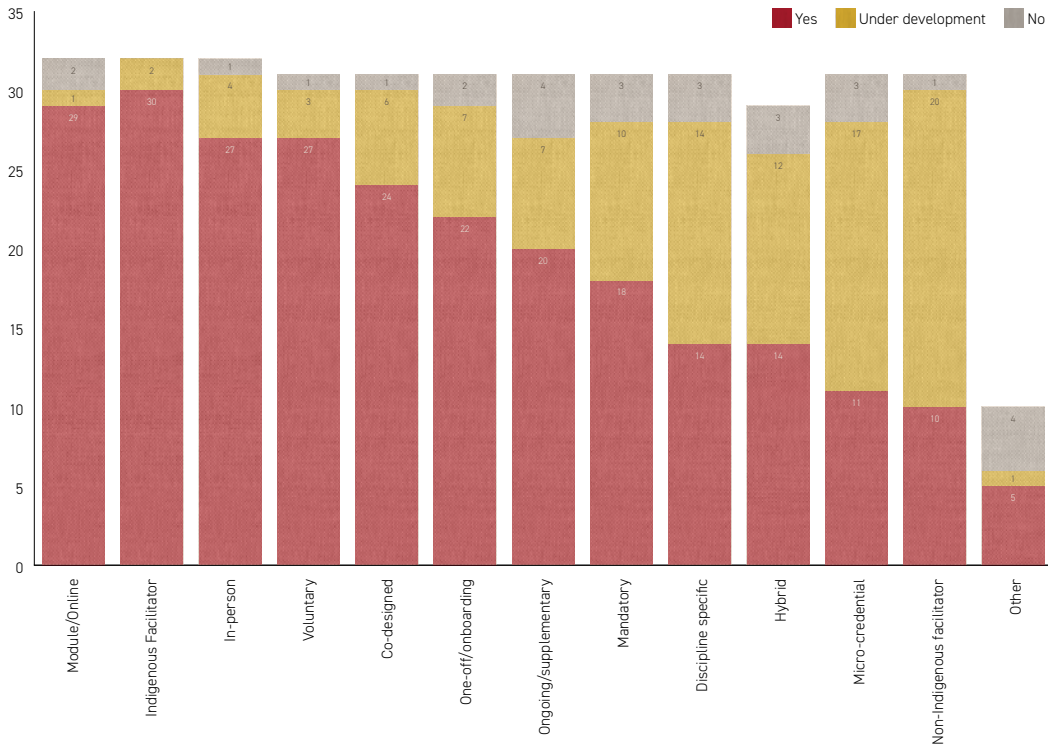
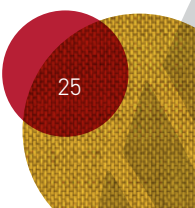
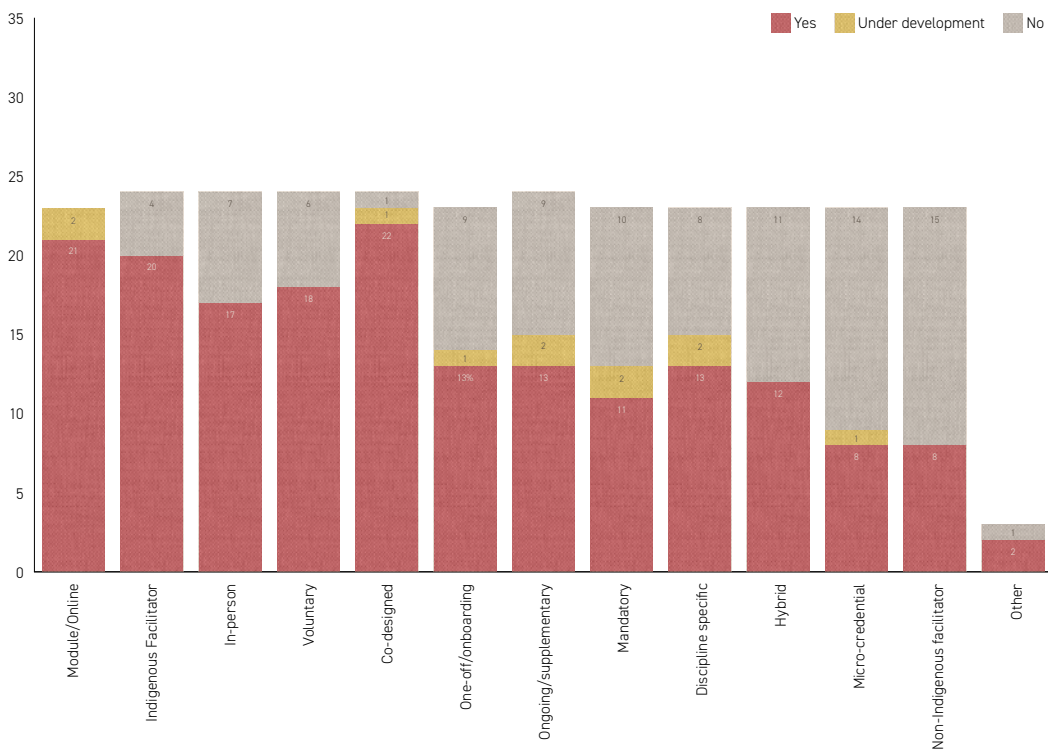


Figure 5.3: Cultural safety initiatives for students



6. Recognising the value Indigenous peoples, and their knowledges, bring to universities

This chapter reports how institutions recognised the value of Indigenous peoples and knowledges. Many institutions described the value of incorporating Indigenous knowledges into curricula, ensuring students graduate with an awareness of Indigenous values, and the benefits of supporting and promoting Indigenous-led research.

Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in curricula

In 2022 the most common response for including Indigenous content in curricula was to describe a specific position or team responsible for the task. Comparatively, in 2023, specific roles were often referenced but the focus was more likely to be on the sharing of good practice, innovative approaches, and building capacity in curriculum development and pedagogy. Specific initiatives included:

- Collaboration with Indigenous stakeholders
- Working groups, committees, and Communities of practice
- Professional development for key staff (i.e., workshops, seminars and conferences)
- Course audits

*The University has **collaborated with Indigenous stakeholders** to develop best practice on Indigenising curriculum across its schools/faculties. The Indigenisation of the Business School's MBA has **culminated in a program that celebrates the diversity and richness of Indigenous knowledges**, advancing students' cultural competency. The program offers first-hand learning experiences, helping students' understandings of contemporary issues and capacity to ethically engage Indigenous cultures.*

*Centering Country within the curriculum transformation journey for [university] staff to recognise Country as the holder of knowledge and lore. Thereby, Country is the teacher, with the curriculum transformation team guiding the academics and or professional staff (participants) through **culturally informed experiences** with Country. Yin pedagogies, methodologies, and storytelling approaches are implemented within staff's third knowledge space between Aboriginal and Western knowledge systems.*

*In 2023, the learning and teaching team in the Office of the DVCIDI rolled out [the university's] **new Cultural Competency program**, including delivering face-to-face Cultural Competency and Embedding Indigenous Content **workshops**, monthly online drop-in sessions and establishing a **community of practice**.*

*In 2023 [the institution] conducted an **audit across all courses...** to identifying how Indigenous knowledges were embedded and where there was **scope for deepening this**. [The institution] also hosted a Learning and Teaching Week on Indigenising the curriculum, for **sharing best practices & showcasing innovative approaches to curriculum development**. Academics were encouraged to share strategies, experiences, and resources.*

Ensuring students graduate with an awareness of Indigenous knowledges

Compared to 2022, institutions provided more specific examples on incorporating Indigenous knowledges into course content.

In 2023, the most common example described by institutions was an Indigenous graduate attribute. 13 institutions referenced a graduate attribute, 12 of which described a specific course(s) designed to ensure that students graduate with an awareness of Indigenous knowledge.

A first-year course has been developed for schools to tap into when they do not have an existing course.

*All [University] undergraduate courses have an Indigenous knowledges **core unit**.*

*[The university] asks all students to **complete two compulsory subjects** in first year as part of their degrees... Both subjects include Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into the curricula by introducing students to Indigenous perspectives...*

In 2023, the institution made Indigenous Lifeworlds courses mandatory in a number of degrees...

*...Indigenous Studies Essentials (ISE) is a **mandatory online unit** for all first-year undergraduates and UWA College students, with over 6,000 students completing it in 2023.*

An additional four institutions described online modules made available to students, three of which have made their modules mandatory.

Additional examples of initiatives included:

- Film festivals
- Annual guest lectures
- Transformation of the structure and delivery of graduation ceremonies
- The expansion of library catalogues through purchases of titles by Indigenous authors
- Indigenous research showcases

Recognising and promoting the benefits of Indigenous-led research

In 2022, the most common mechanism for recognising and promoting the benefits of Indigenous-led research was an Indigenous Research Strategy, with more than half of responding institutions reporting such. In 2023 this was still the most common with all but one institution reporting that they have or were developing an Indigenous Research Strategy⁹.

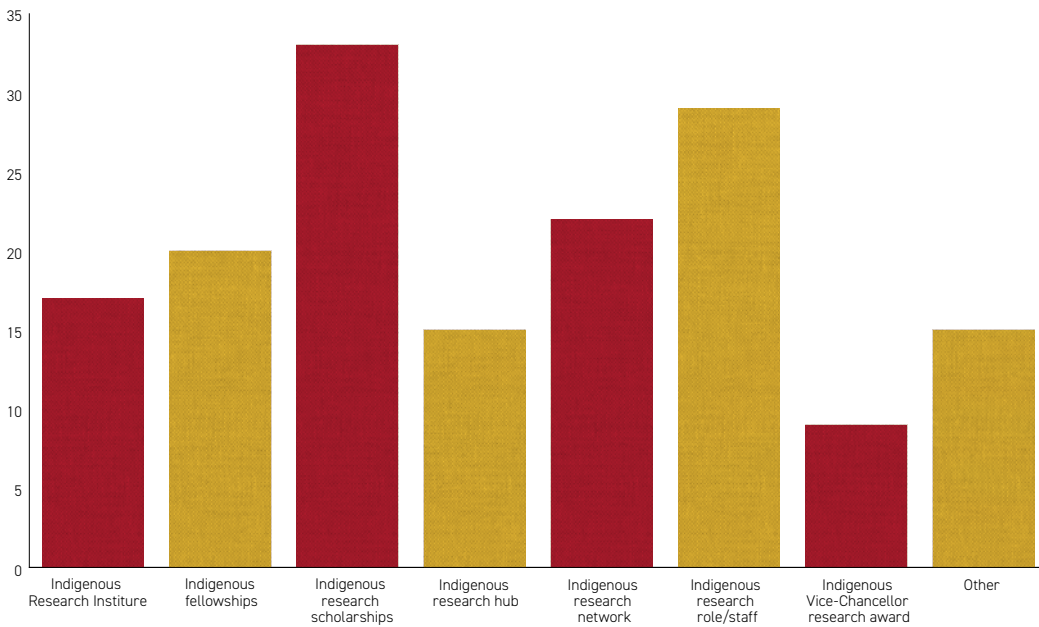
Beyond an Indigenous Research Strategy, many mechanisms were reported in 2023 to recognise and promote the benefits of Indigenous-led research. Figure 6 shows the frequency of these mechanisms reported.

All but one institution reported multiple mechanisms, with an average of 4 distinct mechanisms reported per institution.

'Other' examples volunteered by institutions included:

- Features in institution magazines
- Allocation of additional stipend and operating allowance
- Indigenous research committee or working group
- Funding scheme for research with Indigenous Australian community organisations
- Graduate and professional certificates in Indigenous research
- Specialist Indigenous research training and supervision units
- Award and citation programs
- Dedicated website
- Indigenous HDR development coordinator

Figure 6: Mechanisms for recognising and promoting the benefits of Indigenous-led research



⁹ Further discussion of Indigenous Research Strategies in 2023 can be seen in Chapter 1 Strategic Documents.

Part 2

Universities Australia's activities



Queensland University of Technology celebrates Indigenous Australian women in engineering — Indigenous Australian students Kiah Faiva and Montanna Homosi are on their way to building dream careers in engineering and want to see other women follow their passion for the field.

UA has made several commitments under the Indigenous Strategy, including:

- Continued advocacy to government on issues relevant to the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in higher education and research.
- Incorporating Indigenous matters and perspectives in advocacy and policy development.
- Overseeing the Indigenous Strategy and its implementation.
- Sharing good practice.
- Developing an Indigenous specific anti-racism statement.
- Advocacy by the Lead VC Indigenous to university leaders.
- Gathering data from universities on their progress against their Indigenous Strategy commitments, producing an annual report of the findings, and publishing this on the UA website.

UA also facilitates a range of other activities:

- UA Directorate and DVC Indigenous Committee oversight of the Indigenous Strategy.
- Twice-yearly session at UA Plenary where the Chair of the DVC Indigenous Committee, the National President of NATSIHEC and other PVCs Indigenous are represented.
- Bi-annual reporting by other DVC Committees to the UA Directorate.
- Regular meetings between the UA Directorate and NATSIHEC, including attendance at NATSIHEC Caucus meetings.

The following section provides an overview of UA's activities over 2023.

Advocacy to government and in the community

UA remains a strong advocate for Indigenous policy, engaging with both Government and the broader community whenever opportunities arise.

Community advocacy

At the 2023 UA Conference, a panel featuring Professors Simone Tur, Martin Nakata, and Susan Page explored the integration of Indigenous knowledges into higher education curricula. This discussion was aligned with the goals of UA's Indigenous Strategy 2022–2025, which emphasises the importance of embedding Indigenous value systems and knowledge within university structures. The key takeaway from the session was the recognition that for these initiatives to succeed, Indigenous peoples must lead their development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, supported by appropriate financial and structural backing from the sector. Noting, that for these initiatives to be successful and positively affect both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, whole-of-university approaches that encourage participation from non-Indigenous persons must be facilitated.

Government advocacy

UA, in close consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) Indigenous committee, made a formal submission to the Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The submission recommended revising Priority Reform 4 to explicitly include Indigenous data sovereignty as a goal and to establish guidelines for the reuse of government data, aligning with Indigenous open data governance principles. Both recommendations were adopted in the final report submitted to the government in January 2024.

As part of UA's submission to the Universities Accord, chaired by Professor Mary O'Kane AC, the DVC Indigenous committee provided input to UA's policy positioning and advocacy to government. This was reflected in UA's response which called for demand-driven funding for all Indigenous students, an increased focus on supporting Indigenous student participation at university and greater pathways and supports given to Indigenous researchers and staff within universities. The Accord interim and final reports reflected these advocacy positions and has provided a basis for further actions both government and the sector can take towards Indigenous participation and self-determination within the higher education sector.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor committee activities

Each of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) committees holds specific responsibilities under the UA Indigenous Strategy, with each committee adopting different approaches to meet these commitments. The following outlines the activities undertaken by the committees over the past 12 months.

DVC Indigenous Committee

In 2023, the committee made significant contributions to the Universities Accord process, including submitting a Senior Indigenous University Leaders' proposal to the Accord panel. This submission emphasised the need for a strategic plan to double Indigenous enrolment and enhance student capacity and success.

Key recommendations included:

Policy and funding:

- Evidence-Based Approaches: Implement policies that leverage data to improve learning outcomes and increase funding for Indigenous-focused research.
- Intermediate Qualifications: Introduce options for students to earn qualifications at different stages of their degree programs; reframing what success means for different students at different stages.
- Indigenous Staffing: Encourage universities to hire and support more Indigenous staff and incorporate Indigenous education into funding models.

Governance and leadership:

- **Indigenous Leadership:** Appoint an Indigenous Commissioner and establish an Indigenous Education Council to guide and oversee educational policies.
- **Review and Adjustment:** Modify the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) and the Indigenous Student Support Program (ISSP) and other funding mechanisms to better support Indigenous students.

Data and research:

- **Data Accessibility:** Improve access to national data for informed decision making and invest in evidence-based practices.
- **Research Funding:** Increase funding for Indigenous education research and ensure the Australian Research Council (ARC) prioritises Indigenous research initiatives.

DVC Academic Committee

In 2023, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors Academic (DVCA) committee focused on sharing current and best practices across the sector in five key areas aligned with the Indigenous Strategy: increasing Indigenous student enrolments, boosting Indigenous staff numbers, Indigenising the curriculum, Indigenising pedagogy, and enhancing the environment for Indigenous peoples. Alongside this knowledge sharing, the committee worked to identify challenges and gaps in these areas.

Collaboration with Indigenous Senior Leaders, staff, and communities was recognised as essential to achieving good practice in all areas. However, a lack of consistency across the sector was noted as a significant gap, and developing institution-wide approaches remains a challenge.

Looking ahead, the DVC Academic committee is considering establishing a working group in 2024 to further explore these ideas and develop guidance materials on best practices.

DVC Research Committee

In 2023, a working group of Deputy Vice-Chancellors Research (DVCR) committee undertook a range of activities to fulfill its commitments under the Indigenous Strategy.

One of the key initiatives was the launch of a successful workshop series on "Ethical Conduct and Engagement in Indigenous Research," which began on 26 July 2023. A follow-up session was held on 6 October 2023, allowing participants to share best practices and reflect on the initial workshop. The workshops aimed to foster discussions on ensuring that research involving Indigenous peoples is conducted through meaningful engagement and reciprocity between researchers and the individuals or communities involved.

A significant outcome from these workshops was the call for participants to identify two to three actions or measures that could be implemented at their respective institutions to enhance ethical practices in Indigenous research. All activities were organised in close collaboration with the UA DVC Indigenous committee.

Looking ahead to 2024, the working group has partnered with the Australian Council of Graduate Research to deliver a range of workshops focusing on building the pipeline of Indigenous researchers. Monitoring of progress against the identified measures to enhance ethical practices in Indigenous research will continue.

DVC International Committee

In 2023, a working group from the Deputy Vice-Chancellors International (DVCI) committee met four times, focusing on enhancing and customising mobility opportunities for Indigenous students, researchers, and staff, sharing best practices and resources across Australian universities, and conducting data collection on existing international Indigenous partnerships to support these efforts. These efforts built on the working group's foundation in 2022, which then identified these initial areas for attention.

The group sought feedback from peak bodies representing universities in the US, Canada, and New Zealand to understand Indigenous representation on their governing bodies and the role of First Nations universities in their advocacy work. Preliminary consultations were also held with the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium on these topics.

Looking ahead to 2024, the group plans to expand its membership to further advance its priorities and move into the data gathering and implementation phases.

DVC Corporate Committee

In 2023, a working group from the Deputy Vice-Chancellors Corporate (DVCC) committee finalised the draft of the UA Indigenous Employment and Procurement Guidelines, developed as part of the *UA Indigenous Strategy 2022-25*. The Guidelines will be published in 2024.

The drafting process was informed by a series of workshops organised by the working group. These workshops provided an opportunity for university staff, the UA DVC Indigenous committee, and external stakeholders to offer feedback on the guidelines. Participants also shared successful examples and discussed challenges in Indigenous employment and procurement.

Workshops were held throughout 2022 and 2023 at Curtin University, Swinburne University, The University of Sydney, and James Cook University.

The committee also addressed other Indigenous issues as they arose, including discussions about the potential impact of the Voice referendum results within their institutions.

Ongoing engagement with NATSIHEC

In April 2019, Universities Australia (UA) and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium (NATSIHEC) entered into an ongoing Memorandum of Understanding. As part of this collaboration, NATSIHEC Executive Directors continue to be invited to participate in meetings of the DVC Academic, Corporate, International, and Research committees. Additionally, the NATSIHEC President, along with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the UA DVC Indigenous Committee, are regularly invited to observe the Vice-Chancellors' Plenary meetings.

Context

In March 2022, Universities Australia (UA) launched the *UA Indigenous Strategy 2022–2025* (the strategy). The strategy laid out commitments under five key themes:

- **Student success** — a university experience that fosters the successful completion of a degree and sets students up for favourable outcomes.
- **Staff success** — where Indigenous staff recruitment, retention, workloads, promotion pathways, pipeline development and professional development are all appropriately supported.
- **University responsibility for Indigenous advancement** — harnessing the evidence base and resources to champion Indigenous advancement within institutions.
- **Racism and cultural safety** — continuing to take an active anti-racism stance including addressing more subtle forms of racism and developing understanding of the impact of the dominant culture on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Recognising the value Indigenous peoples and knowledges bring to the university and embedding Indigenous value systems and knowledges into university structures** — Australian universities seize the opportunity to mark themselves as unique in the world as home to the world's oldest continuous culture.

The 2023 report is the second annual report since the launch of the strategy. In response to feedback from UA members, the 2023 survey was expanded with new questions in each of the five key themes to capture and report on activities by institutions that better reflect their activities in meeting their commitments under the strategy.

In addition to expanding the qualitative questions, the 2023 survey added additional quantitative questions about Indigenous students and staff. This report's responses to these questions replace the Department of Education data used in Part 3 of the 2022 report. This change was made to capture, in a more timely and comprehensive way, data on matters relevant to the strategy, and a shift towards data sovereignty principles. Importantly, these changes were made with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) Indigenous committee driving the development of questions asked and data collected.

Due to the change in data collection methods, direct comparisons to the data in Part 3 of the 2022 report cannot be drawn. However, this change has enabled a fuller picture of university activities in meeting their commitments under the strategy. With this new approach, UA maintained several guiding factors in collecting and reporting the 2023 data:

1. That the report provides an overview of the higher education sector's progress towards the commitments made under the strategy while ensuring anonymity of individual institutions
2. That reporting avoids disparity and deficit framing
3. That the report can facilitate discussion amongst UA's members

36 institutions provided complete responses to the 2023 survey and were included in the analysis for this report.

Appendix A

Indigenous Strategy Survey 2023



Students participating in the University of South Australia's Aboriginal Pathways Program. Delivered over 18 months, the program helps to develop academic, literacy, digital and numerical skills, and explores Aboriginal culture and wellbeing, the community and environment.

The following are a compilation of all questions from the 2023 survey.

Not all respondents would have seen every question as some questions were branched follow-up questions dependent on the previous question's answer.

These are noted as #a or #b throughout (i.e., C9a is a branched question that would have only appeared if the respondent answered yes to C9a or C12a was provided only to respondents answering C12 'yes' while C12b was provided to respondents answering 'no' or 'under development').

Part A: Strategic documents

A1 Does the institution have any of the following **strategic documents**?

Note: When responding to the question about strategic documents, please select 'Yes' if the institution has an overarching document in the relevant category that includes one or more Indigenous-specific sections. If there are no dedicated Indigenous-specific sections in a broader strategic document, and there is nothing currently under development, select 'No' in each applicable category.

	Please Select			Provide publicly available link if possible
	Yes	No	Under development	Link
Indigenous strategy, plan or equivalent				
Indigenous education (including student recruitment) strategy, plan or equivalent				
Indigenous workforce strategy, plan or equivalent				
Indigenous-specific anti-racism strategy, plan or equivalent				
Indigenous-specific anti-racism statement				
Indigenous research strategy, plan or equivalent				
Reconciliation action plan				

Other, please specify:

Part B: Student success

Student success is described in the UA Indigenous Strategy as a university experience that fosters the successful completion of a degree that sets up students for favourable outcomes. This includes the density of Indigenous student experiences and priorities about aspiration building, retention, progression, influencing change, giving back to their communities, and reaching desired employment.

Part B: Section 1 – Statistics about students

B1 How many Indigenous students were **enrolled** at the institution in 2023?

Enabling programs/pre-undergraduate	
Undergraduate	
Postgraduate (coursework)	
Doctorate/PhD	
Total	

B2 How many Indigenous students **completed** at the institution in 2023?

Enabling programs/pre-undergraduate	
Undergraduate	
Postgraduate (coursework)	
Doctorate/PhD	
Total	

B3 How many Indigenous students **withdrew** from the institution without completing in 2023?

Enabling programs/pre-undergraduate	
Undergraduate	
Postgraduate (coursework)	
Doctorate/PhD	
Total	

B4 How many Indigenous students **articulated** (continued on) to a higher qualification at the institution in 2023?

Enabling programs/pre-undergraduate to undergraduate	
Undergraduate to Postgraduate coursework	
Undergraduate to Honours	
Honours to Doctorate/PhD	
Postgraduate coursework to Doctorate/PhD	
Postgraduate research to Doctorate/PhD	
Total	

B5 How many Indigenous students were enrolled full-time versus part-time at the institution in 2023?

Full-time	
Part-time	

Part B: Section 2 – Student services

B6 Whilst Indigenous centres play a central role, describe at least **one example** of how **responsibility** for Indigenous student success **was shared** across the institution (e.g., initiatives in the faculties/colleges/schools)? Particularly focus on improvements for initiatives or newly introduced programs implemented in 2023 that are situated outside of the Indigenous centre or an Indigenous portfolio.

B7 Describe at least **one example** of how the institution (e.g., faculties/colleges/schools) is taking steps to improve the **completion rates** of Indigenous students? Particularly focus on improvements for initiatives or newly introduced programs implemented in 2023.

Part C: Staff success

Staff success is defined in the UA Indigenous Strategy as a state where Indigenous staff recruitment, retention, workloads, promotion pathways, pipeline development and professional development are all appropriately supported, so that Indigenous peoples have effective opportunities to gain employment at universities and to develop their careers.

Part C: Section 1 – Statistics about staff

C1 Which **Indigenous-identified senior leadership positions** did the institution have in 2023?

	Yes	No
Deputy Vice-Chancellor		
Pro Vice-Chancellor		
Other, please specify		

C2 How many of the following **Indigenous-identified senior leadership positions** did the institution have in 2023, either active, vacant or under development?

	Number of active roles	Number of vacant roles	Number of roles under development
Deputy Vice-Chancellor			
Pro Vice-Chancellor			
Other, please specify			

C3 Does the institution have plans to create any **new DVC or PVC or equivalent positions** in the **upcoming 12 months**? If so provide details.

C4 How many Indigenous staff **were employed** at the institution in 2023?

	Full time permanent	Fixed-term contract	Casual
Academic			
Professional			

C5 How many Indigenous staff **commenced** at the institution in 2023?

	Full time permanent	Fixed-term contract	Casual
Academic			
Professional			

C6 How many Indigenous staff **left** the institution in 2023?

	Full time permanent	Fixed-term contract	Casual
Academic			
Professional			

C7 How many Indigenous academics were **employed at Level A or Level B** at the institution in 2023?

	Full time permanent	Fixed-term contract	Casual
Academic			
Professional			

C8 How many staff work in the institution's **Indigenous Centre**?

	Full time permanent	Fixed-term contract	Casual
Indigenous			
Non-Indigenous			

Part C: Section 2 – Challenges meeting staff targets

(e.g., competition with other universities, competition with other sectors, inadequate staff budget, limited opportunities for professional development, hiring criteria etc.)

Part C: Section 2.1 – Challenges meeting staff targets (academic staff)

C9 Has the institution experienced challenges in meeting targets related to Indigenous **academic** staffing numbers in 2023?

Yes	
No	

C9a Describe at least **one example** of a challenge the institution faced in **attracting and/or retaining** Indigenous **academic** staff in 2023.

Part C: Section 2.2 – Challenges meeting staff targets (professional staff)

C10 Has the institution experienced challenges in meeting targets related to Indigenous **professional** staffing numbers in 2023?

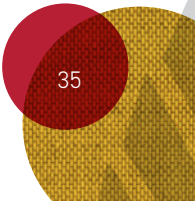
Yes	
No	

C10a Describe at least **one example** of a challenge the institution faced in **attracting and/or retaining** Indigenous professional staff in 2023.

C11 Has the institution experienced challenges in meeting its obligations related to employment of Indigenous **Senior Executive** (PVC, DVC) staff in 2023?

Yes	
No	

C11a Describe at least **one example** of a challenge the institution faced in **attracting and/or retaining** Indigenous **Senior Executive** staff in 2023.



Part C: Section 3 – Career advancement opportunities

Part C: Section 3.1 – Career advancement opportunities (academic staff)

C12 Does the institution have **formal promotion pathways** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **academic** staff?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

C12a Describe at least **one example** of how the institution's **formal promotion pathways** recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous academic staff. Focus on any improvements you've made to your systems in 2023.

C12b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to develop **formal promotion pathways** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **academic** staff.

Part C: Section 3.2 – Career advancement opportunities (professional staff)

C13 Does the institution have **career advancement mechanisms** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **professional** staff?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

C13a Describe at least **one example** of how the institution's **career advancement mechanisms** recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **professional** staff. Focus on any improvements you've made to your systems in 2023.

C13b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to develop **career advancement mechanisms** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **professional** staff.

Part C: Section 3.3 – Career advancement opportunities (Senior Executive staff)

C14 Does the institution have **career advancement mechanisms** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **senior executive** staff?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

C14a Describe at least **one example** of how the institution's **career advancement mechanisms** recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **Senior Executive** staff. Focus on any improvements you've made to your systems in 2023.

C14b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to develop **career advancement mechanisms** that recognise the uniquely broad experience and expertise of Indigenous **Senior Executive** staff.

Part C: Section 4 – Indigenous staff workload

C15 Did the institution **formally support** the **additional workload unique** to Indigenous staff in HR policies in 2023?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

C15a Describe at least **one example** of how the **additional workload** unique to Indigenous staff was formally supported in **HR policies** at the institution in 2023?

C15b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution took **to improve** formal support for the **additional workload unique** to Indigenous staff in HR policies in 2023?

Part 4: Indigenous advancement

The UA Indigenous Strategy describes Indigenous Advancement as initiatives aimed at bolstering the success of Indigenous Peoples in the sector.

Part D: Indigenous advancement

Part D: Section 1 – Statistics about Indigenous advancement

D1 How many of the following groupings of people are **represented** on the institution's **senior governing bodies**?

	Indigenous Academic Staff	Indigenous Professional Staff	Indigenous Students	Non-Indigenous members
University Council or equivalent				
Academic Senate or equivalent				
Senior Executive Group				

Part D: Section 2 – Indigenous representation in decision-making

D2 Does the institution's **senior Indigenous leader** (i.e., the institution's representative on the UA DVC/PVC Indigenous Committee) have a direct line of reporting to the institution's Vice-Chancellor?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

D3 In addition to Indigenous representation on **senior governing bodies**, does the institution take other steps to ensure Indigenous views are represented in the institution's key decision-making processes?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

D3a Describe at least **one example** of how the institution ensures Indigenous views are **represented** in the institution's **key decision-making processes**?

D3b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to ensure Indigenous views are **represented** in the institution's **key decision-making processes**?

Part D: Section 3 – Indigenous representation in decision-making

D4 Does the institution have processes to ensure Indigenous input into policy implementation, not just development?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

D4a Describe at least **one example** of how the institution **ensures** Indigenous input into **policy implementation**, not just development?

D4b Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to **ensure** Indigenous **input** into **policy implementation**, not just development?

Part D: Section 4 – Procurement policies

D5 Does the institution have a **formal** Indigenous **goods and services** procurement policy?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

D5a Describe at least **one example** of steps the institution is taking to implement a formal Indigenous **goods and services** procurement policy.

Part E: Racism and cultural safety

The UA Indigenous Strategy describes efforts to promote Indigenous cultural safety on campuses, including condemning racist behaviours, actively seeking to eliminate racist behaviours, challenging prejudiced thinking, learning about the impacts of white Australia on Indigenous Peoples, past and present, learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being, making cultural provisions for Indigenous staff and students, and recognising the additional workload that is unique to Indigenous staff.

**Part E: Section 1 –
Anti-racism activities**

E1 Does the institution have a formal racism reporting mechanism?

Yes	
No	
Under development	

E1a What is the institution’s formal **racism reporting mechanism**? Please include the name of the mechanism, details of the reporting process and a link if available.

E1b Describe at least **one example** of what steps the institution is taking to implement a formal **racism reporting mechanism**?

Part E: Section 2 – Cultural safety

E2 Which of the following **mechanisms** does the institution have in place to create a **culturally safe environment**?

	Yes	No	Under development
Working group			
Reviews/audits/ analyses of cultural environment			
Indigenous art/ architecture			
KPIs about creating a culturally safe environment for all staff			
Building names			
Indigenous walks/ gardens			
Elder on campus program			
Placed based learning courses			
Other (please specify)			

E3 Does the institution offer **cultural training** to the following groupings?

	Yes	No	Under development
Staff			
Students			

E3a What features does the **cultural safety** initiative for **staff** have at the institution?

	Yes	No	Under development
Module/Online			
Micro-credential			
In-person			
Hybrid			
Co-designed			
Mandatory			
Voluntary			
On-boarding/one-off			
Ongoing/ supplementary			
Discipline-specific			
Indigenous facilitator			
Non-Indigenous facilitator			
Other, please specify:			

E3a What features does the **cultural safety** initiative for **students** have at the institution?

	Yes	No	Under development
Module/Online			
Micro-credential			
In-person			
Hybrid			
Co-designed			
Mandatory			
Voluntary			
On-boarding/one-off			
Ongoing/supplementary			
Discipline-specific			
Indigenous facilitator			
Non-Indigenous facilitator			
Other, please specify:			

Part F: Indigenous knowledges

The UA Indigenous Strategy describes actions designed to appropriately value Indigenous knowledges and value systems that would help Australian universities to grow their understanding, mark themselves as unique in the world, better reflect the history and nature of our country, and become more hospitable institutions of learning for people from all backgrounds.

F1 Describe at least **one example** of how the institution worked to include Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into curricula in 2023? Focus on a new initiative if possible.

F2 In addition to incorporating **Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into the curriculum**, describe at least **one example** of how the institution ensured **students graduated** with an awareness of Indigenous knowledges in 2023?

F3 Which of the following **mechanisms** does the institution use to **recognise** and promote the benefits of **Indigenous-led research**?

	Yes	No
Indigenous research institute		
Indigenous fellowships		
Indigenous research scholarships		
Indigenous research hub		
Indigenous research network		
Indigenous research role/staff		
Indigenous Vice-Chancellor research award		
Other, please specify:		

Part G: Request for Indigenous-led research links

G1 Please share with us links to any relevant **Indigenous-led higher education sector research** that UA could promote and cite in the UA Indigenous annual report. This could be research focused on teaching, learning, education, research, cultural safety, leadership, governance etc.

Appendix B

Research related to the higher education sector submitted by responding institutions



The Narrm Oration is a University of Melbourne key address that profiles leading Indigenous peoples from across the world to enrich ideas about possible futures for Indigenous Australia. In 2023 The Narrm Oration was delivered by Akawayan Pakawayan who is a senior leader of the Indigenous Pinuyumayan people in the Puyuma village of Taiwan (pictured front left).

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Ongoing projects

AI and Cyber Futures Institute Dreamtime Series. Interviews with Stan Grant Junior: New Technologies Impact on First Nations Communities, Navigating Data Ownership Challenges in First Nations Communities, Bridging the Technological Gap: Rural vs. Urban Communities in Australia, Preserving First Nations Data Sovereignty with Emerging Technologies, Unlocking Future Opportunities for First Nations Communities, Creating Useful Technologies for First Nations: Advice for Developers. Charles Sturt University

Historiography of Aboriginal Queensland Nurses and Midwives 1890s–1950s. Odette Best and Tracey Bunda, University of Southern Queensland. <https://dataportal.arc.gov.au/NCGP/Web/Grant/Grant/SR200200902>

Increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in the Northern Territory: Planning for the future. Tracy Woodroffe, Charles Darwin University.

Indigenous success: Creating a senior leadership capability model through capacity building, will progress the success of First Nations people in senior leadership positions. Peter Anderson, Griffith University

Understanding the wellbeing needs of First Nations psychology students: Identifying perspectives, needs, and strategies through the First Nations Psychology student wellbeing. Darren Garvey, University of Queensland.

Working Together (2024–29), Janya McCalman, Ruth Fagan, Sandy Campbell, Alexandra van Beek, Bridget Mitchell, Central Queensland University, <https://www.cqu.edu.au/research/organisations/jawun-research-centre/projects>

