Reconciliation Action Plan
2015-2017

Prepared by:
Professor Marcia Devlin
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality)

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Our Vision for Reconciliation

Federation University Australia shares with Reconciliation Australia in affirming the special place and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Australians.

The effect on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives, lore, languages, cultures, customs and traditions caused by the non-Indigenous settlement of Australia continues to be sustained by racism, racial discrimination, injustice and oppression experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Only by acknowledging this past, understanding the present, and building a future based on equality, respect and genuine opportunity will reconciliation be achieved.

Federation University Australia is unequivocally committed to this process.

The University acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, Jadawadjali, Jaadwa, Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Djab Wurrung Wurundjeri and Gunaikurnai, Barkindji, Mutthi Mutthi and Kureindji peoples as the Traditional Owners of the land where its main campuses, centres and field stations are located. It has set in place measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education, employment and opportunity. It has formalised this commitment in the University's 2015 Charter, and in diverse policies, procedures and actions.

Federation University Australia was established on 1 January 2014 through the merger of the University of Ballarat and the Gippsland campus of Monash University.

It is a new generation Australian University, which is regional in focus, national in scope and international in reach.

The University is unique: it is based on a federated network of campuses in regional Victoria, partner-provider institutions across Australia and overseas, and national and international research collaborations. It offers excellence and quality in vocational education and training, higher education and research, with its programs spanning the full array of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Accessibility, inclusiveness and provision of a supportive learning and research environment are at the heart of Federation University Australia.

The legal objects of the Act (Section 5) commit the University

(f) to use its expertise and resources to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia in its teaching, learning, research and advancement of knowledge activities and therefore contribute to —

(i) realising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations; and

(ii) the safeguarding of the ancient and rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

These are moral and legal responsibilities willingly assumed by Federation University Australia.
The Values of Federation University Australia are:

**Excellence**

Pursuit of excellence in education and research through the development of critical thinking, logic and reasoning.

**Responsibility**

Intellectual responsibility through ethical practice and effective stewardship of our resources and the environment.

**Access**

Creating equitable educational opportunities based on inclusiveness and diversity.

**Respect**

Respect for each other, our students and for the communities we serve.

**Engagement**

Deep engagement locally, nationally and internationally in our endeavours.

The Federation University Australia Act mandates the University to be ‘resolute in its commitment to regional, rural and remote communities’ and to be ‘rigorous in its promotion of international principles’ ensuring that ‘inclusion, access, support and empathy are its core values.’

The Federation University Australia Act also asks of the University that it ‘improve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in tertiary education.’ Indeed, the University recognises the special place and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Australians and this is reflected in our Statement on Reconciliation:

Federation University Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land where its campuses and centres are located. It has set in place measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in education, employment and opportunity. It has formalised this commitment in the University's Compact with the Australian Government and in its policies, procedures and actions. The University seeks to provide a learning and working environment that promotes and values diversity and offers equality of access and opportunity to all. Just as this commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is embedded in policy and strategy, then so too is it seated in the practicalities of teaching, learning, research and community engagement that comprise the daily business of Federation University Australia.

The University considers that closing the 10–17 year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians is fundamental.

As a multi-sector institution delivering pre-tertiary education, Vocational Education and Training (VET), higher education, further education, research programs and courses, the University is therefore determined to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational aspiration, participation, retention and attainment by building confidence, facilitating access, mentoring engagement, providing opportunities and fostering achievement. It will continue to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff are able to participate fully in the life and affairs of the University.

To further the process of reconciliation, Federation University Australia has developed its third Reconciliation Action Plan focussing on improving education, training and research opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; increasing the visibility and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledges and studies on all University campuses; recruiting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at all levels of the University; and ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are involved in the governance and decision-making of the University.

Our Business

Federation University Australia is a multi-sector university providing educational, cultural, professional, technical and vocational services to people living in Central, Western and Eastern Victoria — and beyond. The University’s campuses provide programs and courses for approximately 25,000 students, of whom around 18,000 are domestic students predominantly from regional Victoria. The University has 1,948 employees. To date, the University has eighteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across various work areas and campuses, made up of four trainees, eleven administrative staff, one manager and two Vocational Education and Training teachers.

The University has a long-standing commitment to reconciliation through the provision of education and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This provision has included:

- establishing an Aboriginal Education Centre;
- enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on numerous Federation University Australia committees that govern the University and provide advice to the Vice-Chancellor through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Learning and Quality;
- facilitating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership on University Council and Academic Board;
- implementing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy;
- introducing cultural awareness training for staff;
- displaying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at all campuses;
- commissioning art works and displaying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art at exhibitions;
- incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into units in the disciplines of behavioural and social sciences and humanities, education and nursing;
- providing scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- providing Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country at key events;
- using an Aboriginal company who have paid royalties back to the founder of the flags family, the design and dissemination to Council, senior and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff of a lapel pin incorporating the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and the University logo;
- providing the opportunity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student to wear the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander stole when graduating;
- displaying the Statement of Reconciliation at all campuses in prominent positions;
- highlighting key Indigenous events in Federation University Australia student diaries;
- holding Elders’ Christmas luncheons with Federation University Australia Council members; and
- facilitating liaison and engagement with the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) mentoring program.


In line with Reconciliation Australia’s framework of improving relationships, respect and opportunities, Federation University Australia will implement a 2015-2017 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that advances rapprochement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.
The University reiterates that providing life and career opportunities through access to, and participation in, education and employment is fundamental to closing the 10-17 year life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people.

In 2008 the University Council endorsed a review of the University’s Statement of Reconciliation. This was then updated in 2012 and will be reviewed and possibly updated again in 2015. The revised Statement articulated the University’s vision for reconciliation. The RAP has documented the strategies and processes required to achieve the objectives inherent in the Statement from 2008 onwards.

In 2008, the University also signed a Statement of Commitment with Reconciliation Australia affirming its commitment to develop a RAP. The University indicated its RAP would focus on:

- education, training and research opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- cultural awareness and recognition; and
- recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The 2009-2010 and 2012-2014 Plans sought to improve the level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training; increase undergraduate and post graduate enrolments; improve the rates of success, retention and attainment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working at all levels of the University.

The 2015-2017 RAP provides an opportunity to expand and to strengthen activities commenced under the 2009-2010 and 2012-2014 RAPs and to develop new initiatives through a co-ordinated, University-wide approach to Reconciliation.

The Plan’s actions and targets will be monitored and reviewed annually as part of the University’s policy, planning and reporting cycle. The 2015-2017 RAP is aligned with the University’s principles and aims to contribute to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students are fully engaged in Federation University Australia governance, education, employment and community endeavours. The RAP focuses on activities relevant to the University’s key objectives, which are to be:

1. Regional in focus, national in scope and international in reach;
2. Comprehensive in its offerings, student-centred in its approach and providing access to effective and high quality learning;
3. Strategic in fostering world-class research;
4. Productive and effective in forming partnerships and engaging with its communities and regions; and
5. Accountable for what it does.

The 2015-2017 RAP contributes to these objectives by ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students are fully engaged in Federation University Australia governance, education, employment and community endeavours. Reconciliation thus addresses the inheritance of inequity and enhances and enriches those qualities that define Federation University Australia.

The 2015–2017 RAP commits Federation University Australia to building relationships, respect and opportunities by:

- acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, cultures and disadvantage;
- engaging with Federation University Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alumni;
- embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, insights and knowledge in education planning, programs, events, teaching, learning, and research;
• delivering cultural awareness training to our staff and students;
• further promoting and disseminating protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country in University activities;
• building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspiration for post-secondary education;
• increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander University participation, retention and attainment;
• supporting employment opportunities and career development;
• improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander post-graduate research opportunities; and
• tracking and ensuring that RAP actions are implemented, managed and assessed.

Federation University Australia’s RAP has been developed in consultation with staff and students and community under the guidance of the RAP Committee.

RAP committee membership includes the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality) (Chair), Aboriginal Community Elders and representatives, the Manager of the Aboriginal Education Centre and senior personnel from the University.

Round-table discussions and consultations over many years have provided the opportunity for University senior management to contribute to the development of the RAP. The University community have also been invited to provide feedback on draft RAP documents. Wider community consultation and feedback involving Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups have further informed the development of the RAP.

Federation University Australia considers the 2015–2017 RAP to be an essential document in the process of Reconciliation, in the affairs of the University, and most importantly, in the quest for a more inclusive and more equitable Australia.
## 1. Relationships

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop positive relationships between Federation University Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and the wider University community by building awareness and understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and disadvantage.</td>
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<td>Maintain the RAP Committee, to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review and Reporting Timelines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed and reported on in July and December each year 2015-2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reviewed and reported on in December each year 2015-2017</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable Target</th>
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<tr>
<td>RAP actions implemented, RAP actions monitored by the RAP Committee, and RAP targets achieved during the period 2015-2017.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAP Committee oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.</td>
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<td>RAP Committee meets at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.</td>
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<td>RAP Committee membership will align with the criteria set by Reconciliation Australia</td>
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## 2. Respect

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<th>Action</th>
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<th>Review and Reporting Timelines</th>
<th>Measurable Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Further promote and disseminate protocols for use of <em>Welcome to Country</em> and <em>Acknowledgement of Country</em> in Federation University Australia activities.</td>
<td>Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre/ Director, Marketing, Advancement and Community</td>
<td>Review and report on in July and December each year 2015-2017</td>
<td><em>Welcome to Country</em> and/or <em>Acknowledgement of Country</em> protocols develop, available via AEC website and promoted widely, including by Public Relations for use with Engagement activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2.2 Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training to staff and students | Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre/ Director, Human Resources | Review and report on in July and December each year 2015-2017 | A cultural awareness program developed, finalised and implemented.  
All Federation University Australia students and staff offered access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training.  
Training rates monitored and reported to leaders across the University to encourage increasing uptake. |
| 2.3 Further examine and pursue opportunities for provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies at VET, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality) | Review and report on in September each year 2015-2017 | Identification and promotion of modules/courses appropriate for study at VET and Higher Education level. |
| 2.4 | Celebrate and share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and achievements. | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality) / Executive Dean, Education and Arts / Director, Marketing, Advancement and Community | Review and report on in September each year 2015-2017 | Contribute to the Victorian Indigenous Art Awards.  
Hold an annual art exhibition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student art  
Federation University Australia Reconciliation Lecture presented.  
University internal and external marketing to feature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.5 | Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students to engage with their cultures and community through NAIDOC Week events. | Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre | Review and report on in August each year 2015-2017 | Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, involving all campuses of Federation University Australia, to participate in events designed, promoted, implemented and evaluated each year.  
A communication strategy to promote these activities and encourage engagement designed and implemented. |
### Opportunities

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<tr>
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<th>Measurable Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Improve and promote employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including by utilising the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program and traineeships</td>
<td>Director HR</td>
<td>Review and report on in October each year 2015-2017</td>
<td>The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff spanning classification types and levels increased across Federation University Australia. Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. Pilot different approaches to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment (this may include training pathways, apprenticeships, internships, cadetships, work experience). Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Support existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by building capacity and career potential through targeted activities.</td>
<td>Director HR</td>
<td>Review and report on in October each year 2015-2017</td>
<td>Professional development programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff promoted. Professional development plans, incorporating career planning, developed and implemented for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Promote opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers to undertake Master or Doctoral degrees as part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)</td>
<td>Review and report on in October each year 2015-2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Develop strategies to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention and completion.</td>
<td>Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre</td>
<td>Review and report on in April each year 2015-2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Continue to offer Reconciliation Action Plan Award that recognises staff, students or areas that advance reconciliation.</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>Review and report on in November each year 2015-2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3.6 | Promote and build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspiration for post-secondary education. | Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre | Review and report on each September 2015-2017 | Involvement in Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) program.  
An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Entry Program developed, implemented, promoted and explained to potential applicants. |
| 3.7 | Diversify the Federation University supply chain to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | COO | Review and report each November 2015-2017 | Increasing number and proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses within the University’s supply chain.  
Review procurement policies so that barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses are able to be addressed.  
Investigate becoming a member of Supply Nation  
Educate staff about using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.  
Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business. |
### 4. Tracking Progress and Reporting

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Measurable Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>A RAP Committee meeting Reconciliation Australia’s criteria established and maintained</td>
<td>Chair, Reconciliation Action Plan Committee</td>
<td>March, 2015</td>
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<td>May, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>RAP Finalised and Endorsed</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>June, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report.</td>
<td>Chair, Reconciliation Action Plan Committee</td>
<td>December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>RAP Report to University Council</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality)</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acronyms used throughout plan
AEC: Aboriginal Education Centre
COO: Chief Operating Officer
DVC (A): Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
DVC (E): Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)
DVC (L&Q): Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality)
DVC (R&I): Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
DVC (SSS): Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Support and Services)
HE: Higher Education
HR: Human Resources
Schools: Federation University Australia Schools within Faculties
VET: Vocational Education and Training

Contact details: Bonnie Chew, Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre, Federation University Australia