

Indigenous Student Success Program

2020 Performance Report

Organisation	RMIT		
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1. Enrolments (Access)

Since the recruitment of the Ngarara Willim Indigenous Outreach Officer in late 2019, the Ngarara Willim team have spent the majority of 2020 working from home due to COVID-19. Although the pandemic has hindered opportunities for physical events, the Outreach Officer and the Ngarara Willim team adapted to the new working environments and proactively engaged prospective students and community in a virtual space. Despite working remotely, discussions were still held with Aboriginal community organisations about effective engagement and building meaningful partnerships.

Ngarara Willim staff outreach efforts thrived in a challenging environment, these initiatives included;

- Participation in the National Indigenous Business Summer School in partnership with other universities, which engaged 16 students for an on-campus business experience day.
- Attendance at the Dandenong Koori Kids Back to School day where the Outreach Officer provided RMIT resources to over 50 individuals.
- Partnered with “Deadly Sista Girlz” program based at Thornbury High School and delivered 2 yarning circles and information session to Indigenous high school students.
- Established the Ngarara Willim Newsletter which has grown to 1,200 subscribers. 9 issues have been delivered with an estimated reach of 2,000 individuals.
- Deadly Day of Science shifted to a 2-week online program, engaging over 80 Indigenous young people from 5 schools across the country.
- Over 30 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people enrolled in a short course. Unfortunately, the short course team was disestablished.
- Scholarship provided to 32 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to complete the Certificate IV in Project Management Practice.
- Creation of collateral that is sent to schools and community organisations to provide future students with information of our Indigenous Access program, our Gama-dji Orientation program and other relevant support that will encourage their engagement with higher education

Undertaking outreach activities in a remote working environment allowed us to reflect on how we approach our engagement efforts with schools. We became more connected to the wider RMIT Recruitment team to create more inclusive practices. We now take a much more ‘data-driven’ approach to engagement, particularly using data on schools, SEAS, and rural/regional students in formulating effective engagement strategies. The Ngarara Willim team are looking forward to continuing to grow outreach efforts in a COVID normal setting in 2021. Some outreach targets include Barwon South West, Hume, Gippsland and Metropolitan areas.

In 2020, a review of the RMIT Admissions Policy was conducted which allowed for changes to the policy to separate Indigenous admissions from the Equity and Diversity category. The policy now has a section specifically related to Indigenous admissions and speaks to the rights of Indigenous people to self-determination. The key policy statements that specifically relate to Indigenous admissions are the inclusion of a section within the policy principles that states: 'RMIT acknowledges the unique rights of Indigenous Australians to education under the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 2010 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.'

The Policy also identifies changes to the selection procedure of Indigenous applicants that now includes: 'Applications from Indigenous Australians are overseen by the Ngarara Willim Centre. Applicants may be assessed through the Indigenous Access Program using a non-competitive and pathways focused approach.' This is a significant policy shift in aligning to RMIT's commitment to driving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination through practice.

To align with the policy changes, we have undertaken a review of the Indigenous Access Program and improved the college admissions processes with clear processes and procedures across the University. This has been effective in reducing the number of interviews required and seeing a more streamlined process for applicants and selection staff.

Another major initiative in the past year to improve access is a focus to engage with RMIT applicants earlier and more effectively. This approach has included:

- Strong messaging to engage students with the Ngarara Willim Centre and/or individual staff. There was a particular focus on electronic media and our social media platforms given the lack of face-to-face opportunity. We found that this gave applicants a greater understanding about the student support offering and who our support team were.
- We have built stronger internal relationships within the university to improve applicants' first experiences and interactions. These internal relationships have opened opportunities for our support team to understand who our applicants are and contact them earlier.
- Redesigning and updating RMIT's website for Admissions, Indigenous Access Program, and scholarships (including accommodation).

The work being done to review scholarships, early engagement with applicants and other support resources has significantly strengthened our capacity to turn 'encouragement' through outreach into outcomes and enrolments.

Indigenous EFTSL saw a slight rise in 2020 for both the entire student cohort (152.4 in 2019 up to 167.6 in 2020) as well as the regional/rural cohort (42.8 in 2019 up to 44.6 in 2020). This is a positive result given the impact of COVID-19 in restricting physical access to campus and support, the inability to travel and the general health concerns of the student community.

Table 1.1. EFTSL for All RMIT Higher Education Indigenous Students

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	EFTSL - all	94.75	118.00	123.13	147.88	157.13	152.38	167.63
	EFTSL - regional/remote			35.88	46.38	44.63	42.75	44.63

Table 1.2 Scholarships - breakdown of 2020 payments^{1 2 3}

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total ^{4 5}	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling ⁶	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Undergraduate ⁷	227,087.00	45	41,333.34	7	n/a	n/a	268,420.34	52
Post-graduate ⁸	9,401.00	3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	9,401.00	3
Other	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	236,488.00	48	41,333.34	7			277,821.34	55

2. Progression (access and outcomes)

The main approach to the progression of students during the COVID-19 impacted 2020 was to ensure that students were setup to succeed as much as possible. Ngarara Willim's immediate response to the pandemic was a whole of team effort to directly call and talk with each of our students to discuss the situation, to check on their wellbeing, to ensure that they knew that we remained available to support them. During these calls we also checked to ensure that they were equipped to transition to online learning and we immediately began to respond to the needs identified. Within days of the campus being shut down we had connected with all of our students.

After making our calls we quickly discovered that a number of students relied entirely on on-campus resources (internet, printing, computers, study and other specialist equipment) to enable them to engage in their studies. This required us to immediately meet the needs of students by enabling access to basic resources – laptops, internet, desks and computer chairs, quiet study spaces and other resources and materials that were required to undertake study.

The other significant challenge was supporting students who were deeply connected to the Ngarara Willim space and who relied on our community on campus as a source of social, cultural and emotional support. This was very difficult at times on both staff and students. The earlier development of the 'Ngarara Willim' module on the university's online learning platform, Canvas became extremely useful and provided students with an online community and support. This was an invaluable tool to maintain connection with our students and to pool relevant resources and materials to help support our students, aligning to the situational need with the university being forced onto online platforms for program delivery due to the pandemic. We had also developed an online version of our Gamad-ji orientation program and we created a small bursary which was awarded to incentivise participation pre-COVID 19 which enabled us to deliver a version of this important onboarding program remotely for multiple cohorts of commencing students throughout the year with very strong levels of engagement. The online Gama-dji orientation program continues to provide a way for us to engage with students who may not be able to attend campus during planned sessions.

A key feature of our online community was providing students with the opportunity to run some online sessions for fellow students and staff. A highlight was a student lead 'cook-a-long' where students made a meal and followers could cook along or watch the meal being prepared. A similar and equally popular session was a student lead exercise class. We found that these online events were a great way to encourage interaction between our students and creating a sense of belonging at RMIT during a time when they weren't able to engage on campus due to the pandemic.

Given the importance of online communication, we reviewed the Ngarara Willim Student Communications plan. A more targeted approach was adopted with key messaging matching up with the academic calendar and specific cultural dates of significance. We were able to utilise Facebook, Instagram, email, canvas and on occasion SMS. SMS proved to be extremely effective in offering students' direct access to support services during COVID-19 and allowed us to support the wellbeing of students and their families. Students were grateful to receive the correspondence and commented on how they felt well supported during the uncertain time.

The Ngarara Willim Centre spent time in 2020 designing a new Dhumbali Cultural Series for our students. Dhumbali, meaning a promise to commit in Boon wurrung language, aims to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students a sense of belonging to the Ngarara Willim Centre and RMIT, while learning about their own and Kulin Nation people, land and culture. The Dhumbali Cultural Series will involve an ordered program of cultural activities and engagement, starting with a foundation of students being involved in the aforementioned Gama-dji orientation program with various cultural activities continuing through to graduation. Dhumbali will also provide students the opportunity to connect with students who have been involved with Ngarara Willim in previous years. The Dhumbali Cultural Series will commence in 2021.

The Ngarara Willim tutoring program progressed with face-to-face delivery early in 2020 and moved quickly to online delivery from March following the COVID-19 shutdown. The shift to online delivery was mostly seamless, with student and tutor feedback showing that sessions were convenient and had a positive impact on student learning. There was a noted challenge of technology issues for some students, with the Ngarara Willim team working swiftly to resolve these issues. The Ngarara Willim Centre undertook process improvements to the tutoring program late in 2020 by investigating systems, resources and staffing requirements that will make the program more effective for our students. This work will continue in 2021 to enhance this student service.

RMIT continues to focus on building cultural competency of staff. At the heart of staff expectations is RMIT's unique [Code of Conduct](#), which was officially launched in 2020. This was a significant piece of work that ensured that reconciliation was visibly embedded within RMIT's Code of Conduct through the incorporation of the Bundjil Statement (derived from the Law of Bundjill in collaboration with Boon wurrung Elder N'Arwee't Carolyn Briggs). Recognising the fundamental importance of the Bundjil Statement in guiding the ways of knowing, being and doing for RMIT staff, the Chief Risk Officer and Policy Team incorporated the Bundjil Statement into the Policy Governance Framework and all RMIT policies.

Further to this, RMIT continues to implement activity across *Dhumbah Goorowa* that creates an inclusive environment for students, staff and the community. Specific activity in 2020 included:

- The approval for the recruitment of four Reconciliation Advisors (one per College) to be funded out of the central RMIT budget. These roles will support College staff in building staff reconciliation capability and driving activity to embed Indigenous perspectives in curriculum.
- The continued success of each College and Portfolio's Ngulu (voice) reconciliation committee in creating a staff peer network to discuss academic, research, learning and teaching and professional opportunities. These committees provide support to their respective College/Portfolio staff cohort in creating a culturally inclusive and respectful workplace.
- The successful launch of the Global On Country program to provide all students with meaningful Indigenous orientation opportunities.
- Significant progress in the review of RMIT's policy suite that ensures all policies address the interests and input of Indigenous students and staff through collaboration between the Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement and the central policy team.

From a numbers perspective, we saw a retention rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of 75% (pending government verification). This retention rate is comparable with previous years. The success rate of our students saw a slight rise in 2020, increasing from 80.8% in 2019 to 84.3%. These are pleasing results given the challenging environment for students throughout 2020.

Table 2.1 Indigenous student retention rates (%)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020
Retention rate	77.9	72.1	87.1	71.2	74.4	78.6	71.8	76.4	75.0	N/A

Table 2.2 Indigenous student success rate (%)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Success rate	84.7	83.2	81.7	77.6	82.7	84.0	82.1	84.1	80.8	84.3

Table 2.3 Tutorial assistance provided in 2020

Level of study	Number of students assisted	Total hours of assistance ⁹	Expenditure ¹⁰ (\$)
Enabling	8	600	
Undergraduate	19	1399	
Post graduate	5	400	
Other			
Total	32	2399	154,764.83

Table 2.4 Indigenous Support Activities provided in 2020¹¹

Activity ^{12 13}	Number of student participants	Expenditure (\$)
VAHS Family Mixed Netball Carnival		
CareerTrackers update and Chat	3	\$66.91
Social event – boardgames and dinner	12	\$228.27
Easter Catch up and Prize Giveaway	9	\$ 150
Drop in with Lisa at Careers		
Study Skills drop in with Liz and Shannon x12		
Cooking Class with Torey Booking “Cashew Chicken”	5	\$140
Online exercise classes with student x2	5	
Mature Age Student Pizza night	6	\$270
ELS Chat with Jacinta and Reema x8	3	
Mates Morning Tea and Trivia		
Staff and Students hangout playing games	6	

VE Gama-dji Orientation – Semester 2	17	
HE Gama-dji Orientation – Semester 2	8	
Comedy Show with Kimmie Lovegrove	0	
Staff and Students RUOK Day Lunchtime Yarn	2	
Games Night – Treasure Hunt Time Capsule (book winners)	4	\$200
NAIDOC Weenthunga – Movie discussion	3	
NAIDOC Weenthunga – Book discussion	4	\$910.25
Industry Yarns x3	9	
Ngarara Willim Graduation Event (post, print certificates, stoles, parking for Elders)		\$5374.49
Summer reading program (3 books/post)	11	\$660

3. Completions (outcomes)

The RMIT Careers team continue to support the career and employment aspirations of our students. In 2020 the Deadly Careers website was developed to provide one central location to promote employment and career opportunities, to provide resources to support students and to provide easy access to staff supports. The Careers team work closely with the Ngarara Willim Centre staff to support students and to deliver information sessions online throughout the year to promote and connect with industry partners and career opportunities. The Deadly Careers Fair was postponed due to the impact of COVID-19, but planning continued throughout the year to deliver this when appropriate, whilst we also continued to build connections with industry. All graduates were contacted following completion of their studies to offer support to engage in employment and/or further study where appropriate.

The Deadly Alumni program continues to be a successful graduate program that prioritises the importance and need to build on our connection and engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alumni. In collaboration between the Ngarara Willim Centre staff and the RMIT Alumni team, the planned approach for 2020 identified many action areas including identifying alumni and connecting with them through various channels, encouraging participation in RMIT and industry events, participation in student experiences and in further learning. This approach built on our support with career development, professional development and coaching, encouraging participation in mentoring experiences, across media channels, and inclusion in university celebration spaces.

To better understand how we could engage and support our alumni, we undertook a review of our offering and surveyed alumni. The feedback that we received outlined the importance of engagement with the Ngarara Willim Centre and our student cohorts, the provision of professional development opportunities, employment and general communications on Ngarara Willim and RMIT activity. In response to this feedback, a communications plan was developed and a 'Deadly Alumni' e-newsletter is now sent out to alumni every 6 weeks to promote all opportunities at RMIT and Ngarara Willim Centre, to share stories and to highlight an alumnus in each edition. Alumni have been promoted across campuses and online through various campaigns and for special events at RMIT such as the RMIT Graduation ceremony. The Ngarara Willim Centre also held our end of year

'Deadly Alumni and Graduation' event, which included our Alumni in an online event. Unfortunately, given the online medium of this event, it was not as well attended as our usual face-to-face graduation events.

From a numbers perspective, it was pleasing to see that completions continue to rise. Over the past five years, we have seen the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completing study increase from 19 in 2016 to 48 in 2020. The 2020 completion numbers are the highest number of Indigenous student completions that we have seen at RMIT.

Table 3.1 Indigenous student completions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Award completions	18	24	28	20	22	19	36	47	42	48

4. Regional and remote students

In 2020, RMIT offered regional and remote Indigenous students' accommodation scholarships with funding from other sources than ISSP funded scholarships. Students needing to move to Melbourne to study were offered an accommodation scholarship in purpose-built student accommodation. For students who demonstrated financial disadvantage, they were offered a full scholarship, for students that did not demonstrate financial disadvantage, they received subsidised scholarship. Of the 12 students who accepted this accommodation scholarship type, 8 students were eligible to receive an ISSP accommodation scholarship but did not access the ISSP funded scholarship because their scholarships were funded from other sources. A further eleven accommodation scholarships providing cash assistance for private rentals were offered to rural and regional Indigenous students.

Table 4.1 Accommodation Scholarships

Accommodation Scholarships	Number of recipients	2020 total value
Cedar Pacific Indigenous Accommodation Scholarship	10	\$210,600
IGLU Accommodation Support Scholarship	1	\$10,400
UniLodge @ RMIT Bundoora Scholarship	1	\$10,718
RMIT Indigenous Accommodation Scholarship	13	\$30,670.50
Total	25	\$262,388.50

In addition to accommodation scholarships, RMIT also offered other scholarships to regional and remote Indigenous vocational and higher educational students. These were predominately scholarships to assist with study costs and/or vouchers to redeem notebooks if they did not have the technology.

Table 4.2 Regional and Remote Scholarships

Scholarship name	Number of recipients	2020 total value
Carey Lyon Scholarship	1	\$8,910.91
Evelyn Boekemann Scholarship	1	\$7,400
Inder Kaur Reconciliation Scholarship	1	\$10,000
Marion Fletcher Textiles Scholarship	1	\$8,000
RMIT Covid Grant	8	\$10,150

RMIT Equity Notebook Grant	7	\$5,478.13
RMIT Indigenous Study Support Scholarship	10	\$16,590
Santa Singh and Balwant Kaur Scholarship	3	\$25,000
Total	24	\$91,529.04

Table 4.3 Scholarship data for remote and regional students^{14 15}

	Education Costs		Accommodation		Reward		Total ¹⁶	
	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.	\$	No.
A. 2019 Payments	108,398	27	49,309.51	6	n/a	n/a	157,707.51	33
B. 2020 Offers ¹⁷	114,000	19	30,000	5*	n/a	n/a	144,000	24
C. Percentage ¹⁸ (C=B/A*100)							91%	73%
2020 Payments	130,903	29	41,333.34	7	n/a	n/a	172,236.34	36

*The number of ICAS offers was reduced in 2020 as a new on campus accommodation scholarship was introduced for 10 indigenous students (9 of whom were also eligible for ICAS) which was of a higher value than ICAS.

5. Working with Vulnerable People Requirement¹⁹

	Yes/No
Has the university completed a risk assessment?	Yes
Have staff involved in ISSP received training?	Yes
Does the university have a compliance process in place?	Yes

6. Eligibility requirements

6.1. Indigenous Education Strategy

RMIT University continues to meet requirements under Section 13/ISSP guidelines. RMIT has continued to use the internal document *Dhumbah Goorowa* 2019-2020, RMIT's Reconciliation Plan to support First Nations education, employment, student and staff community and governance and leadership plans. The [RMIT Reconciliation Plan 2019-2020](#) provides a whole of university approach to reconciling a relationship with First Nations people. The document supports the principle authority RMIT Act 2010 (specifically Section 5f) to meet its commitment to and investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and community.

Action areas within *Dhumbah Goorowa* address several of the requirements under section 13 of the ISSP guidelines, specifically:

- *Action Area 1 – Finance, Governance and Management*: includes a priority to embed reconciliation as an RMIT organisational capability.
- *Action Area 2 – Academic Excellence*: includes a priority to create innovative learning and teaching models that embed Indigeneity, including a focus on Indigenous perspectives in curriculum and program architecture.

- *Action Area 4 – RMIT Staff Community*: there is focus within this action area on driving transformative cultural change by supporting all staff on their journey towards a relationship with Indigeneity.
- *Action Area 5 – RMIT Student Community*: includes a priority to improve the student experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in order to have a positive impact on attrition, retention and completion.

The monitoring and evaluation of *Dhumbah Goorowa* is undertaken at the highest governance level by the Reconciliation Implementation Committee, chaired by the Vice Chancellor with senior executive staff as members of this Committee. Each action area has a Vice Chancellors' Executive member(s) responsible for the outcomes of that action area as the executive sponsor, which provides a level of leadership and responsibility in supporting RMIT's whole of university approach to reconciliation.

RMIT also has an Education Plan, [RMIT Education Plan to 2020](#), that highlights RMIT's significant commitment to Indigenous students. The Education Portfolio monitors and evaluates outcomes through this Portfolio's governance structures.

The RMIT University Scorecard has a reconciliation focused KPI that has been expanded to include measures on Indigenous student completions and Indigenous staff recruitment and retention, coming into effect in 2021. These new measures will sit with the already existing KPI metrics on student and staff engagement with reconciliation and a measurement of actions completed out of *Dhumbah Goorowa*. The new metrics within this KPI were introduced to ensure that progress on these priority areas are highlighted at a University Council level with responsibility shared across all areas of RMIT.

In 2020, 55.6% of *Dhumbah Goorowa* actions were completed against a target of 85%. Whilst this fell short of the target, the impact of the pandemic was a common trend in being able to progress some activity due to an inability to be on campus as well as organisational change throughout the year. Given this impact to the university, the Reconciliation Impact Committee made a mid-year endorsement to reforecast the completion target to 56% as impacted activity was shifted to 2021, meaning the end of year result was in line with expectation. This was not the most desirable approach, but under the circumstances there was still positive progress in areas which were not significantly impacted by the pandemic.

An area of strong progress through 2020 was the embedding of Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. This program of work, driven through Action Area 2 – Academic Excellence within *Dhumbah Goorowa*, has the purpose of moving staff and students beyond cultural awareness and into relation; this requires interrogating the boundaries of disciplines, and taking a critical approach to professional practice, industry skills and protocols. The guiding principles of the Indigenous perspectives framework is being used to structure learning across disciplines and programs, the capabilities identify the skills both staff and students need to acquire to be able to practice relationality; iterative maps act as planning documents to visualise how this learning can be incrementally developed, and also how opportunities for shared and new knowledges may arise. The capabilities enable the practice of the Indigenous perspectives in disciplines and inform program learning outcomes and discipline graduate attributes. Indigenous perspectives are now incorporated in:

- Essentials of Learning and Teaching program required for all staff new to teaching at RMIT;
- Academic Expectations for Promotion;
- Comprehensive Program Review process; and
- Program Enhancement Plan.

6.2. Indigenous Workforce Strategy

RMIT continues to meet requirements under Section 12/ISSP Guidelines. The RMIT [Aboriginal and Torres Islander Employment Plan 2016-2020](#) is provided here. The Plan has oversight of the activities, actions and projects to achieve increased recruitment of First Nations staff, and retention and progression of these staff in their careers at RMIT. RMIT's new page for [Indigenous Applicants](#) also speaks to its commitment and the value proposition to join RMIT for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

RMIT's employment target for 2020 was for 42 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Higher Education roles and in the Vocational Education Enterprise Agreement was to have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce of 3. This is a combined workforce of 45 Indigenous people by the end of 2020. In Q1 2020, RMIT had the highest number of Indigenous workforces at RMIT with 39 people, the university had seen sustainable growth in Indigenous employment and retention from 2016 to 2019. By 31 December 2020, RMIT had an Indigenous workforce of 29 (not including casual workforce). There were various factors for the decrease of Indigenous workforce; as a university RMIT was impacted by COVID-19 and additional recruitment of any 'new' staff post-March 2020 was not able to occur due to significant recruitment controls. Additionally, we undertook a Voluntary Redundancy Program which saw the voluntary departure of many Indigenous leaders at RMIT.

The engagement of an Indigenous Workforce Advisor in October 2019 showed the commitment and investment in the career development of current staff. Further to this, RMIT continues to support our Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Pre-Doctoral Fellowship with the development of Capacity Building Workshops by Distinguished Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson and Dr Crystal McKinnon.

RMIT's Aboriginal and Torres Islander Employment Plan was reviewed in Q3 2020 using design thinking 'Huddles' with the Indigenous Staff Network, resulting in the following findings:

- Ngarara Willim Centre's outstanding Dhumbali (commitment) to supporting and championing Indigenous staff. Over the past five years there has been an increase in employment from 18 at the beginning of 2016 to 36 FTE by end of August 2020 (at the time of the Huddle).
- The majority of Indigenous staff employed at RMIT are in ongoing or fixed term positions.
- Academic Promotion of two Indigenous Academics and promotional opportunities for the Indigenous workforce.
- Development of Academic programs to 'Grow our own', including the Vice Chancellor's Predoctoral Fellowship Program and Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Research Fellows.
- Further development of the Indigenous Staff Network; contributing to cultural safety, whilst providing opportunities for identifying staff issues, networking, and peer to peer mentoring.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'Indigenous Careers' site development.
- Working towards creating a safe culture with the roll out of the Reconciliation agenda and many actions, targets and outcomes to ensure that RMIT University is an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

In 2020 using a co-design approach (with the Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement, People Team, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Committee) and the principle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, RMIT developed its first sustainable *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Future Workforce Strategy 2021-2025* and second *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan 2021-2022*. The Workforce

Strategy sets the vision for employment, development and retention of our Indigenous workforce, with an initial employment target for 2025 of a workforce of 75 (headcount) Indigenous people or 1.5 per cent, this is while working towards achieving 3 per cent representation over the long term.

The Employment Plan outlines the approach for achieving the Future Workforce Strategy; effective change is supported by an enterprise-wide framework focused on attraction of talent, supporting fulfilling careers, retention and Indigenous leadership, and cultural safety and wellbeing. A key pillar enabling change in this Employment Plan will be local College/Portfolio Plans and employment targets for each of the Colleges and Portfolio. Employment targets and employment retention will also be measured KPIs within the RMIT Scorecard for 2021.

The co-design approach and Huddle sessions gave RMIT a clearer understanding of what needs to change from 2021, this includes greater action on employment and retention, engaging its Indigenous workforce, and a whole of university approach of accountability for Indigenous employment, development and retention. Central to the Employment Plan is College and Portfolio accountability.

Following the departure of the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education and Engagement in 2020, RMIT is in the process of recruiting for a Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education, Research and Engagement. The role is a Special Measures identified role for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Table 6.2 Indigenous workforce data (2020 breakdown)^{20 21 22 23}

Level/position	Permanent		Casual/contract/fixed-term	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
HEW 5		2		
HEW 6		3		
HEW 7		1		
HEW 8		4		
HEW 9		1		
HEW 10		2		
Casual			2	6
Academic Level A	10			
Academic Level B	3			
Academic Level C	1			
Academic Level E	1			
TEACHER VE 5	1			
Total	16	13	2	6

6.3. Indigenous Governance Mechanism

RMIT's Indigenous governance committee reflects our commitment to the principles and practices of self-determination. The governance committee is made up of the most senior Indigenous staff at RMIT including the leadership team from within the Office of Indigenous Education and Engagement.

The membership outlined in Table 6.3 was impacted throughout 2020. The Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education and Engagement moved on from RMIT and many of the current membership left the University or moved into different roles internally. Despite this impact, the available members of the Indigenous Governance Committee met fortnightly throughout the year, with these members having authority to take leadership in determining the use of ISSP resources and making key decisions related to the recommendation and/or approval of proposed activity.

Table 6.3 Indigenous Governance Committee Membership

Title	Current Incumbent	Community
Dep PVC, Indigenous Education and Engagement and Chair of Academic Board	Mark McMillan	Wiradjuri
Director, Indigenous Engagement	Stacey Campton	Gunggari
Senior Manager, Indigenous Education	Jason Brailey	Tharawal
HR Business Partner, DSC and Indigenous HR	Jillian Weaven	Wiradjuri
Elder in Residence	N'Arwee't Carolyn Briggs	Boon wurrung
Manager, Ngarara Willim Student Services	Nicole Shanahan	<u>Miriuwung Gajerrong</u> and Arabana
Manager, Indigenous Community Partnerships	Kevin Moore	Gurindji
Professor, School of Management, CoB	Mark Rose	Gunditjmara

Supporting this Committee, RMIT also has an Indigenous Staff Network which was constituted through the Enterprise Agreement. The Indigenous Staff Network meet four times a year to health check our business within the university and to discuss issues of community concern, including the treaty process in Victoria.

An action that will be undertaken in 2021 will be to draft a new Terms of Reference for the Indigenous Governance Committee to reflect a new and updated membership, with the input of a soon to be appointed Pro Vice Chancellor Indigenous Education, Research and Engagement.

6.3.1. Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

Members of RMIT's Indigenous Governance Committee endorse the approval of the performance and financial acquittal reports provided in this statement.

Additional information for completing the template

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- ¹ Only payments made during 2020 can be included in this table. For multi-year scholarship agreements, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded in the performance reporting for the relevant future grant year.
- ² Record the number of students (head count) not EFTSL.
- ³ Include both preserved and new ISSP scholarships.
- ⁴ This figures in this column should be the sum of the relevant row.
- ⁵ The total may not be the sum of the previous columns as some students may receive several scholarships.
- ⁶ Include payments to all enabling students, including remote and regional students.
- ⁷ Include payments to all undergraduate students, including remote and regional students.
- ⁸ Include payments to all postgraduate students, including remote and regional students.
- ⁹ Record only hours of instruction received by the students (do not include staff planning or organising time).
- ¹⁰ Include any costs associated with providing tutorial assistance, including staffing costs, materials, facilities etc.
- ¹¹ Add more rows if necessary.
- ¹² Include a brief description of the activity.
- ¹³ Providers can either provide a breakdown of the major activities or a total for all the activities undertaken. Examples of activities may include mentoring, outreach activities, promotion of scholarships, events, elder-in-residence, career guidance etc.
- ¹⁴ Only record amounts which would/did require payment during the 2020 calendar year. For multi-year scholarship offers, payments to be made in future grant years will be recorded against the reporting for the relevant future grant year.
- ¹⁵ Note the data in this table is a subsection of the all student scholarship data provided in Table 1.
- ¹⁶ This figures in this column should be the sum of the relevant row.
- ¹⁷ Record all verbal and written scholarship offers for the 2020 calendar year, including those offers that were not accepted by the student. Record the 2020 component of new scholarship offers and the planned 2020 value of previously awarded scholarships (including continuing scholarships and preserved scholarships).
- ¹⁸ This data confirms the provider's compliance with Section 21(3) of the Guidelines.
- ¹⁹ This section confirms that the provider complies with Section 35A of the Guidelines.
- ²⁰ While universities report on the number of Indigenous staff members through mainstream reporting requirements, the additional information provided in this section provides enhanced monitoring of the university's efforts in building its Indigenous workforce.
- ²¹ Record all Indigenous staff employed by the provider, including those not working on ISSP-related activities.
- ²² The numbers recorded here should be a headcount of staff and not the full-time equivalent.
- ²³ There is no longer a requirement to break up these by faculty. Please group together results by level.