



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement 2007 – 2011

'Core values / Shared responsibilities'

Introduction

The University of Newcastle recognises the cultural and linguistic diversity of its community and the community it serves, as a valuable resource. It believes that both the University and the wider community will benefit from a richer cultural and intellectual life if people of all racial and cultural backgrounds have equal access to work and study opportunities at the University.

The University acknowledges and values the Indigenous people of Australia as our first citizens and shares the vision of The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation:

A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.

Over its history of more than 40 years, the University of Newcastle has continued to define itself as a university of distinction, based on internationally recognised areas of strength in scholarship and research, as well as an enduring commitment to the principles of environmental sustainability and equity and diversity (Strategic Plan 2007 – 2011, *Building Distinction*, page 4). The guiding principles in *Building Distinction* include “As a global contributor, we are strongly committed to encouraging cultural diversity through racial and religious tolerance” (page 8).

Within the University’s Strategic Plan and related plans, a broad goal is to enhance access, participation and positive outcomes for members of equity target groups, consistent with equal opportunity and affirmative action principles.

The acknowledgment of the multicultural nature of Australian society is reflected in the University’s commitment to provide:

- adequate support programs for students and staff with different language and cultural backgrounds;
- effective awareness programs to increase the knowledge of the services and opportunities offered;
- curriculum review that ensures a sensitivity to the multicultural nature of the University’s student population; and
- promotion and publicity of its linguistic and cultural resources.

Within this framework, the University has developed and put into place strategies to address barriers to students and staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to foster the development of a diverse community. The University population is therefore culturally diverse. In 2007, that population consisted of:

- 21,240 students (8,370 EFTSL)
- 778 domestic students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds (Note 1);
- 2,343 fee paying overseas students;
- 2,213 staff (not counting casual staff);
- 163 staff identifying from racial, ethnic, and ethno-religious minority groups

The University’s Equity Plan 2007-2011 articulates the following ideal for the University:

Our systems, policies, and practices at all levels foster a culture which practises equity, excludes discrimination and values diversity. We recognise that disadvantage creates barriers for some groups and therefore we target assistance to members of those groups to ensure that - regardless of background - they have equal opportunity to access and succeed in study or work.

Notes

1. DEST defines people from non-English speaking backgrounds as those who are from overseas, arrived in Australia less than 10 years ago, and speak a language other than English as home.
2. Figures at 31 March 2007.

Objective 1:

The curricula, content and delivery of our courses and programs are inclusive, sensitive to cultural diversity, and designed to prepare graduates who are global citizens.

Strategies	Monitoring and Evaluation	Primary Responsibility and Timeline	Others Responsible
Promote inclusive curriculum content, course design and delivery through a website on the University's Homepage housing policies, guidelines, and resources on inclusive teaching and learning	Web site established	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Website set up by March 2008	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning Manager, Equity & Diversity
Include requirement in the Review of Academic Programs that content and delivery be sensitive to diverse cultures	Requirement incorporated in Terms of Reference	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) March 2008	Academic Registrar
Continue to update appropriate content on inclusive teaching for inclusion in Graduate Certificate in the Practice of Tertiary Teaching and workshops for sessional academics	Number and response of participants	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning In place, review annually in December	Manager, Equity & Diversity
Encourage the inclusion of relevant material relating to Australia's multicultural experience, and its impact on the area of study, in programs and/or courses	Feedback on internationalisation aspects from AUQA 2008 audit Curriculum review feedback	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Immediate and ongoing	Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)
Encourage practicums, field work and clinical and professional placements which include experiences/settings involving people from diverse cultural backgrounds	Diverse work integrated learning opportunities	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Immediate and ongoing	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Development & Community Partnerships)
Conduct regular cross-cultural workshops / training in diversity to enhance the sensitivities and skills of staff with a major role in providing service to students of diverse cultural backgrounds	Number of participants, participant feedback, level of integration of learning into practice	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services) In place, review annually in December	Academic Registrar

Objective 2:

As a community, we recognise and affirm the richness of cultural diversity and work with the community to enhance cultural development

Strategies	Monitoring and Evaluation	Primary Responsibility and Timeline	Others Responsible
Liaise regularly with relevant government, educational and community agencies or organisations to maintain awareness of services and facilities available for culturally different students. This process will also provide the opportunity to provide information on services available within the University and to seek feedback on these by the community.	Increase in NESB students Availability of information on web site and in hard copy	Academic Registrar In place, review annually in October	Director, Newcastle International
Establish closer partnerships with local community agencies and organisations to identify and support initiatives that address the needs of students from NESB	Feedback from students on level of support from the wider community	Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) In place, review annually	Director, Newcastle International
Contribute to plans, projects and initiatives developed by community agencies and organisations to strengthen cultural understanding and harmony	Greater involvement; outcomes reported in UoN Annual Report to Parliament	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Corporate Development and Community Partnerships)	Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)
Provide opportunities for people from culturally different backgrounds to access information about the University's programs and courses. University Open Days, Schools' Visit Days and other promotional activities will be marketed to ethnic communities.	Number of participants from NESB	Director, Marketing & Public Relations In place, review annually in October	Associate Director, Marketing and Public Relations

<p>Participate in appropriate school link or intervention programs for people from culturally different backgrounds (such as Links to Learning) to promote higher education opportunities and support services.</p>	<p>Outreach and promotional activities</p>	<p>Director, Marketing & Public Relations In place, review annually in December</p>	<p>Associate Director, Marketing & Public Relations</p>
<p>Promote events that enhance awareness of cultural diversity and social justice issues affecting staff, students and the broader community such as annual on-campus Cultural Awakenings festival, Harmony Week celebrations, and Human Rights & Social Justice Lecture.</p>	<p>Number of events, attendance levels & written/verbal feedback</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) In place, review annually in December</p>	<p>Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) Pro-Vice Chancellor (Corporate Development and Community Partnerships) Manager, Equity & Diversity</p>
<p>Generate media coverage that celebrates the cultural diversity of the University community; provide a balance of stories in internal publications which acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity; oversee promotional material to ensure that images and text reflect and celebrate cultural diversity.</p>	<p>Media coverage and publications reflect cultural diversity</p>	<p>Director, Marketing & Public Relations In place, review annually in December</p>	<p>Associate Director, Marketing & Public Relations Manager, Media & Public relations</p>

Objective 3:

We encourage a work and study environment which is supportive of diversity and free from discrimination

Strategies	Monitoring and Evaluation	Primary Responsibility and Timeline	Others Responsible
Continue to provide a range of group and private study programs in English as a second language for students.	Number of programs for NESB students	Director, English Language and Foundation Studies Centre In place, review annually in December.	
Continue to provide academic support to supplement language development programs and provide tutorial support for NESB students in programs or courses where this is required.	Centre for Teaching & Learning orientation program for postgraduate coursework NESB students	Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning 2008 and ongoing	Director, English Language & Foundation Studies Centre
Continue to provide a full range of student support services including health, counselling, accommodation, chaplaincy, student loans, careers advice, disability support and promote these to students and staff.	Web resources and information in HUBS Student Support Services annual report	Academic Registrar In place, review annually in December	Deputy Academic Registrar, Student Support Services
Provide specific orientation targeted to the needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds, including international students	Web resources and information in HUBS for NESB and international students	Academic Registrar 2008 and ongoing	Director, Newcastle International
Monitor participation of students from culturally diverse background by program of enrolment	Integration of needs into Faculty operational planning and learning support	Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors Annually in June	Manager, Equity & Diversity
Establish Prayer Rooms with suitable facilities on Callaghan, City Precinct, and Ourimbah campuses	Feedback from students and staff on standard of facilities	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Services)	Director, Facilities Management
Provide training to staff in cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural awareness	Number of programs and participants	Director Human Resources Ongoing from 2006	Associate Director, Organisational Development

Include a segment on cross cultural issues / diversity in staff selection training for recruitment interview panel members	Numbers of staff on appointment committees who have completed training	Director, Human Resources November 2007	Associate Director, Organisational Development
Provide detailed information on distribution and employment outcomes for people from language backgrounds other than English	Report to Executive Committee Annual Report to OEED	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Annually in July	Manager, Equity & Diversity
Promote the achievements/experiences of staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds by preparing articles for publication both on campus and in the community and by ensuring images in University publications reflect the cultural diversity of the University's community	Proactive engagement with Marketing & PR	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) In place, review annually In December	Director, Marketing & Public Relations Manager, Equity & Diversity
Provide a learning and working environment in which equity related complaints are responded to promptly at a point as close as possible to the issue; Monitor race discrimination complaints and ensure action is taken to address systemic issues identified	Report to University Council and Executive Committee from Complaints Office	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) In place, review annually in March	University Complaints Manager Manager, Equity & Diversity

EAPS Forward Plan for 2007

The University of Newcastle will complete the review and updating of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement to align with the University Strategic Plan 2007-2011.

We will also continue to:

- strongly support cultural diversity through further curriculum development and review
- continue to provide language and other support structures for students for whom English is not the first language
- continue to train staff in effective teaching and supervision across cultures, and in customer service across cultures
- broaden our outreach activities and show leadership in fostering and sponsoring culturally diverse events in the wider community