

Environmental Scan

1. **Institution** The University of Queensland
2. **Contact Person (and contact details)** Dr Katelyn Barney, The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, The University of Queensland, St Lucia 4072, email: k.barney@uq.edu.au (I am on maternity leave June – December 2012 and the contact person during this time is: Lauren Scheiwe, email: l.scheiwe@uq.edu.au, ph: 07 3365 6793)
3. **Name of Program/Initiative** Postgraduate Meeting Place
 - 3.1 **URL:** www.uq.edu.au/meetingplace
 - 3.2 **Start Date/Duration:** 2009 - 2010
4. **Brief outline of program** The research project explored ways in which UQ can encourage more Indigenous students to embark on postgraduate study and identified mechanisms to improve their retention and graduation rates. While the ATSI Unit at UQ provided wide-ranging assistance for Indigenous students, there were no programs designed specifically to help with this transition.
5. **Purpose/Aims** The main aim of this project was to assess the experiences of current Indigenous postgraduate students, completed Indigenous postgraduates and non-completed postgraduate students in diverse postgraduate coursework and research degrees, to better understand their experiences and facilitate the shift from undergraduate to postgraduate study for Indigenous students. The results underpinned recommendations on how Indigenous postgraduates can be more effectively supported to encourage greater numbers of Indigenous people to undertake postgraduate study, and improve retention and completion rates.
6. **Breadth of program** Cohort was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students at The University of Queensland.
7. **Category (please select all that apply and provide explanation where necessary)**

Category	Y?	Explanation
Policy		
Curriculum		
Program	Y	A UQ-hosted website for existing and prospective Indigenous postgraduates and a written report on the findings. The website offers resources and information for Indigenous students.
Other (please specify)	Y	Research project to assess the experiences of current Indigenous postgraduate students, completed Indigenous postgraduates and non-completed postgraduate students in

		diverse postgraduate coursework and research degrees, to better understand their experiences and facilitate the shift from undergraduate to postgraduate study for Indigenous students.
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8. Resources

- 8.1 **Start up budget:** \$25,602 from the Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP)
- 8.2 **Ongoing budget:** no ongoing budget however, a follow on study at UQ titled Transitions includes a budget to continue postgraduate seminar series. The follow on study is also setting up a mentoring program connecting completed and commencing Indigenous postgraduates, A symposium on Indigenous research capacity building for staff and Indigenous students and an Indigenous Student Research Network.

9. Outcomes

- 9.1 **Uptake:**
- 9.2 **Evaluation(s) conducted to date - Informal or formal) – and details of findings:** When the website was in development, students and Indigenous staff were invited to give feedback on the layout and content of the site. Both students and staff noted the importance of including many Indigenous people and their stories on the website was a common theme, as was the importance of having an “Indigenous” look to the website through artwork. This was then incorporated into the website. An evaluative survey administered to participants and staff in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit found that the initial website is being positively received.
- 9.3 **Evidence of success:** Google Analytics demonstrates that the website is being well used with numerous repeat visitors to the website.
- 9.4 **Evaluation(s) planned (and dates for this/these):**
- 9.5 **Major challenges:** Initially, challenges included accessing current student data at UQ.
- 9.6 **Other (Please specify):**

10. Publications/Reports (including links to those publically available)

Barney, K. In press. ‘Taking your mob with you’: Giving voice to the experiences of Indigenous Australian postgraduate students. *Higher Education Research and Development*.