

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** Transitions: Facilitating and Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 - 3.1 **URL:** currently in development
 - 3.2 **Start Date/Duration:** 2011-2012
4. **Brief outline of program** This new initiative explores the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in 3 key transition areas: (1) the transition from high school into higher education, (2) from VET programs into higher education, and (3) from undergraduate level to postgraduate level. The study examines ways in which UQ can encourage more Indigenous students to embark on undergraduate and postgraduate study and identify mechanisms to improve their retention and graduation rates. The project will identify factors that have contributed to the successful transition of Indigenous Australian students into UQ, identify best practice models or frameworks based upon these identified factors, and investigate how current initiatives intended to support Indigenous students can be improved. The project will provide recommendations and implementation of strategies to assist potential students in the three transition areas.
5. **Purpose/Aims** The aim of this project is thus to assess the experiences of current, prospective and completed Indigenous students in diverse degrees, to better understand their experiences and facilitate the shift to higher education for Indigenous students. Specifically, the project will examine: What disciplinary areas are Indigenous students currently undertaking at UQ? What support mechanisms do Indigenous students find helpful at UQ? What is the role of bridging programs in supporting Indigenous student groups to make this transition and what are the additional supports required (including structural and financial support)? What are the specific transition and support needs of Indigenous Australian student population? The results will inform the project outcomes to ensure Indigenous students are more effectively supported and encouraged to undertake university study and improve retention and completion rates.
6. **Breadth of program** (is it in a particular subject, program, school, faculty, across the institution, campus, with a particular cohort, etc). The cohort is undergraduate and postgraduate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students at UQ.
7. **Category (please select all that apply and provide explanation where necessary)**

Category	Y?	Explanation
Policy		

Curriculum		
Program	Y	<p>There are five key project outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating a website for potential Indigenous students at UQ in the transition from high school and VET titled the Undergraduate Meeting Place that will be based on the current successful website for Indigenous postgraduates at UQ (www.uq.edu.au/meetingplace). 2. A mentoring program for Indigenous undergraduates and postgraduates 3. A symposium on Indigenous Research Capacity Building for staff and Indigenous students 4. An Indigenous Postgraduate Student Research Network 5. A seminar series for Indigenous postgraduate students to supplement the current existing support website which was the result of a recent HEESP funded project.
Other (please specify)	Y	A research project analysing the experiences of Indigenous students in the transition into higher education.

8. Resources (optional – we are trying to determine what sort of resourcing is necessary to make the initiative work)

8.1 Start up budget: \$172,000 from Higher Education Equity Support Program (HEESP)

8.2 Ongoing budget:

9. Outcomes – Outcomes are currently in development and yet to launched. Data is being collected on students experiences through interviews with students, graduates and non-completd students.

9.1 Uptake:

9.2 Evaluation(s) conducted to date - Informal or formal) – and details of findings:

9.3 Evidence of success:

9.4 Evaluation(s) planned (and dates for this/these):

9.5 Major challenges:

9.6 Other (Please specify):

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

In development