Equity and Diversity Plan
2016-2020

Southern Cross
University

The Equity and Diversity Plan 2016-2020 is aligned with the University's Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Vision

Southern Cross University will be recognised for enriching our communities through the excellence of our scholarship and the achievements of our graduates.

Mission

We equip our students to live a life they value and to be effective global citizens. We do this by creating inspirational and engaged learning experiences.

We create and apply knowledge in partnership with our communities in fields that are regionally relevant and globally significant.

Values

Southern Cross University's values are the basis of how we interact with each other, the working environment we create and the way we connect with our students and the wider community. We are committed to bringing these values to life on a daily basis by our individual and collective commitment.

Collegiality

We demonstrate collegiality through:

Openness and Respect

- Being open with each other and open in our thinking

- Saying what we believe and doing it in a constructive and respectful manner

- Engaging with diverse cultural and Indigenous perspectives in both global and local settings.

Collaboration and Trust

- Working as a team, drawing on combined strengths to meet our shared goals

- Trusting our colleagues to challenge us in a positive manner, and supporting each other

- Engaging with our local and global communities and partners for mutual benefit.

Integrity

We demonstrate integrity through:

Honesty and Ethical Behaviour

- Being truthful in all our dealings

- Acting consistently with what is said and the principles held

- Pursuing practices that develop the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of our University, and local and global communities

- Advancing human rights and our commitment to providing opportunities for students and staff in an inclusive, culturally safe environment.

Drive and Accountability

- Striving to ensure the University's ongoing success

- Having the drive and commitment to innovate based on rigorous analysis

- Being accountable for our individual and collective actions and for the performance of those we lead.

Equity and Diversity at SCU

Southern Cross University is committed to being an inclusive and culturally safe work and study environment where all students and staff are valued.

We are proud of the diversity of our staff and students and committed to fostering a diverse, fair and inclusive environment as reflected in the Values stated in the University's Strategic Plan. We value our engagement with the diverse communities surrounding our campuses and benefit from the knowledge, lived experience and perspectives they bring.

SCU currently leads the sector in access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, students from regional areas and students who are first in their family to attend university. We welcome students from more than 50 countries throughout the world and offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses in an inspiring and supportive learning environment.

The University actively supports lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) staff and students and has implemented activities, events and programs specifically to acknowledge and support LGBTIQ staff and students to thrive and succeed at SCU.

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Goal 1

To improve the access, participation, retention and success rates of students from:

- Low socioeconomic backgrounds
- Regional and remote areas
- Students with disability
- Non-English speaking backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Actions	Key Performance Indicators	Timeline	Responsibility
Access:			
• Continue to improve and enhance targeted school and community outreach programs working in partnership with regional and local schools, the VET sector and communities.	Exceed national access and participation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from low SES and regional backgrounds.	Ongoing	Head, Equity & Diversity
• Develop and implement an SCU College access program for culturally and linguistically diverse students.	Access program implemented and evaluated.	End 2016	Director, SCU College
• Provide a diverse range of alternative entry pathways and access arrangements and so continue to grow access and participation rates of students from equity groups.	Increased enrolments of students from equity groups.	Ongoing	Senior DVC Director, SCU College Manager, Admissions & Scholarships
• Provide access to a suite of tools to assist students prepare and transition to university study.	Tools developed are accessible and utilised by all students regardless of mode of study.	Mid 2017	DVC (Education)
Participation, Retention and Success (transition and during studies):			
• Enhance and expand academic and non-academic support for students including first in family to attend university.	Whole-of-University framework developed to provide direction to all academic and non-academic support strategies.	End 2017	DVC (Education) Head, Equity & Diversity
	Objectives under Strategy 1 from 2015-2017 Student Retention and Success Strategy have been implemented.	End 2017	Director Centre for Teaching & Learning Head, Counselling & Psychology Support
• Increase the number of commencing students from equity groups participating in the UniMentor Program.	Numbers increased across all equity groups with growth in each year of the plan.	Annually	Head, Equity & Diversity
• Continue to implement inclusive teaching strategies that value students' diverse ways of knowing and learning.	Systems developed which recognise students' individual achievements consistent with their pace of learning.	End 2017	DVC (Education)
• Focus on regional and remote students particularly those studying at a distance from our campuses.	Actions developed and implemented that improve the current student experience of learner engagement for regional and remote students.	End 2017	DVC (Education)

Goal 2

Continue to build a workplace that promotes and supports diversity, equity and fairness.

Actions	Key Performance Indicators	Timeline	Responsibility
• Ensure that managers and employees at all levels are aware of relevant equity legislation, Universities Australia and other guidelines, and SCU's policies, and equity and diversity goals/targets.	Information and briefings provided to and made accessible to all staff. Annual briefings to Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee.	By end of 2016 and annually thereafter	Head, Equity & Diversity Director, Human Resources
• Workplace equity and diversity principles are incorporated into SCU leadership development training.	Learning and development programs amended to include equity and diversity principles.	By end of 2016	Director, Human Resources
• Increase the representation of equal employment opportunity (EEO) group members in the SCU workforce.	Increased percentage of staff (of total workforce) in equity groups.	Annually	Director, Human Resources Head, Equity & Diversity
• Improve the quality and reporting of EEO data collection.	Increase in EEO data collected. EEO data reported to Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee and Head of Work Units.	Annually	Director, Human Resources Head, Equity & Diversity
• Develop and implement an Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES).	New IES developed and approved.	February 2017	Director, Human Resources
• Implement strategies to improve the gender balance in our research programs, particularly in disciplinary areas where we know we have an under-representation of one group.	Participate in the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Pilot of the Athena SWAN Charter Australia and complete an application for the Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award.	End 2018	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)

Goal 3

We will provide a diverse, inclusive and respectful work and study environment where students and employees understand and value the benefits of diversity.

Actions	Key Performance Indicators	Timeline	Responsibility
• Promote and affirm the benefits of diversity through workshops, promotional and educational materials, celebrations and events on campus.	Workshops, materials and events are delivered to students and employees.	Annually	Head, Equity & Diversity
• Develop and implement a University Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).	RAP developed, approved and implemented.	End 2016	Director, Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples
• Raise awareness about University equity and diversity programs, policies and initiatives.	Students and employees are aware of and engage with equity and diversity programs, policies and initiatives.	Annually	Head, Equity & Diversity
• Implement and provide ongoing support to LGBTIQ visibility and inclusion strategies (e.g. LGBTIQ Safe Place Program, LGBTIQ staff and student Ally Program).	Continue to provide LGBTIQ Safe Place Program. Implement Ally Program.	Ongoing End 2018	Head, Equity & Diversity
• Engage with students and staff in the implementation of equity priorities throughout the life of the plan.	Consultation with staff and students annually across the life of the plan.	Annually	DVC (Education) Head, Equity & Diversity

Related Plans:

Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2014-2017

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