

Indigenous Student Success Program

2021 Performance Report

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1. Enrolments (Access)

In 2021, Western Sydney University revealed increases in undergraduate and postgraduate commencements for Indigenous students demonstrating that the marketing, engagement, and planning in this area was gaining traction and resonating with the marketplace.

Both the Heartbeat program and Pathways to Dreaming program are embedded at Western Sydney University and are core programs in our Future Student Engagement portfolio. The outcomes of each program are outlined below along with changes made to ensure program delivery was maintained during the COVID 19 pandemic. Details of the programs can be found [here](#).

The **Heartbeat program** is targeted to years 3-6 and consists of an on-campus visit, an in-school presentation and an online webinar each year. Heartbeat raises students' awareness of their wellbeing, Indigenous health issues and inspires them to consider careers in medicine and health science-related fields. Indigenous culture is also embedded in the program and delivered by Indigenous Elders, staff, students and a range of community and industry partners. To reach students learning remotely in 2021, Heartbeat delivered a mix of face-to-face and online sessions. The team held 9 online webinars about a range of topics with 1296 attendees from 49 schools. The team also delivered 21 in-school workshops with 17 schools and 522 participants. This was an increase on 2020 outcomes when the program engaged with 422 primary school students across all activities.

The **Pathways to Dreaming** program offers Indigenous Secondary students in Western Sydney access to, and increased awareness of, higher education and career opportunities throughout their high school journey, including skills-building workshops and cultural activities. Students are also supported through the transition to higher education or the workforce after high school completion. Students who successfully transition into higher education at Western Sydney University (including The College) are offered continued and ongoing support where required. In 2021, the program activities delivered were: 19 online Yarning sessions with 23 high schools and 489 participants; 7 campus experience days; 22 high schools with 414 participants (an increase of 183% on 2020 participation) and 55 in-school mentoring sessions with 800 participants.

The **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathways Program** is a 2-day event held three times per year where applicants are assessed in Academic Literacy and Numeracy as well as suitability in their chosen course. The program is available to current school leavers and mature age applicants and is now via online delivery through Open Learning due to the pandemic. Offers for this program in 2021 were lower than 2020, which we believe is linked to implications associated with COVID-19. Further details about the Pathways Program can be found [here](#).

An exciting new initiative is the **Unlocking Careers in Sport Program** which launched in 2020. This annual event is an opportunity to provide experiences for Indigenous students in Years 10-12 who are interested in sport and related careers. In 2021, 176 students from 44 schools participated with high participation from regional and remote High Schools. Details can be found [here](#).

All outreach programs are sponsored by HEPP funding and all WSU Schools participate in these initiatives.

Western Sydney University Schools

Western Sydney University has twelve Schools that deliver dynamic research and learning/teaching programs. Each School provides valuable contributions to the Pathways to Dreaming sessions, Heartbeat sessions and Unlocking Careers in Sport programs, with a view of inspiring school students into a variety of courses with career trajectories relevant to interests and support structures in place. Some examples of School accomplishments in 2021 include:

- The [School of Social Sciences](#) working toward increasing Indigenous student enrolment and retention, having a total of 104 Indigenous students enrolled in 2021, an increase of 11.5% from 2020. Fourteen percent of students enrolled received a distinction grade or higher in their most recent semester;
- The [School of Science](#) is making a concerted effort with 8 students undertaking the NSW Health Aboriginal Environmental Health Training Program. An additional 3 positions in the trainee program have been filled, with students commencing in 2022 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed between NSW Health Aboriginal Environmental Health Training Program and the [School of Science](#).
- In 2021 the [School of Business](#) saw a 54% increase in Indigenous student enrolments, working in partnership with AMEX to establish new scholarships to the value of \$20,000 per year available to new and continuing students. The School is currently in discussions with the Reserve Bank to develop scholarships/ internships and a High School program for 2022;
- The [School of Law](#) established an Indigenous specific cadetship with the Coleman Greig Law firm and continues their free textbook scheme to all Indigenous students across all teaching periods. A dedicated professional staff member provides ongoing support to all Indigenous students through a monthly phone call and email. This staff member puts students in contact with dedicated Indigenous support services, ensures that all enrolments are current and that any academic issues are resolved promptly in collaboration with the Academic Program Advisor. Individualised academic support is provided to students who are facing challenges that impact their studies. Individualised non-academic support is provided to students to help them gain employment in the legal profession. Assistance with appropriate business attire, resume writing, and interview skills is also provided.
- The [School of Nursing and Midwifery](#) support Indigenous students to apply for NSW Health Cadetships, University Scholarships and Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSiNaM) Awards.
- The [School of Science](#) offers Indigenous teaching through the subject *Mangamai'bangawarra: Indigenous Science*.

The combination of financial support in scholarships and textbooks, skill-ready internships, and professional and personal support strengthens the reputation of Western Sydney University as a university that provides a great education, support and value for money for Indigenous students in a culturally appropriate environment. Moving our [Open Days](#) to virtual interactive platform proved challenging but we received great feedback and our numbers in 2022 should support this. The University also introduced a [Year 12 Student Info Hub](#) to assist Year 12 students to make contact as needed.

Table 1: Course Load (EFTSL): Domestic vs Indigenous Students, 2017-2021

		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Course Type	Commencing Status	Indigenous	Domestic	Indigenous	Domestic	Indigenous	Domestic	Indigenous	Domestic	Indigenous	Domestic
Postgraduate	Commencing	11.4	1,255.1	21.9	1,342.7	18.6	1,299.4	20.1	1,313.0	27.5	1,166.4
	Continuing	24.6	1,666.5	18.0	1,627.9	26.4	1,715.4	22.4	1,656.3	25.0	1,718.9
	Total	36.0	2,921.5	40.0	2,970.7	45.0	3,014.8	42.6	2,969.3	52.5	2,885.4
Undergraduate	Commencing	181.4	9,749.7	183.0	10,378.6	174.7	9,620.1	179.5	9,523.6	197.9	8,470.3
	Continuing	270.4	15,394.4	292.2	16,109.4	295.6	16,954.7	297.9	17,516.9	293.9	17,370.3
	Total	451.7	25,144.1	475.2	26,488.0	470.3	26,574.8	477.4	27,040.5	491.7	25,840.6
Non-Award Course	Commencing	0.3	102.0	0.5	117.6		118.1	0.9	101.8	0.0	61.6
	Continuing		15.3		23.5		31.5		26.9	0	20.6
	Total	0.3	117.3	0.5	141.1		149.6	0.9	128.6	0.0	82.3
Enabling	Commencing	6.9	393.5	10.0	533.9	6.5	512.9	3.4	242.0	5.2	220.8
	Continuing	0.3	42.9		42.5	0.1	27.1	0.3	15.2	0.1	17.9
	Total	7.1	436.4	10.0	576.4	6.6	540.0	3.7	257.2	5.3	238.7
Cross-Institutional	Commencing		8.4	0.3	5.1		4.8	0.1	4.3	0.3	3.9
	Continuing		0.4		1.0		0.3		0.8	0	0.3
	Total		8.8	0.3	6.1		5.0	0.1	5.0	0.3	4.1
Grand Total		495.1	28,628.0	526.0	30,182.3	521.9	30,284.2	524.7	30,400.6	549.8	29,051.0

Table 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Headcount, 2012-21

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students	448	488	544	597	636	665	732	732	744	809
Total Students (Domestic Students Only)	35,976	37,607	39,210	40,315	39,638	38,855	41,352	41,331	41,332	40,962
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (%)	1.25%	1.30%	1.39%	1.48%	1.60%	1.71%	1.77%	1.77%	1.80%	1.98%

Table 3: ISSP Scholarships - breakdown of 2021 payments¹

	Education Costs		Accommodation			Reward		Total ¹	
	\$	No.	\$	No.		\$	No.	\$	No.
Enabling ¹									
Undergraduate ¹	\$152,500	73	\$120,000	12		\$55,250	12	\$327,750	97
Post-graduate ¹	\$247,534	7				\$14,000	2	\$261,534	9
Other									
Total	\$400,034	80	\$120,000	12		\$69,250	14	\$589,284	106

1. Not including any Donor-funded scholarships.

2. Progression (Outcomes)

The University saw progression rates fall across all student categories in 2021, from a high in 2020 (total domestic rates 84.3% to 80.4% and Indigenous 80.8% to 71.7%). With the uncertainty of extended COVID-19 lockdowns and isolation requirements, changes in industry workforce size and environments, and people relocating at higher rates, some students deferred their academic studies to adjust to the challenges of the pandemic. The influx of short vocational courses such as undergraduate certificates did not appear to significantly appeal to Indigenous students, however, non-Indigenous students' rates soared. One of the likely reasons to explain the decrease in progression for Indigenous students in 2021 is the additional pressures and challenges Indigenous students experienced during the pandemic, particularly as Indigenous Australians were identified as one of the most at-risk groups to suffer serious health outcomes should they contract COVID-19. This, coupled with additional responsibilities to care for family, community members and Elders, placed additional pressures on the Indigenous student cohort.

Western Sydney University is deeply committed to providing our students with the best chance to succeed in their choice of academic program. Our retention strategies incorporate a broad range of areas across the University.

BADANAMI – Centre for Indigenous Education

Badanami continued to operate predominantly via a remote and online support model for the University's Indigenous students in 2021. A comprehensive communication plan was created and implemented which supported students through group and personalised support techniques. Students received personalised phone calls every 3 weeks allowing staff to check in with students and proactively offer support moving forward. Weekly online interactions via zoom were introduced to increase student communication and engagement between support staff and fellow students. Care packages and online activities were created to encourage engagement. Towards the end of 2021, Badanami staff returned to campus, facilitating the return of face-to-face support. Badanami has adopted a hybrid-style support model, enabling staff to communicate and engage with students both in-person and via online/remote interactions. This has increased the reach and up-take of support to the University's Indigenous students.

SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOLS

All Schools continue to support Indigenous students with eleven School's implementing a School Indigenous Strategy, which aligns with the University's *Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025*. Each School Strategy begins with a firm commitment to Indigenous students noting target enrolment/completion rates and appropriate strategies to support these targets. The School's Strategies can be found [here](#).

Additional examples of support from the Schools include:

The School of Nursing and Midwifery through its First Nations Liaison's developed the following initiatives to support student success in 2021:

- Tailored welcome video for Indigenous students;
- 'Clinical Yarning' video for teaching staff;
- Weekly virtual drop-in sessions for Indigenous students during COVID lockdown;
- Supporting Indigenous students to apply for NSW Health Cadetships, University Scholarships and CATSINaM Awards; and
- Cultural Immersion Event for students and staff, celebrating local Indigenous culture and knowledge.

In consultation with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership, the School commissioned a new design of the student clinical uniform. The design features artwork produced by University staff and students under the guidance of Indigenous artist Allan McKenzie, signifying our connection to country and commitment to educating the next generation of Indigenous nurses and midwives to support the health and wellbeing of their communities

The School of Education continues to implement several strategies to improve the attraction, retention and success of Indigenous students where the increasing regulation of the teaching profession continues to have significant impact on the operation of all facets of teacher education programs. The School has:

- integrated a range of curriculum features into undergraduate and postgraduate Teacher Education programs to ensure that graduating teachers are well prepared to teach all facets of the curriculum, including mandatory subjects in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, History, and Education;
- Continued employment of an Indigenous professional staff member to provide support to all students across all School of Education programs to students;
- Expanded opportunities for Indigenous colleagues from the profession to contribute to teaching in subjects across the undergraduate primary and postgraduate Teacher Education programs; and
- Continued support for the *Healthy Culture, Healthy Country* professional learning program which emphasises the development of cultural capabilities of Pre-service Teachers to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The trend in commencing, attrition and retention rates for the specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education program in the School of Education over the past four years has been consistently positive. The block-mode delivery contributes to students' development of a professional identity and a sense of connectedness, which extends beyond the classroom into their workplaces and communities. Staff in the School work closely with colleagues from the Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education to ensure students receive advice and support on matters including access to Tutoring for Success services to support their learning.

In 2021 the School of Social Sciences hosted its first 'Indigenous Learning and Teaching Showcase'. Forty participants attended, with the Showcase commended for its "variety of approaches and practical suggestions" to Indigenous learning and teaching. Demonstrating cross-school collaboration, members from the School of Law plan to implement components of the recorded showcase for a Law-specific seminar for their academics to assist them "to more effectively include Indigenous content and perspectives within their subjects".

The School of Social Sciences enjoyed active participation in events in the Greater Western Sydney community in 2021. An example of this is the First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN) who partnered with the School in the development of research and policy to support a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability sector. The School has now developed, in partnership with FPDN and others, a minor in Disability Studies to be offered from 2022.

A School Indigenous Communities Working Group was established by the School of Business, and a School Indigenous Strategy developed. The School of Business commissioned an original artwork "Structure and Country" 2021 (Campus Dreaming) created by Bunda-Bunda man Geoff Sellman with Simon A. Cook of the Social Canvas. This artwork is recreated in various high-quality items which the School uses as gifts of thanks for members of the community and industry who partner with the School.

The School of Law had a cohort of 25 Indigenous students in 2021. It is expected that this number will increase as a result of a number of new exciting initiatives the School has implemented to support Indigenous students, including:

- Continuation of free textbook scheme to all Indigenous students, across all teaching periods;
- A key professional staff member provided ongoing support to all Indigenous students through a monthly phone call and email. This staff member connects students with dedicated indigenous support services, ensures that all enrolments are current and that any academic issues are resolved promptly in collaboration with the Academic Course Advisor;
- Individualised academic support provided to students who are facing challenges that are adversely impacting their studies;
- Individualised non-academic support provided to students to assist them in gaining employment in the legal profession, assistance with appropriate business attire, resume writing and interview skills;
- The School Network for Law and Human Rights hosted a seminar titled 'David Dungay Jr and Black Deaths in Custody' which led to the creation of a working group within the School on Black Lives Matter;
- The launch of a 5-year Indigenous Strategy in consultation with Law staff, students and the DVC Indigenous Leadership;
- Ongoing renewal of curriculum through inclusion of Indigenous content and voice, embedding this into Programs; and
- Approval of a First Nations People Access to Justice Law Clinic, to be staffed by a Solicitor funded for two years by the Commonwealth Government National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund (NPILF). This clinic will be located at the Western Sydney University's Parramatta City Campus (IPSQ) from 2022. The clinical subject has been developed in collaboration with Indigenous partners.

The School of Health Sciences completed an Indigenous curriculum needs analysis survey and are working on the outcomes from that survey. The subject *Games for Diverse Groups* has embedded Indigenous culture and history in each weeks content. Paramedicine is working to enhance Indigenisation within its curriculum. The Paramedicine Program aims to Indigenise the revised curriculum and the Program more broadly, including increasing the cultural competency amongst the Paramedicine teaching staff. Speech Pathology conducted workshops in 2021 on how to best engage with First Nations People and communities and Indigenous outcomes and experience in healthcare contexts.

The School of Humanities and Communication Arts established an Indigenous Committee which participated in a cultural interface consultation that resulted in the School's Indigenous Strategy document. This strategy was launched at the School Planning Day in December 2021 with a short film made on Country by an Australian First Nation Scholar who coordinates all subjects in the Indigenous Major offered by the School. The School's Indigenous Committee focused on Indigenous cultural mindfulness and professional engagement, understanding cultural protocols, curriculum content and culturally-informed pedagogical practice.

TUTORING FOR SUCCESS

The Tutoring for Success Program (TFS) has had a positive impact on the overall Indigenous student experience, including success and retention rates. The Program is administered by Badanami – Centre of Indigenous Education in a culturally safe manner. In 2021, there was a 39% increase in total number of tutoring contracts issued resulting in a significant increase in students gaining valuable tuition support. The TFS Program allows students to improve their academic skill set and build valuable partnerships with their tutor, with many of these partnerships resulting in beneficial mentoring opportunities where student is mentored by a tutor with a sound background and knowledge of their degree, area of study and industry.

Table 4: Tutorial assistance provided in 2021

Level of study	Number of unique students assisted ¹	Total number of tutorial sessions attended ¹	Total hours of assistance ¹	Expenditure ¹ (\$)
Enabling	3	8	24	\$1,171
Undergraduate	146	61	8907	\$434,760
Postgraduate	2	23	47	\$2,294
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Total	151	92	8,978	\$438,225

NB: These numbers take into consideration that some students have multiple contracts with different tutors which means tutorial sessions needed to be based on the total contracts issued (203) and not the unique number of students receiving TFS (151)

3. Completions (outcomes)

Embedded strategies to improve award course completion include Scholarships, information sessions, students engaged as Student Ambassadors and *Jobs on Campus* initiatives. The number of scholarships with paid working experience has increased and provide students with a holistic education and increased stability whilst studying.

The Academy is unique to Western Sydney University, offering high achieving scholars additional educational opportunities. [The Academy](#) membership fell slightly in 2021, however, the conversion rate for Indigenous students remains high with an individualised strategy used when contacting eligible Indigenous students in 2020. The impact of COVID-19 negatively impacted Indigenous participation in 2021, however the University has engaged a strategy to invite a greater number of high achieving Indigenous students into The Academy programs in 2022.

The School of Social Sciences continues to develop and implement strategies across both education and research to further Indigenous inclusion, enhance opportunities for pathways into the University, improve graduate outcomes for Indigenous students and look at ways to promote progression into Higher Degree Research (HDR) as well as opportunities to engage in, and disseminate research with, and by, Indigenous Australian Peoples. The School continues to pursue their commitment to the Indigenous Graduate Attribute, a new undergraduate subject *Introduction to Indigenous Australia: Peoples, Places and Philosophies* was introduced within the School's undergraduate core in 2021.

Careful, systematic admissions processes that identify students prepared for successful completion of their qualifications is monitored by the Pathways Program Committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership. The committee regularly reviews admission criteria for students entering the University via Pathways programs. Indigenous student retention and success is also monitored through regular and routine reporting and analysis at university-level through the Senate Education Committee (a standing committee of Academic Senate).

4. Regional and remote students

The University continues to offer an online delivery platform with Programs available to regional and remote students. We have a small regional and remote student cohort as shown in **Table 6**. Most students enrolled at the University reside within the Greater Western Sydney region , however there has been a 100% growth in students enrolled from the NSW mid-North Coast.

There was an increase in regional schools participating in online activities in our Outreach programs for 2021. An additional 12 regional High Schools registered to attend the Unlocking Careers in Sport events, proving a successful program. We have also started to work with Lithgow High School, De La Salle College (Lithgow) and Portland Central School through the Maldan Ngurr Ngurra Lithgow Transformation Hub. Strong connections have been formed and Indigenous students from those schools have been invited to attend our Pathways to Dreaming program activities in 2022.

Northlakes High School on the Central Coast of NSW has also started to participate in online elements of the Pathways to Dreaming program. Invitations to participate in online elements of the program have also been extended to Central West schools.

With our Outreach programs increasing their engagement in regional areas of NSW, we expect to see a continued increase in enrolments in our programs in future years.

Note: there are no specific ISSP Scholarships for remote and regional Indigenous Students. These are captured in the broader scholarships made available to all Indigenous students.

Table 6: Western Sydney University ETFSL by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Permanent Residence, 2015-21

Permanent Home	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
GWS	352.2	361.7	383.1	419.4	408.6	410.6	421.5
Central Coast	7.8	9.8	8.2	6.6	8.1	8.5	8.9
Central West	10.4	21.0	16.1	13.5	12.3	9.5	9.7
Far West	0.9		0.3	2.5	2.9	3.1	2.5
Hunter	8.9	6.8	6.5	7.1	8.9	9.9	7.4
Illawarra	13.1	15.2	10.1	10.8	11.5	12.5	11.6
Inner Sydney	19.7	26.1	20.7	19.0	19.1	21.4	31.1
Mid-North Coast	3.5	3.5	1.1	1.9	2.0	2.9	6.0
Murray	0.8	0.4			0.8		0.0
Murrumbidgee	0.6	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.9	3.0	1.1
North-Western Region	13.5	15.3	19.0	15.0	13.8	12.5	13.9
Northern Region	1.5	1.3	2.0	5.0	3.8	6.6	2.8
Outer Sydney	12.3	11.5	13.6	8.3	9.7	8.6	17.6
Richmond-Tweed	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.4	2.9	2.4	2.6
South-Eastern Region	3.6	4.0	4.6	3.5	2.0	3.1	1.5
ACT	1.3	0.9	0.8	1.3	2.0	1.3	0.9
NT	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.3
QLD	3.6	2.8	2.0	2.6	4.8	3.9	3.8
SA			0.1	0.8		0.1	2.0
TAS	2.0		1.0	1.5	3.8	2.4	1.9
VIC	0.4	1.5	1.4	1.9	2.6	1.6	2.1
WA				0.5			0.8
Interstate Total	8.3	6.7	6.8	10.4	13.9	10.0	11.8
Grand Total	458.3	484.8	495.1	525.7	521.9	524.7	549.8

5. Eligibility criteria

5.1 Indigenous Education Strategy

The key strategy driving the Indigenous education commitments at Western Sydney University is our [Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025](#). The Strategy aspires ‘to be a university that serves and empowers our community as an anchor institution to the region while being recognised as a national leader in Indigenous education, employment and research.’ The University also has an [Indigenous Australian Education Policy](#) that compliments the Indigenous education strategy.

We are extremely pleased with the Indigenous student headcount in 2021, producing our strongest Indigenous student numbers to date with an increase of 10% on the previous years’ data, as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Headcount, 2012-21

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students	448	488	544	597	636	665	732	732	744	809
Total Students (Domestic Students Only)	35,976	37,607	39,210	40,315	39,638	38,855	41,352	41,331	41,332	40,962
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (%)	1.25%	1.30%	1.39%	1.48%	1.60%	1.71%	1.77%	1.77%	1.80%	1.98%

The Western Sydney University [Reconciliation Statement](#) was approved by the Board of Trustees in May 1998. More recently, the University made a public statement demonstrating our support for the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#).

5.2 Indigenous Workforce Strategy

Western Sydney University is committed to achieving an employment population parity rate of 3% by 2025. This commitment is clearly stated in the *Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025*. We understand the need to create opportunities across a range of employment levels – from entry level positions through to senior Professoriate and Executive positions.

In 2021 the University recruited leading Indigenous scholars, Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Director of Indigenous Research, and Professor Susan Page, Director of Indigenous Learning and Teaching. These positions contribute to the University achieving the bold objectives outlined in the *Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025*.

The University also recognises the need for key positions to lead Indigenous Employment. An Indigenous Employment Coordinator (HEW 7) commenced in May 2021, and Manager of Indigenous Employment commenced in March 2022. A sustainable Indigenous traineeship program ([Ignite](#)) was launched in early 2022 with the aim to recruit ten trainees for a 12-month contract across a range of units across the University, while concurrently completing a Certificate III in Business Administration.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery employed two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff in 2021. In addition to their academic activities, each of these staff members undertakes the role of First Nations Liaison for the disciplines of Nursing and Midwifery. The School has also engaged an Indigenous trainee from the Ignite program for 2022.

The School of Education developed a School-specific Indigenous Strategy to complement the University's *Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025*. The work to develop this plan was supported by a commitment to increase the culture awareness of all staff in the School. All staff in the School completed Cultural Awareness Training with Boomalli Consulting Pty Ltd. These initial sessions will be followed by further workshops in 2022 to support the ongoing cultural capacity of staff. Sixty staff from the School of Business attended Cultural Awareness Training, with the School also preparing a School-specific Indigenous Strategy. The School has welcomed an Indigenous Trainee from the Ignite Program in 2022.

The School of Social Sciences appointed an Indigenous full-time tenured (academic level B) Lecturer in the Sociology academic work group.

The Indigenous workforce at the University has increased over 40%, from 88 to 124, from 2020 with increases across all categories listed in Table 8. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Employment Policy can be found [here](#).

Table 8: 2021 Indigenous workforce data

Level/position	Permanent	Casual /contract / fixed-term	Level / Position	Permanent	Casual / contract / Fixed term
Academic			Non-academic		
Academic Guest Speakers		2	HEW 1		18
Academic Casual Tutors		15	HEW 2		5
Academic Casuals		11	HEW 3	1	7
Academic A	4		HEW 4	1	1
Academic B	6	2	HEW 5	5	7
Academic C	1		HEW 6	8	6
Academic D	2		HEW 7	7	4
Academic E	3		HEW 8	1	
Adjunct		2	Senior	1	1
Conjoint		2			
Executive		1			
Totals	16	35	Totals	24	49

5.3 Indigenous Governance Mechanism

WSU Indigenous Governance Mechanism

The Indigenous Governance Mechanism (IGM) is chaired by Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership (DVCIL), one of seven members of the Western Sydney University Senior Executive Group. The IGM consists of four Indigenous members: the DVCIL (Chair), the Director of Indigenous Learning and Teaching, the Director of Indigenous Research, and the Director of Badanami Centres of Indigenous Education. The IGM aligns their practice with Terms of Reference, which comply with National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) guidelines.

The IGM met seven times in 2021. Along with the four IGM members, each meeting also included members from the Division of Finance and Resources to ensure ISSP funds were allocated in accordance with the NIAA ISSP Handbook (issued May 2020). The IGM has responsibility to advise, recommend and monitor use of ISSP grant funding.

Broader Indigenous Leadership at WSU

WSU is deeply committed to ensuring Indigenous people are involved in decision making processes across the University. This is ensured through several different channels which include:

- Indigenous representation on the Board of Trustees: Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik AO served on the Board of Trustees from 2016-2021. James Christian PSM commenced his term on the Board of Trustees in early 2022;
- The promotion of Professor Michelle Trudgett from Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation to Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership in August 2021. Professor Trudgett also served as Interim Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for three months in 2021. Western Sydney University was the second University to establish an Indigenous-focused Deputy Vice-Chancellor position, honouring our commitment to Indigenous leadership;
- An Elders Advisory Committee meets quarterly. Members are briefed on all Indigenous activity across the University and provide cultural advice and approval as required;
- Eleven schools across the University produced school-based Indigenous Strategies in line with the University's *Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025*. These local strategies are committed to Indigenous leadership and can be found [here](#); and
- An Indigenous Professoriate Group, currently consisting of five senior Indigenous academics who provide advice to the DVCIL on various matters.

5.3.1 Statement by the Indigenous Governance Mechanism

I am confident that the activities reported in this document are aligned with ISSP Guidelines and consistent with our University-wide approach to Indigenous Australians. We continued to collaborate with our partners internally and externally to provide current and prospective Indigenous students with the resources needed to excel during their time studying with us. Our leadership and engagement programs will continue to expand to support our students. I look forward to continuing to shape and implement the next stages of our WSU 2020-2025 *Indigenous Strategy* that will further empower Western Sydney University to become the University of choice for Indigenous Australians.

Professor Michelle Trudgett
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership
Western Sydney University