

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

Southern Cross University

Equity outcomes and strategies for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background.

Outcomes

- Increase accessibility and participation rates for students from low socio-economic backgrounds above the sector average.
- Students are supported to have a positive growth experience, to feel connected and engaged with the University community and their studies.
- Elevated retention rates of students into their second year of studies.

Strategies and Key activities, which will deliver an increase in the access, participation and success of people from a low SES background.

Pre-Access	
Strategy	Key Activities
Provide opportunities for school students from low socio-economic backgrounds to increase their knowledge and understanding of higher education and career options, and improve student academic readiness.	Utilising a multidisciplinary approach with internal and external stakeholders, community organisations and partnerships, deliver the school outreach programs to years 6-10 across the New South Wales and Gold Coast region, specifically targeting schools with a high proportion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
	Collaborate with the campus-based Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) program to offer indigenous mentoring opportunities.
Provide entry pathways for students to access and participate at university.	Offer a free, intensive preparatory course and transition plan to degree studies after completion of the preparatory course.

Participation	
Goal	Key Activities
Provide multifaceted and multimodal support delivery tailored for students from low socio-economic backgrounds to maximise the student experience, participation and progress during the student's transition through university.	Administer support resources such as scholarships and bursaries for students experiencing financial distress.
	Promote and embed equity and inclusion principles through programs, workshops and events that recognise and celebrate our diversity and increase students' connectedness and sense of belonging.
	Provide training programs that strengthen the provision of support for, and increases the participation and success of, students from Equity backgrounds.
	Provide <i>just in time</i> , targeted support, referral, and case management for students in need of personal care.

	Deliver a suite of initiatives, programs and events to support and celebrate a diverse, inclusive, culturally-safe and respectful learning environment.
	Create a supportive university community through the delivery of specialised services and programs including a structured induction program, early check-in sessions, peer support programs and learning coaching.
	Conduct targeted transitional activities and workshops with learning coaches and other engagement specialists to offer students the opportunity to become more self-regulated, especially in the first-year experience.

Attainment	
Goal	Key Activities
Deliver targeted programs aimed at improving the employability of low socio-economic students.	Develop career resources, and conduct career workshops, mentoring and volunteering employment opportunities.

Evaluation

Effectiveness of the equity strategies will be continuously reviewed and evaluated over the year, at various stages, utilising a mixed-method approach of evaluation, including collation of participation surveys, attendance and student feedback.

Partnerships and collaboration

The university will partner with students to ensure there is an authentic student voice when designing and refining support mechanisms for their successful transition through their study program and student lifecycle.

Current partnerships with internal and external stakeholders and organisations will be strengthened to widen university participation across disadvantaged communities including local schools, government services, Department of Education and TAFE, community-based and not for profit organisations. And new partnerships will be established with local NGO's, schools, community enterprises and business.

Continue collaboration with GNIBI College of Indigenous Australian Peoples and the Southern Cross University Indigenous Events Coordination Committee (SCUIECC) to identify opportunities for programs tailored for students from low socio-economic and Indigenous Australian backgrounds.