

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

FEDERATION UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

- 1 Equity outcomes and strategies:** for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background.

Federation University Australia has an overarching Diversity and Inclusion Plan which establishes the objectives, actions and indicators, and provides a coordinated framework for on-going improvement, with respect to equity, diversity and social inclusion in all aspects of University operations.

The plan describes the three key strategic impact areas to address issues faced by students and targets students from low SES backgrounds. These areas are:

Impact Area 1: Aspiration and Access

Federation University will attract and provide accessible pathways to education and employment for students and staff from a wide range of backgrounds, identities and abilities. We will proactively seek to remove barriers to education and improve access to employment within the University.

Impact Area 2: Participation and Attainment

Federation University will provide exemplary access and equity across our educational and workplace environments that facilitates participation, belonging, personal and professional development, and attainment.

Impact Area 3: A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion

Federation University will foster a pervasive culture of inclusion, infusing equity and diversity values throughout our academic and professional spheres. Our staff and students of all genders, backgrounds, ages and abilities will see themselves represented in every facet of university life. Students and staff will be culturally competent and bring contemporary equity knowledge to their endeavours.

HEPPP funding will primarily contribute to the achievement of Impact Area 2: Participation and Attainment and will be measured in terms of reduced attrition and improved retention and success for students from low SES backgrounds.

The strategies are supported by several other plans including the Disability Action Plan, Learning and Teaching Plan and the Reconciliation Action Plan.

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

Pre-access (outreach to schools and communities):

- **Federation University** delivers outreach to low SES schools with a focus in 2020 on the South East of Victoria in Gippsland, where a number of school students are from fire-affected families.
- **Improving aspiration for tertiary education with disadvantaged schools across our network of campus locations:**

- **Kurnai College University Campus (Churchill)** has been identified as a key outreach school for the development of aspiration building engagement activities in 2020.
- **Hallam Senior College (Berwick)** has had a history of low levels of attainment and participation in tertiary education. A MoU with the school has been developed for implementation in 2020 that will see the university and the school implement aspirational and support programs from Y10-Y12 lining up study with careers.
- **MoU development with targeted schools across western Victoria study locations similar to Hallam SC MoU.**

Access (pre-entry and admissions):

- **Workshops for VCE** including study skills and mindfulness workshops. These will be aligned with a transition to online learning for school students (in response to COVID-19 virus).
- **Foundation Programs** – The University will establish a range of Foundation programs and pathways to support young people from low SES backgrounds who have been unable to achieve ATAR requirements due to personal disadvantage exacerbated by COVID-19.

Participation (transition and progression during studies):

- **Bairnsdale Study Hub** – in partnership with local government and library services to offer supported community spaces for students from low SES areas studying online.
- **KickStart Bursaries and Grants and Student Emergency Financial Assistance (using HEPPP funding) and Foundation Scholarships** is a key student retention and success strategy focusing on students-in-need and at risk of not completing due to personal and financial circumstances. This program has been expanded in 2020 to incorporate the impacts of Bushfire (particularly in the Gippsland community (Bushfire Special Assistance Scheme) and the (Corona Virus Special Assistance Scheme).
- **Student Development program** to increase retention and success of students, and in particular build capability among students from low SES backgrounds through a range of skill development workshops which focus on building graduate attributes.
- **Student and staff awareness** of the learning and social support and assistance available for students.
- **FedUni against Violence and Respect Now Always**, is a program which aims to deliver “consent” training and domestic and sexual violence information to students across the university to ensure that FedUni is a safe place for students and staff.

Progress and attainment (successful completion and preparation for graduate employment):

- **Work integrated learning (WIL) and Industry Placement Program (IPP)** are programs to provide real world work experience to students as part of their program. Providing students with extensive opportunities to build local employment and industry connections.
- **Careers advice and Job application support** – guidance and support both short term employment and long term career choices.
- **Career accelerate Program** – Online workshops designed to develop and enhance career readiness.
- **Federation Advantage** – Will be established to support students to achieve and receive recognition for engagement with co-curricular activities in line with the university’s graduate attributes.
- **EDGE** – Contemporary platform that allows students to access a range of services, co-curricular programs and employment opportunities.

- **Employer engagement** – The new EDGE platform will increase engagement with employers through Mock Interviews, Resume books (Direct employer engagement with prospective employees), Job Search and promotion functions.
- **Alumni Mentoring** – EDGE tool will allow the development of mentoring relationships between recent Alumni and students to support transitions to employment and industry insights.

3 Evaluation: how the university plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the equity strategies.

The University will utilise its existing data collection and analyse tools to evaluate programs and activities against its existing baselines.

- Reduced Attrition rates for students from low SES backgrounds and improved rate of retention against students not from low SES backgrounds.
- Improved Graduate and employability outcomes.
- Student survey of Bursary and Grant effectiveness.
- Increase Mentee attendance / engagement with the Mentor program and attendance at all Student Futures programs.
- Increase in the number of students placed in WIL and IPP programs.

4 Partnerships and collaboration: who the university will partner and collaborate with and how this will improve equity performance.

The University partners and collaborates with a range of community groups and organisations to deliver responses to the needs of students in need. This includes ensuring a safe and productive environment for students, targeted engagement opportunities for the diverse equity groups at the University and opportunities for students to gain experience and knowledge to enable them to achieve their career goals.