

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

Macquarie University

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

Increase the breadth of outreach initiatives that engage primary and secondary aged students from:

- bush fire impacted areas across regional NSW (specifically the mid North Coast, Hunter and Southern NSW)
- drought impacted areas across regional and remote NSW (specifically Broken Hill, Riverina, mid North Coast and Hunter regions)
- low-SES backgrounds in schools located in south and western Sydney
- low-SES backgrounds in schools located on the Central Coast
- low-SES and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds
- low-SES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

Strategy to empower students to capitalise on their capacity to pursue higher education learning by engaging them in/with:

- Financial and accommodation scholarship support – particularly for students impacted by the 2019/2020 bush fires
- Mentoring activities to build student knowledge and research skills around learning and career opportunities available following high school.
- Information workshops to better understand alternate entry pathways into university, study skills to support learning and university student support services (including scholarships, financial, well-being, academic)
- Community based events that bring together student influencers (parents/carers) and furnish them with information around options and support services relating to higher education learning
- Virtual reality to engage regional and remote students with a virtual university experience (using VR goggles) and opportunities to participate interactively in conference style masterclass workshops, delivered by academics
- Transition program to enhance university preparedness skills and confidence around academic expectations
- On-campus university experience to allow students to discover academic learning possibilities and explore the campus and student experience
- Regional/remote immersive exchanges whereby teams of university representatives engage with students from schools in various locations across regional NSW and then later invite these students to participate in an on-campus university experience
- Participation in interactive STEM focused workshops, national science week and leadership activities

- Delivery of NESA accredited professional development workshops on digital literacy skills to teachers located in regional and remote areas, via virtual conferences
- Collaborate with a number of Universities to engage secondary students in a scaffolded approach that builds learner confidence in literacy skills

Enhance the retention of equity students to match those of other cohorts, through the delivery of targeted initiatives that engage students with academic support and well-being services, as well increased opportunities to connect with peers.

Strategy to engage students with opportunities, and support to enhance the student learner experience through:

- Transition support that encourages academic preparedness and confidence
- Targeted academic learning skills to meet academic literacy and numeracy course requirements
- Academic mentoring delivered by academics to raise student confidence in their academic capacity, and to encourage higher participation
- Research internships that enable students to develop research-focused skills, professional practice and networks
- Interactive workshops that engage students with industry focused academics
- Accommodation and financial support via scholarships, grants and bursaries

Increase the employability skills of equity students through the delivery of targeted workshops and opportunities aimed at enhancing student transition into the labour market, following graduation.

Strategy to enhance the career readiness of students via:

- Career-readiness workshops
- Mentoring for employability skills
- Internship opportunities with stakeholder partners
- Interactive and industry specific workshops that enable students to build practical professional skills along with the student's portfolio of work
- Professional networking opportunities to enhance student confidence
- Peer networking through student societies
- Delivery of accredited career workshops to career advisors located in regional and remote areas as professional development, via virtual and face to face conferences

Promote equity cohorts to feel a sense of belonging to a community of learning. Encouraging students to connect with a network of peers and academics helps to foster student confidence and a sense of identity as learners within the university environment. The aim of this is to promote greater participation and engagement with opportunities that can positively impact the student learner experience.

Strategy to enhance students' connection to the university:

- Supporting the establishment of a regional/remote student group
- Encouraging peer networking through engagement opportunities
- Providing ongoing engagement via a staff member providing ongoing transition support for students from refugee and or asylum seeker backgrounds
- Providing a designated and safe space for equity groups to meet and study

Build awareness around issues of equity that impact student's access and participation in higher education, by growing a sustainable community of partners and stakeholders that collectively impact on the culture and practice of inclusive education and equity.

Strategy to encourage greater awareness and practice of equity in education by:

- Building partnerships within and external to the university community with the aim of raising awareness around common challenges
- Hosting informative workshops to bring together a community of partners to discuss approaches that enhance equity practices
- Participating in advocacy activities including contributing to equity related research and practitioner knowledge
- Participating in collaborative cross-university initiatives aimed at magnifying the scaffolded impact of equity outreach on students
- Facilitating stakeholder partners to utilise logistical assets and resources to connect and engage with regional and remote communities in support of their recovery from environmental impacts. This will promote relationship building between communities, partners and Macquarie University.

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

<p>Activities to empower students to capitalise on their capacity to pursue higher education learning by engaging them in/with:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial and accommodation scholarship support – with targeted support for students impacted by the 2019/2020 bush fires • Mentoring activities to build student knowledge and research skills around learning and career opportunities available following high school. • Information workshops to better understand alternate entry pathways into university, study skills to support learning and university student support services (including scholarships, financial, well-being, academic) • Community based events that bring together student influencers (parents/carers) and furnish them with information around options and support services relating to higher education learning • Virtual reality to engage regional and remote students with a virtual university experience (using VR goggles) and opportunities to participate interactively in conference style masterclass workshops, delivered by academics • Transition programs to enhance university preparedness skills and confidence around academic expectations • On-campus university experience to allow students to discover academic learning possibilities and explore the campus and student experience • Regional/remote immersive exchanges whereby teams of university representatives engage with students from schools in various locations across regional NSW and then later invite these students to participate in an on-campus university experience • Participation in interactive STEM focused workshops, national science week and leadership activities • Delivery of NESA accredited professional development workshops on digital literacy skills to teachers located in regional and remote areas, via virtual conferences • Collaborate with a number of Universities to engage secondary students in a scaffolded approach that builds learner confidence in literacy skills
<p>Activities to engage students with opportunity and support to enhance the student learner experience through:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition support that encourages academic preparedness and confidence • Targeted academic learning skills to meet academic literacy and numeracy course requirements • Academic mentoring delivered by academics to raise student confidence in their academic capacity, and to encourage higher participation • Research internships that enable students to develop research-focused skills, professional practice and networks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive workshops that engage students with industry focused academics • Accommodation and financial support via scholarships, grants and bursaries
<p>Activities to enhance the career readiness of students via:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career-readiness workshops • Mentoring for employability skills • Internship opportunities with stakeholder partners • Interactive and industry specific workshops that enable students to build practical professional skills along with the student’s portfolio of work • Professional networking opportunities to enhance student confidence • Peer networking through student societies • Delivery of accredited career workshops to career advisors located in regional and remote areas as professional development, via virtual and face to face conferences
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<p>Activities to enhance greater practice and awareness of equity in education by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building partnerships within and external to the university community with the aim of raising awareness around common challenges • Hosting informative workshops to bring together a community of partners to discuss approaches that enhance equity practice • Participating in advocacy activities including contributions to equity related research and practitioner knowledge • Participating in collaborative cross-university initiatives aimed at magnifying the scaffolded impact of equity outreach on students • Facilitating stakeholder partners to utilise logistical assets and resources to connect and engage with regional and remote communities in support of their recovery from environmental impacts. This will promote relationship building between communities, partners and Macquarie University

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

<p>Impartial and robust qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods will be used to gather evidence around the impact of initiatives on student equity. Evaluation tools will be designed in accordance with the evaluation framework developed with KPMG and consistent with Macquarie University’s commitment to excellence and integrity.</p>
<p>Evaluation tools will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups • Transcriptions • Interviews • Case studies • Surveys • Statistical data related to enrolment, retention and success

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

<p>Macquarie University will continue to strengthen established partnerships with external stakeholders, including</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NSW Department of Education • Aurora College • Not for profit organisations including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) ○ Settlement Services International (SSI) ○ Country Education Foundation of Australia ○ The Smith Family ○ CareerSeekers
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunmore Lang College • Robert Menzies College
<p>Macquarie University will also evolve stakeholder collaborations with:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Technology Sydney (UTS) • University of NSW (UNSW) • City of Ryde Council • Mission Australia • The Australian Museum • The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney • Country Universities Centre
<p>Macquarie University will continue to be a representative member of the following equity communities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Interest Group (for Refugee Education) (SIG) • Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) • Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention, Success (STARS) • Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia (SPERA)