

## ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

### University of New England

The University's Access and Participation Plan will provide for increased aspiration and participation of domestic students from Low SES backgrounds to higher education, adding meaning to retention and attainment strategies to support success for the University of New England low SES undergraduate cohort. While there are no projects which have specifically focused objectives on those from areas recently impacted by bushfires, the geographic focus of these projects will assure that significant numbers from such areas will benefit.

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

Programs will be tailored to address disadvantage, as appropriate, developing services and activities to foster access, participation, retention and success for all equity groups, including those from a low SES background. Participation activities supporting outcomes include inclusive entry processes, transition programs, academic preparation, peer support, academic support, financial support, outreach and engagement.

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

- **Pre-Access:**

Widen outreach liaison to ensure a collaborative approach to raise aspirations of potential students and their families, increasing progression to higher education. Develop mainstream knowledge of alternative entry routes and continue access programs and partnerships that provide a sustainable outreach & engagement model for UNE through the delivery of key activities, such as:

- ❖ Discovery Voyager
- ❖ Agmentation and CISCO Coders Challenge
- ❖ SMART Farms Education Program
- ❖ HSC Booster Days
- ❖ Careers Fairs and targeted outreach events
- ❖ Schools and Universities connect
- ❖ Pathways to University for the Secondary School Students and Young People in the Armidale Ezidi Community
- ❖ Creative Arts Outreach, Engagement and Skill Development for Regional, Rural and Remote areas;

- **Access:**

Engagement, pre-entry and admissions activities to advise expectations of university life, provide opportunities to participate in university life and promote inclusion for commencing and future students

- ❖ Oorala Indigenous Youth Outreach Program 2020
- ❖ GRASS (Growing Regional Agriculture and Science Students) Program
- ❖ Rural Scholars in Medicine
- ❖ Support Connect (CUC partnership);

- **Participation:**

Provision of a suite of programs that complement existing student services to facilitate transition and progression including student mentoring and support programs. Additional support is provided for students from low SES backgrounds to continue to attend university through the provision of bursaries and scholarships. Key activities include:

- ❖ Scholarships and Bursaries including Removing Barriers Bursaries
- ❖ Peer Mentoring and Tutoring programs including PASS@UNE Pilot
- ❖ Transition programs and workshops
- ❖ Student Support and Progression programs including Student Success Coaching Pilot
- ❖ Retention and Engagement projects;

- **Attainment/TransitionOUT:**

Aimed at improving preparation for graduate employment, ensuring learning and graduate outcomes enhance students' employability skills base and provision of partnership and networking opportunities. Key activities include:

- ❖ Career and Graduate Employability readiness including collaboration and careers toolkit resources
- ❖ Experiential learning and networking opportunities including Crafting Graduate Portfolios – Inclusive Partnership Network project and UNE Industry Connect
- ❖ Business and Industry Connections including UNE Industry Connect
- ❖ Targeted reSTART activities.

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

Institutional planning, enrolment, participation and graduate data will be used to evidence effectiveness and to aid in the synthesis of success judgement of access and participation initiatives.

Impact of the equity strategies should be evaluated against basic criteria including but not limited to:

- ❖ Informing aspirations and developing expectations towards higher education;
- ❖ Developing academic capacity and providing academic support;
- ❖ Establishing inclusive processes;
- ❖ Supporting students in dealing with broader issues outside of their academic lives
- ❖ Improving financial support for low SES students in need

HEPP funded projects will be monitored at defined times, against agreed milestones and evaluative controls including SMART Objectives and Evaluation Methodologies including:

- ❖ Quantitative data showing broad trends, group responses and measures of efficiency through surveys or questionnaires, pre-tests and post-tests, observation, review of existing documents and databases or by gathering clinical data
- ❖ Qualitative data giving detailed views of individuals and experiences through focus groups, case studies, document/ material review, or ethnographic participation/observation.

Specific evaluation plans for each project are agreed at the project approval stage and outcomes against the measures in the evaluation plans are included in final reports.

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

The University of New England is a partner in the RUN network and will continue to work with regional universities to foster a broad coverage of regional issues. The University will continue its work with schools, and community groups in the New England/North West of NSW, Hunter Valley, Central Coast and North Coast of NSW in delivering programs to improve the access and participation in Higher Education of students in equity groups. UNE will continue to pursue opportunities with industry partners to increase the impact and outcomes for low SES students.