

# ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

## The University of Queensland

1. **Equity outcomes and strategies:** for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background.
  - 1.1. Significantly increase the proportion of students from under-represented backgrounds, including those from rural, regional and interstate locations as well as those facing socio-economic disadvantage
  - 1.2. Improve student retention and success rates of students from under-represented equity groups through a comprehensive and pro-active range of support networks
  - 1.3. Increased participation (including those from regional and remote backgrounds), progression and completions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
2. **Key activities:** which will deliver an increase in the access, participation and success of people from a low SES background.

### 2.1. Access

We aim to raise the educational aspirations and capabilities of students from low-socio economic (low SES) and Indigenous backgrounds through a range of outreach activities focused on secondary schools in regions of strategic priority.

Our strategies include:

- Increase awareness of tertiary study as a post school option among students in Years 7 – 12, with emphasis on engagement with assigned Widening Participation (WP) schools as specified in WP MOU.
- Provide opportunities for students in younger years to experience university and interact with university students, to increase awareness and overcome perception barriers to tertiary-based career opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for senior secondary students to engage with university academics and researchers with a range of intensive academic enrichment opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for parents to engage with university staff and students.
- Build the academic capacity of secondary school students, helping to prepare them for success in Years 11 and 12 and beyond.
- Deliver dedicated mentoring and personalised enrichment program promoting tertiary pathways and careers – *Young Achievers Program*.
- Provide a range of scholarships to support those statistically underrepresented in higher education, for example students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from regional and remote backgrounds.

- Deliver an Indigenous student outreach and aspiration building program that provides university experiential opportunities, with an emphasis on the professions – *InspireU*.
- Provide special entry schemes for Indigenous students.

## 2.2. *Participation, Progress and Attainment*

We will refine the University's strategies to improve educational outcomes for students from equity groups. Our strategies currently include:

- Providing dedicated support personnel and programs to support under-represented groups, facilitated initiatives assisting with the transition to tertiary level study; including support relating to accommodation, financial issues, academic preparedness, and a sense of belonging. Additional services are provided to specifically target retention and success for academically vulnerable students.
- Targeted support for Indigenous students, including a 'whole of University' approach to improve student retention and performance; pastoral, professional and social support; advice on financial support available, professional development and career opportunities; hosting social and cultural events; and academic and learning support and advice.
- Supporting students to develop transferable and professional skills to enhance employability and career prospects through an institution-wide strategy that is inclusive of the needs of students from under-represented groups.

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

- 3.1. Success in increasing the participation, school completion, career aspirations and tertiary application and enrolment rates from under-represented groups
- 3.2. Retention and success rates of university students from under-represented student groups, both at a state and institutional level.
- 3.3. Numbers of schools, organisations and students participating in outreach activities.
- 3.4. Qualitative surveys of outreach and engagement activities measuring student study intentions, confidence for school and university study.

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

- 4.1. The University of Queensland collaborates with a range of government, industry, school, philanthropic and community partners in the delivery of its outreach and tertiary aspiration building programs.
- 4.2. The University of Queensland continues to work in close partnership with secondary schools throughout Queensland to deliver an effective suite of outreach initiatives that benefit students in Years 7 – 12 as well as teaching staff within the schools.

- 4.3. UQ actively participates with Queensland Universities as part of the Widening Participation Consortium for sharing of 'best practice' to proactively enhance school student engagement and academic enhancement initiatives collectively delivered by the tertiary sector.
- 4.4. UQ provides a range of support services targeted at students from equity groups across the student life cycle, including assistance with pre-entry and admissions, a comprehensive program of orientation events and activities to assist with the transition into University studies, and a range of learning, social, pastoral and professional development services. The University works closely with a range of industry, government and community partners in delivering these services.
- 4.5. UQ's program of Indigenous outreach, engagement and student support is founded on the input and involvement of Indigenous peoples. Active collaboration occurs with Queensland schools, community organisations and elders and industry partners in delivering outreach activities to Indigenous students their families and communities to raise aspiration for tertiary study.
- 4.6. UQ's student retention and support activities for low socio-economic and Indigenous students work in collaboration with UQ schools, faculties and Student Affairs and Academic Services divisions to provide a cohesive range of integrated services.