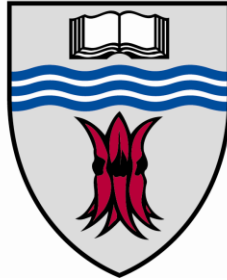


CHARLES STURT

U N I V E R S I T Y



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STRATEGY

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PREAMBLE

Education has arguably been one of the most successful areas of Indigenous development over the past 30 years with steadily increasing numbers of Indigenous students attaining higher education.

But the rate of improvement has now faltered. Educational systems are failing Indigenous people at all levels in terms of equitable participation and achievement.

There is evidence that basic skills such as being able to read, write and do simple arithmetic are in decline, particularly in rural and remote communities...Retention rates to Year 10...have declined at three times the rate of the general population...Indigenous retention rates to Year 12 are also much lower...

If these disturbing trends are not arrested it will make the task of achieving higher jobs growth for Indigenous Australians even more difficult

(Mr. Djerrkura, Report to the United Nation Human Rights Committee, 1999:22-23).

Education plays a major role in the socialisation of children and young adults and is one of the means by which the cultural norms and values of a society are transmitted from one generation to the next. Thus, education reinforces and naturalises societal concepts and expectations, while teaching a child to conform to the roles and status society deems acceptable for that individual or group. The Western education system also serves the function of equipping children and young adults with the knowledge and skills considered valuable and necessary for employment in a progressive and competitive capitalist society such as Australia. However, the types of skills and depth of knowledge taught have been largely determined by dominant societal attitudes and expectations in relation to class, race, age and gender.

The history of Aboriginal education since colonisation has been one of marginalisation and limited access, largely based on the ideologies of Social Darwinism and the twin European policies of 'civilising' and 'Christianising'. Western education was used, and at times is still used, to negate the cultures, languages and identity of Indigenous children. Access to education for Indigenous students prior to the 1960s was restricted by the institutional racism embedded in government policies such as the Aborigines Protection Acts, operational in all Australian States and Territories from 1909. Under these policies the education of Indigenous Australians was limited to the development of rudimentary skills and knowledge deemed by the dominant society as appropriate for positions of domestic and rural servitude.

Educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians showed improvement after the 1967 Referendum, with a significant increase in Indigenous tertiary enrolments from the 1980s to late 1990s following the dismantling of policies deemed contrary to the Racial Discrimination Act (1975). However, the past decade has witnessed a marked decline in improvement in educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians across all educational sectors, particularly in rural and remote Australia. Many Indigenous students are leaving school poorly prepared relative to their non-Indigenous counterparts. An increased number of Indigenous students are disengaging with school prior to reaching or completing Year 10. Relatively few Indigenous students are remaining at school to complete Year 11 and Year 12 or its vocational equivalent and even less obtain the educational outcomes necessary to gain entry into University programs.

Educational outcomes such as this perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of social and economic disadvantage experienced by many Indigenous Australians by limiting the post-school options and life choices of Indigenous students. As Australia's national inland University, Charles Sturt University acknowledges that the institution has a significant role

and responsibility in enhancing educational and socio-economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians, both within the region of Charles Sturt University and nationally. The University recognises that to improve Indigenous educational outcomes:

'An integrated policy approach is needed to advance Indigenous higher education, for the issues are systematic...Equal attention must be given to, among other things, the recruitment and support of Indigenous students, the recruitment, support and promotion of Indigenous staff, and the building and strengthening of Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Research. Urgent action is needed in all these areas if a positive cycle of participation in higher education, which breeds further participation in higher education, is to be established'. (Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education, Report of the Inaugural Indigenous Higher Education Conference, 2005)

1. Vision

Charles Sturt University will be culturally inclusive and preferred education provider in Indigenous Education through active engagement in the process of Reconciliation and the advancement of social justice and human rights for Indigenous Australians and communities.

2. Mission

The Mission of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy is to align the University's Indigenous Education policies and activities with national Indigenous Education policies, recommendations and guidelines to provide the University with a framework and guidelines for the development of a systematic and coordinated whole-of-institution approach to the implementation of the University's Vision and Key Objectives for Indigenous Education. In particular, Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy aligns with the following policies and guidelines:

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (NATSIEP)

The NATSIEP forms the foundation of all Indigenous education programs in Australia. The policy has been endorsed by the Australian Government as well as all State and Territory governments. NATSIEP has 21 long term goals and *4 major goals* designed to improve access and educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians. The four major goals inform the Charles Sturt Indigenous Education Strategy. They are:

1. *Involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in educational decision-making;*
2. *Equality of access to education services;*
3. *Equity of education participation; and*
4. *Equitable and appropriate educational outcomes.*

Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council

The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council of Australia Strategic Agenda (2006) identified seven priority areas which inform and guide the recommendations of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy. These *seven priority areas* are:

1. *Encourage universities to work with schools and TAFE colleges and other registered training organisations to build pathways and raise the levels of aspiration and confidence of Indigenous students;*
2. *Develop a concerted strategy to improve the level of Indigenous undergraduate enrolment;*
3. *Improve the level of Indigenous postgraduate enrolment, enhance Indigenous research and increase the number of Indigenous researchers;*
4. *Improve the rates of success, retention and completion for Indigenous students;*
5. *Enhance the prominence and status of Indigenous culture, knowledge and studies on campus;*
6. *Increase the number of Indigenous people working in Australian universities; and*
7. *Improve the participation of Indigenous people in university governance and management.*

Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) conducted its Quality Audit of Charles Sturt University during 2004. AUQA made many commendations, affirmations and recommendations to Charles Sturt University. Of particular relevance to this Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy is *Recommendation 1*:

AUQA recommends that in responding to cross-portfolio issues the University has identified as fundamentally important to the institution, Charles Sturt University management assign responsibility for formulating and implementing a co-ordinated strategy to address each issue including guiding the various elements of the University in the roles they are expected to play in the solution.

Australian Universities Quality Agency (2006) – ‘Serving the Cause of Indigenous Issues: Thematic Analysis of the Institutional Audit Reports of AUQA’

In September 2006, AUQA published the ‘*Serving the Cause of Indigenous Issues: Thematic Analysis of the Institutional Audit Reports of AUQA*’. The Report provides a detailed analysis of the Indigenous Education *policies and activities* of Australia’s 38 Higher Education Institutions and identifies examples of best practice which are relevant to the Mission of Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy, including:

1. *Planning – making a commitment, monitoring and co-ordination;*
2. *Support – advisory committees, structure, and support service;*
3. *Centre of Knowledge;*
4. *Curriculum – Indigenous subjects, enhancing reconciliation and embedding Indigenous perspectives;*
5. *Outreach – targeting school students, flexible learning, interaction with community and Indigenous employment; and*
6. *Research – Indigenous research, models and training.*

Charles Sturt University Act 1989

The Charles Sturt University Education Strategy aligns with Sections 7(1) and 7(2)(a) of the Constitution and Functions of the *Charles Sturt University Act 1989*. Sections 7(1) and 7(2)(a) are:

7(1) The object of the University is the promotion, within the limits of the University’s resources, of scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence.

7(2)(a) The provision of facilities for education and research of university standard, having particular regard to the needs and aspirations of the residents of western and south western New South Wales.

Charles Sturt University Review 2004

The 2004 Charles Sturt University review of Indigenous education services made a number of *key recommendations* relevant to Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy including:

- *Establish a Centre for Indigenous Studies to focus on Indigenous education, teaching and research;*
- *Expand Indigenous community consultation and input for specific activities and proposals identified by the University; and*
- *Conduct an audit of Indigenous studies, perspectives, administrative procedures and issues to inform the implementation of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy.*

Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007 – 2011

The Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy reflects and enables the *Vision, Values, Mission and Objectives* of the University to:

- *Be a national university for excellence in education for the professions, research and flexible delivery of learning and teaching;*

- *Enhance its communities, which include rural and regional Australia and Indigenous Australians;*
- *Enhance the inclusiveness of Charles Sturt University's learning environments;*
- *Engage with professions and communities through responsiveness, partnerships and inclusiveness;*
- *Promote social justice including ethical practice and global citizenship;*
- *Promote economic, social and environmental sustainability, including the responsible stewardship of resources;*
- *Value its staff and students, their wellbeing and development;*
- *Provide distinctive educational programs for the professions that prepare students for work and citizenship;*
- *Conduct strategic and applied research which is nationally and internationally recognised;*
- *Lead in the quality provision of flexible learning and teaching; and*
- *Maintaining a course and research profile that meets the needs and supports the aspirations of our communities, and contributes to the enrichment of our regions.*

3. Values

The Key Values which form the foundation of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy are drawn from the University's Strategic Vision, Values, Mission and Objectives to:

- *Enhance its communities, which include rural and regional Australia and Indigenous Australians;*
- *Enhance the inclusiveness of Charles Sturt University's learning environments and lead in the quality provision of flexible learning and teaching;*
- *Engage with professions and communities through responsiveness, partnerships and inclusiveness;*
- *Promote social justice including ethical practice and global citizenship;*
- *Promote economic, social and environmental sustainability, including the responsible stewardship of resources;*
- *Value its staff and students, their wellbeing and development;*
- *Be a national university for excellence in education for the professions by providing distinctive educational programs that prepare students for work and citizenship; and*
- *Conduct strategic and applied research which is nationally and internationally recognised and meets the needs and supports the aspirations of our communities, and contributes to the enrichment of our regions.*

4. Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy is to provide the core values and framework for the future planning, development and implementation of Indigenous education at Charles Sturt University. The Key Objectives outlined below align with and support the University's strategic vision and its commitment to the process of reconciliation through, the planning and development of policies and strategies which ensure institutional implementation of the Course Plan and Key Objectives of University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 by "enhanc[ing] the inclusiveness of Charles Sturt University's learning environments...to provide distinctive educational programs that prepare students for work and citizenship".

5. Key Objectives, Performance Indicators and Recommendations

The Key Objectives and Recommendations made within the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy align Charles Sturt University's Vision, Mission and Strategic Plans with national Indigenous education policies, recommendations and guidelines. The Recommendations provide Charles Sturt University with a framework for the systematic development and implementation of a coordinated whole-of-institution approach to addressing the University's Key Objectives for Indigenous Education.

5.1 Key Objectives

Implementation of the Recommendations contained within this document fulfils the 9 Key Objectives of the Charles Sturt Indigenous Education Strategy to:

Key Objective 1

Promote and enhance national and regional reconciliation.

Key Objective 2

Make Indigenous people, culture and knowledge a valued and visible aspect of the life and culture of the University and its campuses.

Key Objective 3

Establish Charles Sturt University as the preferred higher education provider for Indigenous students and Indigenous Education.

Key Objective 4

Improve the four key indicators of Indigenous educational outcomes: access, participation, retention and success.

Key Objective 5

Incorporate Indigenous Australian content into all of the University's undergraduate course offerings, and embed related descriptors into the University's Graduate Attributes.

Key Objective 6

Increase Charles Sturt University's research output relating to Indigenous specific issues by developing a cross-discipline and divisional scholarship of Indigenous learning, teaching and research, based upon Indigenous community involvement and University staff commitment to the advancement of the principles of social justice to achieve equality and self determination for Indigenous Australians.

Key Objective 7

Enhance the profile of Charles Sturt University as the preferred employer of Indigenous people through strengthened programs and initiatives specifically designed to attract and support Indigenous staff.

Key Objective 8

Develop and advance the professional profiles and research skills of the University's Indigenous staff through extended opportunities for professional development and advancement.

Key Objective 9

Develop clear and accountable governance and management structures to develop, implement and monitor progress in achieving this Indigenous Education Strategy.

5.2 Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 1.** Charles Sturt University to increase the total number of Indigenous Australian students participating in higher education at Charles Sturt University to at least 3% by 2015.
- KPI 2.** All Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs incorporate Indigenous Australian content by 2015.
- KPI 3.** By 2015 Charles Sturt University has a national and international reputation for its scholarship and success in embedding cultural competence within all its undergraduate professional programs.
- KPI 4.** By 2015 Charles Sturt University has a well established concentration (equivalent to a PFRG or small Research Centre) that has a solid national reputation for research and scholarly outputs in Indigenous Australian Studies.
- KPI 5.** Consistent with the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Employment Strategy the University increase the number of Indigenous staff employed in continuing and training positions at Charles Sturt University to at least 3% by 2011.

5.3 Summary of Recommendations

The following Recommendations enable the nine Key Objectives of the Charles Sturt Indigenous Education Strategy and the five Key Performance Indicators and align with the Mission, Values and Objectives of the University's Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 and the recommendations of the AUQA, IHEAC and Australian Vice Chancellor's reports. The Recommendations are grouped according to their focus. They fall into three groups that align somewhat with the University's four plans. The recommendations of this Indigenous Education Strategy should be read in context with the broader discussion and recommendations contained within this document.

5.3.1 Institutional Development

Recommendation 1

The Vice Chancellor endorses a Statement of Reconciliation on behalf of the Charles Sturt University community.

Recommendation 2

Charles Sturt University Planning and Budget Committee oversee the development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan based upon the principles outlined in the endorsed Reconciliation Statement and the Principles, Values and Recommendations of the Charles Sturt Indigenous Education Strategy.

Recommendation 3

The Charles Sturt University Reconciliation Action Plan is registered with Reconciliation Australia.

Recommendation 4

The Charles Sturt University University Council appoints an Indigenous member to University Council.

Recommendation 5

The Vice Chancellor establishes an Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group to provide advice and guidance to the University in ensuring cultural appropriateness, accountability and transparency.

Recommendation 6

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Administration) and Director of Student Services formally change the name of the Indigenous Support Units to Indigenous Student Services.

Recommendation 7

The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice President (Administration), work with relevant Divisions, the Centre for Indigenous Studies, Deans and Indigenous Student Services to:

- a) Establish an 'Elders in Residence' program at each campus which promotes and legitimises the role of Elders within the learning community;
- b) Provide facilities on each campus for the establishment of a Community Meeting Place;
- c) Construct murals or other visual displays of Indigenous art and culture on campus;
- d) Develop cultural protocols, codes of conduct and policies to guide the University in its engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities;
- e) Acknowledge Indigenous heritage and traditional ownership and custodianship of the land through observance of a 'Welcome to Country' by traditional Elders at University ceremonies and events and an 'Acknowledgement of Country' in a prominent location on major University documents and marketing materials and University websites; and
- f) Name University spaces in local language and establish on-campus community events, including celebrations for NAIDOC and Reconciliation week's and commemoration of National Sorry Day/Journey of Healing Day.

Recommendation 8

The Indigenous Student Services of Charles Sturt University, in partnership with Divisions and faculties, lead in evidence-based policy development with a view to improving access participation, retention and success rates of Indigenous Students, through:

- Improving and maintaining accurate and accessible data on these key performance indicators;
- Investigating and identifying ways in which financial and other assistance to Indigenous students may contribute to higher retention and success; and
- Identifying the risk factors and vulnerabilities that contribute to Indigenous student lack of academic success and withdrawal from enrolment.

Recommendation 9

The Indigenous Student Services of Charles Sturt University investigate and identify ways in which financial and other assistance for Indigenous students may contribute to higher retention and success, including consideration of scholarships for full or part time students who are ineligible for other financial support.

Recommendation 10

The Indigenous Student Services and Centre for Indigenous Studies establish a mentoring and role model scheme for Indigenous students.

Recommendation 11

The Director of Student Services, in cooperation with Human Resources, provides staff of the Indigenous Student Services with opportunities and support to further their academic qualifications, research skills and profiles.

Recommendation 12

Indigenous Students Services strengthen and extend their partnerships with secondary schools and providers of vocational education and training, in order to increase the entry of Indigenous secondary school leavers and vocational education students into Charles Sturt University courses.

Recommendation 14

Charles Sturt University provide funding for the ongoing development of an Outreach Marketing and student recruitment program.

Recommendation 29

Human Resources provide support and financial incentives including, supporting time release through earnings replacement, for Indigenous people in current employment at Charles Sturt University who are undertaking postgraduate studies.

Recommendation 33

Charles Sturt University Planning and Budget Committee, in collaboration with the Indigenous Employment Coordinator, establish study scholarships and schemes to encourage and support the ongoing career development of Indigenous staff.

Recommendation 34

Faculties in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies and, Indigenous Employment Coordinator, develop programs to provide mentoring and specialised leadership training for Indigenous academics.

Recommendation 35

Contract and ongoing positions are to be identified for Indigenous Trainees on successful completion of their traineeships.

Recommendation 36

Central Funds are to be made available to create the position of Research and Policy Officer within the Centre for Indigenous Studies. This position will service the Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group.

5.3.2 Courses, Learning and Teaching***Recommendation 13***

Faculties in cooperation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies provide multiple entry and exit points and innovative undergraduate and postgraduate courses which specifically meets the employment needs of mature-age Indigenous peoples, and recognises the prior learning and work experience of Indigenous non-school leaving students

Recommendation 15

Academic Senate implement policy requiring the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content as an assessable component of all Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs. The incorporation of Indigenous Australian content is to take place at the next major course review with incorporation across all undergraduate courses to be fully implemented by 2015.

Recommendation 16

The Charles Sturt University Degree Initiative Committee, in consultation and negotiation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies, review the descriptors of the University's graduate attributes to specify the extent to which Indigenous content is expected to be identified and specified within the graduate attributes profiles of programs and courses offered by the University.

Recommendation 17

Academic Senate, in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies, develop a set of curriculum guidelines identifying the broad intentions of Indigenous content and issues to be considered, and that these be included within the guidelines for Course and Program Review and Course and Program Development templates

Recommendation 18

Faculties, as part of the 5-yearly Review process, hold a program specific seminar to explore how the program will address the issues raised within the curriculum guidelines. The seminars should include teaching staff from the program, practitioners from relevant industry or professional contexts, Indigenous participants with appropriate expertise and staff from the Centre for Indigenous Studies.

Recommendation 19

Academic Senate introduce policy requiring Course and Program Coordinators to comment, within the 5-yearly course and program review report, on how they are addressing the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content in Charles Sturt University undergraduate courses.

Recommendation 20

Charles Sturt University to appoint an Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Coordinator located within the Division of Learning and Teaching Services to provide educational design support and advice to Faculties and Schools on the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content.

Recommendation 21

Academic staff who teach Indigenous Australian content are expected to hold qualifications in Indigenous Studies or a relevant discipline. Staff without qualifications or equivalent expertise and experience will be expected to gain qualifications or participate in professional learning programs provided by the Centre for Indigenous Studies.

Recommendation 22

Existing Indigenous Australian Studies subjects (including Discipline-specific and hybrid) should be referred to the Indigenous Board of Studies for Review. Existing subjects should be assigned to the relevant Centre/School based on the governance principles set out in the Indigenous Education Strategy.

Recommendation 23

The Education for Practice Institute be provided with two additional fellowships each year to work in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies on the scholarship of cultural competence for the professions. One of the two fellowships be a designated fellowship for an Indigenous Australian academic.

Recommendation 24

The new Division of Learning and Teaching Services (formerly CELT and LMC) receive additional funding to create an identified Indigenous Australian position, to provide educational design support to academics within the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Faculties that teach Indigenous Australian content. The Indigenous Educational Designer will develop expertise in the Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework as well as instructional design and the development of learning materials.

Recommendation 25

Staff teaching Indigenous Australian Studies at Charles Sturt University, including hybrid and discipline specific subjects, are supported by a Cultural Competence Pedagogy Network (akin the Professional Experience Network or PEN).

Recommendation 26

The Centre for Indigenous Studies, Faculties and the Education for Practice Institute develop a Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Project which would provide for an on-going examination of the process of incorporating Indigenous content into undergraduate professional programs across the University.

5.3.3 Research

Recommendation 27

It is recommended that a senior Indigenous research academic be appointed as a member of the Charles Sturt Human Ethics and Research Committee to ensure accountability and cultural appropriateness of Indigenous research.

Recommendation 28

The University Ethics and Human Research Committee establish an Indigenous Research Ethics Committee as a sub-committee of the University Ethics and Human Research Committee.

Recommendation 30

The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice President (Research) provide financial scholarships for Indigenous postgraduate students to encourage enrolment and completion of Doctoral degrees.

Recommendation 31

The Centre for Research and Graduate Training in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies develops appropriate policies, protocols and procedures to ensure quality and accountability of all Charles Sturt University Indigenous research. This should include:

- The establishment of research advisory groups comprising internal and external stakeholders and the development of culturally appropriate acceptable research models;
- Having an Indigenous researcher on all Indigenous research projects; and
- Adequate supervision arrangements for Indigenous Research Higher Degree students, including appropriate cultural support.

Recommendation 32

The Centre for Research and Graduate Training set aside funding for a Problem Focused Research Group in Indigenous Australian Studies, and accept an 'out of session' application to establish a Problem Focussed Research Group in Indigenous Australian Studies using the approved guidelines.

6. Charles Sturt University Reconciliation Statement

'There can be no reconciliation without social justice and there can be no social justice without reconciliation'

(Mick Dodson, National Reconciliation Convention, Melbourne 1997)

'As sites of critical learning, universities are powerful agents for social change and have a responsibility to provide an environment free from racism in all of its forms'

(Wright, J 2002, 'Apartheid: Australian Style')

Recognition, Acknowledgement, Responsibility and Commitment

Charles Sturt University is committed to the process of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. As Australia's leading national inland University, it recognises the particular role and responsibility this tertiary educational institution has in promoting social justice and human rights for Indigenous Australians, both nationally and within the footprint of Charles Sturt University. This statement provides Charles Sturt University with the blueprint for the development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan which will align with the values, vision and mission of the Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 and the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy.

Charles Sturt University recognises and acknowledges:

- The diversity and unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of Australia and the islands of the Torres Strait, in accordance with local Indigenous laws and customs;
- That connection to the land sustains contemporary Indigenous cultures, languages, art, spirituality, laws and customs;
- The historical and ongoing impact on the lives and futures of Indigenous Australians of the political, social and economic process of colonisation;
- The fundamental importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to the heritage and identity of Australia and the valuable and dynamic contribution of Indigenous people and cultures to the community and life of the University;
- The human right of Indigenous Australian peoples to self-determination, to equitable participation in the community and University and equitable access to resources and services;
- The significance of the University's role in the reconciliation process in building an informed and mature society which acknowledges the past, understands the quintessential connection between the past and present, and is committed to ethical action, social justice and human rights;
- That reconciliation in practice is a shared responsibility requiring commitment to a whole-of-institution approach and active engagement with the Indigenous community;
- The Key Performance Indicators and Recommendations of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy be reported to Reconciliation Australia in the form of a Reconciliation Action Plan, and the institutional performance against the KPIs and recommendation be reported to Reconciliation Australia on an annual basis.

Recommendation 1

The Vice Chancellor endorse a Statement of Reconciliation on behalf of the Charles Sturt University community.

Recommendation 2

Charles Sturt University Planning and Budget Committee oversee the development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan based upon the principles outlined in the endorsed Reconciliation Statement and the principles, values and recommendations of the Charles Sturt Indigenous Education Strategy.

Recommendation 3

The Charles Sturt University Reconciliation Action Plan is registered with Reconciliation Australia.

7. Indigenous Education at Charles Sturt University

While the western region of NSW has one of the highest Indigenous population rates in the country, the Indigenous student population of Charles Sturt University is less than 1.3%.

This under-representation is largely a reflection of the long term socio-economic and educational disadvantage affecting many Indigenous communities and families today.

This is a social justice and equity issue which Charles Sturt University is committed to overcoming.

Charles Sturt University was founded in 1989 and is recognised as Australia's National Inland University, providing access to higher education across central, western and south-western NSW and north-eastern Victoria. In the nineteen years since its establishment, the University has grown into a multi-campus institution with onshore campus locations at Albury-Wodonga, Bathurst, Canberra, Dubbo, Goulburn, Orange and Wagga Wagga.

The State of NSW has the highest population of Indigenous Australians in the country. The Charles Sturt University onshore campuses of Albury-Wodonga, Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo and Wagga Wagga are built upon the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri Nation, the largest Indigenous Nation of Aboriginal Australia. The University's inland catchment area extends into the country of the Kamilaroi Nation in the north east, the Murrwarri, Ngemba and Barkandji Nations in the north west and the Nyampa and Wangkamarra Nations in the far west. The geographical footprint served by Charles Sturt University's main campuses is home to approximately 44,000 Indigenous Australians, representing 3.18% of the total of the population of the region. The size of the Indigenous population throughout the regional areas varies, ranging from 1.7% in Albury-Wodonga to 13.4% in Dubbo and surrounding region, which has one of the highest Indigenous population rates in NSW, however Indigenous students comprise only 1.3% of the Charles Sturt University student population.

7.1 Indigenous student access, participation, retention and success

'Clearly, while Indigenous participation in higher education has increased [in recent years], Indigenous people [remain] markedly over-represented at the lowest end of the course continuum and under-represented at the upper levels'

(Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, 'Indigenous Participation in Higher education: Culture, Choice and Capital Theory' June 2006)

The key indicators of successful higher educational outcomes for Indigenous students can be measured according to the level of Indigenous access to higher education, their participation and retention in a higher education award and successful completion and graduation from their award.

7.1.1 The National Picture

Nationally, the participation rate for Indigenous students in higher education more than doubled, from 2565 to 6956, between the years 1988 and 1996 with the highest Indigenous enrolment rates being in NSW (27%). This represented a rise from 0.63% to 1.10% of the total population of students enrolled at University across Australia during the period 1988-1996. By 2001 the number of Indigenous students enrolled within the tertiary sector had risen to 9024. However, by 2005 the number of Indigenous students commencing University programs decreased by 8.7% nationally compared to an increase in non-Indigenous student enrolments of 2.7%. New South Wales, Tasmania and the Northern Territory were the only States which evidenced an increase in commencing Indigenous student numbers during this period (0.5%, 14.3% and 23.8% respectively) while Queensland had the most significant decrease in commencing Indigenous students with a drop of 20.7% (*DEST National Higher Education Statistics Collection 2005*).

The percentage of Indigenous students accessing and succeeding at University clearly continues to fall well below equity levels. The proportion of Indigenous higher education students participating in higher education has not increased since 2001. Data from the *DEST National Higher Education Statistics Collection* provides evidence of a considerable widening in the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educational outcomes. Since 2001 there has been an increase in the margin between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student access and participation parity rates from 1.20 percentage points to 1.73 in 2005, with a current parity rate of 2.93 percentage points. In other words, for equity to be achieved the Indigenous student access and participation rate in higher education needs to more than double. Similarly, the retention ratio of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students is 64.4% to 80% respectively, requiring a 1.0 increase in Indigenous student retention rates to achieve parity with those of non-Indigenous students (*Indigenous Participation in Higher Education: Culture, Choice and Capital Theory, June 2006*).

The lack of parity in Indigenous student access, participation and retention is also evident in comparative enrolment and discipline patterns. According to the recent report by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy and Research (*Indigenous Participation in Higher Education: Culture, Choice and Capital Theory, June 2006*) a slightly higher national percentage of Indigenous students enrolled in external study mode compared to non-Indigenous students (16% compared to 13%) and a lower proportion of enrolled as part-time students (23% of Indigenous students compared to 28% non-Indigenous). Approximately 51.3% of Indigenous students are enrolled in Bachelor degree programs offered by Australian Universities compared to 75.1% of non-Indigenous students. Nationally, Indigenous students are under-represented within degree programs offered by disciplines such as Business, Engineering, Science, and to a lesser degree, Arts, Health and Education. A significantly high proportion of Indigenous University students across the nation are enrolled in 'Enabling' and other 'non-award' courses than non-Indigenous students (19.4% compared to 1.4%), while less than 9.2% of Indigenous students enrol in postgraduate awards compared to 21% of their non-Indigenous counterparts (*Indigenous Participation in Higher Education: Culture, Choice and Capital Theory, June 2006*).

7.1.2 Indigenous Student Outcomes at Charles Sturt University

Indigenous student access, participation, retention and success at Charles Sturt University largely reflect the national disparity and key performance indicators in relation to Indigenous student educational outcomes.

Indigenous Australians comprise over 3.18% of the total population of the geographical region serviced by Charles Sturt University, however the total Indigenous student population of the University is less than 1.3%. Charles Sturt University data shows that during 2005-2007 a total of 559 Indigenous students enrolled in various courses offered by the University. The vast majority of Indigenous students at Charles Sturt University are enrolled in Arts, Health and Education degree programs and non-award courses offered by the University. A total of 34 Indigenous students graduated from their programs of study at Charles Sturt University during 2005-2007 and 284 Indigenous students are listed on the University system as actively participating in study as of August 9 2007. During 2005-2007 a total of 45 Indigenous students completed a Charles Sturt University Enabling or other non-award program. Significantly, 171 Indigenous students withdrew from their courses during the period 2005- August 9 2007, representing a marked decrease of between 38% (post-graduate) and 43% (undergraduate) in success rates for Indigenous students at Charles Sturt University in recent years. Table 1 presents other Charles Sturt University data for the period 2005-August 9 2007:

Table 1: Status of Indigenous Students 2005-7

Type of Award	Number of Indigenous Students	Study Status
Doctoral Studies	2	1 active 1 withdrawn
Masters	30	1 graduated 20 active 8 withdraw 1 transferred
Postgraduate certificate or Diploma	63	12 graduates, 27 active 24 withdrawn, cancelled or transferred
Undergraduate Degree	341	19 graduates 174 active 132 withdraw or cancelled 13 withdrawn/transferred 3 excluded
Non-degree courses	123	2 graduates 45 completions 62 active 11 withdrawn 3 excluded

Strategies designed to improve the access, participation, retention and success of Indigenous higher education students at Charles Sturt University are outlined in section 8.2 below.

As part of the Charles Sturt University Reconciliation Action Plan, Charles Sturt University will adopt the following key performance indicator.

Key Performance Indicator 1: Charles Sturt University increase the total number of Indigenous Australian students participating in higher education at Charles Sturt University to at least 3% by 2015.

7.2 Strategies for Improving Indigenous Student Educational Outcomes at Charles Sturt University

Charles Sturt University is committed to overcoming the evident disparity in educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students of the University.

Charles Sturt University acknowledges the impact of Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage and the role and responsibility of the University in addressing this disadvantage through improving Indigenous student access to, and success in, higher education.

Charles Sturt University also recognises that Universities, as Western institutions, can be a forbidding environment for Indigenous students and that this can adversely impact upon Indigenous access, participation, retention and success in higher education.

Since its establishment in 1989, Charles Sturt University has initiated a number of programs aimed at increasing Indigenous student access to and participation in higher education within the geographical footprint of the institution and beyond. However, many reports, including the AUQA Report (2006) and the 2006 report of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council entitled *'Partnerships, Pathways and Policies: Improving Indigenous Education Outcomes'* which was endorsed by the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee in September 2006 in the *'AVCC Response on Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Conference Report'*, argue that "certain pre-conditions are necessary before long-term sustainable change is made and an improvement in the participation in higher education and outcomes for Indigenous people is achieved" (IHEAC, 2006:6).

One of the most fundamental of the 'pre-conditions' necessary for achieving long-term sustainable change in Indigenous educational outcomes at Charles Sturt University is the widening of Indigenous involvement in the life and governance of the University. This requires commitment to a whole of institution approach, including increasing the University's engagement with Indigenous communities, Indigenisation of the curriculum, financial assistance and pro-active provision of Indigenous student services, and the inclusion of Indigenous culture and knowledge as a valued part of University life and decision-making.

Charles Sturt University has initiated a number strategies and programs to improve Indigenous student access and outcomes. The establishment of Indigenous Students Services (formally Indigenous Support Units) on all Charles Sturt University onshore campuses has increasingly enabled the provision of culturally appropriate support and academic advice to students and potential students of the University. Current examples include commitment to improving the dissemination of information and services to Indigenous students and potential students of Charles Sturt University by, allocating two staff members to the position of 'webmasters' to ensure ongoing development and maintenance of the Indigenous Student Services site. Partnerships have been established between Indigenous Student Services and the Centre for Indigenous Studies in an endeavour to increase the profile of Charles Sturt University and its programs within the Indigenous communities located within the University's geographical footprint to position Charles Sturt University as the preferred provider of higher education to Indigenous students. The Manager and Student Liaison Officers of the Indigenous Student Services, the Director and Community Relations Officer of the Centre for Indigenous Studies accompanied by representatives from Faculties such as Health and Education have undertaken several successful excursions to Indigenous communities, including many of those located within the country of the Wiradjuri Nation, the Kamilaroi Nation in the north east, the Murrawarri, Ngemba and Barkandji Nations in the north west and the Nyampa and Wangkamarra Nations in the far west of NSW.

Further extension of these outreach marketing trips is strongly encouraged. Outreach marketing programs are currently being funded through the Centre for Indigenous Studies, Indigenous Student Services and participating Faculties or Schools. Given that such strategies market Charles Sturt University more broadly and provide valuable opportunities

for community engagement, outreach marketing programs should be financially supported by Charles Sturt University primarily through the University's marketing funds. Outreach marketing trips should be coordinated by the Community Relations Officer of the Centre for Indigenous Studies in collaboration of Indigenous Student Services and include cross-Faculty and/or Centre participation. Outreach marketing and student recruitment programs should extend beyond the boundaries of Charles Sturt University's inland geographical footprint to include urban centres within NSW and bordering regions. Outreach marketing programs provide Charles Sturt University with a valuable opportunity to:

- Establish relationships with Indigenous communities, organisations, working parties and community groups, as well as other education providers such as TAFE and primary and secondary schools;
- Gather information on the educational needs and aspirations of various communities and potential students;
- Demystify higher education at Charles Sturt University, including University structure and processes, and the programs and student support services offered; and
- Foster the development of collaborative research projects with Indigenous communities and organisations and Charles Sturt University.

Other Charles Sturt University programs identified in the paper entitled *Charles Sturt University Agenda for Inland Australia - Growing our Communities through Education and Research (2007)* that have significant potential to improve Indigenous access and participation in tertiary education at Charles Sturt University include:

- Collaboration with the Riverina Institute of TAFE to provide study centres in TAFE facilities in Griffith (Business and Nursing) and Deniliquin (Social Welfare/Social Work);
- The creation of scholarships and enabling programs targeted at rural and remote communities to address some of the financial barriers to access and participation; and
- The development of close links through clinical placements and practicum's with Schools, health care and community organisations.

Other strategies recommended for improving the access, participation, retention and success of Indigenous students at Charles Sturt University include:

- The development of sustainable programs in conjunction with Charles Sturt University's Indigenous Student Services, regional secondary education institutions and vocational education providers to ensure that Indigenous students are provided with education which enables them to be 'University ready';
- The AUQA Report (2006 p iv) is correct in its assertion that *'the traditional owners of the land on which the institution is located, play a central role in the wellbeing of Indigenous students'* regardless of whether the student is traditionally descended from that particular group's land or not. The establishment of an Indigenous Meeting Place and Elders in Residence program on each campus provides the unique opportunity to engage local Indigenous communities and Elders in the life of the University whilst enhancing the learning, research and engagement of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff;
- The provision of an evidence-based approach to inform and ensure the ongoing development and implementation of culturally appropriate and needs based programs and strategies designed to effectively address key areas of concern in relation to Indigenous Education is vital. The AUQA Report (2006:9) argued the need for Indigenous Student Support Units to take the lead in research, data

collection and benchmarking in relation to the four key indicators of Indigenous educational outcomes. The adoption of such an approach allows not only for the development of targeted programs aimed at improving Indigenous student success both at Charles Sturt University and within the broader University sector. It also provides the opportunity to develop collaborations across Divisions, Faculties and Centres of the University, and the capacity-building of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff in ways which allow them to make a significant contribution in this area;

- The development and implementation of accountable systems for the early identification of Indigenous students at risk and the provision of case management and other relevant support and services;
- The establishment of an academic mentoring scheme between Indigenous students and Indigenous academics, and non-Indigenous academics from within the student's discipline area;
- The promotion of Indigenous cultures and Indigenous community, student and staff achievements;
- The provision of flexible entry requirements for Indigenous students;
- The appointment of Indigenous Librarians and/or Indigenous library liaison staff to assist students in the development of research related skills, including searching, retrieving and evaluating resources. The lack of fundamental IT and academic skills such as these are a well documented barrier to success in higher education for many students, particularly Indigenous; and
- The employment of Indigenous managerial, academic and general staff across the institution, including administrative roles in high profile 'front counter' positions within Faculty and other University offices and reception areas.

7.3 Recommendations

The following Recommendations align with the *Vision, Values, Mission and Objectives* to of Charles Sturt University's Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 and reflect the recommendations of the AUQA, Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council and Australian Vice Chancellors Committee's reports on strategies for increasing Indigenous student wellbeing and educational outcomes through enhancing the inclusiveness of the institution. The Recommendations also reflect the Recommendations of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (*Partnerships, Pathways and Policies: Improving Indigenous Educational Outcomes* 2006:6):

Recommendation 4

The Charles Sturt University Council appoints an Indigenous member to University Council.

Recommendation 5

The Vice Chancellor and President establishes a Charles Sturt University Indigenous Advisory Board to provide advice and guidance to the University in ensuring cultural appropriateness, accountability and transparency.

Recommendation 6

The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice President (Administration) and Director of Student Services formally change the name of the Indigenous Support Units to Indigenous Student Services.

Recommendation 7

The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deputy President (Administration) work with relevant Divisions, the Centre for Indigenous Studies, Deans and Indigenous Student Services to:

- a) Establish an 'Elders in Residence' program at each campus which promotes and legitimises the role of Elders within the learning community;
- b) Provide facilities on each campus for the establishment of a Community Meeting Place;
- c) Construct murals or other visual displays of Indigenous art and culture on campus;
- d) Develop cultural protocols, codes of conduct and policies to guide the University in its engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities;
- e) Acknowledge Indigenous heritage, traditional ownership and custodianship of the land through observance of a 'Welcome to Country' by traditional Elders at University ceremonies and events and an 'Acknowledgement of Country' in a prominent location on major University documents and marketing materials and on University websites; and
- f) Name University spaces in local language and establish on-campus community events, including celebrations for NAIDOC and Reconciliation week's and commemoration of National Sorry Day/Journey of Healing Day.

Recommendation 8

The Indigenous Student Services of Charles Sturt University, in partnership with Divisions and Faculties, lead in evidence-based policy development with a view to improving access, participation, retention and success rates of Indigenous students, through:

- Improving and maintaining accurate and accessible data on these key performance indicators;
- Investigating and identifying ways in which financial and other assistance to Indigenous students may contribute to higher retention and success; and
- Identifying the risk factors and vulnerabilities that contribute to Indigenous student lack of academic success and withdrawal from enrolment.

Recommendation 9

The Indigenous Student Services of Charles Sturt University investigate and identify ways in which financial and other assistance to Indigenous students may contribute to higher retention and success including consideration of scholarships for full or part time students who are ineligible for other financial support.

Recommendation 10

The Indigenous Student Services and Centre for Indigenous Studies establish a mentoring and role model scheme for Indigenous students.

Recommendation 11

The Director of Student Services, in cooperation with Human Resources, provides staff of the Indigenous Student Services with opportunities and support to further their academic qualifications and research skills and profiles.

Recommendation 12

Indigenous Students Services strengthen and extend their partnerships with secondary schools and providers of vocational education and training in order to increase the entry of Indigenous secondary school leavers and vocational education students into Charles Sturt University courses.

Recommendation 13

Faculties in cooperation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies provide multiple entry and exit points and innovative undergraduate and postgraduate courses which specifically meets

the employment needs of mature-age Indigenous peoples and recognises the prior learning and work experience of Indigenous non-school leaving students.

Recommendation 14

Charles Sturt University provide funding for the ongoing development of an Outreach Marketing and student recruitment program.

8. Toward an Inclusive Curriculum: Incorporating Indigenous Australian Content in Undergraduate Programs

“[T]he AVCC accept[s] the principle that all Australian higher education students [should] receive some understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems, cultures and values as an integral part of their studies. There are tangible benefits to be obtained in greater numbers of students gaining an understanding of Indigenous issues. The implementation of this principle will provide a sound basis for equipping all students with some generic skills for living in our society”...

(Australian Vice Chancellor's Submission to the Higher Education Review (2002:38).

Universities in Australia have been educating professionals for over 100 years. The education provided by universities has shaped the thinking and practices of generations of professionals who have played a significant role in structuring relationships between Indigenous Australians and the broader society, including advising colonial and contemporary governments, authorities and professional bodies on policy and practice, constructing and legitimating societal values and attitudes, and providing professional services to Indigenous peoples.

The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) was the first major national Inquiry to document the complexity and severity of the socio-economic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians and consistently questioned the standard and appropriateness of the professional services provided to Indigenous Australians. The Royal Commission argued that professionals largely operated within a neo-colonial framework and were generally ignorant of knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures, worldview, histories and contemporary situations and lacked practical skills and strategies for working effectively in Indigenous contexts.

Whilst over the past decade there has been an upsurge of interest shown by Australian universities in ensuring the inclusion of some Indigenous content in discipline areas such as education, social work and nursing, this incorporation has been haphazard and incomplete. Consequently, seventeen years after the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody tabled its findings and recommendations in 1991, and fifteen years after the beginning of the process of reconciliation, the high levels of socio-economic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians have not improved. Societal attitudes and services provided by professions to Indigenous Australians remain powerful barriers to achieving social justice. Professionals, educated and trained by universities, continue to contribute to the construction and perpetuation of these barriers. Doctors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, police officers, teachers, and other professionals continue to routinely construct and implement policies and practices which have the power to determine health strategies, place children in institutions, send Indigenous Australians to jail and structure the curriculum taught to the future generation of Australian professionals, based upon little or no knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories or contemporary realities.

As the institution responsible for educating the next generation of professionals across a range of disciplines, Charles Sturt University has a significant role in shaping the culture, paradigms and practices of those professions. Charles Sturt University has a major responsibility to provide the next generation of professionals with knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories and contemporary contexts and equip graduates with culturally appropriate skills and strategies to prepare them for working effectively with Indigenous clients and/or communities. This education should engage students in a critical inquiry into the nature of their profession – its history, assumptions and characteristics, its role in structuring Australian society, and its historical and contemporary engagement with Indigenous communities and Indigenous people. These professional characteristics need to be examined and understood if professionals are to develop an understanding of the social and political contexts of Indigenous people’s lives and communities and the roles of the professions in shaping those contexts to become agents of change.

The inclusion of Indigenous content into all Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs offered by Charles Sturt University has the power to change the nature of Australian society and the quality of service provision provided to Indigenous Australians. The systematic and systemic inclusion of Indigenous studies provides Charles Sturt University with the opportunity to define itself as a leading institution in Indigenous education and a significant agent for social change and ethical practice in contemporary Australian society. The implementation of policy ensuring that all graduates are provided with the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, motivation and confidence to be able to work professionally with Indigenous people and communities provides Charles Sturt University with the foundation upon which to set this higher education institution apart from other universities, being second only to the University of South Australia in implementing such policy.

Key Performance Indicator 2: All Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs incorporate Indigenous Australian content by 2015.

8.1 Cultural Competence: A Pedagogical Framework for Incorporating Indigenous Australian Content

Cultural competence transcends cultural awareness to provide students not only with knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary issues, but with skills and strategies for working confidently and effectively with Indigenous peoples and communities.

The cultural competence pedagogical framework for the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs recommended by the Centre for Indigenous Studies was developed by senior Indigenous academic Wendy Nolan and Associate Professor Keith McConnochie in 2004, and subsequently tested at the University of South Australia. This research led to a report which directly resulted in the University of South Australia implementing policy requiring all University of South Australia graduates undertake Indigenous Australian Studies by 2010. The model has been further refined by Ranzjin, McConnochie, and Nolan of the *Psychology and Indigenous Australians: Teaching, Practice and Theory* project team and is currently being disseminated nationally and internationally as a requirement of their Carrick Institute grant. The cultural competence pedagogical framework and associated curriculum guidelines developed by Ranzjin *et al* have been endorsed by the Australian Psychological Society

and now form part of the APAC accreditation guidelines for the education of Australian psychologists.

The cultural competence pedagogical framework was constructed following an initial research project within the University of South Australia conducted by Nolan and McConnochie (2004) to address the four questions: ‘what is the justification for incorporating required Indigenous Australian content into undergraduate programs?’, ‘what content should be included?’, ‘how should this content vary across professions and disciplines?’, and ‘what pedagogical strategies are appropriate?’. The research included an extensive literature search and a series of focus groups within which Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals, academics, Indigenous communities, students, employer groups and other stakeholders explored the role of professionals in Indigenous contexts and the knowledge and skill base required by professionals to work effectively with Indigenous Australians. Five broad groups of issues emerged from the research:

1. There continues to exist a significant lack of awareness amongst professionals of Indigenous Australian clients, cultures and contexts;
2. An absence of specific skills and strategies for working in Indigenous contexts;
3. The culturally specific nature of the assumptions and practices of professions and agencies;
4. The failure of professions to engage in broader issues of justice and human rights, including advocacy and the development of strategies to challenge prejudice, ethnocentrism and racism; and
5. The need for individuals to be aware of their own values, assumptions and expectations and how these impact on their interaction with Indigenous clients and communities.

Given the diversity of programs offered by the University it is not possible within the scope of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy to identify specific content other than at the generalised level. However, this does provide for the development of a cultural competency pedagogical framework within which, Charles Sturt University can establish a series of general expectations within which individual disciplines and programs can develop program-specific content and strategies, which will meet discipline-specific expectations. The literature and focus groups clearly demonstrate the need for all onshore undergraduate students gain knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities. The following is considered the foundational or contextual knowledge necessary to successfully integrate discipline specific Indigenous content in a way which develops the cultural competence of future professionals:

- Nature of Indigenous spirituality & belief systems;
- The diversity of Indigenous Australia and the continuity and change between Indigenous cultures past and present;
- Relationships with land and the interconnectedness of land, family and spirituality;
- Diversity of concepts of identity;
- Importance of understanding the impact of historical processes, including colonialism, institutionalisation, discrimination and genocide;
- Community and individual responses to colonialism;
- Contemporary Indigenous communities, including aspirations, lived realities and issues which impact upon or are of concern to Indigenous Australians;
- Relevant social and economic indicators; and
- Relevant national & international reports, legislation and obligations.

The cultural competence pedagogical framework provides a systematic and systemic approach to the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs. It is highly recommended that students are provided with a ‘stand-alone’ Indigenous Studies subject in the first year of their program within

which they can develop knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories and contemporary issues and contexts. This provides the contextual framework upon which to build student knowledge and understanding of discipline specific Indigenous content integrated throughout the remainder of their program.

The new Division of Learning and Teaching Services can provide a valuable service to Faculties and Schools in the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into subjects and programs in a pedagogically sound way. Within the Division the role of an Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy (ICAP) Coordinator should be created to work specifically in this area, particularly during the implementation stage and professional development in relation to the cultural competence pedagogical framework and effective methods for incorporating Indigenous content and resources. The ICAP Coordinator would work closely with the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Educational Designers to support Faculties and Schools design and teach Indigenous Australian content.

8.2 Implementing the incorporation of Indigenous Australian Content

The adoption of a cultural competence pedagogical framework for the construction and dissemination of Indigenous Studies at Charles Sturt University places the University as the leading Australian higher education institution in this area.

The systematic incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs should occur according to the 5-yearly course Review cycle. The implementation according to the 5-year review allows adequate lead times for planning and implementation followed by a continuous process of review as part of the normal course review processes. Course Review documents and templates should be amended in consultation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies to reflect the requirement for the inclusion of Indigenous Australian content. The Charles Sturt University Graduate Attributes should also be amended in consultation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous Australian descriptors.

The incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into professional discipline specific undergraduate programs which are co-provided or require accreditation from professional bodies will require negotiation with the co-provider or accrediting body to ensure that Indigenous Australian content is incorporated in ways which meet professional and pedagogical requirements and guidelines.

8.2.1 Defining ‘Indigenous Australian Studies’ at Charles Sturt University

‘Indigenous Australian Studies’ is defined as that broad area of inquiry related to Indigenous Australian knowledges, cultures and heritages, histories and issues which impact upon or are of concern to Indigenous peoples and communities today, such as health, education, criminal justice, land rights and Native Title. *‘Indigenous Australian Studies’* does not cover profession specific studies such as Indigenous health and mental health, Indigenous policing and Indigenous education. *‘Indigenous Australian Studies’* should be taught as a ‘stand-alone’ subject in the first year of a program to provide the contextual foundation for integrated content throughout the course of study.

‘Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies’ is defined as that area of inquiry in Indigenous Studies which is specifically related to the theoretical and practical knowledge required for a professional discipline. *‘Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies’*

should be taught as ‘stand-alone’ subjects or via integration of relevant Indigenous content throughout the program.

‘Hybrid Indigenous Australian Studies’ is defined as being a combination of *‘Indigenous Australian Studies’* and *‘Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies’*. *‘Hybrid Indigenous Australian Studies’* provide an effective strategy for the incorporation of Indigenous content into ‘crowded’ discipline-specific programs such as psychology.

‘Restricted Indigenous Studies’ is defined as those subjects in which enrolment is restricted to Indigenous Australian students.

8.3 The question of ‘who should teach Indigenous Studies?’

The inclusion of Indigenous Australian Studies or content in University curriculum has a relatively short history and until recently has predominately been taught by non-Indigenous academic staff from disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology and the social sciences. The question of ‘who should teach Indigenous Studies?’ has been the subject of much discussion and debate, particularly as more Indigenous academics take their place in Australian Universities.

It was not until the late 1960s, the decade in which the United Nations made colonialism a crime against humanity, that any academic interest was shown toward Indigenous issues and/or interests or that Indigenous Studies became available as an area of study in Australian Universities. At this time in history, Australia, like other signatory countries to that UN Convention, theoretically moved into an era of post-colonisation and self-determination in which the voices of the former colonised Indigenous minority became empowered to challenge the institutional racism and exclusivity of dominant ways of knowing and doing, both generally and within academia. More recently, the process of Reconciliation, along with the findings of national inquiries such as the *Royal Commission of Inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (1991) and the *National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* (1997), brought Indigenous issues to the Centre, providing further space for the growing voices of Indigenous peoples challenging and deconstructing colonising practices and articulating epistemologies and histories counter to that of the coloniser as a part of the process of self-determination.

Over the past decade there has been an increase in the number of Indigenous students graduating from higher education institutions and subsequently of Indigenous academics employed within Australian universities. There has followed a challenge to the dominance of non-Indigenous academics and their role in constructing and teaching knowledge about Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities. The question of ‘who should teach Indigenous Studies?’ was addressed at the March 2008 meeting of the National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN) held at the Dubbo campus of Charles Sturt University. The NIHEN made five major determinations in relation to this question:

1. It is no longer acceptable that non-Indigenous academics teach Indigenous Studies content if there is a qualified Indigenous academic that can do so;
2. Non-Indigenous academic staff teaching Indigenous content should have extensive knowledge of Indigenous cultures, histories and contemporary realities, both generally and discipline specific as a requirement for teaching within this area of inquiry;
3. In keeping with recommendations of the AUQA Report (2000:vii), the NIHEN argued for professional development activities for non-Indigenous teaching staff such as cultural competency programs and Indigenous Studies seminars as an important step in the process of developing knowledge and understanding,

- providing a valuable opportunity for integrating aspects of cultural diversity generally, and of Indigenous Australian discipline specific content into a wider range of subjects within various programs;
4. In recognition of the traumatisation that has occurred to Indigenous family structures and the transmission of culture as a direct result of past Government policies and practices, Indigenous academic staff teaching Indigenous Studies outside of their discipline specific knowledge area should have undertaken Indigenous Studies as a part of their higher education degree; and
 5. A partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics in the teaching of 'hybrid' and/or discipline-specific Indigenous Studies subjects is desirable to model to students effective and respectful working partnerships.

8.4 The question of 'who should teach Indigenous content' at Charles Sturt University?

Teaching Indigenous Australian content requires discipline specific expertise and/or broad depth of knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and communities. Teaching Indigenous Australian content lies with both the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the various Faculties and Schools. In a Memo dated April 2 2008, Professor Ross Chambers set out the principles and policy framework for the teaching, management and funding of Indigenous Australian Studies. These principles have been incorporated, at times verbatim, into the following sections.

Indigenous Australian Studies subjects, as defined above, should be the responsibility of the Centre for Indigenous Studies. Indigenous academic staff employed within Faculties and Schools across Charles Sturt University but not within the Centre for Indigenous Studies may be assigned to teach Indigenous Australian studies with the approval of the Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies and relevant Dean. In such cases responsibility for academic management of the subject will remain with the Centre for Indigenous Studies but the funding for the subject will be assigned to the School in which the staff member is employed to recognise the proportion of their teaching load contribution.

Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies will be managed and taught by the relevant Schools, unless otherwise negotiated between the relevant Dean and Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies. It is expected that Faculties and Schools will employ Indigenous Academics in the professions to teach discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies wherever possible.

All **hybrid Indigenous Australian Studies** subjects should be team taught by academic staff from the Centre for Indigenous Studies and relevant Schools. The Centre for Indigenous Studies should have responsibility for teaching Indigenous Australian Studies content while the relevant Schools have responsibility for the **discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies** component. The management of such subjects will remain the responsibilities of the relevant Schools, unless otherwise negotiated between the relevant Dean and the Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies. The Relevant Head of School and Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies will jointly oversee the teaching of the subject. Funding for the teaching of hybrid Indigenous Australian subjects will be assigned proportionally to the Centre/Schools based on teaching load contribution.

8.5 Identification, Assignment and Funding of Indigenous Australia subjects

For the purposes of clear identification, assignment and funding of subjects with Indigenous Australian content to the relevant academic unit and discipline code, a system of prefixes need to be developed and rigorously applied.

The various subjects within Indigenous Australian Studies, hybrid Indigenous Australian Studies and discipline specific Indigenous Australian Studies will be assigned on the SAL to the Centre for Indigenous Studies or relevant School depending on who has management responsibilities. Proportional funding, where required will be negotiated between the Dean and Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies.

The assigned school and Faculty will be responsible for all aspects of subject management including assessment and submission of grades. Marking will be the responsibility of the teaching Centre/School.

Restricted Indigenous Studies subjects will continue to attract double the normal subject weighting for their discipline in Charles Sturt University's RFM. Non-restricted Indigenous Australian subjects (including hybrid and discipline specific subjects) will also attract double the normal subject weighting during the introductory phase of the Indigenous Education Strategy (2009-2011). Long term funding arrangements will be assessed in 2010-2011.

8.6 Academic Governance of the Incorporation of Indigenous Australian content

The incorporation of Indigenous Australian content into all Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs requires a systematic and pedagogically sound approach. It is vital to ensure cultural appropriateness and accountability of all Indigenous Australian content produced and taught by the University. An integrated governance mechanism ensures that Charles Sturt University has a coherent approach to the development of teaching Indigenous Australian Studies, especially with regards managing the shared responsibilities between the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Faculties and Schools.

The mechanism for enabling an integrated governance mechanism will be an Indigenous Board of Studies. The Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies will Chair the Indigenous Board of Studies. This Board would be responsible for monitoring the development and implementation of the Indigenous Australian content in undergraduate programs policy at Charles Sturt University and be the approval body for all Indigenous Australian Studies subjects. Attestation of approval for Hybrid and Discipline-specific subjects would need to be documented before these subjects could be approved by relevant Faculty Courses Committees or the Academic Program Committee. Membership of the Board would include all Centre for Indigenous Studies academic staff at Level B or above, and two Indigenous Australian academic staff from each of the Faculties. This would have the benefit of creating a critical mass of academics in Indigenous Australian Studies which is vital for quality assurance, peer review and the development of culturally appropriate research.

8.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations are consistent with Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 Learning and Teaching Objective 2 to “enhance the inclusiveness of Charles Sturt University’s learning environments” and Key Objective 1 and 2 of the Course Plan 2007-2011 “to provide distinctive educational programs for the professions that prepare students for work and citizenship...including cultural competence” (Charles Sturt

University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011, p.6). They are also in keeping with one of the key defining features of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) vision for Australian University education outlined in the 'AVCC Response on Indigenous Education Advisory Council Conference Report (September 2006:1), that "Australia's universities will meet the needs of Australia's Indigenous peoples through education, research and community service".

The recommendations also provide for the systematic phasing in of appropriate Indigenous content across the undergraduate programs offered by Charles Sturt University over a five year period, allowing adequate lead times for planning and implementation followed by a continuous process of review as part of the normal course review processes.

Recommendation 15

Academic Senate implement policy requiring the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content as an assessable component of all Charles Sturt University undergraduate programs. The incorporation of Indigenous Australian content is to take place at the next major course review with incorporation across all undergraduate courses to be fully implemented by 2015.

Recommendation 16

The Charles Sturt University Degree Initiative Committee, in consultation and negotiation with the Centre for Indigenous Studies, review the descriptors of the University's graduate attributes to specify the extent to which Indigenous content is expected to be identified and specified within the graduate attributes profiles of programs and courses offered by the University.

Recommendation 17

Academic Senate, in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies, develop a set of curriculum guidelines identifying the broad intentions of Indigenous content and issues to be considered, and that these be included within the guidelines for Course and Program Review and Course and Program Development templates.

Recommendation 18

Faculties, as part of the 5-yearly Review process, hold a program specific seminar to explore how the program will address the issues raised within the curriculum guidelines. The seminars should include teaching staff from the program, practitioners from relevant industry or professional contexts, Indigenous participants with appropriate expertise and staff from the Centre for Indigenous Studies.

Recommendation 19

Academic Senate introduce policy requiring Course and Program Coordinators to comment, within the 5-yearly Course and program review report, on how they are addressing the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content in Charles Sturt University undergraduate courses.

Recommendation 20

Charles Sturt University to appoint an Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy Coordinator located within the Division of Teaching and Learning Services to provide educational design support and advice to Faculties and Schools on the incorporation of Indigenous Australian content.

Recommendation 21

Academic staff who teach Indigenous Australian content are expected to hold qualifications in Indigenous Studies or a relevant discipline. Staff without qualifications or equivalent expertise and experience will be expected to gain qualifications or participate in professional learning programs provided by the Centre for Indigenous Studies.

Recommendation 22

Existing Indigenous Australian Studies subjects (including Discipline-specific and hybrid) should be referred to the Indigenous Board of Studies for Review. Existing subjects should be assigned to the relevant Centre/School based on the governance principles set out in the Indigenous Education Strategy.

9. The Scholarship of Indigenous Learning, Teaching and Community Engagement at Charles Sturt University

The incorporation of Indigenous content into the undergraduate programs offered by Charles Sturt University provides a valuable vehicle for developing a coordinated University-wide ‘Scholarship of Indigenous Learning, Teaching and Community Engagement’ with the objective of providing the best quality culturally inclusive professional education to graduates in Australia. As Wright (2002:5) suggests: “[t]he establishment of this [type of] cultural framework...will allow Indigenous people to realize their own potential and speaks to the creation of viable regional agreements and partnerships between [Universities,] private business, state institutions and Indigenous people”. This is consistent with Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011 Learning and Teaching Plan Objective 1 and 3: to “promote and recognise good practice in learning and teaching” and to “strengthen partnerships with the professions in learning and teaching” (Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011, pp.10-11). Thus, the implementation of an Indigenous Content in Undergraduate Programs policy provides Charles Sturt University with the opportunity to:

- Involve a wide range of schools and professional programs across the university in the research and development of inclusive curriculum design and partnership teaching;
- establish a significant level of collaborative partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic staff across disciplines, Institutes and Research Centres;
- undertake a range of experimentation and evaluation of pedagogical strategies and practices in teaching Indigenous Studies;
- disseminate this information and experience to colleagues from across and beyond the university through seminars, conference presentations, publications and research findings;
- develop a body of knowledge and theory which would be of considerable interest to a wide range of professional bodies and other institutions;
- form mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous communities, private business and government and non-government bodies and institutions; and
- make a major contribution to the process of reconciliation and achievement of social justice and human rights for Indigenous Australians, both nationally and within the region.

These activities would best to be undertaken through collaborative partnerships between Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Education for Practice Institute which focuses on enhancing profession education and professional practice.

Key Performance Indicator 3: By 2015 Charles Sturt University has a national and international reputation for its scholarship and success in embedding cultural competence within all its undergraduate professional programs.

9.1 Recommendations

Recommendation 23

The Education for Practice Institute be provided with two additional fellowships each year to work in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies on the scholarship of cultural competence for the professions. One of the two fellowships be a designated fellowship for an Indigenous Australian academic.

Recommendation 24

The new Division of Teaching and Learning Support receive additional funding to create an identified Indigenous Australian Position, to provide educational design support to academics in the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Faculties that teach Indigenous Australian content. The Indigenous Educational Designer will develop expertise in the Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework as well as instructional design and the development of high quality learning materials that may be able to be used across Faculties and Schools that teach Australian Indigenous content.

Recommendation 25

Staff teaching Indigenous Australian Studies at Charles Sturt University, including hybrid and discipline specific subjects, are supported by a Cultural Competence Pedagogy Network (akin the Professional Experience Network or PEN).

Recommendation 26

The Centre for Indigenous Studies, Faculties and the Education for Practice Institute develop a Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Project which would provide for an on-going examination of the process of incorporating Indigenous content into undergraduate professional programs across the University.

10. Indigenous Research

Research is a core activity for universities, and...high quality Indigenous research...is a cornerstone of Indigenous higher education'

(AVCC Response on IHEAC Conference Report, September 2006:15)

The Indigenous peoples of Australia have the distinction of being the most researched group in the world. From the time of the earliest explorers to the Australian continent, Indigenous peoples and their cultures have been subjects of definition, description and classification, primarily within the Western paradigmatic boundaries of Social Darwinism and functionalist anthropology. The Indigenous peoples and cultures of Australia have been defined without consent as the missing link between primate and Homo sapiens, as stone-age curiosities and prime examples of the pre-modern out-of-place with the modern. Phrenology was used to 'prove' Indigenous inferiority and mental defectiveness while anthropology and the physical sciences combined to fill the museums and academic libraries of England and Europe with Indigenous bones, heritage and knowledge (*Hollinsworth, D 1998, Race and Racism in Australia*).

Historically, Western research informed the policies and practices of colonial and post-Federation governments and authorities, including policies allowing for the forcible removal of nearly 100,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and the removal of Indigenous groups from their ancestral country to reservations under the governance and management of the Aborigines Protection Board(s). Western

research has defined generations of Indigenous families and children within deficit models, including explaining poor educational outcomes of Indigenous children a result of mental deficiency rather than a trans-generational consequence of historic marginalization and subjugation (*HREOC, 1997, The Bringing Them Home Report*). Since the 1980s Indigenous Australian peoples, their cultures and communities have increasingly become the subject of research from a broad range of disciplines including sociological and psychological inquiry, where non-Indigenous researchers seek to document and disseminate explanations for the high levels of Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage and mental illness.

Universities and others continue to produce volumes of research about Indigenous Australian peoples and cultures. Academics and researchers generate reports, journal articles and conference papers which aid their career and further the profile of their institution. However, the much of this research continues to deliver little in the way of positive and practical outcomes for the subjects of the research. Indigenous Australians continue to be the most disadvantaged group in the country and policies continue to be developed on the basis of research, often to the detriment of Indigenous peoples and communities. Despite the quantity of quantitative and qualitative data that has been generated, Indigenous men and women continue to die 20 years earlier than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Indigenous educational outcomes remain poor and Indigenous health is of a third-world standard. Many communities continue to lack basic human rights, including 318 Indigenous communities in rural and remote Australia who currently do not have access to a water supply deemed under Australian National Guidelines as fit for human consumption (*Social Justice Report, 2007*).

Theoretically, the socio-political world has moved into an era of post-colonisation in which the rights of Indigenous peoples to equality and self-determination have been repositioned from the Fringe to the Centre. The time has come to transcend the rhetoric of post-colonisation and self-determination by implementing policies and procedures which ensure accountability in Indigenous research and empowerment of Indigenous community in the research process.

10.1 Indigenous Research at Charles Sturt University

It is time to begin [the] process [of] develop[ing] a distinctive policy framework for enhancing and strengthening Indigenous research...

Fundamentally, we want to bring Indigenous research from the margins into the core of academic research culture and affirm its place and prominence within higher education.

To do this we need to increase the recognition of Indigenous research within the prevailing academic research paradigm, establish the unique facets and contribution of quality Indigenous research and dramatically increase both the number and capacity of Indigenous researchers

(Walter, M; Maynard, J; Milroy, J and Nakata, M, 2007, 'Strengthening Indigenous Research Culture')

There is extensive evidence drawing on a wide range of social indicators documenting the extent to which Indigenous Australians are not achieving social justice and redress within Australian society. However, there is a continuing lack of coordinated research developing practical strategies aimed at improving Indigenous autonomy, cultural identity and social equality. There is a need to develop a coordinated research effort which is directed towards identifying, developing and promoting practical policies and strategies which will support Indigenous communities, government agencies, the private sector and the broader population in the development of policies and strategies related to social justice.

Charles Sturt University is well positioned to lead in the development and coordination of high quality Indigenous research which is of practical benefit to the subjects of the research and assists in the achievement of social justice for Indigenous Australians, both nationally

and within the geographical footprint of Charles Sturt University. In doing so, Charles Sturt University fulfils many aspects of the Vision, Values and Mission of the University by enabling key objectives of the Research Plan 2007-2011, including “*creating new knowledge which is applied for the benefit of our communities, is responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges, enhances collaboration with industry, develops partnerships with professions, communities, and other researchers, [and] facilitates opportunities for linkages with learning and teaching*” (Charles Sturt University Strategy and Plans 2007-2011, p. 2-3).

As outlined in the *Charles Sturt University Agenda for Inland Australia - Growing our Communities through Education and Research (2007)* the University is currently involved in many activities which link the University with Indigenous communities and organisations, including in the area of teaching, research and consultancy. Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers within Charles Sturt University are engaged in high quality Indigenous related research resulting in the development of a growing number of quality publications and body of literature coming from that research.

However, there are significant opportunities to extend and coordinate this level of engagement into a broader program with major benefits both to Indigenous communities and to the University. Given that the geographical footprint of Charles Sturt University is home to one of the largest populations of Indigenous Australians in the country, the University is well positioned to become the national leading higher education institution in the development of problem focussed research based upon the addressing the needs of Indigenous communities in culturally and methodologically appropriate ways.

This will require the development of, and institutional commitment to, an Indigenous Research Plan which is comprehensive in approach and sets the framework for success, accountability and sustainability of Indigenous research at Charles Sturt University. The strategy must contribute to increased productivity and quality in Indigenous research and facilitate cross-University collaborations. It should provide policy and guidelines for:

- The conduct of methodologically appropriate ethical research practice which meets the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Australians and communities;
- The development of research procedures which facilitate central involvement of Indigenous researchers, organisations and communities;
- The promotion and recognition of the expertise of Indigenous Australian researchers Ensuring that the results of research and any papers generated from the research are provided to the relevant Indigenous community, organisation or individual(s) in an accessible and culturally acceptable format and that any cultural norms the relevant Indigenous community, organisation or individual(s) may have in relation to the publication, use of photographs and identification of individuals are respected; and
- The negotiation of issues of ownership and control of the knowledge and data generated from Indigenous research.

10.1.1 Capacity-Building Indigenous Research and Indigenous Researchers at Charles Sturt University

'There is an obvious and urgent need to raise the number of Indigenous researchers. The disparity in enrolment, participation and especially completion rates of Indigenous post-graduate students is dramatic.

Indigenous students make up only 0.3 percent of PhD and 0.6 percent of Masters by Research completions. To achieve parity of participation the number of Indigenous doctoral students needs to more than triple and completions need to increase by more than 600 percent. The participation rate for Masters by Research needs to rise by more than one third and the completion rate needs to more than double to achieve parity. The task is formidable'

(Walter, M; Maynard, J; Milroy, J and Nakata, M, 2007, 'Strengthening Indigenous Research Culture')

Over the past two decades the number of Indigenous researchers has increased, however they remain grossly underrepresented in comparison to non-Indigenous researchers. According to the *AVCC Response to IHEAC Conference Report (September 2006:7)* "in order for Indigenous students to be represented in PhD programs at the same rate as non-Indigenous students, their number needs to increase by 282%". Clearly, building the capacity of Charles Sturt University to produce high quality problem focussed Indigenous research of national and international renown is reliant on capacity building the research qualifications and skills of Indigenous students and staff. It is therefore vital that the University develop and support programs to enhance the research skills and profiles of Indigenous staff and students, including formal training and mentoring by experienced researchers. The AVCC Report (2006:15) provides a number of recommendations for enhancing Indigenous research and increasing the number of Indigenous researchers including:

AVCC Recommendation 4:

- *Earnings replacement scholarships for Indigenous people in current employment who are considering taking up postgraduate scholarships;*
- *Adequate supervision arrangements for Indigenous students, including appropriate cultural support; and*
- *Allowing credit for recognised prior learning.*

The AUQA 2006 Report on Indigenous Issues likewise made a number of key recommendations including:

- *Having an Indigenous researcher on all Indigenous research projects*
- *Developing a cohort of Indigenous mainstream researchers as mentors and collaborators*

The creation of a Problem Focussed Research Group (PFRG) coordinated through the Centre for Indigenous Studies provides Charles Sturt University with the opportunity to ensure the development of a critical concentration of Indigenous researchers collaborating with Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues on the production of high quality research which meets the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities. The establishment of a cross-Faculty and Centre Indigenous Problem Focussed Research Group allows for the development of a coordinated approach to Indigenous research at Charles Sturt University and the maximisation of multi-disciplinary expertise and mentoring of beginning Indigenous researchers, including Indigenous Higher Degree students.

The PFRG provides Charles Sturt University with a vehicle upon which to build a reputation as a leader in the production and dissemination of Indigenous Australian research, including through the development of an annual Indigenous Research conference hosted by the Centre for Indigenous Studies designed to bring together in one forum

national and international expertise. The creation of an Indigenous Problem Focused Research Group (PFRG) coordinated through the Centre for Indigenous Studies provides for the capacity building of Indigenous research and researchers and could lead to the CIS achieving Research Centre status within five years. The appointment of a Senior Indigenous Australian Researcher to Charles Sturt University would significantly aid the coordination of Indigenous research at Charles Sturt University and development of the proposed PFRG. The appointment of a Senior Indigenous Researcher also:

'acknowledges to the institution, Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, Indigenous communities and funding bodies the university's commitment to building and supporting Indigenous research. Such high level recognition of the importance and specific place of Indigenous research also increases the likelihood of community research connections and partnerships across Australia and internationally.

High level placement of responsibility also enables Indigenous research to be formally recognised and institutionally embedded in academic research practice. This would include the priorities and precursors of Indigenous research such as: the consideration of Indigenous communities at all levels of the research, especially at setting standards for ethical research practices in Indigenous contexts; the development of cultural and community protocols and practices to guide researchers (Indigenous and non-Indigenous); the significance of research outcomes to benefit Indigenous communities; and the need for researchers to be trained in Indigenous cultural sensitivities and methodologies' (Walter et al, 2007, Strengthening Indigenous Research Culture).

Key Performance Indicator 4: By 2015 Charles Sturt University has a well established concentration (equivalent to a PFRG or small Research Centre) with at least one senior Indigenous Australian researcher, a number of early Indigenous Australian career researchers and RHD students that has a solid national reputation for research and scholarly outputs in Indigenous Australian Studies.

10.1.2 Ethics and Accountability in Charles Sturt University Indigenous Research.

'It's peculiar to say the least that as one of the most consulted and researched people in the country, we are the least listened to...We're subjected to a constant procession of academics, researchers, government agents, anthropologists, archaeologists, and sociologists, perhaps psychologists, who come to our door requiring information. As sure as one leaves, another arrives. We rarely see the report and often too late. We sometimes get quoted out of context or not at all, usually to our detriment. There are no improvements in our conditions and no improvements... or benefits for our efforts. They, on the other hand, have either tidied up their files, made a decision on our behalf, made a scientific breakthrough, attained doctoral status, published their opinions, become experts in the field, provided a consultant's report, moved on to another theory, gained a new prestigious portfolio, attracted lucrative publicity, gained political kudos, offered legislation, made an impressive speech, attacked our credibility, denied our Aboriginality, advised us as to what we should be doing, or created another problem for us'

(Sandra Bailey, 1st National Aboriginal and Islander Mental Health Conference, Sydney, 1993)

Until the early 1970s much of the research generated about the Indigenous peoples and cultures of Australia has been conducted without informed consent or consultation and engagement with the Indigenous peoples and communities made the subject of Western research. While contemporary ethical approval requires informed consent from subjects of research, the theoretical paradigms and methodologies used in the research continue to

largely be constructed by the dominant group to provide answers to the questions and problems posed by members of the dominant group, including funding bodies, governments and agencies, with little or no consultation or engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities.

It is vital that Charles Sturt University develop and implement culturally appropriate ethical and accountability policies, guidelines and procedures for engaging in Indigenous research. The AUQA Report on Indigenous Issues (2006) made a number of key recommendations designed to improve accountability, cultural appropriateness and ethical practice in relation to Indigenous research the including:

- *Establishing [Indigenous Australian] research advisory groups comprising internal and external stakeholders*
- *Developing mutually acceptable research models ensuring academic rigor and accountability*

Other strategies for ensuring accountability and culturally appropriate ethical practice in Indigenous research include:

- Institutional commitment to the construction and implementation of a comprehensive and visionary Charles Sturt University Indigenous Research Strategy, the establishment of a critical centre for the production of collaborative Indigenous research and capacity building of Indigenous researchers, and the appointment of a Senior Indigenous researcher to lead, coordinate and manage Indigenous research at Charles Sturt University
- the establishment of an Indigenous Research Ethics Committee (IREC) as a sub-committee of the University Ethics and Human Research Committee (EHRC) – (*see Appendix 1: Establishing an Indigenous Research Ethics Platform at Charles Sturt University – An Introductory Indigenous Position Statement*)
- the requirement that Indigenous Australians are consulted about, and involved in, research conducted in relation to them or their communities
- clarification of ownership and control of Indigenous research and knowledge and intellectual property generated
- the establishment of an induction and professional development program for Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers of the University on Indigenous research ethics, protocols and guidelines
- ensuring that the relevant Indigenous communities, organisations or individuals are provided with the results of Indigenous research in an accessible format
- fostering collegiality and peer debate as part of the research process

10.1.3 Recommendations

Recommendation 27

It is recommended that a Senior Indigenous research academic be appointed as a member of the Charles Sturt University Human Ethics and Research Committee to ensure accountability and cultural appropriateness of Indigenous research.

Recommendation 28

The establish University Ethics and Human Research Committee (EHRC) an Indigenous Research Ethics Committee (IREC) as a sub-committee of the University Ethics and Human Research Committee (EHRC)

Recommendation 29

Human Resources provide support and financial incentives including supporting time release through earnings replacement for Indigenous people in current employment at Charles Sturt University who are undertaking postgraduate studies

Recommendation 30

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) provide financial scholarships for Indigenous postgraduate students to encourage enrolment and completion of Doctoral degrees

Recommendation 31

The Centre for Research and Graduate Training in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies develop appropriate policies, protocols and procedures to ensure quality and accountability of all Charles Sturt University Indigenous research. This should include:

- the establishment of research advisory groups comprising internal and external stakeholders and the development of culturally appropriate acceptable research models
- Having an Indigenous researcher on all Indigenous research projects
- Adequate supervision arrangements for Indigenous Research Higher Degree students, including appropriate cultural support

Recommendation 32

The CRGT set aside funding for a Problem Focused Research Group in Indigenous Australian Studies, and accept an ‘out of session’ application to establish a Problem Focussed Research Group in Indigenous Australian Studies using the approved guidelines.

11. Indigenous Employment

“Recruiting Indigenous staff who will serve as role models and provide added leadership for Indigenous students or Indigenous Studies is a good strategy”

(‘Serving the Cause of Indigenous Issues’ – AUQA Report 2006)

Indigenous education cannot be addressed in isolation from Indigenous employment. Charles Sturt University has an Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy which was endorsed by University Council in December 2004, currently undergoing review and due for formal review in January 2011. The following discussion and recommendations of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy are neither a replacement of the Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy nor a duplication of its recommendations. Rather, the discussion and recommendations are designed to provide a whole-of-institution framework for improving Indigenous Education at Charles Sturt University and are consistent with and support the four Key Objectives of the Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy. Recommendations made by the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy to improve Indigenous Education which relate to the employment of Indigenous Australians are referred to the Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy for incorporation.

Over the past decade there have been has been a significant increase in the number of Indigenous Australians employed within the nation's University sector. Between 2001 and 2005 there was a national increase of 45.6%, bringing the total number of Indigenous staff employed in Australian Universities to 804 and the proportion of Indigenous staff to 0.9%. This represents an outstanding improvement; however, the proportion of Indigenous staff employed within the nation's University sector continues to fall well below parity levels (*DEST Higher Education Statistics Collection*).

A lack of parity is also reflected in comparative data related to the functions and contractual nature of appointments of Indigenous staff across Australian Universities. The DEST National Higher Education statistics of 2005 reveal that of the 804 Indigenous staff employed within the Australian University sector 503 were employed as general staff with over 50% of those appointments being 12-month Indigenous traineeship positions, the majority of which did not led to ongoing employment once external funding for the position ceased. A total of 301 Indigenous Australians, 69.9% of whom were female, were employed as academics primarily ranging in classification from level A to level C. Proportional statistical data related to the primary function or role of all academics within Australian Universities reveal that Indigenous academics comprise 1.3% of University 'teaching only' staff, 0.87% of 'teaching and research' staff and 0.35% of 'research only' staff, with the vast majority of Indigenous academic staff clustered within the disciplines of the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, Education and Nursing.

Charles Sturt University appointed its first Indigenous Employment Coordinator in 2004 and the position has recently been made a continuing appointment. The Indigenous Employment Coordinator is located within the Division of Human Resources with direct line management to the Manager for Equal Employment and is responsible for the development of the Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy.

The Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy aims to increase the employment of Indigenous Australians in mainstream positions at the University through the development and implementation of strategies including publicity, scholarships options and financial incentives for employees, professional development, support and mentoring, and cultural awareness training for University staff. These aims align with recommendations of the AUQA (2006) and Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (2006) that in order to recruit and retain Indigenous staff Universities need to develop and implement programs and strategies specifically designed to support Indigenous staff members and capacity-build the next generation of Indigenous academic leaders.

Whilst the University was not successful in reaching its target of 2% Indigenous employment by June 2007 it has made commendable progress towards reaching this goal. The implementation of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Employment Strategy has resulted in an increase in the number of Indigenous staff employed across the University from 0.8% in 2004 to 1.6% in March 2007 with a further 8 positions appointed between March 2007 and September 2007, bringing the total number of Indigenous staff to 35. There are currently over 40 Indigenous Australian staff employed across the University in various academic, general and Indigenous Traineeship positions.

The employment of Indigenous Australians at Charles Sturt University is discussed in some detail in the Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy. Clearly though, Charles Sturt University is developing a reputation as the preferred employer of Indigenous Australians. Full implementation of the recommendations of the Australian Indigenous Employment and Education Strategies will continue to result in an increase of Indigenous staff and thus enhance Charles Sturt University's reputation further. This in turn will have a positive impact upon Indigenous education at Charles Sturt University and its status as the preferred higher education provider for Indigenous students and professionals.

Key Performance Indicator 5: Consistent with the Charles Sturt University Australian Indigenous Employment Strategy Charles Sturt University increase the number of Indigenous staff employed in continuing and training positions at Charles Sturt University to at least 3% by 2011.

11.1 Recommendations

Recommendation 33

Charles Sturt University Planning and Budget Committee in collaboration with the Indigenous Employment Coordinator establish study scholarships and schemes to encourage and support the ongoing career development of Indigenous staff.

Recommendation 34

Faculties in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Employment Coordinator develop programs to provide mentoring and specialised leadership training for Indigenous academics

Recommendation 35

Contract and ongoing positions to be identified for Indigenous Trainees on successful completion of their traineeship

12. Governance and Management of the Charles Sturt University Indigenous Education Strategy

'Involving the representatives of the Indigenous communities in advisory committees, seeking their views on curriculum to incorporate Indigenous units, tapping on the knowledge resources of the Indigenous communities to teach Indigenous issues, facilitating interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities ... [is an] important mechanism through which universities can discuss with representatives of Indigenous communities the relationship between themselves and the University and serves the cause of Indigenous issues and reconciliation' (AUQA Report 2006:16)

(AQUA Report: 'Serving the Cause of Indigenous Issues' September 2006 p.6).

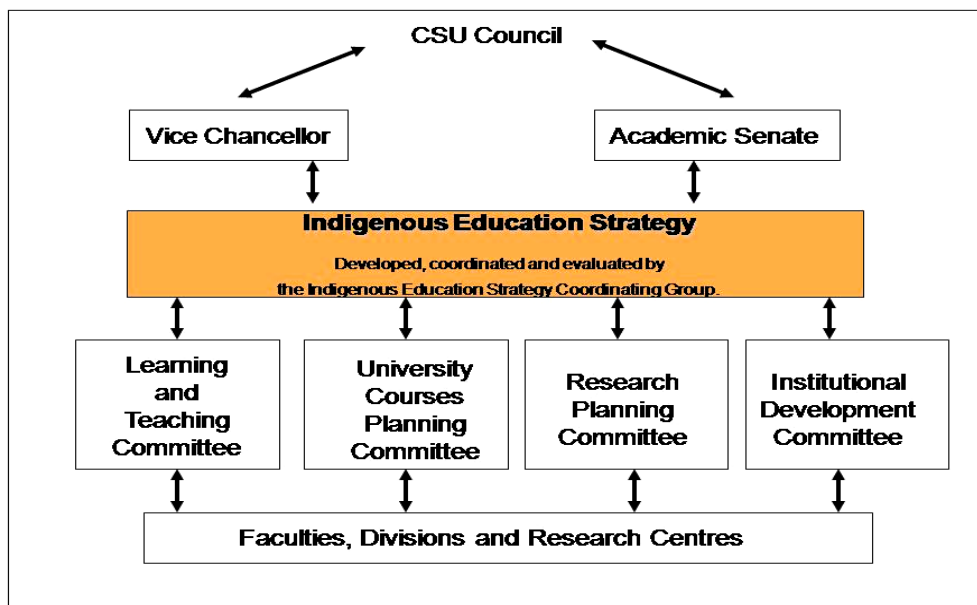
The success of the Indigenous Education Strategy, as measured by the achievement of the five key performance indicators, will require a 'whole of University' response. A number of earlier recommendations involve increasing Indigenous representation on key decision making bodies within the University, including Charles Sturt University's Council.

Because of the policy and financial implications of the Strategy, it needs to be considered and endorsed not only by the Academic Senate, but also by the Charles Sturt University Planning & Budget Committee for implementation on a 'whole of University' basis through the four University Plans: Learning and Teaching, Courses, Research and Institutional Development. The four committees responsible for these plans,

1. the Learning and Teaching Committee
2. University Course Planning Committee
3. Research Planning Committee
4. Institutional Development Committee

will provide advice to the Planning & Budget Committee and Academic Senate about the adoption of the relevant parts of the Strategy, and will be responsible to the Vice Chancellor for the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators as set out earlier in the Indigenous Education Strategy.

An Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group (IESCG) will be established to oversee the development, coordination and evaluation of the Strategy, and monitor the performance indicators set out in each of the four University Plans. This Group, through its Chair, the Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies, will report directly to the Vice Chancellor.



The Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group will have the following membership:

1. Chair: Director of the Centre for Indigenous Studies
2. Deputy Vice Chancellors – Academic, Administration and Research
3. Director of Indigenous Student Services (formally known as Indigenous Support Units)
4. Representative of Deans
5. Heads of School
6. Director of Human Resources
7. Indigenous Academic Staff member, appointed by Vice Chancellor
8. Indigenous General Staff member, appointed by Vice Chancellor.

From time to time the IESCG may form Working Groups, or request Working Groups to be formed by the any of the above four Committees, for the purposes of furthering the work of the Indigenous Education Strategy. Similarly the Board may request the Centre for Indigenous Studies to engage in community consultation directly or through its Elder's Advisory Group on matters related to the Strategy.

The IESCG will be serviced by a 0.5FTE Research and Policy Officer (Level 5 or 6), who reports to the Director of Centre for Indigenous Studies. The Research and Policy Officer will be employed within the Centre for Indigenous Studies; through a budget allocation from central funds.

12.1 Recommendations

Recommendation 36

Central Funds to be made available to create the position of Research and Policy Officer, within the Centre for Indigenous Studies, to service the Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Education Strategy Coordinating Group.

13. Appendix 1: Establishing an Indigenous Research Ethics Mentoring Platform at Charles Sturt University – An Introductory Indigenous Position Statement

Preamble

The following introductory Indigenous position statement is hereby respectfully submitted to Senate in anticipation that in-principal interest will be stimulated in the establishment of a culturally founded Indigenous research ethics mentoring platform within Charles Sturt University. If in-principal interest in this matter is reached the opportunity to submit to Senate a formal Indigenous ethics mentoring proposal would be gratefully welcomed and accepted.

This statement is being made as an active expression of the increasing, and culturally compelling, Indigenous petition currently emerging from within the Indigenous intellectual community which actively calls for an unconditional paradigmatic shift within the tertiary sector to formerly recognise and cement an Indigenous mandate over Indigenous academy and Indigenous research.

Background

The fundamental matters of authority and control speak to the overarching concerns that have surfaced through Indigenous critique of research, which began in earnest in the early 1970's, gathered significant momentum during the 1990's, and continues to this day. At the forefront of this emancipatory movement of critique are Indigenous intellectuals such as Maori academic Linda Tuhiwai Smith. In her volume aptly entitled 'Decolonising Methodologies'(1999) Tuhiwai Smith has successfully exposed the West-centric grip hold that exists on research theory and praxis. Accordingly Tuhiwai Smith began her treatise with an affirmation of the unavoidable reality that "... scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism..." (Smith, 1999, p.1). Further, Tuhiwai Smith, pointed out the reality that "the word itself, research, is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (Smith, 1999, p.1). It is a position that has been echoed in the work of many other Indigenous academics both internationally and nationally and one which can certainly be evidenced in far greater detail. The meaning to emerge from this substantial body of literature, however, is utterly unmistakable. "Aboriginal people are very reasonably suspicious, angry and fearful of research." (Collard, Crowe, Harries & Taylor, 1994, p.114). Clearly "Indigenous people have been pawns in the research process for too long" (Williams, 2007, p.99). Moving beyond this position of critique and the inevitable cultural emotionalism that such critique poignantly exposes is not going to be easy. It will take a concerted effort on behalf of academic institutions to ratify and action change so that genuine non-tokenistic counter-hegemonic space can be founded for the realisation of Indigenous intellectual emancipation.

Proposed Amendment to Current Ethics Arrangements

Accordingly it is being proposed that Charles Sturt University pursue a leadership role in facilitating Indigenous intellectual emancipation by considering the introduction of an Indigenous research ethics mentoring subcommittee as a culturally empowered arm

of the current research ethics committee establishment. It is envisaged that the proposed Indigenous research ethics mentoring sub-committee would consider and advise on all research applications that centre on Indigenous peoples and Indigenous cultures, and would work closely with all researchers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to ensure that potential research does not consciously or unconsciously offend, degrade or otherwise harm Indigenous peoples and/or Indigenous cultures. In this regard the proposed Indigenous research ethics mentoring subcommittee would enact the dual roles of a sanctioning body and a cultural mentoring body.

Rationale behind Proposed Amendment

Whilst it is true that Indigenous representation already exists within the framework of the Charles Sturt University's research ethics process, a sound Indigenous argument can be mounted that contends that the current singular form of Indigenous representation does not adequately articulate with the ideals embedded within culturally germane intellectual enterprise. In every way Indigenous intellectual enterprise centres on engagement with Indigenous values, especially collectivism, and Indigenous worldview, which additionally conveys spiritualism and autonomy. With that in mind we assert the position that it is high time that non-Indigenous researchers investigating Indigenous peoples and Indigenous cultures be subject to Indigenous cultural hearing of proposed research intentions and purposes. Additionally, we assert the basic cultural right of Indigenous students and academics, seeking to undertake research within their own cultural paradigm, not be subjected to ethical scrutiny external to their values, their worldview and their identity.

It is therefore our Indigenous position, which we strongly defend, that it is no longer apposite, particularly in a culturally enlightened intellectual environment, for non-Indigenous peoples to have authority in determining the merit or otherwise of research that takes our peoples and cultures as its subject. It is our Indigenous position that all such ethical determinations should be made by Indigenous peoples, and wherever necessary that appropriate cultural mentoring be provided by Indigenous peoples. In short, it comes down to the fundamental issue that no matter how knowledgeable a non-Indigenous academic may be, they are nonetheless not of our worldview, they do not embody our core values, nor do they embody our identity. It is for us a matter of our fundamental human right to be intellectually autonomous and that necessitates the institution of mechanisms that centre Indigenous knowledge production firmly within its own cultural academic framework.

The Benefit of this Amendment to Charles Sturt University

The move to establish an Indigenous research ethics mentoring subcommittee will hold direct benefits for Charles Sturt University. Such a move would firmly establish the reputation of Charles Sturt University both within the broad spectrum of academia, and more specifically within the Indigenous intellectual community, as a leader at the forefront of a growing movement to formerly provide real cultural space for Indigenous knowledge systems to thrive and grow. Further, such a move would stimulate Indigenous peoples to consider Charles Sturt University as a preferred education provider, especially at the post-graduate level, as Indigenous peoples would gain not only a greater sense of true cultural safety, they would also feel empowered to work within the framework of their own cultural intellectual paradigm.

Closing Statement

As emphasised in the title of this document, this three page summary is very much an introductory position statement only. All the points raised within this statement can be substantiated in far greater detail, and as such lend significant weight to the arguments herewith tendered to Senate. What is being suggested within this position statement categorically falls within the province of Indigenous social-justice and the spirit of reconciliation, and as such is worthy of full consideration. We look forward to your feedback, and anticipate that you will welcome a fully formalised proposal and position statement.

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14. Appendix 2: Consultation Process

The consultation process for the Indigenous Education Strategy has been both formal and informal. An Indigenous Education Strategy Working Party was established to formally oversee the development of the Indigenous Education Strategy. The draft Indigenous Education Strategy was also distributed widely across Charles Sturt University for comment, including to Lyn Gorman (Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Vice-President (Administration)), Col Sharpe (Director, Planning and Budget), Liz Smith (Manager, Learning, Division Student Services), Andrew Callander (Executive Director Student Services), Ben Bradley (Charles Sturt University Degree Initiative, Professor Social Science & Liberal Studies), Leonora Ritter (Head of School, School of Social Science & Liberal Studies), Professor Elaine Duffy (Head Of School, School of Nursing & Midwifery), Marion Tulloch (Director, Centre for Enhance Learning, Research and Graduate Training), Hedy Bryant (Manager, Cultural & Change, Division of Human Resources), Kevin Robards (Presiding Officer of Senate and Professor Agricultural & Wine Science), Geoff Honey (Executive Director, Division of Student Administration), Sarah Ansell (Director, Marketing Division), David Prescott (Educational Design, Centre for Enhancing Learning and Teaching), Centre for Enhancing Learning and Teaching, Heads of Campus including Gary Shipp – Dubbo, Kevin Parton – Orange, Garry Taylor (Acting) – Albury/Wodonga, John Hicks – Bathurst, David Green – Wagga, Will Letts (Sub Dean, School of Teacher Education), John Mills (Senior Lecturer, School of Information Studies), Shirley Oakley (Executive Director, Division Library Services) and all Indigenous Australian academic and general staff.

Community forums and presentations on the Indigenous Education Strategy were held with the Wiradjuri Council of Elders, Dubbo Elders groups, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Indigenous Land Councils, and local Indigenous organisations within Dubbo and across the footprint of Charles Sturt University.

15. Appendix 2: Literature Review

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