



# **MULTICULTURAL ACTION PLAN**

**UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND**

**2016-2018**

## About UNE

The University of New England is a regional university situated in Armidale with 11 regional study centres located throughout northern New South Wales and metropolitan hub, UNE Sydney, in Parramatta. Our purpose is to develop individual aspirations, potential and capability and to enhance the future of our communities through quality research, fostering innovation and delivering a formative educational experience.

Our educational services are provided through three faculties and ten academic schools offering undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and higher degree research levels.

We are a diverse university represented by staff from 51 countries and students from 66 countries. Our students numbered 22,183 in 2016 and international students represented 4.9% of the population. Students from China and Nepal represent the greatest proportion of international students studying at UNE at 19.2% and 15.7% respectively.

The University provides a distinctive opportunity for students and staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to experience living in an Australian regional community and gaining an understanding of the Australian lifestyle.

The University resides within the Armidale Regional Council regional community. The March 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicates 11.6% of the population being born overseas and 6.9% were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 24.8% and 16.4% respectively for the Australian total population.

The Armidale population of people born overseas and from non-English speaking backgrounds has increased over the past ten years. In the period 2006 to 2011 a population increase of 23.8% for those born overseas and an increase of 41.4% of the population from a non-English speaking background.

The largest changes in countries of birth for the Armidale Regional Council population between 2006 and 2011 was an increase of those born in Saudi Arabia and China. The largest non-English speaking country of birth in Armidale Regional Council was China where 1% of the population was born.

To meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population UNE aims to:

- Provide education programs that support social and economic participation.
- Provide a high quality student experience that embeds cultural and international awareness.
- Strengthen engagement with regional and international communities to build educational pathways for diverse student groups.

## Our Aims for Multiculturalism

As the Armidale community and the University attract and expand their population of culturally and linguistically diverse people it is important that the University is able to:

- Provide an environment free from harassment and discrimination.
- Meet our obligations as a provider of education to international students.
- Support the needs of students and staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Prepare our students to work effectively in cross cultural contexts.
- Develop and nurture strong and enduring relationships between the University and the local regional community for the benefit of students and staff.
- Embrace culturally diverse perspectives in our teaching and research.

The University is committed to building a respectful and inclusive environment for domestic and international students and staff and values the contribution of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The UNE Multicultural Action Plan sets out the key actions the University will take to achieve these goals. Responsibility and leadership for achieving the Plan resides with the Chief Operating Officer with appropriate contributions to reporting requirements.

## Plan

### Objective 1:

**Provide an inclusive environment that supports and embraces a knowledge of, and respect for, cultural diversity and inclusion and is free from harassment and discrimination.**

ACTIONS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	ACTION LEAD
Senior Executives actively promote and are accountable for incorporating multicultural initiatives in University plans.	UNE business plan and business unit operational plans support provision of services to diverse student and staff groups.	Senior Executive
Continue the “Respect. Now. Always” campaign.	<p>Increased reporting due to students and staff confidence in UNE response mechanisms.</p> <p>Training on responding and supporting students and staff is provided and attended by 80% of those eligible.</p> <p>International Student Satisfaction Survey (ISB) biannual survey indicates UNE continues to be rated highly by students (above Australian average).</p>	Vice Chancellor

	Increase to 80% satisfaction the Diversity results in the Voice Staff Survey.	
Implement personal safety mechanisms for students and staff.	<p>Leverage technology to provide a safe environment and facilitate reporting. Implement the SafetyApp accessible to all staff and students.</p> <p>International Student Satisfaction Survey (ISB) biannual survey indicates UNE meets the Australian ISB benchmark for Safety.</p> <p>Voice Staff Survey indicates a 10% improvement in Safety meeting the benchmark for all Universities.</p>	Chief Operating Officer
Review and amend policies that support gender equality and staff safety.	UNE continues to be compliant with WGEA Legislation (2012)	Director Human Resource Services
Cultural awareness programs are developed and delivered.	Unconscious Bias program is designed and developed. The Program is attended by 75 staff per annum.	Director Human Resource Services
Acknowledge and celebrate our cultural diversity.	Harmony Week forms the foundation for events conducted that recognize our diverse community and foster inclusiveness across students and staff.	Director Office of Advancement
Completion of mandatory EO Online modules by all staff.	<p>Online EO Online induction and refresher modules are updated to be more interactive.</p> <p>Reports are provided to business areas on staff completion.</p>	Chief Operating Officer/Faculty Deans

Establish Vice Chancellor Advisory Group on Diversity.	Ensure group is established, three meetings are conducted each year and recommendations are made to the Vice Chancellor.	Director Human Resource Services
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**Objective 2:**

**Provide education programs that reflect cultural and international awareness.**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b>	<b>ACTION LEAD</b>
Formal and informal English language programs are available to domestic and international students through the English Speaking Circle and English Language Support accredited programs.	Ratings of language support programs maintain above 90% student satisfaction.	Director Teaching and Learning Support/Director UNE Life
Study and future employment opportunities are improved through the Student Ambassador Program.	Students develop a range of skills valuable for employment such as leadership, public speaking, teamwork.  Metrics to be incorporated into the UNE Internationalisation Plan 2017-2020.	Director UNE International
Enhance the connectivity and engagement of international students with local and regional communities.	Participation by students and their families in the Northern Tablelands Community Partnership project is achieved.  Current participants convert to volunteers for subsequent programs.  Metrics to be incorporated into the UNE Internationalisation Plan 2017-2020.	Director UNE International
Provide opportunities for domestic students to study/undertake work experience abroad and expand	Student applicants successfully obtaining funding under the Mobility Options program (eg	Director UNE International

their knowledge and experience of diverse cultures.	the New Colombo Plan) continue to increase.  Metrics to be incorporated into the UNE Internationalisation Plan 2017-2020.	
Explore opportunities for intercultural staff mobility.	Opportunities to build knowledge and expertise to support teaching, learning and research activities for students and staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	PVC (Academic Innovation)

*The Hub* and the *Student Ambassador Program* has been funded by Bupa and a grant from Study NSW again in 2018.

The *Mobility Program* is a competitive program and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade guidelines and strategic objectives set for each year's round.

### Objective 3:

**Strengthen collaboration between UNE and the local community to enrich the experiences of our culturally diverse students and workforce.**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b>	<b>ACTION LEAD</b>
Explore options to support services for students from refugee backgrounds.	Partnerships established (enhanced) with regional community organisations to support students from refugee backgrounds.	PVC External Relations
Identify and liaise with community organisations to develop mechanisms to support all international staff and students and particularly refugees.	Community groups are engaged in the community partnership project (The Hub) and actively contribute to initiatives that enable interaction between students, the local and international community.  Health and Wellness initiatives are identified and implemented to support staff, students and their families from cultural and	Director UNE International

	<p>linguistically diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Activities are introduced that assist students to adjust and familiarize themselves and their families with Australian customs and culture.</p> <p><i>NB: These initiatives are funded by Study NSW and Bupa and numbers are dependent on the level of funding available.</i></p>	
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## Strategic Alignment

The Multicultural Action Plan aligns with a number of strategic documents, plans and legislation:

- The following priorities are outlined in the UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 *Together We Can Do This*:
  - Deliver a high quality student experience
  - Create a bold and innovative culture
- Workforce Diversity Framework 2016-2018
- UNE Workforce Strategy 2017-2020
- UNE Internationalisation Plan 2017-2020
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2013-2018
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Commonwealth)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Multicultural initiatives outlined in this plan include those detailed in the above documents and are complemented by additional proposals.

## Reporting on the Plan

Implementation of the actions outlined in this plan will be reported in the following ways:

- A report to the University senior executive on progress towards achievement of key performance indicators as part of the Diversity Framework 2016-2018.

- Inclusion in the University Annual Report of progress in achieving the key performance indicators outlined in the plan.
- Submission of a report to Multicultural NSW.

## **Definitions**

Cultural diversity – means the different linguistic, religious and ancestral backgrounds of the people of New South Wales (Multicultural NSW Act 2000).