

**INSTITUTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK
INFORMATION COLLECTION 2009**

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PART A

1. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1.1 Assessment of Strategic Focus

Overall Assessment

The University has a long term strategic approach built around two major themes: regional engagement and sustainability. The University has a planning process in place with an institutional plan - the *USC Strategic Plan 2005-2010* which outlines the overarching strategic goals of the University, under which sit five-year functional plans, followed by three-year planning and budgeting plans for organisational units. Key performance indicators have been defined and performance against objectives is reported regularly. A risk management framework is in place as well as a workforce planning process.

Planning Process

Overall responsibility for strategic planning at USC lies with the Council through its Planning and Resources Committee. The major long term objectives and priorities of the University are found in the Strategic Plan. Below this there are the following functional plans which have a five year outlook: the Learning and Teaching Plan; Research and Research Training Plan; Internationalisation Plan, Regional Engagement Plan, Student Support Plan, Information Technology and Communication Plan, Staff Plan and Finance and Infrastructure Plan. These plans are implemented through detailed three year organisational units' operational plans. The University has developed a suite of key performance indicators to measure achievements against objectives and these are monitored and reported to each meeting of the University's Council. Performance against objectives is also reported in the Annual Report.

Financial Sustainability

The Council is responsible for oversight of the financial sustainability of the University through its Planning and Resources Committee. In 2008 a Finance and Infrastructure Plan was developed to provide a strategic framework for ensuring the longer term financial viability of the University and for the development and investment in strategic and sustainable physical and virtual infrastructure.

Also in 2008 a Strategic Asset Management Plan was developed to underpin the development and management of the physical and virtual infrastructure of the University. The Plan sets out key physical infrastructure, maintenance and space management priorities, including major expenditure for the University's ICT infrastructure resources.

During 2008 the University moved from one year cash budgets to three year budgeting which supports the University's Strategic Plan. In addition a more transparent internal income distribution model has been introduced for the distribution of funds for the 2010-2012 triennium. The University systematically monitors organisational performance and results are fed into regular resource planning and budgeting reviews to Planning and Resources Committee.

For 2008, the University's total income was \$95 million, up \$16.6 million on the previous year. Expenditure totalled \$81.7 million, leaving an operating surplus of \$13.3 million, which will be used, in part, to enhance research performance in regional engagement and sustainability.

Institutional Risk Management

Risk management is the responsibility of Council through its Audit and Risk Management Committee. USC has a Risk Management Framework which provides for the identification, assessment, management and reporting of risks at all levels of the University. Business continuity management is regarded as an integral component of risk management, to ensure continuity of key business processes which are essential to the University's goals.

In line with the Australian and New Zealand Standard on Risk Management AS/NZS 4360:2004), all significant risks are identified, categorised and evaluated by each cost centre manager, existing mitigating controls and their adequacy are assessed and, where necessary, improvement strategies put in place.

Community Engagement

USC has already gained an international reputation for local, national and international engagement at all levels of its activities and has put in place a series of initiatives ranging from the development of regional social, cultural and sporting infrastructure to hosting major regional events. These initiatives include:

Work integrated learning and internships whereby USC students from a range of disciplines connect with the business community through the WIL program and industry internships. In 2009 more than 700 students from across the University undertook a WIL placement.

On campus high quality sporting and athletic facilities are available for community use or hire and include a gymnasium, a sports stadium, IAAF standard athletic track, multipurpose playing fields and outdoor hard courts. Community use of sporting amenities represents about 80 per cent of total usage.

Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast: In the context of a rapidly growing region with a need for economic diversification, the University of the Sunshine Coast established the Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast Pty Ltd as a subsidiary company in 2002 with the following mission:

“To support the start-up and growth of knowledge economy and technology based businesses on the Sunshine Coast and to promote beneficial interaction between these businesses and the University.”

The Innovation Centre has adopted a very practical approach to partnering with small businesses to support their start-up and growth. The Centre also acts as a broker between businesses located on the edge of campus and key University departments and has made good progress in promoting student and graduate employment by the businesses, as well as promoting student entrepreneurship. To date, the Innovation Centre has supported the start-up and growth of over 50 businesses in knowledge economy sectors, employing over 330 people and has helped these businesses to secure over \$20M in investment. Over 4,000 delegates from the community have attended business events and short courses run by the Innovation Centre.

Events: The University hosts Voices on the Coast, a week long literature festival including a two day on-campus program in conjunction with Immanuel Lutheran College. The program consists of a range of creative activities and events for school students and adults. In 2008, approximately 5,000 school children attended, a significant increase from 4,000 in the previous year.

Another event, Festuri, is a three day multicultural festival which culminates in the Great Multicultural Celebration at USC, featuring international cuisine, school performances, and celebrations of international cultures through music and dance.

Art Gallery and Collection: The University has developed an art collection focusing on contemporary Australian art, with an emphasis on Queensland artists, which provides an educative function and includes artworks reflecting themes of relevance to the region. The University Gallery, completely funded by private donations, was opened in 2004.

University of the Third Age: USC and U3A Sunshine Coast are now part way through the second 10 year agreement that provides U3A with space on campus and access to a range of campus facilities. U3A members can attend lectures from the University's undergraduate and postgraduate offerings at no cost. There are nearly 2,000 members of U3A Sunshine Coast, making it one of the largest branches in the U3A Australia network.

In 2009 a new position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor Regional Engagement was created and Professor Mike Hefferan appointed to the position on a half time basis.

Sustainability

Concepts of sustainability drove the planning and development of the University. Elements include sustainable master planning, sub-tropical architectural design and academic work related to the sustainable development of the Sunshine Coast region. The concept has expanded to encompass many aspects of community life: social inclusion; energy for the future, effective and equitable use of natural resources; preservation of built and natural environments; preservation of cultural and social heritages; and the development of sustainable economic opportunities.

A crowd of 7,000 people attended the Sunshine Coast's 2009 World Environment Day Festival at the University of the Sunshine Coast on Sunday 28 June. The free community event was co-hosted by the Sunshine Coast Environment Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, SEQ Catchments and USC, and it had the theme "Your Planet Needs You – Unite to Combat Climate Change". Queensland's Climate Change and Sustainability Minister, Kate Jones, was one of the speakers at the festival, which also had workshops, interactive trade displays, a farmers' market, food stalls and top-quality entertainment. Highlights included wildlife presentations, a business forum run by USC students, activities for children and youths, and a display by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council of recycled household items.

Key performance indicators around sustainability are contained in the *Strategic Plan* and reported in the Annual Report. In addition the University is in the process of revising its Environmental policy and replacing it with a more comprehensive Sustainability policy that recognises the importance of economic and social sustainability, as well as environmental sustainability, in planning for the future.

1.2 Student Load Planning

The University continued its profile of growth in 2008 with an increase of 11% over 2007. Current estimates conservatively indicate that this is likely to be matched again in 2009 and forecasting through to 2011 indicates continued growth in the vicinity of 5% each year.

Commonwealth Supported Load

In 2008, the University's commonwealth load increased by approximately 12% over 2007. The University received an additional 165 new places commencing in 2008 in the new disciplines of occupational therapy, psychology, paramedic science, engineering and special education. In addition, in order to address the potential shortfall from 2007, the University offered new programs in design, biotechnology, exercise science and sports management. In 2008, the new programs in allied health were very successful and exceeded expectation. Programs introduced for the first time in 2007 in nursing and nutrition and dietetics continued to perform well and the pipeline from these contributed to an overall increase in load.

The University's commitment to providing pathways for students without formal educational qualifications via the Tertiary Preparation Pathway has continued to prove successful with an increase of almost 40% over 2007. Following successful completion of this pathway, additional load was then realised in 2008 in award programs, particularly in education, nursing and psychology.

Based on current estimates for 2009 the University is anticipating an increase in commonwealth supported load of approximately 15% over 2008. Despite a shortfall in both 2007 and 2008, it is expected that the University will comfortably achieve its funded load in 2009. An improvement in both retention and offer conversion rates has contributed to this increase as well as an increase in mid year offers. Offers made in mid year 2009 are the highest in the University's history and are almost twice that of 2008. The increase in performance has been experienced across the University's three faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Business and Science, Health and Education particularly in the areas of communication, allied health (including social work, psychology, nursing, paramedic science), tourism, human resource management and environmental science. The success of the University's Tertiary Preparation Pathway is continuing with an expected load in 2009 at almost 40% over 2008 levels.

The University is continuing to consolidate its existing programs with the discontinuation of some of its lesser performing programs and structural changes to other programs to meet the changing demands of their particular disciplines. The University is continuing to explore opportunities for the further development of its engineering programs. The further diversification of programs within the education discipline will continue with the planned introduction of primary education in 2010. There is considerable evidence of demand in the region for primary education so it is anticipated that this program will contribute additional load to the University in 2010 and beyond.

International Load

The University's international recruitment strategy continues to focus on four key elements: building on-campus international enrolments; utilising bilateral partnerships to increase both Study Abroad and award enrolments; focussing on newer and developing markets not dominated by competitor universities and reducing risk by diversifying source countries and program offerings. A consequence of this strategy is that there continues to be a relatively high proportion of Study Abroad load in the international on-campus cohort. In 2008 it accounted for 34% of on-campus international load with a similar proportion expected in 2009. This places upward pressure on recruitment costs as a proportion of fee income as Study Abroad students do not generate an extended pipeline. The top 5 source countries for Study Abroad in 2008 were Germany, USA, France, Finland and Mexico and intakes for 2009 to date indicate that Germany and the USA continue to be dominant markets with France, Austria and Sweden rounding out the Top 5.

International on-campus EFTSL has continued to grow from 356 EFTSL in 2006 to 479 EFTSL in 2007 and to 591 EFTSL in 2008. Current estimates for 2009 indicate that on-campus EFTSL will continue to increase to approximately 680 EFTSL. This is conservatively projected to grow an additional 5% each year to 2010 and 2011. International load accounted for 14% of total on-campus EFTSL in 2008 and current estimates indicate that this level is likely to be sustained over the next few years. At Census 1, 2009 commencing on-campus award students have been sourced from 39 countries with almost 60% of students from Canada, Germany, France and Norway. The University is continuing to focus investment to develop "markets" in Mexico, Korea, India, Denmark, UK and Norway and continuing investment in France, Germany, Japan and the USA.

These future estimates take into account identified risks including: increasing travel costs, weakening of the US dollar, increased competition from overseas institutions, and accommodation supply constraints in the region. Risks are offset to a degree by an increasing range of programs (eg psychology and nursing) that can be promoted, "renovations" to existing programs (eg planned changes to some postgraduate programs), focused investment to develop markets, the development of an increasingly appealing campus, increasing part-time employment opportunities in the region, and the improved recognition of the USC brand.

Other Domestic Load

The University continues to diversify its range of fee paying postgraduate coursework programs each year and continues to increase enrolments in higher degrees. Overall EFTSL in this category continues to increase each year from a small base but continues to contribute only a small proportion of overall load (approximately 5%).

CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN						
	EXAMPLE	2008 actual	2009 projected	2010 projected	2011 projected	2012 projected
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Capital expenditure						
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buildings	20,000	12,000	3,000	3,270	0	0
Leasehold improvements	5,000	66	250	0	100	188
Other property plant and equipment	8,000	1,402	200	300	0	100
Total capital expenditure	33,000	13,468	3,450	3,570	100	288
Capital maintenance expenditure						
Buildings	2,000	1,109	1,928	3,100	3,450	2,300
Leasehold improvements	500		120	200	250	200
Other property plant and equipment	600	151	248	294	305	240
Salary costs*						
Total capital maintenance	3,100	1,260	2,296	3,594	4,005	2,740
Total capital and maintenance expenditure	36,100	14,728	5,746	7,164	4,105	3,028
Capital income						
<i>DEEWR Funding</i>						
Operating grant/CGS (including Capital Roll-In)	3,000	0	0	3,927	4,100	4,200
Capital Development Pool	500	3,300	2,200	0	0	0
Other DEEWR funding	0	2,300	3,200	3,270	0	0
Total capital funding from DEEWR	3,500	5,600	5,400	7,197	4,100	4,200
<i>State government funding</i>			212	0	0	0
<i>Capital sales</i>	3,000					
<i>Other external sources</i>						
Loans & Advances	10,000	9,463	0	0	0	
Other external income	4,600					
Total capital funding from external sources	14,600	9,463	0	0	0	0
<i>Allocations from internal university sources</i>	15,000					
Total capital income	36,100	15,063	5,612	7,197	4,100	4,200
Difference	0	335	-134	33	-5	1,172

As at 31 December (\$000)	Example	Actual 2008	Estimate 2009	Date of last valuation
Estimated deferred maintenance backlog	3,000	2,000		
Total capital replacement value	500,000	184,891		
Total capital asset value as per insurance cover	500,000	201,742		

Name of institution's contact officer:	Professor Greg Hill, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Email address:	ghill@usc.edu.au
Telephone number:	07 5459-4465

* Please provide salary costs if not included as part of maintenance expenditure in rows above.

Notes to CAMP Table

The CAMP workbook has been prepared on a cash basis. Details of current and projected capital development are included in the body of the document.

2. Summary of Capital Asset Management Practices

Performance Against Benchmarks

The University of the Sunshine Coast continues to actively participate and benchmark against the Tertiary Education Facilities Managers Association (TEFMA). The 2007 TEFMA survey is used here to reflect the University's performance measured against all Australian universities.

Item	USC p/m ²	TEFMA Australian Universities KPI's	Comments
GFA per EFTSL	10.6	14.6	USC is a relatively small, but very space efficient campus
Cost of Maintenance per EFTSL	\$259	\$342	Costs are slightly up on last year, but now subject to a Capital Asset Plan
Refurbishments per sq m	\$5.13	\$53.84	Firm budget control reflected in low level of refurbishments
Cleaning and Waste Management per EFTSL	\$152	\$189	Slightly up on last year, with some increased proportions of non- EFTSL areas
Energy Consumption per EFTSL	\$186	\$207	Continuous improvement is a priority – load monitoring being undertaken
Car Spaces per 100 EFTSL	24.8	22.6	Greenlink/Bus Interchange completed - looking for improvements. Regional transport difficulties are reflected.
Water Consumption per EFTSL	5.0 kl	11.0 kl	Recycled rainwater for all grounds irrigation – also expansion to air conditioning completed in 2009
Building Operating Cost as percentage of Operating Grant	5.0 %	6.0 %	Up slightly – increased use of new air conditioned spaces
UFA/GFA	69.6%	65.9%	Re-alignment of calculations following TEFMA Workshop advice

Preliminary planning has continued to enable an Expression of Interest submission for funds from the EIF. This initiative will provide further focus on Health education and research facilities, incorporating an extension to the existing Science teaching building and a comprehensive School of Nursing with a Simulation Laboratory.

The University Master Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan continue to be updated and are used to enhance policies and procedures, and maintenance planning. Figures drawn from the Strategic Asset Management Plan are reflected in the Capital Maintenance Expenditure segment of the CAMP table - this Plan is being reviewed this year to check for accuracy and adjust for ongoing maintenance experience.

Significant Initiatives

All initiatives undertaken are aligned to the University's Strategic priorities of regional engagement and sustainability. The University continues to engage in several regional projects incorporating leasehold improvements and partnerships.

Dilli Village management has been improved with new on-site managers, contracted directly to the university.

As per the notes above, Stage 8 preliminary design development has progressed to enable application for EIF funding for a Health teaching and research building, with some associated academic office accommodation.

Borrowings

The University has borrowings of \$24.871M which has been used to fund capital construction. The University has no plans to borrow additional funds in the short to medium term to fund additional capital construction on campus.

3. EQUITY REPORTING 2009

A. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

Building partnerships with key stakeholders

Murri Pathways

“Murri Pathways”, a collaboration between Education Queensland, TAFE, Tourism Queensland, and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, delivered education and training presentations to over 400 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through 16 Sunshine Coast and Cooloola high schools. This project demonstrated positive outcomes towards improving enrolment in higher education, with the number of Indigenous students admitted to the Tertiary Preparation and Headstart Programs increasing significantly in 2009.

Graduate employment initiatives for students with a disability

Through a \$30,000 partnership grant, USC collaborated with STEPS Disability Employment Service to assist and support new graduates who have a disability to gain employment in their chosen field. This included increasing employability skills through workshops in resume writing and interview technique.

Alternative entry for teenage parents

Tertiary Preparation Pathway classes were delivered in the community at Burnside State High School. Providing a higher education pathway for teenage mothers in a flexible child-friendly environment, eight young mums from the Nambour-based group “Supporting Teenagers with Education, Mothering and Mentoring” enrolled in the TPP program.

Developing tailored services

Post-school options for students with a disability

Tertiary education transition opportunities for students with disabilities were promoted through Post-School Options Expos at schools and the Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE, and to Heads of Special Education at schools with Special Education Units. Early identification of students applying for admission to higher education, and consultation with school Transition Officers, Guidance Officers and parents has enabled a more seamless commencement into tertiary study.

Supporting mental health

Two mental health support programs were established at the University in 2008 to foster good emotional health and raise awareness of mental health issues. The self-help community program GROW initiated a campus group, and Student Services implemented an Anxiety Recovery Program to assist students experiencing emotional and mental health issues that impact on their participation and academic performance.

Increasing employment of Indigenous Australians in higher education

The Employment and Participation Strategy for Indigenous Australians at USC 2005-2008, was reviewed and expanded to include opportunities for student internships. The new Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2009-2011 is being developed to increase teaching, mentoring and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at USC.

B. EQUITY GROUP FOCUS AND KEY EQUITY STRATEGIES

Equity groups targeted in 2008

The USC Equity Policy articulates the University commitment to promoting equitable access to higher education to a wide diversity of prospective students, and to promoting and supporting opportunities for those who are at risk of, or experience, social exclusion:

- HEESP funding supported creation of a Student Equity and Diversity Officer position to lead equity and social diversity projects and initiatives on campus.
- The Access Officer position established in 2006 to work with “at risk” students and develop and implement early intervention strategies continued in 2008.
- Equity awareness workshops were provided around Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer student issues.
- A Quiet Reflection Room was established to provide a dedicated area for multi-faith prayer, meditation, and quiet reflection on campus.
- An Indigenous student Ambassador position was created to attend school visits, community events, Open Day, and other University recruitment activities.

Key strategies in 2009

Equity initiatives in 2009 continue to be impacted by HEESP allocation incongruity, with funds allocated to USC being marginally lower than the 2008 HEESP grant despite increased numbers of students in most equity groups.

Strategies to improve equity performance include:

- Development of a Reconciliation Action Plan articulating the University’s commitment to providing real opportunities to improve social and economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians.
- Establishment of an Indigenous Employment Coordinator position to assist students in accessing cadetship opportunities, and to build the profile of USC as a workplace of choice for Indigenous people on the Sunshine Coast.
- Participation in the national Ally project, supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer students and staff.
- Launch of the student mental health self-help and awareness program Active Minds (www.activeminds.org), with USC approved to establish the first international chapter of the program.
- Development of a Student Retention Plan to ensure a supportive academic and social environment in which students from all backgrounds can achieve their full potential.
- Vision Australia audit of the pedestrian routes around the University to ensure ease of access around the campus for students and staff who are blind or have low vision.
- Ratification of the University’s Disability Action Plan 2009-2011.

- Establishment of an emergency food bank of non-perishable items to provide assistance to students experiencing financial hardship.
- Cross Cultural Competence Workshops for students and staff.

C. EQUITY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN 2008

The University Strategic Plan 2005-2010 strategic priorities and performance indicators emphasise a commitment to meeting the needs of the region including the promotion of regional participation in higher education. The articulated goal under Student Support is to “set standards in student support which will help attract, support and retain students”. This includes a specific strategy to provide for the particular needs of equity groups and Indigenous students.

Although equity initiatives are embedded across the functions of the University, the Student Services division is specifically responsible for managing, reviewing and reporting on equity objectives. Progress on achievement of equity targets is reviewed as part of the general reporting cycle.

Equity strategies include:

- Equity Advisory Committee (chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor);
- University Strategic Plan 2005-2010;
- Disability Action Plan 2009-2011 (reviewed 2007/08);
- Indigenous Services Strategic Plan;
- career**connection** Strategic Plan 2007-2009;
- institutional reporting and review of equity data (Strategic Information and Analysis Unit);
- institutional Equity Project Fund (established 2006);
- University Learning and Teaching Plan 2009-2011;
- Student Equity and Diversity Officer position.

D. PERFORMANCE OF EQUITY GROUPS IN 2007

The University of the Sunshine Coast continues to sustain the annual growth it has experienced since its establishment. In 2007, student numbers grew to 5,246 - an increase of 10.21% since 2006.

Students from Low Socio-Economic Backgrounds

- The 2007 participation rate was 11.82%.
- USC believes that the postcode indicator of socio-economic status does not reflect the socio-economic disadvantage experienced by many students in this region.
- The USC proportion of domestic bachelor students that are first in their family to attend university has remained between 51.5% and 52.5% over the last five years.
- At Census 1 2009, 51.5% of all students were first in their family to attend university.
- The 2007 retention ratio of 0.99 exceeds state (0.97) and national (0.98) data.

Indigenous Students

- The 2007 participation rate was 1.42%, increased from 0.74% in 2002.
- From 2005 to 2007 participation exceeded the overall participation rate for universities nationally.
- The 1.84% proportion of Indigenous students at USC in 2009 exceeds the proportion of Indigenous people in the Sunshine Coast region (1.2% at 2006 census).
- The 2007 retention ratio of 0.93 exceeds state (0.88) and national (0.82) data.

Students with a Disability

- Although the actual number of students with a disability has increased annually, this is not reflected in proportional statistics due to the concurrent high increase in overall student enrolments annually.
- With the employment of more Auslan Interpreters and Participation Assistants, and purchase of adaptive software and equipment, the cost of support services doubled in 2006 and has maintained a significant annual increase to date.
- The 2007 participation rate was 3.86% in 2007, decreased from 6.13% in 2002.
- The participation rate improved to 4.66% in 2009.
- The 2007 retention ratio of 1.03 exceeds state (0.96) and national (0.97) data.

Students from Regional Areas

- The 2007 participation rate was 29.06%, increased from 26.04% in 2002.
- Participation is higher than the overall rate for state and national universities.
- USC was placed 11th out of 39 institutions nationally for the proportion of domestic students from regional areas.
- The 2007 retention ratio of 1.07 exceeds state (0.96) and national (0.97) data.

E. HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME (ESP) FUNDED INITIATIVES IN 2008

HEESP funding supported establishment of a Student Equity and Diversity Officer position to lead equity and social diversity projects and initiatives on campus. This includes promoting social justice principles, the value of diversity and inclusiveness, and the provision of professional support to improve educational outcomes, academic progress and retention rates for students from defined equity target groups.

HEESP funding supported continuation of the Access Officer position created in 2006. The role works with faculty First Year Coordinators to identify students “at risk” and likely to be placed on monitored enrolment; to initiate early interventions and programs; filter monitored enrolment students and, in conjunction with Academic Skills Advisers and Counsellors, case manage those who require a range of additional support services.

F. HIGHER EDUCATION DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME (DSP) FUNDED INITIATIVES

Higher Education Disability Support Programme funding was utilised towards:

- Provision of Auslan Interpreters, Participation Assistants and note-takers.
- Expansion of the Learning Connections Room software and facilities.
- Assistance for students whose study may be affected by a disability, injury or health condition. Whether short or long-term assistance is required, a range of support is available including the transcription of materials into accessible format (for example, large print, Braille, or audio).
- Outreach activities including Post-Secondary Pathways expos.
- Maintenance and servicing of assistive equipment: for example, patient hoist and mobility scooter.

There was improved contact with the Regional Disability Liaison Officer in 2008. The RDLO met with the USC Disability Services Officer to plan linking Guidance Officers and Advisory Visiting Teachers on the Sunshine Coast with TAFE and University contacts. The group planned the Life Options Expo on the Coast, and discussed management of topical issues including mental health support and Asperger's Syndrome. The RDLO also provided resources and information about nationwide programs (eg. ANZ recruiting, Telstra promotions).

G. COMMONWEALTH LEARNING SCHOLARSHIPS (CLS)

All Commonwealth Scholarships were allocated in 2008.

The number of applications for Equity Scholarships and Bursaries to assist with educational and living expenses increased by 82.7% in 2008. The gap between the number of eligible students and the number of scholarships on offer continued to be a problem with only 32% of eligible students being awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship.

The University has provided \$100,000 in equity scholarships for students in 2008, however this still falls far short of meeting justified requests. Students continued to risk having their Centrelink benefit reduced through the provision of institutional scholarships which are not currently exempt from means testing. USC applauds the recent government decision to exempt equity and merit based scholarships from being treated as assessable income for means testing under the Social Security Act.

H. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ESP FUNDING IN 2010

1. Outreach Programs

The following outreach programs aim to encourage students from the region to attend University and in particular those who have not traditionally accessed higher education.

Regional Preference Scheme: Applicants who reside in or attend a school in the Regional Council areas of the Sunshine Coast, Gympie, Moreton Bay, Somerset, Fraser Coast and South Burnett are given 1 additional OP score or 2 additional Ranks.

Middle School Excellence Program: The University continues to enhance its partnership with James Nash High School, Gympie, providing creative writing programs, and science programs, for talented students in Years 6 to 9.

School visits/Ambassadors Program: An annual program of school visits involves the External Relations Officer and a group of student Ambassadors visiting over 50 schools in the region most of which are state schools, Catholic or Christian schools with large low SES and rural or isolated student cohorts.

TAFE visits: The university conducts information sessions at local TAFE with information on alternative entry, programs, courses, articulation and support services.

Schools visiting the campus: The following schools, located in regional and isolated areas, visit the campus for student familiarisation: Gympie, Murgon, Isis, Kepnock, Tin Can Bay, Gin Gin, Kilcoy, and Kenilworth.

Headstart Program: A transition to higher education program which is Faculty subsidised where Years 11 and 12 students who would benefit from experiencing higher education enrol and study in an accredited higher education course as Visiting Students.

Information events: Free education programs for community, students and parents which targets low SES, and rural and isolated community members to demystify and welcome them to the University. The program includes academic writing and study skills, careers education, QTAC preference change information, alternative entry and return to study information.

Careers Markets: The University attends Careers Markets to provide information on programs and support services in rural areas including Stanthorpe, Warwick, Toowoomba, Kingaroy, Dalby, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Maryborough and Bundaberg.

University Open Day: School students, their families and interested community members from the Sunshine Coast region including Kilcoy, Woodford, Beerwah, Gympie and Cooroy are invited to attend a full day exhibition of University courses and potential careers.

Voices on the Coast: Annual youth literature festival that brings students from 70 schools on the Coast, libraries and home schooling and community groups (a total of 86 education and literature related organisations) to the University.

Festuri: A multi-cultural event bringing diverse communities onto the University campus to engage in cultural events over a weekend mid-year.

Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE (CSIT)/ University dual programs: The University is continuing to work with local TAFE institutes to develop a framework for program articulation and student pathways between TAFE and higher education. The University has a number of successful “flagship” joint programs offered with CSIT.

2. Support Programs

The University’s Student Services division provides a range of support services for all students including Counselling, Academic Skills Advisers, Student Health and Wellbeing Officer, Graduate Careers and Employment Officers, Indigenous Services, and Disability Services.

Other targeted support initiatives include:

NICP: The University continues to support student access of the National Indigenous Cadetship Project, and annually employs cadets on campus.

Indigenous Orientation Week Tertiary Introductory Program: Run in conjunction with the Indigenous Alternative Entry Program. All first year indigenous students are invited to participate in an organised five-day program that includes those academic workshops and social events necessary to assist in transition to University.

Enabling Program: Includes enabling courses in general maths, maths for physics, statistics and chemistry which are available free to all domestic students and in particular those with inadequate school preparation and non-school leavers.

Student Mentor Program: Continues through a semester where experienced students provide mentoring to new students particularly those who leave home to study.

Academic Skills Program: The University’s students tend to have lower OP/Ranks than metropolitan universities and this combined with the higher percentage of non-school leavers and equity status students means that many students find themselves at risk of failing. This program offers free intensive academic skills support through a mixture of in-course, workshop and one to one support. Language development workshops and individual language assistance are offered through the year to students from non-English Speaking Backgrounds.

Anxiety Recovery Group and GROW Group: Self-help initiatives to assist students experiencing emotional and mental health issues that impact on their participation and academic performance.

3. Institutional equity scholarships

USC 2009 Institution Equity Scholarships for Undergraduate Students

Award	Duration	Value	No. offered	Total Annual Assistance
University of the Sunshine Coast Equity Bursaries	One-off payment	\$2000	50	\$100,000
U3A Equity Bursaries	One-off payment	\$1000	3	\$3,000
Renouf Family Scholarship	3 years	\$12,000 total \$4000 per year	2	\$24,000
Tim Fairfax Regional Scholarship	3 years	\$12,000 total \$4000 per year	2	\$24,000
ANZ Bank Scholarship	3 Years	\$5000 total \$1500 1 st year \$2000 2 nd year \$2000 3 rd year	1	\$5,000
Neuendorf Group Scholarships	3 years	\$5000 total - \$1500 in 1 st and 2 nd years, \$2000 in 3 rd year	2	\$10,000
Rod and Jan Forrester Scholarship in Business	3 years	\$3500 total \$1500 1 st year \$1000 2 nd year \$1000 3 rd year	1	\$3,500
The Encouragement Foundation Equity Bursaries	One-off payment	\$2000	3	\$6,000
Catherine King Bursary	One-off payment	\$1000	1	\$1,000
Dillon Folker Stephens Bursary	One-off payment	\$1000	1	\$1,000
Millennium Masonic Lodge Bursary	One-off payment	\$750	2	\$1,500
The Encouragement Foundation Textbook Bursaries	One-off payment	\$500 book voucher	2	\$1,000
Sunshine Coast Business Women's Network Bursary	One-off payment	\$500	3	\$1,500
Sunshine Coast Sports Medicine Clinic Bursary	One-off payment	\$500	1	\$500
War Widows Guild Bursary	One-off payment	\$500	1	\$500
Co-op Bookshop Textbook Bursaries	One-off payment	\$500 book voucher	3	\$1,500
Darcy and Heather Stephens Rural Bursary	One-off payment	\$500	1	\$500
DHF Mitchell Bursary for People with Learning Disabilities	One-off payment	\$500	1	\$500
Zonta Club of Caloundra Equity Bursary	One-off payment	\$1000	1	\$1,000
Judy Henzell Bursary	One-off payment	\$1000	1	\$1,000
TOTAL				\$187,000

To be eligible for any of the above-mentioned Scholarships or Bursaries, students must meet the basic Commonwealth Scholarship eligibility criteria, ie. Commonwealth supported students who can make a case for financial hardship. Additional eligibility criteria are detailed on the University's Scholarships and Bursaries website:

<http://www.usc.edu.au/Students/Future/FinancialAssistance/ScholarshipsBursariesPrizes/>

In addition to the above scholarships the university awarded 21 Headstart Scholarships including 2 Indigenous Students for senior high school students undertaking university courses. Eligibility requires that students can make a case for financial hardship or face another equity issue such as having a disability, impairment or long term medical condition or are indigenous.

UNIVERSITY CONTACT OFFICERS

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4. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STATEMENT 2009

The University of the Sunshine Coast acknowledges all traditional owners of the land and recognises the strength, resilience and capacity of Aboriginal people in this land.

PART 1 OBJECTIVES FOR INDIGENOUS HIGHER EDUCATION

Institutional objectives to improve higher education outcomes for Indigenous Australians

Through the vital work of the Buranga Centre – “a place to listen and learn”, the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) has prioritised the identification of pathways for engaging communities, and enhancing career opportunities for Indigenous Australians. The Buranga Centre goals for 2008 focused strongly on strengthening partnerships and engaging the capacities of individuals. This was achieved through projects including “Murri Pathways”, a collaborative with Education Queensland, TAFE, Tourism Queensland, and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, delivering education and training presentations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Sunshine Coast and Cooloola high schools. This project demonstrated positive outcomes towards improving enrolment in higher education, with the number of Indigenous students admitted to the Tertiary Preparation and Headstart Programs increasing significantly in 2009 (Appendix).

The success of the University’s Indigenous students demonstrates the effectiveness of integrated strategies to improving Indigenous higher education outcomes, involving a continuum approach from recruitment through to faculty support, and graduate career guidance. Objectives for achieving the USC’s Buranga Centre Operational Plan in 2008 included:

- ensuring Indigenous people’s higher education outcomes are a shared responsibility and a shared success across the University through inclusion in key University-wide plans including the Learning and Teaching Management Plan;
- providing career pathways and income assistance through the success of initiatives including the National Indigenous Cadetship Program;
- actively pursuing growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment through links with community organisations, schools, TAFE and other registered training organisations;
- implementing the Learning and Teaching Management Plan with an emphasis on increasing the knowledge and appreciation of Indigenous issues and culture, and developing staff cross-cultural understandings.
- continuing to provide financial assistance and support to postgraduate students through the USC equity scholarships, and research grants.

How the Indigenous perspective is embedded in the University’s Strategic Plan

The University of the Sunshine Coast 2005 – 2010 Strategic Plan identifies and commits to a collection of values that guide and direct pursuit of its Mission and everyday operations. Three of these values are directly relevant to the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy:

- Engaging in and responding to the community’s intellectual, cultural and economic needs.
- Adopting consultative processes and ethical behaviour in all activities.

- The advancement of human rights within a tolerant and inclusive society, in which respect of Indigenous and international peoples is fundamental.

The Student Services Operational Plan also articulates a specific objective to:

- Improve Indigenous student recruitment, support and success in undergraduate and postgraduate study.

This objective aims to see an annual increase in the number of commencing Indigenous students enrolling in USC programs, and enhanced rates of success and completion for continuing students. Further strategies have been developed in the Student Services Operational Plan 2009 – 2011.

PART 2 ACHIEVEMENT OF NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION POLICY GOALS IN 2008 & PLANS FOR FUTURE YEARS

Goal 1: Establish effective arrangements for the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decision-making.

USC recognises the importance of Indigenous people's involvement in the high-level decision-making of the University. Opportunities for Indigenous Australians to participate in the governance and management of the University in 2008 included representation on the:

University of the Sunshine Coast Council

- Mr Michael Williams (Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland)

Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee

- Mr Michael Williams (Chair)
- Mr Corey Czok (USC, Indigenous Services Officer)
- Ms Susan Gould (USC, Indigenous Services Officer)
- Dr Maria Raciti (USC, academic staff)
- Mr Brendan Powell (USC, academic staff)
- Ms Robyn Parkes-Sandri (USC, academic staff)
- Ms Judi Wickes (USC, postgraduate student)
- Ms Bridgette Williams (Buranga Indigenous Students Committee, undergraduate student)
- Ms Natasha Hawkins (USC, undergraduate student)
- Mr Terry Bell (Sport and Recreation Queensland)
- Ms Sharelle Eggmolesse (North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health)
- Ms Sally Johnston (Indigenous Education, Queensland Department of Education and Training)
- Mr Lance Lewis (Indigenous Education, Queensland Department of Education and Training)
- Mr Fred Binge (TAFE)
- Mr Neville Blackman (community representative)
- Mr Anthony Beezley (Mission Australia Employment)
- Mr Henry Neil (a senior Indigenous man who is a community representative)
- Ms Melissa Cleary (DEEWR Representative)

Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Student Liaison Committee

- Ms Keicha Adams (Buranga Indigenous Students Committee, undergraduate student)

Buranga Indigenous Students Committee (BISC student group)

In addition to these appointments, Indigenous staff and students at the University participate in meetings with state and national bodies which involve them in educational decision-making:

- Mr Corey Czok and Ms Su Gould presented a paper at the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee Inaugural Forum;
- Mr Corey Czok is a member of the Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE Indigenous Advisory Committee;
- Ms Susan Gould represented USC at the Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts' Indigenous Higher Education Workshop on increasing the number of Indigenous professionals;
- Ms Nicole Copley (undergraduate student and Buranga Centre Research Assistant), represented USC at the inaugural National Indigenous Students Conference at Sydney University;
- Mr Lachlan Anderson (undergraduate student) was nominated to attend the 2008 National Student Leadership Forum in Canberra.

The Buranga Centre and the Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee continue to be the peak Aboriginal education and cultural advisory bodies to the University of the Sunshine Coast. The Buranga Centre also hosts the annual USC Indigenous Education Forum.

Goal 2: Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed as academic and non-academic staff in higher education institutions.

The University is strongly committed to improving the recruitment, development and support of Indigenous people in employment in higher education. Last year, the USC Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2009-2011 was drafted. The revised Strategy is designed to build upon the successes of the earlier document – Employment and Participation Strategy for Indigenous Australians at USC (2005-2008), and reflect the employment priority areas identified by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council.

Areas of significant achievement identified in the 2005 – 2008 review included:

- STEP project funding to support a National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP) Coordinator from 2006 to 2007;
- NICP cadets employed annually by the University since 2006;
- NICP cadets employed annually by Nambour General Hospital since 2007;
- in 2007, two full-time permanent Indigenous Services Officer positions were approved in the Buranga Centre, allowing greater opportunity for more effective collaboration between faculties in building capacity to attract and retain Indigenous students and staff;
- the former Indigenous Services Officer transitioned into a teaching position supporting the completion of his PhD;
- the Faculty of Science, Health and Education employed an Indigenous academic staff member;
- the Buranga Centre achieves annual increases in the number of Indigenous tutoring staff within the ITAS program.

The Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2009-2011 is being developed to increase teaching, mentoring and professional development opportunities for Indigenous Australians at USC. It articulates the institutional responsibility for achieving and maintaining strong representation of Indigenous people in employment at USC that is proportionate to the population of indigenous people in the Sunshine Coast region.

Priority areas and performance indicators identified from consultation processes have been integrated under the new Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy objectives. Many recommendations address continuing issues such as internships, cadetships and job rotation or secondment opportunities. The revised Strategy has been written in consultation with the USC's Buranga Centre, and the Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee including Indigenous elders, members of the local Indigenous community, students, academics, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The University aims to raise the percentage of Indigenous staff to be more reflective of the percentage of Indigenous students at USC (1.84% in 2009). Full-time staff employed by the University in 2008 included:

- Indigenous Services Officer (Student Services and University Community), Buranga Centre
- Indigenous Services Officer (Student Services and Regional Engagement), Buranga Centre
- Lecturer, Marketing, Faculty of Business
- Lecturer, Early Years Education, Faculty of Science, Health and Education
- Teaching and Research Fellow, Faculty of Business
- Research Assistant, Faculty of Science, Health and Education
- Administration Assistant, Teaching and Research Services.

The University is also seeking 2009 funding to establish a new role located in the Buranga Centre – Indigenous Employment Officer. This initiative is consistent with the COAG goal to halve the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous employment outcomes. The Indigenous Employment Officer will be responsible for:

- finalising the USC Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy for the current triennium;
- facilitating employment opportunities at USC for Indigenous people;
- building the profile of the University as a workplace of choice for Indigenous people on the Sunshine Coast;
- providing Indigenous staff with appropriate induction to the University;
- facilitating ongoing mentoring and support for all Indigenous staff, and promoting scholarships and internships where available;
- coordinating mentor training for indigenous people who are academic and/or community leaders;
- coordinating cultural awareness training for University staff to understand and respect the culture and background of Indigenous people.

Goal 3: Ensure equitable access of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to higher education.

The University of the Sunshine Coast continues to develop opportunities to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing higher education through its undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Indigenous students are actively recruited through a range of initiatives including:

- Pursuing growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment through links with community organisations, schools, TAFE and other RTOs (for example, John Pearson Consulting www.jpearson.com.au).
 - The Buranga Centre is a member of the Sunshine Coast Indigenous Network Group.
 - Indigenous Services Officers are registered referrers for North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health (NCACCH).
 - The Murri Pathways program, established in January 2008, provides information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families about career and employment options through Education Queensland, TAFE, Tourism Queensland, and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. Options include traineeships and apprenticeships, certificates and diplomas, the Headstart program, TPP and undergraduate courses.
 - Representation at the Thursday Island (Tagai State College) Careers Expo (July 2008), and annual hosting of senior students from Tagai State College on campus.
 - Representation at NAIDOC events in Brisbane and on the Sunshine Coast.
 - Representation on the Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE Indigenous Advisory Committee.
 - Presentations at the NCACCH Well Person's Health Check Days at Maroochydore and Gympie.
 - Information stall at Indigenous Service Providers Expo, Nambour PCYC, October 2008.

- Promoting workplace learning opportunities and experience available through the National Indigenous Cadetship Program.
- Targeted scholarship opportunities.
 - Including scholarships for Headstart students (in Years 11 and 12 of high school).
 - www.usc.edu.au/Students/Future/FinancialAssistance/ScholarshipsBursariesPrizes/IndigenousScholarships
 - In 2008, USC student Stephanie Pabai, is the first Torres Strait Islander student to receive the Pearl Duncan Scholarship awarded by the Minister for Education. Three students also receive the Rotary Aboriginal Health Science Scholarships.
- Indigenous Alternative Entry Program.
 - All QTAC applicants who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are invited to participate in the Indigenous Alternative Entry Program. The panel interview and assessment of applicants' skills, experience and aspirations, may lead to an offer of admission into a degree program or could guide applicants to consider the TPP pathway as a preparatory program.
 - 2008 QTAC entry changes incorporate the option of rolling offers.
 - Admissions procedures enabling a more seamless transition to undergraduate study from the TPP program.
- Tertiary Preparation Pathway alternative entry.
 - Allowing prospective undergraduate students to experience university life before committing to a degree program.
 - Courses completed as part of the program are free of charge.
 - Students undertaking TPP are provided with the same assistance offered to all indigenous University students through the Buranga Centre.
- Other recruitment activities include the annual USC Courses for Careers open day and Indigenous Job Market (Brisbane).
- Buranga Centre staff have also conducted information sessions for prospective indigenous students as part of the University's "Keep Pace" community information sessions.

Goal 4: Achieve the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education, at rates commensurate with those of other Australians.

As a smaller regional campus, the University is able to maintain close contact and support for many students. High levels of participation and retention for Indigenous students are achieved through:

- An Indigenous orientation program.
 - Including academic skills workshops, tours of the campus and facilities, and personal introductions. This enables a comfortable integration into University life. Indigenous students also meet Student Services staff and are encouraged to access generic support available including: Counselling; Disability Services; Graduate Careers and Employment; and the Student Activities and Clubs Officer.
- Dedicated study areas and a social room on campus.
 - Including access to reference books and laptop computers.
 - In 2008, the Faculty of Business donated over 100 books to the Buranga Centre resource library.
 - The University has committed to increasing the capacity of the study area for Indigenous students to resource the increase in undergraduate student enrolments in 2008.

- The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme tutoring program.
- Establishment of a Student Equity and Diversity Officer position in 2008.
 - Responsible for projects supporting student equity and equal opportunity on campus, including promoting social justice principles, the value of diversity and inclusiveness, and providing professional support to students from equity groups.
- Assistance in accessing the National Indigenous Cadetship Program.
 - USC is committed to continue support within the NICP project despite discontinued funding for a Coordinator. The NICP project is vitally important in assisting students to gain valuable vocational work for integrated learning experiences. In addition to the financial support provided, USC students have had a high transition from cadetships to graduate positions.
 - Eight cadets were placed with employers in 2008.

Goal 5: Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attain the same graduation rates from award courses in higher education as for other Australians.

Increasing the retention and completion rates for Indigenous students is a priority of the University, particularly as excellent employment outcomes have been demonstrated for Indigenous graduates. The University focuses on providing academic and personal assistance, and a culturally supportive environment on campus through:

- Student mentoring program and dedicated support for Indigenous students.
 - Personal and academic support is also accessed through the generic assistance of Student Services, often via referral from Buranga Centre staff. Students are able to access academic skills advice; financial assistance; accommodation support; and health and wellbeing advice.
 - Buranga Centre staff members are registered referrers through the North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health and organise free medical and dental consultations for Indigenous students.
- Student achievement is acknowledged and celebrated through an annual Indigenous graduates and family morning tea, where students are presented with an Indigenous graduate stole and a certificate of achievement.
 - The Buranga Centre also acknowledges three Indigenous students with highest GPA's in Semester Two of each year as well as the recipients of NICP placements. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor is invited to present each of the students with their certificates.
- Development of a collaborative model for accommodation and learning support planned for 2009. Involving dedicated student residences distributed throughout existing student accommodation facilities to provide Indigenous students with:
 - formal on-site and culturally appropriate pastoral care - through the Program Leader who will be an advanced-level Indigenous student living in the residences and providing on-site pastoral support;
 - peer mentoring of new Indigenous students, particularly those who have re-located from a rural or remote area to attend the University - new students will be matched with a mentor who can share their own experiences managing the challenges and responsibilities that a first year student may encounter;
 - facilitation of a peer "learning community" for new students in the residences - a sustainable community of engaged learners who will be encouraged to collaborate, reflect and learn from each others' thoughts and experiences;
 - regular on-site academic support through the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme - ITAS tutors will be available to provide regular learning support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students living in the residences.

Goal 6: To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Indigenous traditional and contemporary cultures.

Celebrating Aboriginal culture and heritage is a powerful initiative for engaging and uniting all communities in this country. USC recognises the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council's priority of enhancing the prominence and status on campus of Indigenous culture, knowledge and studies, and achieves this through:

- Traditional blessings opening every University of the Sunshine Coast Graduation Ceremony.
 - Maroochy Barambah (Song Woman) singing "Monda Barita" – a traditional song of prayer asking the Almighty and our ancestors to be with everyone at the gathering.
- Hosting of the 2nd Indigenous Education Symposium in September 2008.
 - Focusing on raising awareness of Indigenous culture and facilitating understanding between educators, students and Indigenous Australians. The symposium's keynote address was delivered by Ms Michelle Hall (Director of Aboriginal Education and Training NSW), on the topic "Aboriginal Education is Everyone's Business". Ms Hall is a Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi woman who is a passionate advocate for the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and has had over 30 years experience in the field.
 - The program was well subscribed, with the first day – a schools program – attended by over 120 Year 8 and 9 students from local high schools.
- Cross-cultural training.
 - A culturally sensitive and supportive environment is fostered through cross-cultural training provided annually for non-Indigenous ITAS tutors, and on a more regular basis for all staff since 2008.
 - Guest lectures by Indigenous Services Officer, Corey Czok, into courses including Psychology, Nursing, Paramedics, Social Work, and Sociology.
- Events celebrating Indigenous culture.
 - NAIDOC events held at Cotton Tree and at Musgrave Park, Brisbane.
 - The annual multicultural Festuri festival.
 - Sorry Day.
 - Apology Breakfast.
- Development of the University of the Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Action Plan.
 - In 2008, the Indigenous Services Officer (Regional Engagement) was tasked with consulting and writing a draft Statement of Commitment and a draft Reconciliation Action Plan for consideration of Council in 2009.

PART 3 EXPENDITURE OF INDIGENOUS SUPPORT PROGRAMME GRANT

In 2008, all Indigenous Support Program funds were expended on provision of USC's Indigenous Services. The grant was primarily utilised for the salaries of two Buranga Centre staff employed to provide services to the Indigenous students. The University allocated additional funds for remaining operational costs from its Student Services central budget allocation.

INCOME for Indigenous higher education purposes	
1. Indigenous Support Programme 2008 grant only.	\$ 185,000
2. Unspent 2007 ISP funds, carried over to 2008.	\$ 0
3. TOTAL ISP income for 2008	\$ 185,000
4. Other funds provided to Indigenous higher education	
- ITAS	\$ 88,540
- Commonwealth grants, Scholarships/NICP	\$ 116,814
- Philanthropic funds, USC Scholarships	\$ 16,000
- USC central budget, Student Services	\$ 70,119
5. Total Indigenous higher education income for 2008	\$ 476,473
EXPENDITURE	
Operating costs - Salaries	\$ 159,181
Higher education provider overheads (incl. publications, travel, postage, IT)	\$ 79,412
Operating costs - ITAS (including tutor wages)	\$ 96,229
Indigenous Education Symposium (printing, catering, accom)	\$ 5,408
Eidos Pathways Project (printing, wages, travel)	\$ 3,429
Commonwealth grants, Scholarships/NICP	\$ 116,814
Philanthropic funds, USC Scholarships	\$ 16,000
Total expenditure for 2008	\$ 476,473

PART 4 HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Appendix

USC Indigenous student and staff data

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of Indigenous students (enrolments)	26	41	40	52	58	74	86	100
Tertiary Prep Program	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	6	10	18
Headstart (Gr 11 & 12)				1		1	2	7
Proportion of Indigenous students (Access rate)	0.80%	0.99%	1.14%	1.42%	1.19%	1.50%	1.63 %	1.84%
Graduates - Bachelor	1	3	3	2	7	5	10	
Graduates - Postgraduate	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	
Indigenous persons in Sunshine Coast region (Census data 2001/2006)	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
USC retention ratio		1.08	0.75	1.14	0.89	0.93		
QLD retention ratio		0.81	0.81	0.82	0.85	0.88		
USC success ratio	0.91	0.73	0.83	0.79	0.89	0.97		
QLD success ratio	0.79	0.78	0.80	0.81	0.81	0.81		
Number of Indigenous full-time staff	2	1	1.4	2	3	5	7	7
NICP cadets at USC					1	2	2	3
Indigenous ITAS tutors/ (Total ITAS tutors)				4 (15)	5 (14)	6 (21)	12 (26)	14 (32)

PART B

5. RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

1. Overall Research Strategy and Management of Research Activities

a. What are the university's broad research goals? What measures does the university have in place to achieve these goals? How are key research activities monitored and evaluated by the university?

The University has a stated research goal to concentrate the University's research effort and achieve national and international distinction in ways that advance University priorities. To achieve this, the University continues to focus its research effort within the broader themes of Regional Engagement and Sustainability in three designated research groups and centres.

Each of these key research groups and centres are supported by providing annual funding, discretionary funding support, customised research management services, and upgrading research groups to research centres when they reach required performance levels.

The role of research centres and research groups is to concentrate research effort in order to achieve high quality and high impact research outcomes, and advance individual and collective capacity within the University for excellent research. A key responsibility of research centres and research groups is mentoring, supporting and providing opportunities for ECRs and HDRs building their research track records.

The University continues to develop strategic research partnerships and research infrastructure by developing existing strategic research partnerships through joint appointments of active research staff and developing joint research infrastructure around the research groups and centres and by developing new and emerging strategic research partnerships through collaborative/joint research projects and programs, for example Seafood Cooperative Research Centre, National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, SmartWater (a state-funded initiative) and Eidos.

These strategies are monitored and evaluated in a number of ways, including:

- Annual reporting by research centres and groups to Research Management Committee and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Reports include performance against key qualitative and quantitative criteria as well as reporting of expenditure against annual budgets and provision of future budgets.
- External review of research centres and groups every three years, or at any time determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Research Management Committee.
- Regular reporting on Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators to Council
- Regular cost versus benefit reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on key strategic investments in collaborative/joint research projects and programs

b. What are the university's identified areas of research strength? Of emerging research strength? Please provide an explanation of how the university's research strengths are identified?

The University conducts research under the banners of sustainability and regional engagement, and has a USC interpretation of these concepts.

Sustainability, in the context of research concentration at USC, means the enhancement of communities into the indefinite future without impinging on the intrinsic value of natural systems.

Regional engagement, in the context of research concentration at USC, means the process of building mutually beneficial relationships within and between regions to foster, inspire and activate communities to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Within this context key research strengths are:

- Applied genetics in primary industries specifically forestry and aquaculture; and
- Regional sustainability.

An area of research concentration emerging at USC is the area of applied health including public health, dietetics and nutrition and nursing.

The university's research strengths are identified by establishment of a research group or centre which requires performance against key qualitative and quantitative criteria.

Performance against national benchmarks in external competitive research grants and refereed research publication outputs are used as quantitative measures for monitoring and evaluating outcomes.

Qualitative criteria include such indicators as research that is of high originality, significance and rigour; engagement with research training and development; generating new resources for research; partnering productively in research within USC and with other significant business, industry, government and/or community organisations, including other universities, at local, state, national and/or international levels; working systematically to build up the necessary infrastructure, including through partnering arrangements, to implement effective research programs; supporting and mentoring of ECRs, postdoctoral fellows, HDRs and others attempting to build their research track records.

**c. What are some of the university's major research successes in the past year?
Examples could include externally - mediated prizes and awards, major new partnerships, commercialisation outcomes, or significant improvement against key measures of research performance.**

During 2008 there were several major research programs funded which were underpinned by significant strategic research partnerships.

Substantial state government funding through Smart Futures for the Smart Forests Alliance Queensland and through the Plantation Hardwoods Research Fund allow teams of researchers based in the Genecology Research Group to extend their research and build on established partnerships with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, CSIRO and industry partners.

The Sustainability Research Centre was successful in partnering nationally in a bid funded through the CSIRO Collaboration Fund.

During 2008 HERD reportable research grant income associated with the Genecology Research Group totalled \$1.04m and the Sustainability Research Centre totalled \$636,780.

Each of these funding programs will build capacity including higher degree by research students and post doctoral positions in areas of research strength, enhance the University's reputation and build on the University's measurable outputs of quality research publications, external grant income and higher degree by research completions.

d. What are some of the key research and research training challenges facing the university as a result of the Global Financial Crisis?

We see the Global Financial Crisis impacting on the University primarily in terms of reduced funding available from existing and potential partners for both direct and leveraged investment in research. The increased competitiveness and availability of grant income is also a risk for a small university in the process of developing its research profile.

The University has a relatively small, low risk investment with Queensland Treasury Corporation and is not reliant on investment proceeds as an income stream.

e. What strategies has the university put in place to strategically manage your research activities, including meeting the full costs of research?

USC has adopted a very specific strategy of partnering in significant national research opportunities as well as concentrating research into a small number of key strengths as discussed earlier in this submission.

These activities are supported by the Research Block Grant, specifically the Institutional Grants Scheme funds.

Full costs of research are currently funded through operational budgets however there are two ways in which we are moving towards monitoring and meeting full costs of research:

1. introduce triennium budgeting for all funds of the University via full accrual accounting which will provide a more robust way of monitoring and accounting for full costs of research; and
2. operate in a number of key areas to increase consulting income and increase recovery of institutional overheads (an example of this is the recently established International Projects Unit).

f. What strategies is the university adopting to secure its future research workforce?

The University has made and strategic, targeted appointment of mid-career and senior researchers in areas of designated research strength over the last year or two and will continue to move in this direction as needed.

The appointments strengthen our capacity to support the career development of higher degree by research students through to post doctoral positions with the requirement for research groups and centres to mentor the HDRs and ECRs within their team and develop their research track record appropriately.

2. Research Training Strategy

a. What are the university's goals in the recruitment of domestic and international research students? What strategies does the university have in place to achieve these goals? Have these goals changed in the past twelve months?

The University remains committed to its ongoing strategy of growing both our domestic and international higher degree by research student cohort. This is being achieved by an increase in scholarships funded through major grants and strategic research partnerships within the research groups and centres and supported by fee scholarship opportunities for international students.

The University is also committed to further development of the research training offered to undergraduates enrolled in Honours programs.

b. What support arrangements does the university have in place for HDR students, especially in relation to ensuring quality of research experience and timely completions?

The University supports the quality of the HDR student experience through the Research Degrees Committee, under the watchful direction of the Chair, as well as through support from the Director of Teaching and Research Services and the Research Training Officer. The key support measures remain consistent with previous years and include:

- Management of supervision performance by line managers through the University's performance management system (PPR) with a focus on continuous improvement
- Embedding supervision and research training within the University's recognition and rewards structures for excellent academic performance, including the academic promotions policy, the professional leave policy and the policy for the Vice-Chancellor's medal for research and research training, providing strong incentives for demonstrated improvement of research training.
- Implementation by Research Degrees Committee of a Professional Development Plan for Supervisors including an annual supervisor forum
- Provision of a range of high quality research training workshops for candidates.
- Requirement for designated research groups and centres to actively participate in Honours programs and provide opportunities for higher degree by research students including research experience within industry where possible.

c. What funding arrangements does the university have in place to support research training activities?

Examples might include financial support; internally - or externally - funded scholarships (other than APAs); completion scholarships; fieldwork, conference and other travel funding; dedicated postgraduate student workspaces and resources; mentoring and training; and career guidance.

Research Training Scheme funds are distributed to Faculties on a performance basis and used to support the provision of research training including requisite discipline knowledge as well as generic knowledge skills and values.

In addition, as mentioned it is a requirement for designated research groups and centres to provide opportunities for higher degree by research students including research experience within industry where possible as well as funds for conference presentations.

The University provides dedicated space for research students in the Graduate Centre as well as within the work areas of each of the research groups and centres.

3. Funding allocations

a. Has the university's internal mechanism for the distribution of research block funding changed in the past year?

There has been no substantial change to the mechanism for distribution of research block funding during 2008.

b. How does the university estimate and budget for the indirect costs associated with research projects? How are these costs met?

The indirect costs associated with research projects are not currently estimated or budgeted. The costs of staff time and institutional support are met from within the University's current operational budget.

c. What initiatives does the university have in place to improve the transparency and efficiency of its internal distributive mechanisms, cost estimates, and accountability for use of public funding?

End of month management reports which reflect the current budget to actual positions for each cost centre are provided to Senior Staff Advisory Committee and Planning and Resources Committee who recommend to Council for approval. These documents are also supplied on the University intranet which can be accessed by all internal staff.

Distribution of research block grants is based on HERDC data which is available on the University intranet. Full details of calculations and distributions are provided via memorandum to the Deans.

4. Partnerships and Collaboration

a. Who are the university's key Australian and international research partners (public and private sector)?

The University has built significant research partnerships with the following public and private sector organisations:

- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)
- Department of Regional Development Primary Industry and Fisheries and Resources (DRDPIFR NT)
- Integrated Tree Cropping Limited (ITC)
- Forest Enterprises Australia Limited (FEA)
- Forestry Plantations Queensland (FPQ)
- Clean Seas Tuna Ltd
- Paspaley Pearling Company Ltd
- Sunshine Coast Regional Council

During 2008 USC has cemented ongoing research partnerships with:

- Griffith University
- University of Southern Queensland
- Deakin University
- RMIT

Current international research partnerships exist with the following institutions:

- German Sports University, Germany
- University of Wyoming, USA
- University of Iowa, USA
- Iowa State University, USA
- University of Ulster, Ireland
- Mount Sinai School of Medicine, USA
- Pasteur Institute, Iran
- Karolinska Institute, Sweden
- Institute for Statistical Mathematics, Japan

- University of Jyväskylä, Finland
- University of Mataram, Indonesia

b. Does the university have a strategy to increase its international research collaborations?

The concentration of research into key areas of strength over the past several years at USC has led to some key international research collaborations, in particular University of Wyoming and the German Sports University. We anticipate increased research links through the Genecology Research Group into Asia.

Other long term partnerships such as the Karolinska Institute and University of Mataram continue to be developed.

c. Does the university have in place strategies or processes intended to increase its research collaboration with SMEs?

The main focus for USC's research collaboration with SMEs is through the Innovation Centre. The University established the Innovation Centre to contribute to economic development in the region through the provision of business incubation services as well as to attract tenants that link with the University and enable the University to strengthen industry links.

We see our involvement in Cooperative Research Centres as another link to SMEs through the participation of peak industry bodies in the CRCs.

d. What strategies does the university employ to collaborate with research end users, including small and medium enterprises?

USC's strategy to collaborate with research end users is specifically through industry links in research partnerships and Cooperative Research Centres. This partnering strategy has been successful in winning the University a number of large research projects and extending existing collaborations with industry (for example forestry and aquaculture through the Genecology Research Group). This partnering strategy continues to apply to developing research links with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council through the Sustainability Research Centre as well as National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and SmartWater Research Facility.

e. What strategies does the university have in place to encourage collaborations with other universities, including the sharing of research resources?

USC has made a strategic commitment to several nationally significant collaborative research initiatives including the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and Queensland Smart Water Research Facility. We established our involvement in the Australia Seafood Cooperative Research Centre in 2008 and continue to investigate involvement in other collaborations in our areas of research strength.

5. Support for equity groups in research and research training

a. What measures does the university have in place to support access to, and participation in, research and research training for staff and students from defined equity groups?

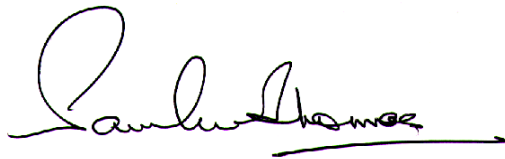
Examples might include staff and students with an Indigenous background; from low socio-economic / low income backgrounds; from rural and isolated areas; from non-English speaking backgrounds; or with disabilities.

The University currently provides a dedicated resource to assist research students with academic language skills development through the provision of online resources as well as opportunities for one-to-one sessions to deal with specific issues. For staff the internal research grants scheme

allows for preferential support for researchers who are returning to work from parental leave or with significant parenting responsibilities.

VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT'S ENDORSEMENT

I, **Professor Paul Thomas AM**, being the Chief Executive Officer of the **University of the Sunshine Coast**, hereby certify that the information in these documents has been compiled in accordance with the guidelines for the Institution Assessment Framework Collection 2009 and that the information contained herein is correct.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Thomas', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Signed:

Title: Vice-Chancellor and President

Date: 17 August 2009