

Indigenous Education –Understanding the journey

*Janeene Payne, Directors Office Student Service Group
RMIT*

Understanding the journey of Indigenous Learners is a challenge faced by all Educators. Getting the first year right for this group of students is a serious responsibility and is worthy of discussion. Indigenous students who participated in the transition program have found that the challenging road map of further education has become easier to navigate.

This presentation will address core topics set out on the FYHE Conference website:

- Increasing engagement of students with their educational institutions
- Engaging international perspectives
- Breaking down social isolation for new students

Objectives of ‘Nuts & Bolts’ presentation

- Participants will gain an understanding of the Indigenous student journey and the transition program designed to support their needs
- Participants will be able to use the established model and work through how it could be adapted to suite other institute
- Presenters will share their experience of the program and be available to discuss the issues raised in an interactive forum.

Discussion arising from ‘Nuts & Bolts’ presentation

Opportunities for discussion will be encouraged as presenters invite participants to:

- Consider why the journey can be so hard
- Identify common issues
- Reflect on initiatives they have implemented in the past. Think about what worked, what didn't, and why.
- Consider ways in which the improving First Year Experience for Indigenous students could be successfully transferred to their own university settings.

Indigenous Student Transition - Program Overview

Background

Research has consistently shown that Indigenous educational outcomes and opportunities fall well behind non Indigenous peers. In order to try and close the Gap, RMIT has worked through a holistic approach where Indigenous Learners aspirations have been sought and used to shape the Indigenous transition program.

Target Group

The program will target 1st year Indigenous students.

Program Objectives

To engage and prepare 1st year Indigenous students to be able to participate in the Social, Cultural, Academic and RMIT experience

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Social</p> | <p>Social integration during the first weeks of study has been shown to improve the transition experience of commencing students</p> | <p>Group activities that enhance social bonding Bowling Rock-climbing Pool Social meal out</p> |
| <p>Cultural</p> | <p>Research has indicated that to meet Indigenous student's aspirations there needs to be a cultural support system in place. For many first year students they are living off country with out their extended family network. A cultural transition to further education should include partnering with local community organisations</p> | <p>Connection to local community, feel part of the community Welcome from local land council Introduction to community Cultural discovery walk/tour Introduction to Indigenous staff and students</p> |
| <p>Academic</p> | <p>Because of the often different demographic of First Year Indigenous student it is vital to include academic support from the very onset of study. This needs to cove 3 key area's, General study and learning support, academic support that is aligned to the area of study and ongoing ITAS touting</p> | <p>Confident in academic ability SLC program Intro to academic writing/reading Intro to ITAS tutoring Alternate assessment Special consideration</p> |
| <p>RMIT experience</p> | <p>All fist year students benefit from an informative Orientation. When students feel like they belong and have the information that they need to seek support when it is needed the chance of successful academic achievement improves.</p> | <p>Understand services offered, know where to go for ongoing support Orientation SSG Library service Student union RMIT union</p> |

Program Structure

| | Day 1 | Day 2 |
|----------------|--|--|
| 9.30 to 10.00 | BRIEF WELCOME by Stuart @ Ngarara Willim | |
| 10.00 to 10.30 | Get trams to Botanical Gardens | Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) Info Session 10.00am till 11.00am with Eric Clarke and Janeene Payne (Building 94 Cardigan St, Carlton opp NWIC, Level 3, Discussion Room) |
| 10.30 to 11.00 | KOORI HERITAGE WALK: 10.30 am till NOON Visitors Centre (Observatory Gate), Botanical gardens Birdwood Ave South Yarra, VIC, 3141 | Student Learning Centre: SKILL YOURSELF UP! 11.00am till 12.00pm (Building 94 Cardigan St, Carlton opp NWIC, Level 3, Discussion Room) With Judy Maxwell and NWIC staff |
| 11.00 to 11.30 | KOORI HERITAGE WALK: 10.30 am till NOON Visitors Centre (Observatory Gate), Botanical gardens Birdwood Ave South Yarra, VIC, 3141 | Student Learning Centre: SKILL YOURSELF UP! 11.00am till 12.00pm (Building 94 Cardigan St, Carlton opp NWIC, Level 3, Discussion Room) With Judy Maxwell and NWIC staff Being a student at RMIT' LUNCH: 12.00pm till 1.00pm Toto's Pizza @ The FigTree Gardens (Old Melbourne Goal) |
| 11.30 to 12.00 | | |
| 12.00 to 12.30 | BBQ ON THE YARRA NOON till 2.00pm *Ngarara Willim Services* *Welcome to Country by Elders *Stuart give detailed introduction to NWIC services & staff *Eric & Carlie explain their roles*Oly Phillips rom ABSTUDY | |
| 12.30 to 1.00 | | |
| 1.00 to 1.30 | Melb City Free Bus back to NWIC (get off Carlton Gardens) | Travel to Barefoot Bowls: 1pm till 2pm Bus from Lygon/Russell st then 112 Tram from Johnson/Brunswick st |
| 1.30 to 2.00 | | |
| 2.00 to 2.30 | | Travel to Barefoot Bowls: 1pm till 2pm Bus from Lygon/Russell st then 112 Tram from Johnson/Brunswick st BAREFOOT LAWN BOWLING: 2.00pm till 5.00pm @ North Fitzroy Bowling Club |
| 2.30 to 3.00 | | |
| 2.30 to 3.00 | SECURITY(2.30-3): get NWIC access cards THE HUB(3-3.30): get student cards, travel concession card, check enrolment | BBQ & DRINKS: 5.00pm - 6.30pm @ North Fitzroy Bowling Club |
| 3.00 to 3.30 | SECURITY(2.30-3): get NWIC access HUB(3-3.30): get student cards, travel concession card, check enrolment | |
| 3.30 to 4.00 | Career Development and Employment- "Looking for part time work, E-Jobs, Program Advice (Building 94 Cardigan St, Carlton opp NWIC, Level 3, 'Training Lab') | |
| 4.00 to 4.30 | | |
| 4.30 to 5.00 | Career Development and Employment- "Looking for part time work, E-Jobs, Program Advice (Building 94 Cardigan St, Carlton opp NWIC, Level 3, 'Training Lab') | |
| 5.00 to 5.30 | | |
| | KEY | |
| | SOCIAL ACTIVITIES | |
| | LUNCH / CATERING | |
| | ACADEMIC ORIENTATION | |
| | RMIT EXPERIENCE | |

Benefits and Outcomes

Transition specialist from across the education sector gets involved in Indigenous Education and together we understand and improve the journey.