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UOW  
COLLEGE  
AUSTRALIA

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2025 - 2027





## About the Artist

Isabella Horne is a proud Wiradjuri woman from around the region of Orange, currently living on Dharawal country. As a part of her connection to culture, she tells stories and shares her passion for country through Indigenous art forms. Her love for story telling through art began at a young age when it was introduced to her by an Indigenous Student Coordinator and elder in the community.

The artwork, titled **Flow**, symbolises the unifying qualities of water and a reminder to take a step back and allow the river of life to guide you to your destination.





# Flow



Some may think water divides us with barriers of vast oceans, streams, rivers, and lakes. But this isn't true. Those oceans, streams, rivers and lakes connect every island, continent and piece of land on earth together, creating a greater community of individuals around the globe.

At the UOW College, their main objective is to create a space where students from all areas of the world can come together and grow. As many students begin their academic journey at UOW, there is a level of uncertainty about what the future might hold; All the potential twists and turns; The mountains that need to be conquered; The multiple pathways you can take; All the people you'll meet; It's a lot!

The winding river through the centre of the piece represents this. But, like the water being guided by a river, we too need to let life guide us – or in other words, 'go with the flow'. Only then, can we truly find ourselves and grow into the people we wish to be, like the river expanding and growing into multiple smaller streams and river systems.

Towards the right-hand side of the piece, there are multiple communities along various points of the expanding river. These represent not only the various destinations the students will reach along their college and university journey, but also the greater communities across the seas that work closely with the UOW College.

In the top left-hand corner is the UOW College - the beginning for many students. The mountains represent not only some of the challenges that need to be overcome in life and while studying at UOW, but are also attributed to the college's location at the base of Mt Keira (Geera) that can be seen from many points of the UOW campus and is a constant reminder of the beautiful landscape we are so lucky to be a part of.

If you can take one thing away from looking at this piece, it would be to remember to take a step back and let the river of life guide you to your next destination."

**ISABELLA HORNE**  
Artist

## Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient and sophisticated relationships. The University of Wollongong spreads across many interrelated Aboriginal Countries that are bound by this sacred landscape, and intimate relationship with that landscape since creation. From Sydney to the Southern Highlands, to the South Coast. From fresh water to bitter water to salt. From City to Urban to Rural. The University of Wollongong acknowledges the Custodianship of the Aboriginal peoples of this place and space that has kept alive the relationships between all living things. The University acknowledges the devastating impact of colonisation on our campuses' footprint and commit ourselves to truth-telling, healing and education.

# Our Commitment

## to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment

We are proud to introduce the inaugural UOW Global Enterprises and UOW College Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2025 – 2027.

Consultation with current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and stakeholders has highlighted that we need to improve our efforts by breaking down barriers to employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and ensuring our workplace is a culturally safe environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures are respected and celebrated.

The ethos of this strategy is underpinned by focusing on strategic actions that will improve cultural safety to support a positive working and learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will support the goal to improve representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our workplace. It is designed to complement, not compete with, the University of Wollongong's goals for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In the recommendations of the Universities Accord commissioned by the Federal Government, there are ambitious targets to increase the rate of tertiary attainment, i.e. the percentage of the working-age population with a vocational or university qualification, from the current 60% to 80% by 2050. The report cites First Nations people as among those groups where participation needs to increase most. While UOW College is seeking to address this with the Aunty Linda Cruse scholarship that covers the tuition fees for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in any UOW College program, this Strategy also seeks to ensure that our College is a safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to study, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to work.

We need to commit to increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our workforce, and to improving the cultural capability of our entire workforce to ensure that our organisation is a safe space for staff, students and visitors alike.

This Strategy will enable UOW Global Enterprises and UOW College to position cultural capability and safety at the heart of the experience for all current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and students.



**Marisa Mastroianni**

Managing Director & Group  
Chief Executive Officer,  
UOW Global Enterprises



**Felix Lanceley**

General Manager,  
UOW College

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment is embedded in

# Our Future

This Strategy has been developed to support the achievement of the following:

UOW Global Enterprises  
People and Culture  
Strategic Plan 2024 - 2026

## Goal 1

### **Strengthening our future**

Attracting and retaining  
remarkable people

## Goal 2

### **Elevating safety**

Strengthening our safety  
and wellbeing culture

## Goal 3

### **Empowering inclusion**

Embracing diversity,  
advancing equity and  
fostering inclusion across  
our community

UOW College Australia  
Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027

## Aspiration 1

### **Our education is student focused**

1.1 Enhance student-centred learning,  
experience and support

## Aspiration 2

### **Our ways of working enable our people**

2.1 Attract and retain talented people  
2.2 Continuously develop our people

## Aspiration 3

### **Our actions drive innovation and growth**

3.1 Foster a culture of innovation

## Aspiration 4

### **Our diversity supports our community to thrive**

4.1 Cultivate an inclusive working and learning  
environment





# Our Goals

To build a workforce that is an exemplar for the communities in which we are embedded, where all employees including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees feel valued and empowered to pursue their career aspirations in an environment that is culturally safe.

## Guiding Principles

- **Country** – learning from and doing the right thing by Country.
- **Self-determination** – being led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to inform our decisions related to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- **Community** – being guided by community to meet their need in the areas that matter most to them.
- **Trust** – doing what we say we will do, holding to our word.
- **Cultural safety** – being open-minded and flexible in our attitudes, value diverse practices and do not assume superiority of the dominant views.
- **Inclusion** – ensuring work and learning spaces are free from racism, where everyone is respected and feels a genuine sense of belonging.

# Our Areas of Focus

## Attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

- Establish and maintain relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and community organisations, with a focus on building trust and awareness of employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at UOW Global Enterprises and UOW College.
- Collaborate with the Woolyungah Indigenous Centre, local high schools, and community organisations to establish pathways for aspiring and early-career Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, particularly those pursuing teaching careers, to participate in peer learning and teaching opportunities at UOW College.
- Support UOW to contribute to Academic and Professional staff pipelines.

## Support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce with opportunities for career development and growth.

- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are encouraged and supported to participate in professional development opportunities that are aligned to their current role and/or future development goals.



**Create an inclusive and respectful working and learning environment for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.**

- Improve mechanisms for data collection, and reporting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- Improve organisational knowledge, respect and communication on matters of cultural significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, informed by the workforce and community.
- Implement cultural awareness training to ensure cultural sensitivities are reflected in our communications, while establishing platforms that promote truth-telling, healing, and education in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Establish robust reporting mechanisms to track progress on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes and report to key stakeholders including boards and committees.
- Establish ways to listen to and communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and learn from their experiences.
- Support UOW by amplifying the visibility and recognition of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Strengthen staff capability to identify, address and prevent racism.
- Take proactive steps to address racial disparities and injustices, which may arise both within the workplace and classroom.



# Measures

1. Progress towards the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment target of 3% of the UOWGE Australian-based Workforce (including break-down of Academic, ELICOS Vocational and Professional Staff).

2. Retention rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness program completion rates.





4.

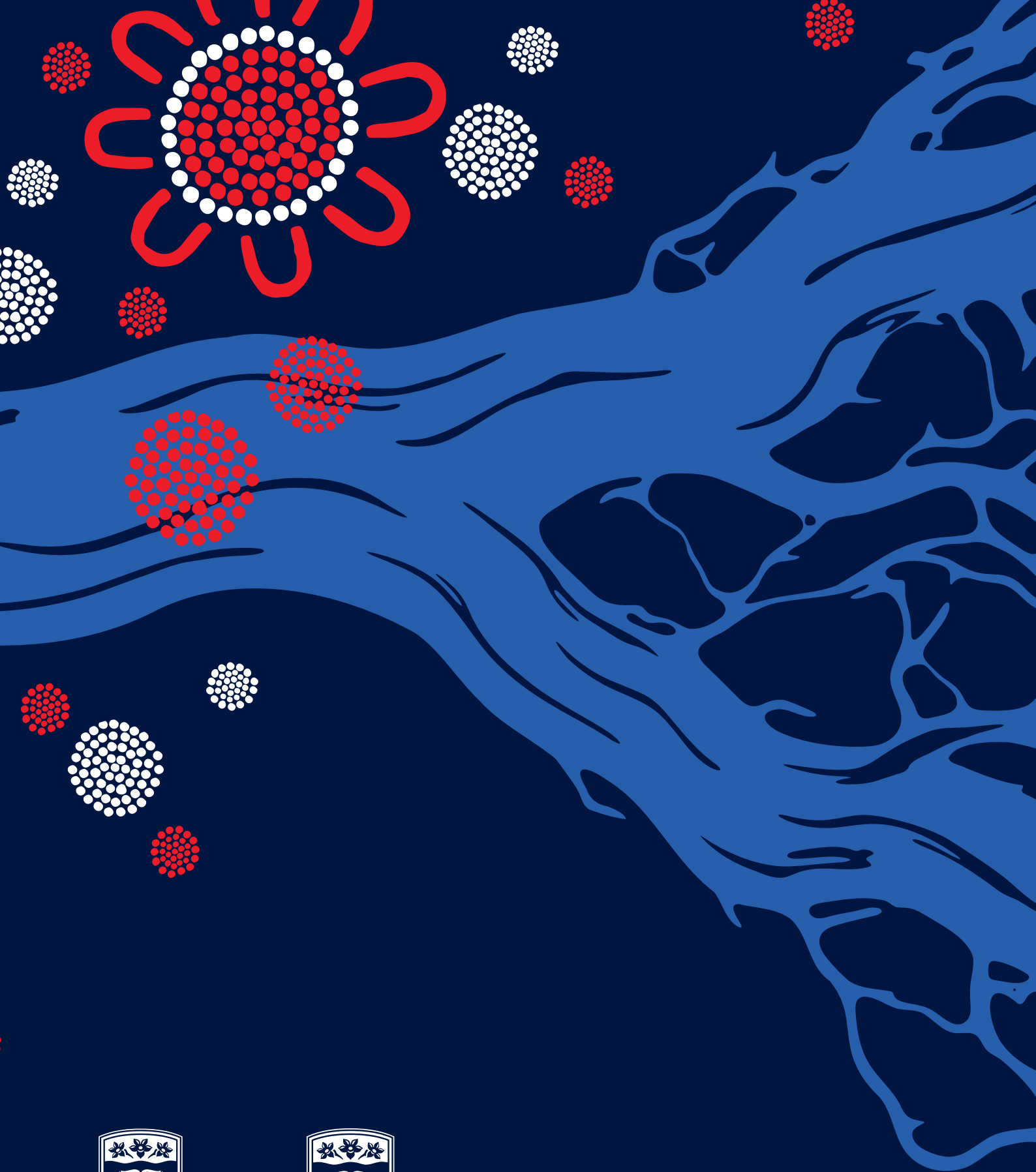
Achieve 'Agreement' threshold of at least 90% ('agree' or 'strongly agree') on Staff engagement 'Lived Experience' statements:

- This organisation is inclusive of all people
- Discrimination is not tolerated in this organisation

5.

Career opportunities created for, and Learning and Development Programs attended by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.





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