



Melbourne Centre for the  
Study of Higher Education

# Engaging 'diverse' students:

An audit of strategies to foster intercultural engagement  
in Australian public universities

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## Project Report

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Australian universities are places of great diversity and there is broad acceptance that promoting and learning through diversity can enhance all students' university experiences. However, there is little known about how this is done across the Australian higher education sector. As the composition of the student population continues to expand, it is important that universities are prepared to support positive, effective intercultural engagement.

This report presents findings from an audit of Australian universities' public documents relating to diversity and inclusion. These comprised diversity strategies, inclusion policies, and public-facing websites. Documents from 39 Australian universities were analysed regarding how they discussed diversity and the ways the university supports diversity and inclusion. Findings indicated that diversity and inclusion are important goals for all Australian universities, but definitions of diversity remain vague and inconsistent.

In addition to the desktop research, this project also included informal student roundtable conversations with 46 students from The University of Melbourne and The University of New South Wales. Responses suggest that students' conceptualizations of diversity are broader, wider, and more nuanced than previously presented—and more comprehensive than portrayed in universities' public documents. Findings also suggest that students believe that engaging with diversity and with diverse ideas is an important component of their learning experiences but that many barriers to inclusive engagement remain.

Key conclusions from the project suggest that little progress toward diversity and inclusion seems to have been made beyond aspirational statements. A focus on recruiting students from diverse backgrounds is also prevalent, despite ample research that suggests that the presence of diverse student groups does not suffice in promoting positive, effective, comprehensive engagement with different people and ideas. More needs to be done to ensure that engagement with diverse people and ideas is facilitated effectively, comprehensively, and often on Australian university campuses.

# INTRODUCTION

The imperative to engage with and promote 'diversity' is prevalent in universities across the world. In Australia, universities are often places of great diversity themselves, as massification and internationalisation have increased and broadened the student population. Likewise, the need to prepare students for employment in diverse, global contexts has led to heightened attention on skills and attitudes related to diversity, such as intercultural competences, global citizenship, and the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds and contexts.

However, like its sister terms of 'equity' and 'inclusion' there is limited critical engagement with the term 'diversity'; as Archer (2007)<sup>1</sup> noted in her examination of the discourse of diversity, "It is so apparently benign and 'good' that it silences other interpretations, thus render[ing] those who resist it unintelligible or morally reprehensible" (p. 648). Universities have long used the terms equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in promotional activities to attract new students<sup>2</sup>; however, recent analysis of universities' public documents suggests that this often functions at the rhetorical level, with little substantial practice or policy to exemplify grand mission statements about EDI.<sup>3</sup>

Given the significant challenges that the Australian higher education sector has faced in recent years, including closed borders and international immobility, and broader patterns of racialised violence resulting from the pandemic, it is timely to re-examine how universities engage with EDI and what policies, practices, strategies and supports are offered to foster intercultural engagement. This report outlines the findings of a project that audited university policies and strategies that promote diversity and intercultural engagement in Australia.

## CHALLENGES WITH 'DOING' EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN THE UNIVERSITY SPACE

In exploring diversity and intercultural engagement across domestic and international cohorts in Australian universities, we first need an understanding of what constitutes diversity and who is diverse. While a focus on EDI is a prevalent concern for universities globally, these are nebulous concepts with (fittingly) no shared definition, meaning they are subject to institutional interpretation, definition, and implementation. As Marion Bowl<sup>4</sup> noted in her analysis of public documents of universities in England and Aotearoa New Zealand, this results in 'linguistic slippage' that serves institution's agendas:

*The vagueness of the term serves a number of purposes. It invokes the warmth and harmony of institutional inclusiveness without threatening an elitist ethos. It evades specification of who is currently excluded, what structural and economic constraints may perpetuate their exclusion, and what action might be needed to end it. (p. 684)*

Such 'slippery' and ambiguous notions of EDI pose challenges in higher education, particularly where these initiatives intersect with universities' public face, including policy, strategy, and marketing. The international literature explores these tensions between strategy, language, and impact,<sup>5</sup> with much of this literature critiquing the economic agendas inherent in the corporate functions of universities, and the level to which marketing departments are skilled in appropriating diversity and inclusion discourse, therefore creating a set of moral discourses that are difficult to contest.

A further challenge that persists in the international higher education context is the hegemonic pull of the English language. In Anglophone countries like Australia, monolingualism creates significant challenges, as English remains the dominant language of instruction,<sup>6</sup> despite increasing cultural and linguistic diversity evident in enrolments amongst domestic and international cohorts. In 2020, 16.1 per cent of domestic students reported speaking a language other than English at home and 23 per cent were born outside of Australia<sup>7</sup>. International students were a considerable influence on Australian universities' diversity profiles prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, international student enrolments were representative of over 140 countries and 125 languages spoken<sup>8</sup>.

Despite this diversity in terms of cultural and language backgrounds, it is clear that amongst these contested contexts and discourses that students' intercultural engagement does not naturally develop by intercultural encounters, and such encounters could rather be likely to reinforce stereotypes and prejudices when individuals' experiences are not evaluated at cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and behavioural (practices) levels. Intercultural engagement, as the outcome of intercultural learning, is essential in current intercultural diverse environment in Australian universities. However, there is little evidence that intercultural learning is taking place, or that intercultural engagement is being developed.

The aim of the study reported here was to audit universities' public facing websites and documents to examine what policies, practices, strategies and supports are offered to foster intercultural engagement.

- 1 Archer, L. (2007). Diversity, equality and higher education: a critical reflection on the ab/uses of equity discourse within widening participation. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 12(5–6), 635–653.
- 2 Dakka, F. (2020). Competition, innovation and diversity in higher education: Dominant discourses, paradoxes and resistance. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 41(1), 80–94.
- 3 Baker, S., Field, R., Burke, R., Hartley, L., & Fleay, C. (2021). Discursive constructions of equity in Australian higher education: Imagined worlds and the case of people seeking asylum. *British Educational Research Journal*, 47(4), 836–854.
- 4 Bowl, M. (2018). Differentiation, distinction and equality – or diversity? The language of the marketised university: An England, New Zealand comparison. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(4), 671–688.
- 5 For example, Singh, M. (2011). The place of social justice in higher education and social change discourses. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 41(4), 481–494.
- 6 Xing, C., Mu, G.M., & Henderson, D. (2022). Problematizing English monolingualism in the 'multicultural' university: A Bourdieusian study of Chinese international research students in Australia. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 43(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2026366>
- 7 Based on Department of Education, Skills, and Employment data: <https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/student-data>

# SCOPE AND METHODS

Desktop research and document analysis were carried out during September and November 2021. All public universities in Australia were included. Sample institutions similar in size to Australian institutions in Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Singapore, the UK, and the US were included to facilitate international comparisons.

There were five main stages involved:

1. The words *diversity* and *inclusion* were searched for in thirty-nine Australian public universities' strategic plans and reconciliation action plans<sup>8</sup>, to determine whether such terms were used in the documents, and, if used, in what contexts they were used. The documents were usually available in a downloadable PDF form. When they were unavailable or not easily accessible on the website, the institutions' websites were searched using terms such as *goals*, *vision*, or *strategy*. Various forms of the words (e.g., *diversity*, *diverse*, or *diversify* and *inclusion* or *inclusive*) were also looked for. Whether the institutions provided the definition, or their meaning of diversity, was also noted.
2. The Australian institutions' (*Equity Diversity and Inclusion*) webpages were examined (where they existed) to see what groups are included in their (equity) diversity and inclusion statements, descriptions, plans, or efforts to make their university community more inclusive.
3. Institutions' websites were specifically searched for the words *intercultural/cross-cultural awareness* or *competence*, including if any of those word combinations were mentioned as graduate attributes. Examples of these are included as Appendix A.

The same process used in stages 1–3 was applied to search the websites of the selected international institutions. All relevant sentences and information at fourteen institutions were noted in a table form in a Word document. This information is included as Appendix B.

4. Any programs, activities, or resources that appeared to focus on intercultural awareness or intercultural engagement were identified and listed. Programs or activities offered by student clubs and societies were excluded because they are not usually run by the institution. Student exchange programs were also excluded because they do not take place in Australia as well as their being individual choice and experiences. Likewise, elective subjects/units offered at the university (e.g., intercultural communication in linguistics, international relations in business, etc.), were excluded because they are not offered as common or compulsory subjects and only those interested in these subjects enrol in and engage with the content.
5. Consultations were conducted with students at the University of Melbourne (n=36) and the University of New South Wales (n=10) to get a sense of students' perspectives, experiences, and definitions of diversity.

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<sup>8</sup> "A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a document that sets out an organisation's commitment to promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the broader Australian community" (Murrup Barak, <https://murrupbarak.unimelb.edu.au/engage/the-reconciliation-action-plan>)

# RESULTS

A summary of the results of all four stages is shown in Appendix C.

## HOW DO AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES DISCUSS DIVERSITY IN THEIR PUBLIC DOCUMENTS?

All universities publish a strategic plan or its equivalent (e.g., university's horizon, blueprint, or plan). The word *diversity* was found in 37 strategic plans or websites, with the University of New England and Batchelor Institute as the exceptions. Where *diversity* was found, the term was mostly used to describe their student or staff populations being diverse in terms of their age, ethnicity, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic backgrounds. For example, in the strategic plan of La Trobe University<sup>9</sup>, it said “[o]ur student body is highly diverse. Our students are school leavers, TAFE graduates, career changers, mature aged, from regional and remote communities, and drawn from many nations” (p.10). Similarly, the strategic plan of University of Queensland<sup>10</sup> stated “[w]e will build diversity and inclusivity within our community. Philanthropy will both boost our capacity for innovation and support our goal of increasing the diversity of our student community. We will aim for modest growth in total enrolments, with strong growth in diversity” (p. 4). In many cases, it was stated that institutions were diverse due to international students from many different countries. For instance, University of Adelaide<sup>11</sup> stated it is a culturally diversity student body that makes the university community diverse. It stated:

*A truly international university welcomes a student body representative of global diversity; international students enrich the social environment of the University, the city and the State. Awareness of, and respect for, diverse cultures, ethnicities, and geographies are foundations of civil society; a diverse student body contributes to the development of our students as global citizens with aspirations to experience, participate in, and influence, the global community. (University of Adelaide, 2019, p. 8)*

Only two institutions provided a definition of diversity. Deakin University stated:

*Diversity refers to all the differences we bring to study or work. It includes diversity of background, often in combination - such as gender, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, professional discipline, experience -as well as diversity of thinking approaches, educational and functional diversity. (Deakin University, 2020)*

Another institution which provided a *diversity* definition was Edith Cowan University. They cited the definition of *cultural diversity* provided by the Diversity Council Australia<sup>12</sup> as, “The variation between people in terms of how they identify on a range of dimensions including ancestry, ethnicity, ethno-religiosity, language, national origin, race, and/or religion”. However, the current webpage of the Diversity Council Australia<sup>13</sup> provides a different definition. It explains “[d]iversity is the mix of people in your organisation. Diversity refers to all the ways in which we differ (e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, education, gender, profession)”. The council also provides the definition of inclusion, as “[i]nclusion is getting this mix to work. Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people are respected, connected, progressing and contributing to organisational success” (n.p).

## HOW DO AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES SUPPORT DIVERSE COHORTS?

All universities but one have a dedicated website section of (equity,) diversity and inclusion. Gender equity or equality including LGBTIQ+ was included and people with disability were also all included. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds were sometimes included. On the websites of two G08 universities, diversity and inclusion were described only in terms of recruitment of staff and a workplace environment. When cultural diversity was mentioned in (equity) diversity and inclusion, this was often limited to acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, often without further mention of other cultures. Only 13 institutions included *language* or *linguistic* diversity in their inclusion webpages. While all universities have dedicated webpages for international students, which contain practical or administrative information, such as visa guidance, English language support, life on campus, and accommodation, the cohort are rarely included in universities' inclusion policies, statements, plans, or practices. Of the 13, only one institution (Charles Stuart University) specifically mentioned and included international students or domestic students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

9 La Trobe University. (2020). *Strategic plan 2020–30*. [https://www.latrobe.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1167193/2020-2030-Strategic-Plan.pdf](https://www.latrobe.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1167193/2020-2030-Strategic-Plan.pdf)

10 University of Queensland. (2021). *Strategic plan 2018–2021*. University of Queensland. [https://cms.qut.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/894066/qut-blueprint-6-final.pdf](https://cms.qut.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/894066/qut-blueprint-6-final.pdf)

11 University of Adelaide. (2019). *Strategic plan*. University of Adelaide. <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/vco/ua/media/30/strategic-plan.pdf>

12 Diversity Council Australia. (n.d.a). *Diversity & inclusion explained*. Diversity Council Australia. Retrieved October 21, 2021 from Edith Cowan University <https://www.ecu.edu.au/about-ecu/commitment-to-equality-and-diversity/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/cultural-and-linguistic-diversity>

13 Diversity Council Australia. (n.d.b). *Diversity & inclusion explained*. Diversity Council Australia. Retrieved October 21, 2021 from <https://www.dca.org.au/di-planning/diversity-inclusion-explained>

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and Victoria University were two exceptions with a separate *Multicultural Action Plan* and *Cultural Diversity Strategy* document provided respectively. In USQ's multicultural action plan, it included (1) short-term training programs for students from non-English speaking backgrounds, (2) developing and implementing cultural awareness programs for staff and students, (3) offering academic programs relating to cultural diversity challenges, (4) promoting and providing extra-curricular activities for international students to facilitate friendships and familiarity the university environment, and (5) developing and improving provision of the university's academic support information in languages other than English (University of Southern Queensland<sup>14</sup>). In Victoria University's cultural diversity strategy document<sup>15</sup>, four goals were stated especially for fostering intercultural engagement, advancing culturally inclusive initiatives, providing a harmonious and safe environment, and building meaningful partnerships to uplift diverse communities (Victoria University, n.d.).

## INTERCULTURAL LEARNING OR AWARENESS, OR INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

Terms such as *internalisation* or *global citizenship* were found in the initial search of graduate attribute statements. Terms relating to intercultural learning or awareness were found in 20 universities' websites. Likewise, *cross-cultural competence* was one of the nine graduate attributes found at CQ University, and cultural competence including intercultural knowledge and skills were described as what the university aims for all students and staff develop at Deakin University<sup>16</sup>.

## INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS

Having recorded the previous search results about intercultural/cross-cultural learning or awareness, or intercultural competence, we searched for programs (workshops, online training, activities, resources) relating to institutions' statements about diversity. Five institutions (James Cook University, Murdoch University, University of Southern Queensland, University of Sydney, and University of Wollongong) published information about their diversity-related programs or events for their students. These included both curricular and extracurricular examples, including an Intercultural Lab that collates over 20 undergraduate and 10 graduate coursework units, an extracurricular Global Citizenship Award, language exchange programs, and an intercultural competence online training course. Only one institution, Swinburne University of Technology, stated that intercultural themes were integrated into their curricula, but no further relevant information was provided.

Three institutions (Deakin University, Monash University, and University of Adelaide) had identifiable programs or events for both their students and staff. These programs included online training modules on cultural and diversity awareness and campaigns such as *Racism. It stops with me.* and *Diversity—More than we see*. Other examples included art exhibits and multicultural weeks and festivals.

For seven institutions (Edith Cowan University, Flinders University, Queensland University of Technology, University of New South Wales, University of Technology Sydney, University of the Sunshine Coast, and Victoria University), only staff-related offerings were visible. Examples were primarily resources or professional development, such as inclusive teaching toolkits and a range of online training modules, including on unconscious bias, inclusive teaching practice, and diversity awareness,

## STUDENT ROUNDTABLES

The student roundtables were conducted in October 2021 and included 46 students. The question schedule asked questions that probed their understanding of diversity — inviting them to offer their definition of diversity and to offer examples and observations from their own experience and of their peers about what universities do to facilitate intercultural engagement, what works and what doesn't, and how students think universities could improve.

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14 University of Southern Queensland. (n.d.). *Multicultural action plan 2017–2019*. University of Southern Queensland. <https://usq.edu.au/about-usq/values-culture/diversity-inclusion/multiculturalism>

15 Victoria University. (n.d.). *Cultural diversity strategy 2018–2021*. Victoria University. <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/university-profile/diversity-inclusion/cultural-diversity>

16 Deakin University. (2020). *Creating inclusive futures together: Diversity and inclusion strategy 2020–2025*. Deakin University. [https://www.deakin.edu.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/2308167/2021-March-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Strategy.pdf](https://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2308167/2021-March-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Strategy.pdf)

## UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

There was broad consensus amongst roundtable participants that diversity in the student and staff body is positive and valuable; however, students' understanding of what diversity means in the higher education context varies and has developed/changed over time. Some students recognise the change in their own conceptions of diversity since being in higher education. While they may have previously thought of diversity mainly in terms of ethnic or cultural backgrounds, they are more aware of different, less visible, forms of diversity at university, including socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Students recognise how these factors can impact on how they experience university life. Diversity of beliefs and opinions was also recognised to be an important aspect of higher education, but one that poses risk and challenges. Some students commented on a reluctance or fear to express views that are different to what they perceived to be the 'mainstream' or 'accepted' view.

The conceptualisation seems to be wider both that it (a) considers more variables and (b) includes behaviours and actions:

- a. Diversity is more than common identity markers like culture and gender. It considers sexuality, ideology, opinions, socioeconomic background, class, ability, neurodiversity, ideas, and changes to fundamental concepts (e.g., gender).
- b. Diversity not just as an adjective but also as a behaviour: acknowledging difference; making students feel included; the lack of discrimination, whether ethnic, age, cultural, etc.; feeling free to share views and perspectives; living in harmony; equal opportunity.

## DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Student roundtable participants indicated a belief that there are tangible and important benefits to engaging with diversity and diverse ideas while at university and were generally supportive of the inclusion of materials in the formal curriculum that reflect diverse perspectives. It was less common for students to consider diversity among the staff; most, but not all, focused on the student body. While students generally hold an expectation that healthy debate should exist at university, there was some disagreement as to whether controversial opinions can or should be shared in class. Some participants suggested that it is possible to share, while other participants indicated that to do so is uncomfortable, and the response to sharing 'opposing' ideas is extreme. Students perceived there to be a dominant way of thinking at university and noted that the roles such as tutors can be very influential. Participants reported being known to one another in the classroom environment as a supportive factor in engaging in discussion, and they noted that speaking up in class can be intimidating because of a range of variables; including gender, power dynamics, language, personality, confidence, and the attitude of their tutors.

## PERCEPTIONS OF BARRIERS TO INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

While students generally recognise the importance and benefit of engaging with people from diverse backgrounds, there remain numerous barriers and challenges to interacting with the 'other', and few students report interacting regularly (or outside of class) or with those from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds. When discussing barriers to inclusive engagement, some students referred to challenges associated with international students' language ability, but this was not as predominant a comment as represented in previous literature. Many participants felt that the onus should be on the university to create the environment, as well as opportunities, to foster intercultural connections amongst students. However, students noted that it is up to the individual to take advantage of what is offered. Students cited a range of barriers to inclusive engagement, many of which have been identified in previous literature; including perceived lack of interest from other students in forming friendships, structural, cultural, or personal barriers to getting to know classmates, and the challenges of interacting with others in the age of remote learning.

# CONCLUSION

This audit of publicly available information from Australian universities reveals that promoting ‘diversity and inclusion’ is espoused as being important goals for most, if not all universities. However, few define what this means, and there is little consistency in the activities that constitute ‘diversity’ across the Australian higher education sector. Our audit reveals a variety of programs to encourage intercultural engagement are offered, but only by some universities. In addition, the provision is mixed across the sector, including recruitment efforts, clubs and events, and supporting international students.

Moreover, our analysis of this publicly available information suggests that university strategies are mostly focused on ensuring diversity in demographic profile of staff and students, which is very important for structural diversity, but is not enough to ensure that frequent or effective inclusive engagement occurs. In addition, less is stated about other important dimensions of diversity that are important, such as graduate attributes, and which have the potential to benefit student development and the student experience, e.g., cross-cultural engagement in curriculum and university life. This is interesting, given the importance of being viewed as a university that is committed to diversity in the global student market.<sup>17</sup>

Our consultations with students revealed interesting insights into how diversity is understood. The discussions in the consultations clearly pointed to an immediate perception of diversity as relating to visible markers of difference, such as cultural and linguistic profiles, but gentle probing illuminated the range of ‘diversities’ that students were able to articulate, including less overt or visible forms of diversity, and multiple ways of viewing the world. In contrast to these nuanced insights, the students expressed views that their universities are jointly responsible with individuals to create the conditions for diversity to be valued, and for intercultural engagement to be prevalent. Students also seem to see tangible and important benefits to engaging with diverse people and ideas at university, but they suggested that more work is needed to improve the inclusiveness of their learning environments.

Universities may also benefit from considering students’ conceptualisations of diversity as not only categories of difference but as behaviours and descriptions of the environment. Focusing on what universities can do and how they can ensure inclusion might help progress efforts beyond vague aspirations and better facilitate genuinely inclusive engagement.

Overall, this audit illustrates the disparate approaches to diversity taken by Australian public universities. While the variety could be indicative of the rich diversity that exists in the higher education sector, it is also a reminder of the size and complexity of the task to achieve the goals and facilitate the educational benefits of diversity. While the consultations suggest some students are a receptive and encouraging audience for encouraging ongoing student engagement with diverse others in the curriculum and beyond, the challenges of creating the conditions for intercultural engagement are abundantly clear and require further exploration.

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<sup>17</sup> Dakka, F. (2020). Competition, innovation and diversity in higher education: Dominant discourses, paradoxes and resistance. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 41(1), 80–94.

# APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS OFFERED BY AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

## EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY COURSES OFFERED TO STUDENTS IN AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (REPORTED IN PUBLICLY AVAILABLE FORMAT)

- Deakin University has programs for students, such as training modules that students should take before they start their studies. The modules include cultural diversity awareness, inclusive language, and gender and disability awareness. There are also cultural diversity and inclusion campaigns on campus such as *Racism. It stops with me* and *Diversity- More than we see*.
- Monash University has *Intercultural Lab* in the Arts Faculty. On the Lab webpage, 20 undergraduate and 10 graduate coursework units are listed. Co-curricular programs are also available. Global Leadership Academy was a 2.5-day weekend workshop launched in 2019 as a collaborative pilot program between Monash University and Penn State University. In 2019 the workshop took place in Dandenong ranges in Australia with 50 students participating. Two self-directed online programs are offered to students. *Intercultural Competence for the Workplace* is a 3-hour self-directed online learning course. In the first semester of 2021, for example, about 200 students completed the course. *Connecting across Cultures- Becoming a Global Citizen* is a 2-hour self-directed online program including three sections on cultural awareness. Between last 2016 and early 2020 about 4,000 students completed the course.
- Murdoch University offers a language and cultural exchange program through which students can make friends, learn about different cultures, and develop cross-cultural understanding. Similarly, University of Wollongong has the *Global Communicators* program through which domestic and international students meet and have an hour session each week for 10 weeks.
- The University of the Sunshine Coast offers online diversity awareness training and 2-hour unconscious bias training for students.
- The University of Sydney has an extra-curricular program *Global Citizenship Award*. The program is designed to strengthen students' intercultural competencies, create international networks, maximise their overseas study and work experience, prepare to compete in global labour markets, and understand role as a global citizen. To complete the program, students are required to attend one of the influential leaders speaker series event, participate in six practical skills devilmint seminars, and achieve 100 citizenship in action points by doing internships or volunteer work, participating in conferences and mentor program, and taking courses in culture/language.

## EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY COURSES OFFERED TO STAFF MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (REPORTED IN PUBLICLY AVAILABLE FORMAT)

- Deakin University have a diversity and inclusion task force committee in each of the four faculties and the committee organise training and capacity building for their teaching staff. Themes covered in the training includes intercultural awareness, unconscious bias, and belonging and inclusion of international students.
- Edith Cowan University offers two 2-hour online workshops in teaching and learning: *Providing Education to Overseas Students* and *Inclusive Education Learning Community*.
- Flinders University offers a one-off workshop on the *Cultural Intelligence Professional Development* in 2019. The workshop consisted of a teaching and professional staff panel of five sharing their experiences from interaction with international students. There were comments from the staff attendees, about 40, and their experience was also shared. There was an art exhibition the *Frame* held in 2019 where 20 international students' photos and self-reflective stories of moving and living in Australia were presented for the South Australian Living Artists Festival.
- Queensland University of Technology provides self-paced online programs as parts of their professional and executive education: *Including Education- Essential Knowledge for Success* (2-hours, free) and *Inclusive education- Core Concepts and Essential Knowledge* (4 weeks, paid extended module with a fee of \$275.80).
- University of the Sunshine Coast has cultural diversity and inclusive practice toolkit which includes designing culturally inclusive learning and teaching spaces information folio for teaching staff.
- University of Technology Sydney offers *Unconscious Bias Training* and *Cultural Diversity Training*. They are all half day on campus training and have been offered since 2019. *Unconscious Bias Training* has a focus on race and gender. *Cultural diversity training* focusses on introspective reflections, taking a cultural humility approach, giving attendees an opportunity reflecting on their own culture, biases, and prejudices. It is designed to lead people to recognise different ways of understanding, so they can deal with diversity in a more open-minded way. It is offered once per semester and there are usually 10 to 15 attendees. It is also offered at a team or unit's request at the university.
- Victoria University provides resources on intercultural engagement and cultural diversity for teaching staff on the website including intercultural approach to learning and teaching, culturally inclusive learning and learning, and tips. It holds a *Multicultural Week* each year and events such as a Mooncake Festival, a Multicultural Trivia Night, and an origami session are organised.

# APPENDIX B: DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS OF SAMPLE INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA

Fourteen sample universities' websites were searched for the same terms (i.e., diversity, inclusion, intercultural-, and intercultural programs) used in our search of the Australian institutions. A selection of institutions was based on results of a research project conducted by the Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education on international student engagement<sup>18</sup>. The report includes four universities in Canada, one in Ireland, four in the United Kingdom, and three in the United States, and those universities' websites were searched except that two universities in Canada (i.e., University of Toronto with over 95,00 students and University of British Columbia with over 68,000 students) were replaced with McMaster University and University of Alberta due to their much large student numbers compared to most Australian universities. In addition, two representative universities in Hong Kong and Singapore were added.

Table 1 shows:

- The student numbers and international student numbers of each institution
- Whether the terms *diversity*, *inclusion*, and *intercultural awareness or competence* were mentioned in their website
- Whether they offer any relevant programs to students.

**TABLE 1. DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA**

Country	Institution	No of students	Diversity	Inclusion	Inter-cultural	Program/s
		No of international students				
Canada	McGill University	39,736 12,108 (30%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	McMaster University	33,147 4,400 (13%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Alberta	40,061 9,036 (23%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Saskatchewan	25,900 3,100 (12%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hong Kong	University of Hong Kong	31,844 11,508* (36%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ireland	University College Dublin	33,321 8,500 (26%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Singapore	National University of Singapore	47,200 unavailable	✓	✓	✓	✓
United Kingdom <sup>19</sup>	De Montfort University	29,000 2,700 (9%)	✓	✓		
	Nottingham Trent University	35,785 unavailable	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Nottingham	34,840 9,000 (25%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Warwick	26,825 9,500 (35%)	✓	✓	✓	
United States	North Carolina State University	36,042 884** (2.5%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Minnesota	43,467 5,927 (14%)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	University of Wisconsin-Madison	46,030 7,102*** (15%)	✓	✓	✓	✓

\*The term non-local was used on the website.

\*\*The term non-resident aliens was used on the website.

\*\*\*The term non-citizen students was used on the website.

18 Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education. (2020). *International student engagement*. Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne.

19 Total student numbers at all four universities in the UK were drawn from Higher Education Statistics Agency (n.d.).

The terms *diversity*, *inclusion*, and *intercultural*- were all found on all fourteen universities' websites except for the term *intercultural*- on the De Montfort University website. Programs or events offered to students were found in all excluding De Montfort University and University of Nottingham in the UK.

## EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY PROGRAMS OFFERED BY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

In Canada, McGill University offers the *Buddy Program* which pairs new international students with current students. University of Saskatchewan runs three programs. Through the *Collaborative Online International Learning* an instructor at the university can work a partner instructor from an international institution. This program is provided to enrich teaching and learning experience both for faculty and students. *Introduction to Intercultural Communication* is self-guided 8-10-hour online course. It is a non-credit course designed for students. The program's six modules include 1) introduction to culture, 2) facilitating self-reflection on participants' cultural identity, 3) providing tools to understand the different characteristics and understandings within cultures, 4) examining ways that cultural immersion can lead to transition shock and how to mitigate and manage these experiences, 5) reflecting on intercultural communication competencies and how these can be further developed in participants, and 6) reflecting on an intercultural experience with the content learned throughout the course. The university also has the *Buddy Program*. McMaster University offers three programs. *Virtual Global Learning* is an instructional model where students are given collaborative tasks in partnership with students from other organizations outside Canada. For example, assignments or learnings can be demonstrated in text, audio, image, or video. It also has *International Student Buddy Program* as well as *International Students Socials*. The Socials program includes cooking with friends, cultural night, hot drinks and speed meeting, and McMaster's got talent: International students edition.

University of Alberta's *Certificate in International Learning* (CIL) offered to students is worth noting for its tightly designed content and activities required. It aims to learn how to thrive in culturally diverse and global contexts through meeting other internationally minded students. There are five requirements to complete. First, students need to take 3-hour online orientation. Second, students need to take CIL-approved academic courses at least from two different disciplines (e.g., World Prehistory, Topics in Asian Anthropology, Interculturalism and East Asian Music, Language(s) of Culture, Global Critical Race Theory, Introduction to Cinema, etc.). Third, students need to obtain intercultural experience either going abroad more than 6 weeks, working in a cross-cultural environment for more than 100 hours, or living in the International House for more than one year. Fourth, students need to get enough co-curricular and communication points and this can be done by completing two of the following: 1) earning co-curricular activity points by attending or organising globally-focused events on campus, serving as an executive members of an internationally-oriented, students' union-registered student group, or volunteering for select programs with UAlberta International, 2) gaining second language competence, or 3) completing 15-hour intercultural communication training. The last requirement is to complete a capstone project which requires a 1000-1500 words essay reflecting on what students learned from this certificate course. To University of Alberta's CIL program in particular, an email enquiry was sent, and responses were provided. The program began to offer in 2013 and as of November 2021, 498 students have graduated with the CIL. They had 15 students graduating with the CIL in the academic year 2013-2014, for example, but the numbers increased to 99 students in the 2020-2021 academic year. A mix of domestic and international students participates. Of the 355 current enrolments, 250 are domestic students (70 per cent) and 105 are international students (30 per cent).

One institution closely examined in Ireland was University College Dublin. It has the *Intercultural Development Programme* run by its Graduate Business School. It aims to develop key 21st century skills. It is offered for two terms and certification is given upon completion. Topics covered in the programme includes managing time/task, developing intercultural/global competence, communicating cross-culturally, working in teams, managing conflict, working in virtual teams, and enhancing global career prospects. They also offered *Buddy Programme* which links incoming international, graduate students with the local university alumni, upon their arrival. In the UK, University of Warwick's equity, diversity and inclusion division offered online programs including unconscious bias, inclusive language and communications, and challenging inappropriate behaviours, and also cultural awareness

and understanding race bias. Nottingham Trent University has programs such as global week, global employability award, and global languages. *Global Week* is a week during which people can showcase their culture or global issues. *Global Employability Award* is a certificate course through which students can develop international related skills and experience. *Global Languages* is a program through which students can practise speaking different languages with other students three days a week.

In the US, three institutions were examined: North Carolina State University, University of Minnesota, and University of Wisconsin-Madison. North Carolina State University provides online training programs on the topics of diversity and managing bias both for staff and students. *Applied Cultural Identity*, offered to students, is a 2-hour workshop on the foundations of diversity, equity, and inclusion learning. Especially for undergraduate students, an online *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Students* module is offered. Key topics covered in the module include identity, selfhood, imposter syndrome, identity transitions, power, privilege, oppression, bias, respect, allyship, and self-care. University of Minnesota twin cities campus offers their staff *Global Programs and Strategy Alliance* especially related to teaching. A 2-hour interactive workshop is run to learn and practise intercultural facilitation technique, and explore, share, and practise activities that broaden student engagement, integration, and interaction. A day conference *Leap into Global Learning* is held every 2 years. Also *Teaching in Globally Diverse Classes Certificate* program is available. It is 10-hour self-paced readings, reflections, short pre- and post- surveys plus 12-contact hour core and elective workshops and webinars. At University of Wisconsin-Madison *Culturally Competent Practices for Working with Students of Colour and Cultural Diversity Awareness* training for research mentors are available, both of which appear to offer at request. For students, *Graduate Students Diversity* training is offered online focusing on diversity, inclusion, and other new initiatives. Also *Graduate Assistants Equity Workshops* focus on diversity, discrimination, and harassment, and they are offered to teaching assistants, research assistants, and project assistants. An annual diversity forum to discuss, share, and learn about contemporary issues on diversity and inclusion has been held for 20 years at the university.

In Hong Kong, the University of Hong Kong was examined. Their *Common Core* program requires all undergraduate students to take common core courses and complete 36 credits courses (i.e., 6 subjects), so it is compulsory. There are four areas and students need to take at least one but no more than two courses from each area: 1) Science, Technology and Big Data, 2) Arts and Humanities, 3) Global Issues, and 4) China: Culture, State and Society. In the area of *Science, Technology, and Big Data*, for example, courses include Understanding Climate Change, Women in Science, the Age of Big Data. In the area of *Arts and Humanities* include Sexuality and Gender: Diversity and Society, Art and Ideas: East and West, and Critical Thinking in Contemporary Society. In the area of *Global Issues* courses include Globalisation and Migration, the Life and Death of Languages: Diversity, Identity, and Globalisation, and Think globally, Act Local: You, Hong Kong and the World. Lastly, in the area of *China: Culture, State and Society* courses include Social Development: China, Asian and the World, Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought, and Arts, Science and Artefacts in Chinese Cultural Heritage.

In Singapore, National University of Singapore was examined. Their focus is on student exchange programs. Various student exchange programs are available including short study trips, summer and winter programs to non-traditional destination in East Asia, Europe, and Latin America, and a semester-length exchange program to over 300 partner universities in more than 400 countries. They also provide *Global Internship* through which students can gain work experience while they are on exchange programs.

# APPENDIX C: RESULTS FROM INITIAL DESKTOP RESEARCH

TABLE 2. INITIAL DESK TOP RESEARCH OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN AUSTRALIA

No.	Institution	State	Strategic plan	Reconciliation action plan	Diversity in the strategic plan	Diversity definition	International students/ linguistic diversity in Diversity and Inclusion	Intercultural competence	Intercultural program	
									For students	For staff
1	Australian Catholic University	Multi-state	✓	✓	✓					
2	Australian National University	ACT	✓	✓	✓					
3	Batchelor Institute*	NT								
4	Charles Darwin University	NT		✓	✓					
5	Charles Sturt University	NSW	✓	✓			✓			
6	CQ University	QLD	✓	✓	✓			✓		
7	Curtin University	WA	✓	✓	✓			✓		
8	Deakin University	VIC	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
9	Edith Cowan University	WA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
10	Federation University Australia	VIC	✓	✓	✓					
11	Flinders University	SA	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
12	Griffith University	QLD	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
13	James Cook University	QLD	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
14	La Trobe University	VIC	✓		✓					
15	Macquarie University	NSW	✓	✓	✓					
16	Monash University	VIC	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Murdoch University	WA	✓	✓	✓				✓	
18	Queensland University of Technology	QLD	✓		✓					✓
19	RMIT University	VIC	✓	✓	✓			✓		
20	Southern Cross University	NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		

21	Swinburne University of Technology	VIC	✓	✓	✓	✓			
22	University of Adelaide	SA	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
23	University of Canberra	ACT	✓	✓	✓		✓		
24	University of Melbourne	VIC	✓	✓	✓		✓		
25	University of New England	NSW	✓	✓					
26	University of New South Wales	NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
27	University of Newcastle	NSW	✓	✓	✓				
28	University of Notre Dame Australia	WA	✓		✓				
29	University of Queensland	QLD	✓	✓	✓				
30	University of South Australia	SA	✓	✓	✓				
31	University of Southern Queensland	QLD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
32	University of Sydney	NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
33	University of Tasmania	TAS	✓	✓	✓				
34	University of Technology Sydney	NSW	✓	✓	✓				✓
35	University of the Sunshine Coast	QLD	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
36	University of Western Australia	WA	✓	✓	✓	✓			
37	University of Wollongong	NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
38	Victoria University	VIC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
39	Western Sydney University	NSW	✓	✓	✓		✓		

\*Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education is the only dual-sector university in Australia specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.