HIGHER EDUCATION PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM (HEPPP) 2016

The Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) aims to ensure that Australians from low SES backgrounds who have the ability to study at university have the opportunity to do so.

HEPPP provides funding to assist universities listed in "TABLE A" of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds, as well as improving the retention and completion rates of those students.

CQUNI HEPPP 2016 GRANT FUNDING

CQUniversity Australia (CQUni) HEPPP grants are for initiatives that increase access to and participation in higher education by domestic undergraduate students from low SES backgrounds, and that support the retention, success and attainment of those students. This can include activities that target low SES students who are also Indigenous students, students from regional and remote locations, students with disability, women in non–traditional areas, or students from non–English speaking backgrounds.

In 2016, CQUniversity received funding of $5.3 million and used this grant funding to deliver 19 projects – the following pages provide a synopsis of these projects.

For more information about how CQUniversity engages with equity students through HEPPP grant initiatives, please contact Lindy Smith, CQUni HEPPP Projects Coordinator on 07 4150 7111 or email HEPPP@cqu.edu.au

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
CQUni HEPPP Coordination	The CQUni HEPPP Coordination project is responsible for the overarching coordination, evaluation and strategic direction of all CQUniversity HEPPP projects to ensure they meet Australian Government funding and reporting requirements, and improve access to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes ensuring HEPPP Project Coordinators are well supported, and that all HEPPP Projects have the support, advice, training, tools and resources needed to deliver on agreed project outcomes, on time and within budget. The Project is responsible for annual reporting to the Australian Government on the effectiveness of the money spent; in particular, how it aligns with national guidelines and how it supports outcomes for disadvantaged students. It also works with the Financial Services Division to monitor CQUniversity HEPPP Projects' forecasted expenditure, provide monthly financial reports, and works with projects to progress initiatives and outcomes. The Project also provides advice and direction to CQUniversity senior management about the most effective use and allocation of Australian Government HEPPP funding within the CQUniversity context.	Student Experience and Governance	Lindy Smith	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Ethics and Evaluation	The HEPPP Ethics and Evaluation project will facilitate the ethical application and evaluation process for defined HEPPP projects for 2016. A key element for HEPPP projects is to embed an effective, research informed evaluation process. The aim of the Ethics and Evaluation Project is to assess the accuracy and effectiveness of HEPPP projects for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, as defined by the Australian Government for HEPPP.	Higher Education	Mary McLeod	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Student Equity Program	The Student Equity Program delivers targeted assistance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring they are adequately supported to transition to, and participate in, higher education and attain a tertiary qualification. This includes scholarships and financial assistance. Managed by the Inclusion and Accessibility Service, the Program is responsible for: • administering all HEPPP-funded scholarships and financial assistance, as well as the Indigenous Commonwealth Scholarship Program • the CQUni Connect Program – implementing a tailored transition program for school leavers entering CQUniversity in 2016 directly from high schools in Central Queensland that have partnered with the CQUniversity Widening Participation Program • the Disability Support Program – providing educational support (including reasonable adjustments) to students with disability at CQUniversity, implementing strategies to attract and support students living with disability, and raising awareness among CQUniversity academic staff of inclusive teaching practices and disability services for students.	Student Experience and Governance	Cate Rooney	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
Student Mentors and Leadership Program	Student Mentors support students in their transition to CQUniversity, foster opportunities for peer contact outside of curriculum activities and help build a sense of belonging to the University. Student Mentors model professional and supportive behaviours and promote success by delivering timely information at key, staged points in the life cycle of a first year student. The aim is for students who are being mentored to be welcomed into an engaged learning community from a peer who can relate to the plethora of challenges (particularly those experienced by students from disadvantaged groups) that can be faced during the first year transition, and have access to personal learning journeys that will inspire and motivate. The engagement with Student Mentors will contribute to the likelihood of success by extending and enhancing the support services offered. They are equipped to: • provide information about CQUniversity support services such as disability assistance, scholarships and other forms of financial support, referrals for course and program advice, and academic assistance through the Academic Learning Centre • recommend wellness and wellbeing strategies, study skills, and support provided by Indigenous Engagement Officers and the English Language Centre • help with student systems and general advice on where to go for assistance. Student Mentors build new students' confidence to access available services and engage with peers and staff for assistance.	Student Experience and Governance	Rachel Lamb	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Widening Participation Program	The Widening Participation Program raises and supports the career aspirations of school students from disadvantaged backgrounds to consider post-school pathways through university or TAFE. Engagement with students in primary and junior secondary years focuses on awareness of aspirations, strengths and personal values; understanding of occupations and careers; and building students' capacity to navigate multiple pathways. Students participate in a range of self-reflection and group activities to develop a sound awareness of pathways from high school to university, and university to the workforce. The Program also aims to assist senior secondary students to build practical tertiary education readiness skills to improve their understanding and expectations of university and VET pathways. The CQUni Connect Program – a joint initiative between the Widening Participation Program and the Inclusion and Accessibility Service – offers guidance to Year 12 students transitioning to CQUniversity from Widening Participation cluster schools. This includes orientation and scholarship advice, ongoing support throughout the first term, and the opportunity to join the Reach Out Central Queensland Program (ROC-Q) in their second, third and fourth years.	Student Experience and Governance	Melinda Mann-Yasso	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
UCROO (Student Social Networking)	UCROO is a secure social network that aims to improve engagement and retention for low SES students, particularly those in regional and remote locations. UCROO gives students a platform to connect with their classmates and lecturers. It has three main aspects: social, selling and study. Since the launch of UCROO in 2015, student engagement and interaction on the platform has continued to gain momentum. UCROO is quickly developing into a thriving online community, with over 50,000 contributions to the network by both students and staff. Distance students gain the following benefits from UCROO: • Access to Student Mentor groups. • Use of online study groups and support. • Access to student services via dedicated web pages. • Connectivity and engagement with the University via University Feed. • The ability to buy and sell textbooks within the UCROO Marketplace. • A safe environment, exclusive to CQUniversity students, which is monitored for bullying and abuse. With nearly 10,000 CQUniversity students based in regional and remote locations, UCROO provides a valuable engagement platform. With this in mind, UCROO aims to see 10,000 students signed up to the platform, interacting and connecting with their University, in 2016.	Student Experience and Governance	Sarah Pierce	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Inherent Requirements	The Inherent Requirements project will work with internal and external stakeholders to construct CQUniversity's inherent requirements and embed these requirements into CQUniversity processes and policies. This will help ensure students understand the requirements of their program on enrolment and can prepare to satisfy these requirements throughout their degree.	Higher Education	Denise Wood	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Succeed at CQUniversity	CQUniversity has unacceptably high levels of student attrition, in many cases owing to ineffective transition of first year students. Students from low SES backgrounds (and students from other disadvantaged backgrounds) are most vulnerable to transition issues, as they do not have the same frame of reference for university life as students from higher socio-economic backgrounds. The Succeed at CQUniversity project aims to improve first year student transition through proactive intervention with new students, including directly linking them to existing support services.	Student Experience	Elizabeth Hamilton	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
Student Alumni Mentoring Program	The Student Alumni Mentoring Program is a joint project between CQUniversity Development and Alumni Relations Directorate and the Careers section of the Student Experience Directorate. This Program will bring students from low SES backgrounds together with alumni in purposeful, mutually rewarding relationships, using an online platform to introduce students to alumni from different class years, programs and industries, who come from similar backgrounds to their own. The platform enables online self-matching and free phone calls to connect participants from across the world to provide and receive advice and mentoring, to and from the right person, no matter the location.	Engagement and Campuses	Anthea Cuddihy	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME)	Access to higher education remains a key pathway to redressing entrenched socio-economic disadvantage. Research argues that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students face specific personal and academic challenges within the higher education system, and access to social, financial and academic support is imperative if they are to succeed at university. The Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) is a successful national outreach program that helps Indigenous students progress onto higher education. The Project is designed to build self-confidence and pride in being Indigenous and develop aspirations to graduate from Year 12 and go on to further education or employment. AIME will engage high school students from Years 7–12 in Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Gladstone and Mackay. Students will learn about higher education and career opportunities, and access free tutoring support. The Project will also engage university students who will be trained as mentors. They will receive focused leadership, cultural training, and a unique opportunity to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Higher Education	Marina Mikecz	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Community Aspirations Program (CAP-ED)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are one of the lowest represented groups in the higher education sector. The Community Aspirations Program (CAP-ED) aims to demystify CQUniversity, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can gain the skills needed to transition into higher education. CAP-ED provides short sessions that are practical, inspiring and focus on identity and culture. By developing a relationship with participants, CAP-ED builds self-confidence to achieve personal goals and further develop opportunities in tertiary education or employment. The Program will also host information sessions and network events to encourage discussion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders within their local communities.	Higher Education	Tasha Lamey	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
Indigenisation of the Curriculum	The Indigenisation of the Curriculum project aims to create change within the tertiary education landscape by embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, issues and perspectives into the curriculum and teaching practices. This enables Indigenous students to feel as though their knowledge systems are valued, giving university education direct relevance. The Project will: • develop and undertake a University-wide strategy that incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge within CQUniversity's course design framework, accreditation and evaluation process, according to the 'both-ways' pedagogical framework • train academic staff in Indigenous cultural competency, supporting the development of appropriate learning resources, teaching methods and assessment strategies • provide advice on incorporating Indigenous methodologies and 'ways of knowing' into research methodology.	Higher Education	Ryan Al-Natour	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Accessible Online Delivery	The Accessible Online Delivery Project uses an evidence-based approach to designing and redeveloping online courses to suit the needs of a diverse student population, including those students from low SES backgrounds. By considering usability, accessibility and analysis of data, the project will facilitate the development of a framework, guidelines and prototype usability testing system application, which is embedded in learning management systems such as Moodle. This will provide academics with an integrated process to design online curricula that can be adapted to suit individual student accessibility needs.	Higher Education	Renette Viljoen	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Retention Follow-Up and Return to Study	The Retention Follow-Up and Return to Study project aims to address high levels of attrition from CQUniversity programs through a follow-up phone survey of all students who withdrew, failed to re-enrol, transferred or were precluded over a three-year period, and provide opportunities for former students to return, with steady and flexible support to increase their chances of success. The outcomes will inform the development of a CQUniversity retention and success strategy that addresses the key factors contributing to continuing high levels of attrition, with a specific focus on students from low SES backgrounds (or who represent any one or more of the specified special equity groups).	Higher Education	Robyn Bailey	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
VET Undergraduate Students Transition to University	The VET Undergraduate Students Transition to University project will address the urgent need to improve pathways for Vocational Education and Training (VET) students from low SES backgrounds (and other disadvantaged backgrounds) into higher education programs, with a particular focus on students transitioning from VET to undergraduate programs at a regional university. It will establish a process to identify and monitor transitioning students and, through an action research approach, identify the enablers and barriers to their success. This will help to develop guidelines on effective strategies for supporting transitioning students.	Higher Education	Jeni Richardson	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
Supporting Students' Assessment Success (SSAS)	The SSAS project will benefit disadvantaged students, including those identified as low SES, by: • consulting with these students to identify obstacles around assessment within current course structures that may limit their abilities to succeed • improving assessment design and providing students with better assessment resources • increasing CQUniversity faculty knowledge and skills around the design of quality assessment to promote best practice, in partnership with Learning and Teaching Services. It therefore supports HEPPP's objective that Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds have the opportunity to access and successfully complete tertiary studies, as assessment non-submission, failure, and/or underperformance often limit the success of these students (Long, Ferrier, & Heagney, 2006). This Project also aligns with the Critical Interventions Framework (Naylor, Baik & James, 2013), as it explicitly looks at how assessment is positioned and enacted within course structures to identify changes that may benefit disadvantaged student groups. In addition to these students benefiting from an assessment model designed with their specific needs in mind, they will also recognise that their voices are heard and valued, which can be an empowering experience in and of itself.	Higher Education	Joanne Dargusch	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Preparation for Success in Health	The Preparation for Success in Health project is a short, non-award course designed to give students in Years 10-12 an authentic experience of university life, as well as study, writing and researching skills, and maths application, all through a health context. The course also links students to academics and support staff in the University, provides information about scholarships, and links to possible further fields of study. The Project helps to build the skills of students from disadvantaged groups' skills so they feel more capable of attending university. It demystifies university, so students can see it as an achievable option. It highlights the appropriate avenues to seek help, so students feel supported to pursue further education (DIICCSRTE, 2013). In addition, the Project aims to open up discussions around aspirations and belonging. It allows students to feel connected to the University, and helps them connect with academic and support staff (DIICCSRTE, 2013).	Higher Education	Rebecca Shields	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔

Project name	Project description	Project Management Division	Project Coordinator	Intended target audience					
				Students from low socio-economic backgrounds	Indigenous students	Students from regional and remote locations	Students with disability	Women in non-traditional areas	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
Retention and Support Strategies for Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Project	The WIL project helps disadvantaged students to develop professional skills through an online Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placement system. This system is being rolled out across the University and will help ensure the quality of the student placement experience. Feedback on the quality of placements will ensure students are provided with a range of authentic experiences that will effectively prepare them for the workplace. Industry Placement Officers and academic staff report that disadvantaged students experience significant anxiety prior to participating in placement activities. Students have also reported that they are not aware of the time needed to complete the mandatory pre-placement requirements. This project will benefit these students by providing them with resources and support designed to prepare them for placement, and to address their concerns regarding placement.	Higher Education	Robyn Donovan	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔
Communication Hub	Students from non-English speaking backgrounds often struggle to study in a foreign language and adjust to a new institution and different academic culture. Although just as capable as their Australian classmates, they often have a higher failure rate and tend to be under-represented at the higher end of the grade scale. The CQUniversity Communication Hub will provide time, space and resources to help students overcome language barriers that affect reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, all of which can have a negative impact on involvement in lectures, completion of assignments and success in exams. Issues caused by cultural differences in students' first year at university will also be addressed.	Industry, Vocational Training and Access Education	Valerie Cleary	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔