

FIRST NATIONS WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2020-2025



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1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

1.1 We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work and learn. We pay respect to the First Nations Peoples and their Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities are also respectfully referred to within this strategy as Indigenous Australians, First Australians and First Nations Peoples.



2 CONTEXT

- 2.1 CQUniversity has a long-term commitment to, and involvement in, the education and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout its many campuses, study hubs, study centres and local communities ([CQUniversity Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#)). As such, the University will continue to cultivate positive relationships with First Nations people and take a leadership role by maintaining and further growing its First Nations workforce. The intention is to reach the national parity rate of a minimum of three per cent employment, as identified by the Australian government and Universities Australia (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew and Kelly, 2012, Universities Australia, 2017).
- 2.2 This First Nations Workforce Strategy is a whole-of-university approach aimed to reflect parity across the geographic and demographic catchments of the University's national footprint (Behrendt et al., 2012). This will be achieved through targeted recruitment, professional development and retention in all employment categories and levels. This Strategy strives for significant outcomes of social and economic benefits for First Nations trainees, employees, alumni, and communities. In turn, the University will be positioned as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

3 FIRST NATIONS WORKFORCE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.1 First Nations Workforce Strategy Framework



3.1 The First Nations Workforce Strategy Framework consists of four key components ([Figure 1.1](#)) - pre-employment training, recruitment, culturally safe and supportive work environment and reporting. Each component is further divided into intent, key performance indicators and actions that have been derived from the analysis of employee data as illustrated in [Figures 2.1 to 2.3](#) and [Tables 3.1 to 3.6](#).

Our strategic alignment

- 3.2 The CQUniversity [Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#), and the Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Strategy 2020-2022 are key documents that inform and enable the enactment of this Strategy. [Figure 1.2](#) shows the alignment of this Strategy to these above strategies, as well other important CQUniversity documents.

Figure 1.2 Hierarchy of Strategies



Our commitment

- 3.3 CQUniversity will listen and respond to First Nations employees' voices through the development of systems, strategies and opportunities for Indigenous employees to influence governance and policy. The University will encourage and enable Indigenous Australian employees to be engaged broadly, to contribute beyond their immediate responsibilities and to be acknowledged for these efforts. It will recognise the value that these contributions make in addressing systemic racism and ensure that the workforce embodies a richness of culture and diversity, which enhances successful employment experiences and fulfilling careers.
- 3.4 CQUniversity will exert significant effort to provide a culturally safe and supportive workplace environment that respects and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique sense of identity, distinct belief systems and cultural traditions. First Nations Cultural Competency training offers an opportunity for University employees to deepen their understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions and culture and reflect this in personal cultural competency. As an institution, the University will take responsibility and accountability in meeting these targets, reviewing programs and regularly reporting (Indigenous Student Assistant Grants Guidelines, 2017).
- 3.5 CQUniversity's vision and core values include a commitment to engagement, openness, and inclusiveness, significant drivers for providing employment opportunities and connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (CQUni Strategic Plan 2019-2023). Ultimately, the Strategy works as a road map, providing direction, motivation, and specific purpose to CQUniversity's intent for becoming Australia's most accessible, supportive and engaged university (CQUni Strategic Plan 2019-2023).

Our principles

- 3.6 The University has adopted the following **RISE** principles to underpin the First Nations Workforce Strategy.
- Respect** - policies and practices reflect recognition and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledges, communities, and people.
- Inclusion** – CQUniversity encourages First Nations expression and voice and recognises the talent and knowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to the University.
- Safe and supportive** – CQUniversity provides a culturally safe, and supportive workplace environment that enables successful employment experiences, nurtures fulfilling careers and supports a workplace environment that is free of discrimination and systemic racism.
- Equity and employment** - CQUniversity recruits, develops and retains First Nations people across Australia as an integral part of its commitment to inclusiveness, engagement and to becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Data summary

3.7 This table summarises the characteristics of the Indigenous workforce at University from 2015 to 2019. These statistics have been updated and analysed, following the adoption of the Beyond COVID-19 CQUniversity's Recovery Plan and 2020 Full Change Proposal.

Table 1 Summary of CQUni Indigenous employment data

	PRIORITY AREAS	FINDINGS
1.	Our participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of December 2020, the First Nations workforce at CQUniversity was 1.63 per cent of total employee numbers. Our target is a minimum of 3 per cent.
2.	Academic, research, professional and VET employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous academics and researchers make up 1.06 per cent of the academic and research workforce, with the majority of employees employed at Academic level A. Indigenous vocational education and training (VET) employees make up 0.69 per cent of the VET workforce. Indigenous professional employees make up 2.15 per cent of the professional workforce, with the majority of employees employed in HEW 4 to 6.
3.	Employment status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Indigenous employee employment status statistics show an increase of 14 Indigenous employees employed in continuing and fixed-term positions between 2015 and 2019. Due to the 2020 University restructure, this number was reduced from 56 First Nations employees in 2019 to 29 First Nations employees in December 2020. In 2015 Indigenous employees comprised 2.27 per cent of continuing positions, compared to 1.26 per cent in 2020. In 2015 Indigenous employees comprised 2.1% of fixed-term positions, compared to an increase of 3.1 per cent in 2020.
4.	Gender and age profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominantly female employees (79.3 per cent) in 2020. 50 to 59-year-old employees occupy the largest employee segment in 2020, with the 20 to 29-year-old age cohort occupying the smallest employee segment.
5.	Retention and employee turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The retention rate of Indigenous employees between 2015 to 2018 had been relatively stable at 90 per cent. 2019 saw an 11 per cent decrease in the retention rate from the previous year, and an increased turnover rate of 8.7 per cent. Due to the University restructure the retention rate for Indigenous employees in 2020 is 60 per cent, with a corresponding turnover rate of 40 per cent.

Our key result areas and key performance indicators

Table 2 Key result areas (KRA) and key performance indicators (KPI)

Key Result Areas	Intent	Key Performance Indicators	Actions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibilities	Investment
1. Pre-employment Training											
1.1	Develop a one-two year traineeship program for First Nation students.	Trainees to be engaged throughout all areas of CQUniversity.	Recruitment and funding options will be investigated.	N/A	3	3	3	3	3	All sections Supported by: Office of Indigenous Engagement and People and Culture Directorate	Co-funded or externally funded. ¹
1.2	Identify research opportunities for University final year Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate students to be employed in research assistant roles.	Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate students to be employed as research assistants in respective schools and departments.	Schools to identify opportunities for recruiting Indigenous students into research roles.	N/A	2	3	3	3	3	Office of Indigenous Engagement, Directors of Research Centers and Institutes, Deputy Deans Learning and Teaching and Deputy Deans Research	Salary to be funded through research projects.
1.3	Create employment pathways for Indigenous Research Higher Degree (RHD) students.	Promote the appointment of Indigenous RHD students to Schools to become sessional academics and researchers.	Schools to identify opportunities for recruiting Indigenous RHD students into learning and teaching or research activities.	N/A	1	1	1	1	1	Office of Indigenous Engagement, Directors of Research Centers and Institutes, Deputy Deans Learning and Teaching and Deputy Deans Research	Schools to appoint and fund as required from a casual pool.

¹ These targets are dependent upon COVID-19 restrictions and government funding

Key Result Areas	Intent	Key Performance Indicators	Actions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibilities	Investment
2. Recruitment											
2.1	Create a First Nations Employment Officer role to coordinate the First Nations Workforce Strategy.	Recruitment of First Nations Employment Officer based in People and Culture Directorate.	Incorporate into existing People and Culture Directorate positions and review to determine the requirement for a new position to be established in 2023.	2020 - Ongoing						People and Culture Directorate - HR Business Partnership and Strategy	HEW 6 at 0.5 ISSP funds 2020 and 2021, then General Operating Funds.
2.2	Review the recruitment and selection procedure to ensure it is responsive to the First Nations Workforce Strategy.	All recruitment and selection practices to be reviewed.	Vacant positions to be advertised through social or print media and internal and professional networks.	2020 - Ongoing						First Nations Employment Officer and People and Culture Directorate.	No cost - As per policy review schedule.
2.3	Provide further employment opportunities for Indigenous people who have participated in traineeship and internship programs.	Promote and appoint Indigenous people to vacancies where appropriate within the University	Targeted support prior to completion of the traineeship program, which leads to the mentoring / support network (KRA 3.5)	2021 – Ongoing						First Nations Employment Officer and People and Culture Directorate. Supported by Office of Indigenous Engagement.	No cost.
2.4	Increase the number of identified continuing positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Schools and Departments to designate Indigenous identified positions across academic, research, teaching and professional vacancies.	Maintain record of targeted positions advertised and filled.	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	All sections Supported by: First Nations Employment Officer, People and Culture Directorate and Office of Indigenous Engagement.	No cost. Recruitment freeze in 2020.
				0	1	2	3	4	5		

Key Result Areas	Intent	Key Performance Indicators	Actions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibilities	Investment
3. Culturally safe and supportive work environment											
3.1	Maximise participation in the First Nations on-line cultural competence program for all employees to develop cultural knowledge and understanding.	All new employees to complete the on-line First Nations Cultural competency training within five days of commencement. 80% of all employees successfully completed the on-line training.	Launch the training and review completion data.	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	Office of Indigenous Engagement.	User license purchased until 2022. ISSP funding for a user license extension.
3.2	Employees to participate in First Nations Cultural competency workshops.	60% of employees, including 100% of all supervisors and managers, attended First Nations Cultural competency workshops by the end of this strategy timeline.	All employees encouraged to attend and participate in First Nations Cultural Competency workshops.	Mid 2021 - Ongoing						All sections. Supported by: Office of Indigenous Engagement and People and Culture Directorate.	Employee development budgets.
3.3	Employees who supervise Indigenous research students to develop cultural knowledge and understanding.	100% of supervisors attended training by the end of this strategy timeline.	First Nations Cultural Competency training for non-Indigenous supervisors of Indigenous research employees to be developed.	2021 Ongoing						First Nations RHD Academy.	ISSP funding.
3.4	Establish an induction process for new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to provide information, support and assist with the transition to the University workforce.	All Indigenous employees have completed the induction within five days of commencement.	Online and face to face induction process created.	2020 0	2021 100	2022 100	2023 100	2024 100	2025 100	First Nations Employment Officer and People and Culture Directorate. Supported by: Office of Indigenous Engagement.	No cost.

Key Result Areas	Intent	Key Performance Indicators	Actions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibilities	Investment
3. Culturally safe and supportive work environment (cont.)											
3.5	Create a mentor program based on building relationships with new Indigenous employees.	A mentor program designed to enhance the employment experience at CQUniversity for new Indigenous employees. Increased employee retention.	Each new mentee is matched with a mentor.						2021 - Ongoing	First Nations Employment Officer and People and Culture Directorate.	No cost.
3.6	Develop leadership skills of Indigenous employees.	Encourage Indigenous employees to access leadership development opportunities. All Indigenous employees to access their employee training budget and internal training opportunities.	Promote employee study support in leadership programs.						Ongoing	Indigenous employees and their supervisors.	Training budgets and employee study support.
3.7	Encourage further education and career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	Increase by 5 per cent the number of Indigenous employees who hold or are studying a VET or tertiary qualification.	Analyse data on qualification levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Mentors and supervisors to encourage career planning and further education.						2021 - Ongoing	Indigenous employees and their supervisors.	Employee study support.

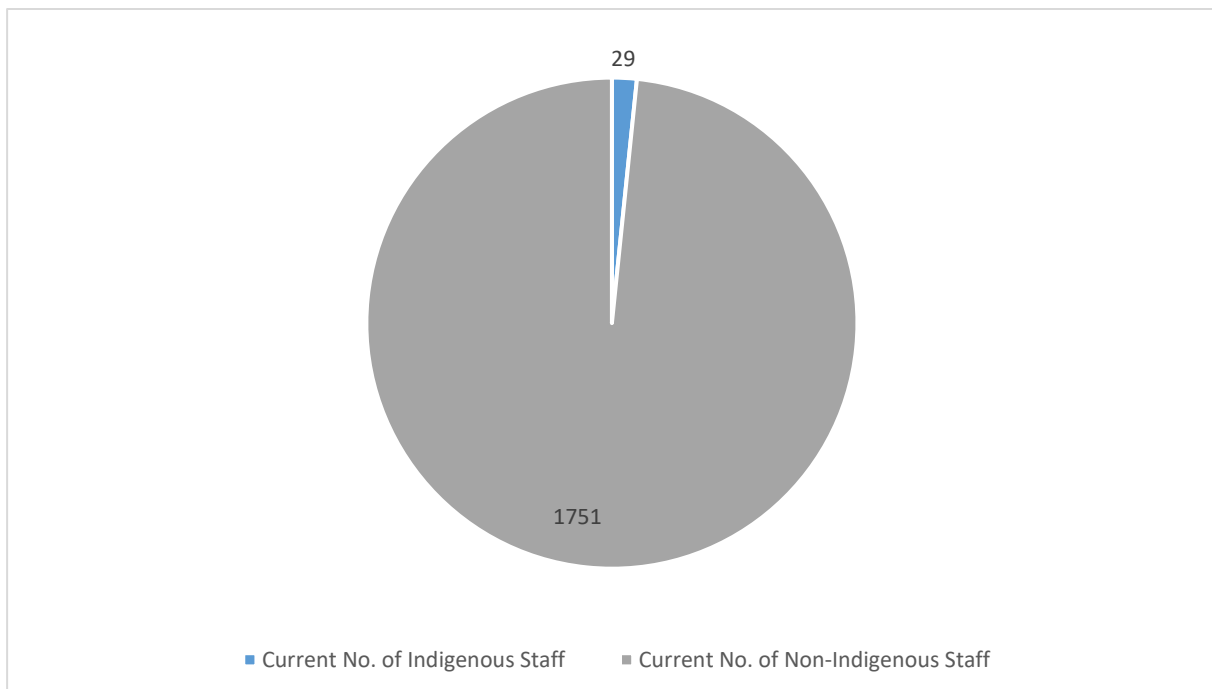
Key Result Areas	Intent	Key Performance Indicators	Actions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Responsibilities	Investment
4. Reporting											
4.1	Exit surveys	Encourage Indigenous employees to undertake an exit survey or interview.	Analyse survey data and develop an annual report with recommendations on increasing Indigenous employees' retention.	2020 - Ongoing						First Nations Employment Officer.	No cost
4.2	Conduct an annual internal review of the First Nations Workforce Strategy.	Six monthly reports to the First Nations Success Strategies Committee. 100 per cent of KPI's met or commenced, unless due to strategy change.	Develop processes and maintain documents to track, measure and report progress on strategic activities.	2020 - Ongoing						First Nations Employment Officer.	No cost
4.3	Review and Update the First Nations Workforce Strategy 2026 – 2030.		Consult with key stakeholders to review and refresh the First Nations Workforce Strategy.	2020	2021	2022 Oct	2023	2024	2025 Oct	First Nations Success Strategies Committee.	No cost

4 ANALYSIS OF WORKFORCE DATA

Our participation

- 4.1 Following the restructure in 2020, the First Nations workforce at CQUniversity has fallen from 2.3 per cent in December 2019 to 1.63 per cent of total employee numbers as of September 2020 ([Figure 2.1](#)). This represents a loss of 27 First Nations employees. Of the 29 First Nations employees employed, 21 employees work in professional services, seven in academic and research areas, none in management and two in VET. The University is also aware of Indigenous employees who choose not to identify as First Nations and not considered in this data.
- 4.2 This workforce profile indicates under-representation of First Nations employees across the University. To achieve the preferred target outlined in CQUniversity's Strategic Plan, customised strategies are required for the recruitment of new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. This plan corresponds with the recommendation from the [National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy](#) report, which states that to increase First Nations academics presence at higher education institutions, a 'growing its 'own' recruitment strategy from the alumni pool, and the postgraduate and RHD Indigenous students pool will guarantee a transition into continuing academic and research positions once their studies are completed (Behrendt et al. 2012).

Figure 2.1 Total number of employees: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous^{2&3}



Campus parity

- 4.3 At CQUniversity, the underrepresentation of Indigenous employees is distributed across campuses and study Centres/Hubs, except for Cairns, Mackay Ooralea and Townsville. In [Table 3.1](#), the number of Indigenous employees compared to the non-Indigenous employees at each campus is demonstrated. The table compares the percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees and the required increase to reach the ideal Indigenous employment target of three per cent at each campus. It is essential to show where the 26 potential Indigenous employees can be drawn from to fulfil the Strategic Plan target in relation to the three per cent parity.

² Source: People and Culture Directorate, CQUniversity.

³ Total number as of September 2020. Casual employees are not included.

Table 3.1 CQUni Indigenous employees by campus and study centre/hub population parity^{2&4}

CQU's Campuses and Regional University Centre	Non-Indigenous Employees	Indigenous Employees	Indigenous Employees as a percentage of the total campus employees	Number of new Indigenous Employees required per campus to equal parity level of 3%
Adelaide Campus	32	-	-	1 person
Brisbane Campus	154	-	-	4 people
Broome Study Centre	1	-	-	-
Bundaberg Campus	111	2	1.77%	1 person
Busselton Study Centre	2	-	-	-
Cairns Campus	69	4	5.48%	target achieved
Emerald Campus	22	-	-	1 person
Gladstone Marina	70	1	1.40%	1 person
Mackay City	68	-	-	2 people
Mackay Ooralea	104	3	2.80%	target achieved
Melbourne Campus	114	-	-	3 people
Non-Campus aligned	1	-	-	-
Perth Campus	25	-	-	1 person
Rockhampton City	63	-	-	2 people
Rockhampton North	749	15	1.96%	8 people
Sunshine Coast Campus	29	-	-	-
Sydney Campus	80	-	-	2 people
Townsville Campus	36	4	10%	target achieved
Working from Home	21	-	-	-
Total	1751	29	1.63%	26 people

Academic and research employee profile

- 4.4 Indigenous academic employees are inadequately represented at all academic levels (A to E) when compared to non-Indigenous academic employee numbers (2015-2020). As shown in [Table 3.2](#), the pattern of underrepresentation is evident at each level. The data indicates that a slight increase occurred in levels A, B and E, relative to other levels in the five years 2015-2019. Due to the restructure in 2020, numbers of Indigenous academic employees decreased in levels B, D and E with no changes in levels A and C. However, the low numbers of Indigenous academic employees have remained unchanged in the same five-year period. This may imply that a stronger recruitment drive for Indigenous people, focused on academic and research positions rather than professional positions, is required.
- 4.5 This finding correlates in four pertinent areas with the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy report (2011). It reported that many Indigenous employment strategies in Universities have tended to focus on professional rather than academic positions. Secondly, the lack of early career opportunities for levels A and B academic employees to develop their research, to publish and obtain research grants or to be fully engaged in Indigenous research and scholarship is lacking. Thirdly, there is a deficiency in appropriate support and opportunity provided to Indigenous PhD students to become sessional academics and to transition to positions of continuing, full-time academics once their PhD studies are completed. Lastly, there exists an underutilised alumni pool that could provide a source for recruiting Indigenous lecturers and researchers (Rigney, 2011, pp.20-1). Also, Indigenous academic employees provide education role models to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, encouraging them to study, to aim high and to further their study (Behrendt et al. 2012). Therefore, the University must increase the number of Indigenous academic employees per campus, as outlined in [Table 3.1](#) above.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census of Population and Housing, Cat No. 20750.0

Table 3.2 Academic employees by level 2015-2020: Indigenous and non-Indigenous^{2&5}

Year	Level A		Level B		Level C		Level D		Level E	
	Indigenous	Other	Indigenous	Other	Indigenous	Other	Indigenous	Other	Indigenous	Other
2015	1	83	3	216	0	157	1	52	1	71
2016	2	98	4	247	0	177	2	44	2	73
2017	2	108	4	279	0	187	2	67	2	71
2018	3	94	4	315	0	205	2	68	2	77
2019	3	117	5	344	0	218	1	70	3	84
2020	3	98	2	266	0	172	0	50	2	65

4.6 Researchers are essential in universities and across the Australian economy as their work addresses significant environmental, economic or social needs and drive innovation (Behrendt et al. .2012). There is a need to meet Australia's future research skill gap by increasing the participation of minority groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the research workforce (Behrendt et al. 2012). For CQUniversity, the proportion of Indigenous full-time equivalent research employees is deficient compared to non-Indigenous employees. Therefore, the need to offer research trainee or assistant positions to Indigenous postgraduate research alumni, RHD students, and final year undergraduate students is highly recommended.

VET employee profile

- 4.7 VET employees play an important role in unlocking the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to use VET as a pathway into higher education (Behrendt et al. 2012. p.167). According to Taylor et al. (2011), Indigenous students are eight times more likely to be enrolled in a VET course than any other University course. For example, in 2010 the percentage of working-age Indigenous Australians that enrolled in VET, was 23 per cent, compared to three per cent in other University courses. Similarly, CQUniversity has the highest number of Indigenous student commencement in VET (5.5 per cent) in relation to other courses; undergraduate (3.6 per cent) and postgraduate (0.5 per cent) in 2015-2019. However, the VET completion numbers are comparatively very low within the same period.
- 4.8 Despite VET being the preferred education pathway for most Indigenous people, there are small numbers of Indigenous teachers at the University. [Table 3.3](#) confirms the percentage of full-time equivalent Indigenous VET employees at CQUniversity is also low in comparison to non-Indigenous employees. The percentage has ranged from a high of 3.32 per cent in 2016 to 0.69 per cent in 2020.
- 4.9 According to Behrendt et.al. (2012), Indigenous lecturers/teachers provide educational role models to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to take on the study, build their labour market skills for mainstream jobs (Dockery and Milsom, 2007), and continue to further study. As a strategy to assist in recruiting new Indigenous VET teachers, the University may be able to utilise the Indigenous VET alumni pool as a source for recruitment to increase the number of Indigenous VET teachers across its campuses. Increasing Indigenous VET teachers should assist in increasing VET completion amongst Indigenous students.

Table 3.3 VET teachers and tutors: Indigenous and non-Indigenous 2015-2020^{2&6}

Year	Teacher/Tutors-Indigenous	Teacher/Tutors - Non-Indigenous	Percentage of Indigenous Teachers and Tutors
2015	5	197	2.59%
2016	7	204	3.32%
2017	6	189	3.08%
2018	5	200	2.44%
2019	6	203	2.87%
2020	1	143	0.69%

⁵ Academic employees are those classified as being in 'teaching and research' or 'research only' roles.

⁶ Tutors are included from 2015 to 2019. There were no VET tutors in 2020.

Professional services employee

- 4.10 According to Rigney (2011), Indigenous employees must be given every opportunity to build their professional skills and knowledge in order to move into leadership roles. While CQUniversity has made significant efforts to date in increasing the proportion of professional services positions held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, Indigenous employees appear to be concentrated at the lower to mid-levels especially in HEW levels 4, 5, and 6 (2015 and 2020) as shown in [Table 3.4](#). The data also indicates that after HEW level 6, the number of Indigenous employees declines significantly, which implies the lack of support to provide opportunities for employee succession, promotion, and or professional development to Indigenous employees to be able to step up into higher-level positions. In 2020, 21 First Nations professional employees were employed in comparison to 957 non-Indigenous professional employees, which equates to 2.14 per cent.

Table 3.4 Professional services employees: Indigenous and non-Indigenous 2015-2020²

Year	HEW Level 1 - 3		HEW Level 4 - 6		HEW Level 7 - Senior Management	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
2015	3	126	23	627	5	315
2016	4	102	21	690	4	348
2017	4	89	25	729	5	349
2018	4	90	28	743	3	367
2019	4	76	30	816	4	365
2020	0	42	19	602	2	313

Employment status

- 4.11 The Indigenous employee employment status statistics show a significant decrease in Indigenous employees employed in continuing and fixed-term positions in 2020 in comparison to 2019, due to the University restructure. [Table 3.5](#) compares the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees in both categories in the six-year period. In 2015 Indigenous employees comprised 2.27 per cent of continuing positions, compared to 1.26 per cent in 2020. These statistics clearly show that after six years, the number of continuing Indigenous employees have not increased. Instead, the gap continues to widen between Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees employed in continuing positions over the past six years.
- 4.12 In 2015, Indigenous fixed term employees comprised of 2.1 per cent of the professional workforce. This number has increased to 3.1 per cent in 2020, indicating that a greater number of Indigenous employees have been employed in fixed term contracts. This statistic highlights the need to increase the recruitment of Indigenous employees in all employment categories with a particular emphasis on recruiting for continuing and full-time positions in the University.

Table 3.5 Number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous continuing and fixed-term employees²

Year	Continuing Indigenous	Continuing non-Indigenous	Fixed-term Indigenous	Fixed-term non-Indigenous
2015	32	1380	10	469
2016	33	1521	13	469
2017	36	1656	14	413
2018	38	1778	14	390
2019	41	1842	15	455
2020	18	1406	11	345

Gender profile

- 4.13 The Indigenous employee gender profile (2015-2020) reflects that employees were more likely to be female than male across the University. This trend is aligned with the non-Indigenous gender profile (see [Table 3.6](#)) and studies by Shalley et al. (2019), where more women than men participated at higher rates in University studies and work. Table 3.6 not only highlights the high Indigenous female employee proportion in the University workforce but the issue of lower participation of Indigenous male in Universities. It is appropriate that CQUniversity undertake research to understand why there is such a large underrepresentation of Indigenous males in the CQUniversity workforce. By understanding the lack of Indigenous male employees, the University can develop innovative and specific recruitment and retention strategies that address the significant difference.

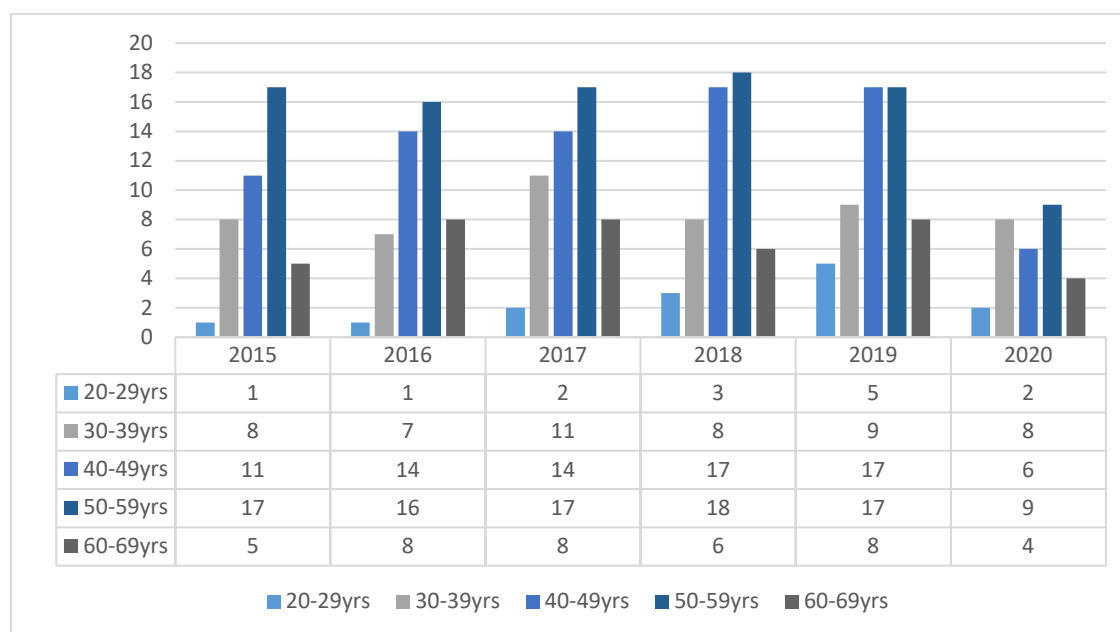
Table 3.6 Number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees 2015 - 2020²

Year	Indigenous Males	Non-Indigenous Males	Indigenous Females	Non-Indigenous Females
2015	8	658	34	1191
2016	10	690	36	1300
2017	10	722	40	1347
2018	13	771	39	1397
2019	14	835	42	1462
2020	6	636	23	1115

Age profile

- 4.14 The Indigenous workforce at CQUniversity is a mature cohort spread from 30-60+ years, age groups. More specifically, the 40 to 49-year-old and the 50 to 59-year old employee cohorts occupy the largest employee segment. (see [Figure 2.2](#)). This fact suggests the need to target recruit in the age group 20 to 39 years to address the attrition of an ageing workforce, the recent high turnover rate (see [Figure 2.3](#)) and enable workforce succession planning. Furthermore, opportunities to offer pre-employment training internships, graduate training, early career academic opportunities and work placements will attract Indigenous people of all ages into the CQUniversity workforce.

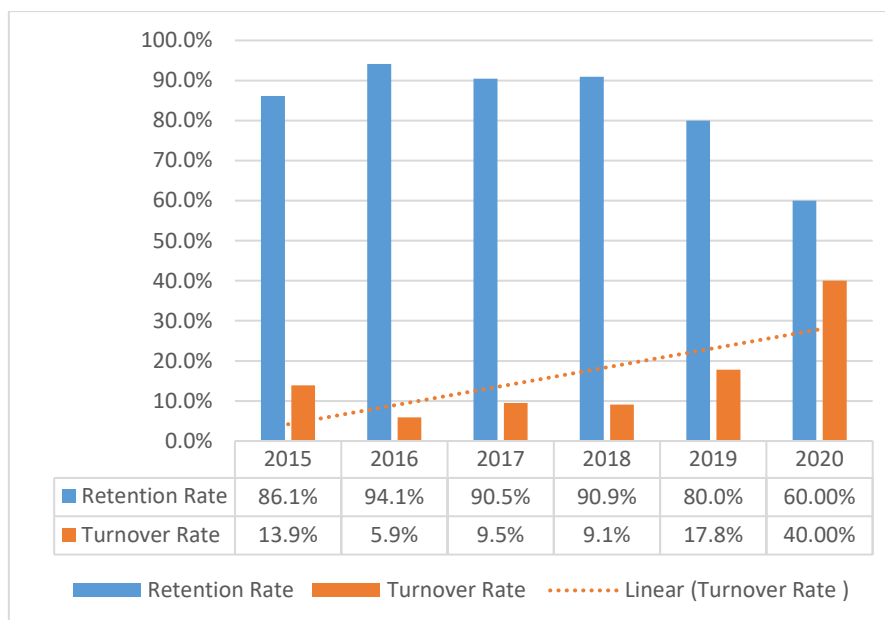
Figure 2.2 Indigenous employee age profile 2015-2020²



Retention and turnover

- 4.15 The retention rate of Indigenous employees between 2015 to 2018 has been relatively stable at 90 per cent. However, 2019 saw an 11 per cent decrease in the retention rate from the previous year, and an increased turnover rate of 8.7 per cent rate of Indigenous employees at CQUniversity. In 2020, the Indigenous employee retention rate fell to 60 percent, a 20 percent decrease from the previous year, due to the restructure of the University (see [Figure 2.3](#)). These figures may indicate that the University has been retaining Indigenous employees as a result of current strategies. This Strategy aims to positively impact the increased employee turn-over rates experienced in 2019 and 2020.

Figure 2.3 CQUni Indigenous employee retention and turnover rates^{2&7}



5 DEFINITIONS

Cultural competency: the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures. Being aware of one's world view and developing positive attitudes towards cultural differences such as cultural practices and world views.

Culturally safe work environment: an environment where First Nations people feel safe and draw strength in their identity, culture and community. This is ensured through the relationships that are fostered plus established policies and practices that enable all interactions to adequately meet cultural needs (Australian Human Rights Commission 2011).

Research higher degree (RHD): a research doctorate or research master course for which at least two-thirds of the student load is research work.

Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP): a program which prioritises the support of Indigenous students who are financially disadvantaged and/or from remote and regional areas. Universities receive ISSP funding based on enrolments, unit success rates and course completions of Indigenous students.

Key results areas (KRA): significant areas of outcome which a department must achieve. The KRA corresponds with the vision and the strategies of the organisation.

Key performance indicators (KPI): measurable values used to gauge the effectiveness of the actions or activities to reach the set targets.

National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA): an agency committed to implementing the Australian Government's policies and programs to improve the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

⁷ Employee data as of December 2020.

National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy (NIHEWS): a strategy developed by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) to aid universities in developing their Indigenous employment strategies and employment targets.

Parity rate: proportion of the total Australian population aged between 15-64 years that is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics population statistics. The national parity rate is currently three per cent based on the 2016 census.

Parity target: national parity target for the 2016 census is three per cent and will increase in the 2021 census once it is revised in line with new population data following each national census.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): formal statement of commitment to reconciliation. It provides a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement.

Respect, Inclusion, Safe and Supportive, Equity and Equipment (RISE) Principles: foundations for this strategy.

Retention (employee retention): practice of retaining employees in an organisation by fostering a positive workplace environment, promoting engagement and inclusion, providing competitive pay and healthy work-life-balance, and showing appreciation to employees.

Systemic racism: requirements, conditions, practices, policies or processes that maintain and reproduce avoidable and unfair inequalities across ethnic/racial groups - also known as institutional racism (Paradies et al., 2008).

Turnover (employee turnover): number or percentage of employees who leave an organisation.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Central Queensland University Enterprise Agreement 2017](#)

Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Strategy

[National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy](#)

[Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#)

7 FEEDBACK

7.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Delegated Approval Authority	N/A
Advisory Committee	University Management Committee
Administrator	Deputy Vice-President (Indigenous Engagement)
Next Review Date	19/02/2025

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Vice-Chancellor and President 19/02/2021.
Amendment Authority and Date	
Notes	This document replaced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Career Development Strategy (approved 19/02/2021).

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