



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE THROUGH DIVERSITY

UWA'S WORKFORCE DIVERSITY STRATEGY

PHASE 2: 2005-2009



## 1. Background and Context

The University of Western Australia, in the context of both its Strategic Plan and its social responsibility commitment, developed and implemented a Workforce Diversity Strategy (WDS) with a view to maximising opportunities for all Western Australians to actively participate in employment. Launched in 2001, the WDS has provided a framework for identifying priorities and harnessing the benefits of workforce diversity through utilising the widest possible pool of skills available. The initial Plan ('Achieving Excellence Through Diversity 2001-2003') outlined both the strategic intent and operational aspects of the WDS and was formally evaluated in 2003. The Workforce Diversity Strategy has achieved impressive outcomes – a variety of employment opportunities have been offered across a range of organisational units at UWA. In excess of 120 staff have been offered employment through the WDS and, in recognition of the outcomes achieved, the Strategy won the Prime Minister's Employer of the Year Award for the Employment of People with Disabilities in both 2002 and 2003. An Indigenous Employment Coordinator was appointed in late 2004 to further progress the full participation of Indigenous Australians at UWA.

In 2004, UWA Executive endorsed the recommendation that the Workforce Diversity Strategy be continued and supported the development of a further iteration of the original Plan to ensure the WDS remains responsive and focused. This Plan dovetails with and complements the Indigenous Employment Strategy 2005-2009 and builds on the achievements of the WDS, further extending the University's commitment to workforce diversity.

## 2. Outcomes

Since its inception in 2001, 123 staff (78 women and 45 men) have been recruited: 24 Indigenous Australians, 55 staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and 48 people with disabilities. 76 staff are still currently employed in a range of employment categories: 35 ongoing, 29 fixed term and 12 casual. Since recruitment, 14 staff have been promoted to higher levels both within and external to the University; and some staff have pursued higher education options. These figures represent significant and tangible outcomes with respect to achieving greater workforce diversity.

## 3. Evaluation

The Workforce Diversity Strategy was evaluated in late 2003. Both employers and staff were surveyed in relation to various aspects of the WDS. The former group were generally supportive and provided constructive feedback with respect to both the strengths and weaknesses of the initiative. Employees unanimously endorsed the continuation and expansion of the WDS and revealed a high level of satisfaction with management, colleagues and the UWA environment.

This comprehensive evaluation, with its recommendation to continue the WDS, was tabled at both the Vice-Chancellor's Equity and Diversity Committee and UWA Executive. The recommendation was endorsed by UWA Executive, subject to the implementation of targeted strategies designed to focus and streamline both strategic and operational aspects of the WDS.

## 4. Objective

To increase, within the UWA staffing profile, the representation, distribution and retention of people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## 5. Guiding Principles

1. UWA staffing profile will reflect the diversity of the broader West Australian community.
2. Employment and development of staff from diverse backgrounds will enhance our capacity to achieve excellence in teaching, learning and research, service delivery and our external relationships with local, national and international communities.
3. UWA Executive and Senior Managers, with support provided by Human Resources, will oversee the management of the WDS.
4. The University will remove any structures and practices that may act as a barrier to recruitment and career enhancement and which may result in direct or indirect discrimination.

## 6. Broader Strategic Framework

The UWA Workforce Diversity Strategy supports the following broad policy and strategic frameworks established by both the University and the West Australian Government:

- UWA Strategic Plan and Operational Priorities Plan;
- UWA Human Resource Strategic Plan;
- UWA Equity and Diversity Management Plan;
- UWA's Internationalisation Strategy;
- UWA Disability Services Action Plan;
- WA Government's Diversity Improvement Management Plan;
- WA Government's Substantive Equality Framework.

## 7. Monitoring and Evaluation of Workforce Diversity Strategy

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will oversee the WDS through the Equity and Diversity Committee and UWA Executive. A comprehensive annual report will be presented to UWA Executive, together with the Indigenous Employment performance data.

A comprehensive evaluation of the WDS will be carried out in the second half of 2007 to ensure that the Strategy continues to remain focused and responsive. This will involve broad consultation thereby ensuring maximum opportunity for involvement, participation and ownership of strategies contained in the Plan.

## 8. Key Result Areas

The four broad key result areas – Leadership and Management, Workplace Culture, Recruitment, and Employment Support and Development – have been developed to identify issues and implement strategies to address the needs of individuals and communities. These areas dovetail with the UWA Indigenous Employment Strategy.

### Leadership and Management

Outcome	Strategies	Performance Indicators
To embed appropriate and responsive management of workforce diversity across UWA.	<p>WDS to be publicly endorsed and visibly promoted by Senior Management.</p> <p>Continue to develop the diversity management capacity of UWA managers and supervisors through workshops, seminars, articles in UWA News, HR issues papers and other fora.</p> <p>Ongoing reporting to both UWA Executive and the Equity and Diversity Committee outlining progress towards achieving greater workforce diversity.</p> <p>Heads of organisational units to receive annual feedback, as part of their overall Equity and Diversity responsibilities, in relation to their level of participation in the WDS.</p> <p>Review identified priority areas and make appropriate recommendations to UWA Executive in the light of new and emerging gaps (e.g. mature-aged, youth).</p> <p>Develop promotional materials describing the positive experience of managers adopting best practice in the area of workforce diversity.</p>	<p>Extent of participation across UWA tiers of management in modeling diversity good practice.</p> <p>Reports (both University-wide and area-specific) presented to UWA Executive scoping progress towards achieving WDS objectives and feedback received.</p> <p>Promotion of good practice through profiling workforce diversity issues in a variety of UWA print and electronic material.</p> <p>WDS adjustments in response to new and emerging issues / identified gaps.</p>

### Workplace Culture

Outcome	Strategies	Performance Indicators
UWA workplace culture reflects a greater appreciation of diversity.	<p>Conduct ongoing diversity, intercultural awareness and disability awareness staff development workshops across all organisational units.</p> <p>Promote greater diversity awareness among the staffing body through diversity dialogues, guest speakers and staff workshops on targeted issues.</p> <p>Promote workforce diversity issues (managerial best practice, successful workforce diversity placements) within broader UWA channels such as the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Managers Group, University Management Group and UWA News.</p> <p>Review relevant components of UWA policy environment (e.g. WDS Policy, UWA Disability Policy) to ensure compatibility with workforce diversity objectives.</p> <p>Develop a UWA Cultural Diversity Priority Statement.</p>	<p>Number of sessions conducted and nature of feedback received.</p> <p>Extent of participation of staff in diversity management / cross-cultural awareness workshops across all occupational groupings.</p> <p>WDS and related UWA policies and procedures are responsive, streamlined and applied flexibly.</p> <p>UWA Cultural Diversity Policy Statement endorsed by Senate.</p>

## Recruitment

Outcome	Strategies	Performance Indicators
Increased representation and distribution of staff from identified priority areas across a range of UWA locations and occupational groups.	<p>WDS to be publicly endorsed and visibly promoted by Senior Management.</p> <p>Continue to develop the diversity management capacity of UWA managers and supervisors through workshops, seminars, articles in UWA News, HR issues papers and other fora.</p> <p>Ongoing reporting to both UWA Executive and the Equity and Diversity Committee outlining progress towards achieving greater workforce diversity.</p> <p>Heads of organisational units to receive annual feedback, as part of their overall Equity and Diversity responsibilities, in relation to their level of participation in the WDS.</p> <p>Review identified priority areas and make appropriate recommendations to UWA Executive in the light of new and emerging gaps (e.g. mature-aged, youth).</p> <p>Develop promotional materials describing the positive experience of managers adopting best practice in the area of workforce diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic and operational adjustments to the WDS incorporating recommendations.</p> <p>Extent of liaison with WA employment network; volume and breadth of applicant pool. Implementation of traineeships for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Extent of articulation of traineeship participants into mainstream employment at UWA.</p> <p>Feasibility study undertaken with respect to viability of expanding the WDS umbrella to include work experience, casual employment workers pool and supported teams.</p>

## Employment Support and Development

Outcome	Strategies	Performance Indicators
Both existing and new participants in the WDS are supported and encouraged to realise their full potential.	<p>Ensure that all new WDS staff continue to receive two site visits within three months of commencement and receive an orientation package that complements the generic induction within their work area.</p> <p>Provide all UWA managers that offer a WDS placement with a workforce diversity management package.</p> <p>Develop, in partnership with OSDS, targeted skills development strategies for WDS staff: e.g. career planning and development workshops, 'winning' that job, navigating UWA systems.</p> <p>Implement English language support initiatives for existing and new WDS recruits, and UWA staff from CALD backgrounds generally.</p> <p>Implement a mentoring scheme for both new and existing WDS staff, as required.</p> <p>Encourage WDS staff to avail themselves of secondments, higher duties and targeted professional development.</p>	<p>Extent of participation across UWA. All WDS staff receive a comprehensive induction, adjusted to meet individual needs.</p> <p>Managers recruiting WDS staff are appropriately resourced and supported.</p> <p>Feedback received from WDS staff with respect to satisfaction with employment support and development programs offered.</p> <p>Number of WDS staff obtaining positions at higher levels and availing themselves of professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Targeted support programs implemented: e.g. mentoring, English Language support.</p>

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