

SECTION THREE

## EQUITY REPORT

30 JUNE 2006

INSTITUTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK  
INFORMATION COLLECTION FOR 2006

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INSTITUTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK INFORMATION COLLECTION FOR 2006

## **EQUITY REPORT**

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## INSTITUTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK INFORMATION COLLECTION FOR 2006

# EQUITY UPDATE

### A. Key Achievements in 2005

- The Disability Action Plan for 2005–2008 was completed and distributed by the Equity and Diversity Unit (EDU) throughout the University in September 2005. This was to ensure that the University's policies, procedures and publications relating to disability were communicated and understood by staff and students.
- During 2005 the University developed a policy on *Assessment Arrangements for Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English* that will take effect from 2006.
- Development and completion of an undergraduate course *Equity and Ethics in Global and Local Perspective* in the Faculty of Arts, due to commence in 2006.

### B. Equity Group Focus in 2005

During 2005 the University continued to develop and promote student policies, programs and initiatives to ensure equality of opportunity in regard to access and participation in courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with a particular focus on each of the following target groups:

- Students with a disability
- Students from rural and isolated areas
- Students from low socio-economic/low income backgrounds
- Students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Female students in non-traditional fields of study.

The reasons for the focus on each of these groups are set out briefly below. Issues affecting the groups are addressed in Section D.

#### B.1 Students with a disability

The ANU is experiencing a continuing high demand for student services from students with a disability.

## B.2 Students from rural and isolated areas

The University's enabling legislation requires that "in the performance of its functions, the University must pay attention to its national and international roles and to the needs of the Australian Capital Territory and the surrounding regions" (SS.5.2, *The Australian National University Act 1991*).

Although the ACT does not include any 'rural' or 'isolated' areas, it nevertheless operates its *Countrywide* scheme that targets students from regional rural areas.

## B.3 Students from low socio-economic/low income backgrounds

The ANU recognises that disadvantage leads to educational outcomes that do not necessarily reflect the student's true academic potential.

## B.4 Students from non-English speaking backgrounds

The University recognises that Students from Language Backgrounds other than English may encounter difficulties in the first year of enrolment, which native speakers of English do not experience. New programs for assistance with English have been developed by the ANU College, in order to cater for a greater number of students in need.

## B.5 Women in non-traditional fields of study

Previous access data has indicated a decline in students under this group and further attention is needed to address participation. In 2006 new initiatives will be undertaken to address this decline.

## C. Equity Planning and Management in 2005

The monitoring and development of student policies and programs with a particular focus on the recruitment, retention and success rates of students belonging to the target areas, is done mainly through collaboration between Student and Academic Services Division and the Equity and Diversity Unit.

The ANU released its strategic plan titled [ANU to 2005](#) in February 2003. The University's commitment to equity is incorporated within the primary objective of Tactical Goal 2:

***Our primary objective is to ensure an environment that is supportive, nurturing, challenging and motivating for staff and students, and exemplary in its encouragement of excellence, equality and tolerance.***

- Under Tactical Goal 2 the University states its commitment to:
  - *Develop an environment emphasising mutual respect and equity of access to opportunity for staff and students;*
  - *Ensure an effective student support services environment;*
  - *Provide mentoring for recently appointed staff and students.*

In 2005 the University took a strategic management decision to streamline the academic structure of the ANU by the introduction of a College structure that brings together the particular strengths of the faculties and cognate research schools. The College structure will ensure that education provided to students is continually at the cutting edge and informed by the latest research.

As part of this process, work also commenced on the University's new strategic plan that will embed the College structure and move the University forward into the next quinquennium; the new Plan is expected to be launched to coincide with the University's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 1 August 2006.

2005 also saw the creation of a new senior management position of Pro Vice-Chancellor (University Community) in June 2005. The role includes that of Dean of Students to both undergraduates and graduates, assisting students in resolving issues, overseeing the strategic development of halls of residence and developing initiatives to enhance community life at the ANU.

In managing equity and diversity on campus, the University looks towards:

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who has overall responsibility for student equity.
- Student equity programs monitored and managed through two University committees – the Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) and the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee (EDAC). The Dean of Students chairs the SSAC and the EDAC is chaired by the DVC (Education). The agenda and work of all University committees and working parties are firmly grounded in the University's broad strategic directions as outlined in the [ANU to 2005](#) document referred to above.
- All EDAC members have a responsibility to act as 'champions' of equity and diversity and to encourage a commitment to equity and diversity principles among both staff and students.
- All student service units, including the Disability Services Unit, the Academic Skills and Learning Centre, the Counselling Centre, the ANU Health Service and the Jabal Centre, report to the Student Services Advisory Committee on a quarterly basis.
- The Equity and Diversity Unit reports to the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee four times per year, and to the University Council annually. The Student and Academic Services Division also provides an annual report to Council.

#### **D. Performance of Equity Groups in 2005**

*Note: From 2004 the decision was made that all statistics for access, participation, retention and success will be based on DEST statistics, which contain final figures. 2005 Data is not yet available and, following advice from DEST will be reported later.*

## D.1 Students with a disability

In response to the continuing high demand for student services from students with a disability, the following initiatives have been implemented:

- A new Disability Policy has been implemented.
- The Disability Action Plan for 2005-2008 is complete and in the process of implementation.
- A full disability access audit of the campus has been conducted to identify any areas where physical access or access to services may be a problem. On receipt of the final audit report, a program of works to address access issues will be implemented.
- The full suite of Assistive Technology software has been integrated into the standard *InfoCommons* programs, allowing access to all software in all student computer laboratories at the ANU, including halls of residence.
- An online survey of students registered with the Disability Services Unit conducted to obtain feedback on the quality of services provided and identify access issues.
- Continued participation in the Liberated Learning consortium, developing technology to transcribe lecture material.
- A portable wheelchair lift has been purchased to address temporary access needs, such as graduation ceremonies.

Continued community partnerships with:

- ACT Tertiary Education Institutions
- ACT Disability Coordination Office
- Disability Employment Services
- ACT Department of Education and Training
- ACT Government Review of Post-School Options.

## D.2 People from rural and isolated areas

As the ACT does not include any 'rural' or 'isolated' areas, participation rates are not provided for these groups.

The ANU operates its *Countrywide* scheme that targets students from regional rural areas.

Commonwealth Scholarships introduced in recent years are the main support for such students but are supported by accommodation provided by the University (approx. 2400 beds) with fees that are lower than the residential-for-profit sector offers.

## D.3 People from a low socio-economic background

*Access Data not yet available.*

Commonwealth Scholarships are increasingly attracting students from a low SES background but additional accommodation bursaries and hardship fund schemes (administered by the Student Associations) are available for emergency situations.

The ANU's decision not to increase HECS in 2005 and 2006 and a relatively low General Service Fee also makes it a more affordable, quality option for students from a low SES background.

Participation will be monitored in the light of the University's reluctant decision to increase HECS (to apply, however, in 2007).

The *Countrywide* scheme provides for students who have experienced educational disadvantage due to such factors as remote location, financial hardship and family circumstance, to have such factors taken into consideration in the admissions process.

#### D.4 People from non-English speaking backgrounds

*Access Data not yet available.*

The University recognises that Students from Language Backgrounds other than English may encounter difficulties in the first year of enrolment, which native speakers of English do not experience. Culturally based difficulties are also most likely to manifest as linguistic issues for students. The cultural implications for student assessment are broader than the provision of extra time in examinations and special consideration in assessment.

For this reason, during 2005 the University developed a policy on Assessment Arrangements for Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English that will take effect from 2006.

([http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Policies/Students/Other/Assessment\\_Arrangements\\_for\\_Linguistically\\_Diverse\\_Background\\_Students.asp](http://info.anu.edu.au/policies/Policies/Students/Other/Assessment_Arrangements_for_Linguistically_Diverse_Background_Students.asp))

In addition, the University will introduce in 2006 through ANU College a heavily subsidised, semester-length, concurrent English language extension program and will also explore the opportunities for the program to count as credit towards undergraduate degree programs.

#### D.5 Women in non-traditional fields of study

*Access data not yet available.*

In order to increase access rates in these areas, the following steps have been taken:

- The College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS) 'Women in Technology' brochure continues to be distributed to female students in Australian schools.
- The CECS Women in Technology Network continues to provide opportunities for students to network with peers and professional women in the ICT and engineering industries. It does this in various ways including:
  - Providing subsidised attendance to special events with high profile female speakers in ICT such as the Breakfast Series presented by the Canberra-based Women in Information and Communications network.
  - Providing opportunities for young female students to meet each other informally in group discussion and mentoring sessions.
  - Continuing its very successful series of 'Women in Technology' workshops. These have proved to be so successful that students have requested more workshops in a tighter timeframe than were originally planned (two per year over four years). The workshops are attended by both undergraduate and postgraduate students with the undergraduate students gaining considerable insight from the postgraduates.

- The CECS Marketing Manager has been elected to the Board of the ACT 'Women in Information & Communication' (WIC) network. This has enabled the University to nominate high-profile female speakers to address participants in the Breakfast Series including Professor Shirley Gregor and Ms Deborah May. This has also opened up opportunities to collaborate with women in the ICT industry to provide special events to assist in recruiting women into study in engineering and ICT at events like ANU Open Day.
- The CECS also took part in the National ICT Australia (NICTA) Taskforces and an all-female team developed hands-on, practical workshops in computer vision, combinatorics and mathematics to take directly into ACT classrooms. The team comprised early career researchers, postgraduate and Honours students in engineering and computer science.

The leader of the Taskforce, Dr Pei Yean Lee, subsequently received a WICKed Woman Award for her contributions to mentoring and supporting women in ICT.

- During 2006 the CECS trialled setting up structured mentoring programs within the engineering and computer science programs that are offered to female undergraduate and postgraduate students. It is too early to predict the success or otherwise of these programs.

## **E. Strategies/Measures in Place to Achieve Objectives in 2005**

The Disability Action Plan for 2005–2008, which was distributed throughout the University, was developed on the assumption that as the National University, the ANU should assume a leadership role, both as a provider of educational services and as an employer, in relation to people with a disability.

The framework addressing disability issues consisted of the following key areas:

- Planning, Policy and Procedures
- Physical Access
- Information Access
- Study
- Employment.

The Disability Action Plan outlines the goals and recommended strategies in all the above areas to achieve an operating environment where there is commitment to equality of access.

The recommendations of the Disability Access Audit and Action Plan 2004 are underway following the allocation of funding by the Vice-Chancellor.

Three new policies have been developed by the Equity and Diversity Committee (EDAC) and approved by the Academic Board in November 2005:

- *Work, Study and Carer Responsibilities Policy* ensuring that a student's work and carer responsibilities are reasonably accommodated in the provision of education
- *Disabilities Policy*
- *Breastfeeding Policy.*

Diversity Education has expanded.

- 2005 has seen the establishment of an Ally Network: staff and student contacts on campus who support, are sensitive towards and have an understanding of sexual diversity issues. This initiative, implemented via information/training sessions, aims to promote awareness and understanding of sexual diversity as well as fostering a more inclusive culture in the university community.
- Cross Cultural training workshops have continued with tutors and student contacts in the residential Halls and Colleges.
- Development and completion of an undergraduate course *Equity and Ethics in Global and Local Perspective* in the Faculty of Arts, due to commence in 2006.
- Continuation of awareness raising and education of equity issues via information packs for students at orientation days.
- Promotion of events that support equity, for example, Harmony Day.
- Organisation of monthly English conversation support groups, facilitated by an EDU staff member around selected topics.
- Discussions commenced with institutions in Canada, the USA and New Zealand to establish an indigenous/First Nations student mobility program.

Equity and Diversity's work is focused on achieving an environment where all members of the University community are committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and valuing of individual diversity. It achieves this through the development, implementation, monitoring, assessment and revision of programs and policies aimed at achieving such an environment.

Students are welcome to seek information and/or advice from EDU staff on equity and diversity programs or discrimination and harassment issues and are assured of confidentiality. The Equity and Diversity Unit website (<http://www.anu.edu.au/equity/students/index.php>) lists the priority areas, programs and initiatives for students, including links to:

- Support services
- Equity scholarships
- Diversity education
- Equity related policies
- Work/Study balance
- Grievance resolution
- Equity resources.

## **F. Disability Support Programme in 2005**

Funding for a variety of support initiatives has been sought through the Disability Support Programme. However, DEST was unable to comment on whether the ANU applications were successful at the time of writing of this Report. Funding had been proposed for the following initiatives:

- to provide note-taking and other resources essential for support (Additional Support for Students with Disabilities guidelines);
- to increase the successful transition and participation of students with a disability in post-secondary education (Regional Disability Liaison Officers guidelines);
- to extend the use of assistive technology across campus for students with disabilities and to further develop the ANU's Digital Lecture Delivery Project (Performance-based Disability Support Funding).

Funding is also being sought to educate staff on the requirements of the new Disability Standards.

## **G. Scholarships**

The University has a number of scholarship programs covering equity including Commonwealth Learning Scholarships (CLS), Group of Eight equity scholarships and its own equity scholarships for accommodation and special emergency.

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INSTITUTION ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK INFORMATION COLLECTION FOR 2006

## STATEMENT OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME FUNDS IN 2007

### Vice-Chancellor's Certification Statement

I, Ian Chubb AO being the Vice-Chancellor/President of **The Australian National University** hereby certify that the University is undertaking activities which assist disadvantaged students, consistent with the aims of the Programme (paragraphs 1.45.1 and 1.85.1) and that the University meets all the criteria set out at paragraph 1.45.1 (a)-(d) which can be demonstrated in the following statement.

**Signed:**

**Title:** Vice-Chancellor

**Date:** 28 June 2006

The following section comprises the ANU's 2006 Statement of Eligibility under the Higher Education Equity Support Programme in relation to all equity target groups.

The objectives of the ANU in respect of Indigenous education are to increase the level of participation both in terms of number and level of study and to achieve the maximum possible completion and success rates for Indigenous students. Although the ANU does not currently have a detailed Indigenous education strategy linked to the University's strategic plan in place, this development is expected to be part of the next ANU planning documents.

The ANU delivers on its objectives in relation to equity support and Indigenous education, in particular, through the following:

## 1. Outreach Programs

- Through the Jabal Centre, the ANU will place renewed emphasis on the recruitment of Indigenous students to its academic programs through publications, visits to urban, regional and outback areas, maintaining close contact with community organisations and specialised admissions and support arrangements. The University will, in particular, focus on building relations with elders to enlist their support in the retention and support of students.
- For students more generally from disadvantaged backgrounds, the ANU has put in place the following outreach arrangements:
  - Articulation arrangements with Canberra Institute of Technology involving associate degree programs that generally have more accessible entrance requirements but which guarantee entry and credit to ANU bachelor programs (subject to satisfactory performance).
  - Countrywide Access Scheme that grants additional UAI bonus points to students who have suffered disadvantage.
  - Entry programs and bridging courses for mature age applicants and others without traditional entry qualifications provided by ANU College and the ANU Centre for Continuing Education.

## 2. Support Services

- The Jabal Centre provides ongoing academic, social and pastoral support for Indigenous students.
- The Disabilities Services Unit facilitates adjustments to academic and other requirements for students experiencing a disability. This includes:
  - provision of note-taker services
  - lending of equipment
  - accessing or conversion of material to alternative formats and negotiating special assessment or other arrangements.
- The University has a Liberated Learning Project to implement Digital Lecture Delivery in major lecture theatres. This allows academic staff to automatically record their lectures to be rapidly available to students on WebCT. This allows those whose disability or illness prevents regular attendance at lectures to minimise the disadvantage and to revisit lecture material multiple times.
- More broadly, and of benefit to all students, the ANU provides:
  - Counselling and health service, wellness workshops;

- Chaplaincy and specific facilities for Muslim students;
- Academic advice services;
- Problem solving and early intervention networks of Sub-Deans and the Dean of Students;
- Policies on special consideration in relation to assessment that seek to provide flexibility to students whose studies are adversely affected by circumstances outside of their control;
- Policies on academic progress that seek to identify and provide early stage intervention, referral and advice to students experiencing academic difficulties;
- Policies on student equity and diversity including prevention of discrimination and harassment, facilitating students with parental responsibilities bringing children on campus and carer support for students that are required to undertake fieldwork within their programs;
- Considerable pastoral care, tutoring services and support in University residences and a first year accommodation guarantee, which ensures that students are able to access this high level of support when they are most at risk through adjustment difficulties;
- Orientation programs in both semesters;
- Financial aid schemes to assist with emergency circumstances;
- Staff training and development to ensure appropriate responses to equity group students;
- Academic skills workshops and information literacy program;
- On-campus childcare services;
- Peer support system (SIGN);
- Career service.

### **3. Institutional Equity Scholarships**

In 2005 the ANU awarded nearly \$150,000 in equity related scholarships as shown in the following table.

Name of Scholarship or Award	Number Available Each Year	Number Holding Scholarships in 2005	Annual Value (\$)	Outlay in 2005 (\$)	Length	Broad Area
<b>Accommodation Bursaries</b>	Not specified; depends on applications, amounts awarded and availability of reserves or other unallocated funds	UG 15 Emergency UG 8 Postgraduate 11 Disability 3	Variable, from \$320 – \$2,560 depending on need	UG 48,000 Emergency UG 9,610 Postgraduate 9,360 Disability 4,200		Financial hardship
<b>ANU Enterprise Access Scholarships</b>	2	7	4,000	28,000	3 years	Disability and financial hardship
<b>Elsbeth Young Memorial Grants</b>	Number depends on funds available	2		5,900		To assist Indigenous Australian students with studies but not to pay fees
<b>School of Resources, Environment &amp; Society (SRES) Scholarship for an Indigenous Australian</b>	1	0	1,000	1,000	1 year	SRES enrolment and Indigenous Australian
<b>Dickins Scholarship in Engineering</b>	1	1	2,000	2,000	1 year	Final year Engineering and financial hardship
<b>Group of Eight Scholarships</b>	4	12	3,000	36,000	4 years	Financial hardship
<b>John Mitchell Scholarship</b>	1	1	1,000	1,000	1 year	Rural origin and financial hardship and studying in Economics and Commerce
<b>Joseph and Lindsay Croft Scholarship for an Indigenous Australian</b>	1 or 2	2	1,200	2,400	1 year	Indigenous Australian and financial need
<b>Nugget Coombs Indigenous Australian Scholarship</b>	1 Undergraduate 1 Postgraduate	0	A grant depending on funds		2-4 weeks	Indigenous Australian
<b>Rotary - Alf Gillespie Undergraduate Scholarship</b>	1	1	2,500	2,500	1 year	Indigenous Australian and financial need

#### 4. Contact Details

Mr Tim Beckett  
 Director, Student and Academic Services and Student Recruitment  
 and International Education  
 The Australian National University  
 Canberra ACT 0200  
 Phone: (02) 6125 3634  
 Fax: (02) 6125 8421  
 Email: [Director.SAS@anu.edu.au](mailto:Director.SAS@anu.edu.au)