

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY EQUITY UPDATE 2005

1. INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY FOCUS

UTS has a strong commitment to equity and diversity, and has well-established student equity programs and services. UTS is an acknowledged leader in the higher education sector in regard to the innovation, quality and breadth of its equity policies, programs and services.

The University is justifiably proud of its equity achievements. The University's commitment goes beyond a compliance approach to encourage the acceptance and valuing of the diversity of its student and staff populations. There has been a sustained achievement by the University in incorporating equity principles and practices into education and employment policy, programs and projects.

UTS will continue to provide outreach, access and support programs for all student equity groups. In addition, UTS has established the following student equity priority areas for 2005–2008:

- Expanding the University's outreach and admission programs targeting Indigenous students, students experiencing multiple disadvantage, and students from equity groups under-represented in the University community;
- Improving support programs and service provision for equity groups students, with a particular emphasis on Indigenous students and students experiencing multiple disadvantage;
- Creating a diverse, inclusive and accessible University environment, in which students are aware of equal opportunity principles and their rights and responsibilities in relation to these.

Multiple disadvantage, in the context of the UTS Student Equity Strategy, is defined as students from a LSES background who also belong to another equity target group.

Under-represented equity groups at UTS are students with disabilities, female students in non-traditional fields, and students from rural and isolated areas. The latter group is not a UTS priority due to its metropolitan location and lack of extensive on-campus accommodation.

2. PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES IN PLACE TO ADDRESS PERFORMANCE

2.1 People of low socio-economic status (LSES)

UTS uses the urban postcode LSES indicator to assess its performance in this area as NSW has fewer LSES postcodes than other states. The Australian postcode indicator is a poor reflection of student poverty in the Sydney area as it does not take into account the higher cost of living and mixed SES postcodes that are prevalent in metropolitan areas.

LSES access and participation at UTS has continued to decline from 1997, mainly due to a significant drop in representation of those in the 25 years and over bracket. UTS is close to the national participation ratio for under-25 years LSES (0.34 to 0.39), but in the years since differential HECS rates and postgraduate fees were introduced the UTS over-25 years LSES ratio has declined to 0.20 compared to the national average of 0.33. This decline is mirrored in all of the Sydney metropolitan universities, and may be attributed to two main factors: the university's locations in high-cost city areas, and the higher matriculation levels required for entry to

metropolitan universities (during this same period participation ratios for non-metropolitan universities in the Sydney area for both under and over 25 years LSES students increased considerably).

UTS retention and success ratios for LSES students is close to or higher than the national average.

UTS has targeted LSES as a priority equity group in its new Student Equity Strategy 2005-2008, described below. Strategies for outreach and improved access include the development of a schools outreach program, a review of the UTS Educational Access Scheme entry requirements, and the provision of scholarships for low income students to assist with living costs.

2.2 People with disabilities

The access rate for people with disabilities at UTS has slowly increased to 2.73 in 2004. The retention and success ratios are slightly above the national averages.

Participation as a percentage was relatively steady at 2.84%. However, read as a ratio the UTS participation rate for people with disabilities declined dramatically from 0.74 in 2003 to 0.24 in 2004. All NSW universities showed a similar decline, reflecting the changed value upon which the ratio is calculated (from 4% people in NSW with a disability pre-2004 to 11.4% in 2004).

UTS aims to improve the access and participation rates for people with a disabilities to at least the national average (currently between 3 – 3.5%). With funding now reliant on the numbers of students registered as having a disability at each institution, a particular focus in 2005-2006 will be to encourage students with disabilities to identify at enrolment.

A number of factors will continue to hinder the achievement of improved statistics: students who are unwilling to disclose at the time of enrolment (particularly students with 'invisible' disabilities who prefer to use disability services on an as-needs basis); students with disabilities who are self-sufficient and see no benefit in disclosing at enrolment; continued improvements in providing accessible teaching and university services so that students do not need to request special adjustments.

UTS will continue to provide a comprehensive range of support services to students with disabilities. In 2005, in addition to implementing a wide range of strategies under the UTS Disability Action Plan, UTS will focus on two key teaching and learning initiatives: improved provision of reading materials in alternative formats, and training students with disabilities in the use of assistive technologies.

2.3 People from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB)

As a metropolitan university, UTS has more than double the national access rate for NESB students, and a participation ratio of 1.38 in 2004. Retention and success ratios are above or on par with national averages.

Participation for this group is not evenly distributed across the University, and 'traditional' disciplines for NESB students at UTS are IT, Engineering and Business. 'Non-traditional' disciplines are Education, Nursing, Midwifery & Health, Humanities, and Law. Non-traditional faculties will be encouraged to address access issues for NESB students under the new Student Equity Strategy 2005-2008, via outreach and access programs that target students demonstrating multiple disadvantage (LSES plus inclusion in another equity group).

2.4 Gender Equity

The revised Higher Education Equity Support Program designates 'gender equity' as a category that universities may report on.

UTS has a strong commitment to continuing to improve the access and success of females in non-traditional fields, and is unlikely to implement similar programs for males in non-traditional fields as there are no strong equity grounds to do so. UTS sees the low representation of males in Nursing and Education as related to the relatively low pay and status of these professions, and not to structural barriers in higher education. Also, the low representation of males in these courses does not translate into disadvantage in the professions, where they are highly represented as senior nurses and school principals.

UTS will continue to use 15% as the benchmark for females in Engineering, and 40% as the benchmark for females in other non-traditional fields.

Access for female students in Engineering reached 16.33 in 2004. If this upward trend continues it will still take some years for this achievement to influence the still under target participation rate of 13.24%.

Access for female students in Architecture and Building declined in 2004 to 33.33% against the national average of 42.27%. The participation rate of 35.59% is also under the target 40%.

Access and participation for female students in Information Technology has followed a national decline since data commenced in 2001, and rests in the low-mid 20% range.

UTS is currently exploring educational access options to increase the number of offers made to female students applying for non-traditional fields of study at UTS.

2.5 People from rural and isolated areas

As a metropolitan university with limited student accommodation, in a state with a relatively high proportion of regional universities, UTS has not made access and participation of rural and isolated students a priority. However, Indigenous students on 'block' programs are important members of this group at UTS.

3. EQUITY MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

3.1 Monitoring and managing equity strategies

UTS embeds equity policy and planning in **all decision-making committees** of the university.

The **Equity & Diversity Unit** monitors student equity group access, participation, retention and success on an annual basis. This information is used to determine student equity priorities and support the implementation of new initiatives. Faculties are also required to report on student equity in faculty strategic plans.

A number of individual units have specific responsibilities in relation to providing services to students from equity groups. The **English Language Study Skills Assistance Centre (ELSSA)**, the **Special Needs Service**, various **Faculty-based study centres** and the **Library** all evaluate their services on an annual basis.

Student and staff equity is the key purpose of a number of university committees, including the **Accessible Environments Advisory Group**, the **Disability Action Plan Committee**, the **Reconciliation Working Party**, and the **Equity Reference Group**. These committees monitor and/or implement specific UTS strategies, and also act as vehicles for stakeholder feedback.

The **Equity Reference Group (ERG)** reports annually to the UTS Council and is responsible for providing advice and monitoring the implementation of UTS student and staff equity policies and

programs. The ERG has student and staff representatives from each equity group, and is chaired by a member of the UTS Council.

Student equity at UTS is supported by **a range of policies and plans** including the UTS Disability Action Plan, Aboriginal Education Plan, the Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement, Non-discriminatory Language Policy, Prevention of Harassment Policy, Code of Conduct, Reconciliation Statement, Work, Study & Carers' Responsibilities Policy, and the Equal Opportunity Statement.

3.2 Links with strategic planning

In 2005 UTS developed an **Equity Enabling Plan 2005-2008** to support its Strategy Plan 2005-2008. The commitments outlined in the University's various equity plans are encapsulated in the three core objectives of the Equity Enabling Plan, and are supported by strategies and key indicators:

1. Develop community outreach to enhance access and recruitment of equity groups
2. Improve educational and employment outcomes for equity groups
3. Continue to develop a diverse, inclusive and accessible University environment

The Equity Enabling Plan is supported by the new **UTS Student Equity Strategy** that provides a four-part framework to improve the access and success of equity group students, with a focus on Indigenous Australians and students experiencing multiple disadvantage:

1. Outreach
2. Admission
3. Support and Success
4. Inclusive Community

Multiple disadvantage, in the context of the UTS Student Equity Strategy, is defined as students from a LSES background who also belong to another equity target group.

The ATN group of universities sponsors the **ATN Access and Equity Working Group** to develop and share strategies to improve the recruitment, retention, progression and graduation of equity group students. The Working Group's 2005 project again focuses on low income students, and aims to establish long-term strategies to improve outcomes for low-income students at ATN universities.

4. STATEMENT OF ELIBILITY FOR EQUITY SUPPORT FUNDING

Attachment 1 is the UTS Statement of Eligibility demonstrating how it meets the criteria for Higher Education Equity Support Funding.

5. CONTACT DETAILS

Ms Ruth Thompson
Deputy Director and Manager Student Equity
Equity & Diversity Unit
Ph 02 9514 1084
Email: Ruth.Thompson@uts.edu.au

Ms Marie Flood
Manager
Special Needs and Financial Assistance
Student Support Unit

Ph 02 9514 1183
Email: Marie.Flood@uts.edu.au

ENDORSED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

**By Professor Ross Milbourne
Vice-Chancellor**

Date:

Attachment 1

UTS STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES PROMOTING THE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS FROM EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS

A. OUTREACH PROGRAMS

A1. UTS schools outreach activities and partnerships

Name	Strategy
Indigenous Education Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning - Faculty of Education - Faculty of Business - Faculty of IT - Faculty of Nursing - Faculty of Law 	A comprehensive and well-resourced scheme for current and non-current school leavers that includes visits and relationship-building with targeted communities and schools, special entry provisions, and orientation and special support for enrolled students.
Women in Engineering Schools Outreach Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faculty of Engineering 	A comprehensive and well-resourced scheme that includes visits to targeted schools, and orientation and special support for enrolled female students.
U @ UTS Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity & Diversity Unit 	A one-day taster program for Year 11 students targeting disadvantaged high schools and coordinated by the Equity & Diversity Unit. It provides faculty specific sessions, university life sessions and tours. Peer Networkers assist on the day. In 2004, 160 students from 12 high schools participated in the program.
ELSSA TAFE Shadowing Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English Language Study Skills Assistance Centre 	Available to English for Academic Purposes Certificate students. The program runs twice a year for 40-80 students and includes a tour of the university and includes activities with Peer Mentors.
Memorandums of Understanding with High Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faculty of Education - Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning 	The Faculty of Education has instituted collaborative partnerships with the Northern Beaches Secondary College, Sydney Secondary College, and recently Alexandria Park Community School. The partnerships focus on professional educational development and building capacity of school and student communities. The MOU with Alexandria Park has an equity focus, in response to the high numbers of students from Indigenous and LSES backgrounds.

A2. UTS access programs and alternative pathways that benefit equity group students

Name	Strategy
inpUTS Educational Access Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity & Diversity Unit 	Open to current and non-current school leavers who demonstrate educational disadvantage and have never enrolled in university-level study. Eligible applicants receive a 7-10 point UAI concession on standard entry for UTS courses.
UTS Special Admission Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity & Diversity Unit 	Open to current and non-current school leavers who demonstrate educational disadvantage, refugee status, or who are elite athletes/performers. Eligible applicants receive a 7-10 point bonus equivalent to the inpUTS Educational Access Scheme.
Indigenous Education Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning - Faculty of Education - Faculty of Business - Faculty of IT - Faculty of Nursing - Faculty of Law 	A comprehensive and well-resourced scheme for current and non-current school leavers that includes visits and relationship-building with targeted communities and schools, special entry provisions, and orientation and special support for enrolled students.

UTS Mature age entry – Faculties	For students over the age of 20, incorporating work experience and motivation to study. Entry requirements vary according to Faculty.
Insearch programs – Faculties	Fee paying courses for International and local students (roughly 20% local students). International students gain direct entry upon completion of the English Program. Local students completing Diploma courses apply to UTS through UAC and compete for a place.
TAFE Tertiary Preparation Certificate, HSC or Diploma courses – Faculties	UTS offers some subject exemptions for students who have completed Diploma courses. TPC and HSC applicants apply to UTS through UAC and compete for a place. Many UTS courses don't recognise the TPC.
Special Tertiary Entrance Test (STAT) – Faculties	Recognised at UTS in most courses as an equivalent HSC qualification.
UTS and TAFE Outreach Joint Course – Adult Learning and Teaching – Faculty of Education	<p>A joint program with TAFE Outreach, where UTS runs a module in an Outreach course based on a first year core subject in the BEd (Adult Ed).</p> <p>The module is taught by TAFE Outreach teachers, often with the involvement with UTS Staff. Students who complete this module successfully and who are accepted in the BEd gain advanced standing for the equivalent subject in the BEd. The module targets mature age students.</p>
UTS Refugee Academic Skills Assessment – ELSSA Centre and Equity & Diversity Unit	Available to non-current school leaver TPV Scholarship applicants and non-current Special Admission–Refugee applicants who hold Australian humanitarian visas and whose disadvantage precludes them from demonstrating academic ability under existing UTS selection criteria.

B. SPECIALISED SUPPORT TO ASSIST WITH PROGRESSION

B1. Personal support services for UTS students

STRATEGIES	LSES	PWD	NESB	Women NT/PG	Rural & Isolated	Refugees	Indigenous
Personal Support							
Careers Service, including web site for students with disabilities and assistance for recent migrants	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Counselling Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Faculty Academic Liaison Officers		✓	✓				
Faculty-based Orientation programs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hearing Loops and other assistive technologies		✓					
inpUTS Educational Access Scheme Orientation Program	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing Service, including priority house for equity groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning							✓
Library guides in languages other than English			✓				
Special Needs Service for students with disabilities		✓					
UTS Peer Networkers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

B2. Learning supports provided at UTS

STRATEGIES	LSES	PWD	NESB	Women NT/PG	Rural & Isolated	Refugees	Indigenous
Learning Support							
Alternative Assessments		✓	✓				
Computer Support Centre	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disability Resource Room		✓					
English Language Study Skills Assistance Centre	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Faculty Academic Liaison Officers		✓	✓				
Laptop Loan Service		✓					
Library services for remote students					✓		
Library Special Needs Liaison staff, website, assistive technologies, and multi-format reading materials		✓					✓
Library IT and Information Skills program	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Library: International Librarian			✓			✓	
Library: Chinese language web site			✓				
Special Needs Service for students with disabilities		✓					
Study Skills Centres: Maths, Computing Physics, Engineering, IT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Student Services Unit Counselling Service Study Workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
UTS Bell Program (online academic skills tutorials)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Women in Engineering Unit				✓			
Women in Computing Program				✓			

B3. Other UTS programs and policies that promote equitable access and participation

- Auslan training for staff and students
- Cultural Diversity Week
- Disability Action Plan – accessible environments, inclusive practices
- Disability Awareness Training for staff
- Disability Projects Fund
- Diversity Employment Strategy
- EDU Diversity Awareness training programs
- Multi-faith Chaplaincy
- Non-discriminatory language guidelines
- UTS Equal Opportunity Statement
- UTS Reconciliation Statement
- Wingara Indigenous Employment and Professional Development Program
- Women@UTS Professional Development Program

C. ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH LEARNING SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM

UTS administers the Commonwealth Learning Scholarships, targeting students most in need by assessing for multiple disadvantage. Low income students may also apply under the following additional categories:

- Indigenous Australian
- English language difficulty
- Effects of trauma and/or abuse
- Long-term medical condition/disability
- Sole parent/carer responsibilities
- Female studying in Engineering, Information Technology, Architecture or Building

D. INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

D1. UTS Diversity Access Scholarships

UTS provides Diversity Access Scholarships to students assessed under the Commonwealth Learning Scholarships criteria. In 2005 UTS distributed these scholarships as follows:

- 9 x \$2,000 one-off grants
- 60 x \$600 one-off grants
- 138 x \$390 one-off grants

D2. UTS financial support programs

STRATEGIES	LSES	PWD	NESB	Women NT/PG	Rural & Isolated	Refugees	Indigenous
Financial Support							
Childcare Subsidy Scheme	✓						
Computer Loan and Grant Fund	✓				✓	✓	
Disability Equipment Student Grants Fund 2003		✓					
inpUTS and Indigenous students First Semester Service Fee Waiver	✓						
Interest-free Student Loan Scheme	✓						
UTS Housing Subsidy	✓						
Jobs@Uni database for equity group students	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

D3. Other UTS student equity scholarships

Scholarship	Value	Quantity	Duration	Merit	LSES	Women	Indigenous	Rural	Faculty-based	Other
UTS Diversity Access Scholarships (details in D1)	\$2,000, \$600, \$400	200	1 year		x					
Clare Burton Scholarship	\$10,000	1	12-18 months	x		x				ATN postgraduate research in gender equality
Faculty of Business: Corporate Express Australia Limited Scholarship	\$3,000	1	1 year	x	x				x	
Faculty of Engineering: George J Haggarty Civil Engineering Scholarship	\$1,000-\$1,200	1	1 year					x	x	Commencing student
Faculty of Engineering: Indigenous Scholarship	\$3,500	1	1 year	x			x		x	Commencing student
Faculty of Engineering: National Association of Women in Construction Award	\$2,000	1	1 year	x		x			x	Construction-related course
Faculty of Engineering: Zonta Club of Sydney Breakfast Award	\$1,000	1	1 year	x		x			x	Completed first year Engineering FT
Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences: Indigenous Scholarships	\$6,000	2	2 years	x			x		x	
Faculty of IT: Unisys Scholarship	\$5,000	1	1 year	x	x				x	part-time student
Faculty of Law: Eric Dreikurs Scholarship and UTS Law Alumni Scholarship	\$400	5	1 year	x	x				x	
Faculty of Law: Greenwood Scholarship	\$1,000	1	1 year				x		x	
Faculty of Law: Veronica Pike Prize	\$100	1	1 year	x		x			x	
Faculty of Nursing: ATSI Postgraduate Scholarship	HECS or fee exemption for 3rd year	1	1 year	x			x		x	Postgraduate student
InpUTS and Indigenous Service Fee Waiver	\$100-\$200	250	1 year		x		x	x		Also covers disability, other disadvantage; for commencing students.
Jumbunna IHL: Monika Law Undergraduate Scholarships	\$1,000	2	1 year	x			x			Non-traditional areas of study for Indigenous students
Jumbunna IHL: Bob Morgan Australian Indigenous International Student/Staff Exchange	up to \$4,000	1	1 year	x			x			Second year students
Jumbunna IHL: Bruce and Carol Kendall Memorial Undergraduate Scholarships for Indigenous students	1,000	6	1 year	x			x			UG students
Jumbunna IHL: Lindsay Croft Postgraduate Memorial Scholarship Award	\$1,250	1	2 years	x			x			Masters or PhD students
University Graduate School: PG Thesis Completion Equity Scholarships	up to \$5,000	8	1 year	x	x	x	x			Also covers Disability and Carer's Responsibilities

