ABORIGINAL EDUCATION WORKERS IN TASMANIA BECOMING TEACHERS

Clair Andersen, Lauren Gower and Mary O’Dowd

A report prepared for the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative by the University of Tasmania

July 2015
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION WORKERS IN TASMANIA BECOMING TEACHERS

This research project was conducted by the Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching and the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania under the leadership of Clair Andersen, Mary O’Dowd and Lauren Gower. It was funded by the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative.

RESEARCH TEAM

Clair Andersen  C1 Investigator
Mary O’Dowd  C2 Investigator
Lauren Gower  Key researcher and interviewer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the traditional owners, ancestors, elders and custodians of the countries in which we live and work: mouheneenner, panninher and leterermairrener countries. We also acknowledge the traditional owners, ancestors, elders and custodians of the countries we have travelled through and yarnd in as part of this research project.

Thank you to the research project advisors:

Theresa Sainty
Mark Godfrey
Jan Larcombe
Andrea Brumby

Thank you to the people who assisted us with this research project:

Vicky Nicholson
Richard Angus
Sarah Lackey
Libby Van Tienen
Tamzen Jeanneret

Thank you to the Aboriginal Education Workers who volunteered to be a part of this research project for your generosity.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Terminology and abbreviation 4
List of tables and figures 5

1. Executive summary 6

2. Introduction 9

3. Research Participants and Methodology 16

4. Findings: knowledge arising from yarns 20

5. Other project outcomes 39

6. Conclusions 41

7. Recommendations 44

References 47
Appendix 1 Information sheet 51
Appendix 2 Consent form 54
Appendix 3 AEYLO position description 56
Appendix 4 AEW position description 59
Appendix 5 AEO position description 63
Appendix 6 UTAS Associate Degree of Education Support 67
TERMINOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

In this report, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used because no AEWs participating in the research project identified as Torres Strait Islander.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AES</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEW</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEYLO</td>
<td>Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIEWs</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AITS</td>
<td>Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATAR</td>
<td>Australian Tertiary Admission Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATQF</td>
<td>Australian Quality Training Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEd</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAG</td>
<td>Council of Australian Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Education Tasmania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUCIER</td>
<td>David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FoE</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individual Education Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATSITI</td>
<td>More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEECDYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTeach</td>
<td>Master of Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPL</td>
<td>Recognition of Prior Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCEO</td>
<td>Tasmanian Catholic Education Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TILT</td>
<td>Tasmanian Institute for Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRB</td>
<td>Teacher Registration Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UniSA</td>
<td>University of South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTAS</td>
<td>University of Tasmania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOTES</td>
<td>Victorian Occupational Training Educational Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1  Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in UTAS education courses in 2015
Table 2  Activities undertaken in AEW role
Table 3  Key factors influencing Aboriginal student success at school

Figure 1  Time working in AEW role
Figure 2  Key motivations for AEWs to enrol in a teaching degree
Figure 3  Key barriers to AEWs enrolling in a teaching degree
Figure 4  AITSL Focus Area 1.4
Figure 5  AITSL Focus Area 2.4
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project contributes to a key outcome of the MATSITI project to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers. This qualitative research report identifies strategies for increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers based on the views and insights of AEWs in Tasmania on what would foster their engagement in teaching, as well as what would encourage Aboriginal student engagement in school.

This research project was guided by three key questions:

- What factors motivate, support and encourage AEWs in Tasmania to enrol in a teaching degree?
- What are the barriers to AEWs in Tasmania enrolling in a teaching degree?
- What are the views of AEWs in Tasmania on what factors influence Aboriginal student engagement and success in Tasmania?

The research was conducted in two group yarns and twelve individual yarns with AEWs across Tasmania. This was a qualitative study and information was manually coded into themes arising from yarns.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT:

GOOD PRACTICE

- Participants noted that feeling valued in the AEW role motivates AEWs to enrol in teaching. AEWs feel valued in their roles when principals, teachers and schools are supportive and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and people.

- Principals play a key role in influencing the culture of a school, which impacts on the scope of the AEW role and on the experiences of Aboriginal students in the school.

- Student-teacher relationships are a key factor in Aboriginal student success at school and AEWs play an important role in maintaining student-teacher relationships.

---

1 For the purposes of this research project, AEWs included AEYLOs, AEWs, AEOs and Aboriginal TAs in Tasmania.
• Non-Indigenous teachers who include and value Aboriginal perspectives and celebrate Aboriginal culture and identity impact positively on Aboriginal student success at school.

NON-INDIGENOUS BARRIERS TO OVERCOME

• A number of participants identified that some non-Indigenous teachers need PD on how to communicate more effectively with Aboriginal people and to recognise they are operating in a historical and cultural interface.

• A number of participants noted that some non-Indigenous teachers need PD on how to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and or Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives in their teaching.

• A significant number of participants believed that heavy workloads impact on the ability of teachers to educate Aboriginal students and students in general.

• A significant number of participants felt that the AEW role is not sufficiently valued in the education system in Tasmania at present because it lacks influence, support, structure and security. Some participants felt that this impacts on AEWs’ desire and ability to enrol in teaching and indicates a need for PD with principals and teachers on working with AEWs.

STRUCTURAL ISSUES

• RPL was the most cited motivation to enrol in a teaching degree and a significant number of participants felt that RPL would make a teaching degree more desirable to AEWs.

• Some participants identified that flexible delivery combined with face to face intensives would accommodate participants’ work and family commitments and also provide support in gaining a qualification.

• Participants noted that career pathways need to be communicated to students as early as possible to encourage Aboriginal student success.

• Some participants were unaware of diplomas, certificates and degrees that do exist, which highlighted a lack of communication around pathways and support for AEWs considering enrolling in teaching.
CULTURAL EDUCATION

- A number of participants noted that identity impacts upon Aboriginal student success at school in Tasmania and linked this to the prevalence of deficit discourses in schools, insufficient inclusion of Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives in classrooms and a lack of role models and mentors.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

- Money was the most cited barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree. Most AEWs work to support their families and consider full time study incompatible with work and family commitments.

- A quota of teaching positions that function to ensure employment for Aboriginal teaching graduates would act as a motivation for AEWs to enrol in teaching.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE RESEARCH²:

1. Provide AEWs with information about existing teaching courses and pathways
2. Provide AEWs with PD and paid study leave
3. Establish an 8 per cent quota of teaching positions for AEWs and Aboriginal students who qualify as teachers
4. Consider RPL for AEWs enrolling in teaching
5. Increase cross-institutional communication among the DoE, the UTAS FoE and TILT.
6. Increase support for AEWs in the DoE and TCEO.
7. Provide funding, including scholarships, to overcome inequity which disadvantages Aboriginal people gaining access to university
8. Make PD on AITSL Standards 1.4 and 2.4 compulsory for all teachers who have not undertaken relevant training

²Go to page 45 for more detail on recommendations
2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to outline what AEWs’ views are on becoming teachers in Tasmania, and to recommend pathways to make teaching degrees accessible and achievable for AEWs and Aboriginal students in Tasmania.

2.2 AIMS

The aims of this research project were:

i. To identify what factors motivate, support and encourage AEWs in Tasmania to enrol in a teaching degree,

ii. To identify what barriers prevent AEWs in Tasmania from enrolling in a teaching degree,

iii. To identify the views of AEWs in Tasmania on what factors influence Aboriginal student engagement and success in Tasmania.

2.3 BACKGROUND

THE MATSITI INITIATIVE

MATSITI is a four year national project funded by the Australian Government DEEWR to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in teaching positions in Australia (DUCIER 2012).

The MATSITI project aligns with the COAG National Indigenous Reform Agreement and its Closing the Gap targets and is led by senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators with the support of DUCIER located in the University of South Australia (DUCIER 2012).

This research project was funded by the MATSITI project and contributes to a key outcome of the MATSITI project by presenting a qualitative research report identifying strategies for increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers based on the views of AEWs in Tasmania. This research project builds on past research relating to AEWs and provides AEWs in Tasmania with the opportunity to contribute their voices to the research conversation.
THE AEW ROLE

AEWs have been employed in public primary and secondary schools across Australia under various guises for over forty years (Gower et al 2011). Initially the role was associated with reserves and mission schools (Goddard & Anderson, 1998) but later it was extended to include appointments in public schools with a majority of Aboriginal students in the early 1970s and then to schools where Aboriginal students were in a minority (Mackay, 1974).

Aboriginal Teacher Aide programs came into existence in the late 1960s as adult education programs affiliated with TAFE, which did not award full teacher certification or teaching degrees (Patton et al 2012). As early as the 1960s it was acknowledged that AIEWs were often exploited, underpaid and assigned menial tasks, and adult education courses were criticised for providing minimal social mobility for AIEWs (Patton et al 2012). In the late 1970s TAFE was advised to develop stronger links with teacher training institutions in an effort to provide meaningful career pathways for AIEWs (Patton et al 2012). As AIEWs are frequently among the least trained and most marginalised teaching personnel, university education faculties are urged to provide AIEWs with opportunities to achieve ‘a genuine and qualified status’ (Cooper 2008 cited in Patton et al 2012).

In Tasmania, a number of roles for Aboriginal education support exist: the AEYLO role, the AEW role and the AEO role. In 2014, there were four AEYLOs, nineteen AEWs and five AEOs working in Tasmania (Godfrey, Manager AES, 2014, pers. comm., 31 March).

AEYLOS IN TASMANIA

AEYLOs engage families with Aboriginal children from birth to four years of age in a variety of early learning activities and programs; they play a key role in connecting families with young Aboriginal children to schools and providing a nurturing and stimulating environment for young Aboriginal children to learn (DoE 2012). AEYLOs are based around Tasmania in Child and Family Centres or schools around Tasmania (Godfrey, Manager AES, 2014, pers. comm., 31 March). AEYLOs are employed in permanent or fixed-term full-time positions and receive a General Stream Band 3 pay classification (see Appendix 3).

AEWS IN TASMANIA

AEWs facilitate and sustain communication between Aboriginal students, parents or carers, the Aboriginal community and the school in which they are employed; they also play a key role in promoting a culturally safe and supportive school environment in collaboration with teachers and the principal by contributing perspectives of Aboriginal people, community and culture (DoE 2012). AEWs are based in primary schools around Tasmania (DoE 2015). AEWs are employed in fixed-term full or part-time positions and receive a General Stream Band 2 pay classification (see Appendix 4).
AEOS IN TASMANIA

AEOs promote and support Aboriginal student engagement, achievement and post-school transitions; they play a key role in building the capacity of schools to create culturally responsive and inclusive environments that value Aboriginal students, families, community and culture (DoE 2012). AEOs are based in high schools around Tasmania and usually service a network of schools from one base (Godfrey, Manager AES, 2014, pers. comm., 31 March). AEOs are employed in permanent or fixed-term full-time positions and receive a General Stream Band 3 pay classification (see Appendix 5).

DISTRIBUTION OF AEWS IN TASMANIA

AEYLOs are allocated to Child and Family Centres or schools in communities with a significant number of Aboriginal families, while AEWs and AEOs are allocated to ‘focus schools’ (Godfrey, Manager AES, 2014, pers. comm., 31 March). The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014 (MCEECDYA 2010a, p. 44) identifies focus schools as ‘those schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with the greatest need and where effort should be focused to make the greatest difference.’ Focus schools were identified using a three tier approach: firstly, primary schools were ranked by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments in descending order until 75 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments were included in the list of potential focus schools; secondly, schools with at least 25 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students below the minimum national standard in reading, writing or numeracy were identified; and finally, schools were included in or excluded from the list based on special cases (MCEECDYA 2010a). In Tasmania, seventy two focus schools were identified: sixty two government schools, nine Catholic schools and one independent school (MCEECDYA 2010b). Of the seventy two focus schools, fifty are primary schools, eleven are high schools and eleven are combined schools; forty one are provincial schools, twenty nine are metropolitan schools and two are remote schools (MCEECDYA 2010b).

In previous years, a number of federally funded programs supported the employment of AEWs in focus schools (for example the Raising the Bar Closing the Gap maana program, the Next Steps program and the Investing in Focus Schools partnership agreement); however, many of these programs have ceased and AES funds identified schools to employ the remaining AEW positions in Tasmania as most schools have chosen not to fund AEW positions from their own resource packages (Godfrey, Manager AES, 2014, pers. comm., 2 April).
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SCHOOL STUDENTS AND DOE EMPLOYEES IN TASMANIA

In 2011, 4.7 per cent of the population of Tasmania identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). In 2014, 7.9 per cent of school students in Tasmania identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2014). In June 2014, 187 individuals employed in DoE across all positions identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, representing 1.9 per cent of the total DoE workforce (DoE 2014).

Tasmania, therefore, has a low rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander DoE employees (less than 2 per cent) relative to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (almost 8 per cent). It is arguable, therefore, that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are required to achieve parity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in Tasmania.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN TASMANIA

At present, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent 1.1 per cent of the higher education student population in Australia and 2.5 per cent of the population, and are therefore significantly underrepresented in higher education (Edwards & van der Brugge 2012 cited in Edwards & McMillan 2015).

In May 2015 in Tasmania, a total of 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in UTAS education courses out of an overall total of approximately 2000 enrolments. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, therefore, represent approximately 2.5 per cent of the student population enrolled in UTAS education courses (Brookes, Manager FoE, 2015, pers. comm., 27 May).
Table 1: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students enrolled in UTAS education courses in 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTAS Course</th>
<th>No. of ATSI students enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree (Education Support)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Primary)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (HPE)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Applied Learning)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Teaching</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To achieve parity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in Tasmania, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would need to constitute almost 8 per cent of graduating teachers in Tasmania. In addition, Tasmania needs higher than parity Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student numbers in education courses to achieve parity in schools.

In a recent analysis of national data on university enrolments in Australia, the main variables linked to lower likelihood of degree completion (for all students) were part-time enrolment, external enrolment, an ATAR below 60, and enrolling at an age over 25 (Edwards & McMillan 2015). AEWs in Tasmania who choose to enrol in a teaching degree are likely to fall into one or more of these categories. However, the impact of some of these factors may be mitigated. Students enrolled full time have a completion rate of 78.8 per cent versus 49.2 per cent for part time students and internal students have a completion rate of 76.6 per cent versus 46.6 per cent for external students and 70.6 per cent for multi-modal students (Edwards & McMillan 2015). This suggests that multi-modal delivery may increase the completion rates for AEWs enrolling in teaching degrees in Tasmania.

The national completion rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nine years after commencing a bachelor degree in 2005 was 46.7 per cent compared to a 73.6 per cent completion rate for all students (Edwards & McMillan 2015). More than one in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students dropped out before the second year of the degree and another quarter of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students dropped out within nine years; comparatively, 73.9 per cent of non-Indigenous students completed a bachelor degree within nine years, 8.1 per cent dropped out before the second year of the degree and 13.9 per cent dropped out within nine years (Edwards & McMillan 2015). This indicates support is required after enrolment in order to encourage completion of the degree and to make a difference.
EXISTING QUALIFICATIONS AND PATHWAYS

TAFE certification III is a main pathway for AEWs into teaching and is a pathway to a Bachelor of Education\(^3\); for example, the University of Notre Dame’s Certificate III in Education Support (CHC30812) includes the *Work effectively as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander education worker* elective unit (CHCEDS318B) and is delivered part-time for one year (University of Notre Dame 2013). It offers RPL under the AQTF for the Certificate (University of Notre Dame 2013). The mode of delivery includes study in the workplace and face-to-face study with ongoing lecturer support (University of Notre Dame 2013).

The University of Ballarat ran short training courses for Koorie Educators for two years in the late 1990s and when the university became a dual sector TAFE and tertiary education institution they began offering the Certificate III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education in 2000 (What Works 2015a). The method of delivery and the location of the delivery were found to be important in fostering engagement:

*Going back to the year 2000, it was all delivered centrally at the University of Ballarat TAFE campus. It was the big lecture hall model, and everyone was sitting there and we’d just deliver the information.*

*But slowly we got smarter... we found that a lot of people didn’t want to come away from home, especially to a central place, because even though it was good for us in terms of large numbers, it wasn’t good for them because of family responsibilities. So, since last year, we’re delivering in three regional sites: Ballarat, Benalla and Sale, so we’re finding where the workers are and then we’re going to a location close to them. That way, people are, if anything, one to two hours away from home and they can manage the travel.*

*They come in for two days once a term. The trainers go out and deliver the content, talk to them between the training days and give them support. The Koorie Educators send their work in.*

*This year we’ve developed some more up-front assessment material as well, so we can go out to the workplaces and look at their evidence. It might be talking to them or their principals talking to them as well.*

Victoria Koorie Education Strategy Team Manager, Angela Singh (What Works 2015b)

*TasTAFE* Certificate III in Education Support (CHC30213) includes the core unit *Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people* (HLTHIR404D);

\(^3\) It is important to note that no AEWs in this study were aware of this pathway indicating the need for DOE and TCEO to provide this information to their staff.
however, there are no elective units available for AEWs (TasTAFE 2015a). A Certificate IV in Education Support (CHC40213) and a Diploma in Education Support (CHC51308) also exist but are not offered in Tasmania (My Skills 2015a, My Skills 2015b). The Certificate IV in Education Support (CHC40213) includes the electives \textit{Use educational strategies to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander education} (CHCEDS024), \textit{Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people} (HLTHIR404D) and \textit{Assist teacher to develop Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language and culture lessons} (CHCEDS029) but also lacks elective units for AEWs (My Skills 2015a). The Diploma in Education Support (CHC51308), however, includes the electives \textit{Undertake community sector work within own community} (CHCCS421B), \textit{Promote and implement Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language and culture programs} (CHCEDS403B), \textit{Liaise with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community re education program} (CHCEDS404A) and \textit{Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students} (CHCEDS505A) (My Skills 2015b).

Victorian Occupational Training Educational Services (VOTES) offers the Certificate III in Education Support (CHC30812) and includes four Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander education worker electives: \textit{Communicate with parents, students and colleagues in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language} (CHCEDS317B), \textit{Work effectively as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander education worker} (CHCEDS318B), \textit{Promote and implement Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language and culture programs} (CHCEDS403B) and \textit{Liaise with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community re-education program} (CHCEDS404A) (VOTES n.d.).

At present, the TRB mandates core requirements for the teaching degrees offered in Australia.

Since 2013 UTAS offers an Associate Degree of Education Support (see Appendix 6) which targets TAs and provides RPL. The course comprises 16 units and its duration is 2 years (full-time) to 5 years (part-time). Students enrolling in the course must be employed as a TA and undertake distance/online study with opportunities to study some units on-campus in Launceston or Cradle Coast. Students who undertake further teacher training receive significant credit towards a UTAS BEd.

In 2012, Premier Lara Giddings launched three $6000 Lucy Beeton Aboriginal Teacher Scholarships in an effort to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers in Tasmania (Bolger 2012). Ms Giddings stated that fewer than 1 per cent of teachers in Tasmania were Aboriginal compared to 8 per cent of students, and that increasing Tasmanian Aboriginal teachers in schools may contribute to improving the performance of Aboriginal students (Bolger 2012). The Tasmanian state government recently announced that 50 teacher assistants in Tasmania will be provided with on-the-job-training for a fully funded Certificate III Diploma of Education Support (Bird 2015). This program will be delivered by the Department of Education’s Professional Learning Institute and the University of Tasmania (Bird 2015).
3. RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants in the research project were AEWs working in Tasmanian schools. Twelve AEWs - nine women and three men - participated in individual yarns\(^4\), and all were over eighteen years of age. Fourteen AEWs participated in group yarns: five AEWs participated in the first group yarn and nine AEWs participated in the second group yarn. Six of the AEWs who participated in individual yarns also participated in group yarns. All participants in the research project identified as Aboriginal. Figure 1 outlines the amount of time that each of the participants in individual yarns have been working in the AEW role.

**Figure 1: Time working in AEW role**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of time worked in the AEW role.]

The AEW role comprises a number of activities and responsibilities. Table 2 outlines the activities that participants undertake in the AEW role.

**Table 2: Activities undertaken in AEW role**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>% of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student support</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring attendance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy and numeracy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging stereotypes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) Yarns/yarning- Aboriginal methodology see methodology section.
3.2 YARNING METHODOLOGY

Yarning methodology has links with empowering research and non-exploitative research methodologies including feminist research (Harding 1987; Lather 1988; Reinharz 1983). However, yarning also differs as it is a culturally appropriate methodology for working with Aboriginal people (Bessarab & Ng’andu 2010; Dean 2010; Fredericks et al 2011; Geia et al 2013). Yarning aims to embody cultural respect and protocols including respect of Elders, gender dynamics as well as ‘deep listening’. Deep listening is a cultural practice that embraces silence and extended reflection (Atkinson 2002). This extended reflection means a returning to participants to talk again about understandings; it acknowledges understanding and dialogue as critically linked. It moves beyond western methodologies that ‘feedback’ findings to participants as the feedback process may be extended over 2, 3 or 4 yarns extended over weeks, depending on participants’ interest in extending the yarn. Yarning is a way of sharing and creating knowledge that has been practised by Indigenous peoples for generations (Dean 2010) and in recent years it has been gaining recognition as a research methodology in academia (Bessarab & Ng’andu 2010; Dean 2010; Fredericks et al 2011).

Indigenous communities around the world have been positioned as the objects of research and subject to culturally unsafe research practice (Rigney 2001; Tuhiwai Smith 1999); yarning as a methodology contributes to the decolonisation of research practice and the repositioning of Indigenous methods and knowledges as sovereign, valued and rigorous (Rigney 2001; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Battiste, 2000). Yarning embeds the core values that underpin cultural safety - ‘reciprocity, respect, equality, responsibility, survival and protection, and spirit and integrity’ (Dean 2010, p. 9) - into a methodology that transforms research practice. Moreover, yarning is a methodology that requires the researcher to exchange a leading role in the research project for a reflective role (Dean 2010); this allows the participants agency to shape the research process and therefore demonstrates a deep respect for cultural protocol, knowledge and process. In addition, by focusing on relationships (Bessarab & Ng’andu 2010) yarning fulfils another key cultural requirement for integrity in research, and simultaneously grants the flexibility required for these relationships to function outside of a researcher-researched paradigm.

3.3 PROCESS

The research project comprised two group yarns and twelve individual yarns with AEWs across Tasmania. Good relationships were developed with AES and TCEO, who were supportive of the project and assisted in reaching potential participants. These organisations circulated an email through their networks to distribute an information sheet (see Appendix 1) about the research project and invite AEWs to participate in it. In addition, AES invited researchers to attend three AEW meetings to introduce themselves, distribute information about the research project and invite AEWs to participate in it. AEWs who were interested in taking part in the research project contacted the researchers to discuss the research project further.
and to arrange a time for an individual yarn. Participation in the research project was entirely voluntary and the consent form (see Appendix 2) signed by participants clearly stated that participants could withdraw from the research project at any time.

The principal research team comprised three members: Clair Andersen, who has Yanyuwa and Gunggalida clan connections in the Northern Territory; Lauren Gower, who has connections to the Dolly Dalrymple mob in Tasmania; and Mary O’Dowd, a non-Indigenous academic. After the research project was designed by the research team and the methodology developed the idea that the Aboriginal members of the research team only would undertake the interviews was decided collaboratively in order to be culturally respectful. The yarning methodology was used with AEWs for empowerment and respect (Parry & Wells 1997) and to avoid silencing (O’Dowd 2012).

The research interviewers noted core themes during individual yarns and elaborated on these core themes in detailed notes directly after the yarn. Findings were discussed collectively (between the three researchers) to gain insights from differing cultural positioning and knowledge.

The yarning methodology embraced taking detailed notes of the individual yarns which were then sent to participants by email or hard copy for review. Participants were contacted by email or phone to arrange a time to discuss the detailed notes- to have a yarn after the yarn - if they wished. During the yarn after the yarn, research interviewers shared findings, refined learning and consulted as to whether the content of the yarn could be included in the report. Researchers also asked permission to write down powerful phrases and include them as quotes and/or paraphrased statements in the report.

Pseudonyms were used when reporting information to protect the anonymity of participants. Information gathered was analysed and a final draft report produced. All participants in individual yarns were again contacted by email or phone to arrange a time to discuss the draft report before its submission if they wished. The process of communicating with participants in individual yarns at the information gathering, analysis and recommendation stages of the project was part of the yarning methodology (Fredericks et al 2011).

### 3.4 LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

The research methodology was designed to be respectful of and responsive to cultural protocol and it thereby developed over the course of the research project. Initially, the research project was to comprise interviews and a survey. Draft interview questions were developed by the research team in consultation with project advisors and staff in the DoE and AES. Yarning methodology was then discussed as a possibility and the team agreed to its use. The research project included face to face focus group discussions and individual interviews with AEWs
using this methodology. It became apparent that the concept of a survey was at odds with yarning methodology so the researchers re-examined the role of the interview questions and altered them to function as focus topics for yarns.

The re-framing of the ‘interviews’ and surveys as ‘yarns’ allowed participants greater agency in the research process and thereby supported the establishment of an environment of respect, inclusivity and empowerment, which is critical to yarning methodology (Fredericks & Adams 2011).

The spontaneous nature of conversations presented challenges to the research project. Two out of the three times that researchers attended AEW meetings to introduce themselves, distribute information about the research project and invite AEWs to participate, the AEWs present instantaneously began talking (yarning) about the research project topic. The first time this occurred the non-Indigenous researcher and the Aboriginal researcher were present. The idea to change the methodology to yarning was then developed and it was decided this research provided an ideal opportunity for the methodology to be owned by the Aboriginal members of the research team; they would yarn with AEWs. In addition to the yarns used the two attempts made by the main research interviewer to organise more group yarns. This was unsuccessful. Consequently, one unplanned group talk (yarn) that took place at first AEW meetings was included in the research project. The non-Indigenous researcher was involved in this group yarn.

The initial intention of the researchers was to record yarns but the act of asking permission to record the yarn caused discomfort to one researcher due to her positioning as an Aboriginal person undertaking research in her own community. This intensified when participants in the first two individual yarns indicated they would prefer note taking over recording. As a consequence of this, researchers noted core themes and key phrases during individual yarns and elaborated on them in detailed notes directly after the yarn, instead of recording. In cases where verbatim comments were not noted down during yarns, researchers adapted statements to reflect the nature of the communication; thus, there has been a small amount of interpretation of comments made by participants (Minniecon et al 2007).

Multiple stages of contact with participants resulted in the yarning process taking longer than anticipated. Organising yarns was a lengthy process. Time restraints and busy schedules mean that it was not possible to yarn with all participants in individual yarns at each stage of the research project.
4. FINDINGS: KNOWLEDGE ARISING FROM YARNS

4.1 WHAT MOTIVATES AEWS TO ENROL IN TEACHING DEGREES?

**Figure 3: Key motivations for AEWs to enrol in a teaching degree**

1. **RPL**

RPL was the most cited motivation to enrol in a teaching degree. Several participants noted that RPL would contribute to valuing the AEW role and also make a teaching degree more accessible to AEWs.

   If recognition of prior learning were available, I might consider enrolling in teaching (Participant A, September 2014)

   Credit for work experience might encourage AEWS to undertake further training because it recognises the knowledge and expertise that AEWS hold. Some of the work AEWS do in schools could be counted towards teaching prac, for example (Participant J, December 2014).

At present, TasTAFE offers RPL and it is possible to apply for university credit for TasTAFE units (TasTAFE 2015b). Participants, however, were unaware of this.
2. KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT EXISTS

A significant number of participants identified an AEW certificate, a course with various entry and exit points that awards certificates toward a teaching degree and flexible delivery as motivations to enrol in a teaching degree.

A four year degree feels like too much to take on at once. I’d prefer to enrol in a year long certificate that gives me an AEW or TA qualification (Participant F, November 2014).

If it was a shorter degree, or a year by year course with a certificate towards a teaching degree at the end of each year, I might consider it (Participant A, September 2014).

A four year degree can be daunting: short-term outcomes could help make it more achievable (Participant J, December 2014).

One of the short-term outcomes could be an AEW qualification. If someone intends to study the four year degree but decides to withdraw after a year, getting a certificate might impact on their working conditions. They might take on more responsibilities or get a pay rise, which might encourage them to study more (Participant J, December 2014).

I live a long way from campus so accessibility is an issue for me. Flexible delivery combined with onsite intensives might make it more achievable (Participant B, September 2014).

The delivery mode of teaching is important - a lot of people have very busy lives, and can’t travel long distances several times a week to attend regular lectures and tutorials. Bringing people together in a regional centre for a two-day intensive each month might work, and it would help create a community of mentors and undergraduates who can support each other (Participant J, December 2014).

Most participants, however, lacked knowledge of pre-existing qualifications and pathways into teaching degrees that offer the components identified above (for example, the UTAS Associate Degree of Education Support).

3. PAID STUDY LEAVE AND TIME TO STUDY AT WORK

A significant number of participants cited paid study leave as a motivation to enrol in a teaching degree.
I’m working five days a week at the moment and I’ve got access to one day of study leave per week, which is motivation to enrol (Participant I, December 2014).

Most AEWs, however, do not have access to paid study leave. Time to study at work was another widely cited motivation to enrol in a teaching degree.

If work gave me time, I’d like to enrol to become a teacher (Participant K, December 2014).

4. KEY ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN INFLUENCING AEWs, TEACHERS AND WHOLE SCHOOL CULTURE

A significant number of participants identified that principals play a significant role in influencing AEWs to enrol in teaching degrees. Two participants who were strongly encouraged to enrol in a teaching degree by a principal decided to enrol in a teaching degree.

‘I didn’t plan on going to uni straight up but then I got a job as a TA and the principal strongly encouraged me to enrol in teaching, so I did’ (Participant G, November 2014).

When I was working in Education Support, the principal encouraged me to enrol in a teaching degree and so I did in the end (Participant D, October 2014).

Principals therefore play a key role in influencing whether AEWs feel valued in their role. Many AEWs expressed in individual yarns that they feel valued in their roles and that their knowledge, expertise and input is respected and sought after.

You get more respect as an Elder, and more opportunities - to start with the role consisted of monitoring attendance and student support, but now I’m invited into schools by principals to share cultural knowledge and give workshops (Participant A, September 2014).

A number of participants stated that they felt valued in their role when teachers were open to and supportive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and perspectives within the education system.

I’m included in all staff meetings and briefings, and I take advantage of this to update teaching staff on upcoming activities I’m planning for significant cultural events and days (Participant H, November 2014).

Participants particularly valued teachers who consulted with AEWs about including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their teaching and curriculum.
planning, and invited AEWs to collaborate directly in lessons relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I often find articles on my desk with sticky notes on them asking what I think about incorporating them into a lesson (Participant J, December 2014).

I consult with teachers on curriculum development to implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as a cross curricular priority and I get invited into the classroom to collaborate with teachers to include Aboriginal perspectives and content in a wide range of subject areas (Participant J, December 2014).

I’ve had the opportunity to teach in the AEW role, and I want to continue developing my skills so now I’m thinking about enrolling in teaching (Participant H, November 2014).

A majority of participants who feel valued in their role explicitly linked this to a supportive school environment where teachers value Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives.

I got the opportunity to give a class on Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture and one of the students contributed a lot to the sessions. She got a lot out of it, and she’s much stronger in her identity now (Participant H, November 2014).

Some participants noted that feeling valued in their role was linked to a supportive school environment that celebrated Aboriginal people and perspectives.

Aboriginal students are celebrated, and it’s visible: artworks are displayed to make the school a welcoming place, NAIDOC week is celebrated and students give Welcome to Country in language (Participant B, September 2014).

Participants who are considering enrolling in a teaching degree or are enrolled in a teaching degree noted that an open and supportive school culture comprising positive principals and teachers and valued AEWs had a positive influence on their desire to become teachers.
### 4.2 WHAT BARRIERS PREVENT AEWS FROM ENROLLING IN TEACHING DEGREES?

#### Figure 2: Key barriers to AEWS enrolling in a teaching degree

![Graph showing key barriers to enrolling in a teaching degree](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Barriers</th>
<th>Number of AEWS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family commitments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge of what exists</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School discourse</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. MONEY

Money was the most cited barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree. Most participants are working to support their family and consider full time study incompatible with work and family commitments.

‘I’ll be honest - finances is the number one thing that has held me back from study. I’d love to go back to school this year’ (Participant F, November 2014).

I need to work to support my family and pay the bills. Enrolling in a degree is not going to help me with this (Participant F, November 2014).

I support the family, so I can’t afford to cut down on working hours to study. I’d have to study in addition to working full time (Participant I, December 2014).

A related barrier identified by participants is that although this research project may have the outcome of establishing pathways for AEWS to become teachers it cannot ensure teaching jobs for those who complete a degree.

The problem with the research project is that it might establish pathways for AEWS to become teachers but it won’t guarantee them jobs. AEWS lack security in their roles as it is (Participant E, November 2014).
A teaching qualification does not guarantee work. Teaching is competitive in Tasmania, and an example of a Tasmanian Aboriginal person who completed a teaching degree and was unable to secure work was referred to a number of times during yarns. AEWs already lack security in their roles and are hesitant to invest time, money and effort in enrolling in a degree that does not ensure job security.

A teaching degree will not guarantee work - I’d rather work full time as an AEW, in a role I enjoy (Participant B, September 2014).

2. FAMILY COMMITMENTS

Most participants are working to support their families and all prioritise the wellbeing of their children and family. Many of the participants in individual yarns were women with children of school age and all of the participants who cited children as a barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree were female. None of the male participants expressed that children are a barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree.

‘I want to enrol to study but I don’t want to let anyone down. I don’t want to over commit myself and I don’t want my kids to miss out - and they would’ (Participant G, November 2014).

A majority of participants have children under sixteen years old. A small number of participants have children over sixteen years old. Of the nine participants with children under sixteen years old, one is already enrolled in a teaching degree. All of the participants who have children over sixteen years old expressed that they feel they are too old to enrol in a teaching degree. This suggests that having primary school aged children is not always a barrier to AEWs enrolling in a teaching degree, and also that AEWs will not necessarily enrol in a teaching degree after their children reach a certain age.

I’ve got two children in primary school and spending time with them is a priority - I’m always balancing their needs with my own (Participant D, October 2014).

Moreover, children may act as a motivation for AEWs to study: a few participants expressed that if attending university at the same time as their children would enable them to support their children through university, or if attending university before their children would normalise university as an option for their children, then this would act as a motivation to enrol in a degree. In addition to being encouraged by their children, several AEWs expressed that broader family support is a key motivation to enrol in higher education.

If enrolling puts me in a position where I can help my kids get to uni and then help them get through uni, then it’s definitely worth thinking about (Participant F, November 2014).
3. TIME

Several participants cited time as a barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree. These participants were managing work and family commitments and felt they could not dedicate sufficient time to studying a degree.

I work full-time to support my family, so I don’t know where I’d find the time to study and still spend time with them (Participant G, November 2014).

4. AGE

Several participants cited age as a barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree. These participants, all of whom were over forty years old, considered themselves too old to enrol in a teaching degree.

It’s too late to begin a teaching degree at my age - we need to be supporting students to get to uni (Participant A, September 2014).

5. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF SUPPORT AND PATHWAYS AVAILABLE FOR AEWS

Participants demonstrated a general lack of knowledge about what pathways are available.

I might consider teaching if I knew more about the pathways and support available (Participant B, September 2014).

Some participants felt that there is insufficient communication about pathways and support available.

I’ve been thinking of studying a teaching degree for a long time, but when I enquired about pathways around eighteen months ago, the information I got was unclear (Participant J, December 2014).

It’s difficult to find appropriate support and mentors in the education system as an Aboriginal person. It’s also hard to find out what career opportunities are available to get support making choices about the future (Participant L, February 2015).

Some participants felt that training to become a teacher would give them greater influence within the education system.

One of the main reasons I enrolled in teaching is because I want to do things my own way. I think becoming a teacher will definitely give me more influence in the education system (Participant D, October 2014).
I feel valued in my role as an AEW but if I complete a teaching degree I’ll be able to engage with teachers on an equal footing, teacher-to-teacher (Participant J, December 2014).

Therefore the lack of provision of information by the DoE relating to teacher training is an issue.

Participants also demonstrated a general lack of knowledge about what support is available when enrolling in a teaching degree. Some AEWs expressed that university feels like a foreign place. One participant unenrolled from a teaching degree after a short period of time, largely due to a lack of support and a sense of not belonging.

‘I felt that I didn’t fit’ (Participant G, November 2014).

University is under accessed by Aboriginal people in Tasmania, therefore it is critical to make links with the Riawunna Centre. A number of participants expressed that knowledge of support available at university is a key factor for AEWs enrolling to study a teaching degree.

Support at university is very important, both from a student’s perspective and from a parent’s perspective (Participant F, November 2014).

A lot of Aboriginal people lack confidence in their ability to study at university (Participant I, December 2014).

I’d prefer to start off slowly at uni to build up my confidence. I’ve got a much stronger sense of who I am now, and I’m connected to the Riawunna Centre, where I know I’ll find support, a welcoming place and a sense of belonging. These are the main reasons I’m thinking about enrolling, and they’ll have a big impact on whether I successfully complete a degree (Participant I, December 2014).

6. TEACHING DOES NOT APPEAR VERY EFFECTIVE TO SOME AEWS

Several participants felt that becoming a teacher would not enable them to better educate Aboriginal students. Reasons cited for this include a lack of support for teachers, teacher workload and consequent lack of time, and teachers not having influence over systemic change until they reach a senior level. A significant number of participants believed that teacher’s workloads impact on their ability to educate Aboriginal students - and students in general - properly.

Teachers are often not well supported in their roles, and often have little freedom as they are overloaded with curriculum mandates (Participant G, November 2014).
Teachers are extremely busy and often don’t have time to follow up with individual students due to their workload (Participant E, November 2014).

A few teachers have suggested becoming a teacher but I’ve never seriously considered it - there’s too much organisation involved, and it’s a heavy workload (Participant B, September 2014).

One teacher can’t support a room full of students (Participant A, September 2014).

7. THE AEW ROLE IS NOT VALUED SUFFICIENTLY

A majority of participants felt that the AEW role is not valued and respected enough at present. This view was expressed in both group yarns. In addition, some AEWs expressed in individual yarns that their skills and knowledge are not valued in school.

Some participants noted that AEWs are answerable to principals, and it is principals who determine the scope of the AEW role. A number of participants identified that principals play a key role in influencing the culture of a school, which impacts on the AEW role and on the experiences of Aboriginal students in the school. Principals, therefore, play a key role in whether or not AEWs feel valued in their roles. This was expressed in one group yarn and a small number of participants outlined in individual yarns how a change in principal has impacted on their role and on school culture directly.

‘The AEW position changed to a TA position when the principal changed. Initially it had a far wider scope with more focus on Aboriginal students but now it is mainly literacy and numeracy support for all students. The role depends on senior management and there is limited scope to change it’ (Participant G, November 2014).

8. THE AEW ROLE LACKS SECURITY

A significant number of participants noted that the lack of financial security that results from the lack of security in the AEW role is a key barrier to enrolling in a teaching degree because many cannot afford it. The AEW role is a casual role that relies largely upon federal government funding for its existence and contracts are yearly at best. The rate of pay is low and many AEWs need to secure alternative work throughout the holidays as they do not receive any income during this time. The lack of job security experienced by AEWs reduces AEWs’ ability and interest in enrolling in a teaching degree.
‘I have been required (along with many other AEWs) to reapply for the [AEW] position. I’ve had to write an application, and I’m working as a "relief teacher aide" in the interim. There is absolutely nothing that has changed with the position - it has not become full time, and the hours were decreased due to budget cuts which we knew about anyway...There is no guarantee I'll be successful in my submission so I guess we are all in limbo in that position’ (Participant G, November 2014).

9. DISCOURSE AT SCHOOL

The aspirations of some participants were influenced by discourses at school and as a result they either did not consider teaching as an option upon leaving school or did not want to become a teacher.

School influenced my views about teaching and university a lot. When I was at school, a teacher said that university was not for me. I realise now that I can make it for me (Participant I, December 2014).

I didn’t want to become a teacher after leaving school but I changed my mind after I got a job in Education Support. I became aware of what I can contribute to the education system as an Aboriginal person, and I realised that completing a teaching degree and working as a teacher will give me more influence to include Aboriginal perspectives in the education system, and to challenge the idea that there is ‘one way of seeing and thinking’ (Participant D, October 2014).

A small number of participants expressed that the schools they attended had a culture of not pursuing higher education.

When I was at school I didn’t consider teaching because everyone got a job out of school. There was a culture of not going to university, but now it’s the opposite - there’s nothing but encouragement for me to enrol in a teaching degree (Participant F, November 2014).

I grew up thinking that university is for smart people and rich people (Participant I, December 2014).

Some participants, therefore, were put off teaching and university by their experiences at school. This was strongly felt and highlights the importance of principals and teachers instilling a culture of high aspirations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at school. The other issue is having clear support for AEWs when they enter university.
4.3 WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE ABORIGINAL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUCCESS IN TASMANIA?

Table 3: Key factors influencing Aboriginal student success at school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors that increase success</th>
<th>Factors that inhibit success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathways</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing clear career pathways</td>
<td>Lack of career pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with students from an early age about career pathways</td>
<td>Lack of information about career pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work placements e.g. internships</td>
<td>Inability to choose a career pathway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive hands on support over time Aboriginal mentors</td>
<td>Lack of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time Aboriginal support person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More AEWs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More hours for AEWs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with students from an early age about support available</td>
<td>Lack of information about support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal mental health support person</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal mentors</td>
<td>Identity not recognised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to connect to culture and country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building strength in culture and identity</td>
<td>Lack of confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying underlying problems</td>
<td>Lack of attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying underlying problems</td>
<td>Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing teacher attitudes</td>
<td>Viewing disruptive students negatively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations and discourses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering deficit discourses</td>
<td>Deficit discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation of Aboriginal students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing high expectations</td>
<td>Low expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countering negative stereotypes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing Aboriginal perspectives and people at all levels of schooling</td>
<td>Negative experiences of school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS ON ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Several participants identified that teachers impact significantly on Aboriginal student engagement and success at school.

Teacher-student relationships are one of the main issues that influence the success of students in school (Participant H, November 2014).

Participants expressed that teacher-student relationships can influence Aboriginal student success negatively or positively.

Teachers often don’t have time to give students the support they need, but putting Aboriginal students in detention or suspending them does nothing to address the underlying issues (Participant A, September 2014).

I monitor attendance by staying in close contact with families to keep up to date with what’s happening at home, and sometimes picking up students and dropping them to school to help out. Some teachers at school also do this (Participant B, September 2014).

Participants also identified that teachers can have a positive impact on Aboriginal student success by engaging with students holistically.

Instead of looking at disruptive students negatively, and failing to see the bigger picture, teachers need to engage with students on a deeper, more holistic level (Participant A, September 2014).

Non-Indigenous teachers who include and value Aboriginal perspectives and celebrate Aboriginal culture and identity impact positively on Aboriginal student success at school.
‘I think teachers need to use more initiative, and ask questions, go into the Aboriginal community, ask Aboriginal Education, ask the principal or any local Aboriginal Support Workers. Gain some insight, knowledge and access updated resources to make sure they are fully understanding and are 100% capable and confident of presenting these to their students, and they are making a difference. They are spreading awareness, they are educating people about Aboriginal history, especially in Tasmania’ (Participant L, June 2015).

2. THE POSITIVE INFLUENCE OF AEWS ON ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Several participants identified that AEWS play an important role in maintaining student-teacher relationships.

I work with students and families to address underlying reasons for lack of attendance. For example, if a student isn’t getting on with a teacher and isn’t attending their classes, I’ll arrange for the student to complete their work in a different space, a space where they feel comfortable (Participant H, November 2014).

In addition, it was expressed that AEWS are role models for students and impact on the aspirations of Aboriginal students. Aboriginal teachers may exercise the same influence over student aspirations.

‘Students get excited when I walk into the room to work with them. Non-Aboriginal students want to be Aboriginal to come and work with me’ (Participant K, December 2014).

AEWs can influence students to become teachers by planting the idea (Participant A, September 2014).

3. DISCOURSES AT SCHOOL

The discourse that students grow up with at school impacts on how Aboriginal students perceive higher education and on what they perceive their options to be. A number of participants noted that some schools have a culture of low expectations of Aboriginal students and/or a deficit discourse surrounding Aboriginal students. It was also noted in one group yarn that Aboriginal students have negative experiences of school and are not encouraged to teach.

There’s still a culture of low expectations in some schools. Aboriginal students are sometimes encouraged to learn a trade rather than enrol in university (Participant I, December 2014).
There’s a deficit discourse surrounding students in the school: the idea that students need to achieve certain levels of literacy and numeracy, and that they only need support when they’re not meeting the required standards (Participant G, November 2014).

I’ve heard Aboriginal students described as ‘million dollar kids’: kids that get lots of money and time spent on them and it makes no difference (Participant I, December 2014).

Some schools provide good support for Aboriginal students but others say ‘nothing is wrong’ when I approach them. The idea that Aboriginal students don’t need extra support unless there is something measurably ‘wrong’ is an example of deficit discourse (Participant I, December 2014).

4. AWARENESS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE AND IDENTITY

Many participants noted the importance of identity for Aboriginal students and emphasised the link between a strong sense of identity and success at school.

A lot of young people in Tasmania struggle with their Aboriginal identity, which affects their success in school. Identity and confidence need focus from an early age (Participant E, November 2014).

It’s all linked: difficulties with identity affect schooling, and when schooling is affected students muck up in class because they don’t understand, and then they get suspended, which affects their literacy and numeracy (Participant E, November 2014).

Some participants noted that some schools demonstrate a lack of awareness of cultural difference, which can function to erode Aboriginal students’ sense of identity.

In the education system, there are constant challenges to identity - for example, ‘you’re not really black’ or ‘you’ve got no real culture’ (Participant I, December 2014).

Around thirty students identify as Aboriginal at my school, but it’s not spoken about openly with their families (Participant L, May 2015).

There is a general lack of cultural awareness within the school, which translates into a lack of recognition of cultural difference and a lack of understanding that Aboriginal students have different and complex support needs (Participant L, February 2015).
A number of participants expressed that Aboriginal students face the challenge of succeeding at the interface of two different cultures.

Overall, Aboriginal ways of doing things are not valued in the education system and this creates a sense of not belonging. It also creates a situation where students are walking in two worlds (Participant I, December 2014).

I don’t have much influence over the school’s policy on Aboriginal students, but I do my best to break down stereotypes about Aboriginal people and students, and also to educate teachers about the particular issues that Aboriginal students face, such as navigating two different value systems, identity and racism (Participant L, February 2014).

5. FAMILY SUPPORT

Many participants expressed that family is key in supporting Aboriginal students’ attendance and success in school.

Attendance is an issue for all students. The older siblings influence the young siblings a lot (Participant B, September 2014).

‘One of the primary reasons that Indigenous kids don’t come to school is some sort of disadvantage…it might be because the car’s broken down and that’s the only mode of transport…it’s often the little things’ (Participant G, November 2014).

A number of participants noted that the discourse that Aboriginal students grow up with within the family is very important for their futures.

‘I would encourage my kids to aim for teaching if that’s what they want’. (Participant G, November 2014).

Many participants expressed that, despite their efforts, parents of Aboriginal students and the wider Aboriginal community felt uncomfortable in a school environment.

In general, the Aboriginal community doesn’t feel comfortable at the school, but this is a work in progress (Participant D, October 2014).

NAIDOC is only celebrated sometimes - not all schools have money and community support (Participant E, November 2014).

I’ve made a lot of effort to connect to the community but most of them are still uncomfortable in a school environment (Participant H, November 2014).
6. PATHWAYS FOR ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

A number of participants explicitly identified targeting students as a priority over targeting AEWs to enrol in teaching degrees.

It’s the young ones that need the focus: with the proper knowledge of what career pathways are available to them, and the proper support, they have the capacity to become teachers (Participant A, September 2014).

A significant number of participants expressed that students need to be advised of and made familiar with pathways from an early age.

Information about teaching degrees, and the pathways and support available, needs to be made available to students as early as possible to help them decide if a teaching career is for them (Participant J, December 2014).

Developing clear career pathways for students, communicating what these pathways are, and supporting students to follow their career pathway would help students achieve at school (Participant B, September 2014).

Many participants identified that students also need to become familiar with university and the support available to them at university as early as possible. If pathways are well established and made clear to students from a young age, this will also contribute to the ease of transition from pre-tertiary to tertiary study.

It’s important that students become familiar with the university and the support that is available for them from an early age (Participant A, September 2014).

For Aboriginal students to enrol in and succeed at university, they need hands on experience and support. They need to know what options are available to them from a young age, and strong support throughout their schooling with a strong focus on pathways into university (Participant A, September 2014).

Sustained support and the opportunity to gain hands on experience were also identified by a significant number of participants as key factors for Aboriginal student success.

Students need to be supported throughout their entire education, from early learning into college, TAFE and university via clear career pathways (Participant E, November 2014).
Students need to know what pathways are available to them as early as possible, and they need the opportunity to gain hands on experience as a result of these pathways as well as having access to support (Participant E, November 2014).

7. SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Support is a key theme that emerged from the yarns. Many participants identified that Aboriginal students have different and complex support needs to support them to achieve at school. A number of participants expressed that making the school into a welcoming place for Aboriginal students helps to create a sense of belonging and contributes to student success.

I work towards creating safe and welcoming spaces for Aboriginal students in the school. They know they’re welcome to drop into my office anytime, and they do. I’m also working on lots of projects in the courtyard with the kids - artworks, sculptures, and a cultural garden - to create a space that values culture and identity (Participant H, November 2014).

Aboriginal students need a valued space where they can go and feel welcome and comfortable and safe (Participant G, November 2014).

Some of the students have good and bad days, and they know that they can come to my office if they need support, or just a place where they feel welcome (Participant J, December 2014).

A significant number of participants emphasised connection to family, community and culture as central to nurturing students with a strong sense of identity and a greater chance of success at school.

I connect with students and their families and with the community, and share cultural knowledge with students to give them confidence in themselves and their identity. This is what makes students feel valued at school (Participant E, November 2014).

I know most of the students’ parents and grandparents, so I give support to the families and work with them to sort out underlying issues with attendance and any other issues at school (Participant A, September 2014).

I work at developing trust with the students and engaging them in activities inside and outside of the classroom to build their resilience and sense of identity and belonging (Participant H, November 2014).

A number of participants identified that the process of supporting Aboriginal students is involved and requires time that teachers do not have.
Schools need to employ a full-time support person - in addition to the AEW - to work with kids who are disruptive, and otherwise getting detentions or suspensions. There is a vicious cycle of non-attendance and suspension that needs to be broken (Participant A, September 2014).

Aboriginal students get a lot out of just sitting down and yarning through things (Participant A, September 2014).

A number of participants expressed that better resourcing and support would enable them to better support Aboriginal students to engage in school. Some participants were not aware of what they are entitled to within the school; for example, an office space or access to PD opportunities.

‘The office has been taken away and although I have a staff study, children are not allowed in there so students no longer have the option to come to me if they wish’ (Participant G, November 2014).

There is a lack of support for AEWs in schools - for this to change, structural change needs to happen (Participant E, November 2014).

The culture of a school influences the role of the AEW, but AEWs can also influence their role. To be successful in the role, you need to be strong in yourself and your identity, especially in schools that are not so supportive and open to including Aboriginal perspectives - it’s very easy to be put at a desk in the corner of a room (Participant J, December 2014).

8. INCLUSION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVES IN CLASSROOMS

Insufficient inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and people in classrooms was identified by some participants as a barrier to Aboriginal students enrolling in a teaching degree. Several participants also noted that some teachers are ill-equipped with knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, which impacts on teachers’ capacity to meet the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Teachers try to incorporate Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives into their classes but they lack knowledge. They need more professional development opportunities and cultural awareness training (Participant B, September 2014).

The education system needs to recognise the value of Aboriginal perspectives and to embed them throughout teaching degrees, so that
teachers graduate with a more fully developed understanding of Aboriginal perspectives and experiences, and how this impacts on Aboriginal students in the education system (Participant A, September 2014).

Some participants noted that some teachers include mainland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their teaching to the exclusion of Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives. Participants recognised that this is positive in that it is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives; however, it fails to acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal culture as a continuing culture and can impact negatively on Tasmanian Aboriginal students.

Teachers include Aboriginal perspectives in their teaching at times, but tend to include mainland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, not Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives. It’s difficult to get invited into classrooms to share Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives (Participant E, November 2014).
Some participants noted that some teachers do not include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their teaching. Participants attributed this to a number of causes, such as lack of time or fear of making mistakes and causing offence.

The teachers at my school don't use resources such as Gumnuts to Buttons, as they don't have the time or knowledge to use it (Participant L, May 2015).

To begin with a few teachers were hesitant to engage with me, but it turned out that they had a lack of knowledge and confidence in teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, which I was able to work through with them (Participant J, December 2014).

Some participants felt that their skills and knowledge are not always sufficiently utilised.

I get invited into some classrooms to share Aboriginal perspectives but whether my knowledge and skills are valued varies from teacher to teacher (Participant D, October 2014).

Teacher’s responses to including Aboriginal perspectives in their classrooms vary: some teachers are open to consulting me on Aboriginal perspectives and others have little time, interest or respect for my knowledge and skills (Participant L, February 2015).

5. OTHER PROJECT OUTCOMES

NUMBERS OF CURRENT OR PROSPECTIVE INDIGENOUS TEACHERS SUPPORTED

- Contact was established with 12 prospective teachers as a result of individual yarns
- Contact was established with 8 prospective teachers as a result of group yarns

DEGREE OF REFORM AND INNOVATION OF THE INITIATIVE

- The research project comprised two Aboriginal researchers and one non-Aboriginal researcher working together at the cultural interface
- The idea that the Aboriginal members of the research team would yarn with AEWs was co-developed for empowerment and respect (Parry & Wells 1997) and to avoid silencing (O’Dowd 2012)
SHARING OF PROJECT FINDINGS

- In addition to MATSITI, this report will be distributed to the following in the hope they will be proactive in supporting the recommendations:
  - Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmania
  - UTAS FoE
  - AES
  - DoE
  - Tasmanian branch of the Australian Education Union
  - Tasmanian Principals Association
  - Catholic Principals Association Tasmania
  - Principals Australia Institute

SUSTAINABILITY - LASTING BENEFITS AFTER COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT

- AEWs have been connected to UTAS diplomas and degrees as a result of yarns and become aware of support available
- Some AEWs have attended ‘tunapri teaching’ information sessions at UTAS
- Four AEWs who participated in individual yarns have enrolled/are planning to enrol in undergraduate degrees at UTAS (Bachelor of Education (2), Bachelor of Social Work (1), Bachelor of Fine Arts (1)).

DIFFERENTIATION FROM EXISTING PROGRAMS

- This research project embedded Aboriginal ways of relating in its methodology.
- The researchers, as Aboriginal people working at UTAS, worked towards making AEWs feel comfortable connecting with UTAS.
6. CONCLUSIONS

MOTIVATIONS TO UNDERTAKE TEACHING

- A significant number of participants stated they are more likely to enrol in a teaching degree if it is a course with multi-modal delivery and various entry and exit points that awards qualifications, including an AEW certificate, towards a teaching degree.

- A quota of teaching positions that ensures employment for Aboriginal teaching graduates would function as motivation to enrol in a teaching degree.

- When AEWs feel valued in their roles, they are more likely to consider enrolling in teaching.

- Some participants recognised they can function as powerful role models for Aboriginal students and bring about changes on a systemic level by guiding new teachers and embedding Aboriginal values in the education system.

- A significant number of participants identified that funding, including scholarships, would assist them to gain access to university.

GOOD PRACTICE TO FOSTER STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Teacher-students relationships are a key factor in Aboriginal student success at school and AEWs play an important role in maintaining student-teacher relationships.

- Non-Indigenous teachers who privilege Aboriginal perspectives and celebrate Aboriginal culture and identity can impact positively on Aboriginal student success at school.

- When principals, teachers and schools are supportive and inclusive of Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives and people AEWS feel valued in their roles.

- A key role of principals is to encourage respect for Aboriginal culture in schools, which impacts on the scope of the AEW role and on the experiences of Aboriginal students in the school.
BARRIERS TO UNDERTAKING TEACHING

- The economic circumstances of AEWs and Aboriginal people in Tasmania are a key barrier to AEWs enrolling in teaching degrees

- An over-supply of qualified teachers in Tasmania means that there is no guarantee of employment for AEWs who complete teacher training, which was identified as a key barrier

- There is a lack of knowledge of educational opportunities in TAFE and university, which operates as a key barrier for AEWs considering enrolling in teaching: participants were largely uninformed of the pathways available to them and need this information

- Many participants felt their role lacks influence, support and structure, and their skills are not fully utilised

- The AEW role lacks security due to short-term contracts and this impacts on the ability of AEWs to plan for the future

- Participants’ views of the education system were impacted upon when they felt they were not valued in their role, which impacts on the broader Aboriginal community by entrenching negative perspectives and experiences of the education system and also impacts on AEWs’ motivation to enrol in teaching degrees

INCLUSION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVES

- AEWs are allocated to schools with significant populations of Aboriginal students, which recognises the importance of AEWs to Aboriginal student success.

- Including Aboriginal perspectives and people is important in teaching Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to effect systemic change

- A number of participants noted that some non-Indigenous teachers need PD on how to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives or Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives in their teaching

- There is an insufficient number of AEWs employed in schools in Tasmania; schools, therefore, are not sufficiently resourced and supported regarding the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
ABORIGINAL STUDENT SUCCESS

- A number of participants noted that pathways to TAFE and university need to be communicated to students as early as possible to encourage Aboriginal student success

- Many participants identified that Aboriginal students have different and complex support needs to achieve at school

- Many participants believed negative stereotypes of Aboriginal people impact upon Aboriginal student success at school in Tasmania and they linked this to the prevalence of deficit discourses in schools, insufficient inclusion of Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum and a lack of role models and mentors

- Aboriginal students at every level in the education system in Tasmania constantly negotiate the complexities of existing at the interface of two cultures.
7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are specific to the Tasmanian education context with UTAS as the provider of teacher education in Tasmania

7.1 FoE develop an AEW certificate as part of the UTAS Associate Degree of Education Support

7.2 Establish an employment quota for Aboriginal teacher graduates

- Targeted positions for AEWs and Aboriginal students who qualify as teachers until parity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in Tasmania is reached
  - Employ an Aboriginal teacher in every school.

7.3 FoE, AES and TRB collaborate to consider RPL for AEWs enrolling in UTAS BEd

- AEWs receive RPL for first year Professional Experience placements (observation) in negotiation with principal to evidence skills;

- AEWs receive RPL for second year Professional Experience placements (group work of 3 weeks duration) in negotiation with principal to evidence skills.

7.4 DoE and TCEO assist AEWs to advance their career

- Encourage AEW staff to undertake formal qualifications via UTAS or TAFE by:
  - On appointment and while employed send AEW staff letters and emails about pathways to qualifications for career development;
  - On appointment and while employed provide AEWs with paid time for study at work.

- Recognise in salary increment an AEW qualification: refer to the South Australia Aboriginal Education Workers (DECS) Award as an example of good practice.

- Employ more AEWs in schools until parity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in Tasmania is reached
  - Employ an AEW in every school.
7.5 Increase cross-institutional collaboration among DoE, FoE, TILT, Riawunna and TCEO.

- DoE, FoE and TILT develop a pathway document that outlines pathways into teaching available to AEWs and update and distribute annually
  
  › Include who to contact for support when enrolling and make introductions to relevant people.

- DoE and TCEO provide AEWs with an induction on appointment which includes connecting AEWs to the Riawunna Centre and FoE at UTAS.

- DoE, FoE and TILT collaborate to provide bi-annual professional development for AEWs at UTAS.

- UTAS, FoE and the Riawunna Centre fund recruitment programs to target Aboriginal people’s engagement in teaching.

7.6 Provide funding to overcome inequity which disadvantages Aboriginal people gaining access to university

- Nationally establish federally funded places including living allowance for AEWs and Aboriginal students to undertake TAFE cert III and BEd programs until parity with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in each State and Territory is reached.

- Faculties of Education and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centres secure funding to develop units with a focus on Aboriginal students as part of an AEW certificate.

- Within the UTAS Associate Degree of Education Support develop an AEW certificate with units focusing on working well with Aboriginal students’ learning attributes.

- UTAS FoE, TILT, DoE and TCEO secure funding to enable a cohort of AEWs to undertake the UTAS Associate Degree of Education Support.

7.7 Make PD compulsory for non-Indigenous teachers at all levels

- DoE fund and make PD in working at an Aboriginal and non-Indigenous cultural interface compulsory for all teachers if not completed in their degree.
• DoE and UTAS FoE work with Aboriginal scholars at UTAS to run PD for teachers in schools who have not undertaken study in working at an Aboriginal and non-Indigenous cultural interface in their teaching degree.

• Schools who employ AEWs allocate PD monies for AEWs.

• DoE allocate PD funding for AEWs.

7.8 Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the UTAS BEd

• Include more compulsory units relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and history in the UTAS BEd.

• Introduce a specialisation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education in the UTAS BEd and link to AEW certificate.

• Include a module on Tasmanian Aboriginal perspectives and history in the UTAS BEd developed in consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

• Develop compulsory cultural awareness education with FoE staff to enable them to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in each unit in the UTAS BEd and MTeach.
REFERENCES


David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research (DUCIER) 2012, *MATSITI 2012-2015 Project Plan*, University of South Australia, Adelaide, South Australia.


Department of Education Tasmania (DoE) 2012, *Aboriginal Education Services*, flyer, Department of Education Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania.

Department of Education Tasmania (DoE) 2015, *Support for Aboriginal Students in Tasmanian Government Schools*, brochure, Department of Education Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania.


Industrial Relations Commission of South Australia 2014, *Aboriginal Education Workers (DECS) Award*, South Australia.


Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) 2010b, *2010 Annual Report for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers (AIEOs)*, Mount Lawley.


Patton, W., Lee Hong, A., Lampert, J., Burnett, B., & Anderson, J. 2012, Report into the Retention and Graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Enrolled in Initial Teacher Education, More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative, University of South Australia.


University of Tasmania 2015, Associate Degree of Education Support, University of Tasmania, viewed 18 May 2015,


APPENDIX 1: INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION WORKERS IN TASMANIA
BECOMING TEACHERS

1. Invitation

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to invite you to participate in our study, Aboriginal Education Workers in Tasmania becoming Teachers. We are undertaking this study to find out what Aboriginal Education Workers’ (AEWs) views are on becoming teachers, and what processes can be put in place to make a teaching degree an accessible and achievable goal for AEWs in Tasmania. We would also like to find out what factors are preventing and promoting the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools across Tasmania. Our research team is made up of: Clair Andersen, who has Yanyuwa and Gunggalda clan connections in the NT, and her research focuses on improving education and training pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the development of appropriate learning resources; Lauren Gower, who is a young Tasmanian Aboriginal woman from the Dolly Dalrymple mob in northwest Tasmania, and is studying a Masters in Philosophy at UTAS; and Mary O’Dowd, who works in cultural awareness in the UTAS Education Faculty.

2. What is the purpose of this study?

i. To yarn with AEWs in Tasmania to establish their views on engaging in a teaching degree,

ii. To identify what factors would persuade, support and encourage AEWs in Tasmania to undertake a teaching degree,

iii. To identify Tasmanian AEWs’ views on effective strategies for encouraging Aboriginal students’ attendance, engagement, retention and motivation to complete year 12 and undertake further study.

3. Why have I been invited to participate?

We are inviting all AEWs, AEWs and AEOs working in Tasmania to take part in the study. The Department of Education (DoE) and the DoE Aboriginal Education Unit (AEU) have forwarded this information sheet to you on our behalf. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, but we would greatly appreciate it if you became involved.

4. What will I be asked to do?

An Aboriginal member of the research team will yarn with you one on one for approximately fifty (50) minutes, at a place and time convenient to you. The yarn will consist of three parts and we will talk about:
1. your current role as an AEW.
2. the possibility of undertaking a teaching degree, and what might prevent you or encourage you to do so.
3. your experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ engagement in school and what you think needs to happen to improve student retention and motivation to undertake further study.

The Aboriginal member of the research team will write down dot points during the yarn, or make a recording depending on your agreement. The key points of the yarn will be transcribed and you will have the opportunity to review the transcription of the key points and indicate what may be included or excluded in the data analysis. You will also have the opportunity to discuss the data analysis to refine the key learnings and recommendations.

The yarns will take place from August 2014 until October 2014, and during this time you will also have the opportunity to take part in one or more group yarns. Before we begin yarning, we will talk through expectations around what a yarn is, inside and outside of academia, and how the yarning process will inform the project and provide you with a written consent form to sign, which we can also talk through more at the time.

5. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?
By taking part in this study, you will be able to share the knowledge and experience you have built up in your role as an AEW to help develop strategies for schools to improve the engagement and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, both in Tasmania and nationally. You will also be able to contribute your ideas as to what barriers AEWs face when considering undertaking a teaching degree, and what support mechanisms can be put in place to encourage AEWs to become teachers. If you would like to become a teacher yourself, you will be able to directly contribute to establishing the processes that will help you, and other AEWs, to start a teaching degree.

6. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?
We see no foreseeable risks in the study. However, if you do at any stage become distressed as a result of participating in the study, you may wish to contact the counselling service contracted by the DoE to provide free counselling for DoE employees. The service, Positive Solution, can be contacted on 1800 064 039.

7. What if I change my mind during or after the study?
If you decide at any time during the study that you no longer wish to be a part of it, you are free to withdraw without explanation; at all times your participation is voluntary. You may also request that any data you have supplied be withdrawn from the research until two (2) weeks after your review of the key points transcribed from your yarn.

8. What will happen to the information when this study is over?
All of the research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania Sandy Bay campus premises for five years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed. Only we, the researchers involved in the study, will have access to the data, and any information you supply to us will be used only for the purposes of the research. We will maintain confidentiality at all times. However, other members of focus groups may place limitations on the confidentiality of any information you supply to us. We will ask that all participants keep discussions confidential, but cannot guarantee it.
9. How will the results of the study be published?
The results of the study will be published in a report in a generic way so that none of the participants are able to be identified. No names will be recorded. A copy of the report will be provided to DoE, AEU, the University of Tasmania (UTAS), the UTAS Faculty of Education, the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative (MATSITI), members of the reference group overseeing the project, and participants, in March 2015. The report will be accessible online on the websites of the above organisations.

10. What if I have questions about this study?
If you have any further questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are interested in becoming involved in the study or have any questions, please contact us and we are happy to respond. Please call or email:

Clair Andersen: Clair.Andersen@utas.edu.au or (03) 62262517
Lauren Gower: Lauren.Gower@utas.edu.au or 0437158702
Mary O’Dowd: Mary.ODowd@utas.edu.au or (03) 6324 3345

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number [H0014104].
APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION WORKERS IN TASMANIA 
BECOMING TEACHERS

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The study has been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves a one on one yarn of approximately fifty (50) minutes, and that an Aboriginal member of the research team will write down dot points during the yarn and the yarn maybe recorded if I agree. I understand that the key points of the yarn identified in the audio recording will be transcribed.
5. I understand I will have the opportunity to review the transcription of the key points of the yarn and indicate what may be included or excluded in the data analysis. I understand that I will also have the opportunity to discuss the data analysis to refine the key learnings.
6. I understand that I will have the opportunity to take part in one or more group yarns during the study, and that as a participant of group yarns I will be asked to agree to keep the discussions confidential.
7. I understand that participation in the study involves no foreseeable risks.
8. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania Sandy Bay campus premises for five (5) years from the publication of the study results, and will then be destroyed.
9. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
10. I understand that the researcher(s) will maintain confidentiality and that any information I supply to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research. I understand that other members of focus groups may place limitations on the confidentiality of any information I supply to the researcher(s).
11. I understand that the results of the study will be published so that I cannot be identified as a participant.
12. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any effect.

If I so wish, I may request that any data I have supplied be withdrawn from the research until two (2) weeks after my review of the key points transcribed from my interview.

Participant's name: __________________________________________________________

Participant's signature: ______________________________________________________

Date: __________________________

Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

☐ If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have had the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Investigator's name: __________________________________________________________

Investigator's signature: ______________________________________________________

Date: __________________________

Page 2 of 2
APPENDIX 3: ABORIGINAL EARLY YEARS LIAISON OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Department of Education

STATEMENT OF DUTIES – October 2010

Title Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officer
Number Generic
Division Strategic Policy and Performance
Branch Programs - Students
Section Aboriginal Education Services
Sub-Section/Unit/School Aboriginal Education Unit
Supervisor Specified Principal
Award/Agreement Tasmanian State Service Award
Classification General Stream Band 3

Employment Conditions Permanent or fixed-term, full-time, 73.5 hours per fortnight, 52 weeks per year including 4 weeks annual leave to be taken during period of appointment.
Location The location is as specified in the advertisement.

The Role
To engage parents/carers of Aboriginal children from birth to four years in the education of their children. The role will contribute to improved kindergarten enrolment and attendance by providing parents with knowledge and skills to enhance their support for children’s learning and preparedness for school entry.

Level of Responsibility/ Direction and Supervision
The employee is responsible for the provision of sound advice to parents/carers of Aboriginal students in relation to their children’s active engagement in early learning experiences.

The day to day work of the Aboriginal Early Years Liaison Officer will be guided by the nominated supervisor. Professional support will also be provided through the Aboriginal Education Unit.

Primary Duties
1. Support schools to implement the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes 2010-2014 strategy and develop early childhood programs that maximise the attendance and participation of Aboriginal children in kindergarten orientation and kindergarten programs.
2. Provide effective communication to the parents/carers of Aboriginal children on the importance for their children to participate in education and early school engagement.

Department of Education
3. Provide information to parents/carers on the critical role they play as the primary educators of their children.

4. Assist and support parents/carers in developing and implementing skills to help their children to be school ready.

5. Participate in a range of Aboriginal Education Services activities to support culturally inclusive professional learning and early childhood programs in schools.

6. Liaise with other government departments and community agencies to assist in the development and implementation of culturally appropriate early childhood programs.

**Selection Criteria**

Employment in the State Service is governed by the *State Service Act 2000* and employment decisions must be based on merit. A decision relating to appointment or promotion is based on merit if:

- an assessment is made of the relative suitability of the candidates for the duties; and
- the assessment is based on the relationship between the candidates' work-related qualities and the work related qualities genuinely required for the performance of the duties; and
- the assessment focuses on the relative capacity of the candidates to achieve outcomes related to the duties; and
- the assessment is the primary consideration in making the decision.

Work-related qualities might include: skills and abilities; qualifications, training and competencies; standard of work performance; capacity to produce required outcomes; relevant personal qualities; and demonstrated potential for future development.

The following specific selection criteria must be addressed by candidates in this context. The nominated role and duties contained in this statement of duties must also be used to assist in the interpretation of these selection criteria.

1. Demonstrated ability to consult and negotiate effectively with, and actively engage, the Aboriginal community and parents/carers of Aboriginal children.

2. Well-developed understanding of the importance of early years education and the issues relevant to parents/carers of Aboriginal children.

3. Well developed interpersonal, oral and written communication skills and proven personal skills of initiative, judgement, planning and organisation.

4. Demonstrated capacity for autonomy and self-motivation in a work environment, with practical experience in working with the Aboriginal community.

5. Demonstrated ability to develop and implement programs which are of benefit to the Aboriginal community.

**Requirements**

- **Essential**
  - Aboriginality. The State Service Commissioner has determined that this position is an Aboriginal identified position and that it will be filled in accordance with Ministerial Direction No.12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment in the State Service. The Commissioner has determined that the person nominated for this position is to satisfy a pre-employment check before taking up the appointment, promotion or transfer.

- **Desirable**
  - A Current Drivers Licence.
Working within the Department of Education

The Department is responsible for providing public education, vocational education and training, adult and community education, and library and archive services throughout Tasmania.

Our strategic focus is centered on achieving the Tasmanian Government’s priorities for education, training and information services. These priorities are expressed through the goals of the Student at the Centre plan, Qualifications and Skills for Tasmania Tomorrow, the Community Knowledge Network strategy and Tasmania Together.

Our strategies aim to transform the way Tasmanians access education, training and information services, provide a fresh and exciting approach to lifelong learning and build an education system that realises the full value of every Tasmanian’s creative and productive spirit.

State Service Principles and Code of Conduct

Employment in the State Service is governed by the State Service Act 2000. All employees are responsible for ensuring that the standards of behaviour and conduct specified in the State Service Principles and Code of Conduct are adhered to. Employees who breach the code of conduct may have sanctions imposed.

The State Service Principles and Code of Conduct are contained in the State Service Act 2000 and can be found on the State Service Commissioner’s website at http://www.osscc.tas.gov.au together with Commissioner’s Direction No. 2 State Service Principles. All employees must read these and ensure they understand their responsibilities.

All employees are expected to utilise information management systems in a responsible manner in line with the DoE Condition of Use policy statement located at Department of Education: Information technology policies.

Supervisors are responsible for promoting, and for ensuring all practices within their area follow the principles of OH&S and Managing Diversity, including Equal Employment Opportunity. All employees are expected to promote and uphold the elimination of workplace harassment. Workplace discrimination, bullying or harassment are considered to be breaches of proper standards of conduct and behaviour and are illegal.

State Government workplaces and vehicles are non smoking environments.

Employees who do not have access to the above resources electronically must obtain a hard copy from their supervisor, or by contacting HRMB on 6233 7048.


Office use only: APPROVED BY HRM DELEGATE: 103974 - Deputy Secretary Corporate Services/960249 – Director Human Resource Management – February 2010

Instrument to Vary Establishment: 294-2004/05

Date Duties and Selection Criteria Last Reviewed: 02/2010 SAS
DePARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF DUTIES – October 2010

Title   Aboriginal Education Worker
Number  Generic
Division Learning Services
Branch  Specified Learning Service
Section Specified School or College
Sub-Section/Unit/School N/A
Supervisor Specified Teacher(s)
Award/Agreement Tasmanian State Service Award
Classification General Stream Band 2
Employment Conditions Fixed-term, full or part-time, up to 73.5 hours per fortnight, 40 weeks per year. The occupants of these positions work for the duration of school terms only, consequently leave and other benefits are paid on a pro rata basis at the conclusion of Term 3 each year.
Location The current location is the specified school.

The Role
Provide assistance to teacher(s) to support implementation of the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes 2010-2014 strategy and other relevant initiatives that contribute to improvement in the attendance, participation and educational outcomes of Aboriginal students, Prep – Year 8.

Level of Responsibility/ Direction and Supervision
The employee is responsible for the provision of support duties associated with a range of cultural and educational programs and related activities for Aboriginal students and for the efficient completion of tasks as directed. The employee may be responsible for the physical well being of a student or group of students and general supervision of tasks. Closer direction is received on specific or new tasks as well as some guidance on how they should be carried out.
Primary Duties

1. Assist teachers and parents/carers with programs that support attendance and participation of Aboriginal students, Prep – Year 8, including the development of partnerships between the school and the local Aboriginal community.

2. Contribute to personalised learning planning by assisting teachers to engage parents in literacy and numeracy development and liaise with appropriate agencies that provide additional support for Aboriginal students and families.

3. Assist teachers with programs which affirm Aboriginal student identity, self-esteem and capacity to succeed.

4. With support from Aboriginal Education Services, assist teachers to implement cultural programs for Aboriginal students.

5. Work with teachers and Aboriginal Education Services to raise awareness about Aboriginal culture and history using general classroom activities, school life, and community and cultural knowledge and literature where possible.

6. Work with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students and school communities to extend and deepen their knowledge of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community and Aboriginal culture both traditional and contemporary.

7. Assist with the supervision of small groups or individual students on activities relevant to duties 1-6.

8. Participate and assist in whole of school activities relevant to duties 1-6.

9. Assist on school camps or excursions relevant to duties 1-6.

10. Perform other duties as envisaged by the assigned classification under the relevant industrial award or agreement and in accordance with the skills, competence and training of the occupant.

Selection Criteria

Employment in the State Service is governed by the State Service Act 2000 and employment decisions must be based on merit. A decision relating to appointment or promotion is based on merit if:

- an assessment is made of the relative suitability of the candidates for the duties; and
- the assessment is based on the relationship between the candidates’ work-related qualities and the work related qualities genuinely required for the performance of the duties; and
- the assessment focuses on the relative capacity of the candidates to achieve outcomes related to the duties; and
- the assessment is the primary consideration in making the decision.

Work-related qualities might include; skills and abilities; qualifications, training and competencies; standard of work performance; capacity to produce required outcomes; relevant personal qualities; and demonstrated potential for future development.

The following specific selection criteria must be addressed by candidates in this context. The nominated role and duties contained in this statement of duties must also be used to assist in the interpretation of these selection criteria.

1. Knowledge of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and Aboriginal culture both traditional and contemporary.

2. Proven communication skills, including the ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal people, and to liaise with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds.
3. An understanding of general educational processes and methods, or the capacity to acquire this knowledge.
4. Capacity to work as part of a team and be adaptable and flexible.
5. Demonstrated skills of creativity and initiative.
6. Competent numeracy, literacy and organisational skills.

Requirements

**Essential**
- Aboriginality. The State Service Commissioner has determined that this is an Aboriginal Identified Position and that it will be filled in accordance with the Guidelines for Aboriginal Employment.
- The Commissioner has determined that the person nominated for this position is to satisfy a pre-employment check before taking up the appointment, promotion or transfer.

**Desirable**
- Post year 10 studies in health and/or education.

Working for the Department of Education

The Department is responsible for providing public education, vocational education and training, adult and community education, and library and archive services throughout Tasmania.

Our strategic focus is centered on achieving the Tasmanian Government’s priorities for education, training and information services. These priorities are expressed through the goals of the Student at the Centre plan, Qualifications and Skills for Tasmania Tomorrow, the Community Knowledge Network strategy and Tasmania Together.

Our strategies aim to transform the way Tasmanians access education, training and information services, provide a fresh and exciting approach to lifelong learning and build an education system that realises the full value of every Tasmanian’s creative and productive spirit.

State Service Principles and Code of Conduct

Employment in the State Service is governed by the State Service Act 2000. All employees are responsible for ensuring that the standards of behaviour and conduct specified in the State Service Principles and Code of Conduct are adhered to. Employees who breach the code of conduct may have sanctions imposed.

The State Service Principles and Code of Conduct are contained in the State Service Act 2000 and can be found on the State Service Commissioner’s website at: [http://www.osscc.tas.gov.au](http://www.osscc.tas.gov.au) together with Commissioner’s Direction No. 2 State Service Principles. All employees must read these and ensure they understand their responsibilities.

All employees are expected to utilise information management systems in a responsible manner in line with the DoE Condition of Use policy statement located at [Department of Education: Information technology policies](http://www.doe.tas.gov.au/itpolicies).

Supervisors are responsible for promoting, and for ensuring all practices within their area follow the principles of OH&S and Managing Diversity, including Equal Employment Opportunity. All employees are expected to promote and uphold the elimination of workplace harassment. Workplace discrimination, bullying or harassment are considered to be breaches of proper standards of conduct and behaviour and are illegal.

State Government workplaces and vehicles are non smoking environments.
**Category/funding/restrictions:** Fixed-term. Cost code: Funded through the specified School Resource Package.

---

**Office use only:** APPROVED BY HRM DELEGATE: 103974 - Deputy Secretary Corporate Services – January 2010


Date Duties and Selection Criteria Last Reviewed: 12/09 TDB
APPENDIX 5: ABORIGINAL EDUCATION OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Department of Education

STATEMENT OF DUTIES – June 2013

Title Aboriginal Education Officer
Number Generic
Division Strategic Policy and Performance
Branch Programs - Students
Section Aboriginal Education Services
Sub-Section/Unit/School N/A
Supervisor As Specified
Award/Agreement Tasmanian State Service Award
Classification General Stream Band 3

Employment Conditions Permanent or fixed-term, full-time, 73.5 hours per fortnight, 52 weeks per year including 4 weeks annual leave.
Location As Specified

The Role
Assist schools to engage with Aboriginal community members, organisations and cultural resources in order to build their capacity to provide culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments that value Aboriginal students and Aboriginal culture, and actively promote Aboriginal student engagement, attainment and successful transitions, Years 8 – 12. Support school communities to implement the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes 2010-2014 strategy and other relevant initiatives.

Level of Responsibility/ Direction and Supervision
The occupant is appointed within one or more designated Learning Support teams. The occupant is expected to operate as a member of these teams with a degree of autonomy in day-to-day activities. The occupant will receive support, guidance and supervision from Learning Services. Additional support and guidance including leadership and policy direction will be provided by Aboriginal Education Services.

Primary Duties
1. As a member of one or more Learning Support Teams, assist schools to develop and deliver a range of culturally appropriate and sustainable support mechanisms and initiatives aimed at improving the attendance, participation and educational outcomes of Aboriginal students from Years 8 – 12 and support the implementation of the Closing the Gap in Aboriginal Educational Outcomes 2010-2014 strategy.
2. Assist with the successful transition of Aboriginal students from Year 10 to 11 and their access to appropriate pathways towards further education, training and employment.
3. Promote the value of shared responsibility for Aboriginal student learning success via the development and implementation of strategies to build respectful partnerships between Aboriginal families/care givers, the Aboriginal community and school communities.

4. Liaise with other government departments and community agencies to promote effective school and community partnerships and collaborative support services for Aboriginal students.

Provide advice and facilitate communication within school communities to build cultural understandings of local Aboriginal community and the issues affecting Aboriginal students and impacting on Aboriginal educational outcomes.

6. Monitor student achievement and enrolment data and support schools in personalised learning planning and the implementation of Aboriginal student attendance strategies.

Participate in a range of Aboriginal Education Services as required to support culturally inclusive professional learning and curriculum development in schools.

8. Perform other duties as envisaged by the assigned classification under the relevant industrial award or agreement and in accordance with the skills, competence and training of the occupant.

**Selection Criteria**

Employment in the State Service is governed by the State Service Act 2000 and employment decisions must be based on merit. A decision relating to appointment or promotion is based on merit if:

- an assessment is made of the relative suitability of the candidates for the duties; and
- the assessment is based on the relationship between the candidates' work-related qualities and the work related qualities genuinely required for the performance of the duties; and
- the assessment focuses on the relative capacity of the candidates to achieve outcomes related to the duties; and
- the assessment is the primary consideration in making the decision.

Work-related qualities might include: skills and abilities; qualifications, training and competencies; standard of work performance; capacity to produce required outcomes; relevant personal qualities; and demonstrated potential for future development.

The following specific selection criteria must be addressed by candidates in this context. The nominated role and duties contained in this statement of duties must also be used to assist in the interpretation of these selection criteria.

1. Knowledge of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and Aboriginal culture both traditional and contemporary and a demonstrated ability to apply this knowledge to their work with Aboriginal students and their families and school communities.

2. Knowledge of the Tasmanian public education system and an understanding of issues relevant to Aboriginal students.

3. Proven communication skills, including the ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal people, Aboriginal students of secondary school age, and to liaise with support service providers, individuals and groups within school communities.

4. Proven time management, work organisation and problem solving skills.

5. Proven interpersonal skills and the capacity to work effectively as a member of a team according to clear accountabilities.
Requirements

**Essential**
- The Head of the State Service has determined that this position is an Aboriginal Identified Position and that it can only be filled by Aboriginal people or Torres Strait Islanders in accordance with Employment Direction 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment in the Tasmanian State Service.
- The Head of the State Service has determined that the person nominated for this role is to satisfy a pre-employment check before taking up the appointment, promotion or transfer.

**Desirable**
- A current driver's license.

**Working within the Department of Education**

The Department is responsible for providing public education, vocational education and training, adult and community education, and library and archive services throughout Tasmania.

Our strategic focus is centered on achieving the Tasmanian Government's priorities for education, training and information services. These priorities are expressed through the goals of the **Learners First, Connected and Inspired Strategic Plan**, the **LINC Tasmania Strategy** and **Tasmania Together**.

**Our Vision** — Successful, skilled and innovative Tasmanians.

**Our Mission** — To provide every Tasmanian with the opportunity to continue to learn and reach their potential, to lead fulfilling and productive lives and to contribute positively to the community.

**We Value** — Learning, Excellence, Equity, Respect and Relationships.

Our strategies aim to transform the way Tasmanians access education, training and information services, provide a fresh and exciting approach to lifelong learning and build an education system that realises the full value of every Tasmanian's creative and productive spirit.

**Information and Records Management**

All employees are responsible and accountable to:
- Create records according to the business needs and business processes of their business unit or school that adequately document the business activities in which they take part.
- Register documents in an approved Business Information Management System.
- Access information for legitimate work purposes only.

All employees must not:
- Destroy delete or alter records without proper authority; or
- Remove information, documents or records from the Department without permission.

**State Service Principles and Code of Conduct**

Employment in the State Service is governed by the State Service Act 2000. All employees are responsible for ensuring that the standards of behaviour and conduct specified in the State Service Principles and Code of Conduct are adhered to. Employees who breach the code of conduct may have sanctions imposed.

All employees are expected to utilise information management systems in a responsible manner in line with the DoE Condition of Use policy statement located at Department of Education: Information technology policies.

Supervisors are responsible for promoting, and for ensuring all practices within their area follow the principles of OH&S and Managing Diversity, including Equal Employment Opportunity. All employees are expected to promote and uphold the elimination of workplace harassment. Workplace discrimination, bullying or harassment are considered to be breaches of proper standards of conduct and behaviour and are illegal.

State Government workplaces and vehicles are non smoking environments.

**Category/funding/restrictions:** Permanent or fixed-term. Cost code: As Specified

**APPROVED BY HRM DELEGATE:** 103974 - Deputy Secretary Corporate Services – January 2008


Date Duties and Selection Criteria Last Reviewed: 03/11 CJS
APPENDIX 6: UTAS ASSOCIATE DEGREE OF EDUCATION SUPPORT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
ASSOCIATE DEGREE OF EDUCATION SUPPORT
NEW COURSE FOR 2013

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

Duration: 2 years (full-time), up to 5 years (part-time**)
Location: Distance/online** with opportunities to study
some units on-campus in Launceston or Cradle Coast*.
Intake: February or July.

ABOUT THE COURSE
The Associate Degree of Education Support provides
professional development to those fulfilling key
non-teaching roles in the education system.
Graduates will finish with a university qualification
informed by core theoretical knowledge. This course
also provides a stepping stone to further study, such as
a teacher education course.

RECOGNISED PRIOR LEARNING
Students are encouraged to apply for recognition of
prior learning, which includes formal study undertaken
in recognised tertiary institutions or other demonstrated
learning achievement. Credit received for recognised prior
learning may reduce the duration and cost of the course.

ESTIMATED COMMITMENT
Whether on-campus* or studying by distance/online**,
each student should allow approximately 10 hours
of focussed study per unit, per week. This estimate
includes on-campus* lectures, tutorials and workshops
which equate to 3–4 hours per unit, per week.

ARTICULATION WITH OTHER COURSES
Students who wish to continue their studies and
undertake a teaching qualification will receive significant
credit towards the following UTAS teaching degrees:
• Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)
• Bachelor of Education (Primary)
• Bachelor of Education (Specialisations)

APPLICATION PROCESS
• Apply > receive an offer > accept offer > enrol.
• Applicants are encouraged to submit an online
application using the eApplication system.
• See www.futurestudents.utas.edu.au for more details.

*Cradle Coast Campus enrolments are not available to international students. **Part-time studies are not available to international students. *** International students may only undertake a course by distance if they are in their home country or a country other than Australia.
FEES AND COSTS
Those employed in the Tasmanian education sector may be entitled to a partial HECS-HELP scholarship.

For more information see www.futurestudents.utas.edu.au
International Students should refer to www.international.utas.edu.au

OTHER COSTS
Most units require students to have access to prescribed text books in order to complete assessments. Take into account the costs of stationary, resource materials for assessments, and postage. All units have some online component so internet access costs must also be taken into consideration. The University has computer laboratories which are available for enrolled students to use.

COURSE STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>XAB012 Learning at University (Education)</td>
<td>XAB042 Research and Information Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XAB092 Academic Numeracy (Education)</td>
<td>ESH160 Foundations of Literacy Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESH160 Early Childhood Theories of Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>ESH161 Foundations of Education: Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESH160 Thinking and Writing at University</td>
<td>ESH104 Human Development in Educational Contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ESH122 Personal and Professional Numeracy</td>
<td>ESH111 Children's Literature Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESH102 Planning for Positive Behaviour</td>
<td>ESH110 Arts Education: Visual Arts and Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESH103 Inclusive Practices in Education Settings</td>
<td>ESH114 Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESP217 Social and Emotional Wellbeing</td>
<td>ESH105 English Literacy: Understanding the Curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International students may only undertake a course by distance if they are in their home country or a country other than Australia. **Course structure and unit titles are subject to change.

CONTACT US

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION CENTRE
For further information about the University, including course information and application processes, contact the Uni Info Centre.
Phone: 1800 363 864
Email: Course.Info@utas.edu.au
Web: www.utas.edu.au/futurestudents

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
For more information on the Faculty of Education contact the Faculty.
Phone: 1800 061 512
Email: Education.Enquiries@utas.edu.au
Web: www.utas.edu.au/education

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
For more information for prospective international students contact the Student Centre.
Phone: +61 3 6224 3775
Email: Your.Study@utas.edu.au
Web: www.international.utas.edu.au

www.utas.edu.au

Aboriginal Education Workers in Tasmania becoming Teachers Report

68