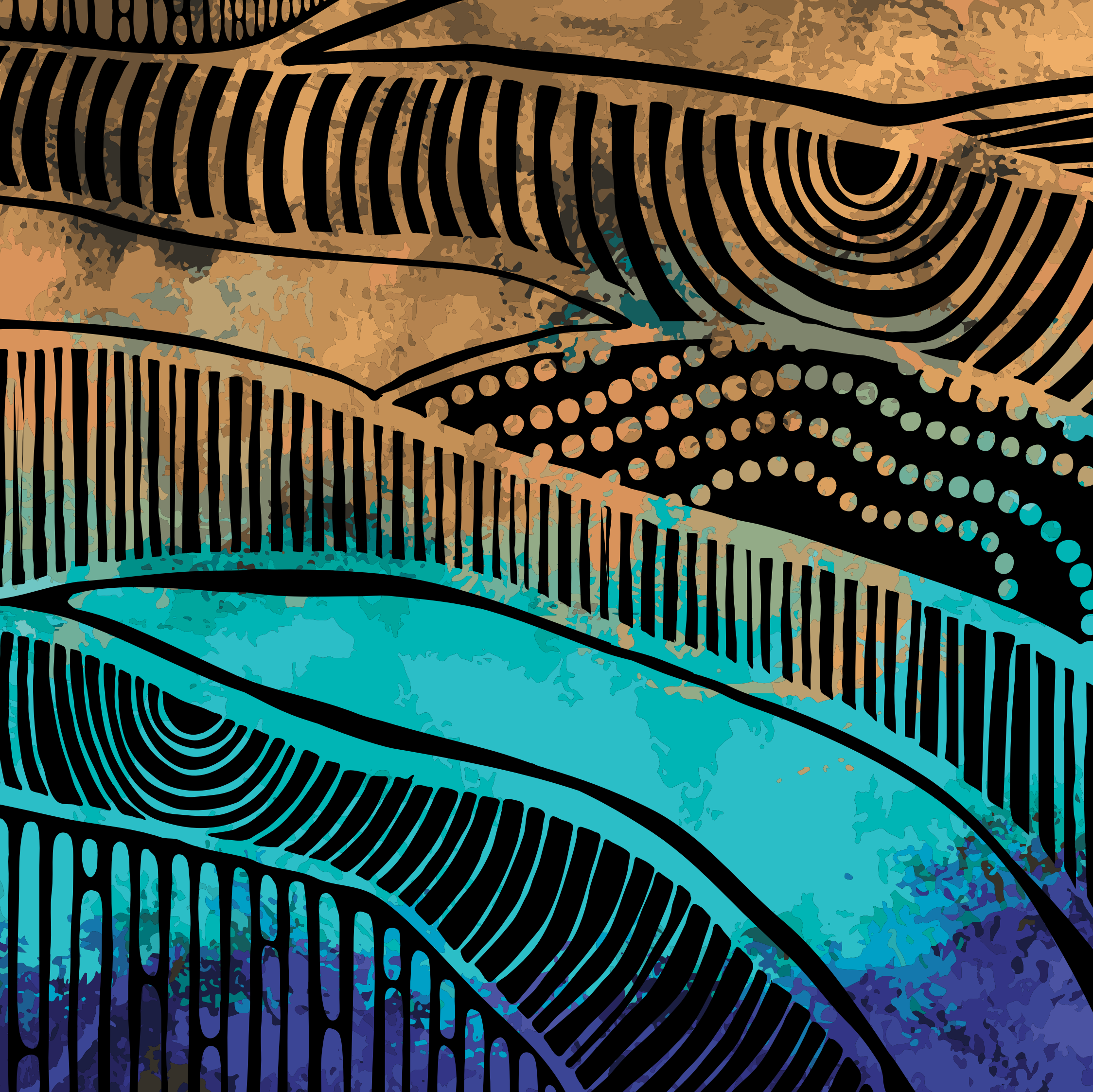


2022-25

Indigenous Student Success Targets



Flinders
University



Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which its campuses are located, these are the Traditional Lands of the Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the Southeast, First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people. We honour their Elders and Custodians past, present and emerging.

We also acknowledge and pay respect to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are from.

Flinders University uses the term 'Indigenous' when referring to programs and strategies and 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander' when referring to peoples.

Artwork credit

Elizabeth Yanyi Close
Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara, 2020

The artwork both explores Connection to Country and speaks to the Landscape around Flinders University, but it also deeply explores and speaks to the concept of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people travelling to undertake their studies bringing with them knowledge, wisdom and understanding of their own Language Groups and standing together as one.

Introduction

Flinders University’s Indigenous Student Success Targets (ISST) have been developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and promotes a university-wide approach.

The ISST encourages the development of localized and connected strategies within Colleges and Portfolios towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ success. It is the first of its kind at Flinders and aligns with the University’s aspirations of success for all students.

The framework is underpinned by the University’s Strategic Plan, *Making a Difference – the 2025 Agenda* which promotes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success with equal and equitable access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a target of 1.9% participation by 2025.

The University’s Student Success and Retention Strategy 2020-2025, *Changing the Lives and Changing the World* promotes that every Flinders student should know that they belong, that they can succeed, and are supported as they develop their capabilities to navigate a unique pathway to their own success. This ISST also aligns with the University’s Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and national priorities and agreements with the Australian Government, with commitments to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation across enrolments, progression, and completions in undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success is a university-wide responsibility and is core business across the institution. Although dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support and service areas with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in prescribed positions are located at the Bedford Park and Flinders NT locations in Alice Springs and Darwin, this is supplementary and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success extends to all support services across the University. The University is committed to culturally responsive teaching and learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The University through its agreements with the Australian Government, receives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Success Program (ISSP) supplementary funding from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian’s Agency (NIAA) that further supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success. The Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy and Engagement (OISE) administers ISSP funded programs through Yungkurinthe Student Engagement (YSE) and consists of a dedicated team who work in partnership with students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student association representatives, Colleges, and Student Administration Services to progress the University’s ongoing commitment to increased success. OISE reports annually to NIAA on the performance of ISSP funded programs and maintains its funding compliance through the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance Structures.

Flinders University’s Elders on campus located at the largest footprints campuses at Bedford Park (Kurna), Alice Springs (Arrernte), and Darwin (Larrakia) supports student success by providing role modelling, mentoring, leadership and cultural guidance and learnings that can contribute to student retention, cultural wellbeing, and identity.

Additional dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support services and study spaces are available at the Sturt campus, and in the Northern Territory locations at Flinders NT and the Poche SA+NT locations in Darwin, Alice Springs, Katherine and surrounding rural and remote areas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are encouraged to utilise mainstream services across the University such as the Health, Counselling and Disability Services, Student Administration Services, OASIS Student Community and Wellbeing Centre, Flinders Living, CareersHub, and Flinders Connect to support their learning and progression at the University.

Contextualising Success

The ISST acknowledges that success can be understood and interpreted from many perspectives. The University collates data to measure student participation, attrition, retention, completion, and employability as measures of achievement and successfully meeting the expectation of study. This data provides valuable insights into students’ progression throughout their university studies and strategies to support student success, as well as celebrating achievements. For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students success can also be understood from a broader perspective, for example, as a first-generation family and community member to undertake higher education studies; or role modelling with family, extended family and community; mentoring and role modelling to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the University; taking on leadership roles within the University and in community organisations; achieving in individual topics and semesters to completion; aspirations of excellence from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective; navigating and border-crossing within mainstream education; and centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing as paramount to their studies. Success therefore should be understood from multiple standpoints as contributing to a holistic educational experience.

Data Sovereignty

What is Indigenous Data Sovereignty?

Data sovereignty, as it relates to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, is the “right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over these”.

healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/learn/cultural-ways/data-sovereignty/

This definition relates particularly to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and data collation.

Why is Indigenous data important?

Indigenous Data sovereignty is not just about numbers and research – it’s about story ownership. It’s about having access to relevant evidence to have informed views. Indigenous Data Sovereignty increases First Nations’ access to control decisions and the narratives that affect them and their communities.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty is data **about** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources, environment, land, history geographical information, titles, and water information. It’s about social data, legal, health, education and use of services. This also includes traditional, cultural data, archives, oral literature, ancestral knowledge, and community stories (Walter, 2020).

[communityfirstdevelopment.org.au/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanderdatasovereignty](https://communityfirstdevelopment.org.au/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-datasovereignty)

As part of Data Sovereignty, the discourse, representation, and narrative progressing these targets, need to be in the interest of advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Success University Targets

The University has set targets to achieve by 2025: Commencing, Participation, Progression, Retention and Completions. These projected targets are inclusive of foundation studies, undergraduate, honours and postgraduate studies.

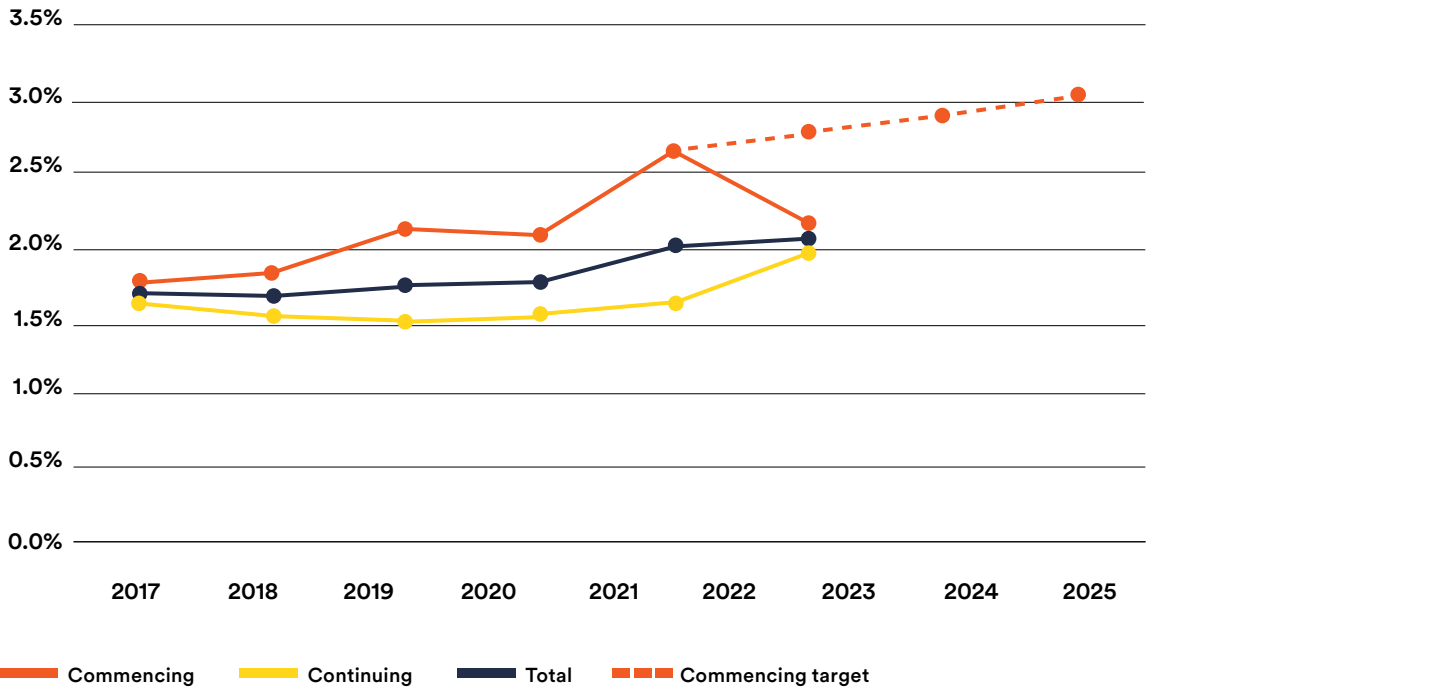
Commencing study	Participation	Progression	Retention	Completions
The number of commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments.	The total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments.	The proportion of enrolled topics completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students each year.	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students returning to continue their studies each year prior to having completed their course.	The number of course completions by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Commencing

Objective: To increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student commencing enrolments at the University as a percentage of all domestic student commencing enrolments

Target: 3% by the end of 2025.

Chart 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment % of all domestic enrolments



The above figure plots the trajectory to our 2025 target compared to historical data.

The following table shows the actual numbers of student enrolments in prior years:

Status	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Commencing	155	158	192	184	208	170
Continuing	212	205	199	208	212	246
Total Participation	367	363	391	392	420	416

To achieve the commencing target (3%) would mean that ~240 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students would need to commence their study with Flinders University in 2025 (based on 2022 total domestic student commencing enrolments of ~8,000).

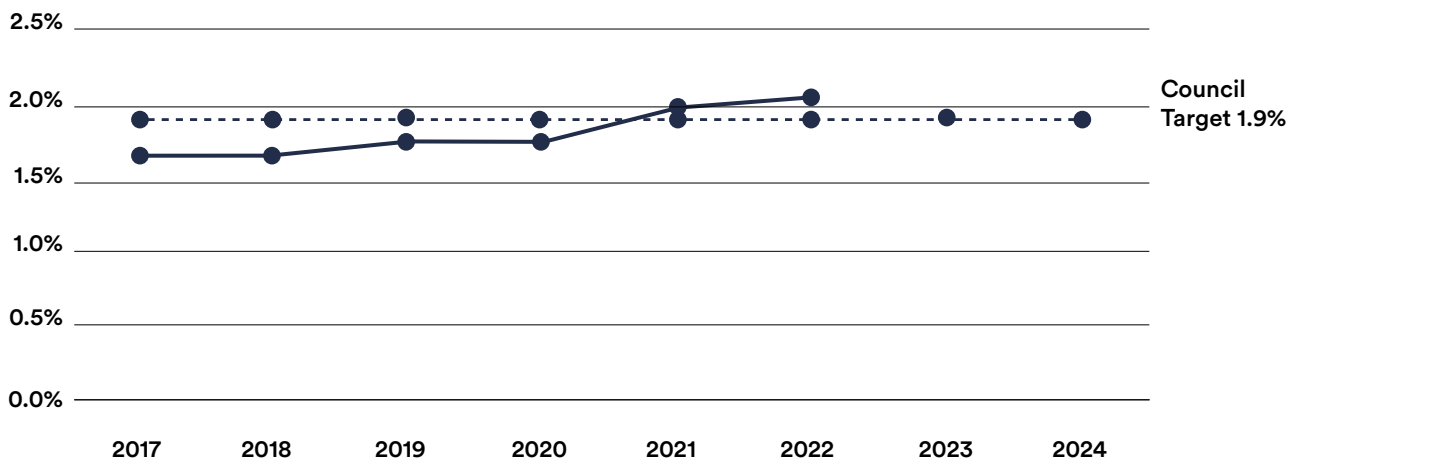
Participation

Objective: Increase the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as students at the University.

Target: The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments at the University continues to track above the Council target of 1.9%.

Target: Maintain above 1.9% until the end of 2025.

Chart 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment



In 2022, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolment as a % of all university-wide domestic student enrolment was 2.0%. In enrolment terms this equated to 419 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments.

¹ The use of commencing enrolments – the Council has set an overall target of 1.9% total enrolments, which is an aggregate measure also impacted by progression, completion, and retention. Commencing enrolments is a more useful metric within our strategy to isolate how well participation strategies are working at attracting and enrolling students.

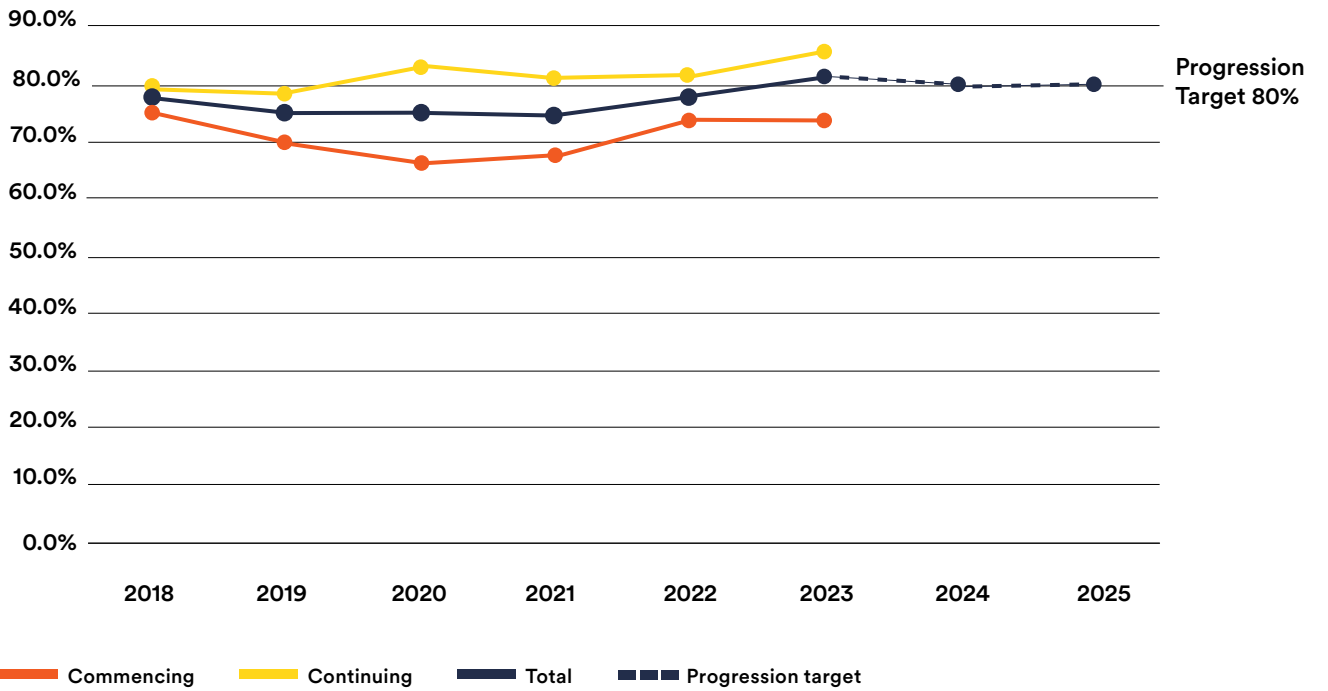
All figures are are inclusive of all course levels (including foundation studies, exchange, cross institutional and HDR)
All % proportion figures include domestic enrolments/load only (excludes international)
Source: Student Study Model, as at 30/07/2023

Progression

Objective: To increase the number of topics successfully completed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as a percentage of all topics Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in.

Target: The success rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students increase to 80% by 2025. This would represent an increase from the 2020 figure of 75.2 to 80 in 2025.80% by the end of 2025.

Chart 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students % topic successful completion rate



The above chart shows the historical topic success rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, inclusive of all course levels. 2023 figures only include topic results that have been finalised before 30/07/2023, and excludes semester 2 results. These provisional 2023 success rates (which exclude semester 2 results) is currently at 81%, slightly above the 2025 student progression target of 80%.

The following table shows the actual number of topics passed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in prior years:

Topic Completion Status	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Successful	1179	1112	1121	1162	1221	637
Withdrew Without Penalty	24	25	30	19	29	5
Failed	324	355	385	403	336	139
Total	1527	1492	1536	1584	1586	781

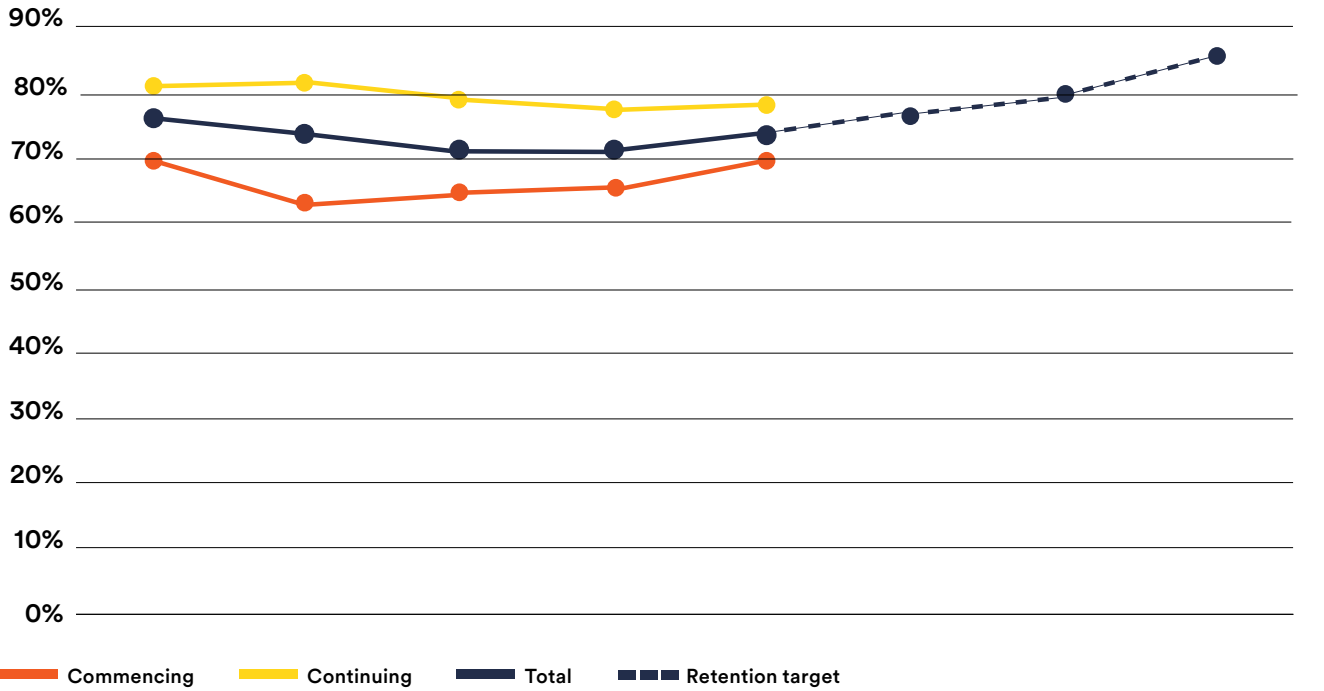
NB: Excludes Topic Completion Status of “Unknown” where a grade is incomplete or yet to be finalised.

Retention

Objective: To increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students returning to continue their studies each year prior to having completed their course.

Target: 85% by census date, Semester 1, 2026 (this date aligns with 2025 targets as it relates to the 2025 cohort).

Chart 4: % of retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from year to year



The above figure plots the trajectory to our 2025 target compared to historical data. Interestingly, these data back up the topic progression data insight that students who successfully continue with their study beyond their initial year are more likely to be return to study in future years.

2020 and 2021 numbers were also impacted by COVID 19, and so this may account somewhat for the dip.

The following table shows actual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention in prior years. It shows each student enrolment who returned to study the following year.

Commencing Status	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Commencing	98	94	123	119	144
Continuing	164	158	155	160	163
Total	262	252	278	279	307

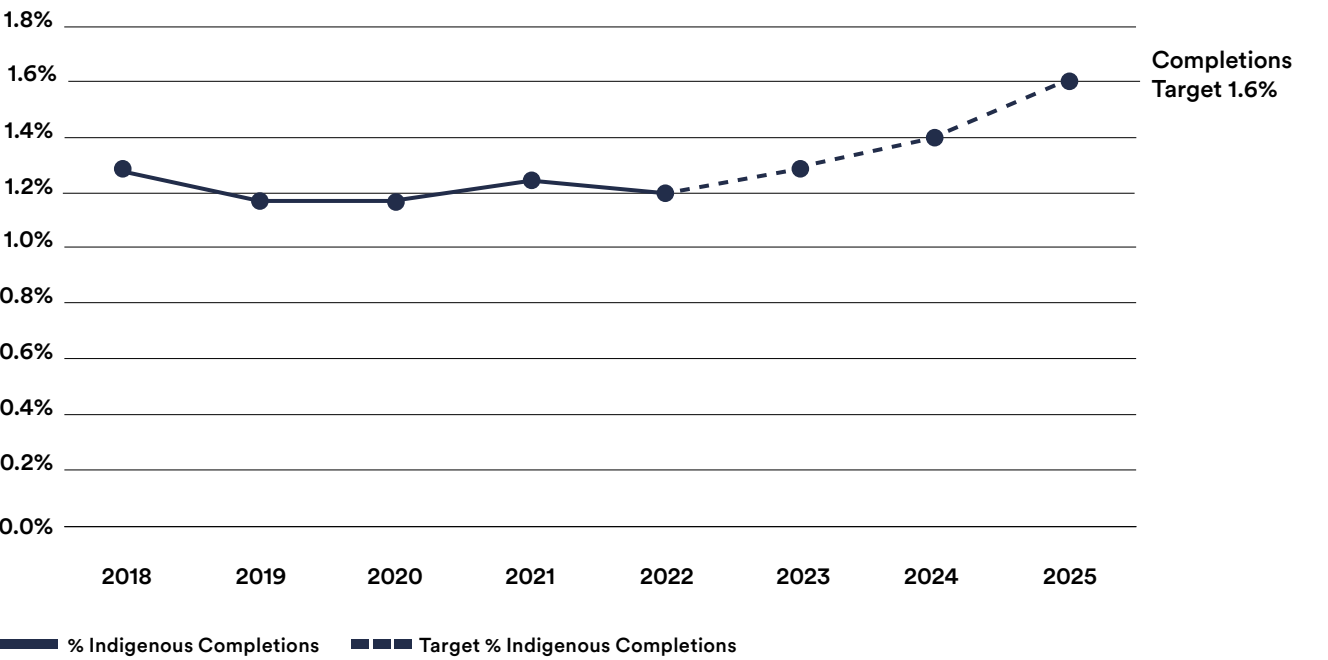
To achieve the 85% target would mean that an additional 50 students would need to be retained annually, from 307 students to ~357 students (based on 2022 total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments of 420).

Completions

Objective: To increase the number of course completions by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as a percentage of all Flinders University domestic student course completions.

Target: 1.6% by the end of 2025.

Chart 5: % completions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students vs domestic students



* To achieve the 1.6% target would mean that annual completions would need to increase to ~75 students (based on 2022 total Flinders University completions of ~4,650).

Status	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Completions	59	56	51	63	55

* 2022 figures only include Semester 1 completions. Semester 2 data were not available at the time this paper was finalised, so the current data point for 2022 may be inflated when compared at year end. To achieve the 1.6% target would mean that annual completions would need to increase to ~85 students (based on 2021 total Flinders University completions of ~5,200).

Australian government and flinders university policies & frameworks:

- Universities Australia, Indigenous Strategy 2022 - 2025
- Innovative Research Universities Strategy 2022-2027
- Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP)
- National Agreement of Closing the Gap
- National Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, 2012
- The Report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Success in Higher Degree by Research, 2020
- Flinders University Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Flinders University Whole of University Wellbeing Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025
- Flinders’ Student Retention and Success Strategy

Flinders university governance

- Tarrkarri-ana Committee – Flinders University Indigenous Governance Mechanism
- Retention Working Group
- Indigenous Advisory Council
- RAP Oversight Committee
- Indigenous Research Strategy Group

Glossary of acronyms

IAS	Indigenous Admissions Scheme – alternative entry into Flinders undergraduate	NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
IES	Indigenous Entry Stream – alternative entry into MD program	SAS	Student Administration Services
ISSO	Indigenous Student Support Officer	YSE	Yungkurinithi Student Engagement
ISSP	Indigenous Student Success Program - ISSP Commonwealth Tied Funding, National Indigenous Australians Agency NIAA		
OISE	Office of Indigenous Strategy and Engagement		
POCHE	POCHE SA NT		

Indigenous Student Success Targets 2022-25

Contact us

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