

# What's your union doing about: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Equity?

## **What are NTEU members doing to improve the pay and conditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers?**

National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) members are committed to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (A&TSI) peoples in Australian higher education workplaces; and combatting the overt, covert, and inherent structural racism prevalent within our institutions.

NTEU Bargaining Representatives are negotiating with UQ management to create fairer and more equitable working conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

### **We have 7 key claims:**

#### **1. Employment target of 3.6%**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are critically underrepresented within universities; however, their leadership is essential for real and meaningful cultural change.

Employment targets place a binding obligation on management to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff,

bringing concrete measures towards reconciliation.

In this bargaining round, your union wants a clear commitment to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment across all classification levels and within all areas of UQ equal 3.6% of full-time equivalent hours paid by the university.

#### **2. 10 days paid + 10 days unpaid Cultural and/or Ceremonial Leave**

Increased cultural and ceremonial leave better recognises the obligations fundamental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It allows for attendance and participation in culturally significant events, such as funerals, smoking/cleansing ceremonies, and NAIDOC week.

#### **3. Introduction of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Allowance**

Your union is bargaining for a Language Allowance to recognise and value the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, a complex and highly diverse system of communication, including sign language, speech taboos, Indigenous

gestural systems, and ceremonial language.

An employee who is proficient in and is required to use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language in their employment should be paid an annual salary loading.

#### **(4) Introduction of specific workload allocations and paid allowances for Cultural Duties**

To recognise the additional cultural duties undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples — on and off-campus — on behalf of UQ, your NTEU Bargaining Representatives are negotiating for the introduction of specific workload allocations and paid allowances for employees who perform these duties.

Many of these duties are placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff — yet are unpaid and undervalued.

They include:

- Welcome to Country/ Acknowledgement of Country;
- smoking/cleansing ceremonies; performances of traditional dance and storytelling;
- provision of cultural knowledge; and attendance at community meetings as representatives of UQ; and
- much, much more.

#### **(5) Recognition of Aboriginality as a genuine occupational qualification**

To back up employment targets and ensure that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are fairly represented within UQ, your union is bargaining to make UQ recognise Aboriginality as a genuine occupational requirement under s25 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)*.

This means that the people recruited into targeted roles must demonstrate their heritage (i.e. they are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identify as such, and are accepted within their Community).

Your union wants targeted recruitment for all positions within:

- UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit;
- the PVC-Indigenous Engagement portfolio;
- any academic position that has responsibility for a cohort of students who are largely Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; and/or
- have a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, heritage, knowledges, culture and language.

Targeted recruitment should also be applied for any positions responsible for Indigenous engagement in Schools/ Faculties or for those responsible for Indigenisation of curriculum.

## 6. Recognition of community-based Intellectual Property and Indigenous Cultural Knowledges

Indigenous cultural knowledges must remain the intellectual property of the knowledge holders. Accordingly, your union is bargaining for the recognition of community-based Indigenous knowledges taught or used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the protection of their intellectual property.

## 7. Raising Indigenous Engagement within UQ's executive portfolio

NTEU Bargaining Representatives are negotiating for the recognition of the important and wide-ranging duties performed by the small number of staff within the PVC Indigenous Engagement Unit.

As UQ management claim that reconciliation is a strategic imperative, your union is seeking the establishment of a DVC Indigenous Engagement Unit. The appointment of a DVC Indigenous Engagement (DVC-IE) is in addition to the PVC Indigenous Engagement.

The DVC-IE will sit on the senior executive and provide strategic



direction to the university on all matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and engagement.

**If you want to find out more about what NTEU members are bargaining for in this year's negotiations, contact your Branch at [uq@nteu.org.au](mailto:uq@nteu.org.au).**

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