



## Priority 2: Focus on youth and plan for success

“ *The cohort of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders is large and growing – we need to prioritise the improvement of economic participation outcomes for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, and build a pipeline of future opportunity* ”

As at 30 June 2014, around 36.1% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were under 15 years of age (compared to around 19% of non-Indigenous Queenslanders). All young people can experience some level of vulnerability in the labour market through a combination of a lower level of skills and education and/or limited experience. However, the situation for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders may be compounded given evidence of on average poorer school attendance, and difficulties in transitioning to further education, training or employment.

Data shows:

- a 26.5% unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 18 to 24 years old, compared with 11% for non-Indigenous young people in the same age cohort
- non-Indigenous Year 12 completers were still significantly more likely than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 completers to commence a Bachelor Degree
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 12 completers were more likely than non-Indigenous Year 12 completers to be looking for work.

Therefore, we need to better support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders at these vital transition points. Further, in developing our future approach, we also need to understand the nature of the modern economy, including growth sectors and areas of potential workforce shortage. Ideally, we should demonstrate a flexible and agile approach to ensure resources can be positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities and growth sectors, and build a pipeline of future opportunity.

### Actions

1. **Improve student transitions to further education, training and employment**, through the Youth Employment Program to:

- engage with Year 12 students
- provide assistance and support in the year after Year 12 including provision of job readiness training, and pre- and post-employment support
- engage with local businesses and community organisations to identify and link candidates with real jobs (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

2. **Continue implementation of the Solid Pathways Program** to improve the tertiary pathways,

aspirations and outcomes for high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and provide academic extension activities (Department of Education and Training).

**3. Assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to develop the skills and knowledge for jobs of the future**, through support of the Digital Careers Program (Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation).

## Case study: School-based actions to increase Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) attainment

In 2015, 94.9% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students completed Year 12 with a QCE or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement, compared to 96.8% of non-Indigenous students; significantly exceeding the Department of Education and Training's Service Delivery Statement target of 93% certification.

Schools took many different approaches; however, it was the frequent and close monitoring of students which resulted in this achievement. Some particularly successful approaches included work to:

- improve line of sight on student's achievement - data walls identifying individual student's progress were used in some state schools. This allowed staff to track student progress and intervene early, allocating or redirecting resources to better support students at risk of not achieving success.
- provide effective case management for at-risk students - teachers and leaders were able to gain a more holistic understanding of factors impacting students' progress across all subjects and Vocational Education and Training courses.
- improve school leadership and collaborative practice - school leadership teams identified areas for growth and developed the capabilities and knowledge of teachers to better support Year 12 attainment, through a focused approach toward improvement.
- increase student engagement and ownership - students were empowered to engage in the process of tracking their own progress by identifying areas of growth, and clear expectations were communicated and goals were set in partnership between staff and students.

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