

## **From principles of nutrition to good tucker stories back again— pedagogical lessons from an Indigenous specific community nutrition degree**

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The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NATSINSAP) 2000-2010 and National Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2004 have developed key objectives including ‘to address the role and development needs of other health workforce groups contributing to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health’ and ‘to increase the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nutrition workforce’. Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), in collaboration with The University of Queensland School of Population Health, has responded by developing a new three-year Bachelor of Applied Science (Community Nutrition) degree, commencing in 2007. The new degree interweaves distance education and intensive workshop components that minimise disrupting students’ community connections.

As a specialist dual sector provider BIITE provides education and training to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. BIITE offers a culturally safe learning environment and sustainable education and training that promote the aspirations of Indigenous Australians to contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of Australia. In keeping with this philosophy, both BIITE and UQ collaborators have adopted strategies aiming to ensure that students do not experience alienation by either the content, the materials or the delivery/teaching style.

To date the UQ units *Principles of Human Nutrition* and *Nutrition through the Lifespan* have been offered, with a further three UQ units to be offered with the roll-out of the degree. As part of the collaboration UQ and BIITE aim to continue to produce curriculum that will offer an educational grounding for Indigenous Australians to improve nutritional status within their own communities.

This paper will describe a range of ways that the teaching and learning experience has been tailored to the needs of the first cohort of ATSI students in the Bachelor of Applied Science (Community Nutrition) and some preliminary feedback, as well as plans for the future.