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I am pleased to present the 2012 Annual Report for Student Support Services. During the year we have achieved great success in supporting and assisting students to meet their personal and academic goals.

All of our work is geared towards developing students’ capacity to engage fully in their studies, to remove barriers that prevent effective and sustainable participation in their curriculum, and to support and promote active engagement with the breadth of opportunities on campus.

Each arm of Student Support Services works tirelessly across three levels of the University:

1. individual support and assistance
2. group programs, faculty initiatives and cohort activities
3. University-wide programs and policy input.

During 2012 we welcomed the Student Accommodation Services team through an amalgamation of the Housing and Properties offices within the Investment and Capital portfolio and the Accommodation Information Service that existed within Student Support Services. This change program allows us to better respond to the challenges laid out in the University’s Strategic Plan of improving the quantity and quality of student accommodation to support the student experience.

We have created the Student Transition and Retention team to bring together expertise in supporting student acculturation and adaptation to tertiary study. This team also focuses on the access, retention and success of all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at the Camperdown and Darlington campuses. The Orientation program continues to expand and mature, and is vital in facilitating international student adjustment in the first four weeks on campus.

Again we have been successful in delivering high-quality, best-practice services, risk mitigation, and staff development and support for dealing with complex and difficult student issues. Each student is unique in their approach to university study; many factors are at play for each student and the services described within this report play critical roles in responding appropriately and in a timely way to the many demands and pressures on students.

I wholeheartedly congratulate all staff for their dedication to the student experience. All staff strive to improve their programs continuously and have the wellbeing of students at the core of their work. I also thank the Senior Executive Group and Professor Derrick Armstrong in particular for their ongoing support of our work, and for the continued commitment to improving the student experience.

Jordi Austin  
Director  
Student Support Services
The Cadigal Alternative Entry Program and Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) work towards ensuring the successful orientation, transition, retention and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to the University while meeting University strategic goals, as well as the goals of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) portfolio and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services) Wingara Mura (“Thinking Path”) strategies.

**CADIGAL PROGRAM**

The Cadigal Alternative Entry Program assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate applicants to enter the University and offers academic and social support from admission through to graduation.

Students who are made offers through the Cadigal program are supported to enrol by various faculties and offered the opportunity to participate in a two-week academic skills program to enhance their skills prior to semester commencement.

The academic skills program is run in February each year and is designed to equip new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with skills in academic writing, essay structure, critical thinking, oral presentation, research methods and time-management skills.

Cadigal students are encouraged to attend follow-up classes at the Learning Centre, and to participate in the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme. Follow-up meetings are also encouraged and the Cadigal Officer monitors students’ progress throughout their studies. Students are offered ongoing support and assistance should they encounter academic and/or personal challenges.

**INDIGENOUS TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME**

The Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) is a federally funded program that provides free tutoring in individual or group settings. It aims to support and enable academic success for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The scheme matches Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with qualified ITAS tutors suited to their needs. The ITAS Administrator matches participants with tutors who have skills, knowledge and expertise within the student’s chosen discipline.

**KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

Student Support Services focused on improving student awareness of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and increasing applications through these programs. This initiative produced a 25 percent increase in Cadigal applications over previous years, and an increase of 35 percent in Cadigal enrolments over the previous year, with 23 students enrolled in the program in Semester 1, 2012.

In Semester 1, 2012, Student Support Services also began a pilot Cadigal first-year student mentoring program. Current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students provided mentoring for first-year Cadigal students. The program aims to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ engagement, sense of belonging and overall experience within the University. It facilitates incoming students’ social and cultural adjustment to study and university life. Mentors offer general advice and guidance, organise small group outings, and provide information about support services for both academic and personal issues.

The program continued through Semester 2, 2012, with 11 mentors and nine mentees participating.

**ANTICIPATING 2013**

- Student Support Services looks forward to recruiting more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support staff to meet the expected increase in enrolments over the life of the University’s Strategic Plan. This will mean more resources for the Cadigal mentoring program and closer monitoring of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- We will develop the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme database to provide for more timely matching of students with tutors.
- We will expand the Cadigal Alternative Entry Program to assist in increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants to the University.
- Pilot implementation of the Pemulwuy pathway will allow expansion of this program for broader promotion to local and regional communities.

**STAFF**

**Cadigal Officer**

Tanya Griffiths

**Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme Coordinator**

Freda Hammond
The service aims to deliver a seamless student residential experience that connects and integrates housing processes throughout the student lifecycle from application to graduation. The service provides help for students to find and obtain on or off-campus accommodation. Our database lists hundreds of off-campus share, temporary and full-board accommodation options.

REALISING THE VISION OF THE 2011-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Rationale for the change program

Significant work over 2012 involved restructuring the Camperdown/Darlington Housing Office and Camden Properties Office to link these two units with the student accommodation information service. All areas were brought together to form the Student Accommodation Service. This newly created service sits within Student Support Services. This enables enhanced student experience through revision of policies and procedures, and website and other communication strategies. We expect to do this through the professional development of all staff, greater facility in accessing and drawing resources from the Student Support Services teams, and clearer communication to students of a single service unit.

For students, the physical relocation of the Camperdown/Darlington staff to the Student Support Services floor within the Jane Foss Russell building will enable a common student-facing desk to respond to many frequent student queries aligned with sourcing accommodation (such as financial assistance to meet bond and rent, scholarship and part-time work opportunities). The relocation also explicitly links the provision of beds on campus with advice and assistance in finding suitable accommodation off campus through accommodation database partners. Reception desk sharing with the other Student Support Services will allow for cross-training in services, enabling a continuously open desk throughout the working day, increasing access by students to all services.

The Student Accommodation Service aims to:
1. achieve greater consistency across accommodation offerings on all University campuses, with particular emphasis on technological platforms, policy and procedures, and student support programs
2. improve the ‘wraparound’ services to students, such as streamlined application processes, single point of application, clearer information about all accommodation offerings, both on and off campus to facilitate choice and early engagement with the University as a place to belong
3. meet diverse student needs within accommodation to support the University’s strategy, with particular recognition of the needs of students from rural or remote areas, first-in-family students, international students, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as students in financial need
4. develop a structure and line management within a central housing unit that provides best practice in student services, is responsive to student demands, and adaptable to the changing requirements of the University.

Community outreach

In line with previous years, the Accommodation Information Officer coordinated presentations and information stalls for the January 2012 Info Day and August Open Day community events. In addition, at the commencement of each semester, the International Housing Officer provided individual and group information sessions to assist international commencing students to locate and navigate housing in Sydney. For four weeks in the lead-up to semester commencement, and covering the first two weeks of each academic semester, the International Housing Officer provides assistance, guidance and referrals for commencing international students. This information includes reference to transport options, reasonable housing prices, listings on the accommodation database, and highlights renter rights and responsibilities for international students who are unfamiliar with the local rental market.
Table 1: Services snapshot 2012

### FULL YEAR

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### SERVICE ACTIVITIES

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### PEAK PERIOD, JANUARY TO MARCH

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### SERVICE ACTIVITIES

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Table 3: Properties snapshot 2012

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<td>Selle House</td>
<td>28 Parramatta Road</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>248</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUMBERLAND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yannadah</td>
<td>75 East Street Lidcombe NSW 2142</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANTICIPATING 2013

The vision outlined in the change proposal comprises three main goals:

1. implement the student accommodation strategy
2. embed programs and procedures
3. enrich and enhance the student experience of living on campus.

To achieve this, two additional positions have been created: Head, Student Accommodation Service; and Student Programs and Development Officer. Both of these positions will be filled in 2013. During 2013 the service will refine and implement procedures to enhance the student experience. This will include considering recommendations from the scholarships review by linking suitable accommodation options for University scholarship recipients. Staff from the Student Accommodation Service will be included in discussions and planning for University accommodation through the Student Accommodation Project control group and the Queen Mary Project control group.

STAFF

Accommodation Information Officer
Angela Mason (fixed-term)

The following staff were embedded into the new structure from November 2012:

Satellite Accommodation Site Manager (Camden Campus)
Bernice Joudgalvis

Student Liaison Officer (Camden Campus)
Janene Dehon

Accommodation Officer (Camden Campus)
Rachel Brewster

Student Liaison Officer (Camperdown Campus)
Karla Mahe

Accommodation Officer (Camperdown Campus)
Oneeva Tu’uhetoka

International Student Housing Officers
Albert Lee (part-time, fixed-term)
Shaun Goggins (part-time, fixed-term)
REALISING THE VISION OF THE 2011-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Careers Centre enriches University life for all students through provision of an effective student-focused service aimed at:

– enhancing students’ employability skills
– helping students attain their career-related goals
– facilitating direct contact with employers.

The centre aims to:

– enrich University life for students by delivering career development programs to enable them to realise their full potential and to develop independence and personal resilience
– broaden and strengthen links between global recruiters and the University by delivering strategic services that connect employers with students
– develop relationships with faculties to support and facilitate awareness of graduate attributes and improve graduate outcomes
– provide a central place of enquiry for all matters related to graduate outcomes and employment opportunities
– deliver a wide portfolio of strategic services to all stakeholders in a timely and effective manner online and on campus.

SERVICES AND TRENDS

The Careers Centre offers workshops tailored to various student cohorts, individual careers counselling and web resources. It also offers a range of employer-related activities such as careers fairs, employer information sessions and workshops presented by industry representatives. Students can subscribe to receive emails from an online jobs database that has casual, part-time, vacation, internship and graduate vacancies.

The centre offers services to local and international students who are currently enrolled while prospective students are offered careers advice and information through Open Day and Information Day events. Alumni are offered the opportunity to apply for vacancies posted on the Alumni website via the Careers Centre jobs database.

The total number of students who used the Careers Centre services in 2012 was 20,960; of these, 18 percent, or 3718, were international students.

Careers fairs

The Careers Centre runs annual careers fairs. In 2012, we held an Investment Banking and Consultancy Fair, an all-disciplines Careers Fair (Local.Global.Connected) and an Internship and Vacation Work Fair. In total, 172 organisations participated in the fairs and 3830 students attended.

A number of the employers who attended the fairs were keen to highlight to students their diversity programs which target graduates with disabilities and graduates from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. Some employers offer Indigenous graduate programs as well as internship and cadetship programs.

The Careers Centre also staffed a booth at the Engineering and IT Fair which is run by the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies. The centre also worked collaboratively with the Sydney Medical School on the Medicine and Health Careers and Research Fair.

Orientation Week activities

Employer presentations held in Orientation Week were well received by students in 2012. Three presentations were spread across the three days of Orientation Week and included:

– Postgraduate Skills in the Corporate World (Bain & Company)
– Looking for Casual Work (Ernst & Young)
– Looking for Casual Work (Reckitt Benckiser).

Some 700 students attended presentations organised by the Careers Centre as part of Orientation Week.

Online jobs database

The Careers Centre received 4258 vacancies for the online job vacancy database. Some of the vacancies were for vacation work or graduate programs that recruit up to 200 students. More than 57 percent of the jobs advertised were casual or part-time, indicating that the service provides students with the opportunity to find employment to support themselves financially through study.
NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Career Development Officer (International)
In 2012, the University engaged in a process of consultation with the Director, Student Support Services and the student organisations about priorities that could be addressed using the funds raised by the Student Services Amenities Fee. One of the priorities was to increase support to international students in finding employment throughout their degree and at the conclusion of their degree. As a result, the Careers Centre received funding to appoint a Career Development Officer (International), a 12-month, fixed-term position. This would enable the Careers Centre to develop highly tailored services and resources for international students. The successful applicant, Angela Harrow, commenced in the role on 31 July 2012.

During Semester 2, 2012, led by the Career Development Officer, the centre conducted the following workshops and events for international students:
- Job search for international students
- Get noticed! (a one-day workshop)
- Resume writing (conducted specifically for Sydney University Association of Malaysian Students in preparation for Graduan Malaysia Careers Fair)
- Career development for departing AusAID students
- Guest presenter and panelist at the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) international student evening.

These workshops were attended by 256 students with an additional 51 students receiving individual careers counselling. The centre also developed further workshops for delivery in 2013. These covered: resume basics, business communication, career planning, job search; and interview skills for international students.

The Career Development Officer (International) staffed an International Students booth at the Internship and Vacation Work Fair held on campus as well as a booth at the International Students Expo held by the Centre for English Teaching.

In terms of business development, the centre held meetings with:
- George Weston Foods
- NSW Business Chamber
- Anglicare
- Smith Family
- City of Sydney
- Australian Women’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- NSW Centre for Volunteering

The centre also networked with employers attending off-campus fairs including the Graduan Malaysia Fair and the Shenzhen Trade Fair.

Career development program for higher degree research students
The Career Development Program is well received by Higher Degree Research (HDR) students. In 2012, the Careers Centre ran a number of workshops on resume and letter writing, interview skills, networking and presentation skills for HDR students. More than 400 HDR students attended these workshops.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Change management process
The Careers Centre underwent a change management process in 2012. The main aim was to ensure that the centre:
- is aligned closely with the University’s strategic goals
- provides programs and services that address these strategic aims
- has a structure that enables effective delivery of these programs and services.

The change process highlighted the need for more efficient administrative systems within the Careers Centre to enable it to deliver programs and services effectively. In particular, time-consuming administrative procedures for handling employer bookings for events and processing payments would be made more efficient by the better use of online technology. A budget request was submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to purchase and implement Career Hub in 2013. As a result, it was determined that the Customer Service Officer (Finance) position was no longer required.
**Graduate Edge Program**

This program, which targets penultimate year students from several faculties was extended in 2012 to first-year students. This was at the request of industry leaders that partner with the Careers Centre to provide students with the opportunity to develop highly regarded professional skills early in their degree. It is considered that the earlier students acquire these skills, the greater chance they will have to gain internships or vacation work in their second-last year. The program welcomes students from the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Engineering and Information Technologies, Law, and Science. Entry is competitive and 55 students were selected for participation in 2012.

Eight partner organisations offered professional development modules at their premises to the selected cohort. Students were asked to evaluate each module in terms of quality of presentation, relevance of the topic, and the value of the topic for assisting career development. About 80 percent to 90 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed that each module had met all of the above requirements. Comments from students include:

“Having a go at a real-life project that the job would involve, collaborating with peers and the feedback after presentations was useful.”

“The real-life client problems made this module very interactive and a useful learning experience about the role of a consultant.”

“This module was highly interactive and the module to solve client problems was especially useful. The presenters were wonderful.”

The Careers Centre also ran a workshop for the students on networking prior to the initial meeting with participating employers. This workshop was highly rated, with 90 percent of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that it was relevant and useful. Student comments include:

“I will now consciously apply etiquette processes and be better prepared for future engagements with employers. It has increased my confidence in participating in unfamiliar business environments.”

“Networking tips are really useful – I feel as though I have a better idea of how to behave around and speak to firm representatives.”

Employers were impressed with the calibre of students in the program. Asked if their expectations were met, employer comments include:

“Great to meet so many students who were graduating in 2015 – a fantastic feeder for our [program].”

“We were very impressed with the level of engagement from the students – they were of a very high quality.”

“I was impressed by the insightful questions the students asked after the presentation. The students showed a high level of interest and enthusiasm.”

“Vibrant students, eager to learn. Students with well-rounded backgrounds, strong academic profiles, extra-curricular and community involvement. Passionate about developing their skills and confidence.”

Employers were also impressed with the diversity of academic backgrounds among the students.

**Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program**

The Careers Centre received funding in 2012 through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) for a project focusing on career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from a low socio-economic status (low SES). Given the difficulty of identifying low SES students, the cohort was limited to those who gained admission through the Broadway Scheme and/or those who were awarded an Equity Scholarship.

The project included the following aspects, drawing upon existing expertise and programs:

- A survey of the target cohort to gauge their awareness of careers services and gain insights into the types of services they would like. The survey also touched on students’ career aspirations, career and course decisions and perceived inhibitors to achieving career success.

- A focus group with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to gain further insights from the career survey, using an inclusive and interactive format.

- Career preparation workshops entitled “Get noticed!” aimed to assist students with their understanding, engagement in and management of the career-building process.
The main findings from the survey were that students were particularly interested in accessing the online jobs database and would like assistance with job search and the preparation of job applications.

The central inference drawn from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus group was that these students still experience the challenges of being the first in their families to enter tertiary education, along with financial constraints and family commitments. Students were keen for the Careers Centre to organise meetings with potential employers to help them build networks. Additionally, they strongly recommended liaison and cooperation with the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Unit to help raise awareness of career support services for Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander students.

All the cohorts above were also invited to attend a one-day employability skills workshop. Ten students attended the workshop and overall feedback was very positive.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In 2012, Careers Centre staff engaged in staff development to keep up to date with graduate recruitment processes, the graduate labour market and careers counselling. Various staff members attended the following:

– Industry Visits, 16-18 July, Canberra
– Postgraduate Careers Advisers Network Forum, 19 July, Australian National University, Canberra
– National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services Conference, 2–5 December 2012, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia
– Australian Association of Graduate Employers Conference, 14-16 November 2012, Melbourne.

ANTICIPATING 2013

Following on from the 2012 change management process, 2013 will see the introduction of a new Careers Centre jobs database. Apart from streamlining administrative processes, the database will enable faculties and business units to lodge just-in-time vacancies on the online jobs database that should result in more jobs on campus for students in 2013. This would address a priority raised in the University’s consultation with the University of Sydney Union regarding the student services and amenities fee.

The Careers Centre will continue to work on programs tailored to specific cohorts such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, low SES students and international students to the degree that its resources allow. The Graduate Edge Program aims to involve more first-year students in 2013 and the Orientation Program will expand with more industry involvement.

STAFF

Manager
Nitsa Athanassopoulos

Industry Development Manager
Sarah Jones

Resources and Communications Manager
Anke Zschoegner (January to March)
Sinead Hartnett (May to December)

Career Development Manager
Julie Doherty

Career Development Officers
Barbara Mackie (January to September)
David Scoppa (September to December)
Helena Asher (January to February)
Ruth Wilcock (March to December)

Career Development Officer (International)
Angela Harrow (from July)

Industry Development Officer
Pippin Wanless

Administration Officer, Industry Development
Malcolm Ross

Resources and Communications Officer
Scott Spence

Customer Service Officer (Finance)
Kevin Eden (till November)

Student Support Services Reception
Zahra Rifaath Anver
Table 4: Number of students using Careers Centre services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>2950</td>
<td>3349</td>
<td>5012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty workshops</td>
<td>2351</td>
<td>3820</td>
<td>2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest presenter workshops</td>
<td>2366</td>
<td>2385</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual counselling</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>1405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers fairs</td>
<td>3627</td>
<td>3188</td>
<td>3830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer information sessions</td>
<td>2211</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information desks</td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other presentations</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job alert subscriptions</td>
<td>6631</td>
<td>4928</td>
<td>5741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,014</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,912</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,960</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Students were eligible to participate in multiple service offerings. Total = Unique student access.

Table 5: Number of services delivered to employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of job ads* placed</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>4115</td>
<td>4110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of employer information sessions held</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of employers who participated in campus careers fairs</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hard-copy mailouts sent on employers’ behalf</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of emails sent out on employers’ behalf</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of employers seeking distribution of posters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some job ads were for multiple positions such as an ad for a Graduate Program recruiting up to 200 graduates.

Table 6: Breakdown of ads on online jobs database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of employment</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casual/part-time</td>
<td>2360</td>
<td>(58%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time/graduate</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer/work experience</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>(4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other opportunities</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3991</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note that in addition to the 3991 ads on the online jobs database, the Careers Centre screened 267 ads that were not accepted on the grounds of not meeting the Careers Centre’s advertising terms and conditions.

Table 7: Web page visits 2010–12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web page visits per month (average)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>21,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database page visits per month (average)</td>
<td>214,198</td>
<td>182,158</td>
<td>163,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception enquiries (in person, phone, email) per month (average)</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>1037</td>
<td>1181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY DEVELOPMENTS
The Multifaith Chaplaincy continued to provide spiritual support and pastoral care for students and staff on campus. There is a great breadth of religious faith within the student body and staff and the University supports this diversity through the Multifaith Chaplaincy.

The chaplains represent a diverse group of faiths such as Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and several Christian denominations including Anglican, Uniting, Assemblies of God, Salvation Army, Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox.

Throughout the year the chaplains met to discuss issues of faith and university life, including many of the issues where faith and studies intersect.

The chaplaincy supports an increasing number of international students as they seek to integrate into university life and into the wider community. Many students come from a culture that is very different to the one they experience in Australia and this can present many challenges.

SERVICES AND TRENDS
Many students took up the opportunity to meet with chaplains throughout the year on a variety of issues, including pressure with study, problems with parents, relational issues, homesickness and particular pressures that come to bear on their faith through their studies.

We also met with some staff who sought pastoral support and prayer during stressful times both in the work environment and at home.

We are still seeing an increase in students who suffer from depression and anxiety during their studies. The opportunity to refer these students to the Counselling and Psychological Services and University Health is much appreciated.

The number of international students seeking support is increasing. We find that many become lonely and isolated and also suffer financial and housing pressures and can become homesick while trying to settle into a new culture.

During 2012 we saw an increasing number of students from diverse backgrounds with particular religious practices, and this has placed some pressure on our resources. The increasing number of Islamic students has placed pressure on prayer rooms with some 500 men gathering for prayer on Friday in the Old Teacher’s College Assembly Hall. Unfortunately, this places pressure on the women wishing to attend Friday prayers due to a lack of space. There are also more requests for space for Buddhist meditation, rooms for Catholic Mass, space for Bible studies, and one-to-one meeting spaces.
NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

We engage in and encourage dialogue between faiths on campus. Many of the chaplains have the opportunity to speak on panels, in debates and interfaith forums, as well as on an informal basis in one-to-one conversations.

The chaplains also took part in conversations with the University of Sydney Union, other student services and some of the student groups about how to help them and how to respond better to interfaith needs on campus, including issues such as food, religious holidays and special religious requirements. This also included working with Student Services on the interfaith strategy for the campus.

On Anzac Day 2012 the chaplains and students from the Interfaith Council gathered at the “big kitchen” at the Yeshiva Centre at Bondi Junction. The then chancellor, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, attended the event with her Anzac biscuit recipe and we baked Anzac biscuits to sell on campus to support students who are struggling financially. The Jewish chaplains, Rabbi Eli Feldman and Rabbi Danny Yaffe organised this event.

The University of Sydney Union organised an Interfaith Council in 2012. This was established in 2011 to encourage dialogue between the different faith clubs and societies on campus. The council is made up of student representatives and University chaplains. The council met regularly in 2012 to discuss issues faced by people of faith and to ensure we had open lines of dialogue between different faith groups on campus. There was plenty of lively discussion about the place of faith in a secular university.

The Interfaith Council also organised an Interfaith Week in September 2012. This included panels, talks and a fair based on issues of faith on campus. Many of the chaplains were involved in the events of this week and had numerous discussions with students.

ANTICIPATING 2013

The chaplains hope to be a continuing and significant spiritual support to students and staff on campus, as we see increasing pressures on local students and greater numbers of international students from diverse religious backgrounds.

We will continue to raise the profile of the chaplains on campus so that students and staff are aware of the service. This will include involvement in Orientation Week and in the University of Sydney Union Interfaith Week as well as working with Student Support Services to ensure that students receive spiritual support and development during their time at the University.

The Multifaith Chaplaincy also aims to be a model of engagement and dialogue on faith issues on campus with generosity and tolerance as we acknowledge difference and diversity.

STAFF

Multifaith Chaplaincy Coordinators
Rev. Dr Rowen Kemp
Caroline Andrews
The service provides up-to-date information about childcare options, mainly via the childcare website and the drop-in service at the Jane Foss Russell Building. The Child Care Information Office website provides information for international students so they are aware of the challenges of sourcing child care before they leave their home countries. The website also provides links to other useful resources including non-University childcare services and Australian Government websites providing information about financial assistance for child care.

The childcare centres affiliated with the University are open to staff, students and the local community and have been established with funds provided by the Senate, University of Sydney Union and the federal government. The University of Sydney Union and the University of Sydney work closely to ensure the provision of suitable child care that has government accreditation.

### KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Our main focus during 2012 was to ensure that the information on the Child Care Information Office website was kept up-to-date. The service strives to give prompt responses to telephone and email enquiries. Obtaining child care can be stressful for staff and students and access to information is important.

### SERVICES AND TRENDS

In 2012 there were 11,101 visits to the childcare website – a slight increase on the 2011 figure of 11,090 visits. There were 64 telephone, email or in-person enquiries to the office, compared with 55 in 2011. The website is the service’s focus as it is a primary channel of childcare information for students and staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8: Child care enquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IN PERSON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THROUGH THE WEBSITE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New visitors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ANTICIPATING 2013

The service will continue to ensure that students and staff have access to current information about childcare options. In particular it will ensure that international students and staff are well supported with access to all relevant information. Our main focus will be maintenance of the childcare information website.

The service will also continue to work closely with other Student Support Services, the University of Sydney Union and the childcare centres located on campus.

### STAFF

Child Care Information Officers
Maria Loveday (Mon–Tues)
Leah Arthur (Wed–Fri)

### CONTACT

Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building
University of Sydney NSW 2006
T +61 2 8627 8419
E child.care@sydney.edu.au

The Child Care Information Office aims to support staff and students who have childcare responsibilities while studying or working at the University.
COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides a range of psychological support services to assist students build skills to enhance emotional wellbeing and promote academic success.

These services are free and confidential and are available to all currently enrolled local and international students. All CAPS interventions are delivered according to evidence-based best practice and focus on strengths.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Arising from the recommendations of the CAPS report Building Mental Health Capacity, submitted to the Sydney Executive Group Education Committee in November 2011, CAPS conducted a University-wide survey to establish baseline indicators of distress and wellbeing in the student population. The survey was run in conjunction with the Thrive Festival (see page 20), a campaign aimed at increasing the health and psychological competencies of students on campus.

The Mental Health Survey, conducted over four days in week five of Semester 1, 2012, was designed to provide a snapshot of student wellbeing. The survey gathered information through an online questionnaire on levels of student distress, mental health and psychological flexibility.

Psychological flexibility (emotional, cognitive and behavioural agility) refers to the ability to adapt effectively to changing situational demands, adjust strategies and balance competing demands. The study also assessed patterns of seeking help, alcohol use, financial distress, an indication of “days out of role” (that is, the number of days when the student was unable to fulfil their studies or work commitments) as a proxy for the impact of ill-health, and a measure of assessing personal flourishing. This data enabled comparison with international and domestic research into campus wellbeing. All undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University were invited to participate via an email from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Professor Derrick Armstrong. The survey was also promoted on the University’s website during the Thrive Festival.

More than 4000 students participated in the survey, with 3711 completing it. Almost half the students (49.6 percent) reported high-to-very-high levels of psychological distress and a considerable proportion (8.1 percent) reported “languishing” levels of mental health. A further 55.8 percent reported “moderate” levels of mental health and 36.1 percent indicated that their mental health was “flourishing”.

Distress and wellbeing were also associated with levels of psychological flexibility, with students’ level of flexibility also moderating the impact of distress on the number of “days out of role”. The data also indicated that students most commonly nominated parents, peers and the internet as sources of support and mental health information should they require it.

The survey findings underscore the importance of CAPS’ core services that offer stepped care and evidenced-based psychological interventions to address student distress or impairment. However, the survey results are also being used to inform further CAPS student wellbeing initiatives. These include remodelling of the CAPS website and plans for 2013 to initiate a program of training peers as mental health advocates. Student activities in the form of monthly “psychological challenges” will also be introduced to engage community wellbeing online.

The Mental Health Survey was being written up for publication, anticipated for early 2013.
Thrive Festival
From 3 to 5 April 2012, CAPS ran the Thrive Festival in collaboration with Sydney University Sports and Fitness (SUSF) and the University of Sydney Union (USU). Launched by then chancellor Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, the festival aimed to raise awareness of mental health issues on campus and promote the psychological, physical and emotional health of all students. The festival included health and wellbeing workshops, body balance and fitness training sessions, film and comedy nights, theatre sports, a market, music, a soup kitchen and a flash-mob event. The festival also included a competition entitled ‘What makes you thrive’ during which CAPS staff recorded vox populi of student interviews. This became the first in a planned series of student-centred videos.

As part of the Thrive Festival, a series of three seminars on the theme of ‘Let’s Talk About Love’ were also developed and delivered to address the commonly raised student concern about relationships and relationship issues.

SERVICES AND TRENDS
It was strongly recommended in 2011 that the CAPS client record system be replaced by the more flexible and capable web-based program ‘Penelope’. As this system was implemented at the start of Semester 1, 2012, reporting for 2012 is based on data from 5 March 2012 to 31 December 2012. Missing data from 1 January to 5 March will underestimate reported figures, however, this period includes summer holidays so the impact should be minimal. Data reported for 2012 therefore represents the transition to a new reporting and data collection method that will be fully operational for 2013 reporting. Data collection for 2012 is also influenced by the delay of integration with ‘Sydney Student’. We anticipate that integration with this system will substantially reduce missing data (it is currently optional for students to report some information).

Counselling appointments
CAPS saw a total of 2267 unique clients in 2012, representing little change from the numbers reported in 2011. In 2012, international students comprised 21.6 percent of the CAPS client group, consistent with the proportion of international students within the University. Table 9 shows a breakdown of the demographic characteristics of CAPS clients in 2012.

### Table 9: Caps clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of total CAPS clients</th>
<th>% of university enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate*</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate*</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local*</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International*</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* About 10 percent of data is missing due to data platform changes. The table represents available data. Female students continue to be overrepresented as clients at CAPS consistent with community trends.

### Table 10: Counselling service clients by faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>2010 % (international students)</th>
<th>2011 %</th>
<th>2012 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1.58 (1.2)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>2.36 (3.9)</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Social Sciences</td>
<td>34.8 (23.2)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>8.27 (27.9)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>0.59 (0.3)</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Social Work</td>
<td>7.29 (2.9)</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and IT</td>
<td>5.84 (9.6)</td>
<td>9.40</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>7.49 (4.8)</td>
<td>9.23</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>3.81 (3.5)</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>2.95 (2.9)</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>1.18 (0.8)</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>1.38 (1.4)</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>15.96 (10.9)</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney College of the Arts</td>
<td>2.36 (0.5)</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Conservatorium</td>
<td>1.84 (0.8)</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Science</td>
<td>1.97 (1.6)</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (undefined)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 2010 reports figures from the former Counselling Service; figures in parentheses indicate the percentage of international students from each faculty at the former International Student Services Unit in 2010.
Presentations by faculty in 2012 differ from 2011 but resemble more closely patterns of presentation seen in 2010 by the then Counselling Service. Further exploration suggests that the aberrations seen in 2011 may have been the result of errors in the Titanium database used in that year. It is anticipated that data in 2013 will confirm the 2012 patterns of presentation.

Table 11: Student equity cohort (self-identified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% OF CAPS CLIENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal and Torr Strait Islander</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-English speaking background (local)</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/remote</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of students attending CAPS from various socio-demographic groups has not changed substantially in 2012, with the possible exception of a decrease in the proportion of local students from a non-English speaking background. We note, however, that students provide this data on a voluntary basis and a substantial proportion of students does not complete responses.

The 10 most common problems presented by students attending CAPS are listed below. These figures cannot be directly compared to previous data due to changes in the way the data is collected. However, we note that emotional and mental wellbeing (including issues such as low mood/depression, stress and anxiety) are still the most common reasons for seeking help.

Presenting problems
1. low mood/depression
2. stress
3. anxiety (general)
4. family issues
5. interpersonal relationship difficulties
6. exam and study anxiety
7. procrastination and time management
8. loss, grief and bereavement
9. academic failure
10. transition to university.

Academic risk
For the first time CAPS can report on the number of students attending CAPS who have been identified by the university as being at “academic risk”. In 2012, 280 such students presented to CAPS, of whom 100 were being asked to “show cause” (Stage 3, Staying on track) or were facing exclusion (Stage 4).

Serious mental health concerns
CAPS provides a crucial role in the triage and referral of students presenting at the severe end of the spectrum of psychological distress. During 2012, we made 42 urgent referrals to mental-health crisis teams. These referrals were for students who presented in session either at very high risk of suicide or with serious mental health symptoms such as signs of psychosis. CAPS staff also had about 90 occasions for contact with community mental health teams (including first-episode psychosis and acute-care teams). CAPS completed 127 sessions with students who reported medium to high risk of suicide. During 2012, CAPS also completed 42 sessions with students who were reporting current, deliberate self-harm.

Historically, complex and urgent mental health presentations were not regarded as core business for University CAPS units. However, with increasing reports of mental health problems in students and limitations in public mental health services, CAPS services will need to respond to such shifting student needs. Problems associated with these needs are acute, managing emergencies requires considerable resources, and managing risk is difficult when counsellor resources are low: the counsellor-to-student ratio is 1:4310 while the recommended benchmark is 1:3000.

Staff and community liaison
Throughout 2012, CAPS continued to assist University staff who were concerned by a student’s mental health or behavioural issues through telephone consultations. Consultations regarding more than 90 unique students were recorded for 2012.

“Dealing with students in distress” seminars were again provided to staff in 2012. These seminars, run as part of the Learning Solutions series, provide an overview of mental health concerns and enhance staff skills and techniques for interacting with distressed students and for referring them to professional support. CAPS also provided mindfulness training to staff.

CAPS delivered training to resident advisers in residential colleges and to student mentors in specific faculties. Such training emphasises self-care, role boundaries and skills in making appropriate referrals for fellow students to professional assistance.
Risk management
During 2012, the Head of Department, Dr Philomena Renner, attended fortnightly meetings of the Behavioural Risk Management Committee. The committee, established in 2011 in response to the tragedy of the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings in the United States, develops the pro-active risk management strategy for the University of Sydney and is a collaborative initiative between Student Support Services, CAPS, the University of Sydney’s Office of General Counsel, Campus Security Services and Human Resources.

Workshops and group programs
CAPS introduced a reformulated (one-hour) workshop program aimed at attracting students to sessions held during the common University lunchtime. The workshops address topics relevant to the time of semester (for example, ‘Time management and procrastination’ was offered early in the semester and ‘Exam anxiety’ toward the semester’s end).

In 2012, CAPS staff ran 30 such workshops including several that addressed the needs of international students – ‘Adjusting to life in Sydney’ and ‘Communicating effectively in Australia’. CAPS also continued to offer the popular ‘Acceptance and commitment’ therapy group program, with two groups offered in 2012. More than 380 students attended the workshop and group programs, which were well received by all participants. Student feedback includes:

“Great workshop, a very friendly, helpful and informative presenter.”

“It’s great to get self-help strategies and support. I am so happy these workshops are provided.”

“The presentation was excellent and I love the way we get to try with tasks and exercises.”

In addition to these regular workshops, in Semester 2, 2012, CAPS also ran two extra programs of “Adjusting to study at university” for international students attending the International Student Orientation Program. More than 120 students attended the workshops and more than 90 percent reported that the workshop was helpful and that they would adopt new attitudes or behaviours as a result of attending.

An initiative for 2012 was the ‘Parents optimising potential’ (POP) program, which was run during the first week of Semester 1. The two-hour program included a presentation ‘Helping your student: what a parent can do’, as well as information for parents about students changing, withdrawing or failing courses and further information about how Student Support Services can assist students. There was also a lively question and answer forum. About 30 parents attended the evening, with feedback indicating that the program was valuable and helpful.

Web presence
Building on new multimedia skills in the team, 2012 saw the remodeling of the website to further encourage students’ access to and interaction with CAPS information and resources. Three key areas on the homepage now invite students to access ‘Get help’ (incorporating e-books, book prescription scheme, e-therapy, guided exercises and information about face-to-face and group counselling), as well as ‘Workshops’ and a ‘Student zone’. The student zone includes vox pops with innovations planned for 2013 to include ‘monthly psychological challenges’ with further resources also being developed to inform and assist parents.

In 2012 CAPS also worked with student consultants as a component of their third-year computer subjects to develop a CAPS mobile phone application (CAPS Pocket Psychologist) focusing on e-therapy. Following completion, CAPS commenced liaison with the University’s Information and Communication Technology division and Workplace Project Portfolio to review and launch the mobile app. It was envisaged that the mobile app would be released in 2013.

CAPS also commenced the development of an electronic skills audit for students that assesses their cognitive and personal skills, provides remediation tips and promotes effective self-management strategies. It is expected that this resource will also be launched in 2013.

A further innovation in 2012 was the launch of electronic health promotion messages in the CAPS waiting room. These messages offer students ‘Psychological tips of the day’, ‘Did you know?’ infobytes, and information about CAPS workshops and upcoming events.

CAPS staff development
In November 2012, CAPS invited two internationally recognised experts in acceptance and commitment therapy, Dr Kirk Strosahl and Dr Patricia Robinson, to deliver two workshops:

– Brief interventions for radical change – the practice of focused acceptance
– Commitment therapy, FACT and ACT with challenging patients.

These workshops, held over a day and a half, advanced the CAPS commitment to providing evidence-based, best practice therapy.
CAPS staff publications and conference presentations
In July 2012, Head of Department Dr Philomena Renner presented her work regarding the clinical trial investigating the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy versus acceptance and commitment therapy at the Association for Contextual Behavioural Science world conference in Parma, Italy. This work was also submitted as a chapter in ‘Mindfulness and acceptance for counselling college students’, due to be published in early 2013.

ORIENTATION PROGRAM 2012
International student orientation
In 2012 CAPS facilitated and presented at six arrival information sessions in addition to facilitating and presenting at the international student welcomes.

Mainstream orientation
CAPS presented workshops and seminars covering an array of topics and issues relevant to commencing students. These seminars included: social networking, working in groups, well-balanced lifestyle, succeeding at university, happiness, and mindfulness. The seminars were well attended, with more than 40 students participating in most seminars and more than 60 participants in the mindfulness session.

CAPS facilitated and presented at Student Welcomes for more than 300 students who attended welcomes for mature age and part-time students, Broadway Scheme participants, and country and interstate students.

ANTICIPATING 2013
During 2012, CAPS focused on promoting student wellbeing through the Thrive Festival and student Mental Health Survey and developing social media resources.

In 2013, we will continue to collaborate with students and encourage involvement in peer advocate initiatives. We will also launch web-based resources for students, such as the CAPS mobile phone application and a personal development plan. To meet student mental health needs, CAPS will prioritise establishing a psychiatric service within the CAPS clinical team. CAPS will also survey staff regarding student life skills needs and work collaboratively with academic and administrative staff to develop a holistic approach to skills and attitudes for promoting emotionally fit and cognitively able students.

STAFF
Head, Counselling and Psychological Services
Dr Philomena Renner
Senior Counsellors
Paul O’Donohue
Jenny Tebbutt (part-time)

Counsellors
Helena Alexandrakis
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Karin Austin
Counselling Psychologist/Counsellor(part-time)
Karen Davis
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Ashley Douglass
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Kathryn Elbourne
Psychologist/Counsellor* (part-time)
Anna-Lena Lopez
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Clint Moore Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Natalie Papageorgiou
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor* (part-time)
Maria Pirrello
Counselling Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time/casual)
Allison Ryder
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Eileen Seah
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Patrick Sheehan
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)
Elizabeth Stanton
Clinical Psychologist/Counsellor (part-time)

Administrative Officers
Mark Shadwell
Angela Mason
Sabrina Patmore
(*Denotes staff not in position for full year)
Disability Services is committed to student equity and to generating positive outcomes for the University through greater engagement and retention of students with disability.

REALISING THE VISION OF THE 2011-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN
In 2012, Disability Services planned and delivered its programs with an emphasis on the University’s Strategic Plan:

– enrich the experience of University life for all students (Strategy Four)
– attract and support promising students from a diversity of social and cultural backgrounds (Strategy Eleven).

KEY DEVELOPMENTS
In 2012, Disability Services implemented a number of initiatives aimed at enriching the experience of University life for students with disabilities.

2013-18 Disability Action Plan
The Disability Action Plan is used to ensure University alignment and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

In close collaboration with the Director of Student Support Services and the Dean of Sydney College of the Arts, the Manager of Disability Services had primary oversight of the development of consultation and community engagement to determine the objectives of the Disability Action Plan. This process consisted of holding University-wide workshops that focused on the Accessible Environments Plan and the draft purpose and objectives of the Disability Action Plan (DAP).

An all stakeholder staff and student survey was conducted to assist with finalising the objectives of the DAP. In total, 1500 students and staff participated in the survey and the findings revealed a disappointment with the University culture towards people with disability and indicated a strong need for the allocation of resources to improve the learning and working environment for students and staff with disability.

Orientation program for students with autism spectrum disorders
In 2012, we initiated a pilot program to assist students with autism spectrum disorders to develop key skills for successful navigation of the academic and social demands of university.

This program consisted of group workshops to provide information and training for communication skills, social skills, organisational skills and motivation.

The pilot was successful in facilitating academic, social and personal adjustment for these students and has fostered a sense of belonging at university for this cohort.

In 2013, Disability Services will expand the workshops by providing students with the opportunity to practise their skills in a safe and accepting environment. The program will also include an Orientation Day, which aims to offer specialised transition support for first-year students with autism spectrum disorders.

Expanding the Student Disability Liaison Officer role
One of Disability Services’ most successful strategic initiatives has been the appointment of Student Disability Liaison Officers across the University. In 2012, all faculties and schools had at least one staff member appointed as an officer to provide support for disability-related matters for both students and faculty staff.

In 2012, Disability Services refined the scope and responsibility of the officer by developing a role overview. Each new officer attended an introduction to establish an effective and consistent approach to helping clients, and two forums were held to develop the officers’ knowledge and skills.

The ongoing training and expansion of the officer network has refined information channels across faculties, and has generated increased awareness of the needs of students with disability.
Qualitative data gathered through the Disability Services survey and officer forums indicates there has been an increase in support provided to students across the University through implementing reasonable adjustments and developing inclusive teaching practices.

In 2013, Disability Services will develop the role of officers to facilitate systems that target disability awareness and inclusive teaching.

**NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Disability Awareness Training Manual**
In 2012, Disability Services led the University of Sydney towards its goal of becoming an inclusive tertiary education institution by working with faculties, residential colleges and student organisations to raise the level of disability awareness and assist staff to develop skills for supporting students with disability. Disability Services commenced development of a Disability Awareness Training Manual, designed as a resource for increasing knowledge around inclusive teaching practices and legislative requirements.

In 2013, Disability Services will complete the manual, which will form a core training resource to assist the University in achieving key objectives identified in the University 2013-18 Disability Action Plan.

**Fisher Library space**
Disability Services collaborated with the Director of Fisher Library to develop an area within the newly renovated premises specifically for students with disabilities. This included the relocation and upgrade of the assistive technology lab, a locker space and a quiet study space developed specifically for students with autism spectrum disorder. This quiet study space consists of five workstations for short-term study periods, and a rest area with a couch for 30-minute breaks. The room has been designed in consideration of some common sensory stimulation difficulties these students face and avoids bright lighting, bright colours and noise.

**Lecture support pilot**
Disability Services implemented a pilot lecture support program in 2012. This program aims to increase the use of lecture recording and reduce reliance on the peer-driven note-taking service. Recent data indicates that the program has substantially reduced the number of note-takers required and has created a more efficient process for students with disabilities to access lecture support.

**Review of registration documentation**
In 2012, Disability Services developed a registration pack aimed at providing newly registered students with vital information regarding support available to them at the University. Disability Services developed a service request deadlines table, to assist with the efficient and timely management of students’ online requests. A registration checklist was also implemented to ensure students receive information relating to key issues such as documentation requirements, disclosure and clinical placements.

**SERVICES AND TRENDS**

During 2012, a total of 1645 students were registered with Disability Services.

Yearly statistics indicate that there is an increase in the number of students with high needs or complex needs registering with the service; consequently, there has been a notable increase in students requiring individual face-to-face consultations from 920 in 2011 to 1317 in 2012. There is also an increasing number of students with mental health conditions registering with the service: 1008 discrete diagnoses were recorded among students registered with Disability Services in 2012, compared with 896 in 2010. Greater staffing resources are required to ensure that Disability Services is able to support the growing number of students with disability at the University of Sydney.

**Orientation**
In 2012 Disability Services conducted staff and community engagement activities to increase the participation of students with disabilities at the University by delivering a range of information sessions at orientation days. Disability Services was involved in Open Day and Info Day, and ‘Accessing Disability Services’, ‘Navigating MyUni’ and ‘Assistive Technology’ sessions were run to provide students with information on the range of services offered at the University.

**Managing disability at work forum**
Disability Services collaborated with four Sydney-based universities in 2012 to hold the annual Careers Forum hosted by the University of Western Sydney. This forum aims to facilitate the transition of students with a disability into the workforce, and provides an excellent opportunity for students to network and meet other students and experts in the field.

**Staff newsletters**
This newsletter is distributed to all faculty staff across the University six or seven times a year and promotes awareness of key disability issues. It communicates vital issues to staff regarding disability and provides information to help staff support students with disability.
Staff development
Disability Services represented the University at several conferences, including the ‘Pathways 11’ conference at which Disability Services staff conducted a presentation and a panel discussion on ‘Sharing experience for future change – a transcontinental comparison of two diverse institutions, the Australian and the Irish disability services model’. As part of this presentation, a paper will also be submitted for publication.

All Disability Services staff attended and represented the University at the quarterly Disability Education Association of NSW and ACT days. This is a professional association that represents staff and students in the tertiary sector and provides opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration, a forum for professional development and networking, and promotes access to education for people with disabilities.

ANTICIPATING 2013
In 2013, Disability Services will implement initiatives to increase engagement and retention of students with disability by promoting access to education and inclusive teaching and learning practices.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS
Disability Action Plan 2013-18
A key strategic priority for Disability Services is to increase disability awareness at the University.

In 2013, Disability Services will commence implementation of the Disability Action Plan by highlighting areas of focus and identifying best practice guidelines for the support of students with disability on campus.

We will complete the Disability Awareness Training Manual, which will form a core resource for disability awareness training. Disability Services will also collaborate with Human Resources to assist with the development and roll out of disability awareness training for all staff at the University.

Orientation programs
Disability Services will facilitate two orientation sessions in the week prior to Orientation Week designed for students with autism spectrum disorders and students with vision impairment.

The sessions aim to familiarise these students with the academic and practical expectations of the university environment. We aim to empower students to overcome barriers associated with making the transition to university.

Website
We will undertake a complete review of the Disability Services website to ensure it is comprehensive, user friendly and accessible. We will also update the website with resources for first-year students by developing a ‘Getting ready for university’ section and a ‘Disability awareness’ section to promote disability awareness across the University.

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS
Centre for Disability Research and Policy
In 2013, Disability Services will collaborate with the Centre for Disability Research and Policy to develop a student outreach program to encourage and attract students with a disability to study at the University. The program facilitates university students to act as mentors for high school students with a disability – to open up conversations about capacity, achievements and aspirations so that more students with disability aspire to tertiary education.

Developing academic plans
Academic plans enable students to better manage their studies through early planning and organisation of their assessment requirements by providing an outline of a student’s exam and assessment timetable for a given semester. These plans have been used with great success in the Faculties of Law, Business, and Health Sciences.

In 2013, Disability Services will run a pilot scheme with the Faculty of Agriculture and Environment and Sydney College of the Arts to implement academic plans for students registered with Disability Services.

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS
Collaboration with the Guide Dogs Association
Disability Services will collaborate with the Guide Dogs Association in 2013 on the Orientation Program for students with vision impairment. This program aims to increase students’ engagement and enrich their overall experience in making the transition to university and managing their everyday study commitments.

Collaboration with Vision Australia
In 2013, Disability Services will collaborate with Vision Australia in the rollout of a ‘University Experience Day’ for high school students with vision impairment. This outreach program aims to encourage and attract students with vision impairment to study at the University of Sydney.

STAFF
Disability Services Manager
Dagmar Kminiak

Disability Services Officers
Bronwyn Allan
Gemma Ennis
Vicky Little (part-time)

Administrative Officers
Charles Stott (up to July)
Erin Simpson (July onwards)
The Financial Assistance Service provides support to degree students who are experiencing financial difficulty and whose academic work may suffer as a result.

In 2012 the service assisted 1036 students through a total budget of $1,905,560, with $1,170,815 provided through bursaries, and $734,745 provided through interest free loans. In addition, Student Support Services has continued the mutually beneficial relationship with the University’s Development Office, in particular through the student support fund that provides funding for the University of Sydney Bursary. Alumni and friends of the University donated $124,740 in 2012, enabling additional bursary assistance to a greater number of students in financial need.

**KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

At the start of 2012 the service worked on refocusing the ‘Money Matters’ talk for new students through collaboration with the Accommodation Information Service funded through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program. This was a great update to a valuable resource for incoming students. The service ran two very well attended ‘Money Matters’ sessions during Orientation Week, and participated in welcomes for rural and interstate students.

The centre also worked closely with the Scholarships Office to promote more bursaries through the Equity Scholarships program through the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC), so that prospective and current students could apply for and receive assistance at the beginning of the academic year when they need it most. This will take place for the first time in 2013 as a trial with a view to moving more bursaries to this process to enhance the student experience and better organise administrative processes.

As part of the Wingara Mura 2012 implementation plan, the service commenced awarding bursaries that were previously awarded through the Koori Centre, increasing the number of bursaries awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

**ANTICIPATING 2013**

The service continued to work closely with faculties and the Development Office to secure new funding for bursaries and Equity Scholarships. A case in point was the collaboration with the Faculty of Dentistry on the introduction of the Schweitzer Scholarship in 2012. Two students received scholarships valued at $6000 – a significant benefit to students in this resource-dependent course. In 2013 this assistance will grow to $60,000 to assist 10 students in the Faculty of Dentistry.

**Table 12: Comparison of financial assistance awarded**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students assisted</td>
<td>1642</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>1036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of bursaries awarded</td>
<td>$1,155,890</td>
<td>$1,368,945</td>
<td>$1,170,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of loans awarded</td>
<td>$842,475</td>
<td>$774,580</td>
<td>$734,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of assistance provided</td>
<td>$1,998,365</td>
<td>$2,143,525</td>
<td>$1,905,560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STAFF**

Financial Assistance Officer  
Elise Jackson  
Administrative Officers  
Maria Loveday (part-time)  
Leah Arthur (part-time)
The Orientation program is designed to facilitate the academic, cultural and social adjustment of first-year undergraduate students. Activities are linked to the key strategic goals in the University’s Strategic Plan, including enhancing the student experience (Strategy Four), developing excellence in learning and teaching (Strategy Seven), and encouraging participation of students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds (Strategy Eleven). The program incorporates:

– University welcome to new students
– faculty and school welcomes
– academic skills development
– transition talks
– cohort welcomes (Broadway scheme, mature-age and part-time students, country and interstate students, and postgraduate students)
– international student welcomes and information sessions for Study Abroad and Exchange (STABEX) and full-degree students.

The Orientation Project Group works cooperatively to develop an integrated program of activities for Orientation Week on the Camperdown and Darlington campuses.

The Student Experience Coordinator and the Transition Support Officer support the Orientation Week Convenor by assisting with:

– managing the production and delivery of promotional material for Orientation, including gathering all information from faculties, schools and support services regarding their events
– organising the University Welcome, including invitations to speakers and set-up of the Great Hall (in conjunction with the Graduations Office)
– supporting the Orientation Project Group meetings
– developing and promoting the website, event guides and promotional material each semester
– providing links to Orientation activities on other campuses.

Orientation Packs were sent to all commencing first-year undergraduate students. These packs included: the Orientation booklet with timetables of all faculty and school welcomes at all campuses, as well as academic and transition sessions; information about the University of Sydney Union’s O-Week events; campus maps and a list of useful contacts; and the Union’s O-Week promotional material.

Orientation includes events for postgraduate students and scholarship recipients. International and postgraduate events occur in Semester 2 for newly commencing students.

Previously, these activities were held in the preceding week, and were reduced in 2011 from four days to 1½ days of activities. The international student orientation and welcomes were streamlined, with social activities and tours organised by Sydney University Sport and Fitness and the University of Sydney Union. One student commented:

“Orientation week was fantastic! It allowed me to meet heaps of new people and make friends before the massive jump into lectures the next week.”

International student response from e-survey
An annual orientation survey is conducted early in Semester 1 to obtain information about students’ experience, to measure outcomes and refine program development. Responses from the annual orientation e-survey indicated that:

– 81 percent of international students attended the International Welcome in the Great Hall
– 69 percent reinforced that the new format was convenient
– 89 percent attended other activities during Orientation Week
– more than 60 percent of international students joined two or more clubs or societies.

As one student commented:

“All the events I attended were really useful to me, not only those about the academic part (since I come from France and did not know the University before) but also the social ones where I met many other international students.”

Anticipating 2013
Recommendations from the Orientation Project Group will be incorporated in planning for the 2013 program. These include:

– inviting student representatives to participate in the project group
– developing the program to meet the goals of the University Strategic Plan, such as responding to demands for increased support and assistance for diverse cohorts
– promotion of academic skills activities during Orientation Week
– development and refinement of the program to meet the evolving needs of the student body.

Staff
Convenor, Orientation Project Group
Jordi Austin

Student Experience Coordinator
Catherine Dernee (FTE 0.6)
T +61 2 8627 8454

Transition Support Officer
Cassie Khamis
T +61 2 8627 8452
The Scholarships Office is responsible for the management, administration, promotion and effective reporting on more than $50 million of undergraduate and postgraduate research scholarship funds annually. This comprises more than 68 percent of the entire University scholarships funds. More than 1000 undergraduate and postgraduate prizes are awarded through this office each year. Provision of scholarships to students enables the University to recruit outstanding scholars at all levels of candidacy.

REALISING THE VISION OF THE 2011-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Scholarships Office continues to operate as two teams:

– undergraduate and postgraduate coursework scholarships and prizes
– research scholarships.

Both teams manage the application for and awarding of University-wide scholarships, and the monitoring of student academic progression or progress in research to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of a diversity of scholarship schemes. Where appropriate, students who are not meeting their academic potential are referred for support within their faculty and other Student Support Services.

In both areas of scholarship support, the development of services is guided by Strategy Four of the University’s Strategic Plan (enhancing the student experience). The office does this by continually evaluating processes and administrative services as well as engagement with students. Provision of Equity Scholarships through the Access Scholarships for undergraduate students contributes substantially to the University’s vision of supporting promising scholars regardless of background. The office receives more than 2000 applications each year for about 100 Access Scholarships. We also provide guidance and assistance to faculties in determining access and equity considerations for scholarship allocations.

The office also plays a key role in providing advice to faculties, the Alumni Office and the Development Office in regards to emerging areas of need in student financial support, and in establishing new scholarship schemes.

The vast majority of University scholarships funding is managed by the Scholarships Office, enabling appropriate risk management and transparency of fund allocation. The office has a strong engagement with external research partners, and is a trusted resource for research scholarship applicants and the management of external research scholarship funding.

SERVICES AND TRENDS

The office administered the following scholarships:

Undergraduates

– University of Sydney Outstanding Achievement Scholarships: $10,000 per annum for the duration of undergraduate degree; 253 students were paid a total of $2,508,000
– University of Sydney Access Scholarships: $6000 per annum for the duration of undergraduate degree; 476 students were paid a total $2,782,500
– University of Sydney Merit Scholarships: $6000 per annum for the duration of undergraduate degree; 175 students were paid a total of $1,020,000
– University of Sydney Entry Scholarships: $6000 for the first year of an undergraduate degree; 84 students were paid a total of $489,000.

Honours

– University of Sydney Honours Scholarships: $6000 for the honours year; 78 students were paid a total of $439,500.

Graduate entry

– University of Sydney Graduate Entry Scholarships: $6000 for one year; $6000 per annum for the duration of the degree; 12 students were paid a total of $67,500
– University of Sydney Academic Merit Prize: $1000 one-off payment for academic performance in the previous year; 600 students were paid a total of $600,000.

Postgraduate research

– 378 new Australian Postgraduate Awards
– 39 new University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards
– 42 new University of Sydney International Scholarships.

All at a stipend of $23,728 per annum for a maximum of 3½ years.

Together with other postgraduate research scholarships funded by faculties, bequests, research grants and external organisations, the total value of stipends paid to more than 2000 research students in 2012 was about $47 million.
NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS
Audit and Risk Management conducted a review of the administration of scholarships and prizes in 2012. It found that the administration of University-wide scholarships appears to be effective and the University has adequate processes in place to ensure these scholarships are awarded in line with their terms and conditions. The Scholarships Office also regularly monitors student eligibility. Implementation plans and completion dates were put in place for the recommendations for further improvements identified by the review.

In conjunction with faculties, the office played a substantial role in allocating 120 scholarships for the Early Offer Year 12 (E12) scheme for commencement at the University in 2013. These scholarships are awarded to NSW HSC students from a financially disadvantaged background and/or who attend a NSW government identified low socio-economic status high school.

The Scholarships Office continues its close relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support programs (Cadigal Entry Scheme, Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme, Yoorong Garang Indigenous Student Support Unit, Koori Centre) to ensure that all prospective and current students have access to information regarding scholarships and other financial support.

The research scholarships team continued to work closely with the Academic Board’s Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee in awarding the University-wide research scholarships for both domestic and international students. It also continued with streamlining processes and improving data integrity across systems in order to manage the increasing number of scholarship applications, stipend payments, external funding agreements and reporting requirements.

ANTICIPATING 2013
In 2013 we will integrate the two scholarships teams and the financial assistance team into a new service. This change is driven by the need to provide a single, cohesive voice for all stakeholders in relation to scholarships policy, compliance and practice at the University. Further, we will be able to service prospective students, current students, faculties, senior management, donors, professional business units, funding agencies and government in a holistic manner. The service will continue to contribute information to the University review of scholarships.

Further development and work on the fund management module on Sydney Student will continue in 2013, and this will also require a full review of many of the administrative processes.

STAFF
Postgraduate Research Scholarships
Manager
Carmen Ng
Scholarships Officer
Ellen Spinner
Research Scholarships Officer
Lara Fourro
Research Scholarships Assistants
Glenn Barnes*
Rebecca Liu*
Adi Piersol*
Emily Reid*
Undergraduate and postgraduate coursework scholarships
Senior Policy Officer
Ben Alfred
Scholarships and Prizes Officer
Emil Wiramihardja
Scholarships Officers (Operations)
Belinda Baccarini*
Toni King*
Administrative Assistants
Cassandra Khamis*
Natasha Harrison*
*Not full year