

Racism & Racial Discrimination in Australian Universities: Report on the Racism@Uni Survey

Part A: Survey results

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**Australian
National
University**

November 2025

For publication April 2026

Note:

This publication version of the report excludes identification of individual university results including survey response rates.

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This is Part A of a two-part report. This publication version of the report excludes identification of individual universities.

Part B is “Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Responses to Question F12”, by Deirdre Howard-Wagner & Katherine Curchin

Advisory note

This report contains extensive statistical and textual material reporting of individuals’ experiences of racism. These may be traumatising for some readers.

Executive Summary

About the survey

- The Racism@Uni survey was conducted in August and September 2025 by researchers at the Australian National University for the Australian Human Rights Commission as part of a broader study into racism at Australian universities commissioned by the Australian Government.
- 42 out of the 43 Australian universities participated in the survey. From the 1.65 million invitations sent to Australian university staff and students 76,131 responses were obtained.
- The survey asked whether people had experienced racism in the past two years, and if so where. It asked about student and staff experiences of, and perceptions about, their university, their knowledge of policies to address racism, and whether they took precautionary actions to guard against racism. It also collected ethnic, cultural and racial characteristics of students and staff.

Prevalence, nature and impacts of racism experienced at universities

- Students and staff placed a high priority on safety, belonging, respect and support at university. While most reported positive experiences, those who experienced racism felt markedly less safe and supported. This divide was also reflected in opinions on whether racism is a problem at their university.
- Staff and students generally were positive about the extent to which the student body and staff reflected diversity; however, staff strongly believed that this was not the case for university leadership.
- Based on self-reported racism, an approach which primarily captured interpersonal racism, racial discrimination and abuse, 11.8 per cent of non-academic staff, 13.2 per cent of domestic students, 18.6 per cent of international students and 20.5 per cent of academic staff in Australian universities who participated in the survey reported experiencing direct interpersonal racism in the previous two years at their university.
- Additionally, in text responses, many describe both the subtle and the traumatic racism they experience as they study or work in Australian universities, and the impact this has on their lives.
- Our analysis, including benchmarking against other sources, and the results of an independent survey, suggests that the survey estimates may somewhat overstate the rate of racism. This was assessed as likely to have occurred because students and staff who experienced racism at university were more likely to respond to the survey (response bias). The actual extent of this overestimation could however not be determined.

- Across all identified groups, students and staff reported higher rates of racism in the broader community than at university, with a small group only experiencing racism at university.
- The rate of experiencing racism overall, and at Australian universities, varied across the range of different communities on which the survey reported.

Incidence of racism at university and in total, selected respondent groups

Communities (a)	Racism at University				Total racism			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff
All	13.2	18.6	20.5	11.8	34.0	50.4	33.2	25.6
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	29.8	–	56.6	41.1	64.5	–	81.0	69.9
'European'	6.1	11.4	8.0	4.5	15.6	23.6	13.8	10.3
Non-'European'	20.8	18.8	35.7	23.0	53.6	51.4	56.9	49.2
Pasifika	19.6	11.9	48.3	23.5	62.8	41.8	66.7	50.6
Māori	12.5	–	25.0	12.0	50.5	–	45.0	37.3
Other Indigenous	26.1	16.7	33.3	18.8	67.4	25.0	53.3	43.8
African	21.9	29.7	44.9	30.1	68.6	64.7	67.2	63.9
Afro-diasporic	25.7	35.7	47.6	28.0	83.2	62.5	78.6	48.0
Total Asian	17.9	16.5	33.4	21.9	58.1	49.9	61.7	55.0
Chinese	17.4	17.4	28.2	19.3	55.9	55.9	61.8	57.6
North East Asian (excluding Chinese)	18.5	23.1	30.3	24.9	61.2	55.8	55.7	60.5
South Asian	20.6	15.9	41.2	27.1	61.7	46.4	67.6	54.9
South East Asian	17.1	16.9	28.5	21.0	58.5	48.3	57.9	56.6
Central Asian	14.7	28.1	22.7	4.5	51.8	56.3	36.4	27.3
Americas (excluding US and Canada)	16.6	17.5	26.2	18.6	47.6	48.0	45.2	45.6
Middle Eastern	27.7	30.6	46.8	32.0	59.4	55.4	64.7	54.2
Palestinian	43.1	0.0	60.0	33.3	67.7	33.3	75.0	60.0
Jewish (religious)	57.3	47.6	56.5	50.4	77.5	57.1	73.6	69.5
Jewish (secular)	22.6	45.5	27.8	24.7	42.5	54.5	38.4	32.6
Muslim	21.9	16.6	44.8	31.2	59.9	43.7	64.6	61.7

(a) Details on how these were derived and defined are detailed in the report. Individuals could be a member of multiple communities.

- Differences in the rate of racism between individual universities were generally small, and marginal, compared to the overall level across all universities.
- While there were some gender differences, these were not consistent across different groups of staff and students. Most notably amongst international students, women reported considerably higher rates of experiencing racism.
- The most common reason given by students for why they thought they had been subject to racism was their cultural, racial or ethnic identity. Although for some groups, in particular Jewish, Palestinian and Middle Eastern communities, a very high proportion identified conflict in the Middle East.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students reported high levels of racism and expressed mixed views about university policies and practices. Staff reported carrying a high colonial/cultural load, as well as experiencing tokenism.

- The most common elements of the experience of racism reported by respondents were: being singled out or excluded, feeling unable to express views freely, and inappropriate comments, names or jokes direct at the person. However in most cases students and staff reported that there were multiple elements to their experience. Both staff and students from some communities reported high rates of being inappropriately stopped by university security.
- Most students experiencing racism reported this occurring most frequently in tutorials, seminars and similar small group learning environments. Staff reported it occurring most frequently in staff meetings and staff common areas.
- Students primarily reported racism from other students, but also frequently identified teaching staff as perpetrators of racism. Non-academic staff reported other non-academic staff as the most frequent participants, while academic staff reported other academic staff. Staff, however, also identified university leadership in over 40 per cent of responses.
- The most common consequences of experiencing racism at university were negative impacts on mental health, minimising participation at university, and adverse impacts on studies and employment.
- A notable number of international students and staff reported that concerns about their visa constrained their ability to freely express their views.
- The majority of staff and students reported indirect racism, for instance hearing racist comments about the groups they identify with, but not directed at them individually.
- In most cases staff and students tended to report that experiences of direct and indirect racism occurred ‘sometimes’ or ‘rarely’, rather than ‘frequently’ or ‘very frequently’.
- Taking into account both direct and indirect racism, regardless of frequency, only 31.5 per cent of domestic students, 24.5 per cent of international students, 27.9 per cent of academic staff and 33.8 per cent of non-academic staff, reported not having experienced any racism at university.
- Around one in five of those who did not experience direct racism reported being a bystander to racist conduct. Most did not take action. International students were less likely to intervene, while academic staff were more likely to take action.
- Racism from those with ‘European’ heritages towards other groups was cited as the most frequent form experienced or witnessed. However, all groups of respondents also reported that they had also seen or experienced racism being directed at those with a European heritage, between various non-European groups, and within specific communities.

Knowledge and views about university policies on racism and diversity

- Staff participants were generally more aware of existing university policies on racism than student participants, with over half of academic and professional staff reporting awareness of these policies and just over one-third of domestic and international students reporting awareness of these policies.
- Although this level of self-reported knowledge of university policies on racism and diversity can be seen as low, most respondents considered they could find out how to report racism. Those with more knowledge of the university's policies were generally positive about these, except regarding processes for complaints about racism, which were rarely used and widely viewed as ineffective in achieving meaningful change.

Key findings

The key findings from the survey are:

- The high levels of interpersonal racism reported at universities reflect wider racism across the Australian community, rather than simply being specific to universities.
- At the same time, however, racism at university impacts negatively on students' study, staff careers, and on staff and student mental health. It is also deleterious to people's participation at university and their sense of belonging.
- Some dimensions of reported racism reflect wider conflicts, including in this survey, conflict in the Middle East.
- A recurrent element of the experience of racism for many staff and students were constraints on being able to speak freely. This strikes at the central role of universities.
- There are key areas of the study environment at universities which need to be addressed, including the management of small group learning environments, and placements and internships.
- While some university policies are seen as effective, others, such as the management of complaints, were not, and some policies were seen as being performative, rather than substantive.
- Central to the challenge for universities is their leadership, both in terms of the extent it was identified as a participant in the racism reported, and the degree it, and the university more widely, is not reflective of the diversity of students and staff, or the broader Australian community.

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Glossary

A-B	Reference to academic staffing levels. Level A: Associate Lecturer or equivalent, Level B: Lecturer or equivalent
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADA	Australian Data Archive
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ANU	Australian National University
ANUpoll	A regular population survey undertaken by the ANU
ATN	University Grouping: Australian Technology Network
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CDU	Charles Darwin University
C-E	Reference to academic staffing levels. Level C: Senior Lecturer or equivalent; Level D: Associate Professor or equivalent; Level E: Professor or equivalent
CE	Cooperating Educator (an educator who works with student teachers in placements)
COVID	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
CQU	Central Queensland University
CSU	Charles Sturt University
DEI	Diversity, equity and inclusion
ECAJ	Executive Council of Australian Jewry
ESB	English Speaking Background
ESS	European Social Survey
EU	European Union
Go8	University Grouping: Group of Eight
HESP	Higher Education Standards Panel
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
ICERD	International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
ID	Identity
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
IPA	Institute of Public Affairs
IRU	University Grouping: Innovative Research Universities
JHU	John Hopkins University
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, intersex, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse people

ME	Middle East
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
N/S	Not stated
NE	North East
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
NZ	New Zealand
ORU	The Online Research Unit
PG	Post Graduate
POLIS	POLIS: The Centre for Social Research, Australian National University
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RDA	Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
REC	Research Ethics Committee
RUN	University Grouping: Regional University Network
S&C	South and Central
SACC	Standard Australian Classification of Countries 2016, ABS
SE	South East
Segal	Reference to: Special Envoy's Plan to Combat Antisemitism
SWANA	South West Asia and North Africa
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
U	University
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNE	University of New England
UniSA	University of South Australia
UniSC	University of Sunshine Coast
UniSQ	University of Southern Queensland
UOW	University of Wollongong
UQ	University of Queensland
US	United States
USA	United States of America
UTAS	University of Tasmania
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney
UWA	University of Western Australia
VC	Vice Chancellor

Categorisations and terminology

Respondent classification	Survey respondents are grouped on the following basis reflecting the different roles and experiences of types of staff and students, and differential response rates
Domestic student	Students who are Australian or New Zealand citizens, and holders of Australian permanent visas, or others entitled to stay in Australia on an indefinite basis
International student	Those who do not qualify as Australian students
Academic staff	Academic staff as determined by universities
Non-academic staff	Other staff employed by universities

Communities	These are the main classifications of communities used in the report. It is noted that a person may be a member of multiple communities, and when this classification system is used, they will be reported on in each of the communities of which they are a member
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
African	Persons with an African heritage (excluding those with a white South African heritage, or otherwise identifying as non-African)
Afro-diasporic	Other persons with an African heritage such as Afro-Caribbean and those in North America, as well as those who identified simply as Black or a Person of Colour
Americas	Persons from the Americas, excluding those from the USA and Canada with European heritage
Central Asian	As per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016
Chinese	Persons who identify as having a Chinese ethnicity
Māori	Persons who identify as Māori
Middle Eastern	As per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016
North East Asian	As per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016, excluding those who identify as being Chinese
Other Indigenous	Indigenous persons other than Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons and Māori people. (Note this was not able to be comprehensively coded and is mainly Indigenous persons of the Americas and Europe.)
Palestinian	Persons who identify as Palestinian

Pasifika	Persons identifying as Pasifika, including Papua New Guinea, but excluding Māori
South Asian	Southern Asia per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries
South East Asian	South East Asia per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries
Southern European	Southern Europe as per ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries. Note: This coding only applied to those who explicitly had Southern European heritages. Where this could not be identified, people have simply been classified as ‘European’
European	European, including those who have a derived historical European ethnicity in Australia, the US, Canada, and South Africa
Jewish (religious)	Persons who identify their religion as Judaism
Jewish (secular)	Persons who identify as Jewish, but do not state Judaism as their religion
Christian	Persons who identify Christianity as their religion
Muslim	Persons who identify Islam as their religion
Other identified religions	Persons who identify a formal religion other than Islam, Judaism or Christianity

Broad Ethnicity	This is used as a broad categorisation of respondents. Unlike communities it is a single categorical classification
‘European’	Persons with solely an identified European or Southern European heritage
Non-‘European’	All others, including those whose ethnicity was not stated or not able to be derived

University groupings	These are used to examine outcomes across broad groupings of universities, using existing institutional groupings
ATN	Australian Technology Network: University of Technology Sydney; The University of Newcastle; RMIT University; Deakin University; Curtin University; and University of South Australia
Go8	Group of Eight: The University of Sydney; UNSW Sydney; The University of Melbourne; Monash University; The University of Queensland; The University of Western Australia; The University of Adelaide; and The Australian National University
IRU	Innovative Research Universities: Western Sydney University; La Trobe University; Griffith University; James Cook University; Murdoch University; Flinders University; and University of Canberra

Other	Those universities which are not a member of the other groups: Macquarie University; University of Wollongong; Swinburne University of Technology; Victoria University; Queensland University of Technology; Edith Cowan University; The University of Notre Dame; University of Tasmania; Charles Darwin University; Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education; Australian Catholic University; Avondale University College; University of Divinity; and Torrens University Australia
RUN	Regional Universities Network: University of New England; Southern Cross University; Charles Sturt University; Federation University; University of the Sunshine Coast; CQ University; and University of Southern Queensland

Terminology used

Direct racism	Direct interpersonal racism that the person has experienced. This includes abuse, harassment, adverse treatment, or exclusion, on the basis of a person's race, ethnicity, nationality or religion. It is based upon the individual's reporting of whether they consider they have "experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the past two years".
Indirect racism	Where staff and students have heard, at university, the use of racist terms and language, the denigration of the person's culture, the use of negative stereotypes, blaming the person's group for adverse outcomes for others, or trivialising the group's outcomes, but these were not directed at the individual.
Bystander racism/ witnessing racism	Where people observe racist behaviour directed towards other persons at university.
Racism at university	When individuals identify that as students, or staff, the direct racism they experienced occurred at university (including online), including when this occurred at a university related activity such as sporting events and conferences
Racism outside of university	Direct racism which the person experienced outside of the university.
Institutional/Structural racism	Racism which is structured into the systems, structure, culture, content, and control of an organisation
Settler groups	Populations which have colonised/settled in the lands of extant Indigenous inhabitants, and the descendants of such settlers.
Intersectionality	Where different aspects of a person's identity expose them to overlapping or multiple forms of discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation

1 Introduction

This is a report on the Racism@Uni survey which was conducted between 12 August and 24 September 2025. A request to participate in the survey was sent to 1.6 million students and staff at 42 Australian universities, with all universities, other than Bond University, agreeing to participate. It was completed¹ by 76,131 students and staff.

1.1 Background

This project was commissioned by the Australian Human Rights Commission as part of the broader Racism@Uni study², which has been commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education (Clare and Giles 2024). This study, and the need for a survey of staff and student experiences, formed part of the findings of the 2023 Universities Accord, specifically:

Recommendation 33: That to contribute to making the tertiary education system as safe as possible for students and staff, the Australian Government conduct a study into the prevalence and impact of racism across the tertiary education system, on campus and online ... (O’Kane et al 2023, 34)

1.1.1 The AHRC Study

The overall objective of the study is to “examine the prevalence and impact of racism in universities (including those with dual sector operations), establish a baseline of the experiences of racism, and develop recommendations to foster a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all university students and staff” (AHRC 2024a).

The broader AHRC Racism@Uni project Study has four elements:

- Literature review: The Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research and the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion at The University of Technology Sydney undertook a comprehensive literature review of domestic and international research on the prevalence, nature and impact of individual and systemic racism within universities.
- Focus groups: Think Change Resolve and Langton & Partners (2025) undertook a qualitative study of experience of racism and discrimination at Australian universities. Using a co-design approach this study engaged with 142 students and 43 staff through 57 sessions, which were a mix of focus groups, small group sessions and individual interviews. As well it received written submissions from 50 staff and 75 students. In total, participants from 34 universities were engaged in the research.

¹ See discussion at section 1.9.

² This was initially titled ‘Respect at uni: Study into antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and the experience of First Nations people’.

- A national online survey: The Racism@Uni survey, which is the focus of this report.
- Policy Audit: This was undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) by reviewing policies related to racism across Australian universities with the objective of showcasing examples of good practice and making recommendations to strengthen policy.

The AHRC released an interim report from the Study in December 2024 (AHRC 2024b), and the final report of the project is scheduled for completion in December 2025.

1.1.2 Objectives of the Racism@Uni survey

The key elements of the survey, as identified by the AHRC in the Terms of Reference for the study, were to identify:

- a. The prevalence, nature and experiences of racism including antisemitism and Islamophobia at universities (including those with dual sector operations³) for both staff and students, at the individual and systemic level.
- b. Which cohorts of students and staff experience racism, including but not limited to the distinct incidences of antisemitism, Islamophobia, and the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from negatively racialised backgrounds, and international students.
- c. The unique context and circumstances of racism for different groups of students and staff, including a specific focus on the experiences of Jewish, Muslim, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. (AHRC 2024a)

Drawing upon this the AHRC as part of a strategy to effectively engage with all communities, identified nine specific communities of students and staff which it sought to ensure were effectively engaged in the study. These were:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	South, Southeast, and East Asian communities
Jewish communities	African communities
Muslim communities	Pasifika communities
Palestinian communities	International student communities
Middle Eastern communities	

Within the survey content development the AHRC identified a range of potential themes for investigation through the survey, including: ‘Complaints handling’; ‘Impact of the conflict in the Middle East and racism: Antisemitism and Islamophobia’; ‘Academic freedom and racism’ and ‘Backlash’.

³ Dual sector universities offer both higher education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses.

1.2 Approach to ‘racism and discrimination’

Although the terms racism, and more broadly discrimination, are used extensively, there is variation in the scope of these concepts, how they are defined, and in understandings of the underlying mechanisms. In part this reflects the evolution of the concept, the specific circumstances which are being addressed, and the theoretical framing which is adopted.

1.2.1 International

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1965 and was signed by Australia in 1966 and ratified in 1975 defines racial discrimination as:

any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (UN 1965, Part 1 Article 1 Clause 1)

This was defined more broadly in the 2001 Durban Declaration and Program of Action (UN 2002) which stated:

We recognize that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance occur on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin and that victims can suffer multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination based on other related grounds such as sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, birth or other status. (p. 13)

The United Nation’s position has developed from a narrow focus on acts of racial discrimination (ICERD) to recognising racism as a systemic and adaptive process. Since 1993, UN Special Rapporteurs on Racism have highlighted that racism is dynamic, intersectional, and often embedded in laws and institutional practices, extending beyond overt prejudice. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights now defines racism as a set of exclusionary systems that create inequities, emphasising the importance of addressing both direct discrimination and systemic inequality (Human Rights Council, 2021).

1.2.2 Australia

The Australian Racial Discrimination Act (RDA) states:

It is unlawful for a person to do any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (*Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) §9(1))

Other forms of discrimination are addressed through Commonwealth legislation including the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth), the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth), and the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth).

The AHRC reports, that while religion is not identified in the RDA as a ground on which discrimination is illegal:

Courts have found that members of groups that share both a faith and an ethnic origin, such as Jews and Sikhs, are protected under section 18C of the RDA and under the more general prohibitions on racial discrimination. (AHRC 2024b, 13)

Reflecting a wider concern that reference to discrimination on the basis of race implies the existence of different races, rather than this being a socially constructed concept, the AHRC has in its approach moved away from the language of race, to refer mainly to racism and the terminology of racialised:⁴

Racism is the process by which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race. Racism is more than just prejudice in thought or action. It occurs when this prejudice – whether individual or institutional – is accompanied by the power to discriminate against, oppress or limit the rights of others. (AHRC 2024c, 37)

It further notes:

Racism adapts and changes over time, and can impact different communities in different ways, with racism towards different groups intensifying in different historical moments. (p. 38)

The Commission uses ‘negatively racialised’ to refer to communities that experience the harms and traumas of racialisation. The Commission does not use ‘negatively racialised’ to define or identify individuals or communities. Rather, it is used to highlight how racism operates by racialising various groups of people negatively to maintain the dominance of groups racialised as white, and how people who are negatively racialised experience inequity due to false and disproved biological beliefs in race. (p. 7)

This latter also reflects considerable academic and other analysis which draws upon approaches such as critical race theory.⁵

1.2.3 The forms of racism at university

The Australian Universities Accord identified the diversity of forms that racism, including in education, can take:

Racism takes many forms. It can be deliberately harmful or carelessly casual. In education and employment settings – enrolment, assessment, recruitment and

⁴ This is drawn from The National Anti-Racism Framework. More generally the framework places emphasis on the systemic aspect and colonial foundations of systemic racism. This is highlighted in Recommendation 1: “The National Anti-Racism Framework should: acknowledge the systemic and structural nature of racism, including the historical and ongoing impacts of settler colonisation on First Nations peoples; be intersectional, community-centric, and recognise racism as a complex and shifting phenomenon; embed truth-telling and self-determination for First Nations peoples...” (AHRC 2024c, 15)

⁵ The term of negatively racialised groups emerges in academic and policy analysis, often informed by approaches such as critical race theory and related scholarship, which examine how particular groups are socially constructed and disadvantaged through racialisation processes (Paradies, 2006; Moreton-Robinson, 2015).

promotion – racism can take the form of conscious or unconscious bias. (O’Kane et al 2023, 243)

The qualitative study undertaken as part of the broader AHRC Racism@Uni study reported:

In the specific context within the university, the lived experience of racism and discrimination is defined as the aggregate and interacting consequences of racist encounters across multiple levels:

- **Individual Racism and Discrimination:** Bullying, exclusion, or stereotyping based on race, religion or cultural background
- **Internalised Racism:** Acceptance and internalisation of negative stereotypes of a particular ethnicity or cultural group
- **Institutional Racism and Discrimination:** Policies, rules, or practices that disadvantage certain groups, even if unintended (e.g. admissions, curriculum, disciplinary processes)
- **Structural Racism and Discrimination:** Broader system of power, history and social norms that produces and reinforces inequalities across society and thus, absent effective interventions, in universities. (Think Change Resolve and Langton & Partners 2025, 4)

1.3 Identity

As detailed above, one of the objectives of this study was to understand how racism was experienced across the staff and students of Australian universities, with a particular focus on a number of specific communities. This raises two important questions: firstly, the extent to which people may be members of multiple communities; and secondly, the nature of identity. The first arises because of the overlap between the communities identified, such as the ‘Middle Eastern community’ which, as well as encompassing whole identified communities such as the Palestinian community, has cross overs with both the Jewish and Muslim communities, as well as those members of other religions such as Christianity. The second relates to how people identify themselves. In the first instance they may see themselves as being members of multiple communities, reflecting the diversity of their own heritages, and may identify in different ways in different environments. Further, while people may have what they consider as being ‘their identity’, they may wish to present as having a different identity or be seen by others as having another.

Identity is also impacted by other factors such as, citizenship, migration, marriage across cultures and communities, and language. In some cases people will draw upon these, either wholly, or selectively, in other cases they make deliberate decisions to sever links with their own or familial identities, or in some cases these are broken by external events, or may simply fade away in the persons’ own life and their decisions, or over multiple generations. While some elements of identity may persist through people’s biological inheritance, people may frame these in particular ways.

The complexity of identity, including the internal, expressed and perceived ‘external’, dimensions, is a challenge in all data collections which seek to include such identification. In analysis of classification in the US Census this was illustrated in Harris’s ‘Matrix of race’, Figure 1.1, with these elements also being present in the survey which focused on collecting both the external and the internal/expressed dimensions.⁶ Also, as identified by Harris and Sims (2002), for many there is fluidity in racial identification.

Figure 1.1 Identification, ‘matrix of race’

	Genotype/Ancestry	Phenotype	Culture
Internal	1 “I know that my background is X”	2 “I know that I look X”	3 “I know that I feel/act X”
Expressed	4 “My background is X”	5 “I look X”	6 “I feel/act X”
External	7 “He/she has X ancestry”	8 “He/she looks X”	9 “He/she acts X” “He/she thinks he/she is X”

Harris (2002) as cited in National Research Council (2004, 37)

Additionally in Australia the issue of identity can be complex for settler groups who lack any ties with their ethnic heritage, or heritages. This, as discussed in subsequent chapters, was one of the themes which emerged from the study.

While seeking to categorise individuals in this study on the basis of race or ethnicity was criticised by some, both conceptually, and in terms of the approach to categorisation, it was integral to this study. It was however technically challenging and while the broad approach is considered to be robust, there is some ‘fuzziness’ in the identification, an imprecision which is also likely to be impacted by the issues of the dimensions inherent in the matrix and the fluidity of identification noted above. However as demonstrated in the analysis, this does not detract from the finding of marked differences in experiences and outcomes. These challenges reflect the conclusion of Logan (2022, 1) “Racial and ethnic categorizations are problematic but necessary components of consistent comparative analysis over time”.

1.4 Australian Universities

In framing our approach, we recognise that many elements, including the role and responsibilities of universities, are contested. Some aspects of these are considered below.

⁶ The survey sought to consider some dimensions of the experience of racism relative to aspects of the internal and external identification through the inclusion of questions on: how the person considered they were perceived by others (Question F5); and how they identify themselves (Question F4). Actual analysis of responses relative to these two perspectives was not able to be undertaken as the data from both of these questions was required to construct the ethnicity classifications used in the analysis. This was a consequence of the extent to which many respondents identified themselves in response to question F4 in ways which did not inform on their ethnicity, or sought to report their internal or expressed identity in response to question F5.

1.4.1 Offence, discrimination and harm

The language of what constitutes racism or a racist act varies, as can be seen in the spectrum of definitions detailed earlier. One dimension of this is that of offending people. Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act makes it unlawful to “offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of people” where this “is done because of the race, colour or national or ethnic origin of the other person or of some or all of the people in the group” (*Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth))⁷. This though is qualified in Section 18D: “Section 18C does not render unlawful anything said or done reasonably and in good faith: ... (b) in the course of any statement, publication, discussion or debate made or held for any genuine academic, artistic or scientific purpose or any other genuine purpose in the public interest; ... (ii) a fair comment on any event or matter of public interest if the comment is an expression of a genuine belief held by the person making the comment”.⁸

An associated concept is that of vilification, which is described in Victorian legislation, for example, as “conduct that incites hatred against, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, that other person or class of persons” (*Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* (Vic) §7(1)). This approach adds a level of intensity, ‘serious’, to the act.

1.4.2 Universities, academic freedom, and freedom of speech

The issue of freedom of speech and academic freedom was, as noted in 1.1.2 one of the dimensions of study. Specifically within the survey this was addressed in questions related to the extent to which people felt that they “could not express [their] views freely” because of their “race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion” as part of their experience of racism.

This question has particular pertinence for Australian universities with respect to the central tenet of universities, academic freedom. While the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), for example, specifies that in a “university context, intellectual freedom refers to the right of all staff and students to freely hold political and intellectual views and values and express them publicly, without fear of reprisal or retribution or restriction by university policies and procedures” (NTEU 2025), the concept is, and has been, contested. This was noted by the Hon Mr French AC, former Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, in the opening words of his *Independent Review of Freedom of Speech in Australian Higher Education Providers*:

Universities have recently been described as a contemporary battleground over the boundaries of the debates, discussions and collaboration that are essential to the idea of a university. The description has been true for a long time in a number of places. There was no golden age when the scope of freedom of speech and academic freedom in the higher education sector was settled under a common consensus. (French 2019, 13)

⁷ While making such behaviour unlawful, the Act further specifies that while giving grounds to make complaints to the Australian Human Rights Commission, it does not by itself constitute a criminal offence.

⁸ These provisions were subject to extensive consideration in the work of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights Inquiry report “Freedom of speech in Australia Inquiry into the operation of Part IIA of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) and related procedures under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth)” (PJCHA 2017).

Similarly, French encapsulates the tension around the concept: “Academic freedom has a complex history and apparently no settled definition. It is nevertheless seen as a defining characteristic of universities and similar institutions” (p. 18). Reflecting specifically on the question of harm from the exercise of free speech he notes: “There are those who would argue that ‘harm’ includes the causing of emotional distress to individuals or groups and overt disrespect for the human dignity of particular individuals or groups” (p. 125) before detailing what he sees as “examples of arguable ‘harms’ including challenges to religious beliefs”. He concludes, given the wide range of ways in which these harms can be conceived, that: “The potential breadth of the class of ‘harmful’ speech suggests that restrictions of expressive conduct by reference to harmful effects, outside the restrictions imposed by the general law, should be very narrowly drawn” (p. 126).

McKee (2024) reports that: “In Australia, the Institute of Public Affairs’ Free Speech on Campus Audit 2023 found universities lacked the institutional will to self-regulate free speech effectively. The research revealed that 90 per cent of the nation’s universities are explicitly hostile to free speech,” and goes on to claim that “The key issue, as identified in the IPA’s audit, is university policies using broad and subjective terms like ‘offence’ and ‘humiliation’ which can be weaponised by activists to censor speech”. In a similar vein, but from a different perspective, the Human Rights Law Centre strongly criticised the proposals from the University of Sydney Hodgkinson Review⁹ which proposed, amongst other recommendations, prohibiting “any student from addressing those present in a lecture, seminar or tutorial prior to the commencement of the lecture, seminar or tutorial on any subject matter” and the introduction of a ‘New Civility Rule’ “that each person utilising a word or phrase is responsible at the time the word or phrase is used to identify to the audience the context in which it is used”. (Hodgkinson 2024) The Centre noted that adoption of the proposals would lead the university to become “one of the most restrictive campuses in the country for peaceful protest, intellectual freedom and critical debate silencing students’ voices .. and clash with free speech and academic freedom laws and policies” (Schwartz 2024). The university announced in November 2025 that it “will not seek to implement a new civility rule” (Scott 2025)

1.4.3 University activism

Australian universities and the staff and students who constitute them, as with many others across the world, have also traditionally been active participants in political and social movements. Historically in Australia this has seen engagement, on and off campus, through debate, support and protest over issues ranging in the international sphere, from opposition to the Dutch attempts to re-establish control of Indonesia, to opposition to Australian and American involvement in Vietnam, support for the independence movement in Bangladesh, and in the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa, and against the illegal Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in Zimbabwe. Nationally this encompassed the struggle of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for equality, and recognition of their rights and sovereignty, support for the equality of women, and for the end of oppression of LGBTQTIA+ individuals and communities. While most of these stances are uncontroversial today, this was far from the case at the time

⁹ In the context of conflict in the Middle East the University of Sydney appointed “Bruce Hodgkinson SC to conduct an external review of its policies and processes - to ensure they are appropriate and fit for purpose as we safeguard the wellbeing of our community, academic freedom and freedom of speech, and the effective operations of the University into the future” (Thodey and Hutchinson 2024)

where they were seen as being radical, offensive to those holding other perspectives, and the protests were frequently confrontational. This aspect has been noted by Schwartz (2024):

Universities have long been at the centre of struggles for social justice, among them the movement against South African apartheid, the Vietnam War protests and the 1960s Freedom Rides. Student protests have helped shape Australia's political debate and cultural landscape for the better – but at the time, they were perceived as anything but "civil".

This activist role is equally an element, and indeed a reflection, of the intellectual role of universities. Within disciplines ideas are formulated, tested and disputed, at times causing deep schism between those who adhere to one approach or the other. It is a process in which beliefs, what are held to be facts, conventions and theories are open to, and indeed need to, be reviewed and face challenge and criticism. This process though is not one which is simply conducted through polite and respectful discussion, but in many cases, as identified by Kuhn (1970), through 'scientific revolutions', or as he cites Max Planck even more cynically "a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it" (p. 151).

This is however not to say that the history of Australian universities in terms of social justice and inclusion is necessarily positive. The first woman to graduate did so in 1883, despite the establishment of the first university 30 years earlier, and the first Aboriginal person in 1959 (Mackinnon). The shocking dimensions of racism within universities has been highlighted in research such as Jones, Waghorne and Langton (2024), and today those from higher socio-economic backgrounds continue to be over-represented amongst the student community.

1.4.4 Other dimensions of the university environment

While issues of racism are expressed frequently in terms of race, ethnicity and culture, a closely related issue is that of nationality. This includes national chauvinism and claims by countries that they have been "ripped off" by others, as well as the role of international and internal tensions and conflicts, and indeed military action within and between countries. The borderline between nationalism, national stereotypes, and what may be perceived of as racism can be very thin.

These issues are perhaps even more marked in Australian universities with Australia's diverse population and very large international student populations. An assumption that students from one country which is being attacked by another, physically, economically or politically, should simply acquiesce, because they are attending university, is not realistic, or indeed many would consider not morally appropriate. At the same time many of these students are walking a fine line between their own beliefs, their commitment to their own country, including in some cases obligations for military service, concern about the consequences of any views they express for family and others still living in their home country, and fear about the risk of having their visa status and right to study in Australia terminated.

The implications of such international conflicts are of course not only limited to those students and staff whose countries are involved. In some cases, students and staff have relatives who live in these countries, and in other cases they will judge the rightness or wrongness of a particular nation's conduct, and in turn assess any implicit or explicit support that Australia and indeed their university may give to one side or the other.

This was a central element of the context for this survey.

These types of issues can become even more complex, as also noted by French in his report, when morality and religion come into play. To the extent one person believes in a moral code associated with their religion, or a particular interpretation of their religion, and considers it is appropriate for this morality to be reflected in national policies, at what point do opposing voices become intolerance? Or is it the imposition of the morality on others the point of intolerance? Yet such moralities are in place in many institutions within our society. And, to the extent such morality may impact upon a person's own beliefs, do they have the right to shun those who impose them? For those who reject religion as a superstition, and hence as a demonstration of a lack of critical thought, at what point does this assessment become discriminatory?

Underlying these tensions is the central objective of universities to teach critical thought and to challenge ideas. At what point does a challenge become, or is seen as, intolerance? While it is easy to use words such as respectful discussions, some would argue that respect needs to be earned, rather than granted. Similarly, while some may argue for taking a 'neutral position', others would cite Eldridge Cleaver: "What we're saying today is that you're either part of the solution or you're part of the problem" (cited in Ratcliffe 2018).

Additionally given the age and background of many students, in the context of interpersonal relations and appropriate conduct, can issues of ignorance be ignored? Ignorance of cultures, ignorance of history, and ignorance of different cultural and social norms may lead to inappropriate assumptions and behaviours. This is particularly important in the university context which has a highly heterogeneous population, and diverse cultural protocols.

These issues are not identified to excuse or explain racism, but rather to emphasise the complexity of experiences and contexts, and the challenges for policies to address it.

Also of concern in our analysis is intersectionality—the way groups can face discrimination and related negative behaviours due to multiple overlapping factors including racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and class. Additionally, racism may be embedded in targeted misogyny, or fetishisation.¹⁰

¹⁰ The National Anti-Racism Framework describes this as: "Intersectionality is a conceptual framework conceived by African American academic Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw. It is a concept that highlights how different parts of a person's identity and experiences impact one another and 'intersect'. They then inform a person's experience of systemic and structural inequality. For example, a person's experience of a form of discrimination, such as sexism, is also affected by other parts of their identity. This could include their race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, socio-economic status, or whether they live with a disability. In anti-racist action, intersectionality should always recognise race and its impacts on other forms of oppression." (AHRC 2024c, 37)

1.4.5 Demographics of Australian universities

2024 Department of Education data reports that there were 1,513,676 students at Australian Universities: 1,018,957 domestic students, and 494,719 international students. There were 136,325 staff: 58,865 who were academic staff, and 77,460 non-academic staff.

Of the domestic students 17.6 per cent were born in non-‘European’ countries¹¹, while a further estimated 18.7 per cent has at least one parent who was born in a non-‘European’ country. Of the international students 95.6 per cent were born in non-‘European’ countries. Taken together this indicates that at a minimum 53.0 per cent of the total student body were either born in, or had at least one parent born in, a non-‘European’ country. In addition, many more of those identified as being born in Australia to Australian born parents have heritages in non-‘European’ countries which go back further than just their parents. Additionally 2.1 per cent of domestic students identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

These are of course the total across the sector as a whole. With some universities having half their student body comprised of international students, and having quite different mixes of domestic students, the proportion with solely ‘European’ heritage at some universities is likely to be much lower. Additionally, there is likely to be considerable variation within each university across fields of study, which in turn frequently defines the cohort within which students experience their involvement with the university,

Amongst staff it is estimated that some 29.1 per cent of academic staff and 23.0 per cent of non-academic staff were born in non-‘European’ countries and a further 9.1 per cent of those born in Australia are estimated to have had at least one of their parents born in a non-‘European’ country.

1.4.6 The role of universities in providing a safe environment

In addition to their teaching and research roles, universities have obligations to the communities in which they are situated and to their staff and students.

With respect to staff, in addition to the array of occupational health and safety obligations, they are expected to treat staff equitably and to provide them with the opportunity to develop in their professional fields. For students this also involves providing an environment which allows them respect, provides them with safety, and enables a sense of belonging.

Research indicates that belonging, respect, and safety are interrelated components that significantly influence the academic and personal success of university students. A scoping review of 68 articles reveals that under-represented students (based on race, disability, first-generation status) experience heightened stress related to racism and exclusion (Taff

¹¹ See Appendix Table A2 for sources of student and staff numbers. Estimated proportions born overseas are based on the proportions whose country of birth was recorded in the Education datasets. ‘European’ countries are defined as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, Canada and all Western Northern, Southern and Eastern European countries. Estimates of Australian born students and staff with parents born in non-‘European’ countries derived from 2021 Census. ‘European’ countries classified as Australia, New Zealand, North America, and Europe, with the ratio derived using all other records with an identified birthplace as non-‘European’. Students are derived as all persons attending “Tertiary - University or other higher education” and staff as persons employed in “Higher Education” at the 4-digit level INDP Industry of Employment. Tables extracted using TableBuilder.

and Clifton, 2022). The findings suggest that inclusion and belonging are correlated with improved academic outcomes and overall wellbeing (Taff and Clifton, 2022). Specifically, the evidence suggests that a strong sense of safety, respect, and belonging is essential for students' wellbeing, academic performance, and retention rates (Taff and Clifton, 2022).

Allen et al (2024) assert that a strong sense of belonging is foundational for fostering academic engagement, motivation, and persistence. For students, particularly those from under-represented backgrounds, experiences of racism and exclusion can significantly amplify stress levels, which underscores the importance of establishing an inclusive environment (Taff & Clifton, 2022). Respect is identified as a key element of this inclusive culture, as it promotes a sense of safety that facilitates student success.

Allen et al (2024) further emphasise that respect, along with safety and belonging, form the foundation of 'inclusive cultures' that directly impact student wellbeing and achievement. Research highlights that when students perceive respect from their peers and staff, they tend to exhibit higher levels of academic confidence, engagement, and trust in their institutions (Thomas, 2012; Strayhorn, 2018).

For international and underrepresented students, the connections among these three elements are particularly significant, as they often encounter unique challenges such as social isolation and cultural adjustment that can affect their sense of belonging (Corney et al, 2024). When respect for cultural identity and equitable treatment in institutional processes is prioritised, a more accommodating atmosphere can be created. In the context of Australian higher education, factors such as accommodation and social opportunities are recognised as essential for enhancing belonging and overall student wellbeing (van Gijn-Grosvenor and Huisman, 2020; Corney et al, 2024).

Notwithstanding this, after his detailed consideration of the range of issues including with respect to pedagogy, French concluded in his proposed *Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers* that:

'the duty to foster the wellbeing of staff and students'... does not extend to a duty to protect any person from feeling offended or shocked or insulted by the lawful speech of another.' (French 2019, 232)

1.5 Focus of survey

The survey collected extensive information on the experiences of students and staff, their characteristics, and their perceptions of their university experience and of university policies and programs, including the support provided to those who experience racism. It also sought to build an understanding of the nature of their experiences of racism and racial discrimination, and the impact of these on learning and working in Australian universities.

1.5.1 Our approach

In this analysis we have refrained from broad conceptualisations or statements as to the nature of racism, focusing rather on the experiences of individuals and their perceptions.

There are several reasons for this. In the development of the survey a recurrent theme was the complexity of racism, and the way in which individuals experience it. This was highlighted in the response of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Research Ethics Committee (2025) which noted “that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can experience racism from across the settler-colonialist-migrant spectrum” and the existence of “racism within groups” including “class or caste differences within cultural groupings”.

While the conceptual approach to racism as a form of dominant¹² power has some substance, equally racism as an expression of power, or as a means of achieving power, can also be exercised by, and within, non-dominant groups, as well as between individuals, regardless of a dominant group, or otherwise. It can also reflect external political or geopolitical events, or interpersonal conflicts. All of these factors suggest that a simple binary conception is not sufficient.¹³ Sawrikar and Katz (2010, 81) summarise this as: “Racism is seen in the literature as intimately entwined with issues that relate to class, nation, identity, social justice, and institutionalised practices”, and conclude: “Indeed, racism is a complex phenomenon and a simplified explanation and description would be inconsistent with its nature”.

Specifically in the survey we rely upon self-identification of racism from responses to the question:

Have you personally experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years?

The question was prefaced with the following explanatory statement:

“We are now going to ask you some questions about whether or not you have experienced interpersonal racism and racial discrimination.

Racial discrimination may occur when a person is treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation, because of their race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion.

Interpersonal racism occurs to individual people or groups of people, often in everyday settings, and is sometimes referred to as casual racism. It can come in a range of forms including abuse, harassment, humiliation, or exclusion, because of somebody’s ethnicity, race, culture and/or religion.”

¹² Dominance can have multiple manifestations. It can reflect power in the structures of institutions (or those who control them), it can reflect the role of settlers in the displacement of indigenous communities, including through colonisation, or it can be by place in some social, religious, or racial hierarchy. While this approach – frequently termed in sociological literature as Prejudice + Power = Racism -- is used extensively, it is equally one which has been subject to criticism (Scott 2022, Sawrikar and Katz 2010, Hoyt 2012). Similarly Berman and Paradies (2010, 216-217) note that, notwithstanding a range of definitions: “they can fail to recognize that racism does not necessarily depend on ideological premises, does not have to involve prejudice or promote capitalist interests, and can be perpetrated by individuals from ethnoracial groups with limited social power”.

¹³ This is frequently considered in terms of a white/non-white binary, or a white/non-white hierarchy. As detailed by Rocha and Yeoh (2022) in their work focusing on Asia, this approach has been identified as inadequate: “Recent scholarship on new forms of racism has emphasized the need to go beyond White-Other binary models of racial discrimination and take into account other emergent racisms among groups who may look outwardly similar or share the same ethnic heritage” (p. 741).

Notwithstanding this explanatory material, it is probable that a significant number of respondents did not refer to these more technical specifications but rather responded simply on their own understanding of what “interpersonal racism and racial discrimination” was.

Subsequent questions asked about the location of this to identify whether or not it was at a university along with what the racism actually involved, and why respondents thought they were targeted. These latter two dimensions while used descriptively in the analysis, are not analysed as an interrogation of a respondent’s statement that they had experienced personal direct racism or racial discrimination.

As such this analysis focuses on racism as people perceive and report it in terms of their personal experience of “racism or racial discrimination”, without any attempt to qualify this.

1.5.2 Forms of racism and discrimination

The survey, as well as collecting information on broad perceptions of racism in universities, and the extent to which universities reflect and support diversity, specifically considers:

- Individuals’ direct experiences of interpersonal racism and discrimination¹⁴
- Indirect or incidental racism, being exposed to racist language and related behaviour although not directed at the person, directed at a group with whom the person identifies
- Bystander experiences of, and responses to, racist behaviour.

It also considers knowledge about and perceptions of the effectiveness of university policies and programs including:

- Complaint and other processes for those impacted by racism
- Anti-racism and related policies and programs.

Although not fully covering the extent to which racism may be embedded within the curriculum, it pays specific attention to questions related to the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures and histories.

Additionally, the survey provided extensive opportunity for individuals to report on their own experiences. This, in the final comments section alone, collected 18,664 responses, totalling some 1.37 million words. We have included some of this material in this report to better illustrate the experiences reported on, and to allow the voices of the respondents to be heard.¹⁵ A more detailed qualitative analysis is presented in the Part B Report.

¹⁴ In this regard the concept of racism as used in the survey and this report broadly reflects the approach of the RDA: “a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin”, and the acknowledgement in the Durban Declaration: “racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance occur on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin”.

¹⁵ While this material is often an extract from longer statements, we have sought to maintain the context. No editing of the statements has been undertaken, other than removing university names, one person’s name, and

1.6 Survey management and methodology

POLIS: Centre for Social Research at the Australian National University was commissioned to undertake the Racism@Uni survey by the AHRC following a competitive tender. POLIS was responsible for the development of the survey instrument, in consultation and with the final agreement of the AHRC, the survey implementation and preparing a report of the findings of the survey.

The AHRC were primarily responsible for contact with Australian universities including obtaining their agreement to participate in the survey, drafting the letter of invitation to individual participants, and the social media marketing campaign associated with the study.

1.6.1 POLIS team

The Principal Researcher for the project was Associate Professor Deirdre Howard-Wagner. Associate Researchers included Professor Matthew Gray, Associate Professor Bernard Baffour, Professor Ben Edwards, Professor Nicholas Biddle, Professor Karima Laachir, Associate Professor Elfie Shiosaki, Professor Lorana Bartels, Professor Rabee Tourky¹⁶, Dr Francis Markham, Dr Rob Bray, Dr Mandy Yap, Dr Katherine Curchin, Perri Chapman and Kate Doery. These researchers undertook a range of different roles at various stages of the research. The development of the survey instrument was primarily undertaken by Howard-Wagner, Gray, Bray, Baffour, Doery and Markham. The analysis and writing of this report were primarily undertaken by Bray and Gray with contributions by Markham and research on external studies by Dr Markus Hahn.

The POLIS team was selected on the basis of their academic track record and expertise across a breadth of areas encompassing social policy research, including racism, and survey analysis, and capacity to provide critical review. The team included members of Aboriginal, African, Muslim, Jewish, South East Asian, and Palestinian communities.

1.6.2 Survey development

The initial development of the instrument involved a review of existing Australian and international surveys that have sought to measure racism and using these to populate each of the domains that had been identified for the survey, including interpersonal, structural and bystander experience, and the elements within these.

The survey design process was characterised by intensive engagement and collaboration. It involved a series of workshops and direct written feedback on the survey instrument, leveraging the expertise of the AHRC Study team, the AHRC Study Advisory Committee, and the POLIS expert advisory group. The AHRC Study Advisory Committee and the POLIS expert advisory group included First Nations representatives. Overall, the collaborative effort brought together expertise in survey design, research on racism, and

in one case offensive language. It is noted that the comments made were sometimes written in a rush at the end of a quite long survey and into a text box in a survey instrument using a range of devices including mobile phones.

In addition it is recognised that some statements are confronting and may contain extreme views. In other cases they describe traumatic experiences. We believe however that presenting this material is important.

¹⁶ Professor Tourky advised on 22 October 2025 that he was no longer in a position to be part of the ANU academic expert advisory group for the Racism@Uni Survey.

insights from individuals with lived experiences of racism, particularly within university settings.

Significant changes were made to the survey design following feedback from the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee. This included more extensive questions on the experience of racism and the participants in this, and expanding the questions relating to the respondents' identification to allow for a more nuanced understanding, as well as providing greater opportunities for respondents to report on their experience and how this impacted them, including building a better understanding of the nature and dynamics of within-group and between-group racism.

We adopted a culturally safe and trauma-informed approach to designing the survey, recognising the multiple layers of both personal and historical trauma that underpin experiences of racism. To start drafting the survey instrument, the study team used the survey domains formulated by the Australian Human Rights Commission with input from the Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) and the Racism@Uni AHRC Study Advisory Committee.

The final survey instrument is at Appendix K.

1.6.3 Ethics

The study, including the survey instrument, has been reviewed and approved in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023), by:

- The Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee (2025-03-414)
- The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Research Ethics Committee (REC-0541 Howard-Wagner)
- Reciprocal approval being granted by the ANU HREC (H/2025/0311).

As discussed above, some significant changes were made to the survey questionnaire in response to feedback from the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee. In addition, the Committee asked how “will the benefits [of conducting this study] be effective at contributing to reducing racism across all in the universities?” We agree with the importance of this question, and strongly urge all of the participating universities, and the bodies involved in the commissioning and use of this report to focus on this end goal, and to use the results we report here to effectively respond to the problems of racism, and discrimination in Australian universities.

1.6.4 Survey scope

As a National Online Prevalence and Impact Survey the survey sought to study the prevalence and impact of racism in Australian universities using a census-style approach.

The participation of all 43 Australian Universities (including dual sector providers) was sought for this study and agreement was reached with all except Bond University.

The survey was directed to all students and staff at the participating universities who were studying or working at an on-shore Australian university campus, including those studying

remotely, and who were aged 18 years and over. This age restriction was imposed due to the complexity of ensuring informed consent of those under this age.¹⁷ The survey included dual sector universities which had both vocational and higher education students.

Universities had some flexibility in the extent to which some staff, such as emeriti, were engaged, and similarly around the inclusion of students such as those undertaking intensive language courses, or certain pre-tertiary courses which were either off-campus or had short durations. There were also some differences between universities in the treatment of those who were both a staff member and a student. While some maintained a single email address list, others had separate listings, or potentially in some cases separate email addresses for each of these capacities. In this latter case it was recognised that some would receive an invitation to participate in both capacities. The overall impact of this is however considered to be minimal.

1.6.5 Deployment

The Online Research Unit (ORU) was engaged to undertake the data collection. Email letters of invitation were sent by each university to their students and staff each of which contained a unique link which provided access to the survey portal. The survey was proposed to be open for a period of 4 weeks with reminder emails being sent to all¹⁸ invited students and staff at weekly intervals.

The initial soft launch of the survey commenced on 11 August 2025. This proved to be effective, although it was noted that there was a strong almost immediate surge of responses upon the receipt of the invitation which caused concern as to the capacity of the ORU servers to cope if universities sent out invitations as a single block and simultaneously. This resulted in a staggered approach with universities scheduled to issue batches of invitations into time blocks. A consequence of this, and of issues at some universities in operationalising the survey meant that most of the invitations were staggered over the period 14 to 26 August. Given this timing, while it was intended that the survey would be open for a four-week period, it was decided to extend the closing date to 23 September 2025.

A noticeable feature of the responses was the responsiveness to the follow up letters. Analysis indicates that the response to the first follow up reminder was almost as high as that to the initial mail out, with it then falling to around half of this level on the second reminder.

In total some 1,671,071 invitations to participate were dispatched by universities.

The launch of the survey was complemented by a social media campaign implemented by the AHRC.

¹⁷ Analysis of the 2021 Census indicated that only 0.17 percent of university and related tertiary students were aged under 18 years.

¹⁸ Because of the anonymity of the survey, it was not possible for a university to identify whether or not any particular staff member or student had completed the survey, hence the need for the reminder letters being sent to all. There was also considerable variation across universities in the extent and timing of the follow up correspondence.

A number of the participating universities also actively promoted the survey in their communications with staff and students and on social media.

In addition to the provision of extensive material in the online survey identifying a wide range of on and off-campus support services, POLIS operated an 1800 phone service for participants which was staffed by team members who had undertaken mental health first aid training. Only a small number of contacts were made.

The ORU also had a help line facility to assist respondents who experienced technical issues with accessing or completing the survey.

1.6.6 Survey data

Data collected in the survey is anonymous. The survey collection methodology involved the ORU providing a set of unique links which universities then included in their email to their staff and students. These individual links were then used by each person to log into the ORU server, with the link being used solely to ensure that no previous survey had been submitted through the link, and to identify the university which sent out the link. As people completed the survey a new random identifier was generated by the ORU with this being the sole identifier attached to the data record.¹⁹

Following the public release of the AHRC's Racism@Uni Final Report the analysis dataset will be reviewed to ensure it is de-identified and confidentialised, to produce a dataset which is to be held by and made available via the Australian Data Archive (ADA).

1.7 Criticism of the survey

As noted above, the survey had an extensive development phase with broad consultation and significant internal debate and discussions with the AHRC. Notwithstanding this, and as a result of the constraints on survey design and length, including those aspects focused on the specific objectives of the survey, a number of aspects of the survey faced criticism including from survey participants.²⁰ These included:

- The use of the concept of race and seeking to classify respondents into racial/ ethnic and cultural groups, an approach some saw as perpetuating rather than addressing racism.
- The questions in the survey on the identification of persons born in Australia, in addition to whether they were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, on the basis of their genealogical ethnicity.²¹

¹⁹ While some survey respondents provided an email address in order to participate in the prize draw for \$50 purchase vouchers, this information was stripped off by the ORU which was also responsible for the draw and was never part of the data record.

²⁰ Participant criticisms were largely identified from free text responses in the various open text options provided in the survey.

²¹ A key issue in the survey was to categorise respondents by their ethnicity/race. In the survey development multiple approaches were considered for this, including using the concept of 'white'. The AHRC did not support this approach. It was further considered that the use of language of 'white Australian' was contentious given that this terminology has been adopted by ethno-nationalist groups, and was an echo of the "White Australia policy" under *The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901* (Cth), and as a consequence some respondents would be unwilling to utilise this terminology.

- The aggregations of populations used to define ethnic/racial groups including the absence of specific categorisation for those who wished to identify as Jewish.
- The use of social/ethnic classifications, rather than simply a measure such as skin colour.
- The focus on ‘racism’ and ‘racial discrimination’ in generic terms rather than identifying sub-categories such as antisemitism and Islamophobia, nor addressing actions taken against those with European heritage, and a failure to include caste based discrimination.
- The choice of gender categories including the separate identification of trans male and trans female categories.
- The categories and terminology used in describing sexuality and indeed questioning as to why this and gender were included in the survey.
- The use in the survey instrument of the terminology of ‘conflict’ in the Middle East, and a failure to include other international conflicts.
- The use of language such as the “Middle East” and “South East Asia” which embody euro-centric concepts of geography.
- The non-inclusion of questions about non-directed expressions of racist views. That is while information on incidents of bystander racism – where a person observes an act directed to a particular person – are collected, information on non-directed comments, such as those made between people where no person of the community to whom these related was present, were not collected.
- The lack of any explicit questioning with respect to structural and institutional racism including curriculum materials and course design.

While we recognise the sentiments behind each of these criticisms, we consider our approach to have been broadly appropriate, given either the specific intent of the survey, limitations inherent in a survey approach, or conflicting views on some particular matters. At the same time aspects of these criticisms are valid and they should all be considered in further research of this nature, including any further surveys of racism in Australian universities.

We also note that while most of the survey was effectively quantitative with defined categorical response choices, there were also a number of open ended questions to allow for responses which did not fit into the defined categories as well as the capacity to make comments at the end of the survey. These have been utilised extensively in this report to both illustrate what is reported in the quantitative analysis, and to extend analysis into a number of the dimensions of experience which were not well captured in the more formal structure of the survey. Additionally, responses to the final open-ended questions form the basis of the accompanying Part B qualitative report.

Turning specifically to the matters raised: The use of racial/cultural/ethnic classification of respondents was essential to being able to understand the differential impact of racism on different groups. Similarly, to treat those who see their identity as simply being

Australian as a single group ignores the differences within this population based on their different heritages, and the consequences of this, including the variation in characteristics, such as skin colour, which frequently act as markers for the targeting of discrimination. Criticism of this approach to the classification of 'Australians' also, at times, reflected the concept of the "unraced and the raced", that is those, within the dominant group within the population, see race only in terms of others, and not themselves, as opposed to those others for whom 'race' is a constant.

Where the survey used structured classifications, primarily in terms of how people consider they are perceived by others, only a limited number of response categories were provided based on generalised phenotypes. This required compression and grouping. More specifically with respect to groups such as Jewish staff and students, it was considered that while some may be perceived as being Jewish because of dress, or other people's knowledge of their religious beliefs, this was not necessarily the case. When it came to identifying the individual's own identity the question was phrased in terms of "Which ethnic, cultural, national origin groups do you identify with" which we consider provided full scope for reporting Jewish identity, along with the question of religion which included Judaism as one of the illustrative examples, for reporting being a religious Jew.

The focus on racism as a whole, rather than any particular form, such as Islamophobia, or antisemitism, was driven by several factors. First was the formal focus of the study on racism as a whole, as well as its impact on a variety of particular groups; second was to allow the issues of forms of racism to be identified in the data, rather than being pre-determined; and third the extent to which focusing on any particular form, or forms, carried with it a risk that wider questions, including the nature of other forms of racism, and the groups these impact, was downplayed.

We recognise that the design of the questions on gender and sexuality is open to question. This though reflects much wider debates within the community, and for all of the criticisms we received arguing that transgender persons should not have been separately identified, but rather simply recorded as part of gender, there were equally responses which asserted that there are only two biological sexes, that this should be the sole question asked, and that a focus on gender was inappropriate. In the case of sexuality, a significant number favoured referencing themselves by more general terms such as queer, although recognising that for others this language can be considered as a slur. Inclusion of these characteristics in the survey was seen as critical to understanding the extent to which racism may differentially impact and the question of intersectionality. In this regard it is also noted that while information on disability as being a factor in the experience of racism was asked, the survey did not directly collect information on disability.

The terminology of 'conflict' with regard to the Middle East was strongly criticised by some as disguising and downplaying what they saw as genocide, while others noted that there were other conflicts including in Ukraine, between Cambodia and Thailand, and India and Pakistan which also had implications for experiences of racism.

In the survey geographic terminology such as South East Asia was used to denote regions and the populations which live in them. While we recognise that the origin and conceptual basis of the terminology as European based, and that it was used to inform colonial and imperialist ventures, they are equally terms which are widely understood across the community including by the persons who live in these regions. Indeed, in the survey

responses the terms were used by some students and staff alike to describe their own ethnicities and origins.

A point made in comments was that a dimension that was not encompassed was the expression of racist views ‘when the door is shut’. That is views which people might state ‘privately’ but which they would not express publicly, nor in the company of people from the particular group. This is noted and should be given attention in future surveys.

The final of these criticisms concerned the overwhelming focus of the study on interpersonal racism, and limited attention to institutional racism beyond how it operates in terms of discrimination or imposition on individuals. We accept this criticism but note that a survey approach is not the ideal mechanism to undertake this form of study. The two key dimensions which were identified were the structure of universities, and its pedagogy. The first concerns the extent to which the university leadership and management reflect, both in numbers and perspectives, the diversity of staff and student body, as well as the broader community. While perceptions of this were collected, a proper study requires a more formal analysis of the structure and membership of the university leadership, the extent to which there may be racial bias in promotions and recruitment, and similar related matters, including, for example, who buildings and chairs are named after, and whether the institutional history acknowledges its contribution to dispossession and discrimination. Undertaking the second requires, for example, a systematic review of curriculum, curriculum materials and teaching conduct undertaken by individuals with grounding in the subject areas and in contemporary debates.²²

Notwithstanding this, the survey did collect significant responses which highlighted institutional racism along with a number of specific comments relating to curriculum, including embedded cultural and geopolitical perspectives. These are reported on.

Additionally, we note a number of concerns by students that the amount of data provided may identify them to their institutions, and issues relating to accessing the survey online. With respect to the first we consider that the approach which was adopted in the survey and reported on in this chapter ensures that confidentiality is assured. Concerning access to the survey two issues were raised. The first was that some users had problems with utilising assistive technology to complete the survey. These were addressed by the ORU. The second was a concern that the survey was only available in English. In this latter

²² The other aspects of the study being undertaken by the AHRC more fully address the questions of institutional, structural and systemic racism.

regard it was considered that this approach was consistent with the English language requirements for tertiary study in Australia.^{23, 24, 25}

As noted above, attention to these issues is important both in understanding the findings of this study and in its role as a baseline survey, and hence implications for subsequent studies which may be undertaken to identify any change in the extent and nature of racism at Australian universities.

1.8 Assessing prevalence, and bias

As identified, the survey had multiple objectives one of which was to measure prevalence.

Prevalence measures how common a specific experience or condition is within a defined population at a certain time or over a period. In research focused on racism, discrimination, safety, and respect in universities, ‘prevalence’ typically refers to the percentage or proportion of individuals within a specific group who have experienced a particular event or condition, such as racism. This can be measured at a distinct moment in time (known as point prevalence, for example, ‘in the last 12 months’) or over a period (referred to as period prevalence, for instance, ‘at any point during your time at university’).

A prevalence approach provides a foundational understanding of the scale and distribution of these experiences, offering institutions and policymakers evidence regarding the frequency of incidents and identifying which groups are most affected. Unlike case studies or incident reporting, which often capture only the most visible or extreme examples, or which rely upon individuals utilising particular mechanisms, and the quality of data recorded about this, a prevalence approach includes both reported and unreported experiences.

However, attempting to collect data on prevalence is challenging, particularly when undertaken through voluntary participation in a survey or census. A range of biases can impact. Four are of particular note:²⁶

²³ In addition, we note that there was strong criticism of the survey by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) including claims by the ECAJ Legal Head regarding data credibility and verification: “The Commission has no credible means of verifying the accuracy and representativeness of the survey data. The Centre for Social Policy Research (POLIS) at the Australian National University is responsible for conducting the survey even though the ANU has not adopted the IHRA definition and its Academic Board recently recommended against adopting Universities Australia’s new definition.” (Klein 2025).

²⁴ The survey was also criticised by the Opposition Education Spokesperson in a newspaper report which attacked the survey on the basis of some public statements made by some of the ANU academics who were part of the expert advisory group for the study “The Coalition’s newly-appointed education spokesman, Julian Leaser, told The Daily Telegraph he had no confidence in the AHRC’s study. “Why on Earth are anti-Israel activists running an inquiry into antisemitism? It is insulting.” (Daily Telegraph 21 October 2025)

²⁵ There were also a number of criticisms of the two attitudinal questions (F11b in the survey) which addressed multiculturalism and the equality of races. These were included in the survey as validated instruments of attitudes for use in analysis, rather than as free-standing questions concerning attitudes. In including these it was recognise that the equality question, in particular, has some ambiguity as to whether it is about intrinsic equality, or actual equality of treatment and outcomes. They were maintained in the form originally used to maintain compatibility.

²⁶ Additionally, it is noted that this type of survey may be impacted by fraudulent responses, or organized strategies to achieve particular types of responses. The use of individualised single use links sent to personal email addresses was considered as limiting the scope for false returns and there was little intelligence which suggested any inappropriate organised responses.

- The first and potentially most critical is response bias, that is who responds to an invitation to participate. In some cases this may involve under-reporting experiences of racism or discrimination due to fear of repercussions, concerns about anonymity, or doubts about meaningful change. Conversely, those who have experienced such issues might be more likely to respond, skewing results towards higher prevalence rates. A particular concern with this study was of response bias driven by topic salience, that is in addition to those who have experienced racism responding is more common amongst those who are concerned with the subject.
- Social desirability bias can also affect responses. For example, individuals may downplay their own discriminatory attitudes or overstate feelings to meet perceived expectations, or conversely overstate experiences to meet a general, or specific, desire to portray a group as being negatively impacted, depending upon group expectations.
- All surveys which attempt to obtain prevalence data over a specific retrospective time period can be impacted by time telescoping; that is where an event is erroneously remembered, or reported, as having occurred more recently than it actually did.
- Salience bias affects how respondents interpret and report their experiences. For example, a respondent may over-report or emphasise a recent racist incident because it feels more significant or memorable, even if it is not representative of their overall experiences. One dimension of this is attribution bias where in a very specific survey such as Racism@Uni some individuals are more inclined to attribute negative interactions to racism, notwithstanding these being driven by a much broader range, and potentially more relevant factors.

As a result, prevalence data should be seen as indicative rather than precise measures of the actual rates of racism or discrimination. To mitigate response bias, survey design prioritised confidentiality and incorporated qualitative methods to allow participants to share their experiences in their own words. This sought to enhance the reliability of findings and better reflect lived realities.

1.8.1 The impact of promotion

Reflecting the above, one issue is the degree to which the Racism@Uni survey has been impacted by response bias stemming from the framing of the survey as focused on racism in universities. While the occurrence of racism in higher education is well-documented, explicitly positioning the survey in this way can be seen as potentially influencing both participation and responses.

In this regard both the naming and the promotion of the survey reflected a tension between the different objectives it had. While seeking to maximise its role as a survey of prevalence required a neutral approach, a concern of the AHRC was to ensure that all of those staff and students who had experienced racism or discrimination, in particular those from marginalised groups, were motivated, and felt free, to respond to the survey. They were also concerned that these groups felt safe, and valued in participating, as their input was seen as being the most needed to contribute to the development of effective policies and in understanding any weaknesses in existing mechanisms.

This emphasis was reflected in the titling of the survey as ‘Racism@Uni’, in lieu of the language of ‘respect’ as was originally proposed for the study. It was also the emphasis of the letters inviting participation which included the following text:

“Racism harms students and staff in Australian universities. We need urgent action against racism, and your perspectives and lived experiences are central. With your help, the Racism@Uni survey can provide vital data to inform recommendations for real change”.

This focus was also seen in the marketing of the survey by the AHRC which used the themes: “A national study for change”, language which appeals to activists who seek change, as did “Take the survey and have your say about racism at Australian Universities”. Similarly, the tagline “Your voice counts. This is an opportunity to share your experiences of racism at university”, was focused on those who have had an experience of racism.

While the other themes used by the AHRC: “Be part of the Australian Human Rights Commission’s landmark study into racism at universities.”, and “To understand racism at university we need to hear from all students and staff, even if you haven’t experienced racism” are more neutral, the second, in particular, has an implicit assumption that the respondent has a degree of awareness of there being racism at university.

This emphasis was also found in text used in the social media marketing campaign where four approaches were used: “A national study for change”; “Have you experienced or witnessed racism at university? Your voice counts”; “A national study for change. Take the survey”; and “Have your say about racism at university”.

It is unclear the extent to which this impacted the relative response rates across the student and staff populations.

1.9 Survey responses

In total 76,131 usable responses²⁷ were received. 33,943 were from domestic students, 14,154 from international students, 10,799 from academic staff and 17,235 from non-academic staff. This was a raw response rate of 4.6 per cent based on the 1,671,071 email invitations that were issued.

Using 2024 data from the Department of Education on staff and students at Australian Universities it is estimated that the response rate by domestic students was 3.3 per cent, by international students 2.9 per cent, by academic staff 18.3 per cent and by non-academic staff 22.2 per cent. It is estimated that the response rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 5.9 per cent, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff 37.7 per cent and non-academic staff 34.0 per cent, see Appendix A.

While prima facie the response rate by students was low, discussions with a range of different organisations involved in surveys indicates that this is not inconsistent with other

²⁷ A response was considered usable if the respondent provided their basic demographic details, including their staff and student status and answered the question on whether or not they had experienced racism at university or elsewhere.

In total there were 93,647 actual responses to the survey, 68,508 completed responses, and 25,139 incomplete responses. 7,623 of the incomplete responses met the above criteria as being usable and have been included in this analysis.

experiences, and that the student age group is one of the most difficult to get engagement with. In addition, the only contact details used by the survey for these groups were formal university email addresses. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many students rarely check these accounts.

There was considerable variation in response rates by university. As a proportion of emails sent out it ranged between 2.5 per cent and 15.3 per cent. Appendix A provides details on response rates by university and country of birth.

Because of the variation in response rates between respondent groups, the focus in this report is on outcomes at the respondent group level rather than aggregation across groups.

1.10 Acknowledgement and thanks

In presenting this report we wish to acknowledge and thank the many individuals and organisations which made the survey possible.

- The Australian Human Rights Commission, in particular the Racism@Uni team. We recognise the considerable work they have put in at all stages of the study, and in particular the effort they made in gaining the agreement of 42 out of the 43 Australian Universities to participate in the survey and the extensive liaison with these universities during the deployment of the survey.
- Australian universities and their Vice Chancellors for agreeing to participate in the survey and the staff in each university who were engaged in despatching the invitations to participate.
- The ORU, in particular Jessica Fassone, and her team of programmers and others for the smooth operation of the survey and her infinite patience with survey instrument revisions.
- Those members of the ANU team who worked as the reference group for the survey, for their help in shaping the survey and our analysis of the findings. In particular, we acknowledge those members who were subject to inappropriate external comment, for their professionalism in providing academically robust input into the work of this study.
- The ethics committees for their consideration and input. We would, in particular, wish to acknowledge the AIATSIS committee which made a most valuable contribution to this study in their observations on the initial proposal.
- The survey participants, for completing the survey and sharing their experiences with us, including the extensive responses provided to the final open text questions. We recognise that for some, reliving the experiences you reported was disturbing, and we hope that respondents can see their experiences appropriately acknowledged and reflected in this report.

1.11 Use of AI

The survey has been analysed and this report written without the use of AI. Some AI support was used for the Stata coding in Chapters 5 and 7, but the programming was manually reviewed.

1.12 Note on classifications used

In analysing the results of the survey, we have used a number of classifications to identify the outcomes and experiences of different groups in the community. It is noted that the classification of groups, while frequently drawing upon existing definitions, has significant limitations and can both act to combine groups who have distinctly different experiences, and arbitrarily separate people into false distinctions. In addition, the classification of respondents into these groups was not a precise process and it is recognised that a degree of misclassification has occurred.²⁸ We consider the impact of this to be relatively small, and its effect is limited to attenuating the differences between groupings. We also emphasise that this classification has been used simply for the analysis of experiences of groups, not as a label to be applied to individuals.

The main groups used are:

- A series of dichotomous ‘ethnicity’ and religion classifications. These, and the process of derivation are detailed at Appendix D. As an individual many have several identities, in addition to identifying a religion, and thus classifications sum to over 100 per cent of the population.²⁹
- A ‘European’/non-‘European’ classification which categorises people with only an identified European heritage as being ‘European’, with all other respondents, including those who did not state their ethnicity being classified as non-‘European’. While being used extensively in reporting, this should be recognised only as an indicative device to

²⁸ Classification of ethnicity, country of birth, and a number of other variables has been based on write in fields rather than using a ‘tick box’ approach with a limited range of options. In analysis the coding primarily relied upon the identification of key words in these fields, supplemented by some targeted manual coding of records which were not categorised using this approach, or where particular sensitivity was required.

²⁹ Attempting this classification was complex. Firstly, is the extent to which a reductionist exercise such as this groups different communities together without recognising their histories and their differences in experience. A second is the actual groupings to use. This was guided by a range of factors, including the communities identified by the AHRC as detailed on page 2, and the way in which individuals reported on their own ethnicities. In this regard we note four particular issues:

The first is the use of a single ‘South Asian’ grouping. This in part reflected persons reporting at that level of classification, along with terms such as the sub-continent, which made further disaggregation difficult. It is noted that for international students in particular the use of country of birth allows for some finer consideration. The second was the separation of Chinese from ‘North Asia’. This reflected the extent to which people clearly identified their identity as Chinese, notwithstanding the region in which they lived, as well as this being the major group of international students. Thirdly was the differentiation between African and Afro-diasporic communities was driven by the extent to which the histories of the ‘Afro-diasporic’ community was shaped by diverse histories, including migration and slavery. Fourthly was differentiation between Māori and Pasifika, one driving factor for this was the extent to which Māori respondents identified themselves as Māori. A second was that New Zealand Māori are, as are other New Zealanders, treated in the Australian higher education system as domestic students. In doing this we recognised that this issue is contentious as identified by Enari and Haua (2021, 1): “The appropriateness of the term and label “Māori and Pasifika” is contended upon resettlement in Australia, as both groups of peoples are migrants”, and also Haua and Enari (2023).

identify the extent to which there are broad differences in outcomes, and not as any definitive classification.³⁰

- Country of Birth. While this measure is crude from the perspective of the analysis of racism in that it does not recognise the diversity of peoples within countries, and in particular ignores the range of communities within Australia, it has been used at times because it is considered a more precisely measured classification than the fuzziness of the ethnicity measure, and is a single categorical approach that avoids double counting.

³⁰ When this classification is used it is explicitly identified by the use of single quotes on the word 'European'. Where European is used elsewhere to denote for example people by their region of birth the word is used without the quotation marks.

2 Overview of the experience and nature of racism at Australian Universities – key survey findings

This chapter provides an overview of the findings of the survey with respect to experiences of racism at Australian universities and places the survey findings in the context of other research.

Following chapters consider in more detail the experiences of students and staff, the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, addressing the specific groups identified by the Australian Human Rights Commission, as well as assessing universities' performance regarding addressing racism and equality, including through the handling of complaints.

2.1 Key survey responses

In the following sections we discuss the key findings of the survey. A number of classifications are used. These include classifying respondents by type: Domestic students; International students; Academic staff; and Non-academic staff³¹; by whether they are likely to have a solely European heritage or not; by country of birth; and an ethnicity measure. The classification by type reflects the different response rates for the four groups and their different roles and experiences at university. While the 'European'/non-'European' classification is a crude measure, it permits a quick, and at times stark contrast of experience to be identified, which also leads to the ability to delve more deeply into the experiences of specific groups. In contrast to the above measures which partition the population into discrete groups, the more extensive ethnicity measure allows people to be a member of multiple groups. A detailed description of how we classified responses into these groups is given at Appendix D.

2.1.1 Experience of direct racism at university

The survey asked respondents, "Have you personally experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years?"³² and if so where. Although asked about the 'last two years' it appears that this time period was not strictly interpreted by respondents, in particular where they have had an issue that they wished to report on. Specific university locations identified were: "At university as a student, including online university activity"; "At university as a staff member or visitor"; and "At a university

³¹ Also known in some universities as Professional Staff.

³² The question was prefaced with the following explanatory statement:

"We are now going to ask you some questions about whether or not you have experienced interpersonal racism and racial discrimination.

Racial discrimination may occur when a person is treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation, because of their race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion.

Interpersonal racism occurs to individual people or groups of people, often in everyday settings, and is sometimes referred to as casual racism. It can come in a range of forms including abuse, harassment, humiliation, or exclusion, because of somebody's ethnicity, race, culture and/or religion."

professional, social or sporting event, even if this was not on campus”. A person was identified as having experienced direct racism at university if they answered the first question in the affirmative and cited one or more of the three university related environments.³³ This provides the framework for the definition of racism used in this reporting, as discussed in Chapter 1 and detailed in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Concept of direct racism

Direct racism: Self-reported racism and racial discrimination, including abuse, harassment, adverse treatment, exclusion, impositions, or restrictions on the basis of the person’s race, ethnicity, nationality and religion, arising from the behaviours of others, and the structure of institutions including universities.

Overall, 11.8 per cent of non-academic staff, 13.2 per cent of domestic students, 18.6 per cent of international students and 20.5 per cent of academic staff in Australian universities reported experiencing this form of direct interpersonal racism at university in the previous two years, Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Whether or not experienced direct racism at university, by respondent type

Response group	Whether experienced direct racism at university		Total	Persons
	No	Yes		
	– % –			
Domestic student	86.8	13.2	100.0	32,245
International student	81.4	18.6	100.0	12,857
Academic staff	79.5	20.5	100.0	10,245
Non-academic staff	88.2	11.8	100.0	16,449

Note: This table and subsequent tables reporting on experiences of direct racism excludes 3,685 respondents who stated that they were ‘not sure’ and 650 who indicated they would ‘prefer not to say’ to the question “Have you personally experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years?”.

Amongst domestic students, and both groups of staff, males reported higher rates of experiencing direct racism than females. This was though reversed amongst international students with 19.2 per cent of women reporting having experienced direct racism, compared with 13.7 per cent of men, Table 2.2. International students who identify as non-binary or preferred another term also had a highly elevated rate of experiencing racism, although it is noted that the number of these respondents is relatively low. High rates of racism were also reported by respondents who did not provide a response to the gender question.

³³ The survey was also streamed so that people were asked either the staff or student module. Those who were both students and staff were given the choice of whether they wished to complete the survey as a staff member or as a student.

Table 2.2 Proportion experiencing direct racism at university by respondent type and gender

Response group	Gender identification: (a)				Gender identification			
	Female	Male	Other	Not stated	Female	Male	Other	Not stated
	Proportion experiencing direct racism at university (%)				Respondents (persons)			
Domestic student	11.5	12.7	13.0	21.9	17,185	9,749	1,160	4,151
International student	19.2	13.7	28.7	29.6	6,464	4,656	143	1,594
Academic staff	19.0	19.7	19.9	29.9	5,046	3,906	166	1,127
Non-academic staff	10.3	11.7	17.7	20.5	10,193	4,375	237	1,644

(a) Female and male include persons identifying as transgender. Other are persons who identify as non-binary or prefer another term and not stated indicated they preferred not to say, or did not respond

The frequency of an experience of racism or racial discrimination at university was most commonly described as being ‘sometimes’. Over all groups only 30.7 per cent of those who actually experienced it reported that it occurred frequently or very frequently. Higher rates of very frequent experiences were reported by non-‘European’³⁴ domestic students, and academic staff, Table 2.3.³⁵

Table 2.3 Frequency of experiencing direct racism at university, by respondent type and broad ethnicity

Broad ethnicity (a)	Frequency of direct racism at university:						Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Frequency not stated	No direct racism	
Domestic student							
– % –							
‘European’	0.7	1.4	2.5	1.5	0.0	93.9	100.0
Non-‘European’	2.4	4.3	9.3	4.1	0.7	79.2	100.0
International student							
‘European’	2.2	2.9	3.6	2.7	0.0	88.6	100.0
Non-‘European’	1.6	3.8	9.0	4.0	0.3	81.2	100.0
Academic staff							
‘European’	0.4	1.3	3.7	2.5	0.1	92.0	100.0
Non-‘European’	4.1	7.9	17.3	5.7	0.7	64.3	100.0
Non-academic staff							
‘European’	0.2	0.7	2.0	1.5	0.1	95.5	100.0
Non-‘European’	1.3	4.3	11.1	5.5	0.8	77.0	100.0

(a) 33,787 respondents were classified as ‘European’ and 42,344 as non-‘European’. 50.7 per cent of domestic students, 3.4 per cent of international students, 54.1 per cent of academic staff and 59.5 per cent of non-academic staff were classified as ‘European’

As discussed in the more detailed analysis of the student experience, frequency of experiencing racism appears to be significant in determining the impact on individual wellbeing.

2.1.2 Direct racism at university and elsewhere

The survey, in addition to asking about the incidence of racism at university, also recorded the incidence more widely in the community. As shown in Table 2.4, a clear pattern across all of the key groups is that the level of racism experienced at university is lower than that

³⁴ This classification has been discussed in Chapter 1. While it has some limitations, it provides a useful descriptive approach to focus on broad differences in outcomes.

³⁵ While there is also an elevated ‘very frequent’ response by ‘European’ international students, the pattern of relative distribution of responses for this group between this and the second category of ‘frequent’ tends to suggest that this does not indicate a substantive issue.

which they experienced more widely in the community, and the proportion of each of the groups who experience racism solely at university is relatively low. While for the student groups it is possible to speculate, especially for some international students, that their overall exposure to the wider community may be limited, these results would suggest otherwise. Conversely for some, for example, part-time students, and those who study remotely, it may be considered that university represents only a small proportion of their activities and hence their exposure to that environment, and potential for a racially motivated act, is lower.

More relevantly, taking into account this broader approach to experiences of racism and racial discrimination highlights a level of pervasive racism across Australia as a whole.

Table 2.4 Whether or not experienced direct racism at university and elsewhere, by respondent type

Respondent group:	Where experienced direct racism				Total	Total experiencing racism	Proportion at university
	At university only	University and elsewhere	Elsewhere only	Did not experience			
				– % –			
Domestic student	3.1	10.2	20.8	66.0	100.0	34.0	38.9
International student	3.9	14.7	31.9	49.6	100.0	50.4	36.8
Academic staff	7.2	13.3	12.7	66.8	100.0	33.2	61.7
Non-academic staff	3.9	7.9	13.8	74.4	100.0	25.6	46.1

n = 72,734³⁶

Taking account of both racism at university and elsewhere, the majority of international students, 50.4 per cent, and a third of domestic students, 34.0 per cent, and academic staff, 33.2 per cent, reported an experience of racism or racial discrimination in the past two years, along with a quarter of non-academic staff, 25.6 per cent.

Looking at the proportion of the populations who reported racism at university (in most cases concurrently with also experiencing it outside university) as a share of the population reporting any racism, this varies from 61.7 per cent for academic staff, 46.1 per cent for non-academic staff to 38.9 per cent for domestic students and 36.8 per cent for international students. It is unclear though whether, as noted above, this is a matter of relative exposure, or whether universities in fact are a more protective environment. However, what it clearly highlights, in association with the relatively small group who reported experiencing racism only at university, is that experiences of racism at university are not just an issue about universities, but rather racism at Australian universities is a reflection of racism in Australia as a whole.

The extent of the experience of racism varies for different population groups. Table 2.5 shows the rates of racism reported by the region, and/or country of birth of survey respondents. For those from the balance of South and Central Asia almost two thirds reported experiencing racism, with highly elevated rates also being recorded by those born in Africa, excluding South Africa, from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

³⁶ The number of responses varies between tables based on: a) the specific subpopulation to which the table refers; b) the extent to which people may state that they do not know, or prefer not to say (which may be included in some tables where this is seen to be relevant); and c) where a response is not provided. The overall approach adopted in reporting the survey is to maximise the number of survey responses used, rather than restricting the total analysis simply to those records which are complete with regard to all items.

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(excluding Iran), Singapore, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Iran and Malaysia. Other countries where more than half reported racism include India and China.

Table 2.5 Whether or not experienced direct racism at university and elsewhere, by 'region' of birth

Region of Birth (a)	Whether, and if so where experienced direct racism				Total	Respondents (b)
	At university only	University and elsewhere	Elsewhere only	Did not experience		
			– % –			Persons
Aust. & NZ	2.8	6.5	13.4	77.4	100.0	34,856
UK, Ireland, US & Canada	3.1	5.7	11.8	79.5	100.0	3,894
Bal. W & N Europe	3.6	5.0	13.4	77.9	100.0	1,019
S & E Europe	2.9	11.2	18.2	67.7	100.0	861
Bal. Oceania	3.5	12.1	30.4	54.0	100.0	339
Iran	10.4	18.7	26.2	44.7	100.0	423
Bal. MENA (a)	5.8	24.1	27.6	42.5	100.0	937
Indonesia	2.7	8.0	27.7	61.7	100.0	704
Malaysia	4.1	14.8	36.2	44.9	100.0	784
Singapore	3.4	15.7	38.3	42.5	100.0	553
Vietnam	4.4	11.5	31.0	53.2	100.0	617
Philippines	2.5	10.6	36.4	50.5	100.0	689
Bal. SE Asia	4.3	11.3	33.8	50.6	100.0	399
Hong Kong	2.8	9.6	35.3	52.2	100.0	498
China	3.5	12.5	38.4	45.6	100.0	3,431
Bal. NE Asia	3.4	15.0	38.0	43.5	100.0	786
India	5.1	16.6	32.3	46.1	100.0	2,933
Pakistan	6.8	16.5	32.5	44.2	100.0	412
Bangladesh	4.2	10.6	34.1	51.1	100.0	613
Sri Lanka	4.5	15.4	36.0	44.0	100.0	713
Nepal	1.4	5.8	24.5	68.4	100.0	642
Bhutan	0.3	2.8	19.2	77.7	100.0	359
Bal. S&C Asia	9.3	29.4	25.7	35.7	100.0	269
Bal. Americas	5.1	12.9	31.7	50.4	100.0	869
South Africa	3.2	10.7	17.7	68.4	100.0	560
Bal. Africa	7.3	18.7	35.3	38.8	100.0	975
Not stated	7.2	20.6	22.7	49.5	100.0	12,661
Total	4.0	10.9	20.0	65.1	100.0	71,796

(a) This Region/country breakdown has been developed to identify significant populations. Where possible this is done by country, but otherwise by grouping countries with too small a population of respondents into their respective regions.

(b) Excludes 4,335 respondents who were not sure, or preferred not to say in response to the question as to whether they experienced racism.

Across staff and students by their countries/regions of birth, the proportion of racism which is recorded at universities³⁷ varies. It is particularly high for students and staff born in Iran, and the balance of the MENA countries, where over half of the racism individuals experience is at university. In contrast it is quite low for those born in Bhutan (13.8 per cent), Nepal (22.7 per cent), Hong Kong (26.1 per cent), the Philippines (26.4 per cent) and Indonesia (27.8 per cent).

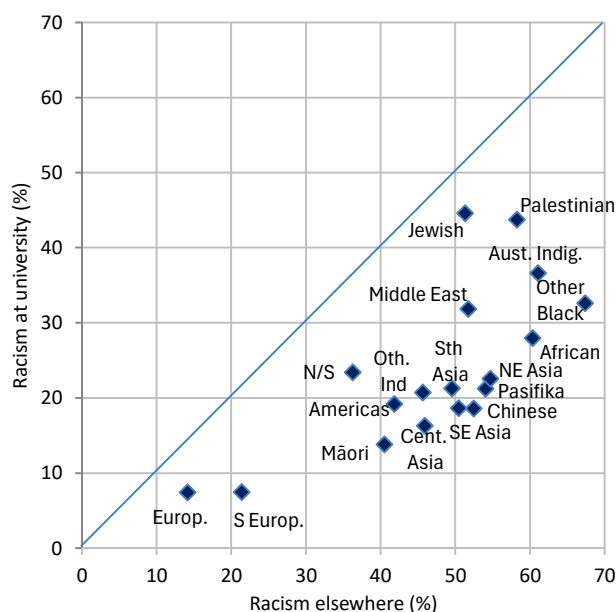
As also illustrated, the rate of racism is relatively low for those groups born in predominantly European, or European settled countries. There are though also some other countries which have relatively low reported rates compared to their geographic neighbours; these include Bhutan, Nepal and Indonesia.

³⁷ That is those who report racism at university, or at university and elsewhere, as a proportion of all of those who report experiencing racism.

The large residual group who did not state their country of birth not only reports a high level of racism at university but, relative to this, a lower rate outside of university. This was a pattern seen consistently for this group regardless of which of the response groups they were a member of. More generally it is noted that this population is somewhat weighted towards international students and academic staff.

Another way of considering the relationship between experiences of racism at university and more widely is illustrated in Figure 2.2. This plots for each of the ethnic classifications used in this study the rate of racism experienced at university and the rate of racism experienced outside. The diagonal line represents a position where the rates are the same, below the diagonal the university rate is lower, and above it is higher. As illustrated, there are significant differences between groups, although in all cases they are below the diagonal, reflecting a lower rate at university. For some such as Māori, Chinese and Africans, the rate of racism reported at university is markedly lower than that more generally, denoted by their distance from the diagonal. For Jewish staff and students, it is much closer to being equal. Also notable is that while Africans, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and Palestinian staff and students have broadly similar, and very high rates of racism in the community, they have quite different levels at university, being low for Africans and high for Palestinians, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being somewhere between the two.

Figure 2.2 Rates of direct racism at university and elsewhere by main ethnic classifications



Note: For details of the ethnic classification see Appendix D.

Locations where non-university racism was experienced are detailed in Table 2.6. The table shows, for the population who identified having experienced racism outside of the university (regardless of whether or not they also experienced it at university) the proportion who experienced it at particular locations. While some patterns are relatively consistent across the two groups of students and of staff, others show considerable variation.

Table 2.6 Non-university locations where racism experienced, as persons who experienced racism outside of university, by respondent type

Location (a)	Respondent group			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
Proportion of those experiencing racism outside of university identifying location (%)				
At other educational location (b)	17.4	3.8	8.6	7.2
In other employment	28.8	22.3	14.0	17.7
Housing	9.3	22.3	13.8	11.8
Security & police	12.0	8.3	10.4	10.1
Government	10.9	5.0	9.4	9.0
Health service	16.7	9.9	16.6	14.2
Shop/Restaurant	37.4	46.1	33.9	39.8
Sport/Pub event	17.4	14.0	15.9	19.0
Social media	38.2	25.7	30.3	33.2
Public transport	34.8	53.2	28.8	34.4
Other	8.6	9.4	7.2	8.4

n = 25,917

(a) Multiple locations could be identified

(b) This may involve previous education, and for parents, for example, interaction with schools for their children.

Particularly high rates of racism were recorded at shops and restaurants, on social media and public transport. Across all groups the highest rate of 53.2 per cent was recorded by international students using public transport. Public transport was also the second highest cited by non-academic staff and third for domestic students and academic staff. This has two elements to it. The first is exposure to racist behaviour by other commuters, the second is racism from transport operators, including inspectors and other enforcement. Both of these dimensions were reported in text responses in the survey. The issue of public transport was also considered in Mujcic and Frijters (2021) who from a field experiment in Brisbane identified a strong bias in favour of 'lighter skinned customer groups' in the granting of free rides to commuters with a travel card with a zero balance.

International students also frequently encountered racism in shops and restaurants, in other employment and in seeking to obtain and maintain housing.

As discussed earlier only 30.7 per cent of those who experience racism at university reported that this was frequent or very frequent. This group represents some 4.5 per cent of all respondents. The broader incidence of high frequency racism both at, and outside of, university, across the whole population is shown in Table 2.7. In aggregate it indicates that 21.7 per cent of all international students face direct racism, at one location or another on a frequent or very frequent basis. For domestic students the proportion is 14.9 per cent, for academic staff 13.8 per cent and non-academic staff 9.3 per cent.

While for most groups social media is the main location of this frequent racism, for international students it is public transport, again emphasising the issue identified above.

Table 2.7 All staff and students, incidence of ‘Very frequent’ or ‘frequent’ direct racism by location

Location	Respondent type			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
As a proportion of the within group population (%)				
As student at university	3.9	4.6	–	–
As staff at university	–	–	5.8	2.5
At related university activity	1.5	2.0	2.2	0.8
<i>Any at university</i>	4.3	5.4	6.3	2.8
At other educational location	2.1	0.6	1.0	0.6
In other employment	3.5	4.2	1.3	1.3
Housing	1.5	5.6	1.8	1.2
Security & police	1.7	1.2	1.3	0.8
Government	1.7	1.0	1.2	0.8
Health service	2.0	1.6	1.9	1.1
Shop/Restaurant	2.9	5.6	2.4	1.9
Sport/Public event	1.7	1.9	1.4	1.2
Social media	7.3	7.9	6.2	4.7
Public transport	3.2	8.0	2.3	1.9
Other	0.9	1.3	0.6	0.5
<i>Any</i>	14.9	21.7	13.8	9.3
At university only	1.4	1.9	2.9	1.2
At university and elsewhere	2.9	3.6	3.4	1.6
Elsewhere only	10.6	16.2	7.5	6.5

n = 71,796

With respect to the experience of high frequency racism at university, academic staff reported the highest rate, with 6.3 per cent of these respondents reporting frequent or very frequent experiences of direct racism at university. They are followed by international students, 5.4 per cent, domestic students, 4.3 per cent, and non-academic staff, 2.8 per cent.

Considering the relative incidence of high frequency racism, only a small proportion report experiencing this only at university, 1.4 per cent of domestic students, 1.9 per cent of international students, 2.9 per cent of academic staff and 1.2 per cent of non-academic staff. This compares with 10.6 per cent of domestic students, 16.2 per cent of international students, 7.5 per cent of academic staff and 6.5 per cent of non-academic staff who experience this only outside of university.

2.1.3 Direct and indirect racism

In addition to asking about the direct racism that the person may have experienced, the survey also collected information on indirect racism, that is, racism which a person may have experienced, even if this was not actually directed at them. Specifically, it asked, “even if not directed to you”, whether they had experienced people:

- “Using racist terms or making racist jokes and comments about the racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group with which you identify”
- “Denigrating your culture in a racist way”; “Using negative stereotypes about your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group”

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- “Trivialising the negative experiences of people of your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group”
- “Blaming your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group for some adverse outcome for others”.^{38, 39}

The two most common forms of indirect racism which were identified were “using racist terms or making racist jokes”, and the use of negative stereotypes, see Table 2.8, although all five forms were reported at relatively high levels.

Table 2.8 Incidence and forms of indirect racism experienced at university, by respondent type

Form of indirect racism	Respondent type:			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– % –			
Racist terms, jokes and comments	57.2	66.2	58.6	54.8
Denigrating culture in a racist way	45.9	56.7	49.1	40.6
Using negative stereotypes	54.3	64.3	58.6	51.0
Trivialising negative outcomes	49.0	59.1	55.0	46.0
Blaming for adverse outcomes	49.6	55.1	52.8	43.8
Any of the above	68.7	75.4	72.0	66.4

n = 71,407

As with direct racism, a question about the frequency of indirect racism was also asked. Table 2.9 shows for all respondents the distribution of the relative frequency of these two forms of racism. Only 1.0 per cent reported they experience both forms very frequently, and a total of 3.4 per cent both forms either very frequently or frequently. For those who reported direct racism very frequently, 72.5 per cent also reported indirect very frequently and 72.5 per cent of those who reported direct frequently reported indirect very frequently or frequently.

Table 2.9 Incidence of direct and indirect racism at university by frequency, all staff and students

Indirect racism at university	Direct racism at university					Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
	– % –					
Very frequently	1.0	1.2	1.4	0.3	4.2	8.2
Frequently	0.2	1.0	1.9	0.6	8.0	11.6
Sometimes	0.1	0.5	2.4	1.2	22.3	26.6
Rarely	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.6	21.5	22.8
Never	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	30.3	30.8
Total	1.4	2.9	6.5	3.0	86.3	100.0

n = 67,319

³⁸ The design of this question was to capture the casual racism which a person may encounter. Specifically, the question sought responses to these behaviours in the case where the subject of the racist behaviour related to the person’s own identity. As such it is differentiated from just hearing people being racist, either where this is actually directed to another group, or, for example, is just being racist about a group in their discussions with others, of their own or different groups.

³⁹ Unlike the question on direct racism, this question was only concerned with what had occurred at university.

Table 2.10 presents this in a more summary form for the respondent groups, categorising people firstly by whether they experienced direct racism, regardless of frequency, and for those that did not, then by the frequency of indirect racism. This indicates that only 24.5 per cent of international students, along with 27.9 per cent of academic staff, do not face some form of racism at university. For domestic students and non-academic staff this is relatively higher, with 31.5 per cent of domestic students and 33.8 per cent of non-academic staff reporting none.

Table 2.10 Whether or not experienced direct or indirect racism at university, by respondent type

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university (a) (b)	Indirect racism only				Never (direct or indirect)	Total
		Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely		
				- % -			
Domestic student	12.1	5.9	9.6	22.0	18.9	31.5	100.0
International student	17.1	4.6	8.5	22.6	22.8	24.5	100.0
Academic staff	19.8	2.3	6.2	22.7	21.2	27.9	100.0
Non-academic staff	11.3	1.7	5.2	22.3	25.7	33.8	100.0

n = 67,319

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism is higher than shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

Again though, as detailed above, for most the incidence of these forms of racism is described by the respondents as being of an occasional, or even a rare, nature.

2.2 Relative incidence

Of central interest to this study are the factors which are associated with whether a student or a staff member experiences racism at an Australian university. This was approached using a multivariate probit model⁴⁰ which took into account a wide range of personal and institutional factors and had as the dependent variable whether or not the person had experienced racism at university.⁴¹ In our analysis we independently modelled each of the four response groups.

Table 2.11 is presented as a marginal effect, that is the independent contribution of particular student and staff characteristics to the incidence of racism. In each case the marginal effect represents the percentage point increase in the probability of a person experiencing direct racism at an Australian university relative to a base case. A marginal effect, say of 0.050, represents a 5 per cent higher probability of being subject to racism at university.⁴² As such, the key issue identified in the model is the direction of the marginal effect – does it show an increase or a decrease in the probability of experiencing racism at university, and the magnitude – does it have a large or small impact. Also shown, in the

⁴⁰ Probit is a form of regression modelling which identifies the independent contributions of a range of variables to a categorical outcome which can have two values, in this case whether or not the person experienced racism at university.

⁴¹ In modelling a number of additional parameters, including field of study, were tested in the model and removed as they were not significant and did not add to model fit.

⁴² The data as presented is for the marginal effect of a change in each of the parameters for an ‘average’ person, based upon the population modelled. These models have also been run using an alternative methodology based on the average marginal effects for each of the individuals, and gives similar results. The need to use such approaches to evaluating the marginal effects is because of non-linearity in the probit estimates.

form of asterisks, is the statistical probability associated with the estimate. This can be considered as an indication of whether the estimate is robust. In the model where a parameter can take on multiple values, one value is selected to be the base, and the marginal effects are relative to this base. In the case of variables such as ethnicity, this is the marginal effect of having that ethnicity relative to not having it.

Caution though needs to be exercised in interpreting the results:

- The data reflects the characteristics of the survey responses. To the extent there is any bias in the experiences of those who responded, relative to those who did not, this will be reflected in the model estimates.
- The outcomes for any one individual represent a combination of a number of these independent factors, some of which may increase their probability and some which will act to reduce it, as well as unobserved characteristics, and the extent to which multiple factors may amplify or reduce the probability of experiencing racism.⁴³
- While there are indicators of the statistical significance of the results, such indicators are again a measure of probability and not absolute evidence of the factor existing.
- The modelling is based on association and not causation. That is, while particular marginal effects are associated in a statistical sense with particular characteristics, they are not caused by that characteristic.

In the table individual universities have been de-identified, and the order of universities randomised, as the AHRC has advised that they provided an undertaking not to publish university level results. Additionally some non-significant estimates have been incorporated into tables where a particular response category was not estimatable for a particular institution.

⁴³ While it is possible to introduce a range of interaction effects to better account for the impact of multiple factors, for example including the interaction between gender and ethnicity, this produces a much more complex model and tends to detract from the broad focus of this analysis. A number of these more detailed interactions are considered in more detailed tables presented elsewhere in the text.

Table 2.11 Analysis of factors associated with the incidence of direct racism, marginal effects, by respondent type

University (Randomised)	Students		Staff	
	Domestic	International	Academic	Non-academic
1	base	base	base	base
2	0.020	-0.079 ***	0.014	0.022
3	0.048	-0.117 ***	0.052	-0.006
4	0.010	0.013	-0.004	-0.006
5	0.043 **	0.085	0.048	0.015
6	-0.002	0.035	-0.005	-0.024 *
7	0.004	0.019	-0.002	0.002
8	0.025 **	0.023	0.047 *	0.031 *
9	-0.010	0.057 **	-0.002	0.012
10	0.016	-0.018	0.016	0.015
11	0.011	0.170 *	0.067 **	-0.001
12	0.018	-0.080 *	0.075 *	0.025
13	0.035 ***	0.025	0.155 ***	0.053 **
14	0.020	-0.079 ***	-0.025	0.008
15	-0.078 ***	0.001	0.202	0.113 *
16	0.020 **	0.022	0.003	0.030 **
17	0.004	0.002	0.006	0.010
18	0.016	0.058	-0.028	-0.017
19	0.025 **	-0.004	0.000	0.008
20	0.062 ***	0.074 ***	0.046 **	0.042 ***
21	-0.006	-0.017	-0.029	0.019
22	0.010	0.068 **	-0.023	0.001
23	-0.024 **	-0.044 *	-0.021	0.007
24	0.049 ***	0.037	0.016	0.001
25	-0.015	-0.012	0.069	0.035
26	0.017	-0.007	0.015	-0.009
27	0.030 **	-0.073 **	0.039	-0.015
28	0.012	-0.016	0.037	-0.023
29	0.006	0.041	0.037	-0.033 **
30	-0.012	-0.063	0.002	0.009
31	-0.002	-0.038	-0.095 ***	0.013
32	0.037 ***	0.012	0.044	0.013
33	0.006	0.055	0.021	-0.002
34	-0.024 *	-0.007	-0.046	-0.001
35	0.028 *	-0.036	-0.021	-0.017
36	0.042 *	-0.097 ***	0.009	-0.013
37	0.028	-0.020	-0.020	-0.006
38	0.017	0.027	0.005	0.022
39	-0.018	0.001	-0.109 ***	0.001
40	-0.014	-0.019	-0.014	0.016
41	0.012	-0.015	0.019	0.035 **
42	0.014	0.023	0.007	0.007

Statistical significance: *** at 99 per cent level, ** at 95 per cent level, * at 90 per cent level.

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Continued

	Students		Staff	
	Domestic	International	Academic	Non-academic
Study type				
On campus	base	base	-	-
Remote	-0.055 ***	-0.014	-	-
N/S	-0.026	-0.039	-	-
Study full or part-time				
Full-time	base	base	-	-
Part-time	-0.015 ***	-0.010	-	-
N/S	0.009	0.042	-	-
Study level				
Doctoral	-0.001	-0.058 ***	-	-
Master	0.009	-0.096 ***	-	-
Other postgraduate degree	0.050 ***	-0.030	-	-
PG Dip/Cert	-0.020 **	-0.096 ***	-	-
Bachelor	base	base	-	-
Dip/Adv Dip/Assoc	-0.028 ***	-0.097 ***	-	-
Tertiary Preparation	-	-0.148 *	-	-
Vocational	-0.059 ***	-0.087	-	-
Other & N/S	0.007	-0.053 *	-	-
Student accommodation				
Did not use	base	base	-	-
Used	0.048 ***	0.033 ***	-	-
N/S	0.003	-0.066 ***	-	-
Academic staff				
A-B Continuing	-	-	base	-
A-B Fixed/Casual	-	-	-0.038 ***	-
C-E Continuing	-	-	0.008	-
C-E Fixed/Casual	-	-	-0.019	-
N/S Continuing	-	-	0.026	-
N/S Fixed/Casual	-	-	-0.057 ***	-
N/S	-	-	0.052	-
Non-academic staff				
<\$100k	-	-	-	base
\$100-150k no staff	-	-	-	-0.002 ***
\$100-150k supervise	-	-	-	0.018
\$150k+	-	-	-	-0.013
N/S	-	-	-	0.012

Statistical significance: *** at 99 per cent level, ** at 95 per cent level, * at 90 per cent level.

Continued

	Students		Staff	
	Domestic	International	Academic	Non-academic
COB - English speaking				
Missing	-0.036	0.134 ***	0.048	0.023
English speaking	base	base	base	base
Not	0.006	-0.030 ***	0.053 ***	0.019 **
Born in Australia				
Australia	base	–	base	base
Overseas	0.004	–	0.027 ***	0.010 *
Missing	0.149 **	–	0.142 **	0.087 *
Gender				
Female	base	base	base	base
Male	0.018 ***	-0.052 ***	-0.010	0.012 **
Other	0.028 **	0.027	-0.008	0.105 ***
N/S	0.008	0.144 ***	-0.053 ***	0.016
Age (years)				
18-24	base	base	base	base
25-44	0.056 ***	0.046 ***	0.078 **	0.026 **
45+	0.068 ***	0.181 ***	0.084 ***	0.023 **
N/S	0.138 ***	0.073 *	0.182 ***	0.086 ***
Ethnicity				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.142 ***		0.297 ***	0.192 ***
African	0.063 ***	0.125 ***	0.151 ***	0.097 ***
Afro-diasporic	0.074 ***	0.152 ***	0.144 ***	0.082 **
Māori	0.041 *	–	0.126 **	0.029
Other Indigenous	0.089 **	-0.021	0.204 **	0.052
Pasifika	0.050 ***	-0.067 *	0.166 ***	0.043 **
Middle Eastern	0.074 ***	0.127 ***	0.124 ***	0.080 ***
Palestinian	0.166 ***	–	0.256 ***	0.085
Central Asian	0.011	0.160 **	-0.045	-0.129
South Asian	0.058 ***	0.040 ***	0.101 ***	0.071 ***
Chinese	0.043 ***	0.030 **	0.035 *	0.033 ***
Other North East Asian	0.059 ***	0.081 ***	0.066 **	0.068 ***
South East Asian	0.042 ***	0.016	0.028	0.039 ***
Americas	0.021 *	0.034	0.012	0.030 **
Southern European	-0.029 ***	-0.045	-0.035	-0.020
European	-0.045 ***	-0.042 **	-0.122 ***	-0.053 ***
Not Stated	0.024 **	-0.010	-0.010	0.003
Whether Jewish				
Not	base	base	base	base
Jewish (religious)	0.504 ***	0.293 **	0.442 ***	0.445 ***
Jewish (secular)	0.150 ***	0.272 *	0.176 ***	0.198 ***
Other religions				
Islam	0.054 ***	0.006	0.058 ***	0.066 ***
Christianity	0.039 ***	-0.016	0.024 **	0.026 ***
Other identified	0.047 ***	0.012	0.055 ***	0.032 ***
Sexuality				
Heterosexual	base	base	base	base
Gay/Queer/Lesbian	-0.011	0.089 ***	-0.001	0.007
Bi/Pansexual	0.000	0.061 ***	0.033 *	0.010
Demi/Asexual	-0.022 **	0.039	0.019	0.000
Other & N/S	0.001	-0.035 ***	0.016	-0.016 *
Model pseudo r-square	0.13	0.08	0.19	0.16
n	32,095	12,850	10,225	16,449

Statistical significance: *** at 99 per cent level, ** at 95 per cent level, * at 90 per cent level.

While this modelling provides a wealth of information on the particular factors which are associated with experiences of racism, as cited earlier it needs to be recognised that for each student the actual outcome depends on the combination of their characteristics, some of which may increase their probability and others decrease, and given the model fit, variation around other factors which have not been included, and the estimation of marginal effects at the mean. Population counts for the model are given in Appendix G.

Aggregate results of some of the key groups identified by the Australian Human Rights Commission are shown in Table 2.12. The major discussion of these are in Chapter 6, although some references to these results are made in this and other chapters.

**Table 2.12 Incidence of direct racism at Australian Universities
some selected groups**

Identified communities of interest:	Respondent group:			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	Proportion reporting direct racism at university (%)			
All	13.2	18.6	20.5	11.8
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	29.8	–	56.6	41.1
All non-‘European’	20.8	18.8	35.7	23.0
Jewish (religious)	57.3	47.6	56.5	50.4
Jewish (secular)	22.6	45.5	27.8	24.7
Muslim	21.9	16.6	44.8	31.2
Palestinian	43.1	–	60.0	33.3
Middle Eastern	27.7	30.6	46.8	32.0
South/South East/East Asian	17.9	16.5	33.4	21.9
African	21.9	29.7	44.9	30.1
Pasifika	19.6	11.9	48.3	23.5

n = 71,796

Because independent models were run for domestic students, international students, academic staff and non-academic staff, caution needs to be exercised in comparing the actual magnitude of marginal effects across each of the models, as they are all variations from a different base.

2.2.1 Impact of university

Overall, the data indicates that there are few systematic differences between universities in their “own” contribution to experiences of racism at university. While in many cases particular universities indicate a higher or lower marginal effect for particular groups, this is in most cases not found consistently for the four populations of students and staff, nor statistically significant. In this analysis university 1 was chosen as the base case due to its characteristics.

While the absence of a systematic finding across all groups of staff and students may suggest no single structural element related to the specific university is at play, this does not mean that the individual findings should be ignored, but rather suggests a need for some cautious consideration and further investigation. In addition, it needs to be noted that these are simply marginal differences between universities.

The key exception is university 20 where there appears to be a significantly higher incidence of racism – by some four to seven percentage points – across all four categories, albeit that the estimate for academic staff was only significant at the 95 per cent confidence

level. Also of note is university 13, where while there was no significant impact for international students, there was for the other three groups, with a particularly high marginal effect for academic staff, although the estimate for non-academic staff was only significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. Looking within the respondent categories there are a number of universities which have negative and significant estimates for international students, suggesting, relative to the mix of other student characteristics, that they face lower rates of racism.

In noting these findings, it is stressed that these results cannot be interpreted simply as one university being more or less racist than another, or that these results are driven by the university itself. While we have incorporated a wide range of characteristics into the model, there are many more factors which we do not have information on. This includes, for example, the extent to which students may have other employment which can impact their time on campus, the socio-economic background of students, or issues such as housing and related costs which may in turn cause stress, which can lead to inappropriate behaviours and outcomes. There are also external factors such as protests, crime, or local political debates, which may also differentially impact students and staff in different locations.

2.2.2 Student study arrangements

Those students who are studying remotely tend to report experiencing lower levels of racism at university, although this is only statistically significant for domestic students. This would appear to be consistent with this group having less exposure to the university environment, although as discussed in section 4.4, to the extent they utilise online methods of participation, these appear to be associated with a higher incidence of racism.

This finding is also echoed, although with a much lower parameter value, in the case of part-time relative to full-time study.

The level of study has diverse impacts, which vary by student group. For domestic students significantly lower rates of racism were associated with vocational study – around 6 percentage points relative to the base case of an undergraduate degree. This was also the case, although to a lesser degree, with undergraduate and postgraduate diploma and related courses. The rate for those undertaking ‘other’ post graduate degrees, typically professional master’s, was significantly higher.

For international students most levels of study were associated with lower rates of experiencing direct racism at university relative to those who were undergraduates taking degree level courses. The strength of this was particularly high and significant for those doing master’s, and those doing postgraduate diplomas and certificates. These forms of study were associated with an almost 10 percentage point lower rate. For those undertaking doctoral studies the effect was an almost 6 percentage point lowering.

2.2.3 Use of student accommodation

The use of student accommodation (although not necessarily using it at the time of the survey) by both domestic and international students was associated with a significantly higher rate of experiencing racism compared to not using this form of housing. However, the magnitude of this was relatively small, with it being estimated that using student accommodation increased the likelihood of experiencing racism by 4.8 percentage points

for domestic students and 3.3 percentage points for international students compared to the base case...

2.2.4 Staff level

For academic staff, there were not many differences relative to the base case of continuing staff at the A and B level, typically associate lecturers and lecturers. The two exceptions were staff at this level who were on fixed terms or were employed on a casual basis where this was associated with a significant 3.8 percentage point lower rate, and those employed on this basis but did not provide the level at which they were employed.

There was even less variation amongst non-academic staff, with the only significant result being a very small negative 0.2 percentage point effect for those earning \$100,000 to \$150,000 and not supervising staff, relative to the base case of those earning less.

2.2.5 English speaking background

In this analysis a very broad measure of whether or not a person had an English speaking background was used, see Appendix C. This was to take into account the fact that many international students, and staff who were born overseas, while coming from countries where English was not the official, or even the most common language, are either countries where English is widely understood, for example a number of European countries, or where education is frequently undertaken in English.

Amongst international students the most marked feature is the statistically significant 13.4 percentage point higher probability of experiencing racism for those who do not state their country of birth, relative to those who identify an English speaking country as their country of birth. This is a group which as noted in section 2.1.2 reports a high rate of racism at university. In contrast being born in non-English speaking countries is associated with a significant but small 3 percentage point lower incidence.

For both groups of staff being born in a non-English speaking country is associated with a significant and higher incidence of racism of some 5 percentage points for academic staff and around 2 percentage points for non-academic staff.

2.2.6 Whether born in Australia

While being born outside of Australia is not, as an independent variable, associated with any significant difference in the incidence of racism at university for domestic students, it is both significant and marked for staff, in particular academic staff where it is associated with a 2.7 percentage point higher incidence of racism. Dominating this variable again is the issue of those who did not provide details of their country of birth, with this being particularly high at just under 15 percentage points for domestic students and a little less for academic staff, and around 9 percentage points for non-academic staff.

2.2.7 Ethnicity and religion

There are a range of very strong and varied independent effects of ethnicity on the incidence of racism at university. In each case the parameter represents the effect of having any particular ethnicity relative to not having it. These ethnicities are not mutually exclusive, and the structure of the survey allowed individuals to have up to three ethnicities. As noted above, the absolute parameter values must be considered cautiously

across models, and the range of other characteristics of individuals must also be taken into account. This is particularly the case with the estimates associated with ethnicity where the characteristics of the base within each model is different. For example, the model for domestic students the model has a base population which is heavily weighted by those with a European ethnicity. In the case of international students, the average base is quite different.

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities** Being an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person is associated with statistically significant higher rates of racism. Specifically, a 14.2 percentage point higher rate of racism at university for domestic students relative to not being a member of this community, a 29.7 percentage point higher rate for academic staff and 19.2 percentage points higher for non-academic staff.
- **African communities:** Having an African heritage (a classification which excludes those of European heritage who may come from Africa, and those which have been classified into the 'Afro-diasporic communities' group) is associated with a statistically significant higher rate of reporting racism at university across each of the groups: 6.3 percentage points for domestic students, 12.5 percentage points for international students, 15.1 percentage points for academic staff and 9.7 percentage points for non-academic staff.
- **Afro-diasporic communities:** This group comprises both persons with a declared Afro-Caribbean identity, along with African Americans, and Afro-diasporic communities in countries such as the UK. It also includes those who simply identified themselves as a Person of Colour. As such it is diverse, but has been constructed to draw in a number of different groups who have an African heritage but diverse histories, including migration and slavery, and to generate a sufficient population to be included in analysis.⁴⁴ In broad terms the independent effect of this ethnicity is similar to Africans, although marginally higher for domestic and international students at 7.4 and 15.2 percentage points, and a little lower at 14.4 and 8.2 percentage points for academic staff and non-academic staff respectively.
- **Māori communities:** No strongly significant differences were associated with a Māori heritage for students or for non-academic staff, but were for academic staff. For these staff it was associated, at a 95 per cent confidence level, with a 12.6 percentage point higher incidence of racism at university. It should be noted that New Zealand students as a whole are classified as domestic rather than international.
- **Other Indigenous communities:** This population which excludes other identified indigenous groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Māori peoples, should be considered as being indicative of the experience of other indigenous

⁴⁴ We are also aware of the sensitivities involved in this classification; both in terms of the extent it may reflect multiple communities, but also the histories of individuals. This latter was raised by one respondent who noted: "please don't ask black people who are the direct descendants of slavery this question. We have heard it for hundreds of years inter-generationally. It's often dressed up as a mere inquiry when our 100s of years of being taken from our lands, our people and moved elsewhere against our will like animals with no records kept still cuts deep. We are born on soil which isn't that of our ancestors and are unable to connect with our lands, water ways, people and ancestors". Additionally while the terminology of "People of Colour" is rejected by some, it was equally the basis on which some respondents reported their identity.

peoples who are now a minority within their country, rather than a comprehensive grouping of all indigenous peoples who responded to the survey. It primarily consists of indigenous people of the Americas and groups such as the Sami people. While the data for international students and non-administrative staff were not significant (potentially impacted by the relatively small population in this group), for domestic students and academic staff it was at the 95 per cent level, with an associated 8.9 and 20.4 percentage point higher rate of reported direct racism at university.

- **Pasifika communities:** Having a Pasifika heritage was associated with a highly significant 5.0 percentage point higher rate of experiencing direct racism for domestic students and 16.6 percentage points for academic staff. For non-academic staff the 4.3 percentage point higher rate was significant at the 95 per cent level, while the negative effect of 6.7 percentage points for international students was only weakly significant. The number of Pasifika international students was too small to allow any estimate.
- **Middle Eastern and North African communities:** Having an ethnicity originating in the area sometimes called Middle East and North Africa was associated with significantly higher rates of racism at university across all four groups. For domestic students the independent contribution was 7.4 percentage points, for international students 12.7 percentage points, for academic staff 12.4 percentage points and non-academic staff 8.0 percentage points.
- **Palestinian communities:** Only a small number of respondents identified themselves as being Palestinian. Notwithstanding this, highly significant higher rates of racism at university were identified for domestic students, 16.6 percentage points, and academic staff 25.6 percentage points. The estimate for non-academic staff was not statistically significant.
- **Central Asian communities:** This was again a very small group of respondents. Reflecting this, in most cases, the results were not significant. The one exception was for international students where the independent contribution of having this identity was an increase of 16.0 percentage points.
- **South Asian communities:** There were strongly significant higher rates of experiencing racism at university associated for each of the groups. For domestic students this was 5.8 percentage points, for international students 4.0 percentage points, 10.1 for academic staff and 7.1 percentage points for non-academic staff.
- **Chinese communities:** In analysis, because of the number of staff and students with this ethnicity, persons with a Chinese ethnicity were identified separately from others from North-East Asia. However, despite the size of the group only two of the estimates were highly significant: for domestic students a 4.3 percentage point higher rate of racism; and for non-academic staff 3.3 percentage points. The value for international students, 3.0 percentage points was significant at the 95 per cent level and for academic staff the 3.5 percentage point was significant at the 90 per cent level. This suggests considerable variability within these populations.

- **North-East Asian (balance⁴⁵) communities:** Having an ethnicity that falls into this category, which excludes those who identified themselves as Chinese, was associated with statistically significant higher rates of racism for all groups. This was at the 99 per cent level for all but academic staff where it was at the 95 per cent confidence level. The actual marginal effects were 5.9 percentage points for domestic students, 8.1 percentage points for international students, 6.6 percentage points for academic staff and 6.8 percentage points for non-academic staff.
- **South East Asian communities:** Only the estimates for domestic students and for non-academic staff were highly statistically significant. For these students having this ethnicity, relative to not, was associated with a 4.2 percentage higher rate of racism at university. For non-academic staff the value was 3.9 percentage points.
- **Americas communities:** As this classification sought to exclude those with a solely identifiable European heritage, and those who identified as members of 'Afro-diasporic' communities, this was largely dominated by people from central and southern America. Only the estimates for domestic students, a positive 2.1 percentage points, and for non-academic staff 3.0 percentage points, were significant, and even here this was weak, at the 90 per cent level for students and 95 per cent for staff,
- **Southern European communities:** This classification is significantly undercounted in this data. While it includes people who specifically identified themselves as southern European, in many cases the classification of people with a European heritage was derived from how people were perceived by others, and other approaches which did not allow for differentiation. Those persons whose ethnicity had to be derived through these processes have all been included in the more general 'European' category. While all of the parameters are negative, pointing to lower rates of experiencing racism, only that for domestic students was strongly significant and indicates that people with this heritage are 2.9 percentage points less likely to experience racism at university.
- **European communities:** Having a European ethnicity relative to not having one, is associated with a lower rate of experiencing racism at university. For all, except international students where the estimate was significant at the 95 per cent level, the estimates were highly significant. The effect is estimated at 4.5 percentage points for domestic students, 4.2 percentage points for international students, a large 12.2 percentage points for academic staff and 5.3 percentage points for non-academic staff.
- **Not Stated:** Interpreting this group, as discussed, is difficult. In this modelling a further complication is that while conceptually the modelling assumes that each of the specific parameters are independent, there is a considerable degree of correlation between having not stated responses to a range of questions, and as such the actual attribution to a specific parameter can be misleading. The only significant result was a slightly lower rate for domestic students.
- **Jewish communities:** In the modelling and in most analysis two measures of being Jewish are used, whether the person identifies as having Judaism as their religion, or whether they identified as Jewish, but did not give Judaism as their religion. In both

⁴⁵

The use of the word 'balance' is to indicate that those identified as Chinese have been treated separately.

cases these identifications are associated with very high marginal effects, with that for those who identify as religious the highest for any classification in the model. All estimates for domestic students and staff are highly significant while those for international students are less so, for religious Jews at the 95 per cent level and for those solely identifying as secular at the 90 per cent level. The model parameters indicate a 50.4 percentage point higher rate for religious Jewish domestic students and 15.0 percentage points higher for those who identified as secular. For international students the values are 29.3 percentage points and 27.2 respectively, for academic staff 44.2 percentage points and 17.6, and for non-academic staff 44.5 percentage points and 19.8 percentage points.

- **Muslim communities:** Having Islam as a religion was significantly associated with high rates of experiencing racism for all groups except international students. Its independent contribution to the rate of racism at university was estimated at 5.4 percentage points for domestic students, 5.8 percentage points for academic staff and 6.6 percentage points for non-academic staff.
- **Christian communities:** Christianity was associated with a 3.9 percentage point increase in the rate of racism at university amongst domestic students, 2.4 percentage points for academic staff and 2.6 percentage points for non-academic staff. The estimates for domestic students and non-academic staff were highly significant and for academic staff significant at the 95 per cent level. For international students the estimate was negative and insignificant.
- **Other identified religions:** This again was significant for all but international students. The marginal effects indicate a 4.7 percentage point increase for domestic students, 5.5 percentage points for academic staff and 3.2 percentage points for non-academic staff.

2.2.8 Age, gender and sexuality

Relative to those aged 18 to 24 years, increasing age amongst staff and students was associated with a higher incidence of racism at university. This was consistently seen across all four categories of staff and students and was in most cases statistically significant. It was particularly marked for international students where being aged 45 years and over, relative to being aged 18 to 24 years, is associated with an 18.1 percentage point higher rate of racism at university.

The effect of gender varied across groups. While being male relative to female was associated with a 1.8 percentage point higher incidence of racism at university amongst domestic students, it was associated with a 5.2 percentage point lower rate for international students. That is, holding all other things equal, while a male domestic student is likely to have a higher rate of racism at university than a female domestic student, an international female student is likely to have a higher rate than a male international student. There was no significant male/female difference for academic staff, although amongst non-academic staff being male was associated with a very small 1.2 percentage point increase in racism.

Those in the 'other' gender classification had a 2.8 percentage point higher rate, relative to women, amongst domestic students, and a 10.5 percentage point higher rate amongst non-

academic staff, although the estimate for domestic students was only significant at the 95 per cent level.

Sexuality only appears to have a marked association in the international student population. Relative to being heterosexual identifying as gay, queer, or lesbian is associated with an 8.9 percentage point higher rate of racism. Those who identify as bisexual or pan sexual have a 6.1 percentage point higher rate. Those who are classified as other, or not stated, have a 3.5 percentage point lower rate, but this is likely to again be a function of interaction with the other not stated variables. All of these effects are highly significant.

Amongst domestic students the only significant result, at the 95 per cent level, is a slightly lower rate, 2.2 percentage points, for those identified as demisexual or asexual. There is a weak positive impact amongst academic staff who identify as pan or bisexual, and a slight negative effect amongst non-academic staff in the other and not stated group.

2.3 Elements of direct racism

This section considers the experience of direct racism in more detail.

2.3.1 Perception of why subject to racism

Respondents who experienced racism at university were asked about their perception of why they were targeted with a range of specific factors identified, as detailed in Table 2.13, along with the capacity to provide additional factors, and with respondents being able to identify multiple factors. The most cited factor was the person's cultural/racial/ethnic background, with between 66.9 per cent and 75.4 per cent citing this basis, followed by the person's skin colour or other physical features associated with their racial/ethnic background.

Table 2.13 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, perception of why this occurred, by respondent type

Perceived factor (a)	Respondent group			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
		– % –		
My language or accent	23.5	56.6	38.6	30.1
My cultural/racial/ethnic background	71.1	71.2	75.4	66.9
My skin colour and/or other physical features associated with my racial/ethnic identity	63.1	68.8	50.5	48.1
My religious background	30.1	17.6	20.3	18.1
Because of current conflict in the Middle East	20.4	8.6	18.8	13.1
Because of COVID	7.6	10.6	3.4	5.4
Because I am an international fee-paying student	–	46.5	–	–
Other	8.3	3.2	9.5	10.6

n = 9,900

(a) Multiple reasons could be cited

The issue of language or accent was identified by 56.6 per cent of international students who had experienced racism at university, and 38.6 per cent of academic staff. Religious background was primarily cited by domestic students, 30.1 per cent, with markedly fewer international students reporting this, 17.6 per cent. This was cited by 87.4 per cent of those who indicated that their religion was Judaism and experienced racism at university, along

with 74.3 per cent of Muslim respondents, 43.5 per cent of those who gave their religion as Sikhism, and 29.4 per cent of non-Catholic Christians. Relatively low levels of international students cited conflict in the Middle East, 8.6 per cent, compared with 20.4 per cent of domestic students and 18.8 per cent of academic staff. When however considered on the basis of country of birth, this is cited as a factor by 61.5 per cent of all respondents born in Iran who experienced direct racism at university, and 61.8 per cent of those born elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as by 88.8 per cent of those who give their religion as Judaism, and 76.3 per cent of those who say they are ethnically, but not religiously Jewish.

COVID in contrast was only cited by 10.6 per cent of international students and 7.6 per cent of domestic students who experienced racism at university, with even lower rates amongst staff. When however, this is considered by country of birth it is cited by 30.8 per cent of all respondents who were born in China, with elevated rates also being given by those who were born in Bhutan, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore.

Almost half of the international students who experienced direct racism at university, 46.5 per cent, cited the fact that they were full fee-paying students was one of the reasons they were targeted.

2.3.2 Forms of direct racism

The survey asked, as noted above, questions about whether people had experienced certain behaviours, or incidents “due to your race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion in the past two years”, with respondents being able to identify multiple items where appropriate. In 93.0 per cent of cases respondents identified the form of racism they had experienced with most identifying multiple dimensions.

For all groups except for international students where it was the second most identified item, the response by those who reported direct racism at university was that it was the person “Feeling I could not express my views openly”, Table 2.14. The proportion citing this reason ranged from 52.3 per cent for international students, to 63.8 per cent of domestic students, along with 61.7 per cent of academic staff. For international students the most common was being singled out or excluded, with this being reported by 53.2 per cent of those experiencing racism at university. Other groups reported rates between 38.9 per cent, non-academic staff and 48.0 per cent for domestic students.

Table 2.14 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, forms of racist behaviour experienced, by respondent type

Identified behaviour (a):	Respondent group			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– % –			
Singled out/Excluded	48.0	53.2	44.2	38.9
Inappropriate comments etc	45.4	39.1	39.6	41.0
Could not express views	63.8	52.3	61.7	57.6
Told unintelligent	35.1	37.3	36.9	35.9
Missed opportunity	31.7	40.1	47.3	36.8
Not Trusted	33.7	42.3	40.7	37.7
Stopped by university security	8.2	10.5	4.4	3.4
Physical harassment	7.3	7.7	4.7	3.1
Verbal harassment	22.9	23.1	21.3	18.3
Online harassment	16.2	11.9	11.7	7.9
Worse mark (students)	24.5	31.6	–	–
Get things for free because of my race	26.5	11.3	–	–
Denied promotion	–	–	25.3	22.4
Neg. assessments (staff)	–	–	33.5	16.4
Other	8.4	6.1	9.0	9.8

n = 10,392

(a) Multiple items could be selected.

Around 40 per cent of respondents in each group reported having inappropriate comments, names or jokes directed at them. Being told, or made to feel, they were unintelligent was reported relatively consistently across the groups, with just over 35 per cent of all respondents reporting that this had occurred.

A sense of feeling that they were not trusted was reported by 42.3 per cent of international students, 40.7 per cent of academic staff, 37.7 per cent of non-academic staff and 33.7 per cent of domestic students. Experiences of missing out on an opportunity the person felt they deserved, was most frequently reported by the academic staff members who had experienced racism at university, with almost half, 47.3 per cent, reporting this. High rates, 40.1 per cent, were also reported by international students.

International students were also the group most likely to report, 10.5 percent, that they had been “unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, threatened or abused by university security”, along with 8.2 per cent of domestic students. In contrast the rates for staff were much lower.

Compared to a number of other experiences, direct harassment is less frequently cited. Most common is verbal harassment, reported by around one in five respondents in each group. This is followed by online harassment where there are some clear differences. It is reported by 16.2 per cent of domestic students, by 11.9 per cent of international students, 11.7 per cent of academic staff and by 7.9 per cent of non-academic staff. Physical harassment was relatively uncommon and largely reported by students. 7.7 percent of the international students who reported being subject to racism at university reported as part of this being physically harassed as did 7.3 per cent of domestic students, 4.7 per cent of academic staff and 3.1 per cent of non-academic staff. Looking at these rates at the total population level indicates that racially based physical harassment impacts 1.4 per cent of the international student population, 0.9 per cent of domestic students, 1.0 per cent of the academic staff population and 0.4 per cent of the non-academic staff population.

Just under a third, 31.6 per cent, of the international students who experienced racism at university cite receiving a lower mark than they considered they deserved, as being one of the manifestations of this, along with 24.5 per cent of domestic students, with a slightly greater proportion of this latter group, 26.5 per cent, being told they get things free because of their race. This compares to just 11.3 per cent for international students.

Amongst academic staff who have experienced racism at university a third, 33.5 per cent, reported that one of the issues was receiving ‘negative student and/or peer evaluations and a quarter, 25.3 per cent, that they had been denied a promotion which they considered they deserved. While the rate reported by non-academic staff was similar with regard to promotions, 22.4 per cent, it was much lower for negative evaluations, just half the rate of academic staff, at 16.4 per cent. This latter is likely to reflect the extent to which academic staff are subject to regular student assessments.

As noted above, respondents could identify multiple forms, with just 16.6 per cent citing only a single dimension to their experience, and most identifying between 2 to 4 elements⁴⁶. Across all respondents there were over 1,500 different combinations of responses pointing to many complex patterns of experience. Table 2.15 presents the most common two element combinations. This, as with the relatively low proportion who only identify a single element, emphasises that the experiences people report on are not a simple incident but rather are experiences which impact in multiple ways. The extent of this can be seen, for example, in considering the one third of respondents who experienced racism at university who report both being singled out or excluded, and feeling they could not express their views openly. Of this group 59.0 per cent also said that they were not trusted, 56.4 per cent reported having inappropriate comments or jokes directed at them, 54.3 per cent reported missing out on an opportunity, and 53.4 per cent said they were told or made to feel unintelligent.

Table 2.15 Most frequent two-way combinations of elements of experiences of racism

Combination of elements of experience of racism		Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff	Total
		Proportion of those who report direct racism at university (%)				
Singled out/Excluded	Not express views	34.1	32.4	33.0	26.3	32.1
Not express views	Not trusted	25.9	28.3	30.5	27.0	27.5
Not express views	Missed opportunities	23.1	26.3	31.9	23.3	25.6
Not express views	Told/Felt unintelligent	25.7	23.4	26.7	24.4	25.2
Singled out/Excluded	Not trusted	21.4	27.0	24.1	21.6	23.2
Singled out/Excluded	Inapprop. comments	25.5	22.8	20.5	20.1	23.0
Singled out/Excluded	Missed opportunities	19.8	25.2	27.4	19.9	22.5
Singled out/Excluded	Told/Felt unintelligent	21.6	22.1	21.3	20.3	21.4
Missed opportunities	Not trusted	16.3	22.2	25.2	20.0	20.0
Not express views	Verbal abuse	17.5	13.7	16.1	12.5	15.5

n = 10,392

⁴⁶ At the same time there was very little evidence of potentially inappropriate patterns of responding, with just 1.5 per cent of respondents identifying 11 or more reasons.

2.3.3 Forms of indirect racism

As detailed in section 2.1.3, indirect racism was also extensively reported. Table 2.8 detailed the overall rates by respondent type. Table 2.16 aggregates the data for all four groups and considers the frequency by the broad ‘European’/non-‘European’ ethnic classification. The two key features of this data are that, as with direct racism, indirect racism while being widespread, is for most an irregular experience. The second is that the rates of incidence of ‘very frequent’ or ‘frequent’ indirect racism experienced by people with non-‘European’ identities tend to be double, or even higher, the rates for those with a ‘European’ heritage.

Reflecting this, around 15 per cent of non-‘European’ staff and students at university reported hearing people very frequently or frequently using negative stereotypes about the ethnic group(s) they identify with, even if these are not directed at them, 15.6 per cent, are exposed, at this rate, to racist terms, jokes and comments about their ethnicity, or comments trivialising negative outcomes for these groups, 14.3 per cent in each case. Blaming a group with which they identify for negative outcomes for others is reported frequently, or very frequently, by 13.7 per cent, with 10.9 per cent hearing other people denigrate their culture.

Table 2.16 Frequency of experiencing indirect racism at university, by type, and broad ethnicity

Form of indirect racism	Frequency of experiencing					Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
‘European’ – % –						
Racist terms, jokes and comments	1.6	4.3	16.8	24.7	52.7	100.0
Denigrating culture	1.5	2.8	9.7	18.9	67.0	100.0
Using negative stereotypes	2.0	4.4	14.9	22.6	56.0	100.0
Trivialising negative outcomes	2.5	4.1	11.9	19.5	62.1	100.0
Blaming for adverse outcomes for others	4.9	5.6	13.8	16.7	59.1	100.0
Non-‘European’						
Racist terms, jokes and comments	4.8	9.5	25.7	28.0	32.1	100.0
Denigrating culture	3.8	7.0	20.8	27.2	41.2	100.0
Using negative stereotypes	5.4	10.2	24.9	25.5	34.0	100.0
Trivialising negative outcomes	5.3	9.0	22.3	25.4	38.1	100.0
Blaming for adverse outcomes for others	5.8	7.9	19.2	24.2	43.0	100.0

n = 69,287

2.4 The structure of racist conduct

As discussed in the opening chapter, one of the questions posed for the study was understanding the pattern of racism between groups. Reflecting this the survey asked respondents who had experienced either direct or indirect racism to report on whether the racism they had experienced or observed was by the population dominant European group directed at other groups (referred to in the instrument as people from ‘culturally and racially diverse backgrounds’), from these groups towards Europeans, between these different non-European groups, or within these groups. Respondents who had observed, directly or indirectly, more than one of these types could identify multiple forms.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ It is noted that the form of the question did not provide the option of also reporting on having observed European on European racism, or racial discrimination.

2.4.1 Between and within group racism

While, as illustrated in Table 2.17, the perspectives of ‘European’ and non-‘European’ respondents varied, the clear picture which emerges is that while racism by Europeans towards non-Europeans is the most common, very significant levels of racist behaviour occurs between, and to a lesser degree within other communities. Furthermore, even for the group that identified this form the most frequently, academics with a non-‘European’ heritage, only 79.2 per cent reported this as being a form of racism that they have observed.

The largest difference in perspective relates to the extent to which Europeans are the perpetrators or subjects of racism. Amongst the non-‘European’ between 71.2 per cent and 79.2 per cent reported having observed racism by those of European appearance towards others, while ‘Europeans’ only reported that, of the racism they have experienced, or observed, some 49.8 per cent to 55.6 per cent took this form. Conversely while some 31.7 per cent to 46.3 percent of this group of ‘Europeans’ reported that they had experienced or observed racism towards those of ‘European’ appearance, this falls to between 13.0 per cent to 21.2 per cent for the non-‘European’ groups.

Around, or just over 40 per cent of both ‘European’ and non-European’ respondents reported they have experienced or observed racism between other groups. While around 20 per cent of both these groups also reported they had seen or experienced racism within these groups, the proportion doing so was higher amongst ‘European’ respondents.

Table 2.17 Persons who experienced direct or indirect racism at university, reporting of inter- and intra-group forms, by respondent type

Respondent type:	Type of racism experienced or observed (a)			
	From people of European appearance (Australian, British, European) toward people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	From people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds toward people of European appearance	Between people from different culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	Between people from the same culturally and/or racially diverse backgrounds
All respondents – % –				
Domestic student	61.8	32.8	43.0	24.9
International student	70.4	13.8	42.1	19.6
Academic staff	67.5	24.8	37.2	18.1
Non-academic staff	62.4	23.6	39.2	19.3
Non-‘European’				
Domestic student	72.0	21.2	45.1	22.7
International student	71.2	13.0	42.0	19.4
Academic staff	79.2	13.4	35.2	14.1
Non-academic staff	74.7	14.2	39.2	16.6
‘European’				
Domestic student	49.8	46.3	40.4	27.4
International student	50.0	34.5	43.4	23.5
Academic staff	55.6	36.5	39.2	22.1
Non-academic staff	51.8	31.7	39.2	21.7

n = 34,872 (Excludes those who did not experience direct or indirect racism at university and those who did not know or preferred not to say the type of racism they had observed.)

(a) Multiple responses could be provided

Account needs to be taken of observer effects; that is people are more likely to register racism when it is directed at them, and that people are more likely to observe racism between and within groups of which they are a member. There are also potential

population effects, with the majority of the population having European backgrounds. These results nevertheless point to pervasive levels of racism between and within different communities which go beyond the more theoretical approaches.

While the levels vary, when this data is considered by country/region of birth, Table 2.18, the same pattern persists, suggesting that these diverse directions of racism are observed across a wide range of different populations. Excluding those born in European and related countries (including Australia) most groups reported having observed rates of racism by those of European appearance of between 61.7 per cent and 80.4 per cent. While this highlights that this was the primary form, at the same time it indicates that some 20 to almost 40 per cent of non-European persons who have experienced or observed racism have not seen persons of European appearance as the instigators.

Table 2.18 Persons who experienced direct or indirect racism at university, reporting of inter- and intra-group forms, by respondent type

Country/Region of birth	Type of racism experienced or observed:			
	From people of European appearance (Australian, British, European) toward people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	From people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds toward people of European appearance	Between people from different culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	Between people from the same culturally and/or racially diverse backgrounds
		- % -		
Aust. & NZ	58.8	34.1	40.8	24.0
UK, Ireland, US & Canada	56.4	32.9	38.5	24.5
Bal. W & N Europe	52.0	31.0	44.7	23.5
S & E Europe	56.0	34.1	41.4	19.5
Bal. Oceania	72.4	20.2	47.2	23.3
Iran	80.4	10.6	38.4	14.9
Bal. MENA	77.7	15.5	41.4	13.7
Indonesia	68.8	11.7	52.1	20.6
Malaysia	74.1	15.3	48.4	22.2
Singapore	77.8	17.8	49.1	25.6
Vietnam	71.0	14.2	44.4	24.5
Philippines	68.0	17.4	54.7	26.6
Bal. SE Asia	74.9	18.6	53.3	19.1
Hong Kong	64.2	14.7	47.4	26.0
China	68.7	14.7	42.8	23.5
Bal. NE Asia	68.5	12.4	43.5	20.2
India	79.2	9.2	37.8	17.7
Pakistan	81.1	8.5	34.0	17.5
Bangladesh	70.5	12.9	40.0	21.7
Sri Lanka	78.6	11.6	39.5	17.1
Nepal	73.3	8.0	31.6	12.8
Bhutan	61.7	6.7	43.3	5.0
Bal. S&C Asia	79.8	14.6	37.1	14.6
Bal. Americas	75.3	8.1	36.3	10.9
South Africa	52.1	33.0	47.9	20.8
Bal. Africa	77.9	13.8	40.8	10.8
Not stated	69.8	21.0	39.3	17.2

n = 34,872 (Excludes those who did not experience direct or indirect racism at university and those who did not know or preferred not to say the type of racism they had observed.)

2.4.2 Gender patterns

A second dimension is that of gender. Using a binary gender approach, participants who experienced direct racism were asked whether the perpetrators of the most significant

experience they had had were males, females or both males and females.⁴⁸ Table 2.19 details the results.

Around half of the responses indicated that both males and females were involved, although this was a little lower for women than it was for men. Of the balance, while both men and women were involved, there was a tendency for a high proportion of the interactions to be within rather than across genders. Relative to the other groups there was a low level of female on male racism reported by international students. Respondents with other gender identification had a diverse pattern, with almost equal levels of male and female perpetrators amongst domestic students. Amongst both international students and non-academic staff, it was more heavily weighted towards female perpetrators, with this being the reverse amongst academic staff.

Table 2.19 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, gender of those participating, by respondent type and gender

Gender of person experiencing racism:	Racism by:				Total
	Male	Female	Both	Not stated	
Domestic student Composition (%)					
Female	20.2	27.2	45.7	6.9	100.0
Male	21.7	18.0	52.6	7.7	100.0
Other	18.5	17.2	57.0	7.3	100.0
Not stated	18.6	20.0	41.9	19.5	100.0
International student					
Female	18.2	27.0	48.6	6.2	100.0
Male	30.6	12.4	50.1	6.9	100.0
Other	17.1	26.8	51.2	4.9	100.0
Not stated	18.2	24.4	40.0	17.5	100.0
Academic staff					
Female	18.6	27.0	48.5	5.9	100.0
Male	22.7	17.8	52.5	7.0	100.0
Other	27.3	6.1	63.6	3.0	100.0
Not stated	13.6	19.3	49.6	17.5	100.0
Non-academic staff					
Female	18.1	32.8	42.6	6.6	100.0
Male	24.5	22.6	44.5	8.4	100.0
Other	16.7	23.8	50.0	9.5	100.0
Not stated	16.9	22.2	39.6	21.3	100.0

n = 9,789

2.4.3 University participants by role

Racism most frequently was reported as being within categories of respondent. That is, students were most likely to report racism from other students, academics from other academics and non-academic staff from other non-academic staff. As detailed in Table 2.20, this type of interaction was reported by some 60 to 70 per cent of respondents. It is however not the only form. Both domestic and international students reported high levels of involvement of teaching and other academic staff in the racism they experience, 46.1 per cent and 47.6 per cent respectively.

Racism from students was reported by 32.4 per cent of academic staff, and a lower 18.1 per cent of non-academic staff. This latter lower rate may reflect that on average non-academic

⁴⁸ This question was also accompanied by a textual response asking respondents to describe the 'cultural, religious or ethnic backgrounds of the individuals who were responsible'. This data is not easily tractable for analysis, although it has been used in a qualitative form in some chapters. A review of it however indicates that a high proportion refer to the person as being 'white', 'Anglo-Saxon', or 'Caucasian'.

staff interact less with students than do academic staff. In some cases, non-academic staff's work is in front line roles where they primarily engage with students, whilst in others it is more internal to university operations, with most interactions being with other non-academic staff, or with academic staff. Reflecting this latter, 28.7 per cent reported that academic staff were participants in racist actions directed to them.

Table 2.20 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, participants in behaviour, by respondent type

Participants in racist activity (a)	Respondent group			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	Proportion reporting racism from (%)			
Teaching/Academic	46.1	47.6	65.0	28.7
Administrative staff	16.1	18.8	31.7	61.9
Facilities staff	7.6	10.4	5.1	6.9
Students	69.0	63.0	32.4	18.1
University leaders	16.8	12.0	48.0	43.7
Other	4.9	3.8	4.5	5.0

n = 9,917

(a) Multiple responses could be provided

Overall reporting of racism from facilities staff was relatively low, although this form was cited much more frequently by international students. This echoes the previous reporting of the much higher rate that these students experienced being unfairly treated by university security.

A particularly notable element of this data is the role of university leaders as a participant in racist behaviour. This was reported by 48.0 per cent of all academic staff who experienced racism at university, and by a slightly lesser 43.7 per cent of non-academic staff. Even amongst students, who are likely to be more remote from the leadership, it is reported by 16.8 per cent of domestic students and 12.0 per cent of international students. This is further considered in section 2.8.

2.5 Consequences of experiences of racism

Racism impacts people's lives. Across all of the four groups of staff and students only between 4.4 per cent, international students, to 11.9 per cent, domestic students, reported that their experience of direct racism had no impact on them, Table 2.21.

The most frequently cited impacts were negative mental health effects and people reducing their participation more broadly at university, described in the question as "limiting my participation in university life". A negative impact on mental health as a result of experiencing racism at university was reported by 72.9 per cent of academic staff who experienced such racism, 71.8 per cent of international students, 65.8 per cent of non-academic staff and 62.1 per cent of domestic students.

Restricting one's participation at university was reported by 64.3 per cent of international students, 61.3 per cent of academic staff, 61.2 per cent of domestic students and 50.2 per cent of non-academic staff. While reporting this high level of disengagement in university life more generally, this was not generally echoed in a retreat into ethnic 'enclaves'. Only 34.3 per cent of international students and much smaller proportions of the other groups

reported that the experience had “made me limit my contacts to those of a similar background to me”.

Table 2.21 Impact of experiences of direct racism at university, persons who experienced direct racism, by respondent type

Reported consequence (a):	Respondent group			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	Proportion reporting (%)			
Negative mental health	62.1	71.8	72.9	65.8
Limit participation in university life	61.2	64.3	61.3	50.2
Limit contacts	22.7	34.3	23.7	18.6
Negative impact on studies	43.0	47.1	–	–
Consider not studying in Australia	18.7	24.1	–	–
Australia less attractive for migration	–	43.2	–	–
Negative impact on career	–	–	55.1	39.3
Other	7.2	4.4	8.8	10.0
None	11.9	4.4	6.9	10.5

n = 10,001

(a) multiple responses could be provided.

Almost half of the students, 43.0 per cent of domestic students and 47.1 per cent of international students, reported that their experience of racism had a negative impact on their studies. Taking this incidence and the rate of racism reported as actually experienced suggests however that some 5.2 per cent of the domestic student population who participated in the survey, and 8.2 per cent of the international students are having their studies negatively impacted by racism.

Over half, 55.1 per cent, of the academic staff who experienced racism reported that this had had a negative impact on their careers, along with 39.3 per cent of non-academic staff. Looking at the implications of this across the whole population indicates 10.9 per cent of all academic staff responding to the survey have had their career negatively affected by racism, as have 4.4 per cent of non-academic staff.

Two of the response categories asked about the impact of the experience of racism on the likelihood of continuing study in Australia or future migration. Amongst domestic students who experienced racism 18.7 per cent indicated that the experience had led them to consider not studying at an Australian university (although it did not probe as to whether this meant not studying at university per se, or studying elsewhere) as did almost a quarter, 24.1 per cent, of the international students. This latter group were also asked whether the experience ‘made me less likely to consider Australia as a country I would consider moving to once my studies are finished’, and 43.2 per cent indicated that this was the case. Looking across the whole population of international students, these two results indicate that some 3.8 per cent of the international student population responding to the survey considered that racism impacted their likelihood of studying in Australia and 6.8 per cent in considering migration. Of course these are only the direct consequences, to the extent these experiences are shared with friends and families, or indeed are given wider media coverage, they have significantly wider implications.

2.6 Perceptions about racism at university

Overall, most staff and students reported that they did not see racism as being a problem at their university. Only 36.9 per cent of academic staff, 25.8 per cent of international

students, 24.8 per cent of non-academic staff and 24.0 per cent of domestic students reported that they agreed, or agreed strongly with the statement that ‘racism is a problem at my university’, Table 2.22. Indeed 49.1 per cent of domestic students, 46.3 per cent of international students, 45.7 per cent of non-academic staff and 38.0 per cent of academic staff said they disagreed or disagreed strongly with this proposition. In all cases a quarter or more reported that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposition.⁴⁹

Table 2.22 Perception of whether racism is a problem at their university, by respondent type

Respondent type	Agreement that racism is a problem at their university					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	– % –					
Domestic student	6.3	17.7	26.9	31.5	17.5	100.0
International student	7.2	18.6	27.9	34.0	12.3	100.0
Academic staff	10.3	26.7	25.1	26.2	11.8	100.0
Non-academic staff	4.7	20.2	29.5	33.4	12.3	100.0

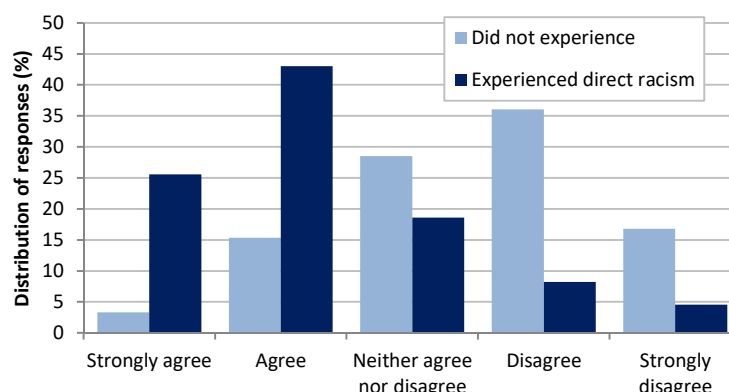
n = 69,474

These perceptions are however strongly shaped by experience.

When the respondents are considered by whether they have personally experienced direct racism at university some 68.6 per cent (combining all groups of respondents) of those who experienced racism agreed with the statement that racism was a problem, compared to just 18.6 per cent of those who had not experienced it. The quite different distributions of levels of agreement are shown in Figure 2.3.

⁴⁹ This question, as with many others in the survey, utilised a Likert scale. While these are extensively used and relatively robust, given the composition of survey respondents it should be noted that patterns of responses can reflect both individual and cultural response approaches. Koo and Yang (2025) summarise this as “For instance, some cultures may exhibit a preference for extreme responses (e.g., Strongly Agree or Strongly Disagree), while others may gravitate toward neutral options ... In some cultures, the respondents may have a greater tendency to provide socially desirable answers” (p. 5). A number of studies suggest that East Asian respondents tended to use extreme rankings less (Gilman et al 2008, Guo and Spina 2019) with Hamamura et al (2007) ascribing this to dialectical thinking. Bachman et al (2010) considering US students conclude “African-American adolescents are highest in extreme responding, Hispanics are intermediate, and Whites and Asian Americans are lowest” (p. 7). Harzing (2006) while identifying low use of extreme results amongst Chinese and Japanese, also find this in some Northern and Western European countries, while high use was found in Southern Europe Latin America and India. Roster et al (2006) find a similar range of responses but report “US and the Philippines samples were more likely to use extreme scale end points than the China or Ireland” (p. 741). While this is not considered to significantly impact the results as reported, caution needs to be exercised in not over interpreting results for specific communities in this regard.

Figure 2.3 Perception of whether racism is a problem at their university, by whether experienced racism at university



n = 65,677

Table 2.23 indicates that this pattern is shaped primarily through people's experience of racism at university, rather than racism more generally. The pattern of responses is largely similar for those who reported experiencing direct racism at university and those who experience it at university and elsewhere, although this latter group tends to be somewhat stronger in their perception of racism being a problem at university. In contrast those who have experienced racism elsewhere, but not at university, show a distribution of views much closer to those who reported not having experienced racism at all.

Table 2.23 Perception of whether racism is a problem at their university, by whether or not have experienced direct racism at university or elsewhere

Whether experienced direct racism	Agreement that racism is a problem at their university					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	- % -					
At university only	23.2	42.0	18.1	10.5	6.2	100.0
University and elsewhere	26.4	43.4	18.8	7.4	4.0	100.0
Elsewhere only	4.2	18.8	32.3	32.5	12.3	100.0
Did not experience	3.0	14.2	27.3	37.2	18.3	100.0

n = 65,677

This result is interesting in that it suggests that the pattern of responses of those who did not experience racism was not simply because they are unaware of what racism is. That is, it would be expected that those who have experienced racism in any circumstances are very much aware of what racism is and hence are able to make an informed assessment of the situation at their university. A possible explanation for this may be associated with the infrequency of experience of racism at university reported by many, with 69.3 per cent of those who reported experiencing direct racism at university over the past two years describing the occurrence of this as being 'sometimes' or 'rarely'.

2.7 Institutional racism

As discussed in Chapter 1, one criticism of the survey was its focus on direct racism, rather than on institutional racism. Notwithstanding this, a number of indicators of institutional racism being a significant issue are apparent in the data collected in the survey.

The first concerns the perception of racism as being a problem at the university. As seen in Figure 2.3, there are two quite different perceptions held across staff and students,

shaped by their own experiences. These perspectives coexist within universities potentially without crossing over—with one group living the problem and others simply ignoring it or denying its existence.

The second concerns the role of university leaders. As detailed in section 2.5.3, a very significant proportion of respondents, in particular amongst staff, identify university leaders as participants in the racism that they have experienced. This is examined in subsequent chapters, but one central issue raised by many respondents is the composition of these leaders. This can be seen in responses to the question asked of staff as to whether “the university senior executive or leadership reflects diversity”. This statement was disagreed with by 56.2 per cent of the academic staff who provided an assessment, and 48.6 per cent of non-academic staff. Agreement with the statement was only voiced by 23.4 per cent of academic staff, and 28.2 per cent of non-academic staff, with fewer than 6 per cent of either group providing strong agreement.

The third concerns the role of the university leadership as parties to racism, both in absolute terms and the extent to which this is more pronounced in the experiences of some groups relative to others. While the detail of this is discussed in subsequent chapters, Table 2.24 highlights the extent of the variation in, but generally the very high level of, reported involvement by the university leadership in experiences of racism. This is particularly marked in the experience of Muslim and Palestinian staff. The pattern of results can be considered to point, not just to particular actions of individuals, but rather to systemic structural issues.

Table 2.24 University staff, selected subgroups, incidence of direct racism at university, and whether university leadership was a participant

Population sub-group	Experience direct racism at university	University leadership participant
	– % –	
All	15.1	46.0
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander		
Islander	47.4	49.5
All non-‘European’	28.3	48.4
Jewish (religious)	54.0	33.7
Jewish (Ethnic only)	26.7	28.1
Muslim	38.5	57.2
Palestinian	48.6	64.7
Middle Eastern	39.9	56.5
South/Southeast/East Asian	26.4	49.7
African	37.8	47.2
Pasifika	30.2	43.3

n = 9,917

A fourth dimension concerns the extent to which racism impacts free expression. As detailed in section 2.4.2, the most common experience of those who reported direct racism was that they felt that they could not express their views freely. This strikes directly at the heart of the role of the university.

Also reflecting institutional racism and bias is the extent to which international students disproportionately reported being unfairly stopped by university security.

2.8 Summary

This chapter presents a broad overview of the key findings of the survey. Central is that there is extensive interpersonal and structural racism in Australian universities. This impacts both domestic and international students and academic and non-academic staff. Additionally, a high proportion reported also experiencing indirect racism – such as racist language or comments, which, while not directed at them, impacts them.

Racism at university is, however, not a phenomenon specific to universities themselves but is a reflection of wider racism across the Australian community as a whole. Only a small proportion of respondents reported only experiencing racism at university, and for each of the sub-populations considered, racism is experienced at university at a lower rate than it is more widely in the community. Additionally, while some reported racism as occurring frequently or very frequently, for most it is reported as being occasional or rare. The most common forms of racism are exclusion, feeling that they could not express views and inappropriate comments, most respondents who reported racism at university reported that this had several dimensions to it, most frequently being singled out or excluded and feeling that they could not express their views freely. Harassment and physical harassment is much less cited. Respondents reported a range of negative consequences, including for their mental health, and on their studies and careers as a result of their experience of racism.

At the same time there are several university specific dimensions which emerge. These include a curtailment of people's capacity to speak freely, and the involvement of university leadership in the racism significant groups experienced.

While the incidence of racism varies considerably between various population subgroups, it is reported by all, and although respondents identify racism from persons with a European background towards others most frequently, racism from other groups towards Europeans, between different non-European groups, and within groups are all identified as being seen, or experienced, at university.

3 Benchmarking

3.1 Benchmarking and findings relative to other studies

As noted in Chapter 1, Racism@Uni was a voluntary survey, and there are significant questions about potential response bias. A central issue is the extent to which individuals who have experienced racism, or who believe racism is a problem, at universities may have been more likely to participate, creating possible selection effects. At the same time there may be a converse effect for those who are most vulnerable, and potentially experiencing higher rates of racism, being less likely to participate in the survey.

Additionally, the response rate to the survey varied. This has four elements:

- The response rate, in particular varied by the type of respondent. As reported the response rate to the survey was approximately 3.3 per cent for domestic students, 2.9 per cent for international students, 18.3 per cent for academic staff and 22.2 per cent for non-academic staff.
- It varied by university. For domestic students this is estimated to range from under 2 per cent to 7 per cent or more.
- It varied across staff and students by country of birth. For international students this is estimated to range from around 1.5 per cent to over 4 per cent.
- The response rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff were very high relative to other populations: 5.9 per cent for domestic students, 37.7 per cent for academic staff and 34.0 per cent for non-academic staff.

This chapter considers these issues:

First in reviewing the extent to which some vulnerable groups may have failed to participate in the survey.

Second by considering the known bias which arises from the varying response rates noted above, and whether weights can be used to adjust for it.

Third, by comparing the results from the Racism@Uni survey with other surveys that can be used to estimate the prevalence of racism.

3.2 Potential under-reporting by vulnerable groups

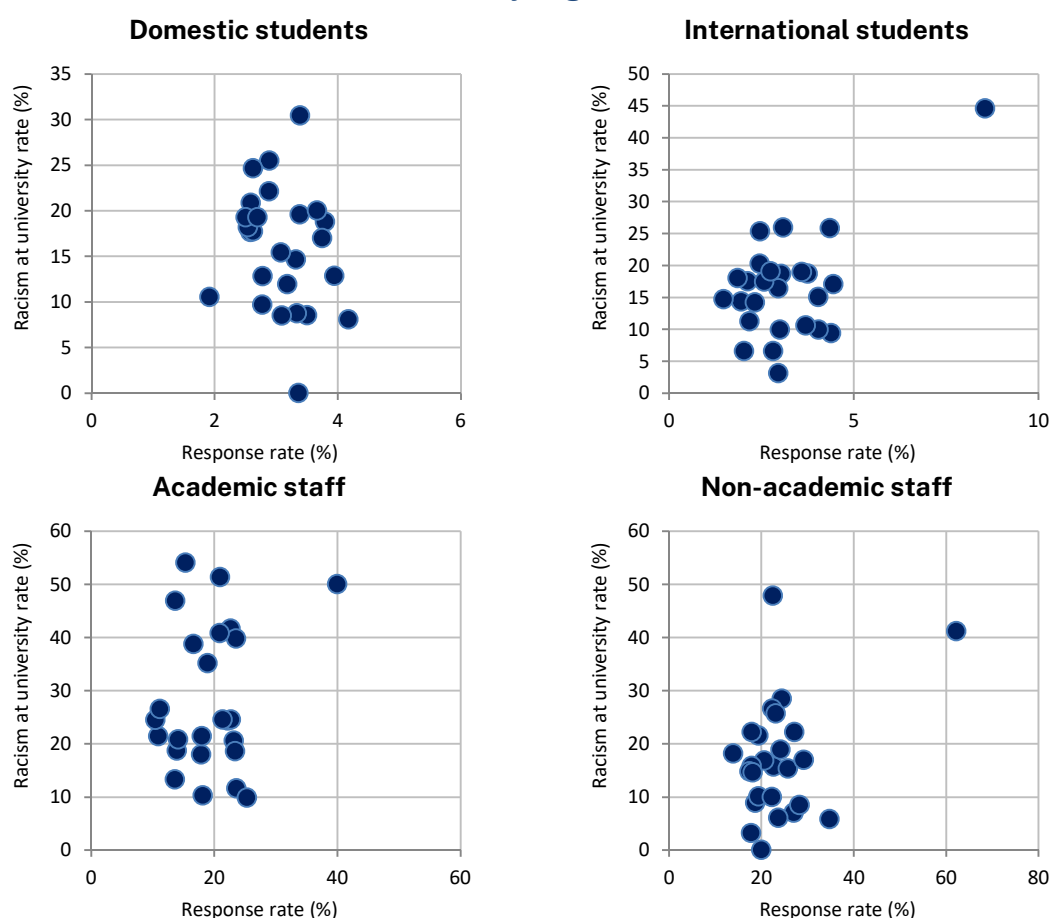
As discussed in Section 1.8.1, a central motivation of the AHRC in their promotion of the survey was to engage with vulnerable groups to ensure that they felt motivated and free to participate, that they felt that they could do so safely, and they recognised the importance of their voices being heard. Failure to engage with these groups had the potential for the survey to underestimate the incidence of racism at university, and its specific impact on these groups.

The extent to which this may have occurred is considered here. While, as examined later in this chapter, it appears that non-respondents report lower levels of racism, this is only undertaken at a highly aggregate level and uses data which is likely to be dominated by domestic students. To address this more specifically analysis was undertaken on the relationship between response rates and the reported rate of racism for population subgroups. For this we have used the region/country of birth of individuals. While it is recognised that this measure does not fully identify individual sub-populations who may be of concern it is however considered to be a broad measure which does assess the extent to which such under-reporting may have occurred.

The results are detailed in Figure 1.1 which plots for each of the main response groups the response rate relative to the reported rate of racism at university for that group. As illustrated, there is no indication of those populations who have high rates of reported direct racism at university having lower response rates which would be indicative of a reluctance to participate in the survey.

Statistical analysis was sensitive to the presence of a number of outliers but indicates a positive correlation between response rates and incidence of racism for international students, academic and non-academic staff and a slight negative correlation for domestic students.

Figure 3.1 Relationship between response rate and rate of direct racism experienced at university by respondent type and country/region of birth



These results suggest that there does not appear to be a marked problem with regard to potentially adversely affected groups feeling inhibited about participating in the survey, but rather that they had a slight tendency to participate at higher rates than others.

3.3 Survey responses and weighting

One way of assessing the likely impact of these differential response rates on the estimated incidence of racism is to develop weights that adjust for the differential response rate by university and by country of birth. Due to limitations of the Department of Education data, and the extent to which survey respondents did not provide details of their country of birth, it is not possible to develop survey weights that simultaneously adjust for both⁵⁰.

Figure 3.2 shows the aggregate impact of using survey weights to attempt to adjust for the differential university and country of birth response rates on the estimated incidence of racism. While it is possible to do this comprehensively for the differential in university response rates, because of the extent of missing country of birth data in the survey, the estimate is only for those who provided a country of birth, an approach which also generates a lower rate of racism for the survey data. For all groups and for racism at university and total racism, adjusting for differential university response rates increases the estimated rate of racism, with the exception of international students where weighting by country of birth results in a lower estimate for racism at university. While the increases in the estimated prevalence of racism at university are relatively small, they are more marked with respect to total racism, that is racism at university and elsewhere.

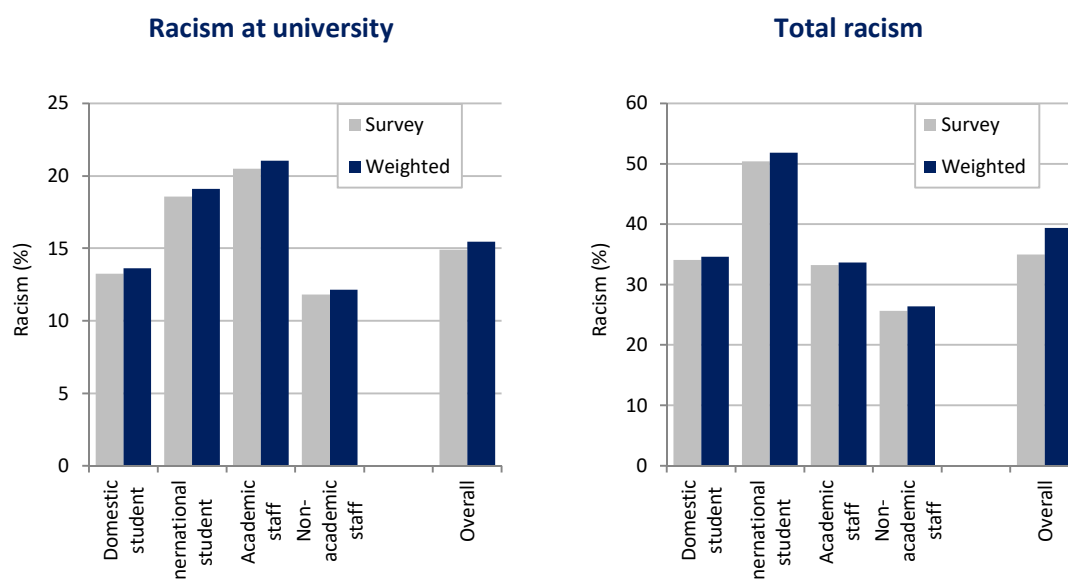
Also shown on the chart is an ‘overall’ estimate, a total population estimate, which weights also for the differential response rates of the different categories of staff and students. Here the introduction of weighting makes a very significant difference to the estimates, with the likelihood of these becoming even more marked, if it was possible to simultaneously re-weight the survey for both the institutional and country of birth effects.

Given this, in the analysis presented in this report we have not attempted to present any analysis on such an aggregated basis, and while we have presented some data in a combined form for expositional purposes, or because it relates to a small subpopulation we have done so cautiously, after review, and have generally only done it independently for students and staff, given the large differences in response rates.

⁵⁰ Here we only consider these two factors. Any systematic weighting of the data would also need to take account of other characteristics such as age, gender, staffing and study level, field of study and religion. In this latter case no data for benchmarking is available.

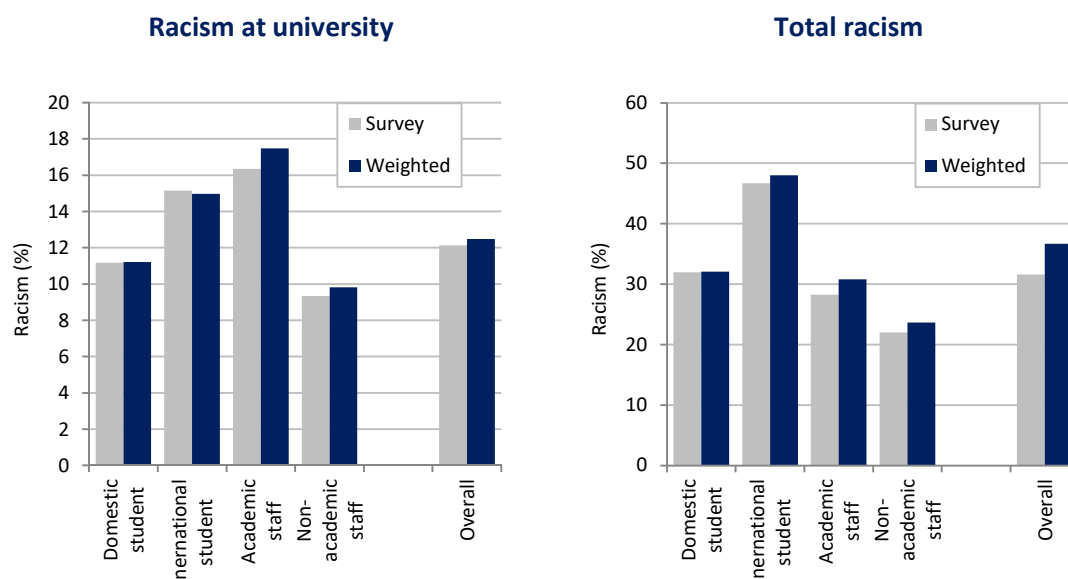
Figure 3.2 Estimated rates of direct racism using different weighting schemes

Weighting by university student & staff numbers



Weighted by country/region of birth

(Note excludes those with a missing country/region of birth)



3.4 Benchmarking against others surveys

From our research it appears that there have been no national surveys which have collected data on racism at university with the same scope as the Racism@Uni survey. However, a number of recent Australian national surveys provide some data on experiences of racism among students aged over 18 years, but none provide data on university staff. The identified surveys, see Appendix H, are:

- Mapping Social Cohesion 2023 Survey
- ABS General Social Survey 2020
- October 2021 ANUpoll
- 2024 European Social Survey
- Student Experience Survey 2024
- 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey

In addition, specific information, paralleling some elements of the Racism@Uni survey was collected in the:

- September 2025 ANUpoll

These surveys are detailed below. As outlined, there are limitations with all of these surveys for the purposes of benchmarking the Racism@Uni survey. These include:

- Differences in the questions asked about racism and related concepts, including how racism is described and whether a time period is specified
- Whether they ask about racism at university or racism more broadly; only the Student Experience Survey 2024 asks questions specifically about racism at university
- How university students are identified from the survey.

3.4.1 The Mapping Social Cohesion 2023 survey

The Mapping Social Cohesion Survey is undertaken by the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute. The survey has been conducted since 2007 and collects data on a range of social measures and is used longitudinally to track changes. The survey is collected using the Life in Australia online probability panel⁵¹, and the 2023 data used here was complemented by a sample drawn from a non-probability panel to boost participation by certain groups who were born outside of Australia. The total 2023 sample was 7,454 persons. The experience of racism is based on the question:

- ‘Have you experienced discrimination because of your skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion over the last 12 months?’

Student status is based on respondents whose employment situation is best described as ‘Student’. The data reported in this report is for the population aged 18 years and over.

3.4.2 The General Social Survey 2020

The General Social Survey (GSS) is conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It forms part of the ABS household survey program and data is collected under the provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (Cth), making completion obligatory. The 2020 survey, while oversampling low socio-economic households, was weighted to

⁵¹ The ‘Life in Australia’ panel is operated by the Social Research Centre. The panel comprises some 10,000 members who have been selected so as to provide a representative sample of Australians, and is designed for social and health research.

Australian benchmarks and obtained a 60.5 per cent final response rate. The GSS has the highest response rate of all the surveys considered here and can be seen as having the least biased sample.

The GSS asks about discrimination and racism in two parts:

- Firstly: 'In the past 12 months, do you feel that you have experienced discrimination or have been unfairly treated by others?'
- Secondly those who answer yes are asked about the reason for the discrimination which includes as a response option: 'Your ethnic/cultural background or appearance'.

While this question is about discrimination in all settings (in Australia), the question about whether it is related to ethnic/cultural background or appearance is only asked for the most recent experience of discrimination that occurred within the last 12 months. Given this, it is expected that the GSS will under-estimate the rate of racism relative to those collections which ask over a long period.

Students are defined as 18+ year olds who attend university or other higher education.

3.4.3 October 2021 ANUpoll

The October 2021 ANUpoll was conducted using the Life in Australia online probability panel. The survey had a final sample of 3,474 respondents.

The survey asked respondents:

- 'How often have you experienced discrimination in Australia because of your own ethnic origin in the following situations?' with five settings identified: workplace, housing, dealing with government, seeking services such as banking, finance or legal services, at a shop or restaurant.

No time period over which the racial discrimination occurred is specified in the question. Students are 18+ year olds who are currently in education.

It is unclear whether this survey will under or overestimate the prevalence of racism in Australia over the last two years. The fact that the question does not specify a time period over which racism is experienced is expected to result in a higher rate of racism. However, the question is only about racial discrimination in a limited number of settings and only about racism due to the respondent's ethnic origin.

This survey was however conducted during the tail end of the COVID-19 pandemic and this may have introduced some bias, in particular to the extent the pandemic was blamed on China and the extent to which policies impacted particular communities.⁵²

On balance it is probable that the survey will underestimate the rate of racism relative to the Racism@Uni Survey.

⁵² In addition to the targeting of Chinese communities, other communities were effectively targeted by policies and enforcement actions on the basis that they were not complying with lockdown and other measures.

3.4.4 European Social Survey 2024

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an international survey which collects information for 28 countries including Australia. The Australian component is collected through the use of the Life in Australia online probability panel.

The survey question related to racism is not about personal experiences of racism, but rather membership of a group which faces discrimination. It comprises two specific questions:

- ‘Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in this country?’
- and a follow-up question ‘On what grounds is your group discriminated against?’

As such it records a different, although related concept, to that used in the Racism@Uni Survey.

3.4.5 Student Experience Survey 2024

The Student Experience Survey 2024 is collected as part of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) survey program. The surveys are conducted by the Social Research Centre on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education. The 2024 survey collected data from 149 institutions, including all Australian Universities, and there were 257,865 completed surveys.

The Student Experience Survey includes one question related to racism. This is part of a battery of questions about freedom of expression on campus and the survey is prefaced by “The following statements are about freedom of expression on-campus at <Institution>. Freedom of expression can be part of the academic and social aspects of your student experience”. With respect to the possible incidence of racism it seeks a response to the statement:

- ‘I am free from discrimination, harm or hatred at <Institution>’.

Estimating the relativity of this question to the Racism@Uni survey is difficult. While its framing in terms of freedom of expression may be seen as limiting the scope, the high proportion of respondents to the Racism@Uni survey who reported that the racism they experienced involves their not being able to speak freely, may somewhat attenuate this. At the same time the explicit non-referencing to race may extend the scope of the responses to other areas such as gender, and gender expression, and the inclusion of the term ‘harm’ may bring in a wider set of factors to do with safety on campus.

Two wider issues with this survey, discussed in section 3.7 are a large discrepancy between this survey and the Racism@Uni survey in responses concerning students’ sense of belonging, and the relativity of domestic and international student responses to the above question on being free from “discrimination, harm or hatred”.

3.4.6 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey

This survey was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics using face to face interviewing with the final sample containing 4,878 Indigenous households.

The survey question on racism was:

I am now going to ask you about situations and experiences where you have been treated unfairly in the last [12 months/year] because you are [Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander/Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander]. In the last [12 months / year], have you had any of the following experiences because you are [Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander / Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander]?

Respondents who said yes were then asked which ones from a list on a show card: called names, teased or sworn at; heard racial comments or jokes; ignored or served last while accessing services or buying something; not trusted; unfairly arrested or charged; told you are less intelligent; left out, refused entry or told you don't belong; spat at or had something thrown at; and any other experience that was unfair.

Students are 18+ year olds who attend university / other higher education.

The question is specifically about experiences of unfair treatment because the respondent is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. While this is narrower than the Racism@Uni survey question on racism, it is likely to have only a small, if any, impact on the rates of racism reported.

Since the question asks about experiences of racism over the previous 12 months, it is expected that the survey will result in a lower rate of racism being reported than surveys that ask about experiences over a longer time period.

3.5 September 2025 ANUpoll

The September 2025 ANUpoll was conducted using the ORU non-probability online panel, and oversampled students. While the ORU panel is a non-probability panel, benchmarking of the data from previous surveys using the panel indicates that it performs well against a number of population benchmarks. Because the ANUpoll was not presented to respondents as being a survey about racism, respondents are less likely to self-select into survey completion on the basis of their experiences of racism, but it is likely to over represent the population who are likely to complete surveys of any kind.

As indicated, a small number of questions on racism which are comparable to those included in the Racism@Uni survey were included in the September 2025 ANUpoll. There were also questions asked of university students and staff as to whether they had heard of the Racism@Uni survey and whether they responded to it, specifically:

- Have you heard of the Australian Human Rights Commission Racism@Uni Survey?
- Did you receive an email asking you to participate in the Racism@Uni Survey?, and
- Did you complete the Racism@Uni Survey?

The ANUpoll also asked respondents if they had:

- Experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years
- Those who answered yes were then asked where these experiences of racism or racial discrimination took place, with response options which included in various university settings and whether these experiences were as a student or a staff member.

University students were also asked an additional series of questions about feelings of belonging, safety, being treated with respect, feeling respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion, feeling supported, and whether or not they agreed that racism is a problem at their university, paralleling the question in the Racism@Uni survey.

Self-reported knowledge, and completion of the Racism@Uni survey among respondents to the September 2025 ANUpoll varied between staff and students. Among students, 16.3 per cent reported having completed the survey. This is much higher than the proportion of students who actually completed the survey and likely reflects that students who completed the ANUpoll survey are relatively more likely to respond to surveys than are university students as a whole. Just over one-in-ten, 11.3 per cent, of university staff who responded to the ANUpoll said that they had completed the Racism@Uni Survey.

For students, the prevalence of self-reported racism at university was higher among those who had completed the survey, 12.6 per cent, than among those who had not, 6.1 per cent. That is, students who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 2.1 times more likely to report having experienced racism than those who said they had not completed the Racism@Uni survey.

The difference is larger for students born overseas than those born in Australia. Among students born overseas, those who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 3.4 times more likely to report having experienced racism than those who said they had not completed the Racism@Uni survey. In contrast, among those born in Australia, those who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 1.4 times more likely to report having experienced racism than those who had not completed the Racism@Uni survey.

Combining the data for students and university staff, 27.5 per cent said they experienced racism or discrimination in Australia in the last two years. Amongst those who said that they completed the Racism@Uni survey, 40.3 per cent said they experienced racism or discrimination in Australia in the last two years.

There was no statistically significant correlation between reporting completion of the Racism@Uni survey and perceptions of racism being a problem at the student's university. Of the total student sample, 67.6 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that racism is a problem at their university. Focusing on those that completed the Racism@Uni survey, 68.8 per cent agreed/strongly agreed. This suggests that, while personal experiences of racism motivated students and staff to complete the Racism@Uni survey, their general perception of whether racism is a problem at their university did not.

A challenge in analysing this data is identifying domestic and international students as this was not asked directly. To address this, two approaches are used. The first is based on country of birth; those born in Australia are classified as being domestic students and those

born overseas as international students. The second is based on whether they are eligible to vote in Australia.

Table 3.1 reports the detailed estimates, including the confidence interval for the estimates, on the experience of racism at university and more broadly for students and staff from the September 2025 ANUpoll. Further details are provided in Appendix I.

Table 3.1 Self-reported experiences of racism among ANUpoll respondents, by staff and student status and by location, estimates and 95% confidence intervals

	Experienced racism at a university	Experienced racism but not at a university	Experienced racism, total	Did not experience racism
		-%-		
Students (all)	6.7 (5.1–8.8)	19.6 (16.8–22.8)	26.3 (23.2–29.6)	73.7 (70.4–76.8)
Students (born in Australia)	6.0 (4.0–8.9)	15.3 (12.4–18.7)	21.3 (17.9–25.0)	78.7 (75.0–82.1)
Students (born overseas)	9.1 (6.3–13.0)	31.7 (25.8–38.3)	40.8 (34.5–47.5)	59.2 (52.5–65.5)
Students (eligible voter)	7.1 (5.3–9.5)	18.3 (15.3–21.7)	25.5 (22.2–29.0)	74.5 (71.0–77.8)
Students (ineligible to vote)	3.9 (1.3–11.2)	26.8 (18.4–37.2)	30.7 (21.8–41.3)	69.3 (58.7–78.2)
Staff	9.9 (5.9–16.4)	30.5 (21.4–41.3)	40.4 (30.8–50.9)	59.6 (49.1–69.2)

3.6 Estimated rates of prevalence: Benchmarking

Table 3.2 reports the available estimates of the experience of racism at university for domestic and international students aged 18 years or older. Table 3.3 presents the larger set of estimates for this group for the incidence of total racism, that is at university and more widely in the community.

The first striking feature of these tables is the amount of variance in the estimation of the rate of racism. While some of this can be attributed to the different concepts adopted in the surveys, it is also probable that it is to do with collection methodology, and the actual sample of respondents.

Table 3.2 Students' aged 18 years or older experience of racism at university, domestic and international students, by survey

Survey	All students	Domestic Students	International students
		- % -	
Racism@Uni		13.2	18.6
University weighted	15.4	13.6	19.1
		Benchmark data	
September 2025 ANUpoll (Country of birth)	6.7	6.0	9.1
September 2025 ANUpoll (Voting eligible)	6.7	7.1	3.9
2024 Student Experience Survey (Undergrad.)	20.0	20.0	19.8
2024 Student Experience Survey (Postgrad.)	18.0	22.3	16.2
First Nations students			
Racism@Uni		29.8	
2024 Student Experience Survey (Undergrad.)		24.9	
2024 Student Experience Survey (Postgrad.)		30.0	

Table 3.3 Students aged 18 years or older experience of racism in all settings, domestic and international students, by survey

Survey	All students	Domestic Students	International students
		– % –	
Racism@Uni		34.1	50.4
University response rate weighted	40.2	34.6	51.8
		Benchmark data	
September 2025 ANUpoll (Country of birth)(b)	26.3	21.3	40.8
September 2025 ANUpoll (Voting eligible)(c)	26.3	25.5	30.7
2023 Mapping Social Cohesion	31.8	30.8 (a)	36.6 (a)
2020 General Social Survey (ABS)	11.5	8.4	19.2
October 2021 ANUpoll	30.3	25.3	60.1
2024 Australian Social Survey International-ESS	18.1	16.7	27.3 (c)
First Nations students			
Racism@Uni		64.5	
2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey		37.7	

(a) Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 per cent to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

(b) Domestic students identified by born in Australia & international students identified by born overseas.

(c) Domestic students identified by eligible to vote in Australia & international students identified by ineligible to vote in Australia.

Assessing the potential impact of bias on the basis of these results is difficult. In summary it can be suggested that:

- In terms of the rate of racism at university, the aggregate figures and underlying ANUpoll analysis suggest an upward bias, likely due to selective response rates associated with the salience of the topic. At the same time, the overall estimates remain slightly below the less clearly defined concept of discrimination used in the Student Experience Survey.

The data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is broadly consistent with the Student Experience Survey. It may be considered that the scope of this survey for this population is less affected by the wider issues which may lead to an overestimate for other groups.

- With respect to experiences of racism amongst students and university staff in the broader community, the Racism@Uni survey again produces a high estimate relative to the range of other surveys, for domestic and international students. However, for domestic students the rate of racism from the Racism@Uni survey is not markedly above the estimate from the Social Cohesion Survey.

While, for international students, the estimate from the Racism@Uni survey is above the estimate from the Mapping Social Cohesion survey, an issue with the Social Cohesion survey is the extent to which the respondent panel used for the survey fully reflects the international student population. While the 2025 ANUpoll, especially when using the country of birth identifier, appears to pick up the differential between domestic and international students, its actual rate is well below the rate from the Racism@Uni survey. A comparison with the 2021 ANUpoll survey however suggests that the rates are highly sensitive to contemporary issues.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students Racism@Uni reports a much higher rate of racism than the 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Survey. This higher rate is however not inconsistent with qualitative reporting by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

In summary, it is likely that the Racism@Uni survey somewhat overestimates the prevalence of racism at Australian universities. However, evidence indicates that reporting of racism can be volatile and influenced by the intensity of contemporary political and social debates, suggesting susceptibility to survey framing effects. The scope for such sensitivity is likely to be substantial, given that many respondents indicated their experiences of racism were not all that frequent. While the extent of any overestimation is difficult to determine, it should be carefully considered when interpreting and applying these results.

Notwithstanding this need for caution, the results of the survey, as with other research, clearly identifies extensive experiences of racism and discrimination at Australian universities, and more broadly across the Australian community.

3.7 Broader comments on the Student Experience Survey from the perspective of measuring racism

The Student Experience Survey is the largest student survey in Australia, reporting in 2024 that it was completed by 158,000 undergraduate students and 99,000 postgraduate coursework students. Findings were that:

- 44.1 per cent of domestic and 57.3 per cent of international students had a positive rating on their sense of belonging
- 79.7 per cent of domestic and 78.1 per cent of international undergraduate and 77.0 per cent of domestic and 82.7 per cent of international post graduate students gave a positive rating in response to the statement “I am free from discrimination, harm or hatred”⁵³

The level of belonging reported in the Racism@Uni survey for domestic students of 62.8 per cent was much higher than the Student Experience Survey of 44.1 per cent, although the Student Experience Survey estimate of 57.3 per cent is broadly on par with the 56.4 per cent reported by international students.

If the measure of “free from discrimination, harm or hatred” is treated as the converse of experiencing racism, as is done in the above analysis, a critical issue is the broadly similar results in the Student Experience Survey for domestic and international students. There is little to support the idea that in totality these two groups face equal rates of discrimination.

This would suggest a need for this question and its responses to be significantly reviewed.

3.8 Summary

The voluntary nature of the Racism@Uni survey made it open to response bias. This has two dimensions. One is that those more vulnerable groups may have been reluctant to

⁵³ The question used was: How strongly do you agree or disagree that “I am free from discrimination, harm or hatred at <higher education institution>” with response categories: Strongly disagree / Disagree / Neither disagree or agree / Agree / Strongly agree.

participate in the survey, and the second that those who either had experienced racism at university, or had an interest in the subject may have been more interested and motivated in responding.

Consideration of the relationship between the response rate and incidence of reported racism by country of birth does not support a view that the survey may have failed to reach significant groups who experience racism. A review of other surveys of racism experienced by students suggests however that there may be some upward bias in the estimates due to response bias in the survey. The extent of this is however difficult to estimate, in large part due to the considerable variability in other estimates. This however should not diminish the essential finding of significant levels of racism at Australian universities, and in the community, and how this impacts communities of staff and students.

This finding emphasises a need for data on racism to be collected as part of more general surveys of students and staff to minimise the impact of subject salience. At the same time there is a need to review some existing data collections, including the Student Experience Survey, to better capture the incidence of racism.

4 Student experiences of racism

As detailed in Chapter 2, 13.2 per cent of domestic students and 18.6 per cent of international students at Australian universities who responded to the survey reported being subject to direct racism at university in the previous two years. This chapter considers this experience in more depth, as well as the broader experiences of students at university and their perceptions about universities and the environment they provide.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the 33,943 responses from domestic students and 14,154 from international students at Australian universities represent estimated response rates of 3.3 per cent and 2.9 per cent respectively. Both populations of respondents were highly feminised, with 61.1 per cent of domestic students and 57.8 per cent of international students responding to the survey identifying as female.

There are however some large differences between the two groups of students. While 70.9 per cent of domestic students for whom a study level could be derived were undergraduates, the proportion amongst international students was well under half this at 23.0 per cent. This is reversed at the master's level, with 12.1 per cent of domestic students and 43.2 per cent of international students who responded to the survey studying at this level. Doctoral level study accounted for 6.2 per cent of domestic students and 16.8 per cent of international. This difference was also reflected in the age distribution. While 43.9 per cent of domestic students were aged 21 years of age or younger, just 23.2 per cent of international students were. In contrast, 41.9 per cent of international student respondents were aged 25 to 34 years, compared with 17.5 per cent of domestic student respondents.

4.1 Overall perceptions of belonging and inclusion

Questions around students' sense of belonging, safety and respect were included to understand their importance to students, how they perceive the university environment, and to understand the extent to which these aspects are impacted by experiences of racism.

4.1.1 Importance of belonging, safety and respect

Students place considerable importance on having a sense of belonging and engagement with their university. Of particular note, see Table 4.1, is the very strong importance attached to feeling safe, and being treated with respect, with 58.4 per cent and 50.8 per cent of students respectively saying that these are 'extremely important' to them. While an overwhelming majority still rank being respected in sensitive discussions, feeling supported, and being included with their peers as being important, these are much less likely to elicit a statement that they are 'extremely important'.

Table 4.1 Importance placed on belonging, safety and respect at university, all students

Statement about the university: Importance	Extent of agreement with statement					Total
	Extremely important	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	
	- % -					
I have a sense of belonging	30.4	40.1	23.3	5.3	0.9	100.0
I feel safe	58.4	32.6	7.5	1.1	0.5	100.0
I am treated with respect	50.8	39.2	8.8	0.9	0.4	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	39.4	39.1	16.7	3.5	1.3	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	32.9	42.7	20.1	3.5	0.8	100.0
I feel supported	39.5	44.0	14.2	1.8	0.6	100.0

n = 48,095

There are though some differences in the priorities placed on these elements by different groups within the student body.

As detailed in Table 4.2, international students who responded to this survey place considerably more importance on all of these dimensions. Particularly marked is the difference in priority placed on having a sense of belonging – where 76.7 per cent of international students reported this as being extremely or very important, relative to 67.9 per cent of domestic students, and on being included with their peers, where the level of extremely or very important agreement was 81.6 per cent for international students and 73.1 per cent for domestic students.

Table 4.2 Proportion of students considering aspects of belonging, safety and respect at university as being 'Extremely' or 'Very' important by student type and gender

Statement about the university: Sense	Student type		Gender			
	Domestic	International	Female	Male	Other	Not stated
	Proportion agreeing 'Extremely' or 'Very' important (%)					
I have a sense of belonging	67.9	76.7	74.4	65.2	61.8	69.1
I feel safe	90.0	93.5	94.6	86.2	89.9	88.2
I am treated with respect	89.4	91.3	93.4	85.4	87.7	87.6
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	76.5	83.1	84.3	70.0	75.6	75.8
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	73.1	81.6	79.2	71.4	68.2	73.3
I feel supported	82.0	87.0	88.3	77.1	79.2	80.6

n = 48,095

Marked differences are also recorded by gender. Female respondents express stronger levels of 'extremely' or 'very' important in relation to each of the specified items. A particularly marked difference is the response to the statement "I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion". While 70.0 per cent of the male students reported that this was 'extremely' or 'very' important to them, this proportion was 14.4 percentage points higher, at 84.3 per cent for females. There was also a marked difference of 11.2 percentage points in response to the importance of support. For the other items the difference was some 8 percentage points.

There was no clear pattern amongst those identified as having other gender identities, other than a potential higher level of disassociation, with this group placing much less emphasis on having a sense of belonging, or desire to feel included with their peers, than either men or women, while their remaining responses appear to slot in between the male and female levels of support.

4.1.2 Experiences of belonging, safety and respect

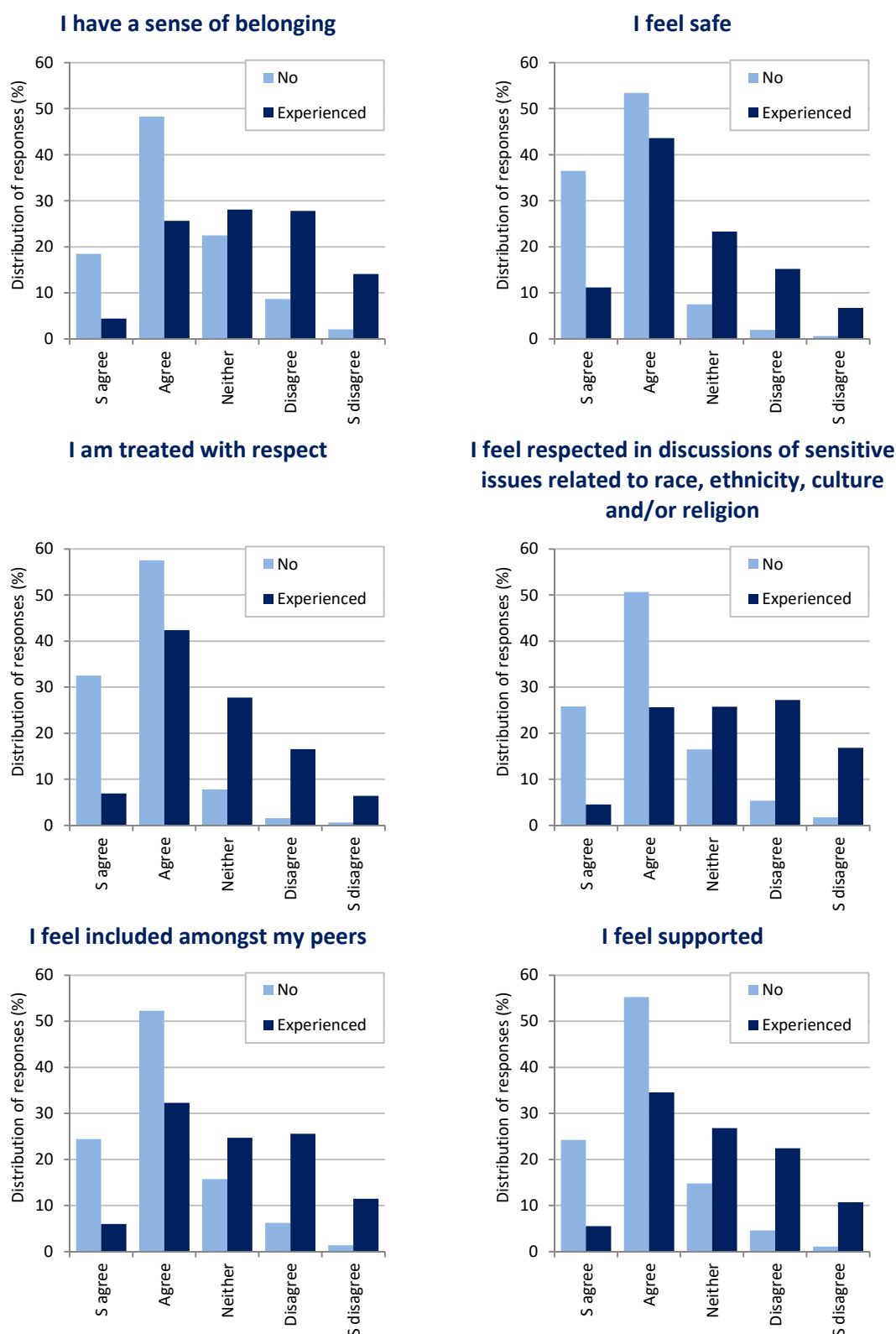
Overall, most students responded positively to the questions, either agreeing or strongly agreeing, on their own experience with regard to belonging, safety and respect. Strongest agreement was with a sense of safety which was reported by 84.5 per cent of students and being respected in discussions of sensitive issues, 84.0 per cent. These were followed by feeling that they were supported, 73.6 per cent, being included with their peers, 70.7 per cent, and a sense of belonging, 60.9 per cent.

However, there were marked differences, Figure 4.1, in the distribution of these assessments by whether or not a person had experienced racism at university.

Although 18.5 per cent of those students who had not experienced racism at university strongly agreed that they had a sense of belonging at university, with a further 48.3 per cent agreeing, for those persons who had experienced direct racism at university these proportions fell to just 4.4 per cent and 25.6 per cent. This pattern is repeated across all of the indicators. Considering the proportion who ‘strongly agree’, the relative rates for safety are 36.5 per cent for those who had not experienced racism at university and 11.2 per cent for those who had; for respect 32.5 per cent and 6.9 per cent; for respect in discussions 25.8 per cent and 4.6 per cent; for inclusion with peers 24.4 per cent and 6.0 per cent; and for feeling supported 24.3 per cent and 5.5 per cent.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ In the survey these questions were sequenced prior to any questions about racism or their own experiences of racism to avoid any framing effect.

Figure 4.1 Student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university by whether experienced direct racism at university



4.1.3 Reasons for not feeling safe, respected, and belonging

Those students who reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements concerning feeling a sense of belonging, safety and support were asked for the reasons why, Table 4.3. Multiple items could be selected.

While this question was not specifically asked in terms of race, the two most frequently identified items, along with the fourth, related to those factors associated with racism. 52.0 per cent stated that this was because of their racial or ethnic identity, 39.9 per cent because of their culture or religion, and 30.8 per cent because of their national identity. Overall, these reasons were selected less frequently by domestic students than they were by international students.

Table 4.3 Proportion of students who disagreed, or disagreed strongly that they have a sense of belonging, safety or respect at university by reason, by gender and student type

Reasons for lack of belonging, respect and safety (a)	Gender				Student type		Total
	Female	Male	Other	Not Stated	Domestic	International	
	Proportion of those disagreeing who identify selected item (%)						
Racial/Ethnic Identity	52.3	50.7	40.2	56.7	44.4	68.4	52.0
Culture/Religion	40.1	39.2	30.7	42.6	35.6	49.0	39.9
National Identity	28.3	34.1	19.6	34.6	19.7	54.6	30.8
Gender, gender identity or gender expression	15.8	14.1	58.6	19.0	20.0	11.8	17.4
Sexual orientation	6.4	10.3	40.0	10.8	11.6	5.5	9.6
Living with a disability	10.4	7.3	39.0	10.1	13.5	3.9	10.5
Social class	15.9	15.5	23.7	17.9	17.5	14.0	16.4
Age	19.1	17.7	24.1	16.7	21.7	11.4	18.4
Political orientation	12.9	23.2	25.2	20.0	21.1	10.6	17.8
General culture at university	32.4	33.5	43.3	31.2	34.9	28.9	33.0
Other	7.8	9.5	13.8	7.3	10.8	3.7	8.5

n = 12,600

(a) Multiple responses could be given

Other frequently given responses included: age, 18.4 per cent; social class, 16.4 per cent; political orientation; 17.8 per cent; and living with a disability, 10.5 per cent overall, but by 13.5 per cent of domestic students, and only 3.9 per cent of international students. In addition to this, a number of the other responses showed considerable variation across groups. Gender, gender identity and gender expression was cited at almost double the rate, 20.0 per cent relative to 11.8 per cent, by domestic students relative to international students, and while being cited at roughly similar levels by males and females, was cited by 58.6 per cent of those who chose an alternative gender classification. This was also the case for this group for persons living with a disability, although in this case it was markedly higher for women than for men. With respect to political orientation the rate at which this was cited was twice as high for domestic students than international students, and was cited at twice the rate by men and those with other gender identification, compared to women.

Intersectionality

These responses however should not be considered in a simple discrete way. Rather the data shows considerable overlap, which is likely to play a significant role in their disenchantment. Analysis indicates that 66.1 per cent of those who identified gender and gender expression as a reason for not feeling a sense of safety, respect or belonging, also

cited one of the three racism related items, as did 64.4 per cent of those who cited sexual orientation, 50.2 per cent of those citing disability, 69.4 per cent citing social class, 58.7 per cent of those citing age, 71.4 per cent of those citing political orientation, and 54.8 per cent of those citing academic discipline.

4.1.4 Behavioural restrictions

While most students do not engage in behaviours which can be seen as avoiding circumstances where they may face racism, or which may trigger racist conduct, nor prepare for the possibility of racist discussions, this behaviour is very much associated with experiences of racism, see Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Students by frequency of exercising behaviour constraint, by type of student and whether experienced direct racism at university

Behavioural constraint:	Frequency of behavioural constraint (a)					Total
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	
Domestic students - not experienced racism at university – % –						
Uncomfortable revealing identity	6.6	6.9	16.6	26.6	43.3	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	3.9	5.4	11.5	22.9	56.2	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	3.1	5.0	15.1	24.6	52.2	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	2.2	2.9	7.5	17.7	69.8	100.0
Not express views due to visa risk	–	–	–	–	–	–
Domestic students - experienced racism at university						
Uncomfortable revealing identity	19.3	21.8	32.9	13.8	12.2	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	17.2	17.3	22.8	20.1	22.6	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	24.0	22.6	29.2	14.2	10.0	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	16.8	15.9	19.7	21.1	26.5	100.0
Not express views due to visa risk	–	–	–	–	–	–
International students - not experienced racism at university						
Uncomfortable revealing identity	4.4	7.4	25.7	33.1	29.4	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	3.5	6.3	17.5	32.4	40.3	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	5.9	10.4	26.9	29.0	27.7	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	6.0	6.4	15.1	28.3	44.3	100.0
Not express views due to visa risk	8.7	10.2	22.4	26.2	32.5	100.0
International students - experienced racism at university						
Uncomfortable revealing identity	11.7	19.0	42.0	16.4	10.9	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	11.8	15.1	28.1	22.9	22.1	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	20.2	23.5	34.2	15.8	6.4	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	16.9	17.0	24.5	22.6	19.0	100.0
Not express views due to visa risk	29.7	18.6	23.2	14.7	13.8	100.0

n = 43,452

(a) These are the proportions of those responding with a frequency response. In addition, students could respond that the question was not applicable to them. This response was relatively rare – on average just 1.8 per cent amongst international students, but more frequent amongst domestic students. The main questions where there were significant proportions of not applicable responses for these domestic students were clothing (13.1 per cent), staying away during protests (8.3 per cent).

In interpreting this data, it needs to be noted that for a number of the items up to 13.1 per cent responded that the particular item was not relevant to them. Additionally, for some, the capacity to adjust the ‘behaviour’ is limited. For example, for most African students their African identity is apparent, rather than being something that can be revealed, this is also the case for others who consider they have a religious obligation to wear specific

clothing. While some 40 to 70 per cent of domestic students who have not experienced racism reported never taking any of the identified behaviour restraints, this drops to some 10 to 25 per cent for those who have. Taking, for example, mentally preparing for racist conversations only 3.1 per cent of those domestic students who have not experienced direct racism at university say that they always do so. This increases to 24.0 per cent for those that have, conversely while 52.2 per cent of the first group say they never prepare for such conversations, this reduces to 10.0 per cent for the second.

A similar pattern is seen amongst international students, although there is a higher degree of engaging in these constraining behaviours amongst those who have not experienced racism, and a less intense response by those who have. An additional question asked international students whether they restricted expressing their views because of fears around their visa to study in Australia. Under a third, 32.5 per cent, of international students who had not experienced racism said that they never did this, while for those who have experienced racism, this falls to just 13.8 per cent and the proportion who say they always limit their expression because of this fear increases to 29.7 per cent.

By gender there is generally little difference in responses, although there is a tendency for males to show a more emphatic adjustment than women.

4.2 Aspects of the incidence of racism

The incidence of experiences of direct racism varies across a range of characteristics of students and their institutional environment.

4.2.1 Incidence by age of student

The regression analysis in Chapter 2 highlighted the increasing incidence of experiences of direct racism with age. The impact of this is illustrated in Table 4.5 which also suggests it is a trend more apparent in the 'European' populations of the two types of students. With the exception of non-'European' domestic students the incidence of racism is reported at the highest level by those students aged 45 years and over. (The table also illustrates the quite different age profile of domestic and international student populations.)

Table 4.5 Incidence of direct racism at university by student type, broad ethnicity and age

Age group	Domestic students			International student		
	Ethnic background		Respondents (a)	Ethnic background		Respondents
	'European'	Non-'European'		'European'	Non-'European'	
	Direct racism at uni. (%)		Persons	Direct racism at uni. (%)		Persons.
18-24	5.0	18.6	18,754	6.5	18.7	6,122
25-44	6.7	24.1	9,102	14.1	18.6	6,448
45+	7.3	22.8	3,835	23.1	28.9	162
Total (a)	6.1	20.8	31,691	11.4	18.8	12,732

(a) Excludes 554 domestic students and 125 international students for whom age was not given, as well as those who responded that they did not know or did not want to say whether they experienced racism at university.

4.2.2 Incidence by university type

The incidence of direct racism at university and elsewhere by the main clusters of universities is shown in Table 4.6. Unlike the earlier regression modelling the actual rates across universities is impacted by the composition of the student population, in terms of

age, ethnicity and level of study, as well as factors such as the use of university accommodation, and hence caution is required in interpreting the findings.

Table 4.6 Incidence of direct racism at and outside of university, students by grouping of university

University grouping (a) ⁵⁵	Where experienced direct racism					Total	Respondents
	At university only	University and elsewhere	<i>Total at university</i>	Elsewhere only	Did not experience		
Domestic student							
			– % –				Persons (b)
ATN	3.0	10.3	13.3	20.8	65.8	100.0	6,766
Go8	3.6	11.4	14.9	19.3	65.8	100.0	9,180
IRU	2.9	10.4	13.2	22.6	64.2	100.0	4,737
Other	2.7	9.7	12.4	21.4	66.2	100.0	6,989
RUN	2.9	8.1	10.9	21.0	68.0	100.0	4,573
International student							
ATN	3.6	14.4	18.0	32.6	49.4	100.0	2,465
Go8	4.2	15.5	19.7	32.2	48.1	100.0	5,818
IRU	4.0	14.8	18.8	27.9	53.3	100.0	1,557
Other	3.6	13.9	17.6	33.2	49.3	100.0	2,337
RUN	3.2	11.0	14.3	30.4	55.3	100.0	680
Total							
ATN	3.2	11.4	14.6	24.0	61.4	100.0	9,231
Go8	3.8	13.0	16.8	24.3	58.9	100.0	14,998
IRU	3.1	11.5	14.6	23.9	61.5	100.0	6,294
Other	3.0	10.8	13.7	24.4	61.9	100.0	9,326
RUN	2.9	8.4	11.4	22.3	66.4	100.0	5,253

n = 45,102

(a) Universities which are members of these groupings are at Appendix B.

(b) Excludes 2995 persons who stated they did not know or preferred not to say whether or not they had experienced racism.

The data shows broadly equal levels of overall racism for domestic students across universities. This is both at the university and more widely across the community. This pattern can be seen in the table, with the one exception of Regional University Network (RUN) universities, where it is slightly lower for racism at university. Considering the rate of racism at university for domestic students this is highest, at 14.9 per cent, in the Group of Eight (Go8) universities, and lowest in the RUN universities at 10.9 per cent, with the 'Other' group reporting a rate of 12.4 per cent, the Innovative Research University (IRU) group reporting 13.2 per cent and the Australian Technology Network (ATN) universities 13.3 per cent. This pattern is echoed for international students, although the gap between the highest and the lowest rates for the sector increases. For international students the relative rates of racism for Go8 universities and RUN universities are 51.9 per cent and 44.7 per cent for total racism at university and outside, and 19.7 per cent and 14.3 per cent for racism at university. Additional caution though also needs to be taken due to the substantial differences in the number of respondents. While there were 5,818 responses from international students at the Go8 universities, there were just 680 from the RUN universities.

⁵⁵ ATN: Australian Technology Network of Universities; Go8: Group of 8 Universities; IRU: Innovative Research Universities; Other: Universities which are not part of the other groupings; RUN: Regional Universities Network See Appendix B.

4.2.3 Ethnicity and religion

Table 4.7 presents the rates of racism at university and more widely in the community outside of university for the ethnic and religious groupings used in the previous chapter. With the exception of the two groups of Europeans, and those students who identify as having a Jewish ethnicity, but did not practise Judaism, and those having Christianity or another religion (except Islam and Judaism), all of the other groups identify levels of experiencing racism at some time in the past two years at or above fifty percent (although levels for the ‘Other Indigenous’ and ‘Americas’ sit just a little below this point).

Table 4.7 Incidence of direct racism at and outside of university by students by ethnicity and religion

Communities/Religion	Racism summary		Racism detailed				Respondents	
	Total	At uni- versity	Uni only	Uni + other	Other only	None	Total	(a)
			-- % --					Persons
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	64.5	29.8	6.0	23.7	34.7	35.6	100.0	1,294
African	67.2	24.8	4.2	20.6	42.4	32.8	100.0	1,191
Afro-diasporic	75.8	29.3	4.5	24.8	46.5	24.2	100.0	157
Māori	50.5	12.4	4.8	7.6	38.1	49.5	100.0	210
Other Indigenous	47.6	19.1	0.0	19.1	28.6	52.4	100.0	84
Pasifika	58.0	17.9	2.2	15.7	40.1	42.0	100.0	588
Middle Eastern	58.4	28.4	5.2	23.2	30.1	41.6	100.0	1,970
Palestinian	66.2	41.2	4.4	36.8	25.0	33.8	100.0	68
Central Asian	52.5	16.8	3.0	13.9	35.6	47.5	100.0	202
South Asian	52.5	17.8	3.1	14.7	34.8	47.5	100.0	6,213
Chinese	55.9	17.4	3.5	13.9	38.5	44.1	100.0	5,756
North East Asian	58.2	21.1	3.0	18.1	37.2	41.8	100.0	907
South East Asian	53.6	17.0	3.3	13.7	36.6	46.5	100.0	4,850
Americas	47.8	17.0	2.9	14.1	30.8	52.3	100.0	932
Southern Europe	25.9	7.1	2.1	5.0	18.9	74.1	100.0	1,944
Europe	19.6	7.7	2.4	5.3	12.0	80.4	100.0	18,651
Not Stated	45.2	23.2	5.4	17.9	22.0	54.8	100.0	6,020
Jewish (religious)	76.6	56.8	12.6	44.2	19.8	23.4	100.0	475
Jewish (secular)	43.1	23.8	6.3	17.5	19.3	57.0	100.0	223
Muslim	52.1	19.3	3.9	15.5	32.8	47.9	100.0	2,395
Religion: Christianity	37.8	12.8	3.3	9.5	25.1	62.2	100.0	8,937
Religion: Other Specified	48.7	17.9	3.5	14.4	30.9	51.3	100.0	7,993
Total	38.7	14.8	3.3	11.5	24.0	61.3	100.0	45,102

(a) Total count, excluded from the distribution of experience of racism are 2,995 respondents who indicated they did not know or preferred not to say whether they had experienced racism.

The highest rates were recorded by students who were religious Jews, 76.6 per cent, marginally above students identified as part of the ‘Afro-diasporic’ community which reported that 75.8 per cent had experienced racism. African students, 67.2 per cent; Palestinian students, 66.2 per cent; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 64.5 per cent, also reported very high rates.

This order was somewhat different when simply racism at university is considered. While those students identifying as practising Judaism reported the highest rate, 56.8 per cent, this was followed by those identifying as Palestinians, 41.2 per cent, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 29.8 per cent, the Afro-diasporic group, 29.3 per cent, and Middle Eastern, 28.4 per cent.

By the ethnicity classification used here the three largest groups of responding students had relatively similar outcomes. Those with South Asian ethnicities reported a total rate of racism of 52.5 per cent, and at university 17.8 per cent, Chinese students had rates of 55.9 per cent and 17.4 per cent, and those who were members of South East Asian communities had rates of 53.5 per cent and 17.0 per cent.

4.2.4 Incidence by level and field of study

Rates of incidence of experiencing direct racism at university by field of study and level of study by student type and gender are presented in Table 4.8. In this table only the major genders have been included due to the small number in these other categories. In considering this data it is to be noted again that the rates shown are not simply a function of the field or level of study, but also of the composition of the students who are studying. While, as shown in Chapter 2, the level of study appears to have an independent effect on the incidence of having reported racism at university, when field of study was included in the modelling, this did not have a significant effect for either domestic or international students.

Table 4.8 Incidence of direct racism at university by field and level of study, type of students by gender

Level and field of study	Student type:						Respondents
	Domestic			International			
	Female	Male	Total (a)	Female	Male	Total (a)	
Level of study							
	- % -						Persons
Doctoral	15.0	14.8	15.2	23.4	14.7	19.9	3,637
Master	13.9	16.3	15.3	14.4	11.0	13.2	8,222
Oth PG degree	16.0	28.5	20.6	24.7	18.2	22.9	566
PG Dip/Cert	7.5	10.7	9.1	14.3	9.9	12.8	1,404
Undergrad	11.1	11.8	11.5	23.2	16.8	21.1	23,766
Dip/Adv Dip/Assoc	7.2	9.7	8.2	16.7	4.4	11.8	1,014
Tertiary preparation	-	-	-	-	-	-	163
Vocational	6.3	7.7	6.8	-	-	-	453
Other & not stated	19.5	18.2	21.6	24.2	21.4	28.2	5,877
Field of study							
Nat & Phys Science	9.3	10.5	9.9	19.1	17.9	19.4	3,894
Information Tech	9.4	11.9	10.8	14.6	13.3	14.1	3,074
Engineer & related	13.3	12.6	13.1	16.5	13.4	14.8	3,245
Arch & Building	15.0	17.4	16.1	20.8	15.1	18.1	715
Agricult & Environ	7.8	7.9	8.0	19.0	12.5	16.6	1,024
Health	13.2	15.1	13.9	24.3	15.5	22.8	8,276
Education	9.1	9.3	9.3	14.6	10.1	14.6	3,366
Manage & Commerce	9.7	13.4	11.6	16.4	11.2	14.4	4,378
Society & Culture	11.7	13.4	12.6	19.9	13.2	18.1	9,196
Creative Arts	10.6	7.8	10.3	19.6	11.9	17.9	1,688
Other & not stated (b)	15.9	18.2	20.9	26.3	20.0	27.4	6,246
Total	11.5	12.7	13.2	19.2	13.7	18.6	45,102

(a) Due to the small numbers of respondents in the other gender classifications at the course and study level these groups are not shown, although these 7,048 respondents are included in the totals.

(b) This includes people who did not give a field of study, including those, for example, who just reported their level of education in response to the question, and those who declined to identify their field of study.

Female domestic students studying at all levels, except at the doctoral level, and for the residual group including not stated, reported lower rates of racism at university, relative to males. In some cases, such as undergraduate study the difference is relatively minor – with rates of 11.1 per cent for women and 11.8 per cent for men –but is more marked in non-master's or doctoral post graduate study. At the doctoral level, while the rate is higher

for women at 15.0 per cent, this is only slightly above that for males of 14.8 per cent. For international students this is reversed and the differences are much greater. At the degree level, while male international students reported a rate of racism at university of 16.8 per cent, for women it is 23.2 per cent. The differential is even greater at the doctoral level where 14.7 per cent of male international students reported racism at university, while the rate for women international students is 23.4 per cent. At the master's level the difference is more muted but still the rate for women of 14.4 per cent is substantially above that for men of 11.0 per cent.

Similarly, a complex pattern emerges when considering the field of study. A number of particular fields appear to have substantially different results. The first is education where there is a consistent pattern of lower racism at university reported across all of the groups considered. While low rates are recorded by domestic females, and both male and female international students, in management and commerce, the rate for domestic male students is a little above average. In contrast to these low rates, architecture and building has the highest rates reported by domestic students, 15.0 per cent for women and 17.4 per cent for men, the second highest of the defined fields for international female students, 20.8 per cent, and an above average rate for international male students, and health. Health records the third highest rate for domestic females, and the second highest for males, as well as the highest rate for female international students and second highest for men.

4.3 Nature of racism experiences

While there are some broadly consistent patterns in the types of experiences those students who experience racism at university face, when analysed in some more detail there are also some marked variations. Table 4.9 indicates for students who experience racism at university the actual activities they identify as occurring. The data is provided for domestic and international students by the broad 'European' and non-'European' classification and the two main gender groups.

The data shows some particularly high rates of identification. For 'European' male domestic students 72.9 per cent of this group who experienced racism reported that they felt they could not express their views freely, and 71.0 per cent of female 'European' international students reported being singled out or excluded. This latter was consistent with a more general tendency for women in each of the categories to report this particular type of action more frequently than males. This was also the case with respect to being told that they were unintelligent. Except amongst the international students with a non-'European' background, there was also an overall tendency for women to be less of a target for inappropriate comments than men.

One strong pattern, with the exception of 'European' international students, was for men to more frequently cite being stopped by university security, or being subject to physical, verbal, or online abuse, than women. The magnitude of this difference was at times high, in general ranging from being one and half to two and half times higher.

Table 4.9 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, nature of racism by type of student by whether of 'European' or other ethnic heritage and main genders

Forms of racism experienced(a)	Domestic students						International student					
	Ethnic background						Ethnic background					
	'European'			Non-'European'			'European'			Non-'European'		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
			(b)	e		(b)			(b)			(b)
Singled out/Excluded	45.8	43.5	44.8	52.9	48.3	49.0	71.0	58.8	64.7	55.5	51.9	53.0
Inapprop. comments etc	38.0	35.3	37.1	50.6	49.7	48.0	61.3	35.3	52.9	37.4	42.1	38.8
Could not express views	68.5	72.9	71.5	63.5	58.2	61.3	51.6	58.8	54.9	54.1	51.6	52.2
Told unintelligent	36.1	27.8	31.3	38.7	34.8	36.3	45.2	29.4	39.2	39.0	37.3	37.2
Missed opportunity	24.7	39.5	33.1	30.8	34.4	31.2	38.7	23.5	33.3	39.0	43.7	40.3
Not Trusted	24.7	30.0	28.0	34.3	41.0	35.5	32.3	29.4	31.4	41.6	49.2	42.6
Stopped by uni. security	1.9	4.6	3.5	7.8	13.2	9.7	6.5	0.0	3.9	7.9	15.5	10.6
Physical harassment	4.4	6.6	5.8	6.1	10.7	7.8	9.7	0.0	5.9	6.8	10.6	7.8
Verbal harassment	17.9	24.5	22.4	19.8	31.1	23.1	22.6	23.5	21.6	22.3	30.0	23.2
Online harassment	11.6	20.5	16.2	12.7	23.8	16.2	9.7	5.9	7.8	9.0	19.5	12.0
Worse mark	16.9	21.2	18.9	27.4	27.7	26.3	6.5	11.8	7.8	32.7	31.5	32.1
Get things for free because of my race	27.1	43.7	36.7	23.4	22.4	23.1	45.2	23.5	37.3	10.1	11.9	10.7
Other	12.3	8.0	10.0	8.4	7.1	7.8	3.2	17.6	7.8	6.6	4.4	6.1

n = 6,420

(a) Multiple items could be selected

(b) Includes those identifying other genders or with a non-stated gender

As has been discussed in section 2.3.2 most students who experience racism at university report that this involves multiple forms. In broad terms, looking at the two item combinations, the pattern of this for 'European' and non-'European' students is similar with the exception of those combinations which included not being trusted, or where university security was involved, where these were more frequently reported by non-'European' students.

When asked why they consider discrimination occurred, students most frequently cited their cultural/racial/ethnic background. This is consistent across both international and domestic students and whether they have been classified as having a solely 'European' background or otherwise, usually at rates in the low to mid 70 per cent range, Table 4.10. For non-'European' international students this is followed by skin colour or other physical characteristics, 69.8 per cent, and language, 56.4 per cent. Language and accent were identified by a somewhat higher 63.3 per cent of international students from a probable 'European' background.

Table 4.10 Students who experienced direct racism at university, perception of the reasons why, by type and broad ethnic background

Perception of reason they were targeted	Domestic students Ethnic background		International student Ethnic background	
	'European'	Non- 'European'	'European'	Non- 'European'
	– % –			
My language or accent	16.3	25.9	63.3	56.4
My cultural/racial/ethnic background	61.6	74.2	75.5	71.1
My skin colour and/or other physical features associated with my racial/ethnic identity	59.8	64.2	26.5	69.8
My religious background	32.1	29.5	20.4	17.6
Because of current conflict in the Middle East	15.6	21.9	22.4	8.3
Because of COVID	3.7	8.9	2.0	10.8
Because I am an international fee-paying student	–	–	26.5	46.9
Other	12.1	7.0	4.1	3.1

n = 6,107

Religion was cited most frequently by domestic students, and at a slightly higher rate, 32.1 per cent, by those with a 'European' background than those with other ethnicities, 29.5 per cent. Almost half the non-'European' international students, 46.9 per cent, also nominate that they were subject to the racism because they were an international fee-paying student.

When considered by gender there are generally few differences in the factors identified. Amongst non-'European' international students there was however a higher tendency for males, 10.5 per cent, than females, 6.8 per cent, to cite conflict in the Middle East. Another difference was for the 'European' domestic students where 69.7 per cent of males, compared with 47.2 per cent of females identified skin colour. In contrast amongst non-'European' domestic students this was reported by 62.6 per cent of women and 65.4 per cent of men, and amongst international non-'European' students by 66.9 per cent of women and 73.8 per cent of men.

4.4 Location of racism in universities

The most frequently reported place where racism took place at university was in physical tutorials, seminars and related contexts. This was reported consistently across the groupings of universities, Table 4.11, and by student type and gender, Table 4.12. This location was followed for most by a generic 'elsewhere on campus', which related to the open spaces, car parks, bus stops, etc at university campuses. For most this was then followed by the identification of physical lecture theatres or similar. One distinct difference was the case of the RUN grouping of universities where the role of physical teaching spaces was somewhat displaced by online activities, with 27.0 per cent of students at this group of universities who experienced racism at university reporting online seminars and tutorials as the site of racist conduct, along with 24.3 per cent citing online lectures (noting that students could nominate multiple locations). This difference, as noted, is likely to reflect the different modes of delivery used by many of the universities in this grouping. Racism in marking and feedback was identified by a little over 20 per cent of the students who had experienced racism across all of the classifications of university and students used here, although being less marked at the Go8 and ATN universities.

Table 4.11 Students who have experienced direct racism at university, locations in which this occurred by university grouping

Location	University grouping				
	ATN	Go8	IRU	Other	RUN
	– % –				
Physical lecture theatre or similar	24.5	26.5	28.6	24.8	22.5
Physical tutorial, seminar or similar	48.4	48.6	47.4	47.5	31.1
Online in a lecture	8.6	6.6	12.1	12.0	24.3
Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar	12.8	9.9	16.9	15.6	27.0
Marking and/or related feedback	17.9	17.5	21.5	22.2	25.2
Placement, internship	14.6	15.6	21.0	15.9	17.1
Student accommodation	8.6	15.0	10.2	8.4	11.9
University club, society, association	16.9	22.6	12.5	12.5	10.3
University sporting space	4.0	6.6	3.8	3.2	3.6
Retail service on campus	11.0	11.3	9.0	8.9	6.7
University library or other study spaces	17.9	17.4	18.0	14.5	13.7
University health service	3.5	4.6	5.2	2.9	3.8
Reflection/ prayer space on campus	2.9	2.2	2.2	3.1	2.9
Elsewhere on campus	32.2	35.0	26.0	28.1	17.6
Other	7.0	7.2	8.7	8.2	12.1

n = 6,197

Table 4.12 Students who have experienced direct racism at university, locations in which this occurred by student type and gender

Location	Domestic students				International students			
	Female	Male	Other	Total	Female	Male	Other	Total
	– % –							
Physical lecture theatre or similar	24.7	27.3	33.8	25.8	26.6	22.8	24.4	25.5
Physical tutorial, seminar or similar	51.0	43.9	47.7	46.6	51.9	40.8	46.3	46.7
Online in a lecture	11.8	15.7	23.8	13.7	4.4	3.5	0.0	4.6
Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar	17.1	17.5	28.5	17.3	8.7	6.9	4.9	8.3
Marking and/or related feedback	20.0	17.8	21.2	18.9	20.8	20.1	26.8	21.1
Placement, internship	15.3	12.4	15.2	14.1	20.7	17.9	26.8	20.2
Student accommodation	8.8	9.0	13.9	9.3	14.4	18.2	12.2	15.4
University club, society, association	14.7	20.4	28.5	17.0	17.1	19.8	17.1	17.1
University sporting space	2.9	6.0	11.7	4.3	3.6	8.6	9.8	5.6
Retail service on campus	8.7	10.2	11.3	9.3	9.5	12.7	12.2	11.3
University library or other study spaces	16.1	19.4	25.5	17.8	13.2	17.4	17.1	14.8
University health service	3.3	3.2	8.6	3.7	5.2	2.5	9.8	4.7
Reflection/ prayer space on campus	1.8	3.1	37.7	2.7	0.7	4.6	4.9	2.4
Elsewhere on campus	29.1	37.1	11.7	31.6	23.8	36.6	31.7	28.0
Other	7.9	8.4	3.1	8.2	8.0	6.9	4.9	7.6

n = 6,197

Other relatively frequently cited locations were university libraries and in sporting and related university clubs, with this latter being much more frequently raised with regard to the Go8 universities, 22.6 per cent, and to a much lesser degree the ATN universities, 16.9

per cent, than the other three groupings where it tended to be in the 10 to 12.5 per cent range.

Another very distinctive feature of the data is the extent to which racism was reported, in particular by international students, in placements and internships, with this being cited by 20.7 per cent of the women and 17.9 per cent of the men who had experienced racism. Students from most non-`European' communities reported high rates, in particular those members of Other Indigenous communities, 31.3 per cent and Central Asian communities 23.5 percent, along with Pasifika, 21.0 per cent and Africans 20.3 per cent. By university grouping this was cited more frequently by students attending IRU, and to a lesser degree RUN universities. Given that only a limited proportion of students have such placements and internships, it is probable that if this group could be identified the rate within the population who are undertaking these would be much higher.

4.5 Dimensions of direct racism at university

From this analysis three key features can be considered as important.

- A very significant proportion of the racism reported on campus takes place in formal teaching, in lectures, tutorials and in placements, all elements of the core function of universities, and in the first two in places where there is direct oversight by teaching staff. At the same time, as noted in Chapter 2, almost half of the students experiencing direct racism reported that teaching and academic staff were a participant in this.
- There are clear problems in tutorials, and in the group work frequently associated with these.
- Placements and internships appear to be activities associated with high rates of racism.

Issues of tutorial groups and group work were raised extensively in the comments made by students in the survey. These raise a range of issues, including assumptions being made about ethnic groups, the impact of international tensions, and language use, as well as dominant issues of inclusion and exclusion. The divergence of perspectives in the comments we received is large.

Being "free-riders" for a group project just because they think Asians are serious about grades and are easy to take advantage of

In group projects, if the majority of members are local students I usually don't have much say in how the projects go/they do not value my input or opinions

Other students excluded the international students when forming groups, when the international students were put into a group by the teaching staff, non international students did not value the input from international students

Excluded because I don't speak Chinese or Hindi in group projects.

My team mates in group activities did not trust my capabilities. My tutors spoke about my background as something special and rare, and this made me feel uncomfortable.

Being excluded by a group member during a group assignment. Her attitudes and behaviours towards me were very different. She would not speak or

engage conversations with me but she would speak to only two other white girls.

I am Ukrainian, the other students I was in a group in are pro Russia

Less information was collected in the survey with respect to internships and placements, although issues relating to these in the fields of teaching, early childhood education, nursing, and social work placements were all identified.

I felt isolated and discriminated during my hospital placement in a private hospital and they were all white people in that unit ... the nurses ... targeted me ... I felt culturally unsafe and lost confidence.

When doing my placement, I tried my best to explain that my passive is due to my culture background, she showed no respect about it ... Small talk is a unique technique for who has been living in Australia for decades maybe. Not like us for about 3 years

I was doing placement at a school (Christian School) and my C.E [Cooperating Educator] singled me out and failed me on unreasonable grounds mentioning I should follow Christian Values

Regarding these issues one academic staff member in discussing the effectiveness of university policies indicated that there was a significant issue around placements:

My context relates to students on compulsory placements at external sites. It is very difficult to address issues of racism, discrimination and microaggressions faced by our students at external sites.

Another staff member, in making a similar point, talked of the tension between attempting to address this problem, and the pressure to find placements, which they reported limited the capacity to exclude potentially problematic sites.

4.6 Impact of racial experiences

Only a small proportion of students who experienced direct racism at university did not report a negative impact from this. This varies from just 5.1 per cent of international students from a non-‘European’ background to 17.7 per cent of those from a ‘European’ background, Table 4.13. The two most common effects reported are a negative impact on students’ mental health and students taking action to curtail their engagement at university. While the intensity of this varies, it is consistently seen across both domestic and international students. While 52.4 per cent of domestic students with ‘European’ backgrounds reported a negative impact on their mental health, this increases to 72.0 per cent for non-‘European’ international students. A further impact on international students, as discussed in the previous chapter, is on their intention to study in Australia, and whether they see Australia favourably as a country for future migration.

Table 4.13 Students who experienced direct racism at university, reported impact of this, by student type and broad ethnic background

Impacts reported as a consequence of experiencing direct racism at university (a)	Domestic students		International students	
	Ethnic background		Ethnic background	
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
	– % –			
Negative mental health	52.4	65.5	60.8	72.0
Limit university participation	61.3	61.2	62.8	64.4
Limit contacts	16.1	24.9	25.5	34.5
Negative impact on studies	38.0	44.8	35.3	47.3
Consider not studying in Australia	16.5	19.5	19.6	24.2
Australia less attractive for migration	–	–	56.9	42.9
Other	8.7	6.6	9.8	4.2
None	13.7	11.3	17.7	5.1

n = 6,132, 2,232 with respect to question on migration

(a) Multiple impacts could be reported

Looking at the negative effect on the students' mental health, and the negative impact on their studies, in overall population terms it is estimated that a negative impact on mental health as a result of direct racism is recorded by 7.5 per cent of all domestic students and 12.4 per cent of all international students. For studies the estimated population wide impact is 5.2 per cent for domestic students and 8.2 per cent for international students.

These two key impacts are considered further in Table 4.14. This presents selected results of probit regressions with the independent, response, variable being whether or not a student reports a negative impact of racism on their studies, and whether they reported negative mental health effects. Only the significant results are shown.

Key findings from this are:

- Being an international student was associated with a 4.4 percentage point increase in reporting a negative impact on studies relative to a domestic student, and a 6.2 percentage point higher rate of reporting negative mental health outcomes.
- There are strong negative impacts on students' studies, and to a slightly lesser degree their mental health, depending on the frequency of their experience. Compared to someone who only experienced racism at university rarely, a student who experienced it very frequently had a 35.2 percentage point higher probability of reporting a negative impact on their studies, and a 20.1 percentage point higher likelihood of reporting a negative mental health impact. As has been discussed in Chapter 2, only a small proportion of the population reported high frequency experiences of racism.
- In contrast, experience of indirect racism, no matter at what frequency, did not have a statistically significant impact in these models on the two identified outcomes for students.

Table 4.14 Extent of reporting adverse study and mental health outcomes from racism, selected marginal effects

International student	Studies	Mental Health
	0.044 **	0.062 ***
Frequency direct racism:		
Very frequently	0.352 ***	0.201 ***
Frequently	0.262 ***	0.184 ***
Sometimes	0.126 ***	0.104 ***
Rarely	base	base
N/S	0.234 ***	0.053
Frequency indirect racism		
Very frequently	-0.038	0.044
Frequently	-0.036	0.035
Sometimes	-0.015	-0.005
Rarely	base	base
Never	-0.065	-0.047
N/S	-0.090	-0.041
Who participated		
Academic staff/teachers	0.165 ***	0.069 ***
Administrative staff	0.035	0.015
Facilities staff	0.005	0.062 **
Students	-0.081 ***	0.031 *
University Leaders	0.077 ***	0.039 *
Gender		
Male relative to female	0.026	-0.052 ***
Age relative to 18-24		
25-44	0.066 ***	0.063 ***
45+	0.146 ***	0.064 **
Not stated	0.137 ***	0.091 **
If experienced this type of racism:		
Singled out/Excluded	0.102 ***	0.083 ***
Inappropriate comments etc	-0.008	0.034 **
Could not express views	0.054 ***	0.048 ***
Told unintelligent	0.070 ***	0.085 ***
Missed opportunity	0.060 ***	0.066 ***
Worse mark	0.243 ***	0.086 ***
Not Trusted	0.081 ***	0.071 ***
Stopped by uni security	0.023	-0.024
Physical harassment	0.077 **	-0.001
Verbal harassment	0.051 **	0.118 ***
Online harassment	0.015	0.057 **
Ethnicity and religion (Selected)		
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait		
Islander	0.127 ***	0.138 ***
Palestinian	0.289 **	0.273 **
Central Asian	0.172 *	0.565 ***
South Asian	-0.011	0.065 ***
Chinese	0.053 **	0.039 *
European	-0.044 *	-0.067 ***
Jewish (religious)	0.119 ***	0.157 ***
Jewish (secular)	-0.042	0.136 **
Religion: Christianity.	-0.064 ***	-0.057 ***
Number = 5,794		Number = 5,794
Pseudo r ² = 0.230		Pseudo r ² = 0.194

Statistical significance: *** at 99 per cent level, ** at 95 per cent level, * at 90 per cent level.

- The effect of racism on these outcomes was also affected by who was engaged in the racist behaviour. The largest effect was from academic staff, whose involvement in the racism generated a 16.5 percentage point increase in the likelihood of reporting a negative impact on studies, and a 6.9 percentage point increased negative impact on mental health. There was no significant impact when administrative staff were

involved, and involvement of facilities staff was only significant for mental health, at the lower 95 per cent confidence level. Involvement of students in the racism was associated with a statistically significant 8.1 percentage point lower impact on studies, and a weak, 90 per cent confidence level, 3.1 percentage point increase in adverse mental health. Where university leadership was involved, this was associated with a significant 7.7 percentage point increase in negative study results and a statistically weak 3.9 percentage point increase in the reporting of poor mental health impacts.

- There were no gender effects in the model for the impact on studies, but relative to females, male students had a 5.2 percentage point lower rate of reporting negative mental health impacts.
- Increasing age was associated with an increased rate of reporting both a negative effect on studies and on mental health. For those aged 45 and over this was a 14.6 percentage point increase relative to an 18-24 year old in reporting an effect on studies, and a 6.4 percentage point increase of reporting a mental health effect.
- The type of racism that a person experienced also had an impact. Considering firstly the effect on study, and secondly that on mental health, being singled out or excluded had a 10.2 and 8.3 percentage point effect of increasing poor outcomes, inappropriate comments had no statistically significant impact on study but a less statistically robust 3.4 percentage point effect on mental health. The effects of feeling constrained on what one could say was associated with a 5.4 and 4.8 percentage point impact, being told or made to feel one was unintelligent 7.0 and 8.5 percentage points, missing out on opportunities 6.0 and 6.6 percentage points, being awarded a worse mark than they believed they were entitled to had a very strong 24.3 percentage point effect on studies, and a lesser 8.6 percentage point effect on mental health, feeling one was not trusted was associated with an 8.1 and 7.1 percentage point increase in a negative study or health outcome. Being stopped by security had no statistically significant impact on either outcome, and physical harassment only on studies, 7.7 percentage point at the 95 per cent confidence level. Verbal harassment was associated with a 5.1 percentage point increase in reporting a negative effect on studies at the 95 per cent confidence level, but a strong 11.8 percentage point effect on mental health, online harassment only appeared to impact mental health and only at the 95 per cent confidence level. It should be noted that because individuals could identify multiple activities as part of their experience of racism, the effects of these experiences are likely to be cumulative.
- A number of ethnicities/communities/religions were associated with higher probability of adverse outcomes. With respect to adverse effects on study for students these encompassed those from communities including: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, 12.7 percentage points; Palestinian, 28.9 percentage points (at the 95 per cent level of statistical significance, potentially impacted by the small population size); along with Chinese, 5.3 percentage points, at the same level of significance. There was also a very weak (90 per cent confidence level) negative 4.4 percentage point effect for a 'European' heritage. Effects on mental health were more frequent and generally larger: 13.8 percentage points for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; 27.3 percentage points for those identifying as Palestinian (again at the 95 per cent level of confidence); a very strong 56.5 percentage points for Central Asian communities; 6.5 percentage points for South Asian students, a small and not robust 3.9 percentage

points for Chinese; and a highly significant negative 6.7 percentage point effect for Europeans. Persons who identified themselves as secular Jews had a 13.6 percentage point increase in the likelihood of mental health effects, while those who were religious had an 11.9 percentage point increase in impact on study and 15.7 percentage points on mental health. Being a Christian had a highly significant negative impact on having a negative outcome from racism of 6.4 and 5.7 percentage points respectively for studies and mental health.

4.7 Indirect racism

As well as varying in the extent to which students face direct racism, there are marked differences between the groups of universities in the incidence of indirect racism.

4.7.1 Direct and indirect

Taking the aggregate effects of both types, Table 4.15, while only 20.6 per cent of respondent students attending Go8 universities did not report either direct or indirect racism at university, this increases to 42.2 per cent for the RUN universities. Other groupings of universities fit between, with rates of 27.8 per cent (ATN) and 32.3 per cent (Other).

These differences are however also a product of student composition. As illustrated in the second panel, while only 20.7 per cent of non-‘European’ international students did not report either direct or indirect racism, this proportion almost doubles to 39.4 per cent for domestic ‘European’ students.

Table 4.15 Incidence of direct and indirect racism by university grouping, and student type by broad ethnicity

University grouping and student type	Racism experienced						Total
	Direct (a)(b)	Indirect racism only				Never (direct or indirect)	
		Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely		
University grouping – % –							
ATN	14.4	5.6	9.3	22.4	20.6	27.8	100.0
Go8	16.2	6.1	10.6	25.4	21.2	20.6	100.0
IRU	14.5	5.1	8.5	21.7	20.2	30.1	100.0
Other	13.6	5.4	8.7	21.2	18.9	32.3	100.0
RUN	11.6	4.0	7.7	17.7	16.8	42.2	100.0
Student type ‘European’							
Domestic student	6.1	5.3	8.4	21.5	19.4	39.4	100.0
International student	10.7	3.6	8.2	23.0	24.2	30.3	100.0
Non-‘European’							
Domestic student	21.0	6.6	11.0	23.0	17.8	20.7	100.0
International student	17.7	4.4	8.5	23.3	23.1	23.1	100.0
Total	14.6	5.5	9.3	22.5	20.0	28.2	100.0

n = 48,097

(a) Includes those who experienced both direct and indirect racism at university

(b) The rate of direct racism is higher in this table as the data excludes 2,156 respondents who reported that they did not experience direct racism, but did not provide details of whether they experienced indirect racism, as well as 2,955 respondents who reported rates of indirect racism but did not provide a usable response to the question on direct racism.

4.7.2 Elements of indirect

For most groups of students who reported indirect racism the most frequent form is the use of racist terms, jokes or comments, Table 4.15, followed by the use of negative stereotypes. Beyond this there is less consistency across groups when identified by whether they are domestic or international or have a 'European' heritage. However consistently the rates experienced across all of the identified items are higher for those with non-'European' ethnicities.

Table 4.16 Forms of indirect racism by student type and broad ethnicity

Form of indirect racism (a)	Domestic students Ethnic background		International students Ethnic background	
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
Proportion of all students reporting (%)				
Racist terms, jokes and comments	46.6	68.9	55.9	66.6
Denigrating culture in a racist way	33.2	59.6	39.7	57.3
Using negative stereotypes	43.4	66.3	55.9	64.6
Trivialising negative outcomes	37.0	62.0	43.8	59.7
Blaming for adverse outcomes	41.9	57.9	42.9	55.5
Any of the above	60.4	77.7	69.7	75.7

n = 31,634

(a) Multiple forms could be reported

This can be seen in the total incidence of any of these forms, with 60.4 per cent of 'European' domestic students reporting at least one type having occurred in the past two years, 69.7 per cent of 'European' international students, 75.7 per cent of non-'European' international students and 77.7 per cent of non-'European' domestic students. This is consistent with the pattern in earlier tables of this group with respect to direct racism and combined direct and indirect racism.

4.8 Racism outside of university

While the focus of this study is on experiences of racism at university, experiences in the wider community can have a direct impact on students' university activities, as well as at times locations such as public transport which are directly linked to their university activities.⁵⁶ The incidence of non-university racism by location and student country of birth is shown in Table 4.17.

⁵⁶ The potential impact of experiences of racism outside of universities was tested as an explanatory variable in the previous models of racism and mental health and studies. It added little to the model fit. This is likely due to the small proportion who only reported racism at university.

Table 4.17 Incidence of direct racism outside of university, by type and region of birth, all students

Country/ Region of Birth	Non-university places where experienced direct racism									
	At other ed'n	Other employ- ment	Housing	Security & police	Govern- ment	Health service	Shop/ Restaur- ant	Sport/ Pub event	Social media	Public trans- port
	Proportion of all students experiencing direct racism in these locations/situations (%)									
Aust & NZ	4.6	7.4	1.6	3.1	2.9	4.0	9.2	4.6	11.3	8.2
UK Ireland										
US Canada	3.5	7.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	3.7	9.4	3.8	9.1	8.4
Bal W&N										
Europe	3.4	8.6	5.0	3.4	2.6	3.1	9.6	3.1	6.5	7.4
S&E Europe	6.5	15.3	7.2	4.6	4.8	5.5	11.5	6.0	10.8	7.9
Bal Oceania	7.8	14.7	7.8	6.1	2.0	7.8	24.9	6.9	14.3	22.9
Iran	7.7	17.6	12.8	8.8	7.0	10.3	19.1	8.8	19.1	15.4
Bal MENA	10.3	16.2	11.5	11.1	6.7	10.3	26.1	9.6	22.8	27.3
Indonesia	2.4	4.8	4.1	2.1	2.2	2.7	15.2	4.8	5.3	20.2
Malaysia	6.4	11.3	6.6	5.4	2.5	5.4	24.9	9.5	15.2	31.8
Singapore	5.4	10.7	6.9	4.9	4.1	4.6	26.5	8.4	12.2	27.3
Vietnam	3.1	10.6	7.5	3.0	3.7	4.3	23.0	8.1	12.0	28.5
Philippines	7.5	16.1	4.5	4.1	2.9	8.2	25.2	8.2	15.4	23.6
Bal SE Asia	4.2	16.4	4.5	4.2	3.2	6.1	20.5	9.9	10.9	26.0
Hong Kong	3.8	10.7	7.1	3.0	3.6	4.6	24.3	7.1	7.9	29.0
China	3.1	11.4	10.0	3.9	3.0	4.2	25.6	8.8	19.9	29.0
Bal NE Asia	4.2	12.0	8.2	4.0	5.0	7.7	28.4	7.2	10.6	30.0
India	4.5	15.4	12.9	4.9	3.1	7.3	25.0	9.0	18.4	29.3
Pakistan	5.8	15.5	12.2	5.8	6.1	7.3	20.4	8.2	14.6	27.7
Bangladesh	2.5	14.5	11.3	5.3	2.7	5.9	21.3	8.6	11.3	27.5
Sri Lanka	4.6	19.9	14.2	6.8	3.5	7.5	32.4	8.3	15.1	31.6
Nepal	1.2	9.6	7.7	2.9	2.2	7.4	14.8	4.0	6.7	15.6
Bhutan	0.3	8.2	3.1	1.1	1.1	2.3	8.5	1.7	3.4	10.5
Bal S&C Asia	9.4	13.9	8.9	8.3	7.8	14.4	26.7	8.3	18.3	28.9
Bal Americas	5.2	17.5	12.6	7.9	4.7	7.4	21.6	8.3	12.1	18.7
South Africa	6.1	11.4	2.5	4.3	2.8	4.0	11.4	5.5	13.2	11.0
Bal Africa	9.2	23.1	15.0	9.8	5.5	14.9	30.3	10.6	14.7	28.5
Not stated	6.5	13.8	9.4	6.1	5.2	8.8	23.2	9.1	17.6	23.8

n = 45,102

Although there is some variation across most countries of birth, students reported rates of direct racism associated with public transport between 25 and 30 per cent, with a rate of 31.8 per cent being reported by students from Malaysia and 31.6 per cent by those born in Sri Lanka. Those born in Sri Lanka also reported high levels of racism in employment and in housing. The two groups with the highest levels of consistent racism in a number of areas were those born in Africa (excluding South Africa) who reported the highest rates of racism, in other employment, housing, health services and at sporting and other public events. Those born in Iran and in the balance of Middle Eastern and North African countries reported high levels of racism, having the highest rate reported in dealing with other educational services, the second highest in housing, the highest dealing with police and other security services, and the second highest dealing with government services, as well as facing the highest rates of racism in using social media.

More generally, and most significantly, students born in non-European countries show systematically higher rates of experiencing racism across the range of community activities relative to those born in Australia and New Zealand or in Europe. In the detailed comments there are many responses which simply reported day to day racism directed to them.

Racial slurs shouted at me from passing cars

While walking on the streets

By random members of the public, in public spaces (e.g.) recreational parks, etc.

Just on the street, I was coming home from getting a manicure when a white man I didn't know punched me in the face.

4.9 Summary

Many aspects of the university environment are important to students. These include a sense of belonging, being safe, being included with their peers, and being respected, including in sensitive conversations. The extent however that students experienced these varied. While responses were overwhelmingly positive there was a sharp divide between those who had experienced racism at university, and those who had not. Those who felt a lack of safety, respect or belonging most frequently reported this was due to their racial or ethnic identity, culture, or religion, or the general culture of the university.

The incidence of experiencing direct racism by students varied across a range of characteristics. While being driven in large part by the communities with which they identified, other factors included the level of study, the field of study, gender and age, as well as whether they were a domestic or international student. In aggregate the highest rates of racism appear to be experienced by domestic students who do not come from a solely 'European' background. Amongst international students markedly higher levels are reported by women when compared to men. Higher rates are also reported by older students.

Students who had experienced racism at university reported a much higher rate of engaging in behavioural constraints such as not revealing their identity or wearing clothing or items which may reveal this, as well as mentally preparing for racist conversations. They also reported adverse mental health and study outcomes. The incidence of these was strongly associated with the frequency with which they experienced direct racism, by who participated in the racism, in particular academic staff, and the form of the racism. International students noted concerns about their visa status if they spoke out, and many indicated that their experience made Australia a less attractive country for study, or for future migration.

Students also reported high levels of racism outside of the university. Key areas where this occurred were on social media, at shops and restaurants, and when using public transport, including the conduct of transport operators.

Within the university environment tutorials, seminars and other small group learning environments were most frequently cited as being the location where racism was experienced. Commonly reported experiences included exclusion. This was manifest in a range of ways, such as segregation on the basis of ethnicity, and discriminatory selection for group work, often as a result of assumptions based on stereotypes. While affecting only some students, those who had placements and internships as part of their study program cited these as the site for experiencing racism, with some suggestion that universities were reluctant to take action because of the pressures they had in attempting to secure sufficient places.

While fellow students were the most frequently identified as being participants in the racism experienced, almost half of the students who experienced direct racism also identified academic staff as the participants.

5 Staff experiences of racism

There was a very substantive response by staff to the survey, with 10,799 responses from academic staff and 17,235 from non-academic staff, representing an estimated 18.3 per cent and 22.2 per cent respectively of the staff of Australian universities.

Of those who provided their country of birth 44.9 per cent of academic staff and 34.8 per cent of non-academic staff who responded to the survey were born in countries other than Australia.

Of the academic staff born overseas 16.9 per cent were born in the UK, 7.7 per cent in India, 7.1 per cent in China, 6.9 per cent in the USA, and 5.3 per cent in New Zealand. 55.4 per cent of the academic staff who responded were women, and while the respondents were spread across all academic levels, the largest concentration was at the Academic B level – lecturers or the equivalent. The largest groups of academic staff who responded were aged 35 to 44 years, 26.3 per cent, and 44 to 54 years, 28.9 per cent.

The distribution of birthplace of the overseas born non-academic staff who responded to the survey was similar to that of academic staff, with the exception of the reversal of New Zealand and the USA, with 19.1 per cent born in UK, 9.4 per cent in India, 7.4 per cent in China, 7.1 per cent in New Zealand, and 4.7 per cent in the USA. These respondents were highly feminised with 68.7 per cent reporting their gender as female. The largest group earned between \$100,000 and \$150,000 per annum, 42.6 per cent, followed by those earning \$50,000 to \$99,999, 36.0 per cent. They tended to be somewhat younger than academic staff, with 22.1 per cent aged 25 to 34 years of age, compared with just 12.4 per cent of the academic staff.

Chapter 2 has reported overall rates of direct interpersonal racism at university of 20.5 per cent for academic staff and 11.8 per cent for non-academic staff. While the rate of racism at university for academic staff was the highest of the four groupings considered, that for non-academic staff was the lowest.

5.1 Sentiments

Table 5.1 presents responses across all staff types on their sense of engagement with the university and their sense of respect, safety and inclusion. As well as showing a diversity on some dimensions, when grouped by gender, there are some marked differences in the importance staff place on different aspects of the university.

Women, who represented almost 60 per cent of responses, show a strong tendency to place a higher priority on all of the identified aspects relative to men, with this being particularly marked with respect to safety where the 62.8 per cent of women who identified this as being extremely important is 14.8 percentage points higher than the rating by men. Women's rating on safety as being extremely important was echoed by those identifying their gender differently, although this group placed a lower priority on a sense of belonging.

Across all genders the statement ‘I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion’ was placed in the lower half of what people saw as being important, although the lowest rated item was whether it was important to have a sense of belonging. The level of agreement that this was ‘extremely’ or ‘very important’ ranged from 66.8 per cent for those identifying as other genders, to 81.0 per cent for women, and 72.3 per cent for men.

Table 5.1 Staff views of importance of respect, safety and inclusion by gender

Statements about the university: Importance	Importance of respect, safety and inclusion				
	Extremely important	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important
Female: 16,010 persons Distribution of agreement (%)					
I have a sense of belonging	33.5	47.5	17.1	1.6	0.2
I feel safe	62.8	33.3	3.6	0.2	0.1
I am treated with respect	59.1	37.1	3.7	0.1	0.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	42.8	44.0	11.7	1.5	0.1
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	36.6	48.6	13.7	1.0	0.1
I feel supported	48.4	45.1	6.1	0.3	0.1
Male: 8,724 persons					
I have a sense of belonging	26.5	45.8	22.7	4.4	0.5
I feel safe	48.0	39.7	10.6	1.4	0.3
I am treated with respect	46.3	43.6	9.4	0.6	0.2
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	30.9	43.0	20.3	4.6	1.2
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	29.3	48.1	19.8	2.5	0.3
I feel supported	35.2	49.7	13.7	1.4	0.2
Other: 423 persons					
I have a sense of belonging	25.2	41.6	24.9	6.2	2.1
I feel safe	62.9	27.3	7.7	0.5	1.7
I am treated with respect	55.1	34.4	6.9	1.7	1.9
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	39.7	38.0	15.1	3.6	3.6
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	26.2	45.0	21.0	5.5	2.4
I feel supported	44.8	39.3	12.9	1.7	1.4
Not Stated: 2,877 persons					
I have a sense of belonging	31.6	44.6	20.2	3.2	0.4
I feel safe	53.7	35.9	9.3	0.8	0.3
I am treated with respect	51.1	40.2	8.0	0.5	0.1
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	38.7	41.7	15.2	3.5	1.0
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	33.9	45.3	17.8	2.6	0.4
I feel supported	41.8	44.9	11.9	1.1	0.3

n = 27,852

Table 5.2 reports on how staff view whether universities are actually performing with respect to these items, that is their personal views about whether they are treated with respect, feel a sense of belonging and consider they are safe.

As with students, there was a very strong difference in the extent to which staff views on these aspects of the university are reported by those who had experienced racism at university and those who had not.

Table 5.2 Staff views on extent of respect, safety and belonging by whether experienced racism at university

Statements about the university: sense	Extent of agreement with statement					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Academic staff						
Not experienced racism at university						
– % –						
I have a sense of belonging	23.2	48.1	18.1	8.5	2.2	100.0
I feel safe	38.6	47.2	8.6	4.4	1.2	100.0
I am treated with respect	32.4	51.2	10.2	4.8	1.5	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	25.5	46.6	18.9	7.1	1.9	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers	30.6	49.5	12.3	6.1	1.5	100.0
I feel supported	23.9	48.4	16.6	8.8	2.3	100.0
Had experienced racism at university						
I have a sense of belonging	5.0	26.8	23.3	28.1	16.8	100.0
I feel safe	7.9	34.1	23.7	22.6	11.8	100.0
I am treated with respect	5.2	33.5	24.1	23.7	13.5	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	3.9	20.4	23.9	31.1	20.7	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers	6.1	31.3	23.1	25.7	13.8	100.0
I feel supported	4.6	25.3	25.1	27.4	17.5	100.0
Non-academic staff						
Not experienced racism at university						
I have a sense of belonging	24.4	53.2	16.0	5.3	1.1	100.0
I feel safe	38.1	52.7	6.2	2.3	0.7	100.0
I am treated with respect	32.3	56.1	7.9	3.0	0.8	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	25.0	52.5	16.7	4.7	1.1	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers	30.9	55.6	9.1	3.7	0.8	100.0
I feel supported	27.7	53.9	12.0	5.2	1.2	100.0
Had experienced racism at university						
I have a sense of belonging	5.6	34.7	26.1	24.7	8.9	100.0
I feel safe	9.8	43.4	23.2	17.6	5.9	100.0
I am treated with respect	6.2	43.1	25.1	19.9	5.7	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	4.7	25.9	28.4	27.9	13.1	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers	7.3	41.8	23.4	21.1	6.5	100.0
I feel supported	5.4	35.7	25.9	24.4	8.7	100.0

n = 26,537

This difference was seen for both academic and non-academic staff, and is large. For example, 23.2 per cent of academic staff who had not experienced racism at university strongly agreed that they had a sense of belonging at the university. This drops to just 5.0 per cent for those who have experienced direct racism at university, and the total agreeing falls from an overwhelming 71.2 per cent, to just 31.8 per cent. Across all of the groups feeling safe was the attribute which received the highest levels of agreement, albeit at quite different rates. For academic staff who did not report having experienced direct racism at university the level of agreement that they felt safe at university was 85.8 per cent, with this falling to less than half this level, 42.0 per cent, for those who had experienced racism. For non-academic staff the equivalent proportions were 90.8 per cent and 53.3 per cent.

When responses are considered by university sector, there is generally little substantive difference. This is illustrated, in the case of the statement about belonging, in Table 5.3,

and the pattern was broadly repeated across the other attributes of the Go8 universities being a percentage point or so below other groupings in the level of support.

Table 5.3 Staff views on whether they have a sense of belonging at university, by university grouping

University grouping	Extent of agreement with statement I have a sense of belonging					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
			– % –			
ATN	20.8	49.8	17.1	9.4	2.9	100.0
Go8	19.2	47.5	19.4	10.4	3.5	100.0
IRU	21.6	49.2	17.6	9.1	2.6	100.0
Other	22.0	47.3	18.1	9.4	3.2	100.0
RUN	22.3	47.2	18.1	9.1	3.2	100.0

n = 27,740

Around a quarter of staff expressed some level of disagreement with one of these statements. That is, they reported feeling unsafe, not belonging, or not treated with respect, and they were asked the reasons for this. Table 5.4 shows the distribution of reasons by gender and by broad ethnicity. The most common response across most of the breakdowns shown was the general culture of the university, rather than any personal attribute. The proportion giving this response is considerably higher amongst staff than it was for students.

There are, however, some quite large differences in identification by the groups of staff. The largest is associated with gender and the identification of the reason for their disagreement as being ‘Gender, gender identity or gender expression’. This was identified amongst academic staff by 34.5 per cent of women, and 57.6 per cent of those who chose other descriptors, but just 13.1 per cent of males. The contrast was not so marked for non-academic staff. Women were also more likely to identify age, and living with a disability, as reasons for their disenchantment.

There were very large differences for both academic and non-academic staff between those who had a ‘European’ background and those that did not. Looking at the data for non-academic staff, while 13.6 per cent of those identified as ‘European’ raised race or ethnicity as a reason, 57.7 per cent of those who were not did. There were similar patterns of discordance between ‘European’ and non-‘European’ staff, with the role of culture and religion, 13.8 per cent relative to 39.6 per cent, and national identity, 8.9 per cent and 24.9 per cent. A very similar pattern was seen in the responses by academic staff.

One specific question for academics only was that of disciplinary orientation. This was cited across all of the classifications by around a quarter of these staff.

As with students, many staff identified multiple reasons, including combinations of class, gender, ethnicity and disability. Indeed, just restricting the analysis to race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability and age produced 126 different combinations. The most common were race and religion; race and gender; race, religion and gender; race, religion and class; race and age; race, religion and age; gender and age; race and class; and race, religion, gender and sexuality.

Table 5.4 Staff who disagreed with feeling a sense of respect, safety and belonging by reasons, by type and gender and broad ethnicity

Reason for disagreeing (a)	Gender				Broad ethnicity		Total
	Female	Male	Other	N/S	'European'	Non- 'European'	
Proportion citing as a reason for disagreeing with feeling respect, safety and belonging (%)							
Academic							
Racial/Ethnic Identity	44.1	48.1	47.1	51.2	17.0	68.5	46.7
Culture/Religion	29.2	31.7	20.0	33.7	16.4	41.0	30.6
National Identity	20.0	24.8	14.1	27.1	12.3	30.3	22.6
Gender, gender identity or gender expression	34.5	13.1	57.6	26.9	27.8	25.0	26.2
Sexual orientation	4.4	5.3	30.6	6.8	6.7	5.0	5.7
Living with a disability	9.4	4.1	21.2	7.4	8.8	6.5	7.5
Social class	12.4	8.7	23.5	9.8	11.5	10.6	10.9
Age	24.6	17.2	23.5	22.1	25.5	18.5	21.5
Political orientation	12.4	18.3	25.9	20.1	17.1	15.1	16.0
Disciplinary orientation	26.3	23.5	22.4	22.3	26.0	23.6	24.6
General culture at university	51.6	48.5	48.2	49.2	55.7	45.9	50.1
Other	12.9	11.6	23.5	7.6	17.0	8.2	11.9
Non-academic							
Racial/Ethnic Identity	33.9	39.6	29.3	42.2	13.6	57.7	36.5
Culture/Religion	27.1	26.1	27.2	29.5	13.8	39.6	27.2
National Identity	15.8	20.4	10.9	17.7	8.9	24.9	17.2
Gender, gender identity or gender expression	22.2	16.2	59.8	20.4	23.1	19.7	21.3
Sexual orientation	4.3	10.2	39.1	6.9	8.5	6.0	7.2
Living with a disability	9.0	6.2	37.0	9.8	11.3	7.1	9.1
Social class	11.4	10.9	17.4	11.0	9.6	12.9	11.3
Age	25.6	22.2	35.9	22.8	26.4	22.9	24.6
Political orientation	10.4	17.3	32.6	14.7	14.9	12.2	13.5
Disciplinary orientation	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
General culture at university	47.1	46.2	58.7	44.2	49.5	44.2	46.7
Other	15.5	13.2	16.3	11.8	19.4	9.7	14.4

n = 6,908 (3,454 for question on disciplinary orientation)

(a) Multiple reasons could be identified

These results, as well as highlighting the role of race, identity and gender, indicate broader questions for universities, given that half of these respondents cited the overall culture of the university, and a quarter that a factor was their disciplinary orientation. The survey did not however collect specific data as to whether this was triggered by clashes between disciplines, or conflicting approaches within disciplines.

5.1.1 Behavioural responses

As with students, staff reported a range of constraining behaviours, with the extent of this again varying dramatically depending upon whether or not they experienced racism at university. For example, 39.3 per cent of academic staff and 31.5 per cent of non-academic staff who experienced racism reported that they always, or often, 'mentally prepare for racist conversations', in contrast to just 6.1 per cent and 3.1 per cent for those who had not experienced such racism, Table 5.5.

An additional question, asked of all staff, was whether they did not express views because of the risk to their visa status. While a large proportion of staff stated that this was not applicable⁵⁷, some 15 per cent of those who had experienced racism said that they did.

Table 5.5 Staff frequency of behavioural constraints, by type and whether experienced direct racism at university

Types of constraining behaviour	Frequency of behavioural constraint						Total
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	Not applic-able	
Academic staff: Not experienced racism at university – % –							
Uncomfortable revealing identity	4.8	5.3	17.5	26.1	42.8	3.5	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	2.8	3.4	9.5	19.0	46.6	18.7	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	1.9	4.2	16.3	25.9	47.2	4.6	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	1.4	2.1	6.6	15.4	68.9	5.6	100.0
Not express views visa risk	0.8	1.4	4.0	6.5	41.3	46.0	100.0
Academic staff: Experienced racism at university							
Uncomfortable revealing identity	14.1	22.2	34.9	14.1	12.3	2.5	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	13.8	15.0	23.4	17.3	19.5	11.0	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	18.0	21.3	34.7	17.2	7.6	1.3	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	12.2	15.1	21.3	21.0	26.1	4.3	100.0
Not express views visa risk	7.6	7.3	7.3	8.0	29.2	40.6	100.0
Non-academic staff: Not experienced racism at university							
Uncomfortable revealing identity	5.9	4.8	14.0	25.3	45.1	4.9	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	2.7	2.9	8.6	18.3	48.1	19.4	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	1.0	2.1	11.6	24.7	55.3	5.3	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	0.9	1.5	5.6	15.3	70.3	6.4	100.0
Not express views visa risk	0.4	0.7	2.4	5.2	43.9	47.4	100.0
Non-academic staff: Experienced racism at university							
Uncomfortable revealing identity	10.3	20.6	38.2	16.9	12.5	1.6	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing/items	11.6	14.9	23.1	21.2	20.9	8.3	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	12.0	19.5	36.5	20.0	10.7	1.3	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	8.0	11.2	20.1	24.7	32.2	3.8	100.0
Not express views visa risk	8.6	7.6	13.3	13.0	57.5	40.4	100.0

n = 26,498 (excludes those who did not respond to the frequency of constraints)

⁵⁷ Unlike the table in the student chapter this table shows the 'not applicable' responses due to the high response on this question. The reason for this different approach was that due to the structure of the survey instrument it was possible to restrict the student question to international students as these were identified in the earlier part of the survey. However, for staff there was no way to stream them into the question as there was no question on nationality or visa status. It would appear though that some staff for whom 'not applicable' was the appropriate response actually responded 'never'.

5.2 Experience of direct racism at university

This section considers the experience of university staff of direct racism at university.

5.2.1 Incidence of direct racism

As has previously been reported, academic staff reported much higher levels of direct racism at university, 20.5 per cent, than non-academic staff, 11.8 per cent. Table 5.6 considers this further by including the level of the staff member, their gender and broad ethnicity. The most significant factor associated with variations in incidence is the broad ethnic background of staff.

Of the two major genders, although male staff have overall a higher rate of experiencing racism at university, this is not necessarily consistent when considered by the level of the staff member. It persists for non-academic staff, except in relation to the more highly paid group where the rate reported by women, 10.4 per cent, is well above the male rate of 7.7 per cent.

Table 5.6 Staff, incidence of direct racism at university by main genders, level and broad ethnicity

Staff level (a)	Gender (b)		Broad ethnicity		Total	Proportion non- 'European'	Respondents
	Female	Male	'European'	Non- 'European'			
Prop'n reported direct racism at university (%)						- % -	Persons
Academic							
A-B Continuing	21.2	19.6	8.0	37.1	21.3	45.6	1,881
A-B Fixed/Casual	16.6	20.3	6.1	30.9	18.6	50.0	2,475
C-E Continuing	19.2	19.3	8.2	40.0	20.5	38.7	4,004
C-E Fixed/Casual	19.3	15.1	8.7	34.5	18.0	36.0	772
N/S Continuing	24.0	32.4	15.5	42.4	32.1	61.7	321
N/S Fixed/Casual	17.7	17.9	7.6	26.7	19.0	59.5	686
Total (c)	19.0	19.7	8.0	35.8	20.5	45.0	10,245
Non-academic							
<\$100k	9.7	11.1	3.9	21.7	11.1	40.5	6,463
\$100-150k no staff	10.5	11.1	4.7	21.0	11.4	41.1	3,822
\$100-150k supervise	10.2	13.8	5.2	25.9	11.6	30.9	2,888
\$150k+	10.4	7.7	4.0	22.6	9.8	31.0	1,424
Total (c)	10.3	11.7	4.5	23.0	11.8	39.5	16,449

(a) Level A: Associate Lecturer or equivalent; Level B: Lecturer or equivalent; Level C: Senior Lecturer or equivalent; Level D: Associate Professor or equivalent; Level E: Professor or equivalent

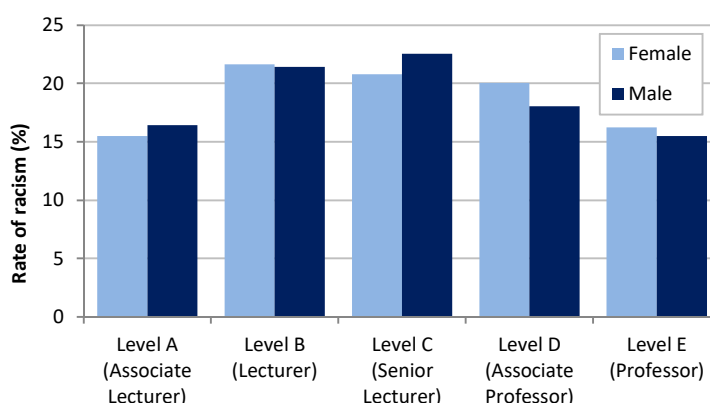
(b) Only main genders shown, due to small numbers in other classifications, others are included in total

(c) Excludes those without details on level and employment status

Amongst academic staff there is no consistency in the relative outcomes for men and women, and indeed the data shown in the table shows no consistency overall in the rate of racism reported, either by level of staff, or whether they are employed on a continuing basis or are casual or fixed term staff.

One reason for the lack of consistency across levels is that the incidence of racism for academic staff appears to have an inverse u-shaped distribution, Figure 5.1, with the rate of racism being lower for Level A staff, then rising before declining at the more senior levels. For female staff the rate peaks for Level B staff at 21.6 per cent, and for male staff at Level C at 22.5 per cent.

Figure 5.1 Academic staff, rates of racism at university by level and main genders



By employment arrangements, aggregated across levels, the differences are small. Across all academic staff, continuing staff reported a rate of 21.6 per cent, continuing contingent 19.5 per cent, fixed term contract 18.3 per cent, casual or sessional 18.4 per cent, and honorary, adjunct and emeriti 18.5 per cent.

As detailed in the Table 5.6 above, the rate of racism at university reported by staff who were not identified as being European was 35.8 per cent for academic staff and 23.0 per cent for non-academic staff. These compare with 8.0 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively for those with a European heritage. Table 5.7 considers this in more detail by the main ethnic and religious classifications. Again, it is noted that any individual may have multiple ethnicities.⁵⁸

As shown, a number of groups of academic staff reported rates of racism at university of 50 per cent or more. These include Palestinian academic staff, 60.0 per cent, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, 56.6 per cent and religious Jewish staff, 56.5 per cent. For all of the ethnic and religious groups the rate of racism at university reported by non-academic staff is lower than that reported by academic staff.

⁵⁸ For example, the classification of European based on country of birth has a number of people who also have another identification. Considering academic staff, the rate of reported direct racism of 9.6 per cent shown in the table for this group comprises a rate of 7.7 per cent for those who solely have a European heritage, and 30.9 per cent for those who have other identities in addition to their European identity.

Table 5.7 Staff, rates of racism experienced at university by ethnicity and religion and staff type

Ethnicity and religion	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– % –	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	56.6	41.1
African	45.0	30.1
Afro-diasporic	47.6	28.0
Māori	25.0	12.1
Other Indigenous	33.3	17.7
Pasifika	48.3	23.5
Middle Eastern	46.8	32.0
Palestinian	60.0	33.3
Central Asian	22.7	4.6
South Asian	41.3	27.1
Chinese	28.2	19.3
North East Asian	30.3	24.9
South East Asian	28.5	21.0
Americas	26.2	18.6
Southern Europe	11.5	6.3
Europe	9.6	5.7
Not Stated	30.0	19.3
Jewish (religious)	56.5	50.4
Jewish (secular)	27.8	24.7
Muslim	44.8	31.2
Religion: Christianity	15.9	11.0
Religion: Other Specified	31.8	19.0
Total	20.5	11.8

n = 26,694

5.2.2 Location and nature of racism

The most frequently cited locations of racism by both academic and non-academic staff were in shared staff spaces, and work meetings, Table 5.8. Noting that multiple locations could be specified, 54.7 per cent of academic staff who experienced racism at university reported that they experienced this in work related meetings as well as 40.8 per cent in common staff spaces. For non-academic staff the proportion citing these spaces was higher at 53.7 per cent and meetings lower at 51.6 per cent.

The rate at which other locations were cited was relatively low, other than the more generic ‘generally on campus’, although for academics, lecture theatres were cited by 15.3 per cent and tutorials by 20.3 per cent. While the rate was not as high as in these other locations, 13.6 per cent of the academic staff who experienced racism at university, along with 6.9 per cent of the non-academic staff, identified ‘university complaints handling services’ as one of the locations where they experienced racism.

Table 5.8 Location of direct racism at university, staff who experienced direct racism by type

Location	Staff type:	
	Academic	Non-academic
	– % –	
Lecture theatre	15.3	4.3
Seminar/Tutorial	20.3	6.8
Online lecture	6.6	1.5
Online tutorial	9.4	2.4
Retail on campus	6.6	6.7
Library	2.4	3.6
University health service	1.8	1.7
Reflection/prayer space	0.8	0.8
Generally on campus	20.1	24.6
Other	14.7	11.0
Work meeting	54.7	51.6
Staff space	40.8	53.7
Perform evaluations	25.1	14.4
Complaints	13.6	6.9

n = 3,888

One specific location which was reported by 25.1 per cent of academic and 14.4 per cent of non-academic staff as being where they had experienced racism at university was in performance evaluations. This is considered further in Table 5.9. Experiencing racism in this context was much more common for staff with a non-‘European’ background. Of those in this group experiencing racism performance evaluations were identified as a location of racism by 27.4 per cent of academic staff and 16.3 per cent of non-academic staff.

Considering these experiences as a share of total responding staff, not just those experiencing racism, 9.4 per cent of all academic staff from non-‘European’ backgrounds reported having experienced racism in university performance evaluations, as did 3.5 per cent of non-academic staff with these backgrounds.

Table 5.9 Staff reporting racism in performance evaluations, type of staff by broad ethnicity

Staff type	Broad ethnicity	Proportion of those reporting direct racism	Proportion of all staff
		– % –	
Academic	‘European’	17.1	1.4
	Non-‘European’	27.4	9.4
Non-Academic	‘European’	8.4	0.4
	Non-‘European’	16.3	3.5

n = 26,542

The most consistently highly ranked item, when staff who experienced racism at university were asked to nominate the form it took, was ‘feeling I could not express my views freely’. This was identified by 62.7 per cent of academic staff with a ‘European’ background and 61.4 per cent of those from non-‘European’ backgrounds, Table 5.10. It was reported at a slightly lower rate by non-academic staff with these backgrounds, 59.6 per cent and 56.9 per cent respectively. Again, this highlights the question of the universities’ openness to freedom of speech.

Table 5.10 Nature of direct racism, staff by type and broad ethnicity

Type (a)	Staff type:		Non-academic	
	Academic			
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
	– % –			
Singled out/Excluded	34.0	47.0	30.2	41.6
Inappropriate comments etc	37.6	40.1	35.8	42.6
Could not express views freely	62.7	61.4	59.6	56.9
Told unintelligent	26.4	39.9	25.6	39.2
Missed opportunity	32.0	51.5	23.3	40.9
Not Trusted	28.0	44.2	28.2	40.6
Stopped by university security	0.7	5.4	1.1	4.1
Physical harassment	3.8	4.9	2.0	3.5
Verbal harassment	20.9	21.4	17.8	18.4
Online harassment	9.6	12.3	7.3	8.1
Denied promotion	16.0	27.8	14.7	24.8
Negative assessments	24.2	36.1	12.0	17.8
Other	12.2	8.1	10.7	9.6

n = 3,972

(a) Multiple responses could be identified

The largest differences in the reported experiences of staff from non-‘European’ backgrounds relative to others related to missed opportunities. Here there was a 19.5 percentage point difference in citing this for academic staff, and a 17.6 percentage point gap for non-academic staff. Lesser, but still large differences were also reported for ‘not being trusted’, gaps of 16.2 percentage points and 12.4 percentage points, and being told or made to feel that they were unintelligent, 13.4 percentage points and 13.6 percentage points.

Although the actual incidence was low, a stark difference is also seen in being inappropriately stopped by university security. While this was reported by only 0.7 per cent of academic staff with a ‘European’ background. For those with a non-‘European’ background the rate of 5.4 per cent was eight times higher. A similar, although less marked, difference was recorded by non-academic staff.

Of those staff who cited not being able to express their views freely 50.7 per cent also cited being singled out or excluded, along with 49.1 per cent citing not being trusted, 47.3 per cent saying they felt they were not trusted, 44.8 per cent reporting receiving inappropriate comments or jokes, and 43.7 per cent being told or made to feel unintelligent.

5.2.3 Factors associated with experiencing direct racism

The most common factor identified as a reason for why they were the target for racism against staff was that of their cultural, racial, or ethnic background. This was identified by 51.1 per cent of those non-academic staff with ‘European’ backgrounds and 61.1 per cent of academic staff with these backgrounds, Table 5.11. In contrast, the rates are much higher for those with non-‘European’ backgrounds, 71.7 and 79.2 per cent respectively.

Table 5.11 Staff who have experienced direct racism, reported reasons for this, by type and broad ethnicity

Perception of reason why they were subject of direct racism (a)	Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	Ethnic background 'European'	Non-'European'	Ethnic background 'European'	Non-'European'
	- % -			
Language or accent	26.5	42.0	20.6	33.0
Cultural/racial/ethnic background	61.1	79.2	51.1	71.7
Skin colour & physical racial/ ethnic features	30.4	56.0	30.0	53.6
Religious background	22.0	19.9	18.7	17.9
Because of current conflict in the Middle East	17.8	19.0	16.3	12.1
Because of COVID	2.6	3.6	5.5	5.4
Other	15.0	8.0	18.0	8.4

n = 3,793

(a) Multiple reasons could be given.

Religion was cited by some 17.9 per cent to 22.0 per cent of respondents, with the highest rate being amongst academic staff with a 'European' background. Those who cited religion, and identified their religion, comprised 29.2 per cent who identified as Muslim, 28.8 per cent whose religion was Judaism, and 30.0 per cent who identified as Christian. There was less consistency with regard to conflict in the Middle East and COVID. Table 5.12 probes this data more deeply taking into account the region/country of birth of the respondent.

This reveals a range of complex patterns across the different groups. Language and accent were most frequently cited by those born in the Americas (excluding the US and Canada) at 81.2 per cent, cultural, racial, ethnic background by those born in the Middle Eastern and North African countries (excluding Iran) at 94.2 per cent, China 87.7 per cent, and Pakistan 85.0 per cent.

Skin colour and other physical features was raised most frequently by those born in Singapore, 80.0 per cent, religious background was most frequently cited by those from Pakistan, 75.0 per cent, those born in South Africa, 65.4 per cent, and those born in the balance of Middle Eastern and North African countries (excluding Iran), 53.8 per cent. This latter group also had a high rate citing conflict in the Middle East, 62.5 per cent, along with Pakistan 52.5 per cent, South Africa 50 per cent, and Iran 49.1 per cent. COVID, while only being reported as a factor in the total data at a low level was cited by 26.3 per cent of those born in China and 16.7 per cent by those born in Singapore.

Table 5.12 Staff who have experienced direct racism, perceived reason why targeted, by region/country of birth

Country/region of birth	Reported reason (a)						
	Language or accent	Cultural/ racial/ ethnic background	Skin colour & physical racial/ ethnic features	Religious background	Because of current conflict in the Middle East	Because of COVID	Other
Proportion reporting (%)							
Aust & NZ	5.9	67.6	41.4	18.6	17.4	3.0	15.3
UK Ireland US Canada	33.5	62.9	25.9	20.0	23.5	4.1	16.5
Bal W&N Europe	61.8	60.0	9.1	10.9	18.2	3.6	10.9
S&E Europe	64.9	64.9	12.3	28.1	24.6	1.8	8.8
Bal Oceania	40.0	80.0	73.3	33.3	0.0	6.7	0.0
Iran	63.2	75.4	49.1	21.1	49.1	1.8	1.8
Bal MENA	42.3	94.2	47.1	53.8	62.5	0.0	5.8
Indonesia	61.1	77.8	72.2	5.6	5.6	5.6	22.2
Malaysia	43.8	79.2	62.5	12.5	4.2	8.3	4.2
Singapore	33.3	73.3	80.0	10.0	3.3	16.7	3.3
Vietnam	61.9	76.2	52.4	14.3	0.0	4.8	4.8
Philippines	22.7	59.1	54.5	4.5	4.5	0.0	4.5
Bal SE Asia	61.5	84.6	69.2	11.5	3.8	3.8	15.4
Hong Kong	44.4	83.3	72.2	5.6	5.6	11.1	5.6
China	57.9	87.7	61.4	3.5	1.8	26.3	4.4
Bal NE Asia	52.6	76.3	57.9	5.3	0.0	15.8	10.5
India	43.8	79.9	72.6	16.4	4.1	1.8	7.3
Pakistan	42.5	85.0	70.0	75.0	52.5	0.0	12.5
Bangladesh	48.3	72.4	72.4	41.4	20.7	0.0	0.0
Sri Lanka	45.2	71.4	73.8	9.5	2.4	0.0	16.7
Nepal	33.3	66.7	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bhutan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Bal S&C Asia	81.2	67.1	31.8	5.9	2.4	0.0	9.4
Bal Americas	19.2	61.5	38.5	65.4	50.0	3.8	7.7
South Africa	45.3	76.8	74.7	12.6	8.4	1.1	4.2
Bal Africa	45.1	70.3	52.6	19.1	14.2	4.6	7.1
Not stated	5.9	67.6	41.4	18.6	17.4	3.0	15.3

n =3,793

(a) Persons could report more than one reason

The role of religion is considered in Table 5.13 which presents, by broad ethnic classification and religion, the proportion who experienced racism, and the proportion of those who experienced racism and who cited religion as one of the reasons. Most notably Judaism is associated with a rate of direct racism at university of 45.1 per cent for those classified as ‘European’ and 59.4 per cent for those identified as non-‘European’, with 83.3 per cent, and 84.5 per cent, respectively of those reporting racism citing religion as a factor. While the rate of experiencing racism for those with traditional Aboriginal beliefs is even higher at 60.7 per cent, religion was rarely cited, just 4.8 per cent, as one of the grounds for the racism that the person experienced. The other religion with a high degree of attribution was Islam where 24.2 per cent of ‘European’ Muslims and 39.3 per cent of those identified as non-‘European’ reported experiencing racism at university, with 100.0 per cent and 70.0 per cent respectively, citing religion as one of the reasons for being targets for the racism that they had experienced.

Table 5.13 Staff reporting direct racism at university, by religion and whether they identify religion as being a factor

Religion	'European'		Non-'European'		Persons experiencing racism
	Proportion experiencing direct racism	Proportion of those citing religion as one of the factors	Proportion experiencing direct racism	Proportion of those citing religion as one of the factors	
		- % -			Persons
No religion	4.0	3.2	24.3	3.9	1,175
Buddhism	11.8	7.7	24.0	7.7	110
Catholic	5.9	30.1	22.7	11.6	261
Other Christian	7.1	35.2	26.6	20.7	414
Hinduism	16.7	0.0	27.9	20.4	140
Islam	24.2	100.0	39.3	70.0	222
Judaism	45.1	83.3	59.4	84.5	175
Aboriginal Traditional	-	-	60.7	4.8	106
Sikhism	-	-	31.4	26.7	16
Other religion	7.6	0.0	23.2	30.8	18
Have but not stated	13.0	27.8	37.2	19.0	496
Other spiritual belief	4.5	8.0	24.6	6.1	78
Not answered	9.8	4.2	26.2	13.8	829
Total	5.8	20.4	28.3	19.0	4,040

n = 26,694

5.2.4 Who participated in acts of racism

Reflecting the high proportion of acts of racism which were reported as occurring in staff meetings and facilities, academic staff, at all levels, reported that other academic staff were the most frequently involved group in the most significant act of racism they had experienced at university in the past two years. Similarly non-academic staff most frequently identified other non-academic staff, again across all levels, Table 5.14.

The data also shows some crossover between these two groups, that is academic staff reporting racism from non-academic staff and vice versa. This is fairly symmetrical. The ratio of identifying non-academic staff relative to academic staff by academic staff was 48.8 per cent, while for non-academic staff the ratio of identifying academic staff relative to non-academic staff was 46.4 per cent. There appears to be no specific deviation in this by the level of the persons who experienced racism.

Students were identified as a participant in the racism they had experienced at university by just under a third of academic staff, 32.4 per cent, and by a lesser 18.1 per cent of non-academic staff, many of whom do not necessarily have extensive contact with students in their work duties. Across academic staff by level students were cited more frequently by the lower ranked A and B level staff than the C, D and E level staff. Mirroring the data on the incidence of racism, the rates of identification of students as participants was significantly lower for those staff employed on a fixed term or casual basis, relative to continuing staff.

Table 5.14 Staff reporting on who was involved in direct racism, by type and level

Staff level	Who participated in most significant act of racism (a)							
	Academic staff	Professional staff	Facilities staff	Students	Leadership	Other role	Not sure	Not state
Proportion of staff experiencing racism at university identifying these as participants (%)								
Academic								
A-B Continuing	64.9	27.8	3.7	38.0	44.2	4.2	1.3	5.0
A-B Fixed/Casual	62.4	33.1	5.4	32.2	39.2	5.2	2.9	4.3
C-E Continuing	68.0	30.5	5.7	30.5	54.1	3.8	1.4	1.6
C-E Fixed/Casual	67.2	41.8	6.7	20.9	53.0	3.0	0.8	5.2
N/S Continuing	57.9	29.5	2.1	31.6	54.7	4.2	1.1	6.3
N/S Fixed/Casual	62.8	37.2	6.6	45.5	38.8	5.8	1.7	5.0
Total (b)	65.0	31.7	5.1	32.4	48.0	4.5	1.6	3.8
Non academic								
<\$100k	27.5	64.9	6.6	20.3	41.6	5.5	1.8	4.0
\$100-150k no staff	25.4	64.9	6.8	10.2	47.2	3.6	2.4	5.1
\$100-150k supervise	30.1	58.7	5.5	20.4	42.9	4.6	0.9	4.3
\$150k+	32.6	64.4	6.7	12.6	43.0	8.9	0.0	2.2
Total (b)	28.7	61.9	6.9	18.1	43.7	5.0	1.9	5.6

n = 4,040

(a) Multiple participants could be identified.

(b) Includes those with details not stated

A significant feature of this table is the role of university leadership, as discussed in Chapter 2. This is considered further for academic staff, by detailed staff level, in Table 5.15. While for academic staff from 'European' backgrounds there is neither a consistent pattern of the incidence of racism nor of the involvement of university leadership by level, this is not the case for others. For academic staff with non-'European' backgrounds there is a consistent trend, except at the most senior level, for higher rates of racism being experienced by more senior staff, ranging from 28.2 per cent for Level A staff to 41.8 per cent for Level D staff. This is accompanied by increasing reporting of university leadership as a participant. The proportion of those in the population experiencing racism who cite university leadership as participants rises from 41.4 per cent for Level A staff to 66.5 per cent for Level D staff. For Level E staff the rate of racism at university is 34.3 per cent, and the university leadership is identified as a participant in 59.1 per cent of cases.

Table 5.15 Rate of racism at university and proportion where leadership was participant, academic staff by level and broad ethnicity

Staff level	Broad ethnicity			
	'European'		Non-'European'	
	Racism at university	Leadership participant	Racism at university	Leadership participant
- % -				
Level A (Associate Lecturer or equivalent)	5.5	46.7	28.2	41.4
Level B (Lecturer or equivalent)	8.2	32.7	37.2	43.2
Level C (Senior Lecturer or equivalent)	9.5	31.4	41.0	54.9
Level D (Associate Professor or equivalent)	7.1	52.7	41.8	66.5
Level E (Professor or equivalent)	8.0	39.8	34.3	59.1

n = 9,589, excludes those who reported they did not know or preferred not to say.

This degree of identification of university leadership as participants in racism at university appears to hold consistently across groupings of universities with limited variation. For non-'European' academic staff the rate at which university leadership is identified as a

participant in the racism that the staff member has experienced runs from 48.6 per cent at Go8 universities, 49.7 per cent at the RUN universities, 51.8 per cent at members of the ATN, and 53.4 per cent at both the IRU and 'Other' universities.

5.2.5 Racism and other discrimination at university

This section considers a range of adverse events staff may experience, some of which may be considered as racism, and others where racism may or may not play a part. Specific questions in the survey were:

- Have you ever had your professionalism challenged by a student?
- Have you ever had your professionalism or expertise challenged by colleagues and/or management?
- Have you ever experienced racist student evaluations?
- Have you ever had your employment prospects impacted by racist student evaluations?
- Have you ever been used in a tokenistic way for diversity and inclusivity?
- Have you ever been inappropriately expected to do work tied to your cultural identity that is not part of your job description?

Only a limited number of these questions were asked of non-academic staff.

Responses to these questions are shown in Table 5.16. In this table one feature is the proportion of staff who are uncertain as to whether or not they had experienced these particular events. One possible reason for this is the often complex nature of the events being considered and the difficulty in identifying the underlying drivers. For example, with respect to being used in a tokenistic way with regard to diversity or inclusion, it is often quite uncertain why a person may have been asked to perform a certain task, attend a specific meeting, or address a particular forum, and the rationale is rarely ever explained by those taking the decision. Rather the person is left to speculate. Similarly, while one might be asked explicitly to undertake a role as part of seeking to show diversity, for example, in the membership of a committee, an appropriate action to promote diversity, a person may find that their views are then not taken seriously, rendering their membership tokenistic and not substantive. Equally since a person has a number of different characteristics it can be unclear which of these was in play. For example, if you are a woman with a specific heritage, was this because you were a woman, or because of your heritage? Unpicking these strands is frequently quite difficult, and hence expressions of uncertainty are not surprising.

With the exception of student challenges to authority, these adverse experiences are reported more frequently by staff with non-'European' heritages. While in some cases such as having a colleague challenge one's professionalism, the difference is relatively small, for example 33.2 per cent of non-'European' relative to 29.7 per cent of 'European' non-academic staff, in others they are large. Non-'European' academic staff reported being subject to racist student evaluations at more than two and a half times the rate of those with 'European' backgrounds, 23.0 per cent compared with 8.6 per cent and 12.2 per cent

reported having their employment impacted by such assessments, compared to 2.7 per cent.

Being used in a tokenistic way was reported by 13.3 per cent of 'European' academic staff and 28.6 per cent of all non-'European' academic staff respondents. This however is likely to also include gender and other forms of tokenism. For women the proportion responding that they had been used in a tokenistic way is 16.8 per cent for 'European' academic staff and 34.2 per cent for non-'European' respondents. Even higher rates were reported by those using other gender identities and where gender was not stated.

Table 5.16 Staff incidence of negative events, potentially due to racism by broad ethnicity

Event	Broad ethnicity							
	'European'				Non-'European'			
	Whether experienced negative event				Whether experienced negative event			
	Yes	No	Uncert- ain	Total	Yes	No	Uncert- ain	Total
Academic staff - % -								
Student challenge professionalism	31.1	67.2	1.7	100.0	30.9	65.4	3.7	100.0
Colleague/Management challenge professionalism	28.6	69.1	2.4	100.0	36.3	58.5	5.2	100.0
Racist student evaluations	8.6	87.6	3.8	100.0	23.0	68.6	8.4	100.0
Employment impacted by racist student evaluations	2.7	93.2	4.1	100.0	12.2	75.8	12.0	100.0
Used tokenistically for diversity	13.3	82.2	4.5	100.0	28.6	57.1	14.3	100.0
Expected work assoc. with identity	3.2	95.3	1.5	100.0	15.9	79.6	4.5	100.0
Non-academic staff								
Colleague/Management challenge professionalism	29.7	67.4	3.0	100.0	33.2	62.1	4.7	100.0
Used tokenistically for diversity	7.3	88.6	4.2	100.0	18.3	67.4	14.3	100.0
Expected work assoc. with identity	1.8	96.8	1.4	100.0	10.8	85.6	3.7	100.0

n = 26,161 & 10,109 for the academic specific questions

As noted above trying to ascertain the actual factors behind such adverse events is difficult, and frequently multiple issues are in play. For this reason, not all of the negative events can be directly ascribed to racism. This can be seen in Table 5.17 which reports on the reasons people believed that they had experienced any of the above items.

Included in the table is a subtotal of what can be considered as the three reasons linked to the incidence of racism or racial discrimination. This indicates that 73.4 per cent of non-'European' academic staff and 63.5 per cent of non-academic staff with this background identify at least one race-related reason for being subjected to the behaviour that they experienced.

Table 5.17 Staff who have had negative experiences, perceived reasons for this, by type and broad ethnicity

Factor identified (a)	Staff type:		Non-academic	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
	'European'	'Non-European'	'European'	'Non-European'
	- % -			
Racial/Ethnic Identity	12.5	64.8	6.6	54.9
Culture/Religion	9.5	31.7	5.3	27.9
National Identity	10.5	25.7	5.8	20.4
Subtotal - any racial	23.7	73.4	13.0	63.5
Gender, gender identity	43.9	28.8	39.5	26.6
Sexual orientation	6.6	4.9	7.9	5.2
Living with a disability	5.1	3.1	6.5	3.8
Social class	7.5	6.6	8.1	8.3
Age	30.9	20.4	31.9	24.4
Political orientation	7.9	7.9	3.9	4.2
Academic discipline	16.6	15.0	4.9	5.0
General culture at university	24.4	23.7	28.8	27.0
Other	9.8	5.5	11.1	6.5

n = 11,151

(a) Multiple factors could be identified.

Also prominent in the table are gender, gender identity and gender expression, and age. Looking across all staff shows that age is cited by half of those aged under 25 years, with the proportion then falling to under 20 per cent in the 45-54 age group and then rising, eventually reaching 55.8 per cent for those aged 75 years and over.

5.3 Direct racism outside university

As explored in Chapter 2, the experiences of racism reported in the survey occur both at university and more widely. A general pattern was that experiences of racism solely at university was low relative to the respondent's experiencing racism, both at university and elsewhere, or elsewhere only. This also applies to university staff, Table 5.18, and this pattern is consistent across the major categories used for analysis.

Table 5.18 Staff, proportion who experienced direct racism at and outside of university by type and broad ethnicity

Broad ethnicity	Where experienced direct racism				Total
	At university only	University and elsewhere	Elsewhere only	Did not experience	
	Academic				
	- % -				
'European'	3.8	4.2	5.8	86.2	100.0
Non-'European'	11.3	24.5	21.2	43.1	100.0
	Non-Academic				
'European'	2.2	2.4	5.7	89.7	100.0
Non-'European'	6.5	16.4	26.2	50.8	100.0

n = 26,974

As has been noted in Chapter 2, many experiences are relatively infrequent. Table 5.19 shows the proportion of staff who have experienced racism, either at university or more generally, 'very frequently' or 'frequently' (relative to 'sometimes' and lower frequencies). It includes a subtotal of the incidence of higher frequency racism at university.

Table 5.19 Staff, proportion experiencing specific forms of direct racism, ‘frequently’ or ‘very frequently’ at, and outside of, university by type and broad ethnicity

Where frequent or very frequent racism occurred (a)	Staff type:		Non-academic	
	Academic	Non-	‘European’	Non-
	‘European’	‘European’	‘European’	‘European’
	– % –			
As staff at university	1.6	11.0	0.9	5.1
At related university activity	0.5	4.3	0.3	1.7
Any at university	1.7	12.0	1.0	5.6
At other education facility	0.2	1.9	0.2	1.2
In other employment	0.3	2.6	0.3	2.8
Housing	0.4	3.5	0.2	2.8
Security & police	0.3	2.5	0.1	1.9
Government	0.4	2.2	0.3	1.6
Health service	0.4	3.6	0.3	2.3
Shop/Restaurant	0.4	4.8	0.3	4.3
Sport/Public event	0.4	2.8	0.4	2.4
Social media	2.3	11.0	1.9	9.0
Public transport	0.4	4.6	0.5	4.0
Other	0.2	1.0	0.4	0.8
Any	4.4	25.3	3.3	18.6

n = 26,694

(a) Multiple places could be identified

‘European’ academic staff reported a 4.4 per cent rate of higher frequency racism, with high frequency racism at university being 1.7 per cent. ‘European’ non-academic staff reported rates of 1.0 per cent and 3.3 per cent. In contrast the rates for non-‘European’ staff are some six times greater. For academic staff 12.0 per cent reported higher frequency racism at university, and 25.3 per cent higher frequency racism outside of university. For non-academic staff the proportions are 5.6 per cent and 18.6 per cent.

Outside of university the main places identified are social media, public transport and shops and restaurants.

5.4 Indirect racism

The majority of staff reported being subject to indirect racism at university. That is, racist comments and other behaviours which they hear or see, but are not directed at them, although they concern a group with whom they identify. The incidence of this runs from 59.7 per cent for non-academic staff with ‘European’ backgrounds, 65.5 per cent for academic staff with these backgrounds, 76.8 per cent for non-academic staff from non-‘European’ backgrounds, and 80.2 per cent of academic staff from these backgrounds, Table 5.20. These levels of incidence point to a pervasive level of racism at university. At the same time however only a much smaller proportion reported that they experienced this type of racism frequently. Considering the incidence of ‘very frequent’ or ‘frequent’ indirect racism, the proportions are 8.5 per cent for ‘European’ non-academic staff, 12.7 per cent for ‘European’ academic staff, 18.3 per cent for non-‘European’ non-academic staff and 25.6 per cent for non-‘European’ academic staff.

Table 5.20 Staff proportion experiencing forms of indirect racism at university, type of racism, by staff type and broad ethnicity

Type and frequency of indirect racism	Staff type:		Non-academic	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
Incidence by type – % –				
Racist terms, jokes, etc	49.8	69.7	46.7	67.3
Denigrating culture	37.2	63.5	29.8	56.5
Using negative stereotypes	48.8	70.6	41.6	65.1
Trivialising negative outcomes	43.7	68.8	35.8	61.3
Blaming for adverse outcomes	45.1	62.1	36.7	54.5
Any indirect for population	65.5	80.2	59.7	76.8
Frequency of any type				
Never	34.5	19.8	40.3	23.2
Rarely	25.1	20.8	27.8	25.6
Sometimes	27.6	33.8	23.4	33.0
Frequently	8.3	15.6	6.0	12.2
Very frequently	4.5	10.1	2.5	6.0

n = 26,631

All of the forms which were identified in the survey were frequently cited, although denigration of culture, trivialising negative outcomes for a group and being blamed for an adverse outcome for others tend to be mentioned slightly less often.

5.5 Impact

Across all the major classifications the most frequently reported consequence of experiencing direct racism at university for staff was a negative impact on their mental health, followed by taking action to restrict their participation at university, see Table 5.21.

Table 5.21 Staff who experienced direct racism at university, Impact by staff type and broad ethnicity

Impact of racism (a)	Staff type:		Non-academic	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
– % –				
Negative career impact	43.1	58.5	26.2	43.5
Negative mental health	58.9	76.9	55.1	69.2
Limit university participation	54.9	63.2	45.1	51.9
Limit contacts	15.6	26.0	13.3	20.3
Other	9.6	8.5	13.1	9.0
No impact	13.3	5.0	15.3	9.0

(a) Multiple impacts could be identified

As with students in the previous chapter, regression analysis has been undertaken to identify factors in the experience of racism, or of the person involved, which may impact these outcomes. Outcomes focused on here are negative career, and negative mental health impacts. The models shown have been fitted separately for academic and non-academic staff.

As with the student analysis, only selected variables from the model are shown. Age was insignificant, as were all genders relative to a female, other than being male. Additionally, a number of ethnicities were non-significant across all four models and are not shown. As with previous analysis care is needed with interpretation as it focuses on a subpopulation

of those who report racism. As a result while a variable may show a lower independent contribution to the specific outcome to the extent the variable may also be associated with a higher rate of racism, the population outcome in terms of incidence of the outcome may be higher than that of a variable associated with low incidence of racism but a higher incidence of poor outcomes from this experiencing racism.

As illustrated in Table 5.22:

- Staff level was generally insignificant except for one category, not stated for non-academic staff.
- The frequency of direct racism was very significant in the career models with high frequency racism being associated with a 24.9 percentage point increase in the likelihood of a negative career outcome for academic staff and a lower, but still strong, 19.7 per cent increase for non-academic staff. While the regression estimates for the frequency of direct racism in the mental health model were positive, they were inconsistent with changes in frequency and were for the most part not significant or only weakly significant. Taken together given the consistency of the sign it would, however, suggest the possibility of some type of impact.
- In the career models there was little impact of the frequency of indirect racism, although there is some suggestion of an impact on mental health.
- Who was involved in the racist actions has impacts, but these varied. The only consistent and strongly significant result was the involvement of university leaders. This was associated with a 10 to 20 percentage point increase in both the negative impact on career and on mental health. For academics the involvement of fellow academics has a 10 percentage point increase in the likelihood of negative mental health outcomes, while for non-academics the involvement of other non-academics, relative to their non-involvement, was associated with a 7 percentage point increase in the likelihood of poor mental health outcomes. Student involvement was associated with an 8.2 percentage point increase in the likelihood of a negative mental health outcome for academic staff but had a 10.2 percentage point negative impact on the likelihood of an adverse career impact for non-academic staff.
- In both mental health models, being a male relative to a female was associated with a reduction of around 5 percentage points on the probability of a negative outcome, but while this was strongly significant for academics, it was only at the 90 per cent confidence level for non-academic staff.

Table 5.22 Staff, selected factors associated with incidence of negative career and mental health outcomes from racism at university

Selected variables only	Impact on career		Impact on mental health	
	Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
Staffing level:				
A-B Continuing	base	–	base	–
A-B Fixed/Casual	0.046	–	-0.009	–
C-E Continuing	0.025	–	-0.019	–
C-E Fixed/Casual	-0.034	–	-0.024	–
N/S Continuing	0.047	–	-0.026	–
N/S Fixed/Casual	-0.026	–	-0.102 **	–
N/S	-0.016	–	0.030	–
<\$100,000	–	base	–	base
\$100-150k no staff	–	0.006	–	0.020
\$100-150k supervise	–	-0.016	–	0.017
\$150k+	–	-0.043	–	0.040
N/S	–	0.035	–	0.054
Frequency of direct racism:				
Very frequent	0.249 ***	0.197 **	0.014	0.112
Frequent	0.228 ***	0.181 ***	0.098 ***	0.079 *
Sometimes	0.095 ***	0.076 **	0.046 *	0.064 **
Rarely	base	base	base	base
Not stated	0.045	0.174 *	-0.050	0.054
Frequency of indirect racism:				
Very frequent	0.095	-0.007	0.041	0.113 **
Frequent	0.052	-0.051	0.080 **	0.010
Sometimes	0.065	-0.028	0.032	0.004
Rarely	base	base	base	base
Never	-0.004	0.060	0.009	0.028
Not stated	0.150	-0.163 *	0.117 *	-0.046
Who was involved:				
Academic staff	0.038	0.069 **	0.100 ***	-0.003
Non-academic staff	0.015	0.071 **	0.041 *	0.070 ***
Facilities staff	0.078	0.092	0.078 *	-0.112 *
Students	-0.009	-0.102 ***	0.082 ***	0.009
University leadership	0.119 ***	0.203 ***	0.109 ***	0.099 ***
Gender (selected relative to female):				
Male	0.027	0.044	-0.063 ***	-0.050 *
Form of racism:				
Singled out/Excluded	0.043	0.038	0.083 ***	0.074 ***
Inappropriate comments etc	-0.079 ***	0.020	0.016	0.070 ***
Could not express views	0.001	-0.035	0.016	0.058 **
Told unintelligent	0.117 ***	0.091 ***	0.064 ***	0.092 ***
Denied promotion	0.331 ***	0.239 ***	0.072 **	0.017
Neg assessments	0.096 ***	0.059	0.040	0.018
Missed opportunity	0.296 ***	0.273 ***	0.033	0.098 ***
Not Trusted	0.049 *	0.079 **	0.057 **	0.116 ***
Stopped by university security	-0.097	-0.012	0.058	0.125
Physical harassment	0.080	0.285 ***	-0.059	0.089
Verbal harassment	0.121 ***	0.034	0.095 ***	0.112 ***
Online harassment	-0.079	0.025	0.061	0.226 ***
Ethnicity / religion (selected only):				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.028	-0.025	0.064	0.133 ***
African	-0.071	-0.157 *	0.062	0.024
Palestinian	-0.134	-0.485 **	0.069	-0.078
European	0.000	-0.116 ***	-0.021	-0.032
Jewish (religious)	-0.127 *	0.102	0.101 ***	0.208 ***
Jewish (secular)	-0.115	-0.102	-0.027	0.065
Muslim	-0.028	0.014	-0.021	0.100
Christian	-0.026	0.089 **	-0.061 **	-0.058 *
Other specified religion	-0.019	0.018	0.045 *	-0.015
Records	1,965	1,784	1,960	1,791
pseudo r ²	0.310	0.308	0.207	0.200

Statistical significance: *** at 99 per cent level, ** at 95 per cent level, * at 90 per cent level.

- There were a diverse range of impacts associated with the form of the racism. Consistent across all models was a marked effect of being told or made to feel unintelligent. This was associated with an increase of between 6.2 to 11.7 percentage points in adverse mental health and academic outcomes across the models. While not being trusted also had an impact consistently, this was weak in some models but was of a similar magnitude. Being denied a promotion was linked with a very strong increase of racism having an adverse impact on career, some 23.9 percentage points for non-academic staff and 33.1 percentage points for academic staff. These academic staff also had an increase, at the 90 per cent confidence level, in the likelihood of an adverse mental health outcome. Missed opportunities as a result of racism had a strong impact on career outcomes, 27.3 percentage points for non-academic staff and 29.6 for academic staff.
- There were limited consistent effects by ethnicity/community/religion, although being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person was associated with a 13.3 percentage point increase in the likelihood of negative mental health outcomes for administrative staff. Identifying as Palestinian or 'European' was associated with a marked decrease in the risk of negative career outcomes for non-academic staff.⁵⁹ Having Judaism as a religion was associated with a weakly significant decrease in the likelihood of a poor career outcome in response to an experience of racism, but there was a 10.1 and 20.8 percentage point increase in the likelihood of a poor mental health outcome for academic and non-academic staff respectively. Identifying as a secular Jew had no impact in either of the models. Christianity showed some inconsistent effects, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, which were significant at the 95 per cent confidence level.

5.6 Perceptions of the university

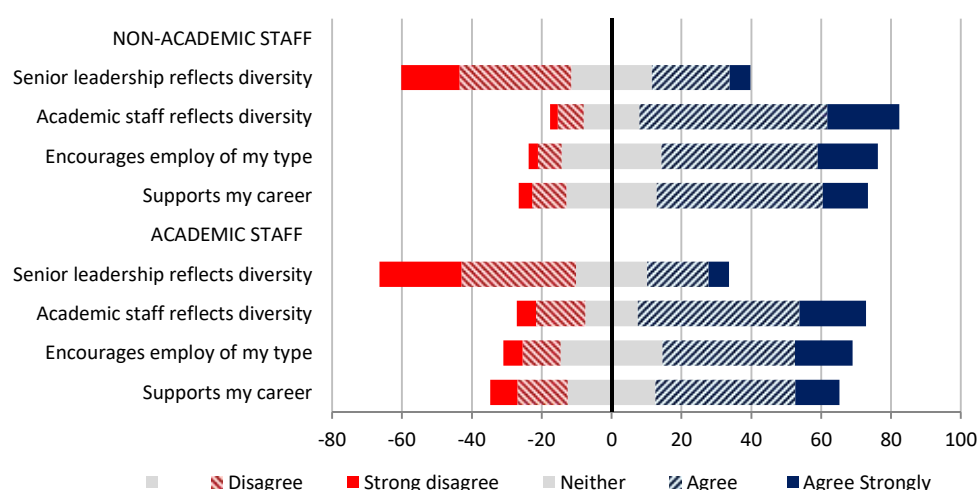
Two dimensions of staff perceptions about their university were collected. The first were general questions around support and diversity, the second related to anti-racism policies.

5.6.1 Perceptions of support and inclusion

Overall, Figure 5.2, university staff have a positive view of the diversity of staff, the extent to which universities employ people like them, and the extent it supports their careers. They however have markedly negative views about the diversity of university leadership. In each of these areas non-academic staff are somewhat more positive than academic staff.

⁵⁹ Again, it should be noted that this form of modelling looks at the independent contribution and not the total impact. For example, an ethnicity might show a negative effect, but a person with that ethnicity may have still a high probability of an adverse outcome if another factor such as frequency was present.

Figure 5.2 Staff views on university support and inclusion



When, however, account is taken of whether or not staff members experienced racism, a more polarised position is seen, Table 5.23. Looking at academic staff and the proportion who agreed that the university supports their career, 14.9 per cent of those staff who have not experienced racism strongly agreed and 44.3 per cent agreed, to give a total of 59.2 per cent. This drops to 3.7 per cent and 19.1 per cent respectively, to give a total of 22.8 per cent for those who did experience racism. Similar falls are seen in responses to the statement that the university “Encourages employment of people with my background”, although it has less of an effect on the level of agreement with the proposition that academic staff reflect diversity.

Experiencing racism is also associated with an even further diminution of agreement with the proposition that senior leadership reflects diversity. Here not only does the already mediocre level of agreement at 22.9 per cent by those who have not experienced racism at university halve to just 11.9 per cent for those who have, but the level of disagreement for those who have experienced racism increases to 67.1 per cent.

Table 5.23 Staff, perceptions of the university, by staff type and whether experienced direct racism at university

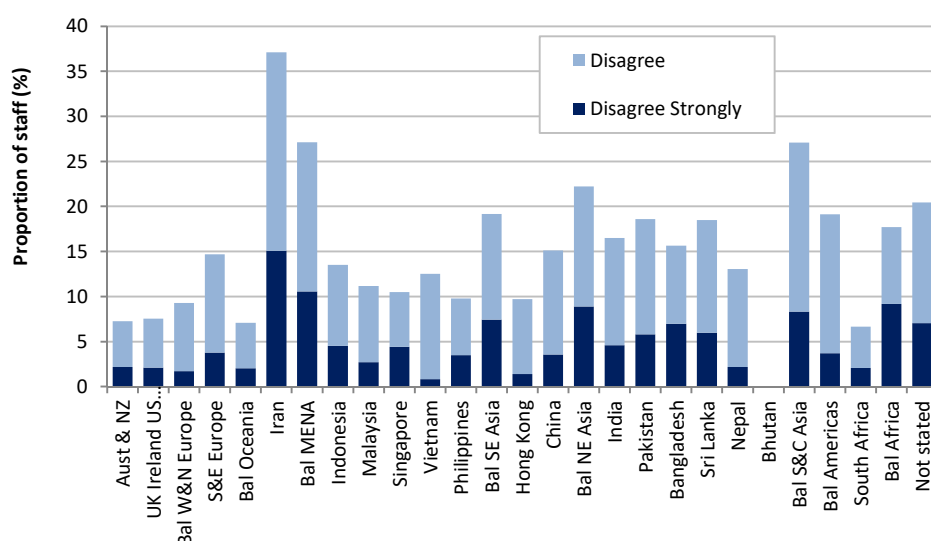
Statements about the university	Agreement with statement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure	
Academic staff							
Not experienced direct racism at university							
– % –							
Supports my career	14.9	44.3	23.7	10.6	4.3	2.2	100.0
Encourages employment of people with my background	17.9	37.6	25.2	6.4	2.2	10.8	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	5.8	17.1	18.3	29.6	15.5	13.8	100.0
Academic staff reflect diversity	21.1	47.0	12.8	12.2	3.0	3.9	100.0
Have experienced direct racism at university							
Supports my career	3.7	19.1	26.7	26.7	21.4	2.4	100.0
Encourages employment of people with my background	4.9	20.9	29.5	22.1	16.9	5.8	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	2.8	9.1	15.8	26.4	40.7	5.3	100.0
Academic staff reflect diversity	9.0	35.8	19.4	19.7	14.2	1.9	100.0
Non-academic staff							
Not experienced direct racism at university							
Supports my career	14.0	49.7	23.7	7.3	2.2	3.3	100.0
Encourages employment of people with my background	17.0	42.0	24.4	4.4	1.2	11.0	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	5.6	20.6	20.2	28.0	12.1	13.4	100.0
Academic staff reflect diversity	19.9	48.9	12.7	5.8	1.2	11.5	100.0
Have experienced direct racism at university							
Supports my career	3.4	21.2	32.5	25.5	14.8	2.6	100.0
Encourages employment of people with my background	6.1	26.4	32.2	17.8	10.9	6.6	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	2.5	11.6	18.9	27.8	32.9	6.3	100.0
Academic staff reflect diversity	7.8	38.9	23.9	13.7	7.3	8.5	100.0

n = 25,067

There are similar effects seen in the data for non-academic staff, with for example the level of agreement that the university supports their career for those who have experienced racism of 24.6 per cent, being a mere fraction of the 63.6 per cent reported by those who have not. In terms of expressing strong support for this statement, the proportions are 3.4 per cent relative to 14.0 per cent.

While in aggregate, only 14.8 per cent of academic staff and 8.4 per cent of non-academic staff responded negatively to the question on the university encouraging people from their background seeking employment, as illustrated in Figure 5.3, there was considerable variation across respondents by country of birth.

Figure 5.3 Extent of disagreement with the statement “The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious background to seek employment”, staff responses by country of birth



Specifically, while only some seven percent of those born in Australia and in European countries responded negatively, this rose to 37.1 per cent of those born in Iran, and 27.1 per cent both for those born in the balance of South and Central Asia and in the balance of the Middle East and North Africa region. Very clearly these responses are reflections of individual respondents’ own experiences at university and as such highlight the extent to which they have experienced racism and discrimination.

Further analysis did not identify any major differences in the pattern of distribution of responses when this was undertaken by the level of staff, or by the groupings of universities, emphasising systemic problems, rather than something isolated to a few universities.

5.6.2 Perceptions of racism and anti-racism policies

Staff perceptions of whether racism is a problem at their university and assessment of the emphasis placed on anti-racism policies are shown in Table 5.24. This is again split by those who have experienced racism at the university and those who have not. The pattern of responses to the question on whether racism is a problem reflects the shift seen in the figure in Chapter 2. While only 24.4 per cent of academic staff who have not experienced racism consider it is a problem, and just 4.2 per cent agree strongly, these rates increase to 74.8 per cent and 31.8 per cent for those who have.

For non-academic staff the shift is from only 16.9 per cent of those who had not experienced racism agreeing, with just 2.2 per cent strongly agreeing that racism was a problem at their university, to 66.3 per cent agreeing that it was a problem, and 20.6 per cent strongly agreeing, amongst those who had experienced racism. Again, it is to be noted that the sequencing of the survey asked this question before any questions on actual experience to avoid priming.

While there is also a shift in views as to whether there is too much of a focus on racism relative to other issues, this question is, as has been noted, subject to perceptions of the extent of other problems which a respondent considers are of equal or greater importance, including sexism and ableism, and the relative weight placed on these by the university.

Table 5.24 Staff, perceptions of racism at university and racism policies, by staff type and whether experienced direct racism at university

Statement concerning racism and the university	Agreement with statement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure	
Academic staff							
Not experienced direct racism at university – % –							
Too much focus on racism relative to other issues	4.9	8.8	26.8	38.7	15.3	5.6	100.0
Racism is a problem at university	4.2	20.3	25.5	29.7	13.4	7.0	100.0
Have experienced direct racism at university							
Too much focus on racism relative to other issues	5.2	6.3	23.3	34.7	25.7	4.8	100.0
Racism is a problem at university	31.8	43.1	14.4	5.8	3.6	1.4	100.0
Non-academic staff							
Not experienced direct racism at university							
Too much focus on racism relative to other issues	3.5	8.2	31.2	39.2	11.2	6.8	100.0
Racism is a problem at university	2.2	14.7	27.8	34.1	12.8	8.4	100.0
Have experienced direct racism at university							
Too much focus on racism relative to other issues	4.8	10.1	27.3	32.7	18.9	6.3	100.0
Racism is a problem at university	20.6	45.7	19.4	8.2	3.6	2.6	100.0

n = 25,025

5.7 Summary

Staff participated in the survey at a much higher rate than students. There is, however, a marked difference in the experiences of academic and non-academic staff. While both groups reported significant levels of racism at university, the rate reported by academic staff was the highest of the four major groups considered, and that of non-academic staff the lowest. Both groups were most likely to identify the participants in their experience of racism from within their own ranks, but there was little evidence of the rate of racism being systematically associated to any large extent with the level or the gender of the staff member or whether academic staff were employed on a casual basis.

As with students, the level of racism experienced by staff outside university was higher than they experienced at university, although around one in five academic staff members and a lesser proportion of non-academic staff who experienced racism reported that they only experienced it at university.

Experiences of racism at university has a range of impacts. It was associated with much higher levels of avoidance behaviour, such as not revealing their identity or wearing identifying clothing or other items, and lower levels of belonging, safety and respect. Respondents experiencing direct racism at university reported a set of negative outcomes, including limiting their participation at university, negative career impacts, and poorer mental health, with these impacts being more marked on staff who have non-‘European’

identities. The dominant part of the experience of racism is reported as not being able to express their views freely.

The racism experienced by staff has several distinct dimensions. Much takes place in staff meetings and in staff common areas. It frequently takes the form of challenges to the staff member's professionalism, and is reflected in performance appraisals, and for academic staff especially from non-'European' backgrounds, being challenged by staff and students, and facing racist student evaluations. These staff also reported being used in tokenistic ways to demonstrate the university's commitment to diversity.

Central also is the nature and role of university leadership. While staff generally reported that they consider that academic staff reflects a diversity of cultural, ethnic and other backgrounds, they distinctly reported that the leadership of universities does not. Centrally both academic staff and non-academic staff identified university leadership as participants in the racism that they have experienced.

6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

Content warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this section contains distressing content about racism

This chapter provides an overview of the survey findings with respect to the experiences of racism at Australian universities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

Comparisons are made with the non-Indigenous population, and for some measures the non-Indigenous population is identified as those of a 'European' background and those of a non-'European' background.

6.1 Profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff who responded to the survey

Of the 76,131 survey respondents, 2,227 identified as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. This comprised 2,006 respondents who identify as Aboriginal, 65 who are Torres Strait Islander people and 156 who identify as a person who is both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Table 6.1. Of the respondents who identified as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, 1,373 are domestic students, 347 academic staff and 507 non-academic staff.⁶⁰ The relative distribution across student, academic staff and non-academic staff is very similar to the distribution for non-Indigenous respondents.⁶¹

⁶⁰ There are 1,319 respondents who responded 'not sure' or 'prefer not to say' in response to the question on whether they are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. These respondents are classified as not being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

⁶¹ The language of 'Non-Indigenous' in this chapter refers specifically to non-Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons, rather than also excluding Indigenous peoples of other countries.

Table 6.1 Number and proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous respondents, by respondent type

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Response group				Total
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander					
Number	1,373	–	347	507	2,227
% distribution	61.7	–	15.6	22.8	100.0
Non-Indigenous					
Number	32,570	14,154	10,452	16,728	73,904
% distribution	44.1	19.2	14.1	22.6	100.0

Note: Respondents who responded not sure or prefer not to say to the question about whether they are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are classified as non-Indigenous for the purpose of this and subsequent tables.

Almost three-quarters, 74.1 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents said that they identified with particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nation(s), community or language groups, 13.1 per cent reported that they had been unable to trace the details of their heritage, 8.3 per cent said they did not, 1.4 per cent were not sure, and 3.2 per cent preferred not to say.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents are slightly more likely to be female, 58.6 per cent, compared to non-Indigenous respondents, 54.2 per cent, and substantially less likely to be male, 23.9 per cent, than non-Indigenous respondents, 31.9 per cent, Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Gender identification, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Gender identification	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (a)	non-Indigenous (b)
	-%-	
Female	58.6	54.2
Male	23.9	31.9
Other	4.5	2.4
Not stated	13.0	11.5
Total	100.0	100.0

(a) n=2,229; (b) n=73,904.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who participated in the survey are more likely to be studying for an undergraduate degree than their non-Indigenous counterparts and less likely to be studying for a master's level degree. Otherwise, the distribution of qualifications being studied for are similar, Table 6.3.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are more likely to be studying part-time and more likely to be studying remotely than non-Indigenous students. Indigenous students are less likely to be at a Go8 university, 17.8 per cent, compared to non-Indigenous students, 34.1 per cent, and more likely to be at Regional University Network (RUN) universities, 24.0 per cent, compared to 11.1 per cent.

The distribution of the academic level of employment is similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous academic staff participants in the survey. The main difference is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics are more likely to be at

Level B (Lecturer) and less likely to be at Level C (Senior Lecturer) than non-Indigenous academics, Table 6.4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics are less likely to be employed at a Go8 university, 28.2 per cent, than other academics, 39.3 per cent, and more likely to be at a regional university (Regional University Network), 14.4 per cent, than other academics, 8.7 per cent.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff are more likely to be earning less than \$100,000 per annum than their non-Indigenous counterparts, 46.6 per cent, compared to 39.1 per cent. They are less likely to be earning \$100,000-\$150,000 and not supervising staff, and less likely to be earning this amount and supervising staff, Table 6.5.

Similarly to academic staff, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff who participated in the survey are less likely to be employed at a Go8 university and more likely to be at a RUN university and an Innovation Research University (IRU).

Table 6.3 Characteristics of university study, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Respondent characteristics	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (a)	Non-Indigenous (b)
	-%-	
Level of qualification studying for		
Doctoral	6.3	8.2
Master	9.5	18.9
Other Post-graduate degree	1.8	1.3
Post-graduate Diploma/Certificate	4.7	3.1
Undergraduate degree	56.7	52.6
Diploma/Advance Dip/Assoc	3.3	2.2
Tertiary preparation	0.8	0.3
Vocational	2.6	1.0
Other & not stated	14.4	12.5
Full-time/part-time study		
Full time	62.4	72.6
Part-time	23.0	15.4
Not stated	14.6	12.0
Use student accommodation		
Use student accommodation	17.3	18.4
Do not use student accommodation	69.1	69.6
Not stated	13.6	12.0
Study on campus/remotely		
On campus	69.3	83.2
Remote	29.4	16.2
Not stated	1.2	0.6
Type of university		
ATN	15.9	20.6
Go8	17.8	34.1
IRU	19.4	13.7
Other	22.9	20.5
RUN	24.0	11.1

(a) n=1,373; (b) n=46,724.

Table 6.4 Characteristics of academic staff employment, by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status

Academic staff level and university grouping	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (a)	Non-Indigenous (b)
	-%-	
Academic level		
Level A (Associate Lecturer or equivalent)	14.4	16.5
Level B (Lecturer or equivalent)	32.3	26.0
Level C (Senior Lecturer or equivalent)	14.4	18.2
Level D (Associate Professor or equivalent)	12.4	12.2
Level E (Professor or equivalent)	15.0	16.1
Not sure	4.3	5.5
Prefer not to say	7.2	5.6
Type of university		
Australian Technology Network (ATN)	20.5	19.3
Group of 8 (Go8)	28.2	39.3
Innovative Research (IRU)	15.3	15.6
Other	21.6	17.1
Regional University Network (RUN)	14.4	8.7

(a) n=347; (b) n=10,452

Table 6.5 Characteristics of non-academic staff employment, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Non-academic staff level and university grouping	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (a)	Non-Indigenous (b)
	-%-	
Non-academic staff pay/staff supervision		
<\$100k	46.6	39.1
\$100-150k no staff	19.1	23.4
\$100-150k supervise	14.8	17.5
\$150k+	7.7	8.5
Not stated	11.8	11.6
Type of university		
ATN	18.7	20.4
Go8	27.4	37.5
IRU	18.7	14.4
Other	20.5	18.3
RUN	14.6	9.5

(a) n=507; (b) n=16,728

6.2 Overall perceptions of belonging and inclusion: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students

This section reports on the importance that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students attach to, and how they perceive the university environment in relation to, belonging, safety, respect and inclusion and how these are impacted by experiences of racism.

6.2.1 Importance of belonging, safety, respect and inclusion

As outlined in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, staff and students place considerable importance on having a sense of belonging and engagement with their university. Taken as a whole, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students place similar levels of importance on belonging, safety, respect and inclusion as other staff and students at Australian Universities, Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Importance placed on belonging, safety and respect at university, staff and students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Statements about the university: Importance	Extent of agreement with statement					Total
	Extremely important	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	
– % –						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (a)						
I have a sense of belonging	37.3	39.5	18.0	3.8	1.4	100.0
I feel safe	57.3	31.1	8.5	1.7	1.3	100.0
I am treated with respect	52.9	36.2	8.9	1.2	0.9	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	49.3	34.6	11.6	2.5	1.9	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	36.1	40.0	19.3	3.2	1.4	100.0
I feel supported	46.9	39.3	10.9	1.7	1.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous (b)						
I feel safe	30.4	42.6	21.9	4.4	0.7	100.0
I am treated with respect	58.0	33.8	7.0	0.9	0.3	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	52.0	39.4	7.7	0.7	0.3	100.0
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	38.8	40.8	16.1	3.3	1.0	100.0
I feel supported	33.2	44.8	18.6	2.8	0.6	100.0
I have a sense of belonging	40.8	45.1	12.3	1.4	0.4	100.0

(a) n=507; (b) n=16,728

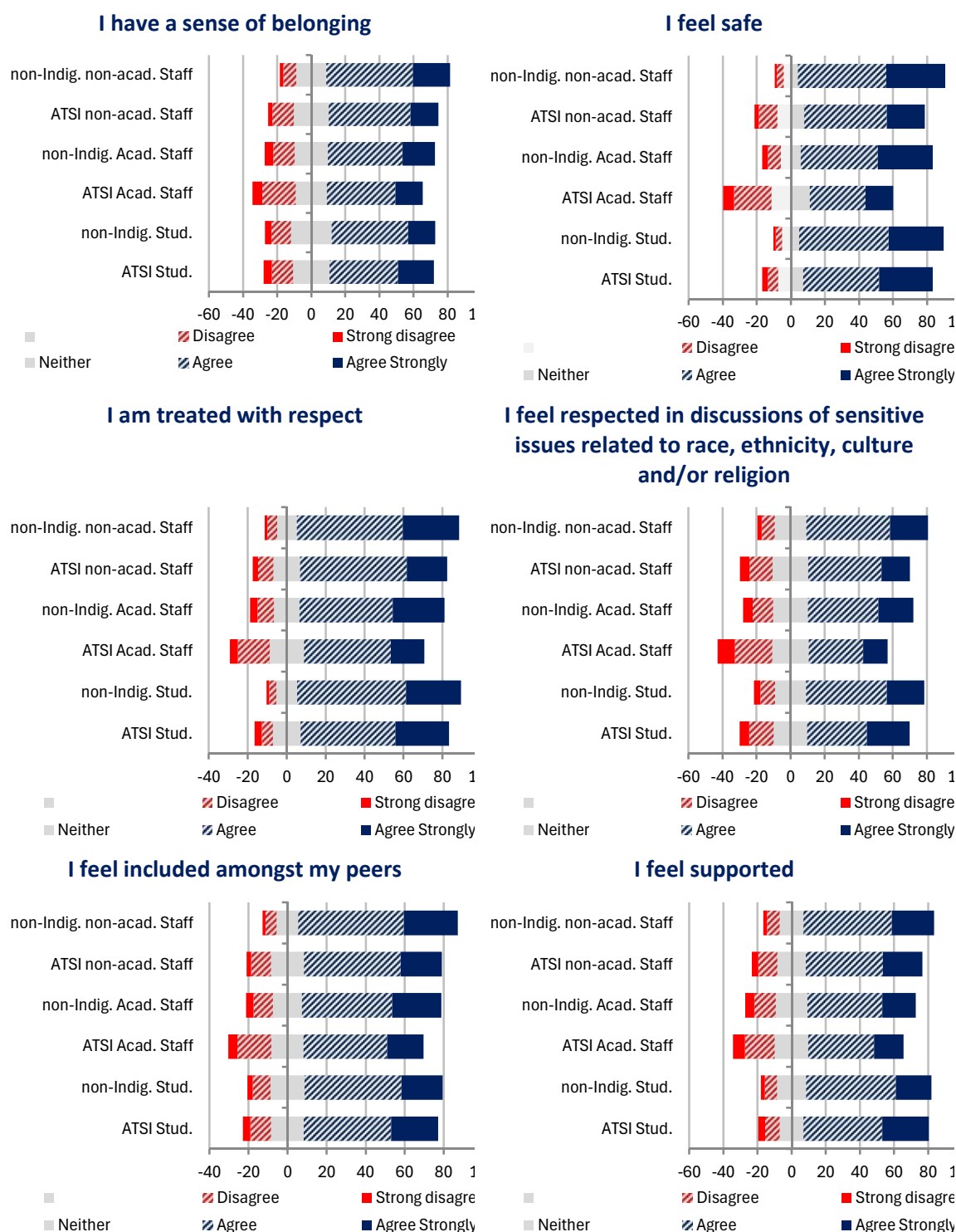
6.2.2 Experiences of belonging, safety, respect and inclusion

While the majority of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are positive about their experiences at university with regard to belonging, safety, respect and inclusion, they are more likely to respond negatively (disagree or strongly disagree with the statement) and less likely to respond positively (agree or strongly agree) than their non-Indigenous counterparts, Figure 6.1; Table 6.7.

The difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and other students is small in relation to having a sense of belonging, feeling included amongst their peers and feeling supported. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are less likely to strongly agree, and more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that they feel safe at university, compared to non-Indigenous students. Indigenous students are less likely to strongly agree or agree that they feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion, 60.2 per cent, compared to 69.4 per cent.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff are less positive about their own experience with regard to belonging, safety, respect and inclusion than are non-Indigenous academic staff. They are also less positive about these aspects of their experience at their university than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-academic staff. Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff 56.4 per cent strongly agreed or agreed that they have a sense of belonging and 25.4 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed. This compares to 63.0 per cent of non-Indigenous academic staff who strongly agreed or agreed that they have a sense of belonging and 17.6 per cent who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 6.1 Staff and student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status



Of particular concern are the low levels of the feeling of safety amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff, with 49.0 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that they feel safe and 28.6 per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. For non-Indigenous academic staff 77.6 per cent strongly agreed or agreed that they feel safe and just 10.9 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel safe.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

Table 6.7 Staff and student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Agreement or disagreement				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have a sense of belonging (a)					
	– % –				
ATSI student	21.0	40.3	21.4	12.3	4.9
Non-Indigenous student	15.9	45.0	23.8	11.5	3.8
ATSI academic staff	16.1	40.4	18.1	19.6	5.9
Non-Indigenous academic staff	19.1	43.9	19.5	12.5	5.0
ATSI non-academic staff	16.4	48.1	20.4	12.6	2.6
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	21.9	50.9	17.6	7.7	2.0
I feel safe (b)					
ATSI student	31.3	44.7	14.7	6.1	3.3
Non-Indigenous student	32.2	52.5	10.0	3.8	1.5
ATSI academic staff	16.3	32.7	22.5	22.2	6.4
Non-Indigenous academic staff	32.2	45.4	11.6	7.7	3.2
ATSI non-academic staff	22.2	48.6	15.8	10.8	2.6
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	34.5	52.0	8.2	4.0	1.2
I am treated with respect (c)					
ATSI student	27.5	48.9	14.2	5.8	3.7
Non-Indigenous student	28.2	56.0	10.8	3.6	1.4
ATSI academic staff	17.2	44.8	17.7	16.3	4.1
Non-Indigenous academic staff	26.6	48.0	13.2	8.5	3.8
ATSI non-academic staff	20.6	55.0	13.7	7.9	2.8
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	28.9	54.7	10.1	5.0	1.3
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion (d)					
ATSI student	25.3	34.9	19.7	14.3	5.8
Non-Indigenous student	22.0	47.4	18.3	8.4	3.9
ATSI academic staff	14.5	32.0	21.2	22.1	10.2
Non-Indigenous academic staff	20.6	41.5	20.4	12.0	5.6
ATSI non-academic staff	16.6	43.1	20.8	13.6	5.8
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	22.2	49.2	18.5	7.6	2.5
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff) (e)					
ATSI student	24.1	44.6	16.8	10.6	3.9
Non-Indigenous student	21.1	49.6	17.4	9.0	2.8
ATSI academic staff	18.6	42.7	16.6	17.4	4.7
Non-Indigenous academic staff	25.2	46.1	14.9	9.9	3.9
ATSI non-academic staff	21.1	49.5	16.9	10.1	2.4
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	27.7	54.2	11.0	5.8	1.4
I feel supported (f)					
ATSI student	27.3	46.3	13.9	8.6	4.0
Non-Indigenous student	20.9	52.6	17.0	7.1	2.4
ATSI academic staff	17.3	38.6	19.6	17.5	7.0
Non-Indigenous academic staff	19.7	43.9	18.5	12.6	5.3
ATSI non-academic staff	23.3	45.1	16.7	11.1	3.8
Non-Indig. non-academic staff	24.7	51.9	13.9	7.5	2.1

(a) n=74,843; (b) n=75,199; (c) n=75,400; (d) n=72,085; (e) n=74,826; (f) 75,122

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff reported higher levels of a sense of belonging and feeling safe, being treated with respect, feeling included amongst their peers and feeling supported, compared to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff, although they have substantially lower levels compared to non-Indigenous non-academic staff.

Consistent with the analysis reported in Chapters 3 and 4, there are marked differences in experiences with regard to belonging, safety, respect and inclusion between those who had

experienced racism at university and those who had not experienced direct racism at university.

Table 6.8 shows the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students strongly agreeing, or agreeing, with regard to belonging, safety, respect and inclusion according to whether they reported having experienced direct racism at their university. The data for non-Indigenous staff and students is also included in the table to provide a point of comparison.

Table 6.8 Staff and student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university, proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing, by respondent type and whether experienced direct racism at university, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Proportion agreeing or strongly agreeing with statement:	Whether experienced direct racism					
	Direct racism			No direct racism		
	Student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	Student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander -% -						
I have a sense of belonging	41.6	44.6	45.7	69.7	71.1	77.6
I feel safe	50.4	30.7	46.5	86.8	72.7	87.4
I am treated with respect	50.0	44.1	54.0	87.5	83.3	91.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	28.8	28.5	37.4	73.5	68.8	75.3
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	45.2	50.3	52.5	78.8	75.5	83.2
I feel supported	49.9	37.1	48.0	83.1	79.0	82.6
Non-Indigenous						
I have a sense of belonging	29.3	30.5	39.6	66.7	71.2	77.6
I feel safe	55.1	43.1	54.0	89.9	86.0	90.9
I am treated with respect	49.2	38.2	48.8	90.1	83.6	88.3
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	30.3	24.0	29.9	76.5	72.2	77.5
I feel included amongst my peers (other students or other staff)	37.9	36.1	48.7	76.7	80.2	86.5
I feel supported	39.5	29.2	40.3	79.4	72.2	81.6

There are several points to take from Table 6.8. Firstly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students who have not experienced direct racism at university are much more positive about their experiences of belonging, safety, inclusion, respect and support at university than those who experienced direct racism at university.

Second, the experience of direct racism at university generally has a larger negative impact on the experiences of belonging, safety, inclusion and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff than it does for non-academic staff and students. While academic staff who have not experienced direct racism at university have less positive experiences of belonging, safety, inclusion and support than non-academic staff and students, for most measures the difference between academic staff and non-academic staff and students is large for those who have experienced direct racism.

6.2.3 Reasons for not feeling respected and belonging

Students and staff who reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements around feeling a sense of belonging, safety and support were asked for the reasons why. The reasons included are a range of factors including several which related to race. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, academic staff and non-academic staff the most frequently identified reason is ‘racial/ethnic identity, with 81.1 per cent of academic staff selecting this reason, 74.0 per cent of non-academic staff and 66.4 per cent of students, Table 6.9. The next most common reasons given by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff are ‘culture/religion’ and ‘general culture at the university’. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic and non-academic staff are more likely to select ‘racial/ethnic identity’ than non-‘European’ staff who had experienced racism and a little less likely to select ‘culture/religion’.

A very significant difference in the reasons given relates to class. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, academic and non-academic staff are much more likely to identify social class as a reason than their counterparts who are of ‘European’ descent or non-‘European’ (and not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander). This highlights an important area of intersectionality with regard to the discrimination and racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students at university.

Table 6.9 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students who disagreed, or disagreed strongly that they have a sense of belonging, safety or respect at university by reason, by response type

Reasons for lack of belonging, respect and safety (a)	Respondent type								
	Student (b)			Academic staff (c)			Non-academic staff (d)		
	ATSI	‘Europ.’	Non-‘Europ.’ (e)	ATSI	‘Europ.’	Non-‘Europ.’ (e)	ATSI	‘Europ.’	Non-‘Europ.’ (e)
Racial/Ethnic Identity	66.4	23.9	64.2	81.1	17.0	67.4	74.0	13.6	56.2
Culture/Religion	40.2	23.7	47.3	36.0	16.4	41.5	38.7	13.9	39.7
National Identity	20.2	16.2	38.1	9.2	12.3	32.2	13.3	8.9	25.9
Gender, gender identity or gender expression	23.4	22.8	14.6	29.3	27.8	24.6	26.0	23.1	19.1
Sexual orientation	16.1	13.2	7.6	7.9	6.7	4.8	10.0	8.5	5.7
Living with a disability	19.8	15.8	7.5	11.6	8.8	6.1	11.3	11.3	6.7
Social class	24.3	15.6	16.3	18.3	11.5	9.9	24.0	9.6	11.9
Age	29.6	24.4	15.1	22.0	25.5	18.2	26.7	26.4	22.5
Political orientation	17.5	23.5	15.1	14.6	17.1	15.2	12.0	14.9	12.2
Academic disciplinary orientation				28.7	26.0	23.2			
General culture at university	38.0	35.8	31.4	53.7	55.7	45.3	48.7	49.5	43.8
Other	10.0	14.0	5.9	11.0	17.0	8.0	8.0	19.5	9.9

(a) Multiple responses could be given

(b) n=12,600; (c) n=3,453; (d) n=3,455

(e) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

6.2.4 Behavioural restrictions

The rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff reporting not engaging in behaviours or avoiding circumstances where they may face racism or triggers for racist acts are high for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders staff and students who

have experienced racism at university. While lower for those who have not experienced racism at university, they are still high, Table 6.10.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students who have experienced direct racism at university, only 12.9 per cent say that they are never uncomfortable revealing their identity and 36.6 per cent say they are always or often uncomfortable revealing their identity. Just 4.9 per cent say they never prepare for the possibility of racist conversations and 58.4 per cent say they always or often do so. Around a quarter, 25.6 per cent, say they never stay away from campus to avoid protests and 31.0 per cent say they always or frequently stay away from campus to avoid protests.

Table 6.10 Frequency of exercising behaviour restraint, by whether experienced direct racism at university, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff

Type of behavioural constraint	Frequency of behavioural constraint (a)					Total
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	
Not experienced racism at university (b)						
	- % -					
Uncomfortable revealing identity	7.9	9.7	29.2	25.0	28.2	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing clothing items	5.6	8.6	19.0	26.1	40.7	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	6.8	10.6	22.5	24.7	35.3	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	2.7	3.9	11.0	22.6	59.8	100.0
Experienced racism at university (c)						
Uncomfortable revealing identity	14.4	22.2	37.4	13.1	12.9	100.0
Uncomfortable wearing clothing items	11.4	17.1	31.5	19.1	20.9	100.0
Mentally prepare for racist conversations	30.6	27.8	27.7	9.0	4.9	100.0
Stay away to avoid protests	13.9	17.1	22.2	21.2	25.6	100.0

(a) These are the proportions of those responding with a frequency response. In addition, the respondents could answer that the question was not applicable to them. This response was relatively rare amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents with 0.6 per cent giving this response to the question about being uncomfortable revealing identity and 5.5 per cent for the question about clothing.

(b) n=1,341; (c) n=774

6.3 Experience of racism

This section discusses the key findings of the survey in relation to the experience of direct and indirect racism by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It builds upon analysis reported in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, and recognises that both direct and indirect forms of racism have negative impacts on an individual's health and wellbeing.

6.3.1 Direct racism

As noted in Chapter 2, Table 2.12, the rates of direct racism reported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents are 29.8 per cent for students, 56.6 per cent for academic staff and 41.1 per cent for non-academic staff. Table 6.11 presents this in comparison to 'European' and non-'European' (and non-Indigenous) students and staff. This comparison clearly shows the significant, and concerning rate of direct racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

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Table 6.11 Whether or not experienced direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Whether experienced direct racism at university		Total
	No	Yes	
	Domestic or international student		
	– % –		
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	70.3	29.8	100.0
‘European’	93.8	6.2	100.0
Non-‘European’	80.5	19.5	100.0
	Academic staff		
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	43.4	56.6	100.0
‘European’	92.0	8.0	100.0
Non-‘European’	65.9	34.1	100.0
	Non-academic staff		
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	58.9	41.1	100.0
‘European’	95.5	4.5	100.0
Non-‘European’	78.5	21.5	100.0

n= 71,796

Amongst those who have experienced direct racism, the distribution of frequency of experiencing direct racism is similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to that of other students (‘European’ and non-‘European’), but is higher for staff. However because of the higher rate of racism that this community experiences the incidence of high frequency racism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is very high, Figure 6.2 and Table 6.12.

Table 6.12 Frequency of experiencing direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Frequency of experiencing direct racism at university					Total
	Very frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all		
Total students						
– % –						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	3.2	7.2	13.6	4.9	71.2	100.0
‘European’	0.8	1.4	2.5	1.5	93.8	100.0
Non-‘European’(a)	2.0	4.0	9.0	4.0	81.1	100.0
Academic staff						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	8.1	16.3	24.7	6.9	44.0	100.0
‘European’	0.4	1.3	3.7	2.5	92.1	100.0
Non-‘European’(a)	3.8	7.2	16.7	5.6	66.6	100.0
Non-Academic staff						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	2.5	10.4	19.2	8.4	59.5	100.0
‘European’	0.2	0.7	2.0	1.5	95.5	100.0
Non-‘European’(a)	1.2	3.8	10.4	5.2	79.4	100.0

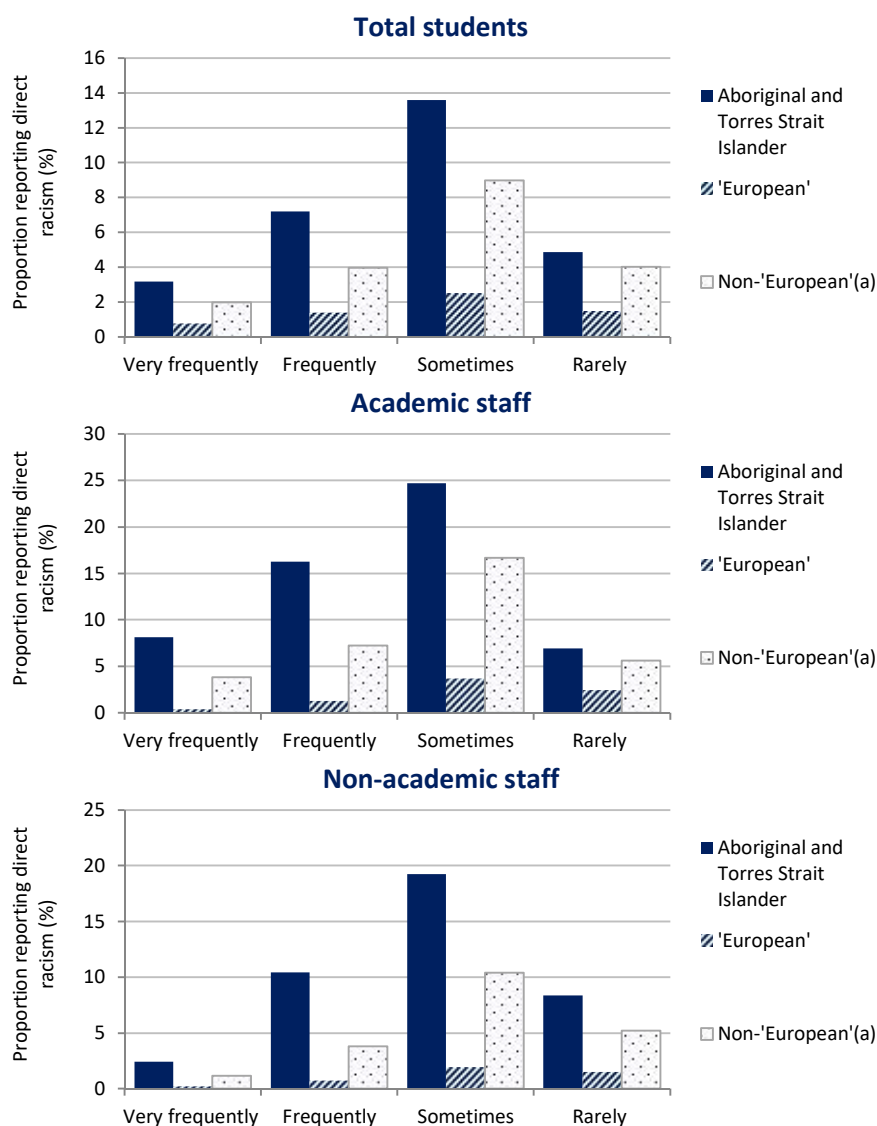
n= 71,796

(a) Excluding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

Indeed, amongst students 3.2 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reported experiencing racism very frequently and 7.2 per cent frequently. This compares with 0.8 per cent and 1.4 per cent for ‘European’, and 2.0 per cent and 4.0 per cent for non-‘European’ students. Amongst academic staff the 8.1 per cent and 16.3 per cent incidence of very frequent or frequent racism indicates that a quarter of the entire population of these academics face this high frequency racism, relative to just 1.7 per cent and 11.1 per cent of these other two populations. A similar situation is reported for non-academic staff where 2.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders reported very

frequent direct racism at university, along with 10.4 per cent reporting frequent racism, relative to 0.2 per cent and 0.7 per cent, and 1.2 per cent and 3.8 per cent, for the other two populations.

Figure 6.2 Frequency of experiencing direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



(a) Excluding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

There are some marked differences in the reported incidence of direct racism amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students across the different university groupings, Table 6.13. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 42.7 per cent of those at Go8 universities reported having experienced racism, compared to 32.7 per cent at IRU universities, 27.8 per cent at ATN universities, 24.9 per cent at other universities and 24.0 per cent at RUN universities. In contrast, the differences in the incidence or racism across the university grouping is small for non-Indigenous students. For both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous academic staff there are only relatively small differences in the incidence of direct racism across the university groupings. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff the proportion

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experiencing racism varies between 59.1 per cent at Go8 universities and 52.1 per cent at RUN universities. For non-academic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff the pattern again is seen, with those at Go8 universities reporting the highest rate of direct racism at university of 45.8 per cent, and RUN universities reporting the lowest, 37.8 per cent.

Table 6.13 Incidence of direct racism at university, students by grouping of university and respondent type and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

University grouping (a)	Total students		Academic		Non-academic	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous
			%			
ATN	27.8	14.3	53.7	20.7	39.6	10.3
Go8	42.7	16.4	59.1	19.8	45.8	12.6
IRU	32.7	13.8	57.7	17.9	38.2	9.9
Other	24.9	13.4	58.3	17.5	41.4	10.0
RUN	24.0	10.6	52.1	19.6	37.8	8.7

n= 71,796

(a) Universities which are members of these groupings are listed at Appendix B.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff not only experience high rates of direct racism at university, but they also experience higher rates of racism outside of university than those who are 'European' or non-'European' and not Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Almost two-thirds, 64.4 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reported having experienced racism in the last two years, with 29.8 per cent experiencing direct racism at university and 58.4 per cent experiencing racism outside of university, Table 6.14. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff 81.0 per cent have experienced direct racism, with 56.7 per cent having experienced racism at their university and 68.7 per cent outside of university. And for Aboriginal and Torres Strait non-academic staff 69.9 per cent have experienced racism over the last two years, with 41.2 experiencing racism at university and 63.0 per cent outside of university.

Table 6.14 Whether or not experienced direct racism at university and elsewhere, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Where experienced direct racism				Total	Total experiencing racism	Proportion at university
	At university only	University and elsewhere	Elsewhere only	Did not experience			
Total students (a) – % –							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	6.0	23.7	34.7	35.6	100.0	64.4	46.1
‘European’	2.2	4.0	9.6	84.2	100.0	15.8	39.2
Non-‘European’ (d)	3.9	15.6	32.6	48.0	100.0	52.0	37.4
Academic staff (b)							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	12.4	44.3	24.4	19.0	100.0	81.0	69.9
‘European’	3.8	4.2	5.8	86.2	100.0	13.8	58.0
Non-‘European’ (d)	11.2	22.9	20.9	45.0	100.0	55.0	62.0
Non-academic staff (c)							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	7.0	34.2	28.8	30.1	100.0	69.9	58.9
‘European’	2.2	2.4	5.7	89.7	100.0	10.3	44.7
Non-‘European’ (d)	6.5	15.0	26.0	52.5	100.0	47.5	45.3

(a) n=45,102; (b) n=10,245; (c) n=16,449 (d) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Reflecting this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students reported having experienced higher rates of total direct racism than ‘European’ and non-‘European’ staff and students in aggregate, and both at university and outside of university.

6.3.2 Indirect racism

As outlined in Chapter 2, the survey also collected information on indirect racism; that is racism which a person may have experienced, even if this was not actually directed at them.

Table 6.15 reports the rates of experiencing direct racism, indirect racism and the frequency of indirect racism. This shows that the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who have not experienced direct or indirect racism is 22.2 per cent, which is very similar to the 21.8 per cent experienced by non-‘European’ students, but only a little bit more than half of the 39.1 per cent reported by ‘European’ students.

Only 10.3 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff reported that they have not experienced direct or indirect racism, compared to 18.6 per cent of non-‘European’ academic staff and 35.0 per cent of ‘European’ academic staff. For non-academic staff 13.7 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff reported that they have not experienced direct or indirect racism, compared to 23.2 per cent of non-‘European’ staff, and 40.5 per cent of ‘European’ non-academic staff.

Focusing on students and staff who did not experience direct racism in the last two years, but who did experience indirect racism, for all groups it is more likely to occur sometimes or rarely, rather than frequently or very frequently, Figure 6.3.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

Table 6.15 Whether or not experienced direct or indirect racism at university, by respondent type and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

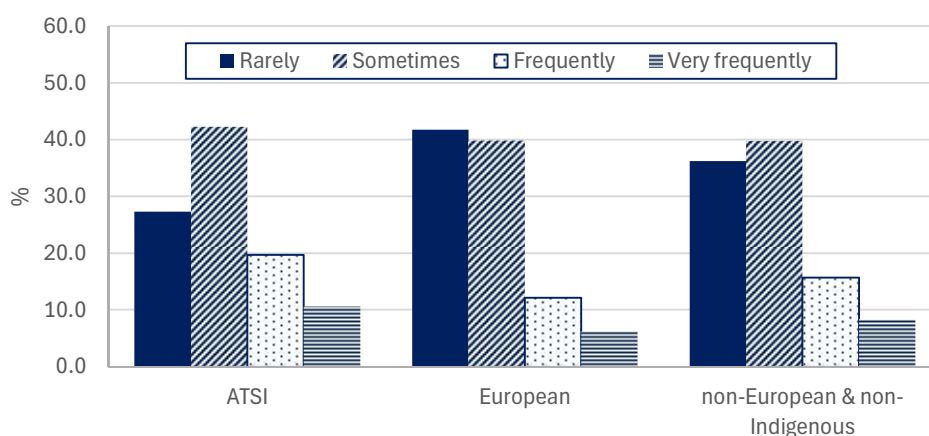
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Direct racism at university (a)(b)	Indirect racism only					Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Total students (c) - % -							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	30.7	6.0	9.7	18.5	12.7	22.2	100.0
‘European’	6.5	5.0	8.1	21.0	19.6	39.1	100.0
Non-‘European’ (f)	20.6	5.7	9.7	22.2	19.9	21.8	100.0
Academic staff (d)							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	57.0	3.0	7.3	16.4	6.1	10.3	100.0
‘European’	8.2	2.2	5.9	24.5	24.2	35.0	100.0
Non-‘European’ (f)	35.7	2.1	6.2	20.0	17.4	18.6	100.0
Non-academic staff (e)							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	41.6	2.5	7.0	20.7	14.5	13.7	100.0
‘European’	4.7	1.4	4.5	21.4	27.5	40.5	100.0
Non-‘European’ (f)	22.6	2.0	6.1	23.1	22.9	23.2	100.0

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism is higher than shown in the baseline tables, as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

(c) n=42,946; (d) n=9,900; (e) n=15,800 (f) excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Figure 6.3 Frequency of experiencing indirect racism if did not experience direct racism, staff and students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status



n=68,646

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff who reported having experienced indirect racism are more likely to report having experienced each of the forms of indirect racism than non-Indigenous students and staff who reported indirect racism, Table 6.16. The higher number of forms of indirect racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff is illustrated by the differences in the distribution of the number of forms of indirect racism. Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff who had experienced indirect racism, 6.6 per cent experienced one form of indirect racism, 22.7 per cent two to four forms of indirect racism and 70.7 per cent all five forms, included in the survey. In comparison, 15.2 per cent of non-Indigenous

students and staff reported experiencing one form of indirect racism, 34.5 per cent two to four forms of indirect racism and 50.3 per cent all five forms.

Table 6.16 Forms of indirect racism experienced, staff and students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Form of indirect racism (a)	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander (b)	Non-Indigenous (c)
	%	
Racist terms, jokes and comments	70.4	58.1
Denigrating culture in a racist way	67.9	46.5
Using negative stereotypes	72.4	55.6
Trivialising negative outcomes	72.2	50.4
Blaming for adverse outcomes	65.3	49.3
Any of the above	80.5	69.6

(a) Multiple forms could be reported

(b) n=2,110; (c) n= 69,297

6.3.3 Nature of racism experienced

The pattern of types of experiences faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who experienced racism at university has some similarities with that faced by non-‘European’ and ‘European’ students, but there are also differences. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who reported having experienced racism at university are much more likely to have been told that ‘they get things for free or other benefits because of their race’, 67.9 per cent, compared to ‘European’ students, 36.8 per cent, and non-‘European’ students, 14.1 per cent, Table 6.17. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were also more likely to have been told that ‘they are, or made to feel, unintelligent or incapable’ and to have inappropriate comments, names or jokes directed at them. Compared to the other two groups Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were less likely to say ‘they had missed out on an opportunity that they felt they deserved’.

Amongst academic staff who have experienced direct racism, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were more likely to report a number of the experiences than non-‘European’ academics, and more likely to report all of the experiences than ‘European’ academics, with the exception of verbal harassment, Table 6.17. Of note amongst those who reported experiencing direct racism at university:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics were more likely to report having negative student and/or peer evaluations, 43.3 per cent, compared to non-‘European’ academics, 35.2 per cent, and ‘European’ academics, 24.2 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics were more likely to report having inappropriate comments, names or jokes directed at them, 52.4 per cent, than non-‘European’ academics, 38.5 per cent, and ‘European’ academics, 37.6 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics were more likely to report online harassment, 18.7 per cent, than non-‘European’ academics, 11.4 per cent, and ‘European’ academics, 9.6 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics were less likely to report being unfairly denied a promotion that they felt they deserved, 16.6 per cent, than non-

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

‘European’ academics, 29.3 per cent, and similar to ‘European’ academics, 16.0 per cent.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics were less likely to report missing out on an opportunity they felt they deserved, 36.4 per cent, than non-‘European’ academics, 53.5 per cent, and similar to ‘European’ academics, 32.0 per cent.

Table 6.17 Nature of direct racism experienced, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Type of activity (a)	Respondent type								
	Total students			Academic staff			Non-academic staff		
	ATSI	‘Europ’	Non-‘Europ’ (b)	ATSI	‘Europ’	Non-‘Europ’ (b)	ATSI	‘Europ’	Non-‘Europ’ (b)
Proportion of those experiencing direct racism reporting (%)									
Singled out/Excluded	51.3	45.7	50.6	53.5	34.0	46.2	51.3	30.2	40.1
Inapprop comments etc	55.1	37.9	43.3	52.4	37.6	38.5	43.2	35.8	42.5
Could not express views	66.6	70.7	56.8	67.4	62.7	60.6	63.3	59.6	55.9
Told unintelligent	48.7	31.7	35.8	43.3	26.4	39.4	47.2	25.6	37.9
Missed opportunity	22.5	33.1	36.0	36.4	32.0	53.5	24.1	23.3	43.6
Not Trusted	34.0	28.2	38.8	43.9	28.0	44.2	40.2	28.2	40.7
Stopped by uni security	10.7	3.5	10.1	5.4	0.7	5.4	5.0	1.1	3.9
Physical harassment	8.6	5.8	7.7	6.4	3.8	4.7	5.0	2.0	3.2
Verbal harassment	18.2	22.3	23.5	20.9	20.9	21.5	15.1	17.8	18.9
Online harassment	17.1	15.8	14.2	18.7	9.6	11.4	13.1	7.3	7.4
Other	8.3	9.9	7.0	13.4	12.2	7.5	13.6	10.7	9.0
Worse mark	22.2	18.4	29.3	–	–	–	–	–	–
Get things for free	67.9	36.8	14.1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Negative assessments	–	–	–	43.3	24.2	35.2	21.6	12.0	17.2
Denied promotion	–	–	–	16.6	16.0	29.3	13.1	14.7	26.7

n=10,392

(a) Multiple reasons could be cited

(b) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Finally, amongst non-academic staff who have experienced direct racism, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff reported most of the experiences at similar rates to non-‘European’ staff and higher than ‘European’ staff for a number of the experiences. Of note:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in non-academic roles were more likely to report being singled out or excluded, 51.3 per cent, than non-‘European’ staff, 40.1 per cent, and ‘European’ staff, 30.2 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in non-academic roles were more likely to report feeling that they could not express their views openly, 63.3 per cent, compared to non-‘European’ staff, 55.9 per cent, and ‘European’ staff, 59.6 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in non-academic roles were more likely to report being told that they are, or are made to feel, unintelligent or incapable, 47.2 per cent, compared to non-‘European’ staff, 37.9 per cent, and ‘European’ staff, 25.6 per cent.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in non-academic roles were less likely to report being denied a promotion unfairly, 13.1 per cent, compared to non-‘European’ staff, 26.7 per cent, and ‘European’ staff, 14.7 per cent.

These experiences were reported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents in a range of ways, highlighting the many dimensions of the racism they face across the range of university environments:

deficit perspectives and low-expectation relationships and having course content when I was a student that presented Indigenous peoples in a deficit, negative, culturally insensitive way

Having my identity be the focus of every comment in my performance evaluations. My only perceived value in the workplace is often connected to my Indigenous identity rather than the fact that I work hard and have been intelligent about my strategic career choices.

I feel as if I can't ever say that I am Aboriginal because of my complexion. I am white, but solely based on the fact that my family was stolen and misplaced. I feel connection to that part of my heritage but feel like I can't ever express pride in that for fear of not being believed or being told that I am faking it for some kind of advantage over other people.

As an Aboriginal student at [university], my experiences have been mixed. On one hand, I have felt supported by the cultural services and proud to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives acknowledged in parts of the curriculum. However, I have also experienced moments where racism (sometimes subtle, sometimes more direct) has left me feeling isolated or undervalued. These experiences can include offhand remarks, stereotypes, or a lack of genuine understanding of Aboriginal culture and identity.

I experienced racism from a nurse at my placement in [location]. She was complaining about the areas websites being changed to have Aboriginal art styles on their banners, borders etc. She was angry and complaining really loudly to me and other staff members at the nurses station. I said that I thought it was nice and inclusive. She responded with 'You're not Aboriginal are you?'' I said yes and then she said 'Well you don't look Aboriginal and I just think it's unnecessary to have to put YOUR art on everything.' I felt embarrassed, confused, and angry. It was my first day on rural placement so I was already nervous and scared, this enhanced my nerves and made me upset.

The racism I experience frequently at [university] is faculty members and other students questioning my Aboriginality, and openly disbelieving my Aboriginality due to the lightness of my skin. I also often experience being in a tutorial or lecture and the professor will assume, by looking at the skin tone of the students present, that no one in the room is Aboriginal, and therefore the professor does not need to police their phrasing as carefully as if there was a visible Aboriginal person present. In situations like this, I find it difficult to speak up about my own Aboriginality because of how this has been questioned in the past. For me, it is not overt racism, simply a lack of belief in my identity due to my lighter skin. But of course this in itself is racism too.

I haven't reported anything because I believe it is an education issue. A lot of international students/students born overseas aren't educated on Aboriginal

Australian history, so they don't know about events like the stolen generations, why even the lightest skin person is considered Aboriginal just as much as the darkest. But also, I see this in Australians who have been born and brought up here. A lot of the times, even when it's relevant, I don't bring up my identity because either people think I'm lying, or I have even got that I'm using government supports (a lot of people have accused me of this).

6.3.4 Perceived reasons for why a person was targeted

Respondents who experienced direct racism at university, and who identified at least one of the forms of racism reported in Table 6.18, were asked whether they thought they had been targeted because of a range of specific factors.

Table 6.18 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, perception of why they were targeted, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Reason why (a) (b)	Respondent type								
	Domestic & international students			Academic staff			Non-academic staff		
	ATSI	'Europ'	Non-'Europ' (c)	ATSI	'Europ'	Non-'Europ' (c)	ATSI	'Europ'	Non-'Europ' (c)
My language or accent	10.1	18.5	41.2	3.3	26.5	47.0	5.3	20.6	37.4
My cultural/racial/ethnic Background	82.5	62.3	72.1	89.0	61.1	78.0	76.8	51.1	70.9
My skin colour and/or other physical features associated with my racial/ethnic identity	52.9	58.2	67.6	44.2	30.4	57.6	43.2	30.0	55.2
My religious background	8.0	31.5	25.7	5.0	22.0	21.8	5.8	18.7	19.9
Because of current conflict in the Middle East	4.9	16.0	17.0	8.3	17.8	20.4	6.3	16.3	13.0
Because of COVID	3.0	3.7	10.2	1.1	2.6	3.9	2.1	5.5	6.0
Because I am an international fee-paying student	–	26.5	46.9	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	9.6	11.7	5.0	13.3	15.0	7.4	13.2	18.0	7.6

n=9,900

(a) Multiple reasons could be cited.

(b) International students were asked whether the racism was because they were an international fee-paying student.

(c) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents, a high proportion said that it was because of their cultural/racial/ethnic background, with 82.5 per cent of students identifying this reason, 89.0 per cent of academic staff and 76.8 per cent of non-academic staff. The next most common reason identified is their skin colour and other physical features associated with their racial/ethnic identity, 52.9 per cent of students, 44.2 per cent of academic staff and 57.6 per cent of non-academic staff.

A relatively low proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents cited their language or accent; 10.1 per cent of students, 3.3 per cent of academic staff and 5.3 per cent of non-academic staff. Only a minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents cited the other reasons identified in the questionnaire (religious background, current conflict in the Middle East or because of COVID).

6.3.5 Location of racism in universities

While there are some differences in the frequency with which direct racism was reported as having occurred in different locations, the differences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, 'European' and non-'European' students are in general small, Table 6.19. The differences of note are that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as 'European' students are more likely to report racism online in a lecture or online in a tutorial, seminar or similar than are non-'European' students. This may be a result of the higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who attend RUN universities which make greater use of these online forms of teaching.

Table 6.19 Students who have experienced direct racism at university, locations in which this occurred by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Location (a)	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	'European'	Non-'European' (b)
	– % –		
Physical lecture theatre or similar	31.9	27.6	24.8
Physical tutorial, seminar or similar	51.0	45.0	46.7
Online in a lecture	19.1	18.4	7.9
Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar	22.6	19.9	12.1
Retail service on campus	8.5	6.8	10.9
University library or other study spaces	16.4	16.1	16.9
University health service	5.2	2.4	4.3
Reflection/ prayer space on campus	4.1	2.1	2.6
Elsewhere on campus	28.1	29.9	30.6
Marking and/or related feedback	18.8	14.6	20.9
Placement, internship	16.9	9.5	17.8
Student accommodation	16.9	8.2	11.8
University club, society, association	16.9	14.8	17.6
University sporting space	3.8	3.4	5.1
Other	7.1	10.7	7.4

n=6,197

(a) Multiple locations could be cited.

(b) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff who had experienced direct racism were substantially more likely to report this having occurred in all of the teaching spaces asked about (physical and online lecture and physical and online tutorials). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff were also more likely to report the direct racism having happened in a work meeting or staff space or at a university complaint handling service, Table 6.20.

Table 6.20 Staff who have experienced direct racism at university, locations in which this occurred by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Location (a)	Academic staff			Non-academic staff		
	ATSI	'European'	Non-'European' (b)	ATSI	'European'	Non-'European' (b)
			%			
Physical lecture theatre or similar	21.2	14.2	14.8	4.1	4.7	4.1
Physical tutorial, seminar or similar	31.5	16.9	20.0	10.2	6.7	6.3
Online in a lecture	14.1	5.3	6.0	1.5	1.6	1.4
Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar	19.6	7.6	8.7	4.1	2.4	2.1
Retail service on campus	9.2	5.1	6.7	9.2	4.9	6.9
University library or other study spaces	3.3	1.8	2.4	4.1	3.8	3.5
University health service	2.2	0.2	2.3	3.6	1.3	1.5
Reflection/ prayer space on campus	0.0	0.2	1.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Elsewhere on campus	17.9	18.9	20.8	25.5	29.8	22.5
Work meeting	69.6	52.4	53.5	56.6	52.2	50.6
Staff space	46.7	38.9	40.6	56.6	53.8	53.2
Performance evaluation	19.0	17.1	28.5	10.7	8.4	17.2
Complaint handling service	19.0	11.6	13.5	7.1	5.1	7.5
Other	10.3	14.7	15.3	8.2	13.6	10.6

n=3,888

(a) Multiple locations could be cited.

(b) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

For non-academic staff, the frequency of reporting locations in which direct racism occurred is similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as for 'European' and non-'European' staff.

While some non-academic staff spend time in classrooms (for example as a tutor or demonstrator), some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff reported having experienced racism in teaching spaces, particularly in a physical tutorial, seminar or similar, with 10.2 per cent reporting having experienced racism, compared to 6.7 per cent of 'European' non-academic staff and 6.3 per cent of non-'European' staff.

6.3.6 University participants by role

As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, for students most racism was reported as being from other students, and for staff most racism was reported as being from other staff. This is true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff as well, Table 6.21.

From the perspective of understanding the experience of Aboriginal and Strait Islander university students and staff, there are, however, some differences.

- Both academic and non-academic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff were more likely to report having experienced direct racism from teaching/academic and administrative staff than their non-'European' or 'European' colleagues.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, academic and non-academic staff were no more likely to report having experienced direct racism from students than their non-'European' or 'European' counterparts

- A higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff reported having experienced direct racism from university leaders than 'European' or non-'European' staff.

Table 6.21 Persons who experienced direct racism at university, participants in behaviour, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Participants in racist activity (a)	Student			Academic staff			Non-academic staff		
	ATSI	'Europ'.	Non-'Europ' (b).	ATSI	'Europ'.	Non-'Europ' (b).	ATSI	'Europ'.	Non-'Europ' (b).
Proportion reporting racism from (%)									
Teaching/Academic	48.6	47.5	46.3	73.6	65.1	63.8	35.1	30.4	27.0
Administrative staff	14.9	17.4	17.1	37.4	25.1	33.2	62.9	57.8	63.4
Facilities staff	6.1	6.3	9.4	6.0	2.9	5.7	9.8	6.9	6.4
Students	69.3	69.6	66.0	32.4	33.1	32.2	17.0	23.1	16.3
University leaders	15.5	23.0	13.2	57.1	38.4	49.9	42.3	37.6	46.3
Other	6.4	4.8	4.3	2.2	6.0	4.3	6.7	6.0	4.4

n=9,917

(a) Multiple responses could be provided

(b) Excludes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

6.4 The consequences of experiencing racism

The reported impacts of experiencing direct racism on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff are summarised in this section. As outlined in section 2, the survey asked respondents who had experienced direct racism at university, if they had had any of the following impacts:

- A negative impact on my academic studies
- A negative impact on my mental health
- It made me limit my participation in university life
- It made me limit my contacts to those of a similar background to me
- It made me less likely to continue my studies at an Australian university
- It made me less likely to consider Australia as a country I would consider moving to once my studies are finished
- Other (please specify)
- None

Only a small minority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff who reported having experienced direct racism at university said that the racism they had experienced had no impact on them, 7.1 per cent of students, 4.4 per cent of academic staff and 7.7 per cent of non-academic staff, Table 6.22.

Table 6.22 Impact of experiences of direct racism at university, persons who experienced direct racism, by respondent type and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Impacts reported as a consequence of experiencing direct racism at university (a) (b)	Student		Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non-Indigenous
			%			
Negative mental health	71.9	65.2	82.0	72.0	76.3	64.6
Limit participation in university life	61.9	62.4	66.7	60.8	54.6	49.7
Limit contacts	26.2	26.9	28.4	23.2	21.7	18.3
Negative impact on studies (Student)	52.3	44.0				
Negative impact on career (Staff)			53.6	55.3	35.1	39.8
Other	9.3	5.9	10.4	8.6	13.9	9.5
None	7.1	9.7	4.4	7.1	7.7	10.8

n=10,001

(a) Multiple impacts could be reported

(b) Students were also asked whether 'It made me less likely to continue my studies at an Australian university' and 'It made me less likely to consider Australia as a country I would consider moving to once my studies are finished'. These items are not reported in this table given that they are only relevant to international students.

The most frequently cited impacts for students were a negative impact on mental health, 71.9 per cent; limiting participation in university life, 61.9 per cent; and a negative impact on studies, 52.3 per cent.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff who had experienced racism at university, 82.0 per cent reported that it had a negative impact on their mental health, 66.7 per cent that it had resulted in them limiting their participation in university life and 53.6 per cent that it had a negative impact on their career. And amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff, 76.3 per cent said the racism they had experienced at university had a negative impact on their mental health, 54.6 per cent they had limited their participation in university life, and 35.1 per cent that it had had a negative impact on their career.

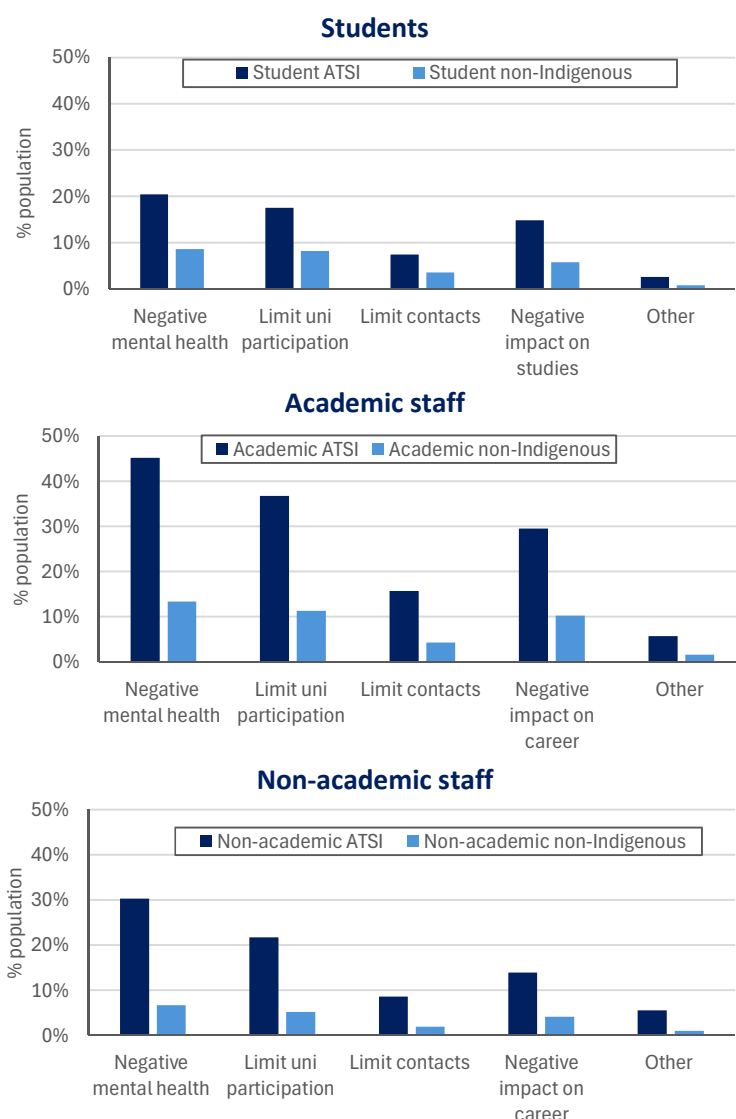
While the pattern of these reported impacts of experiencing direct racism at university is similar for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff to those reported by non-Indigenous staff and students, a significant difference was the much higher level of reporting negative impacts on their mental health by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

Combining the data on the proportion experiencing direct racism, and the reported negative impacts if the respondent had experienced direct racism, the population incidence of negative impacts reported as a consequence of experiencing direct racism can be calculated. This data is reported in Figure 6.4. As an example of the interpretation of the figure, 20.4 per cent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reported that the racism they had experienced at university had a negative impact on their mental health, compared to 8.6 per cent of non-Indigenous students.

Over four-in-ten, 45.2 per cent, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff reported that they had negative mental health consequences of experiencing direct racism at university, almost 3.5 times higher than the 13.4 per cent of non-Indigenous academic

staff. About one-third, 36.7 per cent, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff reported that they had experienced racism which had limited their participation at university, about one quarter, 29.5 per cent, that it had had a negative impact on their career and 15.7 per cent reported that experiencing racism had made them limit their contacts to those of a similar background.

Figure 6.4 Population incidence of impacts reported as a consequence of direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (a)



(a) Multiple impacts could be reported

A lower, but still substantial, proportion of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff reported that direct racism at university had a negative impact on their mental health, 30.3 per cent. About one-in-five, 21.7 per cent, reported that it had limited their university participation and 13.9 per cent that racism experienced at university had a negative impact on their career.

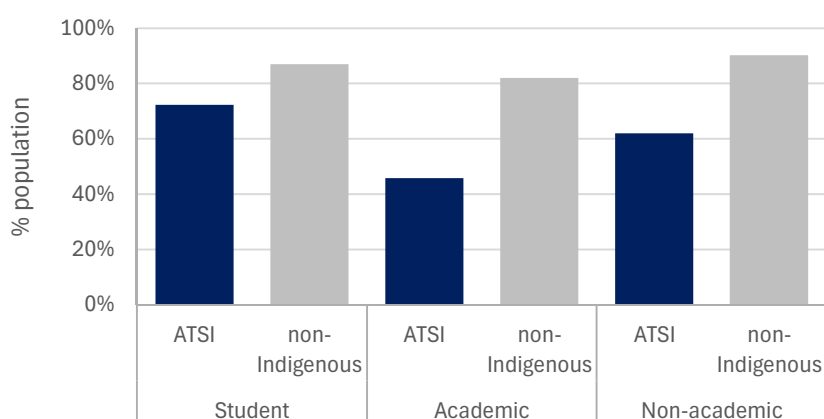
The higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff reporting negative effects of direct racism at university is due to both the higher incidence of

experiencing direct racism amongst this group and a higher proportion of those who experienced racism identifying each of the negative impacts.

Combining those who did not experience direct racism and those who experienced direct racism but reported that it had had no impacts on them, allows us to estimate the proportion of different population groups not reporting any negative impacts of direct racism on them.

Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 72.3 per cent reported that they either did not experience racism at university, or did experience racism and reported no effects, Figure 6.5. In comparison 87.0 per cent of non-Indigenous students reported they did not experience negative effects of direct racism. For academic staff the difference is much larger, with only 45.8 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics having no negative effects from direct racism, compared to 82.0 per cent of non-Indigenous academics. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-academic staff were also substantially less likely to have experienced no negative effects from direct racism, 62.0 per cent, than their non-Indigenous counterparts, 90.2 per cent.

Figure 6.5 Proportion of population either not experiencing direct racism or if experienced direct racism reporting that it had no impact on them, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



Responses to the write in questions in the survey illustrate the impacts of experiencing racism at university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. While there are many similarities with the racism experienced by other communities, there are also some differences, and as with all communities there are diverse perspectives:

Aside from it impacting me on a personal level, it impacts me on a professional level. This then filters down and impacts how I engage with students and my capacity to deliver teaching. The untold and unpaid hours spent on developing, analysing, and provisioning ways to avert experiencing racism, the deliberations and measures that are undertaken when faced with a cohort of students that direct racist remarks either in person, within feedback or within their assessments is time consuming and impacts on my wellbeing. I would love to just be able to do my job without worrying about whether or not I'm about to be faced with racism, and spending a good deal of my own time

before and after classes and terms, reflecting on every word I said and overloading my brain with ways I can do it better next time so that I avoid the racism or address it in better ways so that I can cause some kind of impact that will make people stop and think about what they are circulating within the confines of [university] and beyond.

Over the years, I've experienced repeated microaggressions and comments that reduce me to my Indigenous identity, rather than recognising my expertise. These moments, often framed as well-meaning, accumulate and shape how I'm seen and treated across the University. My identity is frequently positioned as my primary value, with my professional contributions sidelined or framed as 'emotional labour'.

I am hyper-visible in some ways and completely dismissed in others. This imbalance is exhausting and needs to be addressed through genuine, embedded cultural safety and inclusion, not just language. [university] needs to take a serious look at the composition of its management, Program Leads, Heads of School, Deans.

I feel that too much emphasis is sometimes placed on racism rather than on simply treating one another as inclusive and kind human beings. My lived experiences and trauma are my own stories, and being placed into a box because of history or heritage can feel frustrating. I believe it's time to move forward. It's also upsetting when people seem hesitant to speak with me out of fear of being called racist, while I have personally experienced extremely racist and humiliating behaviour from some fellow Aboriginal students. Above all, I just want to be seen and treated as a person, not as a colour.

For me, racism is not always about big events, but about the small, repeated moments that remind you that you are seen as "different." Over time, these moments don't just make it harder to feel a true sense of belonging at university, they also fuel self-criticism. Instead of questioning the ignorance or prejudice in others, you start to question yourself: Did I say the wrong thing? Do I deserve to be here? Am I representing my culture the "right" way? This constant self-monitoring can be exhausting. When difference is over-exaggerated, it intensifies that inner voice, making you feel as though you have to carry the weight of proving yourself (both as a student and as an Aboriginal person) in every space you enter.

Having a patient and supervising nurse discuss in front of me (knowing I was Indigenous) their belief that Indigenous peoples should be rounded up and shot as they're a drain on society made me want to leave my degree & university. I've had staff discuss how I shouldn't have my position and how it is just another "black freebie". That made me feel worthless.

People are more open to talking negatively about other races to me due to having white skin and often end up saying racist remarks without knowing of my ethnic background. They also say racial remarks about other people to me in confidence assuming I am "on their side".

I have largely experienced covert racism, as I appear white, and I am often in situations where I hear racist or prejudiced comments from other students. This has made me very hesitant to disclose my identity, both to students and staff members

My experiences of racism are systemic and structural daily occurrences that reaffirms who is included, who is excluded, whose knowledge is valued and whose is not. It stems from a lack of indigenous governance structures that prevent Indigenous leadership [from having] true decision making power, resources and budget to intact real change. There is also a lack of racial literacy throughout the academy.

As someone who is a white fronting indigenous woman, it makes it difficult to stand in spaces of Indigenous people. In classes, it is seen as not understanding the disadvantages, as I come from a place of 'privilege' due to being white and that my experiences are diminished and not a true reflection of a 'real' Indigenous person.

6.5 Universities' treatment and approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and cultures, history and stereotypes

The survey included a series of questions related to universities' treatment of, and attitudes towards, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. There were also questions about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history are discussed, and whether racist stereotypes about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are challenged in teaching and research. These questions are asked of all respondents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous.

These questions are:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to <university name>?

- The university has an inclusive environment that respects, values and celebrates the cultural contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and history are discussed with respect and sensitivity
- The leadership at the university support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and students
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander knowledges and cultures are valued by the university
- Racist stereotypes about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are challenged in teaching and/or research

In addition, there were five questions asked only of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to <university name>?

- I feel visible or seen as a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- I am expected to educate non-Indigenous students/colleagues about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture
- I am expected to talk on behalf of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
- I am expected to perform work in relation to my Indigeneity, which is not in my position description or for which I am not appropriately remunerated (for example Indigenising the curriculum, speaking at events)
- People have questioned my Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff are less positive than are non-Indigenous staff and students about universities' treatment and approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and cultures, history and stereotypes, Figure 6.6. Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents, students are the most positive about these aspects of their university, and academic staff the least positive.

Only 12.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff strongly agreed, and 38.2 per cent agreed, that the university has an inclusive environment that respects, values and celebrates the cultural contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This compares to 27.5 per cent of non-Indigenous academics who strongly agreed and 56.0 per cent who agreed, Table 6.23.

There are similar, or even larger, differences in the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and non-Indigenous students and staff in relation to the other questions. For example, whether culture and history are discussed with respect and sensitivity, only 10.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff strongly agreed and 37.0 per cent agreed relative to 27.6 per cent and 57.6 per cent of non-Indigenous academic staff. In relation to whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures are valued by the university, 13.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics strongly agreed and 32.0 per cent agreed, compared to 29.7 per cent and 54.8 per cent of non-Indigenous academic staff.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

Figure 6.6 Universities' treatment and approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and cultures, history and stereotypes by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

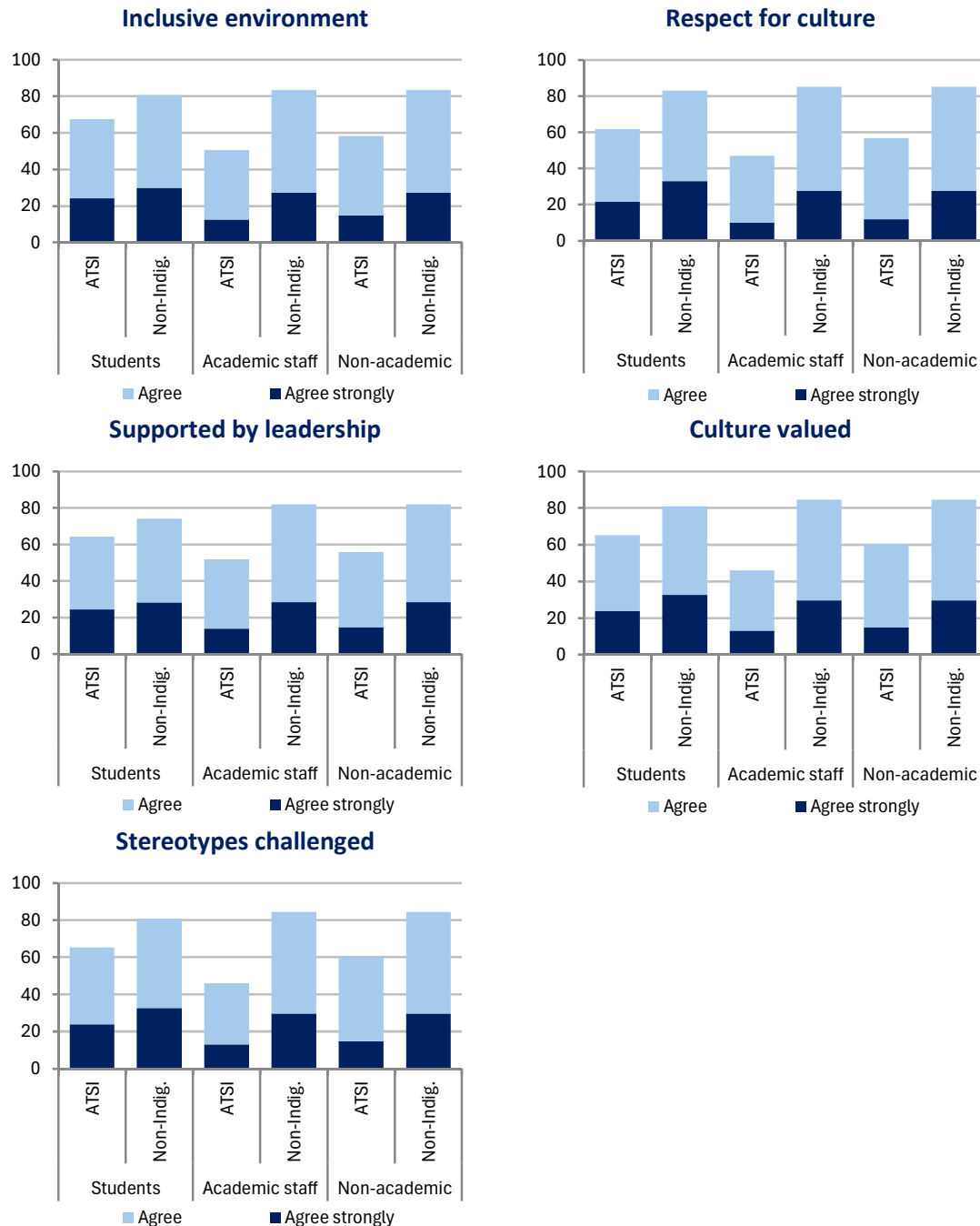


Table 6.23 Universities' treatment and approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and cultures, history and stereotypes by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aspect of university	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander					Non-Indigenous				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Domestic and international students										
- % -										
Inclusive environment	24.3	43.3	20.3	7.8	4.3	30.0	50.5	15.1	3.4	1.1
Respect for culture	21.6	40.2	22.3	11.1	4.8	32.9	50.1	13.2	2.8	1.1
Supported by leadership	24.4	39.8	22.6	7.3	5.8	28.2	46.1	21.0	3.3	1.5
Culture valued	23.8	41.4	21.2	8.2	5.4	32.7	48.2	14.6	3.4	1.1
Stereotypes challenged	14.6	31.8	29.7	15.3	8.6	20.5	38.5	27.8	9.3	4.0
Academic staff										
Inclusive environment	12.4	38.2	24.2	16.9	8.3	27.5	56.0	12.7	3.1	0.8
Respect for culture	10.0	37.0	26.7	18.6	7.7	27.6	57.6	11.9	2.4	0.6
Supported by leadership	13.8	37.9	22.5	14.1	11.6	28.4	53.6	13.6	3.3	1.1
Culture valued	13.1	32.9	25.9	18.8	9.3	29.7	54.8	11.5	3.3	0.7
Stereotypes challenged	8.2	30.8	30.5	21.2	9.2	16.9	43.6	29.8	7.7	2.0
Non-academic staff										
Inclusive environment	14.7	43.5	23.5	12.7	5.5	27.5	56.0	12.7	3.1	0.8
Respect for culture	11.8	44.9	25.7	12.9	4.7	27.6	57.6	11.9	2.4	0.6
Supported by leadership	14.7	41.0	24.9	12.9	6.5	28.4	53.6	13.6	3.3	1.1
Culture valued	14.8	45.3	21.1	13.3	5.4	29.7	54.8	11.5	3.3	0.7
Stereotypes challenged	5.7	28.0	39.1	19.8	7.4	16.9	43.6	29.8	7.7	2.0

In terms of whether racist stereotypes about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are challenged in teaching and research, under half of each of the groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents agreed that this was the case. Amongst students 14.6 per cent agreed strongly and 31.8 per cent agreed; 8.2 per cent of academic staff strongly agreed and 30.8 per cent agreed; and 5.7 per cent of non-academic staff strongly agreed and 28.0 per cent agreed. This was the question on which there was the lowest level of agreement from non-Indigenous students and staff, although still with considerably higher level of agreement amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

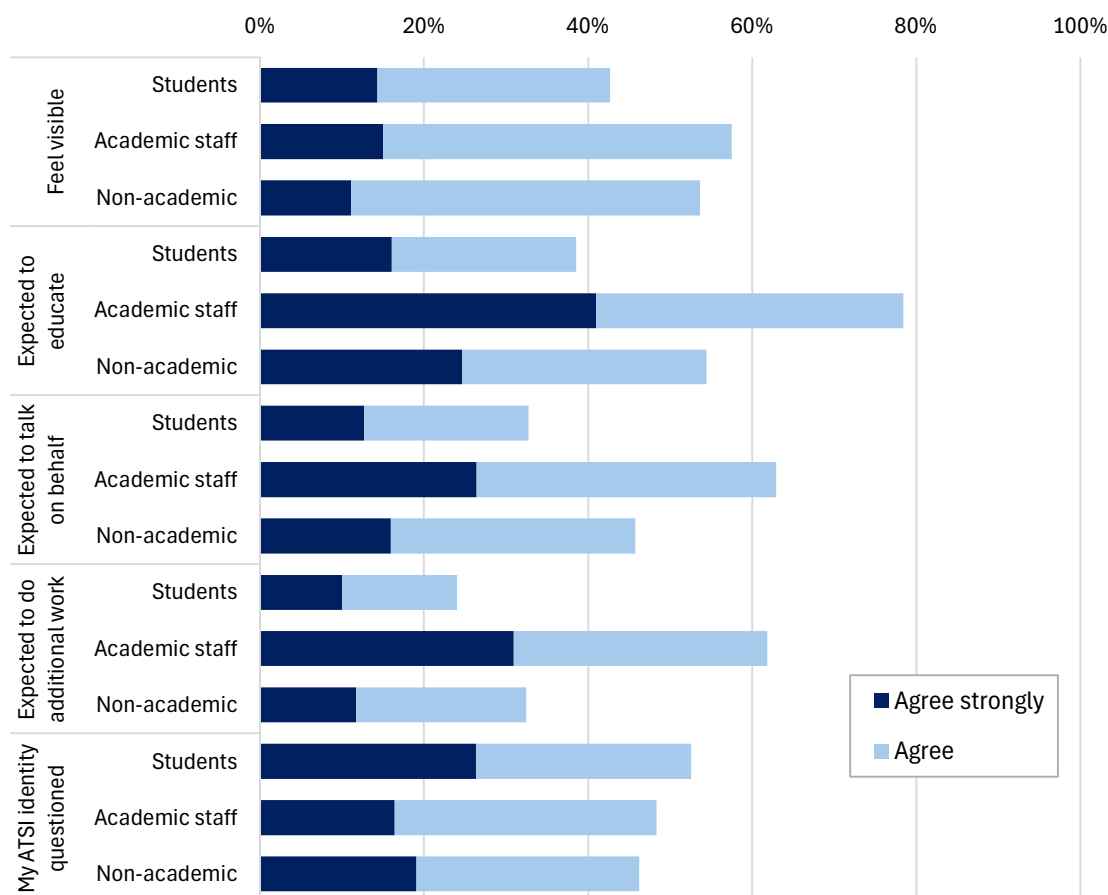
While more than half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff strongly agreed or agreed that the leadership of their university supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, the extent of agreement varied. Only a little over half of academic staff and non-academic staff strongly agreed or agreed, 51.8 per cent and 55.7 per cent respectively, and for students this rises to two-thirds strongly agreeing or agreeing, 64.3 per cent.

Figure 6.7 shows the responses of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff to questions about the expectations placed on them and their treatment at the university due to their Indigeneity. For the second, third and fourth questions, a higher level of agreement indicates a higher burden being placed on the respondent. In the first case of the first question 'I feel visible or seen as a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait

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Islander descent', it is unclear as to whether the respondent would have seen being visible as a positive or a negative. The final question concerns having their identity challenged.

Figure 6.7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff views about expectations placed on them and treatment due to their Indigeneity



There are high rates of agreement with these statements from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff and to a slightly less degree from non-academic staff.

Almost eight-in-ten, 78.4 per cent, of academic staff strongly agreed or agreed that “I am expected to educate non-Indigenous students/colleagues about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture”, with 62.9 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement that they are expected to talk on behalf of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and 61.8 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing that “they are expected to perform work in relation to their Indigeneity which is not in their position description and for which they are not appropriately remunerated”.

Amongst students, over one-third, 38.5 per cent, strongly agreed that they were expected to educate non-Indigenous people, about one-third, 32.7 per cent, strongly agreed or agreed that they were expected to talk on behalf of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, and one quarter, 24.1 per cent, that they were expected to do additional work.

This additional workload placed on Aboriginal students and staff is often termed ‘cultural load’, ‘colonial load’ or ‘cultural burden’ and is increasingly being recognised as problematic.

This imposition was raised in response to open ended questions. Some illustrative examples are below:

Relying on students for an education lesson, or to be the voice for Indigenous people (in class) can at times be exhausting. This is not expected on anyone else - I feel like I have to prepare a bit more than my counterparts. We are expected to be competent and experts in every aspect that involves Indigenous affairs.

Being singled out constantly to be asked questions about anything aboriginal and/ or aboriginal issues, I sometimes do not want to leave the office, as there are always questions.

There is an expectation for Indigenous staff to know everything, be everything and be available to everyone. The colonial load this places on staff is completely unreasonable.

I want to raise some concerns that have been completely overlooked in this survey. I am often asked to give talks about Aboriginal art or to self-disclose my Aboriginal identity in situations where it is not relevant to my role. These requests are framed as opportunities but are ultimately about making the organisation look good. This reflects a wider pattern where Aboriginal staff are expected to be front and centre for visibility rather than for their actual work or expertise. The university’s use of Aboriginal art is often tokenistic.

These factors contribute to higher burdens being placed on Indigenous staff and these normalised racial discourses impact staff under the guise of “burn out”. This then redirects accountability from the system to individual responsibility.

Around one half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, academic staff and non-academic staff strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that people have questioned their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity. The full distribution of strongly agree to strongly disagree responses is reported in Table 6.24.

Table 6.24 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff views about expectations placed on them and treatment due to their Indigeneity

Aspects of experience	Extent of agreement or disagreement					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Students (a)						
			– % –			
Feel visible	14.3	28.3	30.3	18.2	8.9	100.0
Expected to educate	16.1	22.4	25.1	23.5	12.9	100.0
Expected to talk on behalf	12.7	20.0	24.8	26.9	15.6	100.0
Expected to do additional work	10.0	14.0	28.5	27.0	20.4	100.0
My Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait identity questioned	26.4	26.2	13.2	19.1	15.2	100.0
Academic staff (b)						
Feel visible	15.0	42.5	20.9	15.0	6.5	100.0
Expected to educate	41.0	37.5	9.5	7.6	4.4	100.0
Expected to talk on behalf	26.5	36.5	19.0	12.9	5.2	100.0
Expected to do additional work	30.9	30.9	14.1	14.5	9.5	100.0
My Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait identity questioned	16.4	31.9	11.7	23.2	16.8	100.0
Non-academic staff (c)						
Feel visible	11.1	40.5	27.4	14.0	6.9	100.0
Expected to educate	24.7	29.7	16.5	22.0	7.0	100.0
Expected to talk on behalf	16.0	29.8	20.8	23.9	9.6	100.0
Expected to do additional work	11.8	20.7	24.2	29.1	14.2	100.0
My Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait identity questioned	19.1	27.1	13.6	25.8	14.4	100.0

(a) n= 1,240; (b) n=317 ; (c) n=467

6.5.1 Between and within group racism

In response to some of the open-ended questions, the issue of lateral violence was identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents.

The racism I have experienced at the [university] could be described as 'lateral violence'. I have had suggestions that my people, the [Indigenous group], aren't really a people by a senior Indigenous leader. I have had Aboriginal staff I supervise weaponise a 'lack of cultural safety' without being able to substantiate such claims. These experiences have been deeply troubling for me and at times I have thought it might be best not to identify as Aboriginal.

My father was stolen generation. I have no knowledge of his ancestry. He never talked about it, never wanted to know about it. Throughout my life I have experienced racism from both sides. I am too white for indigenous people and at times too black for racist white people. When I have experienced racism it has come from Aboriginal people mostly. Hard to take when my own father is of that lineage.

Table 6.25 shows the answer to the question on 'Was the racism and/or racial discrimination that you have seen or experienced at [University] between any of the following groups?' Keeping in mind that this question was only asked of respondents who reported having experienced direct or indirect racism, 77.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 86.6 per cent of academic staff and 82.4 per cent of non-academic staff said that they had observed racism from people of European appearance

toward people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds. Between about one quarter (academic staff) and one-third (students and non-academic staff) who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander said they had observed racism between people from different culturally and racially diverse backgrounds. Around one-in-five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and academic staff had observed racism between people from the same culturally and/or racially diverse backgrounds and one-quarter of non-academic staff had observed this.

Table 6.25 Persons who experienced direct and/or indirect racism at university, reporting of inter- and intra-group forms, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Respondent type	Type of racism experienced or observed (a)			
	From people of European appearance (Australian, British, European) toward people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	From people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds toward people of European appearance	Between people from different culturally and racially diverse backgrounds	Between people from the same culturally and/or racially diverse backgrounds
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (b)				
– % –				
Student	77.0	21.2	36.6	17.3
Academic staff	86.6	11.4	24.4	21.7
Non-academic staff	82.4	10.6	33.4	27.4
'European' (c)				
Student	49.8	46.0	40.5	27.3
Academic staff	55.6	36.5	39.2	22.1
Non-academic staff	51.8	31.7	39.2	21.7
Non-'European' (d)				
Student	71.3	17.6	44.2	21.6
Academic staff	78.5	13.6	36.2	13.4
Non-academic staff	74.0	14.5	39.8	15.5

(a) Multiple responses could be provided

(b) n = 21,360; (c) n = 5,777; (d) n = 7,735

This is consistent with the picture that most of the racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students is perpetrated by people of European appearance, but there is also lateral racism from other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and racism from people with other culturally and racially diverse backgrounds. This latter has particular implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who can face racism, and denial of Indigenous sovereignty by all settler groups.

6.6 Assessment of the university environment

The survey included questions on whether the respondent agreed or disagreed with statements about the diversity of the university leadership, employment, and whether the culture supports them to succeed.

Only 11.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff strongly agreed that their universities' culture encourages and supports them to succeed, with a further 35.7 per cent agreeing, meaning that just under half, 47.3 per cent, agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This is slightly lower, although not dissimilar to non-Indigenous staff of whom 12.5 per cent strongly agreed and 43.6 per cent agreed, with 56.1 per cent strongly agreeing or agreeing, Table 6.26.

6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of racism and discrimination at university

Two-thirds, 65.2 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff strongly agreed or agreed that their university encourages people from their own racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious background to seek employment. This compares to just over half, 52.5 per cent, of non-Indigenous staff. In contrast, however, only a little over half, 53.6 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff strongly agreed or agreed that the academic staff at the university reflect a diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds, compared to two-thirds, 65.2 per cent, of non-Indigenous staff.

Only one-quarter, 23.9 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff strongly agreed or agreed that the university senior executive or leadership reflects a diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds. This is virtually the same as the proportion of non-Indigenous staff who strongly agreed or agreed that the university senior executive or leadership reflects diversity.

Table 6.26 Extent of agreement with statements about university support and diversity, staff, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status	Level of agreement with statement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
The culture encourages and supports me to succeed – % –							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	11.6	35.7	24.9	16.3	9.0	2.5	100.0
Non-Indigenous	12.5	43.6	24.8	11.1	5.1	3.0	100.0
The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic cultural and/or religious background to seek employment							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	14.8	50.4	17.0	9.4	4.9	3.4	100.0
Non-Indigenous	15.2	37.3	26.1	7.4	3.3	10.7	100.0
The university senior executive or leadership reflects diversity							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	5.7	18.2	17.4	27.7	21.4	9.6	100.0
Non-Indigenous	5.1	17.9	19.4	28.3	16.7	12.6	100.0
The academic staff reflect diversity							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	12.6	40.6	17.3	15.0	8.1	6.6	100.0
Non-Indigenous	18.5	46.7	14.2	9.1	3.1	8.4	100.0

Students were asked a similar set of questions, but related to their studies, the student body and their teachers. Students were more likely to strongly agree or agree that the university culture encourages and supports them to succeed than were staff when asked the equivalent questions, Table 6.27. At the same time however, this response raises a challenge to universities in that it indicates that some 11.0 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students do not feel that the culture is supportive of their studies, and a further 20.8 per cent express a neutral view.

Two-thirds, 66.1 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students strongly agreed or agreed that the university culture encourages and supports them to succeed in their university studies and 69.5 per cent of non-Indigenous students strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were also more likely than staff to agree with the statements about the university encouraging people from their racial, ethnic cultural and/religious background to study/work at the university and that the student body/academic staff reflects a diversity of backgrounds.

More than half, 59.6 per cent, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students strongly agreed or agreed that their teachers reflect a diversity of backgrounds.

Table 6.27 Extent of agreement with statements about university support and diversity, students by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status	Level of agreement with statement						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my studies – % –							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	25.0	41.1	20.8	6.2	4.8	2.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	20.5	49.0	19.7	5.3	2.2	3.3	100.0
The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic cultural and/or religious background to study here							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	34.8	40.7	13.1	5.6	2.9	2.9	100.0
Non-Indigenous	33.5	46.3	10.9	4.0	1.8	3.4	100.0
The student body reflects diversity of backgrounds							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	24.4	37.4	17.8	5.8	2.8	11.7	100.0
Non-Indigenous	26.8	43.5	13.5	4.6	2.0	9.6	100.0
My teachers reflect a diversity of backgrounds							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	22.7	36.9	18.0	12.6	5.8	4.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous	24.0	43.2	15.0	10.1	3.4	4.3	100.0

6.7 Assessment of anti-racism policies

The survey also included questions on the views of staff and students about their university's racism policies, rules and procedures and their effectiveness. This is an issue covered in detail in Chapter 8, and in this section high level results are reported for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

Table 6.28 Extent of agreement with statements regarding universities' racism policies, staff and students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status	Level of agreement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism – % –							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	11.2	26.2	25.9	18.3	7.2	11.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	8.7	31.6	26.7	10.9	3.7	18.4	100.0
Staff and students from different racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds are engaged in the design and implementation of anti-racism policies and other initiatives to improve equality							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	13.4	32.9	19.7	9.3	3.6	21.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	11.5	34.8	17.3	5.3	2.0	29.1	100.0
Approaches for addressing racism have little to do with investigating and responding to the realities of racism at university							
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	8.6	23.8	26.0	14.6	6.8	20.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	6.0	18.6	24.9	20.1	7.6	22.8	100.0
n= 31,588							

n= 31,588

In interpreting these results, it is important to keep in mind that a significant proportion of respondents said that they were not sure. The views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff and students about their universities' racism policies are similar, with only about one-third strongly agreeing or agreeing existing policies and procedures are effective in addressing racism, Table 7.1. Between one-quarter and slightly under one-third strongly agreed or agreed that approaches to addressing racism are ineffective and have little to do with investigating and responding to the realities of racism at university. And under half strongly agreed or agreed that staff and students from diverse backgrounds are engaged in the design and implementation of anti-racism policies and other initiatives to improve equity.

6.7.1 Assessment of university policies of support and inclusion

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have mixed views about the effectiveness of university policies which aim to promote racial equality and address racism.

While between 38 and 47 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff viewed the various measures as being very effective or effective, between 29 and 33 per cent viewed the various measures as being ineffective or very ineffective, Table 6.29.

Non-Indigenous are more positive about the effectiveness of the various measures, with between 59 and 67 per cent viewing them as very effective or effective.

Table 6.29 Assessment of effectiveness of university policies to promote racial equality and address racism, staff, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
Recruitment and promotion practices to address racial inequality – % –						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	9.2	36.5	22.0	22.0	10.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	11.5	47.6	22.6	12.2	6.0	100.0
Mentorship and sponsorship program(s) to address racial inequality						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	8.6	31.0	30.0	20.8	9.6	100.0
Non-Indigenous	10.7	48.4	25.9	10.5	4.5	100.0
Career development program(s) promoting racial equality						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	8.9	33.7	28.9	19.4	9.1	100.0
Non-Indigenous	11.2	48.7	23.9	11.1	5.2	100.0
Support services for people who experience racism						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	9.1	37.7	22.8	21.9	8.5	100.0
Non-Indigenous	13.7	53.3	20.9	8.8	3.3	100.0
Cultural safety program(s)						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	11.6	34.6	22.7	22.2	8.8	100.0
Non-Indigenous	12.0	53.6	21.8	9.1	3.5	100.0
Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	7.6	30.6	28.7	22.8	10.3	100.0
Non-Indigenous	9.7	49.2	25.1	11.4	4.5	100.0

n= 15,153

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are markedly more positive about the effectiveness of university policies which aim to promote racial equality and address racism. Between 57 and 76 per cent assessed the various policies as being very effective or effective and between 9 and 22 per cent assessed them as being ineffective or very ineffective, Table 6.30.

The assessment of students about the general effectiveness of university policies is positive for universities.

Table 6.30 Assessment of effectiveness of university policies to promote racial equality and address racism, students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
Mentorship program(s) – % –						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	21.9	47.1	19.3	7.3	4.4	100.0
Non-Indigenous	15.9	50.5	24.1	6.9	2.6	100.0
Academic skills support						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	28.9	47.4	14.9	5.4	3.4	100.0
Non-Indigenous	22.5	55.0	15.5	5.1	1.9	100.0
Career planning						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	25.3	45.5	18.6	6.2	4.3	100.0
Non-Indigenous	19.2	51.3	19.8	6.8	2.8	100.0
Support systems for people who experience racism						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	23.9	43.0	19.7	7.7	5.6	100.0
Non-Indigenous	22.4	51.2	18.2	5.6	2.6	100.0
Cultural safety program(s)						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	27.8	42.1	14.8	8.9	6.5	100.0
Non-Indigenous	21.8	52.3	16.9	6.0	3.0	100.0
Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies						
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	20.7	36.1	21.1	12.6	9.5	100.0
Non-Indigenous	18.7	46.7	20.4	8.7	5.5	100.0

The question of the nature and effectiveness of policies were addressed in a number of the textual responses to the survey by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff:

Responses to overt acts of racism or cultural safety programs are simply the low-hanging fruit of anti-racism strategies.

Academics particularly need to make a much more concerted effort to do better in the classroom to serve Indigenous students. The numerous racist accounts we hear being made about the 'primitive other' are endless. It should be a responsibility of Deans to ensure that their academics are well equipped across all fronts. We wouldn't tolerate a lecturer coming into a classroom and making sexist remarks of a significant nature - why is racism tolerated with a 'they didn't know better' or 'they are trying their best' approach?

I view this level of implementation of racism and DEI as harmful, particularly when it prioritises demographics over merit, fosters division, stifles expression, or diverts resources from broader workplace needs.

Continuously review processes and policies that enable tokenism. For example, Indigenous Australian panel members are required on panels where there is an Indigenous Australian applicant. Often, Indigenous Australian staff members are approached with 1-2 day's notice to sit on a panel. This is not the same courtesy that is extended to non-Indigenous Australian panel members who are often given 1-2 weeks' notice. This feels tokenistic and insulting. It feels as if panel chairs don't understand the reason for this policy, don't value or respect the opinion of the Indigenous Australian panel member, and don't respect their time as a staff member. I'm not asking for a change to policy, it's incredibly important. But I feel it would be fair for panel chairs

to consider asking Indigenous Australian staff members to consider joining the panel if there is an Indigenous Australian applicant with the same notice provided to non-Indigenous Australian panel members.

6.8 Summary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff experience racism at Australian universities at rates far higher than their non-Indigenous peers, and these experiences have profound consequences for wellbeing, participation, and career progression. Just under one-third, 29.8 per cent of Indigenous students, 56.6 per cent of academic staff, and 41.1 per cent of non-academic staff reported direct racism on campus—figures that are several times higher than those for ‘European’-background respondents. Their experiences also highlight intersectionality and the role of class, as well as the extent to which Indigenous people face racism from across the settler population. A number also raise challenges within their own community.

The impacts are severe. Among students who experienced racism, 71.9 per cent reported negative effects on mental health, and more than half, 52.3 per cent, said it harmed their studies. For academic staff, 82.0 per cent reported mental health impacts, and 53.6 per cent said racism negatively affected their career. These findings underscore that racism is not an isolated event but a structural issue that has significant negative effects and impacts professional trajectories.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students reported lower levels of belonging and respect. Many respondents adopt coping strategies such as concealing identity or avoiding campus events, highlighting the pervasive nature of these challenges.

Cultural load refers to the additional, often invisible, responsibilities placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff within universities because of their Indigeneity. For many, this burden compounds the challenges of navigating systemic racism and discrimination, creating emotional and professional strain. The survey found that almost 78.4 per cent of Indigenous academic staff and 62.9 per cent of non-academic staff reported being expected to take on these tasks. These burdens are even more critical, given that many of the respondents identified university responses and demands placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff as being performative or tokenistic.

Institutional responses remain inadequate with many students and staff believing that anti-racism policies are ineffective. More generally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff tend not to consider that the staff and student bodies are truly reflective of diversity and staff strongly feel this way with regard to university leadership.

7 Identified communities

The AHRC identified a number of specific communities of interest in the survey.⁶² These were: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Jewish communities, Muslim communities, Palestinian communities, Middle Eastern communities, South, Southeast, and East Asian communities, African communities, Pasifika communities, and international student communities. As was identified in Chapter 2, all of these communities reported significant levels of racism, and racial discrimination.

As has been detailed, the classification of people into these communities was not straightforward, and at times relied upon very generalised approaches and key words. As such there is likely to be some imprecision in the classification at the individual level. Our reviews of the data suggest that this is at the margins and does not affect the reported experiences of these communities to any significant degree.

The previous chapter has considered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, while this chapter addresses the other identified communities, along with some others identified in the analysis of the responses, the specific experiences of Australian domestic students who also identify with other communities, and those with only a 'European' heritage who reported racism. Given the extensive coverage of international students in the student chapter, only limited analysis is presented here.⁶³ In line with the approach adopted throughout this report the measure of identification is based upon peoples reported 'ethnic, cultural, national origin groups' that they identify with. Where initial identification was not possible this was, complemented by information based on language spoken at home and country of birth. Further, as noted, a person can be a member of a number of different communities, and their data will be incorporated in each of the analyses of their specific communities.

7.1 Jewish communities

For the purpose of this analysis the Jewish population has been divided into two groups. The first is anyone who stated that their religion was Judaism⁶⁴. The second are 'secular Jews', those who identified at least one of their ethnicities as Jewish (including terms such as Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Litvak and Mizrahi) but did not list Judaism as their religion. In a number of cases, while people identified as Jewish in response to the question on religion, they used free text fields to specifically indicate that this was however not their religion. These were allocated to the non-religious group.⁶⁵ Overall there were 496 students who

⁶² While we have used the AHRC language of 'communities' it is recognised that some respondents may be simply reporting upon their heritage, rather than seeing themselves as being part of a particular 'community' associated with this.

⁶³ In the analysis some data is presented on the basis of country of birth. In some cases, there are a small number of students who reported that their country of birth is Australia, but that they are international students. While this is possible, given the small numbers involved, these have been included as domestic students.

⁶⁴ In analysing the results of the survey the significantly different experiences of these two groups of students and staff warranted this approach.

⁶⁵ In addition, when reading the detailed responses to some of the other open-ended questions, including the final question which allowed for quite substantial responses, a number of those who have been coded as

were identified as religious Jews and 236 as secular. There were 337 responses from staff who identified their religion as Judaism and 255 who identified as Jewish in their ethnicity. These figures compare with 2021 Census data which identifies 1,137 persons employed in higher education as having Judaism as their religion and 6,387 tertiary students. This suggests a very high response rate from these groups.⁶⁶ Overall, 63 per cent of Jewish respondents indicated Judaism as their religion, a percentage that is similar to the 66 per cent reported in a 2018 non-probability survey of the Jewish community.⁶⁷ It is unclear the extent to which religious identification in the survey relates to observance, and to which extent it is a marker of belonging to a particular congregation or religious community.

7.1.1 Jewish communities: demographics

Around two-thirds of the Jewish respondents, Table 7.1, reported that they were born in Australia. Of the balance the major countries of birth were Israel 113, the USA 72, South Africa 63, and the United Kingdom 59.

Table 7.1 Jewish communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
Jewish (religious)				
– Persons –				
Domestic student	339	119	15	473
International student	–	20	3	23
Academic staff	93	93	13	199
Non-academic staff	75	50	13	138
Total	507	282	44	833
Jewish (secular)				
Domestic student	179	39	5	223
International student	–	13	0	13
Academic staff	75	73	9	157
Non-academic staff	54	38	6	98
Total	308	163	20	491

Overall, both religious and secular Jewish respondents reported lower rates of a sense of belonging, safety and respect at university than non-Jewish respondents, Table 7.2. This was particularly marked with regard to safety where 40.8 per cent of religious and 16.9 per cent of secular Jewish respondents reported negative views on their safety, seven and almost three times, respectively the rate for non-Jewish staff and students. While only some 39 per cent of religious Jewish respondents reported that they agreed, or strongly agreed, that they had a sense of belonging or safety at university, 61.2 per cent agreed or strongly agreed they were respected. For secular respondents the level of agreement relating to both safety and respect was around 70 per cent.

religious indicate that this is not the case, but rather they see themselves as culturally and ethnically Jewish only. No correction to the coding was made in these cases.

⁶⁶ Deriving actual response rates is difficult, not just due to the difference of timing of the Census and this survey but also due to the extent to which identifying in the Census as a religious Jew can be seen by some as a way of ensuring acknowledgement of their identity as Jewish, rather than their religious belief. This was also the case in this survey.

⁶⁷ See Table 3 in Graham & Markus (2018).

Table 7.2 Jewish communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Jewish (religious) – % –						
Belonging	8.5	30.2	23.9	26.0	11.3	100.0
Safety	10.2	28.4	20.7	27.2	13.5	100.0
Respect	13.4	47.8	22.8	11.2	4.9	100.0
Jewish (secular)						
Belonging	16.6	38.8	22.8	16.2	5.5	100.0
Safety	27.8	41.4	14.0	12.4	4.5	100.0
Respect	25.1	46.4	15.2	9.7	3.7	100.0
Non-Jewish						
Belonging	17.9	46.3	21.7	10.6	3.5	100.0
Safety	32.9	51.5	9.8	4.3	1.6	100.0
Respect	28.2	54.5	11.0	4.6	1.7	100.0

n = 1,307 (Jewish)

7.1.2 Jewish communities: Incidence of racism

Jewish respondents, as noted in Chapter 2, reported much higher levels of direct interpersonal racism. This, as detailed in Table 7.3, is much more marked for those who were religious than for secular Jews, but even for this latter group the rate was around double that of all other survey respondents. Amongst those who were identified as religious the rate for students was a little higher than that for staff. This was reversed for those identified as secular, and in both groups higher rates were reported for males than females. For those identifying differently, with respect to gender, the rate was lower for those identifying as religious, and higher for those identifying as secular.

Table 7.3 Jewish communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Type and characteristic	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Jewish (religious) – % –						
Student	12.6	44.2	56.8	19.8	23.4	100.0
Staff	11.7	42.3	54.0	17.9	28.1	100.0
Female	11.1	42.6	53.7	19.1	27.2	100.0
Male	14.3	45.1	59.4	19.8	20.8	100.0
Jewish (secular)						
Student	6.3	17.5	23.8	19.3	57.0	100.0
Staff	8.3	18.3	26.7	9.6	63.8	100.0
Female	7.4	16.3	23.6	13.2	63.2	100.0
Male	6.4	19.2	25.6	16.3	58.1	100.0
Non-Jewish						
Student	3.2	11.1	14.3	24.0	61.7	100.0
Staff	5.0	9.5	14.5	13.4	72.1	100.0

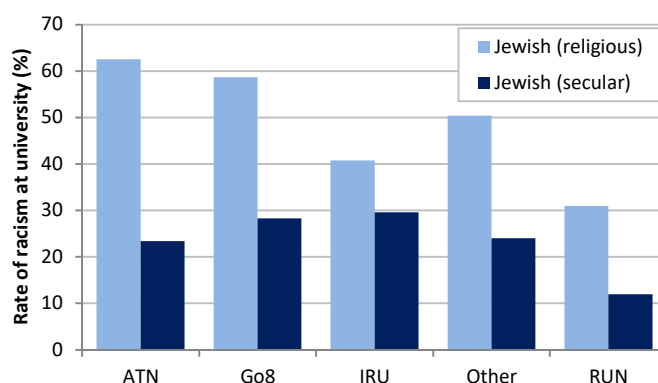
n = 1,262 (Jewish)

For all the classifications considered the rate of direct racism experienced by Jewish respondents at university was lower than the rate they reported experiencing in the

community. Only a quarter of those identified as religious reported no experience of racism. In contrast, for those who are secular this rises to some 60 per cent.

The number of respondents limited the scope for any substantive university level comparison. However, Figure 7.1 presents some analysis for the university groupings. This shows considerable variations in the reported level of racism, with rates for religious Jews at the ATN universities being double that at the RUN group. The table also however shows that there is little, if any, consistency in the relationship between levels of racism reported by religious relative to secular Jewish respondents. That is, while the ATN universities have the highest rate of reported racism by those identifying as religious, they have the second lowest rate for reported racism by those who are secular. The reasons for this disjuncture are not clear, but it does suggest considerable caution in assuming any underlying factors.

Figure 7.1 Jewish communities, experience of direct racism at university, by university grouping



The incidence of indirect racism is detailed in Table 7.4. A very high proportion of Jewish respondents reported such occurrences, and while reported by those who identify as religious at a very high rate as being ‘frequent’ or ‘very frequent’, for those who identify as being secular it is usually reported as ‘sometimes’ or ‘rarely’. The most common and highest frequency item was ‘blaming your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group for some adverse outcome for others’.

Table 7.4 Jewish communities, experience of indirect racism

Respondent type	Even if not directed at you how frequently have you seen or heard people:					Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
Using racist terms or making racist jokes and comments about the racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group with which you identify						
	- % -					
Jewish (religious)	21.2	23.5	26.8	15.2	13.3	100.0
Jewish (secular)	8.2	10.5	26.0	22.2	33.1	100.0
Non-Jewish	3.1	6.9	21.5	26.7	41.9	100.0
Denigrating your culture in a racist way						
Jewish (religious)	29.3	23.0	23.6	11.1	13.0	100.0
Jewish (secular)	8.5	11.2	22.7	18.4	39.2	100.0
Non-Jewish	2.4	4.9	15.6	23.7	53.4	100.0
Using negative stereotypes about your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group						
Jewish (religious)	31.5	23.2	24.7	9.2	11.5	100.0
Jewish (secular)	10.1	12.2	24.0	20.8	32.8	100.0
Non-Jewish	3.5	7.4	20.3	24.4	44.4	100.0
Trivialising the negative experiences of people of your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group						
Jewish (religious)	37.8	23.9	19.2	8.7	10.4	100.0
Jewish (secular)	12.7	14.4	23.3	16.7	32.8	100.0
Non-Jewish	3.6	6.5	17.5	22.9	49.5	100.0
Blaming your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group for some adverse outcome for others						
Jewish (religious)	49.7	19.5	16.2	5.2	9.5	100.0
Jewish (secular)	18.8	15.6	23.5	9.9	32.1	100.0
Non-Jewish	4.7	6.6	16.7	21.1	50.9	100.0
n = 1,282 (Jewish)						

n = 1,282 (Jewish)

Table 7.5 presents a summary of the key issues identified associated with experiences of racism. The main part of the table concerns those who reported direct racism at university. Appended, at the end of the table are the proportion of the whole of population who reported taking each of the precautionary behaviours.

As detailed in the table, there were some marked differences in the pattern of experience. Looking at the form of racism, there was a very high level of reporting that Jewish respondents, both students and staff, felt that they could not express their view freely, with this being reported by 93.7 per cent of those religious Jewish students who had experienced racism. While both student groups reported a high rate of inappropriate comments, this was not the case for staff. There was little evidence of exclusion, relative to other groups facing racism, and generally lower rates of being told or made to feel unintelligent, missing opportunities, or not being trusted. Similarly issues around marks for students and promotion for staff, were raised at rates considerably lower than that for others reporting direct racism. This was particularly marked for staff with respect to promotion. Rates of harassment of all forms were reported at high levels, in particular by students.

Overwhelmingly conflict in the Middle East was most frequently cited as a reason for their experience, being reported by 91.8 per cent of religious and 69.2 per cent of secular Jewish students and 84.1 per cent of religious and 82.3 per cent of secular Jewish staff, followed by religion, for those who identified as religious.

Table 7.5 Jewish communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students			Staff		
	Jewish (religious)	Jewish (secular)	Non- Jewish	Jewish (religious)	Jewish (secular)	Non- Jewish
	– % –					
Forms of racism experienced						
Singled out/Excluded	48.5	52.8	49.9	34.3	25.0	42.3
Inappropriate comments etc	56.3	60.4	42.4	40.6	31.3	40.4
Could not express views	93.7	81.1	58.0	84.6	85.9	58.1
Told/made to feel unintelligent	18.5	32.1	36.7	11.4	17.2	38.0
Missed opportunity	10.0	28.3	35.9	15.4	18.8	43.9
Not Trusted	30.7	37.7	37.0	25.7	31.3	40.0
Stopped by uni security	4.8	11.3	9.2	1.7	1.6	4.0
Physical harassment	13.3	15.1	7.1	9.7	3.1	3.7
Verbal harassment	45.9	43.4	21.8	38.3	34.4	18.7
Online harassment	36.3	32.1	13.6	29.1	20.3	8.8
Worse mark (student)	13.7	20.8	27.7	–	–	–
Get things free (student)	25.2	26.4	20.8	–	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	–	14.3	28.1	25.8
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	–	4.0	9.4	25.1
Reason why targeted						
Language or accent	5.6	13.5	37.1	11.2	8.1	36.2
Cultural/racial/ethnic	68.9	80.8	71.1	67.1	80.7	71.4
Skin colour/physical	7.5	25.0	68.2	2.9	16.1	52.2
Religion	89.5	46.2	22.4	84.1	37.1	15.9
Middle East conflict	91.8	69.2	12.1	84.1	82.3	11.7
COVID	0.8	1.9	9.1	1.2	3.2	4.5
Other	2.3	11.5	6.6	5.9	9.7	10.3
International fee-paying student(a)	10.0	20.0	46.7	–	–	–
Who was engaged						
Teaching/Academic	49.6	45.3	46.5	60.0	51.6	47.0
Administrative staff	12.2	28.3	17.2	37.1	32.8	46.8
Facilities staff	8.2	11.3	8.7	4.6	6.3	6.0
Students	91.9	86.8	65.5	66.3	68.8	22.8
University leadership	20.7	20.8	14.8	33.7	28.1	46.9
Other	6.7	5.7	4.4	9.7	12.5	4.4
Impact of racism						
Limit university participation	82.6	71.7	61.3	76.6	65.6	54.9
Negative mental health	81.9	81.1	64.7	83.4	67.2	68.9
Negative studies (student)	53.0	43.4	44.1	–	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	–	32.6	29.7	48.6
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)						
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	72.2	35.1	15.8	55.4	28.0	14.0
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	75.5	33.7	12.0	66.1	30.5	10.3
Prepare for racist discussions	60.8	30.4	15.0	45.7	19.3	8.8
Avoid protests	60.0	21.3	10.5	44.2	18.7	5.7
Limit speech because of visa (a)	28.6	38.5	24.3	13.4	3.4	5.9

n = 562 (Jewish, racism questions), 1,311 (Jewish, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

Students being party to the racism that was experienced was reported at very high rates by both Jewish students and staff, in the latter case at triple the rate of other staff facing racism, and while Jewish students were more likely to identify university leadership as a participant relative to the other groups experiencing racism, the opposite was the case for staff who identified them as participants at much lower rates.

Both religious and secular Jewish students reported higher rates of negative impact on participation at university, their studies and mental health, relative to other groups and

while both groups of staff reported reducing their participation at university at higher rates relative to other groups facing racism, only those who were religious identified a higher negative mental health outcome, and both groups of staff reported much lower rates of the racism impeding their careers.

Religious and secular Jewish staff and students all reported very elevated behavioural restraints, including disclosing identity, wearing items that may reveal their identity, preparing for potentially racist discussion and avoiding protests.

7.1.3 The nature of racism experienced by the Jewish communities

Detailed below are extracts from some of the textual material which was included in responses. While there was considerable variation across comments, on the whole they point, as was shown in the data, to high levels of experiencing racism. At the same time other members of the Jewish community expressed different views. The material presented in this report has sought to reflect the diversity of views, and all quotes come from people identified as being Jewish. While this material is extensive, and is of a greater volume than is presented for other communities it is considered appropriate to report it here to illustrate their experiences and perspectives, and also to address the question of Antisemitism. Overriding most of the reporting of experiences of racism was the Israel–Palestine conflict. It should however be noted that not all of the racism reported by Jewish respondents related to the Israel–Palestine conflict, or indeed on peoples' Jewish ethnicity. Rather, some focused rather on other ethnicities which they also identify with, and in some cases their responses relates to racism within the Jewish community.

Reported experiences of racism

Many Jewish respondents reported details of incidents that they experienced in their textual responses.

Been told to take a shower (I am Jewish), been called "a Shailo"⁶⁸, been told that "all Jews look the same", got told I look like a comic relief character, when in conversation and revealing my heritage been told "don't worry, I don't read the news" but subsequently excluded, people constantly making Nazi and money jokes around me

Jewish people have unfortunately experienced ample racism over the last 2 years. This has included people screaming "send them to the camps" at a small groups of Jews or accusing us of being involved in foreign wars. It also includes trivialising our experience of racism and antisemitism here.

Many university staff are promulgating anti-Semitic attitudes, and ideas in the classroom, and spreading it through society, often without even realising they are being anti-Semitic. I constantly hear tropes to do with money, power, control, blood thirstiness and other anti-Semitic ideas in classrooms, and staff meetings

⁶⁸ This terminology was not known to the authors, it may have been a misspelling of, or slang reference to, 'Shylock' in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice.

I can't stand how easily there are 'marches for Gaza' and chants of 'Free Palestine'. This is complete misinformation and it's actually insulting to be siding with the terrorist mob that is Hamas.

I find it offensive that its ok for people to wear pro-palestine shirts, carry signs, have tables in main parts of campus and flags on campus and at staff meetings - the reason for this is that these symbols either implicitly or explicitly call for the death of Jews (ie the IDF or 'from the river to the sea') and show support for a terrorist group.

I wear my Star of David and have been harassed because of it, they didn't care about my political views, just that I'm Jewish. I've been called "supporter of genocide" and "Zionist scum" just because I'm Jewish. The harassment is relentless,

One particular student put kefiye's (the headdress that Palestinian men wear) on seats on her table, and had anti-Israel stickers all over her laptop. She also talked about the conflict in the Middle East very casually, how Palestinians are the indigenous people of the area etc. As a Jew with family members who were murdered in the Holocaust, intergenerational trauma due to anti-Semitic violence, relatives who are living in Israel right now who are unsafe, and someone who is generally scared of telling people I'm Jewish, I felt very unsafe. The kefiye's and anti-Israel stickers made me feel unsafe to be in the room, like a Jew hiding in the closet when the SS arrive. I understand that everyone is entitled to their political views, but prohibition of flag stickers are racist, and putting kefiye's everywhere is pretty clearly an anti-Semitic/racist act. It's not far from boycotting Jewish businesses and asking everyone to wear yellow stars.

I'm all for balanced criticism of Israel and do not automatically equate this with anti-Semitism. However some of the unbalanced criticisms of Israel and "Zionists" is nothing but a smokescreen for anti-Semitism. Such as on 8 October 2023, before Israel commenced military action, criticising Israel of 'Genocide'. Such as constantly and vindictively criticising Israel while ignoring (or giving shallow lip service) to atrocities committed against Muslims, such as ones in Sudan, Syria, Yemen.

During the many pro Palestine protests I feel unsafe, not necessarily because I agree or disagree with what they are saying but because they are protesting about the lives of my friends and family. I lived in Israel last year during the war and it was really challenging and seeing people protest saying they hate Israel is really hard to hear, as a Jew I believe in something called hugging and wrestling with Israel where you hug and love it because its "the home land" but also wrestle with it because of the shitty government

During my time at [university name], my experience as an Israeli and Jewish student has been significantly affected by the rise in antisemitism on campus, particularly since October 7th. Before that date, I had not personally experienced antisemitism on campus. However, in the months following, the environment has become increasingly hostile. Posters and protests calling for

the boycott of Israel and Israelis, along with chants such as "Intifada," have created a climate of fear and alienation. Many of these materials and demonstrations spread misinformation and contribute to a sense that Jewish and Israeli students are unwelcome or unsafe.

Casual antisemitism is something I have been surprised to see a lot more than I expected in both staff and students. The dehumanisation of Jewish people has been aided by the responses or lack of response from staff and faculty... As a left-wing Jew I am well informed about the difference between anti-Israel and anti-Semitic rhetoric, and what I have experienced at [University name] has crossed the line into anti-Semitism. I have been told antisemitic tropes by other students such as Jews run the world, they are controlling the government, they control America and so on

I am constantly harassed by Pro-Palestinian supporters with their desks set up outside the library, handing out anti-Israel/Jewish leaflets. I feel intimidated and unsafe because of the hatred they promote towards the Jewish faith.

My grief and pain following October 7 have been dismissed as not valid, or not real, while at the same time being told that it is also deserved and nothing compared to the suffering of Palestinians

Given the current Middle Eastern wars and situation, I feel very threatened at work walking though the campus and having certain socialist clubs wearing Palestinian scarves and thrusting pamphlets at me denouncing Israel. Similarly, attending staff meetings with some staff wearing the same scarves and also comments made about the war that I find very disturbing.

There is vulgar antisemitism alive at [named] university. I cannot wear my Kippah without being confronted with questions about the conflict in the middle east, people actively tell me "Free Palestine", a phrase which simply means, "Remove all Jews (including my family) from Israel".

Was harassed for being Jewish and wearing my kippa whilst walking to class through pro Palestine event. Also had protestors come into class to yell and also call me out

Within the past 2 years of my enrolment in university, I have come face to face with racism and discrimination purely based off of stereotypical and biased beliefs about my religion, ethnicity, and culture.

[University] should take stronger steps to address anti-Semitism on campus, including recognising that hostility linked to pro-Palestinian directly results in discrimination against Jewish students. It has allowed for the normalisation of anti-Semitism on campus.

Prior to the 7 October massacre that Hamas committed against Israel I had never seen a single mention of the Palestine-Israel conflict on campus ... Since 7 October 2023, there has barely been a single time that I have come to university and not been faced with anti-Israel signage, chants, propaganda. I

have seen footage of rallies where a student was screaming 'F... off Zionist scum, from the river to the sea...' into a megaphone. From the river to the sea is a chant from the Hamas charter, and it is a call to kill all Jewish people.

While not all Palestinians are bad (of course not), the Palestinian ideology was born out of terrorism and a dream to complete Hitler's final solution

Seeing the posters that are hung around campus that demonise Israel and the IDF and the Israeli Prime Minister, all the while completely ignoring everything else in the global political arena, is very painful to me. The hostility is loud and clear, even before a physical altercation happens in person. If this will not be tackled, a criminal incident on the basis of hate is only a matter of time. In addition, Islam in its basic texts (Qur'an, Hadith, Sunna) is full of anti-Jewish and anti-Christian and anti-"disbeliever" statements. Yet, Islam is treated as just another cultural construct, and many DEI initiatives, perhaps well-meaning, smear any criticism of Islam as Islamophobia

The "Palestinian" identity is not racial, ethnographic, or religious (as an aside, all religions are a choice and thus should be open to criticism). "Palestinian" is a fundamentally anti-Semitic ideology rooted in a genocidal belief of Jewish ethnic eradication. We must collectively stand against this poison because those identifying as "Palestinian" are actively discriminating against not only Jews but all perceived "others"

Some however argued that the focus on conflict in the Middle East was misplaced:

There is too much focus on Anti-Semitism from Middle-Eastern and/or Muslim students, the most vitriolic anti-Semites on campus are not concerned with Palestine, they are "hard-right" or "far-right" men of mostly European descent.

As noted in some cases the racism reported was from within the Jewish community. A focal point for this was a post from a senior Jewish community member attacking anti-Zionist Jews. This led to comments such as:

it is particularly embarrassing, that a University council member, [name redacted], has not yet been stepped down due to continued racist smearing of not only people from the Middle East but of Jewish people, which also, amounts to antisemitism. On his X account he called a group of Jews 'repulsive and revolting human beings'.

There were also some more complex expressions of either rejection – or distancing within the community

My experience of racism has been ongoing all my life although it is worse now due to the situation in Israel. I am not in any way affiliated with Israel, nor do I agree with their mission and atrocities. I feel like I am required to make my political position clear which is not actually a fair burden to place on me - especially given the generational trauma I experience from my family's experience of the Holocaust. I have been told that there are students who don't like me because I'm Jewish (I'm actually not - I'm an atheist Ashkenazi).

Nobody has been overtly hostile at the University (actually, they're overtly kind to me). Now that I have declared my position, people in the Ashkenazi community outside of the University are avoiding me. Racism is complicated. All the shouty protestor people at the University probably see the trauma they are exacerbating as a reasonable price to make Jews pay - sadly, I agree with them despite the triggering of pain it causes me.

My experience of racism is deeply complex, and at times it feels almost justified. The intersection of my culture, race, and religion has created an internal conflict Since I was old enough to understand why we left Israel, the ongoing conflict in Palestine has stirred a deep and enduring unease within me. It has fractured my relationship with my family and left me feeling both implicated and helpless. I recognise the historical and emotional necessity of a homeland for Jewish people, yet I wrestle with the moral weight of what that has come to mean. At the same time, I've always lived with a sense of fear for simply being Jewish ... Over time, I've distanced myself from the Jewish community. I exist in a kind of cultural limbo, belonging nowhere. And yet I'd rather live in that space of disconnection than risk being reduced to a set of ugly, persistent stereotypes: Zionist, filthy, cheap, manipulative, wealthy, corrupt.

Some however challenged what others saw as racism in the protests:

threats to Jewish safety are being defined extremely widely to include Palestinian flags, misinterpretations of the phrase 'From the River to the Sea', keffiyehs being worn at graduations - and it's up to the university to take a strong stance on this and repeatedly reiterate that these are not threats or acts of violence. They are forms of political expression and solidarity that have long histories for Palestinian and other Arab people, as well as allies - and as a Jewish staff member, I do not require that these be stifled in order to make me feel safe.

I am a Jewish person horrified both by the attacks of 7 Oct and by Israel's response to them. I strongly oppose the war in Gaza. I believe that students and staff of all religious backgrounds should feel safe on campus - but that does not mean not being confronted with views they disagree with. The Gaza encampment at [University] was beneath my office - I thought it was a peaceful and disciplined protest with reasonable aims, such as ending [University] dealings with arms manufacturers who supply weapons to the IDF. I walked past them every day did not feel threatened by them at all. I think the University has made a mistake adopting the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism - it is being used to stifle academic freedom and legitimate criticism of Israel's conduct.

I am writing from the perspective of a Jewish PhD student who has been studying/working at [University] for over 10 years. There has been a lot of discussion on campus regarding the supposed increase in antisemitism at this institution. I want to state very clearly that I have never seen or experienced any antisemitism. This is also true for all of my Jewish colleagues, and all of the Jewish students I know. But unfortunately there has been a concerted effort

by pro-Israel advocates to conflate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism in order to stifle criticism of Israel on campus.

Racism and antisemitism

Quite a number of the responses from participants voiced strong concern that the focus of the survey was on racism generally, rather than specifically on antisemitism:

Take antisemitism much more seriously, instead of coupling it with all other racial events. Every time the leadership mentions anti-Semitic issues that have occurred, they also mention Islamophobia. Both are terrible but have different causes and effects, and do not occur in the same instances; so they should be dealt with on their own.

As a Jewish student, I've found that antisemitism is either overlooked or forced into an anti-racism framework that doesn't always fit. Antisemitism often operates differently to other forms of racism, so treating it as the same risks minimising or misunderstanding the experience

Recognise and reaffirm that racism against different groups IS different and needs to be tackled differently. Racism against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people IS a different beast. Antisemitism is a different beast. Trying to appease people by lumping it all together so no one gets 'special treatment' is a great way to make sure that the only racism which gets addressed is that which targets the most prominent minority groups, whose voices will be privileged in such a structure

On the other hand, a smaller number took a different perspective:

Have an anti-racism policy that protects all people. An antisemitism policy that confuses and muddles anti-Semitism with the legitimate criticism of Israel and Zionism, will negatively impact the safety of Jewish people.

Stop focusing on racism between specific groups. Focus on racism in general, and that means all racism. .. Focusing on specific expressions of racism helps no one ultimately. Especially not Jewish people, and I speak as a member of a ... Jewish group

Stop putting so much effort solely on antisemitism. I am Jewish, and it infuriates me that with so much systemic racism and discrimination, my culture and religion is given such a privileged focus. We do not need to be THE focus, all races, cultures and religions should be the focus of anti-discrimination and antiracism efforts. Combating antisemitism is important, but so is racism and xenophobia for all people.

Constraining behaviour

Quite a number reported, in addition to not attending their university campus as much, constraining behaviours:

I have not disclosed my identity to any staff or students, therefore I don't know the racial perceptions I'd encounter on doing so.

Nobody knows my cultural background is Jewish. I keep it to myself as I'm not sure how it would affect my relationship with my colleagues.

I feel that I am always on guard wondering whether people's anti-Zionism is also going to be anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic as it sometimes can be. I feel wary sometimes as some people can interchange between Zionist and Jew when they are discussing the terrible war and genocide in Gaza.

Being Jewish, I am very careful not to wear anything that identifies me as Jewish whilst on campus, like a Star of David.

I am conscious of who I disclose my religion to and whether I hide my Star of David.

Other perspectives

There were also a number of responses, essentially from members of the Jewish community who did not see systematic issues of racism against the community at university, although some noted it had arisen at times, offering broader perspectives:

People often look at me differently when I wear a star of David, or divulge my Jewish culture. I don't think it is always anti-Semitic, it could be just awkwardness from lack of exposure... but in my experience, lack of exposure/ignorance is usually the root cause of prejudice. I have heard other colleagues talking about the same [Middle East] conflict, stating matter-of-factly that the war is because the Jews and Palestinians 'just hate each other' - like we are just like dogs and cats, not humans with deep connections and history.

There is anti-Semitism on campus, as there are still people who conflate Judaism with Zionism and support for Israel. While I see this in a few select university employees, that reality has NEVER made me feel unsafe or unwelcome at the University more generally.

The University leadership have responded to accusations of racism effectively and should be congratulated for the way they handled the recent political protests on campus. They allowed legitimate protest against military conflict in the Middle East to continue, whilst taking a strong stance against antisemitism. However, I believe that the root causes of Jewish anxiety were not addressed, nor were the concerns raised by protestors sympathetic towards Palestine, who in many cases were wrongly accused of anti-Semitic conduct.

Despite being a Jewish academic I have not been affected directly by the tumult around the conflict in Israel/Palestine. I have not been targeted by students or staff for my cultural background in this period. Protests are confronting but not in themselves offensive to me. However, I am aware that other Jewish academics and students have had worse experiences, including conflation of Israel and Jewish people (eg a Jewish student all but evicted by her housemates). I may simply have been lucky to avoid something similar. But in

general, any racism/antisemitism I experience is outside of the University context

Some took however quite a different approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and what this meant about racism and their identity:

As a Jewish student I am horrified by the weaponisation of my identity by universities (and other institutions) to attempt to silence criticism of the Israel regime by fanning a hysteria of a so-called racism on campus. This confected problem is purely to keep us all quiet about the genocide of Palestinian people so that the university can continue its partnerships with weapons manufacturers. The side effect of this hysteria is that it creates a lot of fear among some international students, especially women wearing hijab.

My family background is Jewish and I'm disappointed at how much "preventing antisemitism" has been used at [university] and across Australia to delegitimise criticism of Israel. I'm openly non-Zionist and participate in pro-Palestinian demonstrations and I don't feel like authorities have taken this perspective particularly seriously. In particular, I've found neo-Nazi materials on campus (stickers, etc.) and don't feel comfortable reporting them to security because I don't want the report to be weaponised by aggregating it into an opaque "antisemitic incidents" statistic which is used to stifle criticism And so I take down the stickers myself.

I am profoundly disturbed by the racism against Palestinians at [university] at the level of the administration in particular. My Jewish morality requires that I speak out against this racism. Never again means never again for all. This racism negates [university]'s capacity and will to meet its human rights obligations. Among other problems, it inadvertently promotes a racial, religious, and national hierarchy that places Palestinians, Muslims, and Black Africans lower than other nations and religions. This is currently part of [university]'s culture. For example, antisemitism training should not be rolled out without anti-Palestinian bias training as a discrete requirement designed by Palestinians in times of genocide against Palestinians. Another ugly, recent manifestations of this racism involves the universities Australia definition of antisemitism. ... Racism can take many forms, including silence. [University]' silence about Israel's genocide against Palestine is deafening for the student body. My peers from Muslim countries feel unsafe, silenced, and scared. My Jewish friends feel safer to voice their dissent, because of this racial, religious and national hierarchy.

As noted not all of the questions of racism raised were about racism against the Jewish community, including a theme that was echoed across communities:

I was astounded by how systemically racist the university executive and chancellor were. If you look at the appointees to Council over the past decade apart from staff student and indigenous there has not been a non-Euro-Australian appointed, despite the diversity of the university community.

Proposed responses

While the survey rotated a number of questions, in particular what action universities should take to address racism, relatively few of the respondents focused on this. Typical of the responses are:

Educate students about anti-Zionist racism, stop allowing anti-Israel demonstrations and posters. Don't allow national flags (eg Palestinian or other) to be displayed in common areas/offices.

Prevent students from defacing university property and plastering propaganda across campus. Prevent culturally appropriating clothing and statements.

I would recommend the university grounds should be neutral. Additionally posters/notes should not be plastered all over the campus, doors, windows, etc, and should only be in one area to allow those who want to go look/ get involved.

I don't think universities should be involved in politics, it's very uncomfortable, especially for Jewish people to see Pro Palestine posters all over the campus.

Educate students on Jewish history, and address anti-Semitism. Educate students on how lies throughout history have blamed the Jews and continue to blame Jews.

7.2 Muslim communities

Just over 3,200 respondents identified as having Islam as their faith, Table 7.6. These were overwhelmingly, 80.8 per cent, students, and where they reported a country of birth 77.1 per cent were born overseas. There were approximately equal numbers of international and domestic students. Major countries of birth, other than Australia, were Bangladesh 497, Pakistan 378 and Indonesia 343.

Table 7.6 Muslim communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
	Persons			
Domestic student	588	676	80	1,344
International student	–	1,169	87	1,256
Academic staff	27	220	78	325
Non-academic staff	59	203	29	291
Total	674	2,268	274	3,216

Around 95 per cent of Muslim international students and academic staff speak a language other than English at home, along with some 90 per cent of domestic students and non-academic staff. The main languages reported were Bengali, Arabic, Urdu and Indonesian.

Staff and students who were members of these communities reported levels of belonging, safety and respect at university at levels generally consistent with other staff and students, albeit with a slightly higher proportion responding negatively to the question, Table 7.7.

Table 7.7 Muslim communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Muslim communities						
- % -						
Belonging	16.3	44.3	21.4	13.1	4.8	100.0
Safety	29.7	51.7	10.6	5.5	2.5	100.0
Respect	26.1	56.0	10.5	5.1	2.3	100.0
Non-Muslim						
Belonging	17.8	46.2	21.8	10.7	3.5	100.0
Safety	32.7	51.1	10.0	4.5	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.1	54.3	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 3,145 (Muslim)

7.2.1 Muslim communities: Incidence of racism

Notwithstanding this generally positive perspective, members of this community reported significantly higher rates of racism at university relative to other groups, Table 7.8. Overall, 19.3 per cent of students reported experiencing racism at university, as did 38.5 per cent of staff. This staff rate is very high, and, as detailed in Chapter 2, for academic staff it is 44.8 per cent.

A marked feature of the experience of racism by these communities was the differential by gender. While 19.8 per cent of males reported experiencing racism at university, 25.1 per cent of women did. As detailed later one important factor here is likely to be the extent to which wearing a hijab, or similar head covering, is part of a Muslim identity for many, and that unlike for many males their adherence to Islam is immediately identifiable.

Table 7.8 Muslim communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Muslim communities – % –						
Student	3.9	15.5	19.3	32.8	47.9	100.0
Staff	12.8	25.7	38.5	24.8	36.7	100.0
Female	5.9	19.2	25.1	32.3	42.5	100.0
Male	5.1	14.7	19.8	29.2	51.0	100.0
Total	5.6	17.4	23.1	31.2	45.7	100.0
Non-Muslim	3.9	10.6	14.6	19.6	65.9	100.0

n = 2,972 (Muslim)

In looking at the experience of those of this community who reported direct racism, Table 7.9, a number of features stand out. When describing the forms of racism experienced, respondents reported higher levels of being singled out, feeling unable to express their views openly, being made to feel unintelligent, missing opportunities, and experiencing a lack of trust. Both staff and students reported elevated frequencies of being inappropriately stopped by university security, while students reported being given worse marks than they deserved, while staff reported negative assessments and being denied promotion.

Relative to others, Muslim respondents identified religion, and to a lesser extent conflict in the Middle East, as key factors in why they were subject to racism, additionally amongst staff, skin colour was also identified at a higher rate than overall.

For students the composition of who participated in the direct racism that they had experienced at university was broadly in line with the experience of others, other than an elevated reporting of facilities staff, likely reflecting the role of university security. For staff it was marked by a much lower rate of student involvement, 18.0 per cent compared with 26.0 per cent, but much higher involvement of university leadership, 57.2 per cent compared with 45.3 per cent.

Muslim students and staff all reported higher rates of adverse outcomes from their experience of racism, across all of the dimensions identified, limiting university participation, negative mental health, and a negative impact on either studies or careers.

Muslim staff and students reported much higher rates of behavioural constraints compared to all staff and students. These constraints were much more marked among academic staff, who were twice likely as staff overall to report being uncomfortable disclosing identity, three times more likely to be uncomfortable wearing identifying clothing, two and half times more likely to prepare for racist discussions. Academic staff also reported higher rates of avoiding protests. There was also an elevated reporting of limiting speech because of concerns this may have for their visa.

Table 7.9 Muslim communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Muslim	Other	Muslim	Other
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	58.3	49.2	53.6	41.0
Inappropriate comments etc	46.0	42.9	40.1	40.2
Could not express views	63.1	59.4	69.8	59.1
Told/made to feel unintelligent	39.7	35.6	46.9	35.8
Missed opportunity	42.1	34.1	56.3	41.4
Not Trusted	48.4	35.9	48.2	38.7
Stopped by uni security	13.2	8.7	6.3	3.7
Physical harassment	3.7	7.7	5.9	3.8
Verbal harassment	22.3	23.0	22.5	19.7
Online harassment	12.5	14.8	15.3	9.6
Worse mark (student)	33.1	26.6	–	–
Get things free (student)	13.4	21.6	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	32.9	24.9
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	33.3	23.3
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	34.0	35.7	39.0	34.3
Cultural/racial/ethnic	75.0	70.8	80.7	70.8
Skin colour/physical	63.8	65.3	61.0	48.7
Religion	75.9	21.5	71.1	16.1
Middle East conflict	43.9	13.8	47.3	14.2
COVID	1.1	9.3	0.5	4.6
Other	6.4	6.4	6.9	10.2
International fee-paying student(a)	39.2	47.1	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	49.9	46.4	51.8	47.4
Administrative staff	17.5	17.0	46.4	46.2
Facilities staff	12.1	8.4	8.6	5.8
Students	65.7	66.9	18.0	26.0
University leadership	16.4	15.0	57.2	45.3
Other	3.0	4.7	3.6	4.8
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	68.9	61.8	60.8	55.7
Negative mental health	76.0	64.8	80.6	68.8
Negative studies (student)	48.6	44.2	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	60.8	46.8
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	19.9	16.3	28.1	14.3
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	20.8	12.3	30.9	10.7
Prepare for racist discussions	21.8	15.2	24.3	9.0
Avoid protests	13.0	10.9	16.5	6.1
Limit speech because of visa (a)	28.8	23.8	22.7	5.5

n = 685 (Muslim, racism questions), 3,150 (Muslim, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

7.2.2 Muslim communities: indirect racism

Members of these communities also reported significant levels of indirect racism. This was particularly marked amongst staff where only 17.0 per cent reported that they had not experienced either direct, or indirect racism, Table 7.10. Amongst academic staff only 7.1 per cent of the female staff members, and 17.7 per cent of the male staff members, reported that they had not experienced either direct or indirect racism. There was a tendency for international students to report a somewhat lower overall burden of racism than domestic students, with the proportion reporting neither form of racism being 22.7 per cent for

female domestic students relative to 25.7 per cent for female international students. For males the proportions were 20.2 per cent and 29.9 per cent. Additionally domestic students tended to report higher frequency indirect racism.

Table 7.10 Muslim communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university (a)	Indirect racism only				Total	
	(b)	Very frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Muslim communities							
– % –							
Student	18.2	6.1	10.3	21.1	19.7	24.7	100.0
Staff	36.3	3.4	5.9	19.2	18.2	17.0	100.0
Non-Muslim communities							
Student	14.3	5.4	9.3	22.6	20.0	28.4	100.0
Staff	14.5	2.0	5.8	23.1	23.9	30.8	100.0

n = 3,160 (Muslim)

(a) Includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) The incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.2.3 Muslim communities: the experience of racism

There were a number of key themes in the more detailed comments. Muslims reported that the racism they experienced was closely linked to conflict in the Middle East:

Growing up in a Western country and culture post 9/11 has meant I have had to justify my existence in this country from an early age in the face of fringe ideology and beliefs. In the wake of the growing political shift to the far right, and these ideologies and beliefs moving from the fringe to policies and practices,

Being told I may not get my contract soon because there needed to be extra background checks because I was born in Lebanon and the uni wants to make sure I don't have ties with terrorist organisations

I have faced significant racism living on campus, and it's always so casual. I'm the only middle-eastern person in our friend group, and people think it's okay to make terrorist jokes at me, even though I personally have had issues with terrorists.

I don't tell people on campus that I am Muslim because I fear the repercussions. I also don't report instances of racism that I witness because I don't have confidence that the University will actually address them and I also fear retaliation. ... I don't feel like I can voice my opinion freely in the University, it's become a really repressive environment.

I was wearing hijab, and leaving my office was approached by a number of young men, identifying as Jews who abused, spat and threatened me due to the current Middle East situation.

When some non-Muslims learn I converted to Islam, they sometimes assume I'm a radical, I can see their grimace or caution. I think they think I'm a walking political symbol.

We prepared a speech to be delivered to a diverse cohort of international students, including some who were Palestinian and from Myanmar. As part of the speech we wanted to acknowledge that many students from these countries who wanted to come and study in Australia haven't been able to due to war and genocide. The University comms team reviewed the speech and removed any reference to this, which felt like we were being silenced and a lack of care of empathy for the students who have experienced such hardships.

I think I'm often scared to speak out about support for Palestine or Islamic identity, even though my hijab makes it obvious. ... I also feel the need to hide certain aspects of my identity and often have to correct that I'm not an international student. Even when people are respectful I can tell they're uncomfortable as to how to approach, include or talk to me. Sometimes ppl will say slightly disrespectful things that come from a place of ignorance and I'll have to decide whether it's worth correcting them or how they'll react to it.

What I believe to be the issue is a deep-seated historical contempt for the MENA region that is difficult to overcome and has now morphed into a fear of discussing the region in any meaningful way. People often do not know what to say about us, so they cling to the stereotypes they are accustomed to. ... The only time Islam is mentioned in my courses is when it is being referred to in relation to terrorist organisations or theocratic dictatorial regimes

The racism is ingrained in our institutions. Being doubted about my ability to work or teach simply because I'm not white has severely impacted my confidence. ... It's disheartening to overhear students say they expected to be taught by a white person and leave negative evaluations that have nothing to do with how you teach and everything to do with their own racial biases

The racism experienced in the University is mostly not personal, it is institutional. An absence of diversity and inclusion in the teaching staff reflects in the way courses and seminars are conceived and delivered.

Religious specific issues

Many issues raised by the Muslim community, both in terms of the racism they experienced, and their suggestions around more inclusive university environments were religious specific:

When I pray outside (because we are no longer welcome to use the prayer room), the staff have blasted loud music one single speaker directly at us as a group, while we pray.

As a Muslim student and staff member ... inclusivity for our dietary requirements and spaces for worship have been continuously overlooked.

Make the Muslim prayer space open and accessible to all without restrictions. Over the past year, [the university] has limited access to the space ... There has also been ongoing bullying and intimidation tactics from the university with their installing security on Fridays ... security were insisting that students present their student cards for ID checks before entering the building and

prayer space to make sure they it was legitimately theirs. There would be multiple guards on Friday and multiple checkpoints to pass through just to reach the prayer space.

Wearing Hijab as Muslim women not shaking hands in meeting and not going to bars after conference considered me as conservative mindset from my colleagues. That has impacted on my career development opportunities. I was not treated as equal as other peer on same academic position.

I wear scarf and often times I have been asked questions regarding covering my head. Which is fine and I can explain but then some saying that if you take it off “what’s gonna happen” ... is insulting. This is my religion ...I want to follow it as I feel good doing it. People should not worry about what’s on my head and see my competencies in the job field.

Some respondents however reported tensions within this community which they considered as being racism:

People are making jokes regarding what other religion usually do, eat, or wear. I am a part of their religion (Muslim) but do not wear, do, and eat as strict as they are. So, sometimes I am afraid to show my religion to other people, because I am uncomfortable of what they're saying about other people's (different religions) behavior

It is because I was raised in an Indonesian traditional culture, which the local culture is stronger than the Islam religion culture itself, so I am Muslim but do not wear hijab

Particularly due to my Syrian Alawite background, I have been subject to a number of isolating in marginalising experiences within the university. Particularly members of Sunni Muslim sects have made me feel quite marginalised and othered. These individuals have labelled me an “infidel”, a “slut”, a “non-Muslim”, and have made me feel unsafe to disclose my cultural and religious identity in university spaces

Underlying people’s experience was a recurrent theme across many communities:

It often makes you feel like to need to work twice as hard to prove yourself and to break free of stereotypes.

7.3 Palestinian communities

There were 105 Palestinian respondents to the survey, 70 students and 35 staff, Table 7.11. The students were overwhelmingly domestic students, while around 60 per cent of the staff are academic. By country of birth slightly more than half, 54.5 per cent, of the respondents are Australian born. The small size of the group has meant that only limited analysis can be conducted, and a number of the table classifications compressed. Overall, 71.4 per cent of Palestinian students and staff speak a language other than English at home, mainly Arabic.

Table 7.11 Palestinian communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born		Total (a)
	Australia	Not Aust.	
	Persons		
Student	37	30	70
Staff	17	15	35
Total	54	45	105

(a) Includes not stated.

Palestinian students and staff reported relatively low levels of belonging, safety and respect at university, Table 7.12, with just 43.7 per cent expressing a sense of belonging compared with 63.9 per cent of non-Palestinian staff and students. Although the majority reported feeling safe, 58.7 per cent, over a quarter, 26.0 per cent, reported not doing so.

Table 7.12 Palestinian communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Whether have a sense of:	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Palestinian communities						
- % -						
Belonging	7.8	35.9	26.2	17.5	12.6	100.0
Safety	17.3	41.4	15.4	15.4	10.6	100.0
Respect	16.2	50.5	19.1	9.5	4.8	100.0
Non Palestinians						
Belonging	17.8	46.1	21.7	10.8	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.6	51.2	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.0	54.4	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 103 (Palestinian)

7.3.1 Palestinian communities: incidence of direct racism

41.2 per cent of Palestinian students and 48.6 per cent of staff reported experiencing direct racism at university, with little difference reported by males and females, Table 7.13. Only a third do not report experiencing any racism at all.

Table 7.13 Palestinian communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	Total
Palestinian communities						
			– % –			
Student	4.4	36.8	41.2	25.0	33.8	100.0
Staff	17.1	31.4	48.6	20.0	31.4	100.0
Female	12.2	31.1	43.2	24.3	32.4	100.0
Male	0.0	42.3	42.3	23.1	34.6	100.0
Total	8.7	35.0	43.7	23.3	33.0	100.0
Non Palestinian	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.1	100.0

n = 103 (Palestinian)

Both Palestinian students and staff who experienced direct racism at university reported very high rates of feeling that they could not express their views, 85.7 per cent and 88.2 per cent respectively, Table 7.14. Students also reported high rates of being singled out or excluded, being inappropriately stopped by university security and facing verbal and on

line harassment. 58.8 per cent of Palestinian staff who experienced racism reported not being trusted, and reported very high rates of physical harassment and inappropriately being stopped by university security – each 17.7 per cent, relative to under 4 per cent for others who experienced racism.

Table 7.14 Palestinian communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Palestinian	Non Palestinian	Palestinian	Non Palestinian
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	71.4	49.8	41.2	41.7
Inappropriate comments etc	60.7	43.0	47.1	40.2
Could not express views	85.7	59.5	88.2	59.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	28.6	35.9	41.2	36.4
Missed opportunity	10.7	34.8	35.3	42.3
Not Trusted	42.9	36.8	58.8	39.1
Stopped by uni security	21.4	9.0	17.7	3.8
Physical harassment	3.6	7.5	17.7	3.9
Verbal harassment	39.3	22.9	17.7	19.9
Online harassment	32.1	14.6	23.5	9.8
Worse mark (student)	32.1	27.0	–	–
Get things free (student)	10.7	21.0	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	29.4	25.3
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	17.7	23.9
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	25.0	35.6	23.5	34.6
Cultural/racial/ethnic	85.7	71.1	94.1	71.3
Skin colour/physical	53.6	65.2	58.8	49.3
Religion	64.3	25.4	52.9	19.1
Middle East conflict	96.4	15.7	94.1	15.7
COVID	7.1	8.7	0.0	4.4
Other	3.6	6.4	5.9	10.1
International fee-paying student(a)	0.0	46.4	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	46.4	46.6	47.1	47.7
Administrative staff	14.3	17.1	41.2	46.2
Facilities staff	25.0	8.6	29.4	5.9
Students	89.3	66.7	29.4	25.5
University leadership	39.3	15.0	64.7	45.9
Other	7.1	4.5	5.9	4.7
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	82.1	62.2	76.5	55.9
Negative mental health	89.3	65.5	82.4	69.4
Negative studies (student)	67.9	44.4	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	41.2	47.6
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	40.0	16.5	44.1	14.6
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	39.7	12.8	55.9	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	40.6	15.6	50.0	9.3
Avoid protests	10.3	11.1	21.2	6.3
Limit speech because of visa (a)	100.0	24.3	23.1	6.0

n = 45 (Palestinian, racism questions), 104 (Palestinian, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

Conflict in the Middle East was cited by 96.4 per cent of students and 94.1 per cent of staff as a factor in the racism they experienced along with religion, 64.3 per cent and 52.9 per cent respectively. (Around half of the Palestinian respondents said Islam was their

religion, and around 10 per cent were Christians.) Both staff and students also identified their cultural/ racial/ethnic background, 85.7 per cent and 94.1 per cent, as being a factor in their experience of racism.

Facilities staff were frequently identified as involved in racist actions – by 25.0 per cent of students and 29.4 per cent of staff. These rates were three and five times higher than those reported by others who experienced racism. Palestinian staff and students reported very high levels of engagement by university leadership in the racism they experienced, 64.7 per cent for staff and 39.3 per cent for students. In the case of students this was cited by 39.3 per cent of those Palestinians who experienced racism, compared with a rate of 15.0 per cent for other students, and for staff 64.7 per cent compared with 45.9 per cent.

Both students and staff reported elevated levels of limiting university participation and negative mental health effects, relative to others facing racism, but while students reported a similarly high impact on their studies, the impact on careers as reported by staff was a little below the rate for all other groups.

Around 40 per cent of all Palestinian students reported constraining behaviours across disclosing identity, wearing identifying items, and preparing for racist discussions. The rate of these behaviours was some two and half to three times the rate of non-Palestinian students. For staff the relativities were even higher, starting at three times as high for revealing identity, to 5 times as high for the other two items – including the 55.9 per cent of staff who felt uncomfortable wearing clothing that indicated their identity.

7.3.2 Palestinian communities: indirect racism

Members of the Palestinian communities also experienced indirect racism, with 21.7 per cent of the students and 17.1 per cent of staff who had not experienced direct racism reporting that they frequently or very frequently experienced indirect racism. Overall, only 10.1 per cent of students and 8.6 per cent of staff reported experiencing neither direct nor indirect racism.

Table 7.15 Palestinian communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct Indirect racism only					Total	
	racism at university (a)	Very Frequently (b)	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Palestinian communities – % –							
Student	40.6	10.1	11.6	21.7	5.8	10.1	100.0
Staff	48.6	11.4	5.7	14.3	11.4	8.6	100.0
Non-Palestinian communities							
Student	14.5	5.4	9.3	22.5	20.0	28.2	100.0
Staff	14.9	2.0	5.8	23.0	23.8	30.5	100.0

n (Palestinian) = 104

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.3.3 Palestinian communities: the experience of racism

As noted, there was a very high number of respondents reporting that they were uncomfortable wearing clothing which identified their ethnicity. This was raised in a number of the comments:

I have been targeted in classes my staff and students for wearing a Palestinian keffiyeh. Staff members have marked me poorly for using Israel's current genocide in Gaza as a case study for assignments where it was completely applicable. University administrators and security guards have made me feel incredibly unsafe and discriminated against and I am consistently watching this University downplay and fail to address Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism. I have been physically threatened by staff members on campus during the encampment for wearing a keffiyeh. I have been treated like a criminal by security staff for wearing a keffiyeh.

I have been asked to remove my Kuffiyeh by a staff member and a PhD student at the university (I am Palestinian, and this is a part of my cultural attire). This got to the point where I undertook mediation with the PhD student, and one of the agreements we emerged with was that I send a message to him if I was planning on being in his presence while wearing a Kuffiyeh, which ultimately led to me minimising my wearing of it.

Others raised verbal attacks and denigration:

People don't see Palestinians as deserving of rights. It's very difficult to assess who supports and who doesn't support you when you first meet someone. I am afraid to tell people where I'm from because you never know who will discriminate against you, especially since history has proved it correctly.

My dad's family is Palestinian and live in Palestine and it's so disheartening constantly hearing tone deaf racist comments like "Palestine isn't on google maps" "Palestine is a terror group"

Three students once had a competition near me, over who could say the word 'terrorism' the loudest. Another time, while I was studying in the library, two girls looked at me and laughed saying Palestine didn't exist, after they noticed a heart sticker with the Palestinian flag on my laptop.

The issue of an ability to speak freely was raised by others:

As a Palestinian staff member I have been called on over the last two years ... to not only carry on in a "business as usual" way despite the ongoing genocide in Gaza and attacks on Palestinian people in the West Bank and Jerusalem where I have family, friends & colleagues affected, but to contend with initiatives in Australia that harm my ability to do my work and engage in my research. Specifically the ongoing question of repressive antisemitism definitions including the IHRA and the University Australia definition, that effectively curtail my capacity as a Palestinian researcher to work in a critically engaged way with Palestinian history, memory and culture. In contrast, there has been little concern for the way in which these definitions

would effectively make anti-Palestinian racism a protected category as is underlined by the many disturbing implications of the Segal report.

The university needs to be more inclusive and open about what's happening in the world like in Palestine and Sudan and Congo. They don't understand how much of this stuff actually impacts and hurts students like me who are actually impacted by this stuff. They need to make it clear that they actually care ... An example of this is the email sent out to all students regarding the definition of antisemitism, which is worded in a way that makes criticism of the government of Israel seem like a punishable action, making students like myself afraid to speak up about issues close to my heart and ancestry. This makes it seem like they're focus is on benefitting white people and ignoring other issues.

Overall, my experience with students and staff has been positive, with only a few incidents. However, I find the university's shifting policies—particularly around free speech, Palestine, student activism, and the right to protest—deeply concerning. The fact that speaking out about the mass killing and genocide of Palestinians can be silenced or taken down immediately makes me question the university's commitment to the values it promotes. While it advertises itself as a place that embraces diversity, free speech, and self-expression, in reality these principles are not consistently upheld.

As a Palestinian, I feel scared every day of my safety and for my job in case I say the wrong thing in a political world where I am not allowed to talk about the genocide of my people

7.4 Middle Eastern communities

While we have used the terminology Middle East, consistent with the terminology of the survey which reflected the language of the AHRC, we note that some respondents used the terminology of SWANA (Southwest Asian and North Africa) which focuses on the geography rather than the Eurocentric conceptualisation of the 'Middle East'.

7.4.1 Middle Eastern communities: demographics

3,041 staff and students who participated in the survey had identities associated with the Middle East, Table 7.16. It comprises a range of diverse communities and has cross overs with a number of other communities identified here including the Muslim community, which represents around a quarter of the Middle Eastern community, and the Jewish community which accounts for some 8 per cent, as well as the Palestinian community. By country of birth following the 42.3 per cent who were born in Australia, the main country was Iran 445, along with some 50 to 100 being born in each of Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Türkiye.

Table 7.16 Middle Eastern communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
Persons				
Domestic student	825	618	184	1,627
International student	–	390	113	503
Academic staff	86	256	139	481
Non-academic staff	149	190	91	430
Total	1,060	1,454	527	3,041

Almost 95 per cent of international students from Middle Eastern communities speak a language other than English at home, along with some 70 to 80 percent of domestic students and staff. While Arabic was cited as the main language spoken at home by some 40 per cent, other languages spoken by significant numbers included: Persian (excluding Dari), Turkish, Hebrew, and Assyrian Neo-Aramaic.

Students and staff from Middle Eastern communities reported somewhat lower levels of a sense of belonging, safety and respect at university than those from other communities, Table 7.17. Around a quarter said that they disagreed with the statement about belonging, some 1.8 times the rate of other staff and students. In the case of safety, while only 14.8 per cent disagreed, this was two and a half times as high as other students, and the rate at which they disagreed with the statement on respect was double, although the proportion disagreeing was only 11.9 per cent.

Table 7.17 Middle Eastern communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Middle Eastern communities						
- % -						
Belonging	14.8	36.9	23.5	16.7	8.1	100.0
Safety	27.5	44.5	13.2	9.6	5.2	100.0
Respect	24.7	49.4	14.0	7.8	4.1	100.0
Non Middle Eastern						
Belonging	17.9	46.5	21.7	10.6	3.4	100.0
Safety	32.8	51.4	9.9	4.4	1.6	100.0
Respect	28.2	54.6	11.0	4.6	1.7	100.0

n = 2,981 (Middle Eastern)

7.4.2 Middle Eastern communities: incidence of racism

Staff and students from Middle Eastern communities reported an overall rate of direct racism at university of 31.8 per cent, just over double that of those from other communities, Table 7.18. The rate of direct racism at university reported by staff was 39.9 per cent, considerably higher than the 28.4 per cent reported by students. For the two main genders the difference in the rate was relatively low, although women reported a somewhat higher rate, 32.7 per cent, compared with the 30.2 per cent reported by men.

Table 7.18 Middle Eastern communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Middle Eastern communities						
			– % –			
Student	5.2	23.2	28.4	30.1	41.6	100.0
Staff	11.3	28.5	39.9	19.9	40.2	100.0
Female	7.4	25.3	32.7	26.9	40.5	100.0
Male	6.8	23.4	30.2	26.7	43.1	100.0
Total	7.1	24.8	31.8	27.0	41.2	100.0
Non Middle Eastern	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.1	100.0

n = 2,818 (Middle Eastern)

n = 2,818 (Middle Eastern)

Compared to other communities experiencing racism at university, staff and students who were members of the Middle Eastern communities were more likely to cite experiences of inappropriately being stopped by security, and facing physical, verbal and online harassment, Table 7.19. For students this was at around 1.3 times the rate of other groups, and for staff around 1.6 to 1.8 times, although rising to double the rate for their experience of online harassment.

Central to their experience was their cultural, racial and ethnic identities, although these were cited at much the same rate as other groups, this was followed by religion, and conflict in the Middle East which were identified by 56.8 per cent, and 61.2 per cent of students, and 42.3 per cent and 53.8 per cent of staff, rates well above that of others who experienced racism.

Staff were more likely to cite the involvement of academic staff in the racism they experienced than others experiencing racism, and both staff and students more frequently cited facilities staff and university leaders, with well over half, 56.5 per cent, of the staff reporting that the university leadership were participants in the racism they had experienced at university.

Regarding the impacts of racism both staff and students from these communities reported around 20 per cent higher rates of incidence of limiting their engagement with their university, leading to 69.2 per cent of staff and 72.8 per cent of students who had experienced racism reporting that they had done so.

Across all staff and students from Middle Eastern communities there was a high incidence of taking precautionary actions. Just under 30 per cent of students reported being uncomfortable in revealing their identity, or wearing items which revealed this, and prepared for possibly racist discussions. Amongst staff a similar proportion reported the identity items, and 23.2 per cent stated that they always or frequently prepared for racist discussions, much higher than the average for all staff who had experienced racism of 8.9 per cent. Restricting the views they express because of the risk to their migration status was cited by 33.7 per cent of students and 14.8 per cent of staff for whom this was relevant.

Table 7.19 Middle Eastern communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Middle Eastern	Non Middle Eastern	Middle Eastern	Non Middle Eastern
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	55.8	49.3	46.5	41.2
Inappropriate comments etc	47.8	42.6	49.7	39.4
Could not express views	69.1	58.8	71.3	58.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	35.6	35.9	40.2	36.1
Missed opportunity	37.9	34.4	51.8	41.4
Not Trusted	44.7	36.0	48.2	38.4
Stopped by uni security	11.6	8.8	5.9	3.7
Physical harassment	9.5	7.3	6.5	3.7
Verbal harassment	30.1	22.3	32.3	18.7
Online harassment	19.5	14.2	18.1	9.1
Worse mark (student)	28.3	26.9	–	–
Get things free (student)	15.7	21.5	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	33.4	24.6
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	31.1	23.2
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	33.3	35.8	40.8	34.0
Cultural/racial/ethnic	76.0	70.6	81.6	70.4
Skin colour/physical	46.0	67.1	42.9	50.0
Religion	56.8	22.5	42.3	17.1
Middle East conflict	61.2	11.7	53.8	12.5
COVID	2.4	9.3	1.2	4.7
Other	5.7	6.5	7.9	10.3
International fee-paying student(a)	36.4	47.1	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	49.9	46.3	57.7	46.7
Administrative staff	21.1	16.6	43.5	46.4
Facilities staff	12.7	8.2	6.8	5.9
Students	70.0	66.5	28.1	25.3
University leadership	20.9	14.5	56.5	44.9
Other	5.6	4.4	3.9	4.8
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	72.8	61.3	69.2	54.8
Negative mental health	75.1	64.7	81.4	68.4
Negative studies (student)	49.6	44.0	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	61.0	46.3
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	28.7	15.9	28.9	14.2
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	27.3	12.1	28.2	10.6
Prepare for racist discussions	27.3	15.0	23.2	8.9
Avoid protests	18.6	10.7	16.6	6.0
Limit speech because of visa (a)	33.7	23.9	14.8	5.7

n = 897 (Middle Eastern, racism questions), 2,963 (Middle Eastern, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

7.4.3 Middle Eastern communities: indirect racism

Table 7.20 presents the incidence and frequency of indirect racism for those members of Middle Eastern communities who did not experience direct racism. As indicated, these communities experienced higher frequency indirect racism than other communities, and only 20.4 per cent of students and 16.9 per cent of staff reported neither direct nor indirect

racism, amongst academic staff only 7.1 per cent of women and 17.7 per cent of men reported neither form.

Table 7.20 Middle Eastern communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Indirect racism only					Total	
	Direct racism at university (a)	Very frequently (b)	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Middle Eastern communities							
- % -							
Student	26.9	8.1	10.0	18.9	15.8	20.4	100.0
Staff	37.3	3.8	8.2	18.1	15.8	16.9	100.0
Non-Middle Eastern communities							
Student	14.0	5.3	9.3	22.7	20.2	28.6	100.0
Staff	14.2	2.0	5.7	23.1	24.0	30.9	100.0

n= 2,987 (Middle Eastern)

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.4.4 Middle Eastern communities: experience of racism

As with the Muslim, Jewish and Palestinian communities, much of the commentary related to conflict in the Middle East. One example of this was:

Watching the genocide being committed against Palestinians - especially as part of the SWANA community - while having free speech censored and solidarity actions shut down has been incredibly dehumanizing. At student referendum's I have seen Zionists come and put on accents as mockery of SWANA, evoking post-9/11 Islamophobia implying that all Palestinians are Muslim terrorists and that anybody who humanizes and sympathizes with Palestinians is also a terrorist. Meanwhile, students were threatened with having attendance recorded for the university to penalize anyone automatically for having attended it too.

As though indicated in the section on Jewish communities, alternative stances within this community were also raised.

More generally respondents identified the issues of stereotyping and broader issues of the dominant Australian and western cultures:

Some lecturers, associate professors, and other academic staff members, particularly those with [western European] backgrounds ... have displayed racist attitudes. They often present themselves as coming from a “modern” or “superior” culture, and whenever they find the opportunity, they criticize other nations and cultures with strong and dismissive language. At the same time, they are clever and strategic in how they express these views: they frame their comments in subtle ways that avoid being labelled as openly racist, allowing them to escape accountability while still conveying discriminatory undertones

Comments suggesting that because I come from Iran, I would not understand or have access to basic things such as automatic cars, alcohol, or developed technology. These words were humiliating and offensive. "You can't dress like

that where you come from, can you?" "You're from the desert, aren't you? How can you be hot here?" "This is a developed country, not like the place you came from.", "Bet you'd be in jail if you said this back home.", "You can't even open your mouth in your country, can you?"

Whilst this is low level I am often mistaken for someone born in Australia as I no longer have an accent. Australians find my name hard to pronounce and often refuse to try. I find myself pronouncing it in an Australianised way just to avoid awkward conversations. It would be nice to be able to use my actual name

My adverse experiences have come from people "meaning well". Most commonly it's questions about "where" I'm from (my family moved to Melbourne when I was 10 and I've lived here for the 34 years since that). Being treated as a novelty is not inclusive, despite what the intention behind it is

[There are] those who assume my religion, culture and calling me a terrorist. I'm Christian but whatever.

7.5 Asian communities

The description of Asian communities is very broad, and across the university sector is very large. For this reason in approaching these communities, while some data are at the aggregate levels, other has been split to allow the experience of some of the constituent communities to be identified.

7.5.1 Asian communities: demographics of respondents

23,501 respondents identify as being members of Asian communities, 44.6 per cent of whom are international students, Table 7.21.

Table 7.21 Asian communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
	Persons			
Domestic student	3,162	3,876	610	7,644
International student	–	9,300	1,166	10,470
Academic staff	303	1,368	433	2,104
Non-academic staff	622	2,103	558	3,283
Total	4,087	16,647	2,767	23,501

Table 7.22 presents the population by the major communities which were used in this analysis. Of these the largest three are South Asian, 8,759 respondents, Chinese 8,298 and South East Asian 8,759. Across these communities the proportion who are international students varies, 12.5 per cent of those identifying as Central Asian, South East Asian 37.3 per cent, North East Asian (excluding Chinese) 41.3 per cent, South Asian 46.4 per cent and Chinese 49.1 per cent. Between 8.3 per cent and 10.0 per cent are academic staff and 9.8 per cent to 15.0 per cent non-academic staff.

Table 7.22 Asian communities, respondents by type and Australian born main components

Place of birth	Respondent Type:				Total
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	
Central Asian – Persons –					
Australia	55	–	8	8	71
Overseas	122	32	10	17	181
Total (a)	183	33	22	26	264
Chinese					
Australia	1,106	–	120	232	1,458
Overseas	1,006	3,446	433	684	5,569
Total (a)	2,388	4,075	698	1,139	8,298
North East Asian (b)					
Australia	197	–	18	44	259
Overseas	233	516	100	137	985
Total (a)	440	540	131	196	1,307
South Asian					
Australia	900	–	74	129	1,103
Overseas	1,561	3,684	584	819	6,648
Total (a)	2,678	4,068	855	1,158	8,759
South East Asian					
Australia	1,259	–	111	277	1,648
Overseas	1,260	2,343	372	674	4,648
Total (a)	2,717	2,651	590	1,154	7,112

(a) Includes those with country of birth not stated.

(b) Excluding China

Across all of the Asian communities some 75.3 per cent of domestic students, 77.1 per cent of non-academic staff, 80.9 per cent of academic staff and 94.9 per cent of international students speak a language other than English at home. There are though variations within these communities, with the proportion of domestic students who speak a language other than English at home varying from 69.5 per cent of those from South East Asian communities to 91.8 per cent of those from Central Asia. The languages spoken also vary. For those from Central Asia the main language was Dari, followed by Persian (excluding Dari). Amongst the Chinese communities, while 71.9 per cent cited Mandarin, this was followed by Yue (Cantonese), Indonesian, and Teochew. North East Asian communities reported Korean and Japanese as their main language, while South East Asians identified Vietnamese, Mandarin, Indonesian, Tagalog and Malay. Members of South Asian communities reported Hindi, Bengali, Sinhalese, Nepali, Malayalam, Urdu, Tamil, and Punjabi.

Respondents from these communities were somewhat less likely to agree, than respondents from the balance of communities at Australian universities, with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university, Table 7.23. While in some cases this was an increase in persons disagreeing with the statement, in others it was a more subtle shift from strongly agreeing to agreeing, or responding that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Table 7.23 Asian communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Asian communities – % –						
Belonging	15.4	45.6	24.1	11.4	3.5	100.0
Safety	27.7	55.0	11.1	4.6	1.6	100.0
Respect	24.6	57.0	12.4	4.5	1.5	100.0
Non-Asian						
Belonging	18.8	46.3	20.7	10.6	3.6	100.0
Safety	34.8	49.5	9.5	4.5	1.8	100.0
Respect	29.5	53.3	10.5	4.8	1.8	100.0

n = 23,025 (Asian)

7.5.2 Asian communities: incidence of direct racism

In aggregate, Table 7.24, these respondents reported a higher rate of experiencing direct racism at university, 19.2 per cent compared to 14.9 per cent for other respondents. The rate reported by women, 20.4 per cent, was markedly higher than the 16.2 per cent reported by men. Also notable in the table is the high rate of racism reported outside of the university environment.

Table 7.24 Asian communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Asian communities – % –						
Student	3.2	13.9	17.1	36.4	46.6	100.0
Staff	7.6	18.8	26.4	31.2	42.4	100.0
Female	4.4	16.0	20.4	36.7	42.8	100.0
Male	3.6	12.6	16.2	32.8	51.0	100.0
Total	4.2	15.0	19.2	35.2	45.6	100.0
Non-Asian	3.9	9.2	13.1	13.6	73.3	100.0

n = 21,346 (Asian)

As however shown in Table 7.25, there was some variation in the incidence of racism reported by more specific communities. For students the highest rate of experiencing direct racism at university was reported by North East Asian communities, 21.1 per cent, with the other rates clustered between 16.8 per cent and 17.8 per cent. The variation in extent was much greater for staff and the relative positions of staff and students varied across the communities. Amongst staff the highest rate, 33.0 per cent, was recorded by those from South Asian communities, followed by 27.1 per cent for those identifying as North East Asian, 23.6 per cent South East Asian, 22.6 per cent Chinese and 13.6 per cent Central Asian.

Table 7.25 Asian communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere, by main components

Communities		Where experienced direct racism				Total
		University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None
Students – % –						
Central Asian		3.0	13.9	16.8	35.6	47.5
Chinese		3.5	13.9	17.4	38.5	44.1
North East Asian (a)		3.0	18.1	21.1	37.2	41.8
South Asian		3.1	14.7	17.8	34.8	47.5
South East Asian		3.3	13.7	17.0	36.6	46.5
Staff						
Central Asian		2.3	11.4	13.6	18.2	68.2
Chinese		6.2	16.5	22.6	36.5	40.9
North East Asian		5.4	21.7	27.1	31.4	41.5
South Asian		10.3	22.7	33.0	27.2	39.8
South East Asian		5.9	17.7	23.6	33.5	43.0
All						
Central Asian	Female	1.9	15.9	17.8	34.4	47.8
	Male	4.8	9.6	14.5	27.7	57.8
Chinese	Female	4.2	15.2	19.4	39.8	40.8
	Male	3.6	12.0	15.6	35.6	48.8
North East Asian (a)	Female	4.2	20.5	24.7	37.1	38.2
	Male	2.6	16.2	18.8	32.3	49.0
South Asian	Female	5.1	17.5	22.6	33.9	43.5
	Male	3.9	14.7	18.6	31.7	49.7
South East Asian	Female	4.1	15.7	19.8	38.0	42.2
	Male	3.4	11.7	15.1	32.3	52.6

n = 21,346 (Asian)

(a) Excluding China

There were also some marked differences in the relative rates of direct racism experienced at university of males and females, although for all of these communities the rate for women was higher than that for men. The largest gap was for the North East Asian community where women reported a rate of direct racism at university of 24.7 per cent, and men 18.8 per cent. This was followed by South East Asian communities where the women reported a rate of 22.6 per cent and men 18.6 per cent.

The factors and outcomes associated with racism at university for Asian communities are detailed in Table 7.26. Compared with other communities, students reported particularly higher rates of being stopped by security and receiving a worse mark than they expected, also notable are the 53.7 per cent reporting being singled out or excluded and 40.6 per cent who felt that they were not trusted. Staff echoed the high rate of reporting being inappropriately stopped by security and missing out on opportunities. In addition, they reported a much higher rate of being denied a promotion. Notably both staff and students reported lower levels of feeling that they could not express their views, than those from other communities reporting racism at university. While this rate was higher for some of the communities, such as 57.4 per cent for staff identifying as South Asian and 61.1 per cent for students, and was also very high for Central Asians. For other communities it was lower.

Cultural and ethnic identity along with skin colour were most frequently cited factors for both staff and students, and language and skin colour were cited more frequently by members of this community who experienced racism at university than by others. Also, an elevated factor was COVID. This though was the experience of only some communities,

with 26.4 per cent of students and 15.5 per cent of staff who were members of the Chinese community and who had experienced racism at university reporting this as a factor. It was also cited by 21.5 per cent of students and 9.0 per cent of the staff from North East Asian communities and 16.8 per cent of the students and 9.9 per cent of the staff from South East Asian communities. Over half of the students who experienced racism cited the fact that they were an international fee-paying student as a factor.

Table 7.26 Asian communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Forms and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Asian	Non-Asian	Asian	Non-Asian
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	53.7	46.9	45.2	40.0
Inappropriate comments etc	43.6	42.7	40.9	39.9
Could not express views	54.8	63.4	55.8	61.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	35.9	35.8	40.5	34.5
Missed opportunity	38.3	31.9	53.8	36.6
Not Trusted	40.6	33.8	44.2	36.8
Stopped by uni security	10.1	8.2	5.2	3.3
Physical harassment	8.1	6.9	3.7	4.0
Verbal harassment	24.0	22.2	19.0	20.3
Online harassment	13.9	15.3	7.6	11.0
Worse mark (student)	30.9	24.0	–	–
Get things free (student)	13.6	26.7	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	27.3	24.4
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	31.2	20.3
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	45.5	27.6	42.6	30.6
Cultural/racial/ethnic	74.5	68.4	78.0	68.1
Skin colour/physical	74.3	57.9	68.6	39.8
Religion	18.4	31.3	15.6	21.1
Middle East conflict	7.2	23.2	6.2	21.0
COVID	14.1	4.4	7.2	2.9
Other	4.4	8.0	6.7	11.7
International fee-paying student(a)	50.7	37.5	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	44.5	48.5	43.2	49.9
Administrative staff	16.2	17.7	51.1	43.7
Facilities staff	9.2	8.2	6.0	5.9
Students	68.1	65.7	22.4	27.2
University leadership	11.3	18.3	49.7	44.1
Other	4.0	5.0	3.9	5.2
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	61.3	63.2	55.3	56.4
Negative mental health	69.4	62.5	71.9	68.3
Negative studies (student)	44.7	44.3	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	54.7	44.0
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	14.8	17.5	15.8	14.4
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	12.4	13.1	14.6	10.3
Prepare for racist discussions	18.3	13.9	12.7	8.5
Avoid protests	13.6	9.4	11.0	5.2
Limit speech because of visa (a)	23.8	25.7	10.6	4.4

n = 4,105 (Asian, racism questions), 22,997 (Asian, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

While potentially impacted by the balance between academic and non-academic staff, staff from Asian communities relative to others experiencing racism, were somewhat less likely to identify academic staff, and more likely to identify non-academic staff as participants in the racism they had experienced, while students were less likely to identify university leaders and more likely to identify facilities staff, with this latter potentially linked to the reporting of a higher rate of being stopped by university security.

In broad terms the impact of racism was similar to other groups – which involved 61.3 per cent of students and 55.3 per cent of staff who experienced direct racism at university reporting they limited their participation at university, and 69.4 per cent and 71.9 per cent reported negative mental health outcomes.

Looking at the extent to which all students and staff in these communities tended to constrain their activities and behaviours, 18.3 per cent of students and 12.7 of all staff said they always or often mentally prepared for racist conversations at university, and both staff and students reported always or often avoiding protests. 23.8 per cent of students, and 10.6 per cent of staff, to whom it applied, reported limiting their speech because of visa concerns.

7.5.3 Asian communities: indirect racism

The combination of direct racism at university and the frequency of indirect racism for Asian communities as a whole and for the significant communities within this are shown in Table 7.27. While overall this shows for all of these communities a high level of racism, with overall only 19.8 per cent of staff and 21.9 per cent of students not reporting having experienced either of these two forms of racism at university, it also shows some variations. These are particularly noticeable for staff where the proportion reporting neither form of racism ranges from 15.3 per cent for members of North East Asian communities to 31.9 per cent for those who identify with Central Asian communities. For most of the communities the incidence of indirect racism, for both staff and students, is described as being sometimes, or rarely, rather than very frequently or frequently.

Table 7.27 Asian communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism

Community type:	Direct racism at university (a) (b)	Indirect racism only					Total
		Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)	
Student - % -							
Central Asian	16.3	5.7	16.3	20.6	19.6	21.5	100.0
Chinese	15.7	4.3	9.9	26.9	25.1	18.2	100.0
North East Asian	19.7	4.5	8.3	26.3	21.9	19.2	100.0
South Asian	16.7	6.5	11.2	22.8	19.1	23.7	100.0
South East Asian	15.5	3.9	9.5	25.8	22.5	22.8	100.0
<i>Total Asian</i>	<i>15.7</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>10.1</i>	<i>24.9</i>	<i>22.5</i>	<i>21.9</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Staff							
Central Asian	12.8	6.4	6.4	21.3	21.3	31.9	100.0
Chinese	20.7	1.9	7.1	27.3	25.8	17.2	100.0
North East Asian	24.8	2.5	4.6	29.1	23.9	15.3	100.0
South Asian	30.6	1.7	6.3	22.4	19.0	20.1	100.0
South East Asian	21.8	2.5	6.1	25.0	23.5	21.1	100.0
<i>Total Asian</i>	<i>24.3</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>25.0</i>	<i>22.8</i>	<i>19.8</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Non-Asian communities							
Students	13.8	5.8	8.8	21.0	18.4	32.2	100.0
Staff	12.7	2.1	5.7	22.5	24.0	33.1	100.0

n = 23,189 (Asian)

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.5.4 Asian communities: experience of racism

There were extensive comments recounting individual experiences, many focusing on the role of academic staff and the experience of students. Many placed their experience of racism in broader structural terms:

I have too many experiences of racism to recount. But I always find it a bit funny to face racism as an Asian, because Asian is not a real race and means nothing to Asian people. Besides, as a Chinese person I feel sad about being blamed for what the Chinese government has done and is allegedly going to do in the future I also think it is racism and hypocrisy for some Australians to condemn China for oppressing its indigenous people and ethnic minorities, while rarely talking about (and even denying) how Australia and other Western countries have oppressed and are still oppressing its own indigenous people and ethnic minorities. The selective caring of human rights is disheartening. It makes me not surprised when seeing some people supporting Ukraine but not Gaza and Palestine. I hope those who act like they are good civilised people that care about human rights and anti-colonialism actually care about them, and don't just selectively care when the human rights violations are done by countries and ethnicities that they dislike.

There were very frequent comments about the assumptions people make:

People often assume my national as China and refer me as "chinese" or "chinese chick". I know there exists no ill-intention behind, however I believe this is a common form of racism. Furthermore, people often disregard my degree which I completed back in South Korea and "doubt" my qualification.

Teaching staff raised many issues, including student assessments:

Students challenged me in classrooms and during online feedback sessions without due respect. I feel it would hardly happen to colleagues of mine who are white male or at least white.

As an international tutor for 3 years, I think some students who were born in Australia and grown up in a different system don't trust me and my expertise. So they see me differently, make noise or jokes in class. When I compared with my local peers, they less likely experienced these behaviours.

Since the racist or discriminatory behaviour I experienced was expressed through anonymous student feedback, I am unable to identify the cultural, religious, or ethnic background of the individual(s) responsible. The anonymity of the system means that comments targeting me as a woman of colour could not be traced back ... What I can say is that the discriminatory behaviour took the form of biased assumptions and accusations (e.g. being accused of having a "bias against white men" ... reflect broader cultural attitudes within a predominantly white institution. In this sense, the feedback mechanism itself can reproduce structural racism, as it allows racially charged comments to be voiced without consequence or dialogue.

And students recounted their experiences:

During seminar discussions, the teacher tends to ignore students of Asian descent and only engages with white students, even when Asian students actively attempt to participate in the discussion. During group discussions, white peers often overlook my contributions and avoid making eye contact with me when speaking.

This semester, I took this class, and a few weeks ago ... she wrote on the board from too far away. Because my eyesight is not very good, I couldn't see it clearly. So, I turned on my phone camera to zoom in. When she saw me, she said, "Oh, if you want to take a picture and translate it, that's fine." She assumed that, because I am Asian, I would naturally be using a translation app. I felt extremely embarrassed. I wasn't taking the photo to translate, but only to zoom in and see the writing more clearly..... The assumption of "because you are Asian and an international student, you must be translating" itself is racism. ... There were over 200 students in that class, so I felt extremely embarrassed. Even though others didn't specifically look at me, I still felt very sad.

I had a professor in the first year who thought I brought my assignment or made AI do it because she could not believe an Indian could write that good in the first year of nursing.

I've been told to go back to my country. I couldn't spot this person though it was said behind my back. My accent has been made fun of. I've been told I should be privileged to study and work in Australia by a fellow student. I am proud of where I am from and have a great life back home. I just feel disrespected by assumptions made about people from my race and country.

[In] clinical placement in [hospital] The clinical facilitator is definitely racist towards all east-asian students there. She demanded the students to change their given name into an English name.

Many students from Asia reiterated concerns about divisions in the student body, and participation in group work:

I've sat for many tutorials where my peers have opted out from doing a group assignment with me saying my "english isn't good enough" and that they wouldn't want a "bad grade.

most of the white students in the class sat together at one table, while students of colour, including myself, were mostly spread across the other tables

I feel consistently ignored by my classmates (white) in tutorial discussions and I feel so excluded: they would never make eye contact with me, never ask my opinions and never really care about what I say.

Social media was mentioned very frequently as a prime site for racist expressions including those related to the university:

It does not take a lot of scrolling through popular social media platforms like Reddit to find [university] students making some extremely racist remarks towards Indian people.

A number also raised the broader political environment in Australia:

The recent Australian March has made things worse. The atmosphere feels more openly hostile, like people are being given permission to act on their prejudices.

I nearly skipped this survey, discounting my experience, thinking of myself as unaffected by it, but this last month we've had the August 31 rallies, anti-immigration protests around the world, Charlie Kirk assassination, and the vigil for Charlie Kirk at [university] yesterday. I am more vigilant than before, about the racial attitudes of the people I'm surrounded by.

And the implications of the environment for them:

I know if I raise my voice, my visa may be compromised, and I may not get a chance to settle here after my studies. I know where I stand.

Some however sought to differentiate between what they saw as harmful and non-harmful conduct:

I faced casual racism but just as a joke in my friend group. It is a diverse friend group and everyone in it passes some casual racist remark to one another and no one gets offended.

I'm a strong believer in celebrating cultures, and I think humour is one of the best ways we do that. At [university], I constantly experience light-hearted racial banter between friends from different backgrounds — and it's clear that

it brings us closer, not further apart. These jokes aren't harmful; they're how we acknowledge and connect over our differences.

There were also reflections on those who engaged in interpersonal racism:

Chinese international students often hold strangely outdated and racist views towards other people of colour on campus. Particularly racism towards black and Indian students. Not specifically towards individual students but throughout conversations noticed these attitudes towards these groups

I often see Europeans being subjected to racism by South Asians/ Asians, and South Asians/Asians being racist towards each other as well.

I have noticed a University culture of systemic and interpersonal discrimination against white Australians, that is to say those of Western European. I have heard "white" used as a casual pejorative to diminish the value of a perspective.

As a south-east Asian, I admit that Asians in general are incredibly racist. It is not fair to demand others to be less racist towards Asians for example if we do not demand the same back.

A more specific issue within the community concerned those with multiple heritages:

It is very difficult for multiethnic/multiracial/mixed race people in society, as we often experience racism from not one but all monoethnic groups. Not just white people, but all monoracial people can hold racist views in my experience

Please also educate all students including international students to stop being racist to mixed-race students, because many of them hold disgusting views about "race mixing" even in the modern day

As a mixed asian/white person, I find that nearly all the racism I experience is from people who are 'full' east-asians. They tend to be much more intolerant than other ethnicities, and it's upsetting that people only listen to/focus on stories where white people are the aggressors

A number of respondents with Asian heritages expressed a view that there was too much focus on racism against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and not enough on other groups. This led one member of this community to note:

A lot of the time, international students may not fully know/understand Australian history and they may say things, not out of ill intent but rather simply out of the lack of knowledge, that may be offensive or rude. Also, those who have not been exposed to other cultures may criticise or dislike the ways of cultures and try to change it (which ironically is a huge part of colonialism).

International tensions and conflicts were also raised by many, both in terms of their relationships with each other, university practices, or course content:

I find it offensive when "Republic of China" is listed under "Taiwan nationality," as this does not reflect how I or many others identify.

As a Chinese national, I can sense that people from Taiwan or Hong Kong are ostracizing me for political reasons, even if it's not overt.

In my journalism and communication class at [university], I felt very uncomfortable with the teaching materials recommended by the lecturer. First, the lecturer encouraged us to watch a talk by Cheng Lei, who has been officially convicted in China for illegally providing state secrets, which makes me concerned about using such a figure as a credible teaching resource. Second, the lecturer assigned foreign media reports that supported Xinjiang independence, many of which contained strong biases. As a Chinese international student, these choices made me feel disrespected and marginalised.

There were also those who addressed institutional racism:

Lastly, while [university] is overall a good place to work in, I am shocked at how white the leadership of the university is - all the way from the Chancellery to the Colleges, Schools, and Departments. It's incredibly and unreflectively homogenous.

This survey won't capture the subtle racism and the impact of Anglo Australian dominance that people can experience. In Australia, especially in an academic environment, racism can be more indirect and is rarely overt. Asking people how safe they feel to speak up or against the dominant white Australian narratives, especially if these are being spoken by their supervisors, would elicit some more meaty information I think.

I feel the senior academic staff has still a stereotypical view on China instead of an updated and progressive one. They expect me to be compliant and conform to their ethics code, or their views on LGBT or feminist movement without nuanced differentiation of my cultural background, and they pre-emptively think Western values are universal values, international students are here to learn and not here to challenge and change their status quo.

In addressing this several stressed a need for substantive change:

The University's Idea of "Addressing Racism": A Checklist of Useless Gestures Now, onto your "suggestions for improvement", because nothing warms the heart like watching institutions reduce centuries of systemic oppression to a few tokenistic band-aids: · Mandatory "Unconscious Bias" Training: Ah yes, the corporate equivalent of "thoughts and prayers." Because nothing dismantles structural racism like a 45-minute PowerPoint that white staff will sleep through before returning to their usual habits of exclusion. · Diversity Committees: Also known as "The Place Where Marginalised Voices Are Ignored by a Panel of Well-Meaning White Liberals." Bonus points if their only action item is "let's have a morning tea to celebrate Diwali!", because nothing says "we value you" like reducing entire cultures to samosas and saris.

Please do NOT respond with a performative 'online mandatory training module' – there are more than enough of these as there is and they do very little to actually change behaviours.

7.6 African communities

1,696 respondents were identified as being members of African communities, half of whom were domestic students, with the balance divided between international students and staff, Table 7.28. Most were born overseas with only 17.1 per cent born in Australia, although as indicated by the distribution of international and domestic students, a large number are residents. A diverse range of African countries, as well as several non-African countries, are represented among respondents' country of birth, with Zimbabwe, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria most frequently reported.

Table 7.28 African communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
	Persons			
Domestic student	215	506	84	803
International student	–	396	86	484
Academic staff	11	152	46	209
Non-academic staff	23	144	33	200
Total	249	1,198	249	1,696

The proportion of members of the African communities who spoke languages other than English at home varied from 61.5 per cent for non-academic staff to 93.6 per cent for international students. The main languages reported were Swahili, Shona, French, Amharic, and Arabic.

Staff and students from these communities, while a majority reported agreeing that they have a sense of belonging, safety or respect at university, tended to report somewhat lower rates of agreement than other staff and students, Table 7.29. In particular 21.6 per cent disagreed that they have a sense of belonging around one and half times that of those from other communities and 10.3 per cent disagreed that they have a sense of safety, compared to 6.2 per cent from other communities.

Table 7.29 African communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	– % –					
	African					
Belonging	15.5	39.2	23.7	13.8	7.9	100.0
Safety	25.6	49.5	14.6	6.2	4.1	100.0
Respect	21.3	52.8	15.9	6.0	3.9	100.0
	Non-African					
Belonging	17.8	46.2	21.7	10.8	3.5	100.0
Safety	32.7	51.2	9.9	4.5	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.2	54.4	11.0	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 1,666 (African)

7.6.1 African communities: incidence of direct racism

Members of this community reported high levels of direct racism at university, 24.8 per cent for students and 37.8 per cent for staff. The rate for female members of the communities of 30.1 per cent was markedly higher than that of the males of 24.0 per cent,

Table 7.30. This difference extends to the broader experience of racism across university and elsewhere, and where just 26.7 per cent of women, compared with 42.5 per cent of men, reported not having experienced racism.

Table 7.30 African communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
African communities – % –						
Student	4.2	20.6	24.8	42.4	32.8	100.0
Staff	13.4	24.4	37.8	27.8	34.4	100.0
Female	6.7	23.5	30.1	43.2	26.7	100.0
Male	6.0	18.0	24.0	33.4	42.5	100.0
Total	6.4	21.5	27.9	38.9	33.2	100.0
Non-African	3.9	10.7	14.6	19.6	65.8	100.0
n = 1,572 (African)						

Three features of the experience of racism by student member of these communities stand out relative to other students experiencing racism, these are: high rates being told or made to feel unintelligent, 53.9 per cent relative to 35.0 per cent; a high rate of feeling that they were not trusted, 46.4 per cent relative to 36.3 per cent, and reporting receiving worse marks than they believed they deserved, 38.3 per cent relative to 26.5 per cent, Table 7.31. Aspects of the experience of staff echoed this, with 56.3 per cent being told or made to feel unintelligent, compared with 35.7 per cent for all staff experiencing racism, and with 55.6 per cent, relative to 38.6 per cent feeling they were not trusted. For staff these were also reflected in the 57.6 per cent who reported they had missed an opportunity, 33.3 per cent, who identified negative assessments, and 34.7 per cent who reported being denied promotions.

Students from these communities in particular reported high rates of being stopped inappropriately by university security, with 13.6 per cent of those who reported racism reporting that this had occurred, compared with 8.8 per cent of other respondents.

Table 7.31 African communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	African	Non-African	African	Non-African
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	52.2	49.8	42.4	41.6
Inappropriate comments etc	49.2	42.8	50.0	39.9
Could not express views	59.0	59.7	61.8	59.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	53.9	35.0	56.3	35.7
Missed opportunity	34.6	34.7	57.6	41.7
Not Trusted	46.4	36.3	55.6	38.6
Stopped by uni security	13.6	8.8	4.2	3.9
Physical harassment	7.1	7.5	2.8	4.0
Verbal harassment	20.3	23.1	19.4	19.9
Online harassment	11.5	14.8	6.3	10.0
Worse mark (student)	38.3	26.5	–	–
Get things free (student)	15.3	21.3	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	33.3	25.0
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	34.7	23.5
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	40.9	35.3	47.1	34.1
Cultural/racial/ethnic	69.2	71.2	75.0	71.2
Skin colour/physical	86.7	64.1	79.3	48.2
Religion	16.8	26.0	12.1	19.6
Middle East conflict	7.0	16.5	6.4	16.4
COVID	1.8	9.0	1.4	4.5
Other	3.9	6.5	4.3	10.3
International fee-paying student(a)	36.3	47.0	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	53.2	46.3	50.0	47.6
Administrative staff	20.7	16.9	50.0	46.0
Facilities staff	10.5	8.6	6.3	5.9
Students	62.7	67.0	28.5	25.4
University leadership	13.9	15.1	47.2	45.9
Other	3.7	4.6	2.8	4.8
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	70.2	61.9	57.6	56.0
Negative mental health	70.2	65.4	77.1	69.2
Negative studies (student)	47.5	44.3	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	54.2	47.3
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	20.2	16.4	23.1	14.5
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	16.9	12.7	20.2	11.1
Prepare for racist discussions	28.8	15.2	24.2	9.1
Avoid protests	14.1	11.0	13.5	6.2
Limit speech because of visa (a)	30.6	24.0	10.8	5.9

n = 439 (African, racism questions), 1,644 (African, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

For both staff and students skin colour and physical appearance associated with their ethnicity was cited at rates well above other groups. For students this was 86.7 per cent relative to 64.1 per cent and for staff 79.3 per cent relative to 48.2 per cent.

Students identified elevated roles for academic staff, administrative staff and facilities staff as being involved in their experience of racism, although the extent varies for particular roles. This was echoed, in a more muted way, by staff members from this community. 70.2 per cent of students reported both negative impacts on their mental health and that they

limited participation at university as a consequence of experiencing racism. For staff the main impact was that of a negative impact on mental health, 77.1 per cent, and a negative impact on their careers, 54.2 per cent.

Compared with all other staff and students, members of African communities reported higher rates of always or often preparing for racist conversations – 28.2 per cent for students and 24.2 per cent of staff, relative to 15.2 per cent and 9.1 per cent for all other staff and students.

7.6.2 African communities: indirect racism

77.8 per cent of students who identify with African communities reported experiencing either direct or indirect racism at university, Table 7.32. This increases to 79.8 per cent for staff from these communities. Taking into account the group whose frequency is not shown in the table because they also reported direct racism, 30.9 per cent of students from these communities and 25.6 per cent of the staff reported experiencing indirect racism either very frequently or frequently.

Table 7.32 African communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Indirect racism only					Total	
	Direct racism at university frequently (a)	Very Frequently (b)	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
African communities							
– % –							
Student	23.2	8.1	10.2	19.4	16.8	22.3	100.0
Staff	35.9	1.8	4.7	20.7	16.7	20.2	100.0
Non-African communities							
Student	14.3	5.4	9.3	22.6	20.1	28.4	100.0
Staff	14.7	2.1	5.8	23.0	23.9	30.6	100.0

n (African) = 1,673

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.6.3 African communities: experience of racism

Many respondents described their experience of racism, some citing the direct acts, and others the microaggressions, and assumptions they face.

Being mocked about my colour from fellow students Teacher treating me differently due to the colour of my skin and my race. Not fitting in with other students Never feel included Treated as I don't know any English or an international student People asking me of how I afford things Not being able to be open at uni I just smile but it's all inside.

On the Black side of things people often say the n-word around me and always make jokes like I am the one to blame if something gets stolen, despite my lack of history of stealing things. Additionally, when I publicly expressed discomfort with hearing the n-word used by non-Black people, I was met with faux sympathy that lasted a day or two, and then it was business as usual :/

I have had multiple people make comments regarding my intelligence. If I have received a high mark, I am met with surprise or genuine confusion. comments include: "How did YOU get that grade?", "How is that possible?", "Oh, I didn't know you were smart." ... I have often been told I am intimidating/scary upon first introducing despite me doing nothing to warrant such an impression. (I'm literally just sitting there...). I have had a lecturer/teacher/exam invigilator speak to me with hostility and then proceed to be kind and respectful, to only the white students (Again, I was just sitting there...).

As a Black African, I am visibly different and usually the only Black person in any room. Although I have NOT experienced extreme forms of racism such as abuse or harassment, I can sense a certain awkwardness or uncomfortableness that others feel in my presence. There is also the assumption that I know less than others or have less experience or that I am dumber than others. This from both other students and staff.

I have experienced casual racism, and I think sometimes people don't realize or are not aware that they are being racist. It is usually microaggressions that people have no idea they practice.... like saying that my English is "actually good", people saying that I am exotic, or people being surprised I have a PhD. ... people dismiss my feelings and my experiences when I say things like how racism is structural and affects all black people, or how someone was racist when they called me exotic. From my experience, people at [university] are not straightforwardly racist. They don't call me racist names or make lots of jokes. It is usually subtle racism, microaggressions that are as harmful and painful as any other kind of racism. But people are not aware of it at all, which makes it difficult to call it.

Examples I have experienced at this university: - 'Your English is very good' (Assumption that because you have a foreign accent, English is not your first language and so this statement is often offered as a 'compliment'.) - 'You look like Rihanna' or other mixed race celebrity (This is a common statement directed at mixed race individuals and seems to be rooted in the notion that all X people look the same) - 'Is your hair real?' (Question often directed to individuals with curly and coily hair textures) - Touching of hair without permission (Often done to individuals with curly and oily hair textures) - Dismissing or avoiding conversations with individuals who have accents that are perceived as difficult to understand.

One reported on how other members of the African student community provided support:

Racism at the University is both widespread and often subtle, manifesting more in omissions and unequal treatment than in overt actions. As an African student, I was cautioned by peers from similar backgrounds on how to conduct myself with supervisors in order to avoid being singled out, noting that the expectations and treatment differ markedly from those experienced by Australian and other white students. I was also advised of specific University facilities where incidents of racism were more likely to occur.

Others raised course content and structural issues, including university leadership:

Racial and ethnic diversity does not exist at scale at the Executive Level across the university, or on the University's board.

Some of the videos used in lectures eg in my social work degree they showed videos they termed Africa in human development of poor dirty children which is not representing Africa only a small portion

Within the faculty of Ancient World studies, I experienced a blank wall when trying to engage with my tutor about non-Eurocentric ancient worlds studies

Reflecting what was found in the quantitative analysis of the patterns of racism some reported that the racism they faced was not just from European staff and students:

I think addressing the ignorance that teachers of ethnic backgrounds ... hold and how they treat and degrade students of African descent is important. It is very discouraging and we are more likely to be discriminated against by other minority groups as opposed to teachers of European descent.

7.7 Afro-diasporic communities

These communities comprised those with African heritage, but with diverse histories and experiences of migration, including enslavement. While for many their identity was explicit, for others it was difficult to appropriately identify from the available data, and the classification also includes those who identified themselves simply in terms of being 'Black', or a 'Person of Colour'. They are a small community, primarily born outside of Australia, but the main group were domestic students. While it is recognised that there may be some inaccuracies in who has been classified as members of this community, and that many with these backgrounds have not been identified, it is considered that the classification provides some insights which are likely to be reflected more widely in this community.

242 respondents have been identified in this community, with the major group being domestic students, with almost two thirds of these being born overseas, Table 7.33. For those born outside of Australia countries of birth include the Caribbean, North America, and Great Britain. With the exception of international students, where 82.3 per cent reported using another language, only around half of the members of Afro-diasporic communities spoke a language other than English at home, including Portuguese, French, Hindi and Spanish.

Table 7.33 Afro-diasporic communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born		Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	
Domestic student	38	64	105
International student	–	58	62
Academic staff	7	33	49
Non-academic staff	4	19	26
Total	49	173	242

While staff and students from these communities have a majority agreeing or agreeing strongly that they have a sense of belonging, safety or respect at university, this level of agreement is much weaker than that for staff and students in aggregate, Table 7.34. In

particular 28.1 per cent disagreed that they have a sense of belonging, almost double that of other survey respondents and 11.7 per cent disagreed that they have a sense of safety.

Table 7.34 Afro-diasporic communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Afro-diasporic communities						
– % –						
Belonging	12.3	38.3	21.3	17.5	10.6	100.0
Safety	24.2	49.2	15.0	8.8	2.9	100.0
Respect	17.8	56.4	13.7	7.5	4.6	100.0
Non-Afro-diasporic communities						
Belonging	17.8	46.1	21.8	10.8	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.6	51.2	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.1	54.4	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 235 (Afro-diasporic)

7.7.1 Afro-diasporic communities: incidence of direct racism

Members of this community reported very high levels of direct racism at university, 29.3 per cent for students and 40.3 per cent for staff. The rate for female members of the communities of 33.1 per cent is a bit higher than the 29.7 per cent reported by males, Table 7.35. This difference extends to the broader experience of racism across university and elsewhere where just 20.3 per cent of women, and 36.3 per cent of men, reported not having experienced racism.

Table 7.35 Afro-diasporic communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total at university	Other only	None	
Afro-diasporic communities						
			– % –			
Student	4.5	24.8	29.3	46.5	24.2	100.0
Staff	9.0	31.3	40.3	26.9	32.8	100.0
Female	5.9	27.1	33.1	46.6	20.3	100.0
Male	3.3	26.4	29.7	34.1	36.3	100.0
Total	5.8	26.8	32.6	40.6	26.8	100.0
Other respondents	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.2	100.0

n = 224 (Afro-diasporic)

Looking at the more detailed data on their experience, Table 7.36, students were much more likely to cite being told or made to feel unintelligent, with 56.5 per cent reporting this as being part of their experience, along with 63.0 per cent who said it felt that they were not trusted. 17.4 per cent reported being unfairly stopped by university security, almost double the rate reported by other students who experienced racism. The issue of low trust, negative assessments and being denied promotion were reported at high levels by staff, relative to the experience of others.

Table 7.36 Afro-diasporic communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Type and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Afro-diasporic communities	Others	Afro-diasporic communities	Others
	- % -			
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	60.9	49.8	59.3	41.6
Inappropriate comments etc	56.5	43.0	44.4	40.2
Could not express views	76.1	59.5	74.1	59.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	56.5	35.7	25.9	36.5
Missed opportunity	41.3	34.7	59.3	42.1
Not Trusted	63.0	36.6	51.9	39.1
Stopped by uni security	17.4	8.9	0.0	3.9
Physical harassment	8.7	7.4	3.7	3.9
Verbal harassment	26.1	23.0	11.1	19.9
Online harassment	13.0	14.7	7.4	9.9
Worse mark (student)	30.4	27.0	-	-
Get things free (student)	21.7	21.0	-	-
Negative assessments (staff)	-	-	44.4	25.2
Denied promotion (staff)	-	-	37.0	23.8
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	40.0	35.5	48.2	34.5
Cultural/racial/ethnic	84.4	71.0	85.2	71.3
Skin colour/physical	84.4	65.0	70.4	49.2
Religion	26.7	25.6	11.1	19.3
Middle East conflict	20.0	16.1	7.4	16.1
COVID	0.0	8.8	0.0	4.4
Other	2.2	6.4	11.1	10.0
International fee-paying student(a)	60.0	46.3	-	-
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	56.5	46.6	70.4	47.5
Administrative staff	26.1	17.0	40.7	46.2
Facilities staff	15.2	8.6	3.7	6.0
Students	82.6	66.7	33.3	25.5
University leadership	21.7	15.0	74.1	45.8
Other	2.2	4.6	0.0	4.8
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	87.0	62.1	74.1	55.9
Negative mental health	78.3	65.5	85.2	69.4
Negative studies (student)	45.7	44.5	-	-
Negative career (staff)	-	-	59.3	47.5
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	27.9	16.5	28.2	14.6
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	18.8	12.8	16.1	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	38.0	15.5	24.3	9.3
Avoid protests	19.6	11.0	12.3	6.3
Limit speech because of visa (a)	39.7	24.2	24.5	5.9

n = 73 (Afro-diasporic, racism questions), 229 (Afro-diasporic, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

Ethnicity, culture and skin colour were all cited at a disproportionately high rate as factors in their experience and students identified administrative staff, facilities staff and university leadership all as parties to their experience. Staff from these communities were more likely to cite academic staff, students and university leadership. In the latter, 74.1 per cent of staff indicated that university leaders participated in their experience of direct racism at university.

78.3 per cent of students, and 85.0 per cent of staff who experienced racism at university reported that their experience of racism had a negative impact on their mental health, and 87.0 per cent of students and 74.1 per cent of staff said it led them to reduce their engagement with the university.

Across all of the identified behaviour constraints the whole of this community reported rates of higher frequency limiting and precautionary behaviour at one and half to two and a half times the rate of other students and staff. 38.0 per cent of students and 24.3 per cent of staff reported always or often preparing for racist conversations at university.

7.7.2 Afro-diasporic Communities: indirect racism

The incidence of indirect racism experienced by these communities is high, in particular for students. As illustrated in Table 7.37 while students have a lower rate of direct racism than staff, when account is taken of indirect racism they have a smaller proportion – just 19.4 per cent not reporting one form of racism or the other, compared with 25.7 per cent for staff from these communities. Indeed 80.0 per cent of students in these communities and 73.0 per cent of staff reported experiencing indirect racism at university.

Table 7.37 Afro-diasporic communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university (a) (b)	Indirect racism only				Total	
		Very frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Afro-diasporic communities							
– % –							
Student	27.9	9.1	14.6	17.0	12.1	19.4	100.0
Staff	36.5	2.7	5.4	20.3	9.5	25.7	100.0
Non-Afro-diasporic communities							
Student	14.5	5.4	9.3	22.6	20.0	28.2	100.0
Staff	14.9	2.0	5.8	23.0	23.8	30.5	100.0

n = 239 (Afro-diasporic)

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.7.3 Afro-diasporic communities: experience of racism

Many of the comments focused on their experience of not being white in a white university environment:

I have been deemed to be dangerous by other staff, simply for being a Black male on campus. As a member of staff, I have experienced feedback from students that align with racialised expectations of what my demeanour as a teacher should be.

As a Black American student at [university] I often feel unsafe. ... I struggle to find spaces where I can openly discuss issues affecting Black Americans. There are no adequate resources in place that encourage conversations around race and racism ... I often witness a troubling indifference in many classes. White students frequently speak over Indigenous instructors, dismissing their experiences with laughter and casualness. This behaviour reveals a lack of respect for the trauma being shared and suggests an overall disregard for the

seriousness of the program. While I understand that this may stem from cultural differences, it still feels rude and disrespectful. Ultimately, I don't feel safe, I can't speak out freely, and it's clear that I am not truly wanted here.

Whiteness is the unspoken and unseen norm at the university. It is easy to be white and harder to be something that is not white, here.

I was only coloured person at tutorial and the Australians didn't understand what being coloured in a white society was like.

Everyday in people's behaviour I am reminded that I am different. I am reminded that I am brown. I never felt "black" in the Caribbean, just human.

It really hurt honestly. I cried about it for quite a bit because it's frustrating to have people judge you pre-emptively based on physical features you cannot control.

[it went on] until one felt like they were rolled out to talk about racial issues. It felt like this was just done to tokenise and also validate the University as 'so diverse and inclusive'.

I have experienced repeated instances of racial bias and discrimination on campus that have significantly affected my experience at [university]. One recurring issue is that teachers and administrative staff frequently mistake me for other Black students and vice versa, even though we do not look alike. My Black friend and I have been singled out and harassed by campus security on multiple occasions.... On several occasions, security approached me in front of groups of students to ask if I studied at [university] while ignoring those around me. The same security officer repeatedly approached me over several days, questioning my activities and implying I was doing something wrong, to the point where I had to assert that I was not breaking any rules and ask him to stop harassing me.

A number of respondents focused on what universities should be doing, and exposed the failures they had seen and experienced:

There is absolutely no consequence or mandatory training I have ever seen or heard of if someone is reported for inappropriate behaviours. Unless it is SO BAD that they should get fired, which never happens. There's just therapy or help offered to the person who experienced the discrimination - which is good but at the end of the day does nothing to address the root problem.

Move beyond tokenism so that diversity is embedded in decision-making and culture, not reduced to a superficial "tick-box" exercise. Create safe processes where staff can raise concerns about microaggressions and behaviour-based discrimination without fear of negative consequences.

The University can begin by acknowledging race....Its seems like it's a secret, negative thing that's not meant to be discussed. Even in spaces that are meant to address inequality and minority identities race is never a point of focus and rarely addressed.

7.8 Pasifika communities

874 responses were received from staff and students who were identified as being members of Pasifika communities, with 72.7 per cent being students. The student population was primarily comprised of domestic students, and the proportion who reported they were academic staff is small relative to the ratio seen for many other communities, Table 7.38. In addition to Australia, where some 40.9 per cent were born, major countries of birth were New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

Table 7.38 Pasifika communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born			Total
	Australia	Not Aust.	Not stated	
	Persons			
Domestic student	236	215	30	481
International student	–	127	27	154
Academic staff	25	27	14	66
Non-academic staff	57	90	26	173
Total	318	459	97	874

Other than international students where 94.1 per cent reported speaking a language other than English at home, domestic students and staff reported much lower rates between 50 and 57 per cent. Languages reported included Hindi, Samoan, Tok Pisin, Fijian and Tongan.

Students and staff who were members of the Pasifika community reported levels of agreement with the statements concerning belonging, safety and respect at university at rates very close to that of other respondents, Table 7.39, with strong majorities agreeing or agreeing strongly with the three statements.

Table 7.39 Pasifika communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with the statement					Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Pasifika communities						
– % –						
Belonging	19.4	43.3	23.4	10.1	3.8	100.0
Safety	31.8	47.5	12.9	6.1	1.8	100.0
Respect	27.5	52.6	13.3	4.8	1.9	100.0
Non Pasifika						
Belonging	17.8	46.1	21.7	10.9	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.6	51.2	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.0	54.4	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 854 (Pasifika)

7.8.1 Pasifika communities: incidence of direct racism

Pasifika staff and students reported rates of direct racism at university at rates above those of others who responded to this survey. This was particularly marked for staff where the rate was 30.2 per cent, double the rate for non-Pasifika staff, of 15.0 per cent, as well as the rate reported by students, 17.9 per cent, which is higher than the average for non-Pasifika students of 14.7 per cent. While the rate of racism at university reported by women

was similar to that of men they reported much higher rates of racism than men outside of the university, Table 7.40.

Table 7.40 Pasifika communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Pasifika communities – % –						
Student	2.2	15.7	17.9	40.1	42.0	100.0
Staff	5.4	24.8	30.2	24.8	45.1	100.0
Female	2.3	16.9	19.2	39.5	41.3	100.0
Male	4.3	15.7	20.0	29.1	51.0	100.0
Total	3.1	18.2	21.2	35.9	42.8	100.0
Non Pasifika	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.1	100.0

n = 810 (Pasifika)

Pasifika students who experienced racism were more likely to cite almost all of the forms than other students who reported racism at university, usually by some 15 to 20 per cent. Two however stand out. The first is being told or being made to feel as if they are unintelligent, where the rate of 50.5 per cent is well above the rate this is cited by others of 35.6 per cent, and being inappropriately stopped by university security. The rate reported by Pasifika students of 15.2 per cent compares with 8.9 per cent for other students who face direct racism at university, Table 7.41. Pasifika staff also show a much higher incidence of reporting the range of adverse experiences than others. As with students this includes being stopped by security where the rate for staff who are members of Pasifika communities of 9.0 per cent was 2.4 times that of others, being told or made to feel unintelligent, where the rate of 61.2 per cent is 1.7 times that of non-Pasifika, being harassed on line 1.7 times the rate, and being subject to inappropriate comments 1.5 times.

Table 7.41 Pasifika communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Pasifika	Non Pasifika	Pasifika	Non Pasifika
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	58.1	49.7	55.2	41.4
Inappropriate comments etc	54.3	42.9	59.7	39.9
Could not express views	61.9	59.6	74.6	59.4
Told/made to feel unintelligent	50.5	35.6	61.2	36.0
Missed opportunity	40.0	34.6	56.7	42.0
Not Trusted	45.7	36.6	55.2	39.0
Stopped by uni security	15.2	8.9	9.0	3.8
Physical harassment	8.6	7.4	6.0	3.9
Verbal harassment	24.8	23.0	23.9	19.8
Online harassment	15.2	14.7	16.4	9.8
Worse mark (student)	30.5	27.0	–	–
Get things free (student)	26.7	20.9	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	29.9	25.3
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	22.4	23.9
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	22.6	35.8	27.7	34.7
Cultural/racial/ethnic	74.5	71.1	80.0	71.2
Skin colour/physical	86.3	64.8	80.0	48.9
Religion	27.5	25.6	13.9	19.4
Middle East conflict	8.8	16.2	4.6	16.3
COVID	5.9	8.7	4.6	4.4
Other	9.8	6.3	9.2	10.1
International fee-paying student	62.5	46.3	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	46.7	46.6	59.7	47.4
Administrative staff	15.2	17.1	55.2	46.0
Facilities staff	8.6	8.7	9.0	5.9
Students	70.5	66.7	31.3	25.4
University leadership	14.3	15.1	43.3	46.0
Other	6.7	4.5	4.5	4.7
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	72.4	62.2	68.7	55.8
Negative mental health	68.6	65.6	74.6	69.4
Negative studies (student)	54.3	44.3	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	47.8	47.6
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	17.4	16.5	19.5	14.6
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	14.9	12.8	16.8	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	21.7	15.5	19.5	9.2
Avoid protests	11.7	11.1	7.8	6.3
Limit speech because of visa (a)	16.4	24.4	9.9	6.0

n = 172 (Pasifika, racism questions), 858 (Pasifika, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

Both students and staff ascribe the experience of racism more frequently than others to skin colour – at rates 1.3 and 1.6 times that of others. In contrast, language is much less identified by Pasifika staff and students than it is by others facing racism at university. More consistently with non-Pasifika, staff and students reported experiencing direct racism at university; culture and race were the second most cited item by students and staff.

For students, the pattern of who was involved was broadly similar to other students, while staff reported elevated rates across academic staff, administrative staff, facilities staff and students. Amongst these the most disproportionate weight was given to facilities staff, again the role of university security.

Negative outcomes were reported by Pasifika community staff and students who experienced direct racism, at somewhat elevated rates, in particular with regard to participation, and 68.6 per cent of students and 74.6 per cent of staff reported negative mental health outcomes from the racism they experienced.

Pasifika community students and staff also reported engaging in behaviour constraints while at university, again at rates above those of other staff and students, and both staff and students reported, relative to all other staff and students, a greater tendency to mentally prepare for racist conversations,

7.8.2 Pasifika communities: indirect racism

75.3 per cent of students and 75.7 per cent of staff from Pasifika communities reported having experienced indirect racism at university. 98.0 per cent of the students and 96.9 per cent of the staff who reported experiencing direct racism at university also reported experiencing indirect racism.

Table 7.42 Pasifika communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university (a) (b)	Indirect racism only					Total
		Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)	
Pasifika - % -							
Student	16.9	5.2	9.8	22.4	21.5	24.2	100.0
Staff	28.2	1.7	5.0	19.8	22.3	23.1	100.0
Non-Pasifika							
Student	14.5	5.5	9.3	22.5	19.9	28.3	100.0
Staff	14.9	2.0	5.8	23.0	23.8	30.5	100.0

n = 858 (Pasifika)

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.8.3 Pasifika communities: the experience of racism

Many respondents cited direct and blatant racism:

When I first started my course [another student] ...commented after I had stated that I am Samoan, "you are a violent people" then adjusted his comment by saying "traditionally",

People associate my ethnic background with brutishness and unintelligence. To say they are surprised when I succeed academically - due to my ethnic background - implies that my culture is innately unable to flourish.

*I have been called 'n*****', 'coconut', 'Moana' (even though I present as male), I've been called a 'black shit', 'fug-ly', 'monkey', etc. I've been told numerous times that I should go back to where I came from I very often have people*

who ignore me and I also had to deal with one person who refused to take something from me directly - I had to place the item on the desk then I watched them pick it up with a tissue and wipe it as if any physical contact with me would cause the person harm - it's degrading, de-humanising and I just swallow my pain and keep going because I need my job to put a roof over and feed my family

Others focused on the more subtle and indirect forms:

Throughout my time at the [university] I've encountered subtle but persistent forms of racial bias that have left a lasting impact. These weren't always overt acts of discrimination, but rather quiet exclusions, assumptions, and microaggressions that made me feel like I didn't fully belong. There were moments in group projects where my ideas were dismissed until repeated by someone else. Times when lecturers mispronounced my name repeatedly, despite corrections. It's painful to see how easily these moments are brushed aside, often labelled as "misunderstandings" or "unintentional." But intent doesn't erase impact. Racism doesn't always look like shouting or slurs but it often hides in systems, habits, and silence.

I am biracial but am white passing. People often feel comfortable expressing views about non-white people to me because of this, including towards me group because they assume I am fully white. Furthermore, people often discount my biracial identity because of the colour of my skin, despite being raised immersed in both cultures and having a strong relationship to my ethnic and cultural identity. I do not feel as though I fully fit in to either the White or Pacific Islander communities because of this.

Also raised was more systemic embedded racism within academia:

There is also the systemic racism. European centric research, methodology and precedents are held up without question. It's very much the Anglo worldview with mention of the "others".

A number of Pasifika respondents, expressed views, heard in voices of many of the other communities considered here, on what it takes to live and work:

I feel that I come from a place of privilege, in how I was raised and am proud of the person I have become. I view myself as a strong independent Samoan female, and carry myself so because that is what is expected of me and I know where I stand when I am with my family, my community. The expectations and standards to which I hold myself, are because I was raised with the intention that I needed to be strong to prepare myself and hold my own against a western man's system that is so different to my cultural/traditional upbringing. When I am outside that safe space, I find myself trying to make myself adapt to fit into the expectations that this society makes of me and it is hard sometimes to separate what is racist or discriminatory, and what is just the norm with the culture at work.

These questions are directed at overt racism. They do not address the quieter racism where you feel you have to work harder in order to receive the same

recognition if you not white. People of colour will tell you how prevalent this is.

7.9 Māori communities

351 survey respondents identified as Māori. These were mainly domestic students, a combination of Australian born and New Zealanders who are considered as domestic in the student classification. Of the balance only 41 were academic staff, and 91 non-academic staff, Table 7.43.

Table 7.43 Māori communities, respondents by type and Australian born

Respondent type	Where born		Total (a)
	Australia	Not Aust.	
	– Persons –		
Domestic student	121	97	219
International student (b)	–	–	–
Academic staff	15	26	41
Non-academic staff	26	65	91
Total	164	188	351

(a) Includes country of birth not stated

(b) New Zealand students are treated as domestic students in the Higher Education sector

The proportion of Māori who reported speaking a language other than English at home was around 29 per cent for students and academic staff, and 17 per cent of non-academic staff, with the main language being New Zealand Māori, followed by Cook Islands Māori.

Members of the Māori community had a tendency to report a slightly lower level of agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at their universities, although in all cases having a marked majority saying they agreed or agreed strongly with each of the statements, Table 7.44.

Table 7.44 Māori communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Māori communities						
– % –						
Belonging	15.8	46.6	20.7	14.4	2.6	100.0
Safety	29.1	54.2	10.7	4.0	2.0	100.0
Respect	25.1	58.6	9.7	5.1	1.4	100.0
Non Māori						
Belonging	17.8	46.1	21.8	10.8	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.6	51.1	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.0	54.4	11.1	4.7	1.8	100.0

n = 348 (Māori)

7.9.1 Māori communities: incidence of direct racism

While Māori community students who participated in the survey reported lower rates of experiencing direct racism at university than non-Māori students, 12.4 per cent relative to 14.8 per cent, and lower than for all domestic students, 13.2 per cent, Māori staff reported a higher rate, 16.3 per cent, above the average for all staff of 15.1 per cent. There was also a very strong gender difference, with female respondents having a rate of direct racism of

12.5 per cent and males 17.7 per cent, see Table 7.45. Notwithstanding this gender difference in the rate of racism faced at university, when all direct racism is considered, that is at university and elsewhere, the rates of experiencing racism for each gender is the same. This reflects the relatively high rates of racism these staff and students reported as occurring outside of university. Specifically, while non-Māori staff reported a rate of experiencing racism outside of university of 13.4 per cent, for Māori staff the proportion is 23.6 per cent. For students the relative proportions are 23.9 per cent and 38.1 per cent.

One possible reason for the difference in staff and student experiences is in the relative proportions of these two groups who were born in Australia,

Table 7.45 Māori communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Māori communities						
			– % –			
Student	4.8	7.6	12.4	38.1	49.5	100.0
Staff	8.1	8.1	16.3	23.6	60.2	100.0
Female	5.8	6.7	12.5	34.2	53.3	100.0
Male	6.3	11.4	17.7	29.1	53.2	100.0
Total	6.0	7.8	13.8	32.7	53.5	100.0
Non Māori	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.1	100.0

n = 333 (Māori)

Overall, the experience of those that have experienced racism at university is similar to the overall profile with some exceptions, see Table 7.46.

- Māori staff and students both reported higher rates of being inappropriately stopped by university security as part of their experience of racism at university. In the case of students this is around 28 per cent higher, but for staff it is 2.6 times as high.
- Reflecting this both students and staff were more likely to identify facilities staff as being involved in their experience of racism.
- Students were also more likely to report that the racism involved them being told that they had got things for free.
- Students reported a much lower rate of teaching or academic staff as being involved in the direct racism that they have experienced at university, 23.1 per cent relative to 46.7 per cent, but a higher rate of student involvement, 80.8 per cent relative to 66.8 per cent.

Table 7.46 Māori communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Māori	Non Māori	Māori	Non Māori
	– % –			
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	26.9	50.0	50.0	41.6
Inappropriate comments etc	42.3	43.1	45.0	40.2
Could not express views	57.7	59.7	50.0	59.7
Told/made to feel unintelligent	38.5	35.9	45.0	36.4
Missed opportunity	30.8	34.7	25.0	42.3
Not Trusted	38.5	36.8	40.0	39.2
Stopped by uni security	11.5	9.0	10.0	3.9
Physical harassment	7.7	7.4	0.0	4.0
Verbal harassment	19.2	23.0	20.0	19.8
Online harassment	11.5	14.7	15.0	9.9
Worse mark (students)	3.9	27.2	–	–
Get things free (students)	38.5	20.9	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	15.0	25.4
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	5.0	24.0
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	16.0	35.6	42.1	34.6
Cultural/racial/ethnic	64.0	71.1	84.2	71.3
Skin colour/physical	68.0	65.2	42.1	49.4
Religion	8.0	25.7	5.3	19.3
Middle East conflict	4.0	16.1	5.3	16.1
COVID	0.0	8.7	0.0	4.4
Other	16.0	6.4	5.3	10.1
International fee-paying student(a)	0.0	46.4	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	23.1	46.7	45.0	47.7
Administrative staff	15.4	17.1	50.0	46.2
Facilities staff	15.4	8.6	25.0	5.9
Students	80.8	66.8	15.0	25.6
University leadership	15.4	15.1	25.0	46.1
Other	3.9	4.5	10.0	4.7
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	53.9	62.4	55.0	56.0
Negative mental health	53.9	65.7	60.0	69.6
Negative studies (student)	46.2	44.5	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	30.0	47.7
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	17.3	16.5	12.3	14.7
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	16.6	12.8	9.3	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	13.9	15.6	10.2	9.3
Avoid protests	6.5	11.1	1.6	6.4
Limit speech because of visa (a)	0.0	24.3	2.5	6.0

n = 46 (Māori, racism questions), 344 (Māori, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

7.9.2 Māori communities: indirect racism

Staff and students from Māori communities also experience extensive indirect racism, Table 7.47. Taking account of both direct and indirect racism, only 25.0 per cent of students and 29.0 per cent of staff from these communities did not report experiencing either of these forms, although of those who only reported indirect racism 74.3 per cent of students and 87.7 per cent of staff reported this as occurring sometimes or rarely, rather than it being frequent or very frequent.

Table 7.47 Māori communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university	Indirect racism only				Total	
	(a) (b)	Very frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
Māori communities							
– % –							
Student	12.0	4.6	11.6	25.5	21.3	25.0	100.0
Staff	15.3	1.5	5.3	19.9	29.0	29.0	100.0
Non-Māori							
Student	14.6	5.5	9.3	22.5	20.0	28.2	100.0
Staff	15.0	2.0	5.8	23.0	23.7	30.5	100.0

n = 247(Māori)

(a) Includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) The incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.9.3 Māori communities: experience of racism

There were relatively limited comments on actual experiences, possibly as one member of the community noted “I have personally never experienced racism, as I don't appear as a 'targetable' race”. This was not the case however for others, with a number highlighting the complexity of their lived experience:

I don't know I'm still annoyed at the woman in my class ... put inappropriate comments in the chat ... she said the Maoris ate a whole race and wouldn't admit it - this took place in an indigenous subject were I never in my dreams expected to hear a comment like this

The racism I have experienced is mostly because I am white-presenting, and white racist people are less cautious with their language and behaviours than they might otherwise be if they understood my heritage.

As a white presenting Māori woman, I have had experiences where I was excluded, spoken over or told my input is irrelevant when in discussions surrounding my culture. I believe that my appearance had a big part in that, and I experienced it from both Polynesian people and white Australians. It has made me feel uncomfortable and question the validity of my own connections to my culture, and made me feel humiliated in those moments. I have at times avoided wearing my whalebone necklace, passed down to me from my great grandmother, as I have been accused of being a 'plastic Māori'

As with a number of other communities the more detailed comments from Māori respondents to the survey included a range of responses in which people, while they had their own experiences, wanted to address racism against Australian First Nations people:

embedding Indigenous approaches to what we do is fundamental but from what I've seen, ... No one knows what or how to do it, and they are worried to offend people, so they do nothing. I try to be an ally but it is hard when leadership doesn't deem it important ... Unfortunately as Māori, we also fall into a gap where we are not Indigenous to this country, so we do not have the networks and supports available to us, but we want to be allies because we have had the same experiences.

7.10 Americas communities

1,896 respondents have been identified in these communities, which comprises persons, excluding those identified with a sole 'European' heritage, and those identified as being members of 'Afro-diasporic' communities⁶⁹, who are living in the Americas. The largest groups are domestic students, 659 persons, followed by 507 non-academic staff, 368 academic staff and 362 international students. Some 20.2 per cent of those with an identified birthplace were born in Australia, Table 7.48.

Table 7.48 Americas communities, respondents by type and whether Australian born

Respondent type	Where born		Total (a)
	Australia	Not Aust.	
	Persons		
Domestic student	252	342	659
International student	–	320	362
Academic staff	25	287	368
Non-academic staff	58	373	507
Total	335	1322	1,896

(a) Includes those who did not report their country of birth

Other major countries of birth were the United States of America, 268 persons, Brazil 235, Columbia 199, Chile 109, Canada 83, Mexico 78, Peru 64, and Argentina 59. 779 of the respondents reported using Spanish at home along with 238 using Portuguese.

Staff and students from these communities have a pattern of agreement with the statements on belonging, safety and respect at university at levels very similar to all other students and staff, although with a very slight tendency to express strong agreement when agreeing, and a slightly larger proportion expressing disagreement, Table 7.49. This was most noticeable with respect to belonging, with 17.0 per cent of this community disagreeing with the statement that they had a sense of belonging, compared with 14.4 per cent of other respondents.

Table 7.49 Americas communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Americas communities						
	– % –					
Belonging	18.0	41.7	23.4	12.6	4.3	100.0
Safety	36.2	47.2	10.0	5.1	1.5	100.0
Respect	31.9	50.1	11.3	5.0	1.8	100.0
Non-Americans						
Belonging	17.8	46.2	21.7	10.8	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.5	51.3	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	27.9	54.5	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 1,869 (Americas)

7.10.1 Americas communities: incidence of direct racism

Members of this community reported higher levels of direct racism both at university and more widely in the community compared with the balance of survey respondents, Table

⁶⁹ As with each of these broad groupings a person may have identified themselves as a member of multiple communities and in such cases these exclusions may not apply.

7.50. The reported rate of direct racism at university was 21.7 per cent for staff, and 17.0 per cent for students. It was somewhat higher, 19.7 per cent, for women, than it was for men, 17.5 per cent.

Table 7.50 Americas communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism:					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Americas communities – % –						
Student	2.9	14.1	17.0	30.8	52.3	100.0
Staff	7.1	14.7	21.7	23.7	54.5	100.0
Female	5.1	14.7	19.7	29.4	50.9	100.0
Male	4.6	13.0	17.5	24.1	58.4	100.0
Total	4.8	14.3	19.2	27.5	53.3	100.0
Non Americas	4.0	10.8	14.8	19.8	65.4	100.0
n = 1,737 (Americas)						

n = 1,737 (Americas)

Table 7.51 provides some further insights into this experience. Both students and staff from these communities were more likely than other respondents who experienced racism at university to report that this was through inappropriate comments or being told or made to feel that they were unintelligent. For staff, the proportion reporting this of 48.0 per cent was markedly higher than the 35.9 per cent for other staff experiencing racism. While staff were more likely than other respondents to report not being trusted, with 46.3 per cent citing this as an element of the racism they experienced, this was not the case for students, although a third still did so. Students however reported a higher rate of being inappropriately stopped by security.

Both staff and students reported that language was a key factor in the racism they experienced. In the case of students this was reported by over half, 52.3 per cent, a rate one and a half that of other respondents. For staff this was cited by 68.6 per cent, over double the rate reported by other staff members who experienced racism. In contrast to other staff they were much less likely to cite students as being a party to the racism they experienced, with this being recorded by both academic and non-academic staff. The pattern for students from this community was broadly in line with that of other students experiencing racism. This was also the case for both staff and students with respect to the impacts, although students reported a slightly lower impact on their studies, while staff reported a slightly higher impact on their careers.

Considering the extent to which all staff and students from these communities took precautionary actions, 18.6 per cent of students and 15.5 per cent of all staff reported mentally preparing for racist conversations, well above the rates of 12.9 per cent and 9.2 per cent reported by other respondents. 10 per cent of staff also reported limiting their speech because of fears about the implications of speaking out for their visas.

Table 7.51 Americas communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Americas	Other	Americas	Other
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	48.7	49.9	44.6	41.5
Inappropriate comments etc	51.3	42.9	51.4	39.7
Could not express views	59.5	59.7	61.1	59.6
Told/made to feel unintelligent	39.2	35.8	48.0	35.9
Missed opportunity	29.8	34.8	45.1	42.1
Not Trusted	36.1	36.8	46.3	38.9
Stopped by uni security	11.4	8.9	1.7	4.0
Physical harassment	5.7	7.5	2.3	4.0
Verbal harassment	17.7	23.1	17.7	19.9
Online harassment	9.5	14.8	8.0	10.0
Worse mark (student)	27.2	27.1	–	–
Get things free (student)	14.6	21.2	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	25.7	25.3
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	24.0	23.9
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	52.3	35.1	68.6	33.0
Cultural/racial/ethnic	70.2	71.1	69.8	71.4
Skin colour/physical	54.3	65.5	35.5	50.0
Religion	15.9	25.8	11.1	19.7
Middle East conflict	13.9	16.1	8.7	16.4
COVID	6.0	8.8	1.2	4.5
Other	10.6	6.3	7.0	10.2
International fee-paying student(a)	32.1	46.8	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	46.2	46.6	52.6	47.4
Administrative staff	17.7	17.0	53.1	45.8
Facilities staff	8.2	8.7	4.0	6.0
Students	65.8	66.8	19.4	25.8
University leadership	15.2	15.1	50.3	45.8
Other	5.7	4.5	3.4	4.8
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	65.2	62.3	57.1	56.0
Negative mental health	64.6	65.7	70.9	69.4
Negative studies (student)	39.9	44.6	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	52.6	47.3
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	14.7	16.5	14.7	14.6
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	12.1	12.8	10.7	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	18.9	15.5	12.9	9.2
Avoid protests	10.2	11.1	6.3	6.3
Limit speech because of visa (a)	21.2	24.4	10.0	5.8

n = 333 (Americas, racism questions), 1,853 (Americas, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

7.10.2 Americas communities: Indirect racism

In addition to experiencing direct racism at university members of these communities also experienced indirect racism, Table 7.52. This was more frequently reported by students, in particular with regard to very frequent and frequent incidents. Fewer than a quarter of the members of these communities reported neither direct nor indirect racism

Table 7.52 Americas communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Indirect racism only					Total	
	Direct racism at university	Very frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (direct or indirect)		
	(a)	(b)					
Americas - % -							
Student	15.7	6.3	11.0	22.8	19.4	24.9	100.0
Staff	20.1	1.7	6.6	25.2	22.6	23.8	100.0
Non-Americans							
Student	14.5	5.4	9.3	22.5	20.0	28.3	100.0
Staff	14.8	2.1	5.8	22.9	23.8	30.7	100.0

n = 1,876 (Americas)

(a) Includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) The incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.10.3 Americas communities: experience of racism

One of the strong themes in the comments from members of this community was the role of stereotyping. This was stressed by a number as being a particular issue because the community was not well represented across the university sector.

I know we are a minority in terms of numbers compared to other minorities so a lot of our uni experience is not heard/recognized. There should be more because people usually say very ignorant things to me because they simply have no idea what my culture is about.

Repeated jokes from the director of my department about my appearance, he says that I look like a Spanish conquistador, who are the people that invaded and colonised South America. Not very happy with his comments

Racism is expressed mostly in passive aggressive ways, it is reflected when anglo-saxon people make quick assumptions made on stereotypical views about other races. i.e. if you are latin, you are a "volatile" passionate" latin. Having an accent when speaking English attacks judgement on someone's level of intelligence and education. Most racism is not evident, sometimes it is not expressed with words but in the way people behave towards other races, alienation, isolation, judgement, condescending comments and patronizing behavior. Culturally profiling people is very common, and it can only reflect lack of education or a global view. I have learnt to ignore it, not to react and just use sense of humour to diffuse any nasty comments about my looks, accent or ways I express myself

Personally, I don't take offence easily and even joke about my "Mexicanity." I understand that not all cultural groups have the privilege of doing this, especially where stereotypes are more harmful or deeply negative, but for me, and I'd say for many Mexicans, it feels natural to be playful.

One respondent emphasised that this issue of stereotypes and ignorance of other cultures was widespread across all groups at universities:

There was one question on this questionnaire that talked about caucasian/european people being racist towards others, which is true and has happened to me, but Asians (Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Indian etc) are equally ignorant and even more judgmental towards my culture (in my own personal experience) and this issue should have more recognition.

Another, while recognising the nature of what many reported as microaggressions, expressed a concern that caution was required:

There is a pervasive fear of saying the wrong thing and being perceived as racist, which paradoxically creates an environment where people are overly cautious in their words but still act on their underlying biases ... Personally, I don't get offended if someone asks me where I come from, I'm very proud of my culture and I love to talk about it to whoever is curious and wants to know about it. Sadly younger generations are so scare to offend that they don't ask where people are coming from, which I think is a miss opportunity to enrich their knowledge about other cultures in the world.

Also raised in the comments was an issue which was identified by respondents in a number of communities, including some of the Asian communities, this is fetishisation of women from the communities as a distinct form of racism:

I often hear male students making derogatory and highly sexualised comments about Latina women (based in racist stereotypes fetishising Latinas)

A number of the members of these communities directly spoke about the nature of universities. In the first case this addressed a wider question of the extent to which political pressures resulted in discrimination. The second placed this in the broader context of the 'imposter syndrome'. That is the way in which high achieving individuals from marginalised backgrounds, including class, gender and race, face self-doubt in institutions, in particular where these are based on privilege. The others re-emphasise the question of the structure of universities and the discrepancy between the composition of students and staff, and of university leadership:

I have seen many academics (some of Chinese heritage, some not) be treated as though they are guilty of something simply because they engage in research collaborations with Chinese academics

I have experienced casual racism, and I think sometimes people don't realize or are not aware that they are being racist. It is usually microaggressions that people have no idea they practice. Like saying that my English is "actually good", people saying that I am exotic, or people being surprised I have a PhD. I think it affects our self-esteem and makes our impostor syndrome bigger than it is for a white person.

Finally, I would like to say that it continues to be disheartening to me that I am often the only person of colour in an academic/university setting - or at the very least, the only one who belongs to historically stigmatised ethnic group.

When I look at the current leadership team, I also find myself questioning whether the few non-Caucasian members represent genuine, inclusive leadership, or whether their presence is more about optics than impact.

In my humble opinion, promoting diversity should start with both staff and leaders, helping to position the University as an institution that truly supports students from all countries.

7.11 Other Indigenous communities

The identification of other Indigenous communities was not undertaken systematically, but rather relied upon the extent to which people identified themselves as such. As a result, the group is primarily comprised of Indigenous people of the Americas including American First Nations and Inuit, and groups such as the Sami people. That is groups who have experienced settler colonialism and displacement from their lands. While this is a limited scope we consider though that it is likely to be indicative of the broader experiences of a wider range of Indigenous persons at Australian Universities. The approach to identification of these communities in the survey, which was also reflected by a number of other participants, was articulated by one of the Māori participants as:

I just wish that when the question around Aboriginality/Torres Strait Islander is asked, that it would be asked if a person identifies as any other indigenous group. The thing is that while being Māori for example is connected to New Zealand, just because an indigenous person is not physically situated in their home country, does not mean they do not experience racism, or inequality. It is a very difficult and challenging and not something often discussed.

In total 95 respondents were identified as being part of these communities, 62 as students, 15 as academic staff members and 18 as non-academic staff, around a third were born in Australia, with this rising to over half for domestic students, Table 7.53. While three quarters of international students from these communities reported speaking a language other than English at home, for all other groups in these communities it was just under half, with Spanish being the main language

Given the relatively small size of the population, particular caution needs to be exercised in interpreting this analysis.

Table 7.53 Other Indigenous communities, respondents by type and whether Australian born

Type	Where born:		Total (a)
	Australia	Not Aust.	
	Persons		
Domestic student	25	21	47
International student (b)	–	15	15
Academic staff	4	11	15
Non-academic staff	3	14	18
Total	32	61	95

(a) Includes those who did not identify their country of birth

(b) Due to the small number of international students identified they have been included with domestic students.

Members of these communities although having a slightly lower level of agreement with statements relating to belonging, safety and respect at university, still strongly supported the propositions, with this being less marked with respect to belonging, Table 7.54.

Table 7.54 Other Indigenous communities, agreement with statements about belonging, safety and respect at university

Statement concerning	Extent of agreement with statement:					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Other Indigenous communities						
				– % –		
Belonging	16.0	41.5	19.2	18.1	5.3	100.0
Safety	32.3	43.0	16.1	6.5	2.2	100.0
Respect	23.7	52.7	11.8	9.7	2.2	100.0
Non-Other Indigenous communities						
Belonging	17.8	46.1	21.8	10.8	3.6	100.0
Safety	32.6	51.2	10.0	4.6	1.7	100.0
Respect	28.0	54.4	11.1	4.7	1.7	100.0

n = 94 (Other Indigenous)

7.11.1 Other Indigenous communities: incidence of racism

Members of these communities reported rates of direct racism at university well above the rates overall. The rate for students is 24.1 per cent, and for staff 25.8 per cent, Table 7.55. Again, we note the small size of this population. There is also a very large difference in the rates reported by men and women, both at university and in total. Women reported rates of direct racism at university of 18.5 per cent, and total racism rates of 46.3 per cent. Men in contrast reported rates of 34.6 per cent and 76.9 per cent. It is possible that this is related to the size of the population available for analysis and the distinct gender structure; excluding those who give other genders or did not state their gender, 69.0 per cent of the respondents for this community are female.

Table 7.55 Other Indigenous communities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism:					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Other Indigenous communities – % –						
Student	0.0	24.1	24.1	34.5	41.4	100.0
Staff	6.5	19.4	25.8	22.6	51.6	100.0
Female	3.7	14.8	18.5	27.8	53.7	100.0
Male	0.0	34.6	34.6	42.3	23.1	100.0
Total	2.2	22.0	24.2	29.7	46.2	100.0
Non Other Indigenous	4.0	10.9	14.9	20.0	65.1	100.0

n = 89 (Other Indigenous)

Turning to the nature and consequences of this experience, Table 7.56, shows a number of distinct patterns.

Students reported being stopped inappropriately by security 1.6 times that of other students who reported racism at university, are twice as likely to report receiving lower marks than they felt they deserved and reported racism from facilities staff at 2.5 times. In citing the cause of racism they cite language at double the rate of other students. Students

from these communities reported rates of being uncomfortable revealing their identity and preparing for racist discussions at one and half times the rate of students overall.

Table 7.56 Other Indigenous communities, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Students		Staff	
	Other Indigenous	Non-Other Indigenous	Other Indigenous	Non-Other Indigenous
– % –				
Forms of racism experienced				
Singled out/Excluded	50.0	49.9	75.0	41.6
Inappropriate comments etc	35.7	43.1	62.5	40.2
Could not express views	64.3	59.7	75.0	59.7
Told/made to feel unintelligent	64.3	35.8	87.5	36.4
Missed opportunity	35.7	34.7	25.0	42.3
Not Trusted	42.9	36.8	62.5	39.2
Stopped by uni security	14.3	9.0	12.5	3.9
Physical harassment	7.1	7.5	12.5	3.9
Verbal harassment	21.4	23.0	37.5	19.8
Online harassment	7.1	14.7	0.0	9.9
Worse mark (student)	57.1	27.0	–	–
Get things free (student)	7.1	21.0	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	62.5	25.3
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	37.5	23.9
Reason why targeted				
Language or accent	71.4	35.5	62.5	34.5
Cultural/racial/ethnic	85.7	71.1	62.5	71.4
Skin colour/physical	64.3	65.2	37.5	49.4
Religion	14.3	25.6	12.5	19.3
Middle East conflict	0.0	16.1	12.5	16.1
COVID	0.0	8.7	0.0	4.4
Other	0.0	6.4	25.0	10.0
International fee-paying student(a)	50.0	46.4	–	–
Who was engaged				
Teaching/Academic	50.0	46.6	62.5	47.6
Administrative staff	14.3	17.1	62.5	46.1
Facilities staff	21.4	8.6	0.0	6.0
Students	85.7	66.8	37.5	25.5
University leadership	0.0	15.1	37.5	46.0
Other	7.1	4.5	12.5	4.7
Impact of racism				
Limit university participation	64.3	62.3	100.0	55.9
Negative mental health	71.4	65.6	100.0	69.4
Negative studies (student)	64.3	44.4	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	50.0	47.6
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)				
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	26.2	16.5	34.4	14.6
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	12.7	12.8	22.2	11.2
Prepare for racist discussions	24.6	15.6	18.8	9.3
Avoid protests	9.1	11.1	24.1	6.3
Limit speech because of visa (a)	20.0	24.3	15.8	6.0

n = 22 (Other Indigenous, racism questions), 93 (Other Indigenous, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

While the number of staff in these communities is relatively small, and this may have an impact on the estimates, the data is stark. Staff from these communities reported being singled out or excluded at 1.8 times the rate of other staff reporting racism at university, are 2.4 times more likely to have been told, or made to feel unintelligent, and over three times as likely to have been inappropriately stopped by university security and faced

physical harassment. As with the students, they cite language as being one of the key issues, and facilities staff as being involved.

All of those that experienced racism reported that they had limited their participation at university and that the experience had had negative mental health impacts.

Staff from these communities reported double or higher rates of behavioural constraints across all of the items.

7.11.2 Other Indigenous communities : indirect racism

The incidence of combinations of direct and indirect racism experienced by those identifying as members of these communities is shown in Table 7.57. Only 22.8 per cent of students and 19.4 per cent of staff did not report experiencing one or the other of these two forms of racism, with students in particular reporting high, 14.0 per cent, rates of very frequent indirect racism for those not experiencing direct racism, in addition to the 24.6 per cent who reported direct racism.

Table 7.57 Other Indigenous communities, incidence of direct and indirect racism at university

Respondent type:	Direct racism at university	Indirect racism only				Total	
	(a)	(b)	Very Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely		Never (direct or indirect)
Other Indigenous Communities							
– % –							
Student	24.6	14.0	3.5	24.6	10.5	22.8	100.0
Staff	25.8	3.2	0.0	25.8	25.8	19.4	100.0
Non-Other Indigenous Communities							
Student	15.5	5.4	9.1	21.6	19.6	28.8	100.0
Staff	15.7	1.9	5.5	22.1	23.6	31.1	100.0

n = 88 (Other Indigenous)

(a) includes those who reported experiencing both direct and indirect racism

(b) the incidence of direct racism varies from that shown in the baseline tables as this population is restricted to those who answered both the question on direct and indirect racism in the survey.

7.11.3 Other Indigenous communities: experience of racism

The written responses by members of these communities identify a number of aspects of their experience, including the role of nationality as well as indigeneity.

I have been asked what my cultural background is. ... When explaining my dad is from Indigenous American Shawnee Tribe, and that it is my Culture, I got called a "red Skin" This really hurt, and has made it EXTREMELY hard to keep up with ALL of my online study

I am concerned about xenophobic remarks being made casually by colleagues, students, and support staff. I should not be expected to tolerate backhanded 'jokes' about my country of birth, and these comments make me feel uncomfortable being myself as I fear criticism.

Not only are students at [university] racist, they are incredibly xenophobic. Any accent other than Australian has been ridiculed or harassed on a daily basis in my experience. ... Even if the teaching staff are accepting, dealing with your fellow students acting like that is exhausting.

The only couple of times I have felt offended in [university] was by other Latin people with comments or jokes about drug trafficking for being Colombian, sadly, this is very common all around the world.

Another, focused not just on their own experience, but what he had seen and sought to do:

I am an educated black hetero man without a physical disability who speaks English as my first language so I come with privilege but also do not have the power of white people. I feel for those with less privilege than me such as women of colour, people of colour with a disability whose first language is not English. Intersectionality matters. I do my best to speak up for people with less power than me to empower them but it is very hard as people see this as 'trouble-making' and it harms my professional progress and mental health.

Some also related to what universities should do to address racism:

Fostering diversity and inclusion across all levels of staffing, particularly within senior leadership roles, is essential to cultivating an environment that truly reflects our institutional values. Such representation not only strengthens the University's commitment to equity but also serves as a visible affirmation to students, faculty, and staff that we actively uphold and embrace the principles of racial tolerance and inclusivity that we espouse

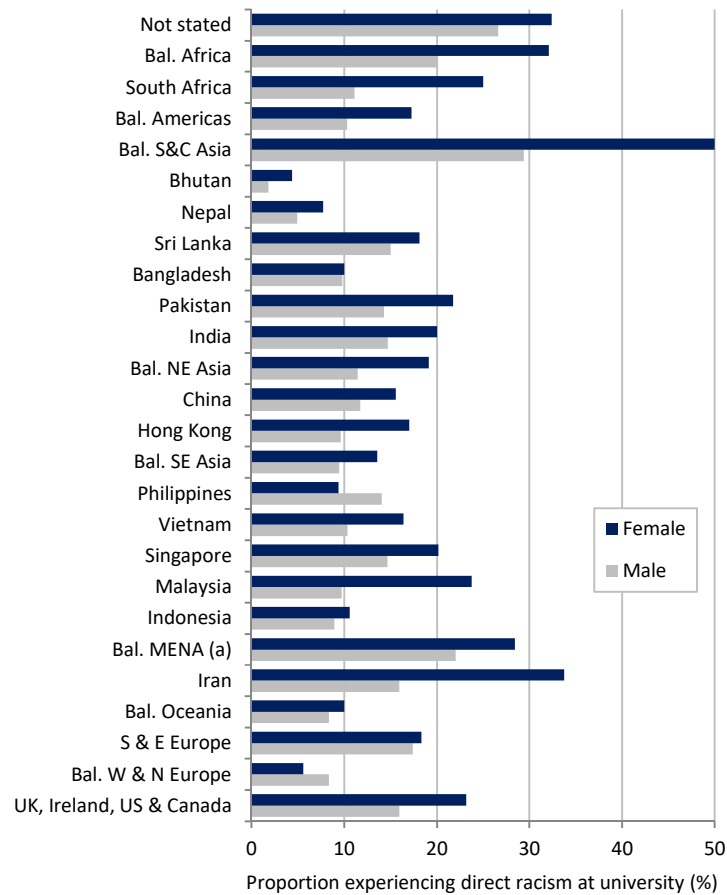
7.12 International students

Extensive data on the 14,154 international students has been presented in earlier chapters, along with the rich commentary in this chapter.

As detailed in earlier chapters, while some of the data is positive, such as the higher rates of agreement with the statements relating to a sense of belonging, safety, respect and support, other elements are not. Almost a third, 29.6 per cent, of international students reported having experienced direct interpersonal racism at university in the past two years.

As illustrated in Figure 7.2 and detailed in Table 7.58, the incidence of direct racism varies by the regions/countries of birth of these students and by gender. For students except those born in the Philippines, balance of Western and Northern Europe (a region which excludes the UK and Ireland), the rate of direct racism at university for women is higher than it is for men. In many cases the rate experienced by these female students is very much higher than that of males, this includes Iran, Malaysia, Bhutan and South Africa where the rate reported by women is more than double that of the male students.

Figure 7.2 International students rate of direct racism at university by country/region of birth and gender



In addition, 31.9 per cent of international students reported that while they had not experienced direct racism at university, they had in the community while living in Australia, leaving just 49.6 per cent unaffected. Indeed as indicated in Table 7.58, international students from the Balance of South and Central Asia, from the Balance of Africa, and those who did not state a country of birth, all had total rates of direct racism at university and in the community of over 60 per cent.

Table 7.58 International students rate of direct racism at university, and total at university and elsewhere, by country/region of birth and gender

Region/country of birth	Gender						Students (b)
	Female		Male		Total (a)		
	At university	Total	At university	Total	At university	Total	
	– % –						Persons
UK, Ireland, US & Canada	23.2	34.4	16.0	23.4	20.3	29.5	237
Bal. W & N Europe	5.6	21.5	8.3	20.8	6.6	20.9	182
S & E Europe	18.3	36.7	17.4	28.3	18.7	33.6	107
Bal. Oceania	10.0	43.3	8.3	19.4	9.4	34.4	96
Iran	33.8	55.0	16.0	37.7	25.8	47.7	151
Bal. MENA	28.4	50.0	22.0	53.0	25.4	52.2	209
Indonesia	10.6	37.1	8.9	29.4	9.9	33.9	504
Malaysia	23.8	59.5	9.8	39.0	18.7	52.2	316
Singapore	20.1	58.4	14.7	54.7	19.0	58.6	232
Vietnam	16.4	48.7	10.4	37.2	14.4	44.9	390
Philippines	9.4	36.9	14.1	39.1	10.6	37.3	217
Bal. SE Asia	13.6	49.0	9.5	43.2	11.2	45.5	178
Hong Kong	17.0	57.5	9.6	42.2	14.2	51.6	225
China	15.6	54.5	11.7	51.6	14.7	53.8	2,341
Bal. NE Asia	19.1	54.5	11.5	45.0	16.4	51.5	414
India	20.0	50.8	14.7	49.3	17.5	50.1	1,543
Pakistan	21.7	58.0	14.3	55.1	18.0	56.4	172
Bangladesh	10.0	42.4	9.8	43.4	9.9	44.0	443
Sri Lanka	18.1	53.5	15.0	50.0	17.5	52.7	378
Nepal	7.7	30.5	4.9	22.4	6.6	27.2	501
Bhutan	4.4	25.7	1.9	17.9	3.2	21.7	350
Bal. S&C Asia	50.0	77.1	29.4	29.4	44.6	64.6	65
Bal. Americas	17.3	56.8	10.3	36.1	15.1	49.0	239
South Africa	25.0	41.7	11.1	44.4	19.1	42.9	21
Bal. Africa	32.1	73.5	20.1	47.3	25.9	60.0	355
Not stated	32.4	69.3	26.6	64.4	30.1	63.0	2,950
Total	19.2	52.2	13.7	44.8	18.6	50.4	12,816

(a) Includes students who identified as other genders or did not respond to the gender question.

(b) Excludes 41 students who identified their country of birth as Australia, and those who answered not sure or did not want to say in response to racism question.

While 63.0 per cent reported that other students were participants in this, 47.6 per cent identified that the racism they faced also involved academic staff. Over half of those experiencing direct racism at university indicated that part of this experience was not being able to express their views freely, and an even higher proportion that they had been singled out or excluded.

The pattern of experience also varies by gender, Table 7.59. While male international students were less likely to report having experienced direct racism at university those that did, reported being inappropriately stopped by university security at almost double the rate of female international students who reported experiencing direct racism at university. Males reported online harassment at more than double the rate, and physical harassment at one and a half times the rate of women. There were also variations for those who identified their gender differently. This included a 30 per cent high incidence of inappropriate comments, and a 40 per cent higher involvement of facilities staff. They were also much more concerned about the risk to their visa if they spoke openly.

71.8 per cent of these students reported that the experience of racism has had a negative impact on their mental health, and a significant number reported frequent action to limit

their exposure to potential racism – or to prepare for it, including 21.0 per cent who said they frequently or very frequently mentally prepare for racist conversations at university.

Table 7.59 International students, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristics	Gender				Total
	Female	Male	Other	Not Stated	
Respondents	1,239	637	41	472	2,389
	– % –				
Direct racism at university	19.2	13.7	28.7	29.6	18.6
Forms of racism experienced					
Singled out/Excluded	55.9	52.1	56.1	46.6	53.2
Inappropriate comments etc	38.0	41.9	51.2	36.5	39.1
Could not express views	54.0	51.8	61.0	46.6	52.3
Told/made to feel unintelligent	39.1	37.1	29.3	32.5	37.3
Missed opportunity	39.0	43.2	39.0	38.8	40.1
Not Trusted	41.4	48.7	41.5	35.0	42.3
Stopped by uni security	7.8	15.1	9.8	11.3	10.5
Physical harassment	6.9	10.4	2.4	6.8	7.7
Verbal harassment	22.3	29.8	17.1	15.6	23.1
Online harassment	9.0	19.2	4.9	10.1	11.9
Worse mark (student)	32.0	30.9	31.7	31.2	31.6
Get things free (student)	11.0	12.2	14.6	10.6	11.3
Reason why targeted					
Language or accent	55.9	57.1	53.9	58.1	56.6
Cultural/racial/ethnic	71.0	73.5	74.4	67.5	71.2
Skin colour/physical	65.8	72.7	69.2	71.9	68.8
Religion	15.7	21.4	12.8	18.2	17.7
Middle East conflict	7.2	10.9	7.7	9.4	8.6
COVID	9.9	12.2	15.4	9.6	10.6
Other	3.5	2.8	5.1	2.5	3.2
International fee-paying student(a)	47.1	48.7	43.6	41.1	46.5
Who was engaged					
Teaching/Academic	49.1	44.7	41.5	48.3	47.6
Administrative staff	17.4	21.0	9.8	20.6	18.8
Facilities staff	8.1	14.0	14.6	12.2	10.4
Students	64.5	67.5	61.0	47.6	63.0
University leadership	10.5	13.3	14.6	15.2	12.0
Other	3.8	4.1	7.3	3.0	3.8
Impact of racism					
Limit university participation	64.8	66.7	68.3	57.1	64.3
Negative mental health	71.8	73.2	75.6	68.3	71.8
Negative studies (student)	43.7	52.6	46.3	49.4	47.1
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)					
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	13.1	15.8	23.5	19.4	14.9
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	11.1	12.6	15.3	18.4	12.5
Prepare for racist discussions	20.2	20.1	27.0	26.9	21.0
Avoid protests	15.3	15.8	17.6	21.4	16.2
Limit speech because of visa (a)	21.5	25.9	36.4	30.4	24.3

n = 2,314 (International students, racism questions), 13,826 (International students, behavioural constraints)

(a) Of those who reported this is relevant

The textual responses seen in this chapter show the range of exclusions they face, including their ability to effectively participate in forms of group work which are often elements of their courses. Particular problems have also been highlighted by those who have placements associated with their courses, and the racism they have experienced in these.

7.13 Australian domestic students with non-European ethnicities

Amongst the Australian born domestic students there are 4,564 respondents who reported that they identify with non-European cultures and ethnicities (excluding those who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people), either wholly or in association with also identifying as European. While these have been considered as part of the communities addressed earlier in this chapter, here they are addressed as a group, and aspects of their experiences considered.

7.13.1 Domestic students with non-European identities: demographics

The range of other communities these students identified with are detailed in Table 7.60. In total some 5,235 identities are listed, reflecting the fact that some students are members of multiple communities. The major communities are South East Asian, Chinese, South Asian and Middle East.

Table 7.60 Australian domestic students with non-European community identification, major ethnicities reported

Community	Number identifying
South East Asian	1,259
Chinese	1,104
South Asian	900
Middle Eastern	825
Americas	251
Pasifika	236
African	213
North East Asian	196
Māori	121
Central Asian	55
Afro-diasporic	38
Palestinian	37

While 29.4 per cent of these students said that they are perceived by others as being European, the majority, 70.6 per cent, reported that they were not.

The survey asked domestic students whether or not they experienced assumptions being made about their domestic student status. As detailed in Table 7.61, although only 9.7 per cent reported this was always the case, a further 12.4 per cent say it occurred often, and only a little over a third, 36.8 per cent, said it never occurred. The incidence of being assumed to be an international student was more frequent for female students and for those with other gender identities.

Table 7.61 Australian domestic students with non-European ethnicities, whether assumed to be international students

Respondent type	Feel people assume you are an international student					Total
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Never	
	– % –					
Female	11.0	13.6	21.6	20.0	33.9	100.0
Male	7.3	9.1	19.9	21.7	42.1	100.0
Other	10.3	19.4	13.7	20.0	36.6	100.0
Not stated	3.7	16.7	16.7	14.8	48.2	100.0
Total	9.7	12.4	20.6	20.5	36.8	100.0

n = 4,357

7.13.2 Domestic students with non-European identities: incidence of racism

Compared with other Australian domestic students, these students reported a rate of experiencing direct racism at university of 18.7 per cent, triple the rate of 6.2 per cent for Australian students who do not have these identities. As detailed in Table 7.62, the rate reported by female students in this population of 18.7 per cent is higher than that of males, 14.7 per cent, with the other gender categories having higher rates.

Table 7.62 Australian born domestic students with non-European ethnicities, experience of direct racism at university and elsewhere by gender

Respondent type	Where experienced direct racism:				None	Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only		
	– % –					
Female	3.0	15.7	18.7	40.8	40.5	100.0
Male	3.0	11.6	14.7	32.3	53.0	100.0
Other terms	2.4	18.1	20.5	39.8	39.8	100.0
Not stated	3.9	19.2	23.1	28.9	48.1	100.0
Total	3.0	14.5	17.5	37.8	44.7	100.0
Other Aust born	2.2	3.9	6.2	8.9	85.0	100.0

When this is considered on the basis of whether people perceive them as being European the rate for those who are, at least on some occasions perceived as European, falls slightly to 15.1 per cent and that for those who are not so perceived increases to 18.5 per cent, suggesting that issues relate to more than just their physical presentation.

In the analysis it was recognised that this data was also impacted by the conflict in the Middle East. Taking account of this, considering the population, excluding those who reported they are Jewish or Muslim, reduces the rate to 15.6 per cent of reported direct racism, but still double the rate of other Australian born students.

7.13.3 Domestic students with non-European identities: experience of racism

There were many detailed responses from these students, many covering issues already addressed. The perspectives below are focused on the assumptions these students face, the insights they provide about the racism that flow from these, and also for some, the experience of being “mixed race”:

I know at social events that people avoid me because I am Asian. I know people assume that I'm an international student because I am Asian despite being born and having lived in Australia my entire life. ... my tutor asked me at the end of the semester, after I had mentioned I was travelling overseas for the break, "oh, are you going home?" Non-white, especially Asian students, are always assumed to be international. It's upsetting and exhausting to always have to justify my nationality. ... I have had professors single-out Asian students by implying that they are more likely to engage in academic malpractice because of language barriers. ... I don't think people realise that racism is often a daily reality for some people. I travel to university from an area that is further away with significantly less cultural and racial diversity. Yet, I have faced more racism and exclusion on campus than in my home town.

I've never experienced any significant form of racism before starting my master's degree, as I'm mixed race and very European looking. I was however included in a group of international students and accused of breaching academic integrity by a lecturer and it was disturbing to me that the only students accused were all international, aside from myself and one other student who also has an ethnic name and surname.

I am half white Australian and half Chinese. People view me as 'too white for the Asian kids, and too Asian for the white kids'. I've found that white Australians tend to avoid sitting next to me, probably because they think I am an international student. I've found that international Asian students also avoid me, as they can tell I'm 'not like them'.

As an Asian born in Australia, I am often (extremely, extremely, often) assumed to be an International Student when I am not, leading to passive racism due to the stereotypes placed on me from my appearance alone. I experience this most commonly with students, and more commonly with students of the same or similar background to me. I am often (again, extremely often) asked the question "Where are you from?", which I find to be passively racist, because I am in fact "from" Australia, but feel the need to answer something else because that is what people expect from me and my appearance.

Often I find myself having awkward experiences when I inform people of my background as a Rom. There is a substantial lack of education and general distaste toward Roma possessed particularly by those from Europe and particularly within that the Balkans. Hearing words like Gypsy being normal and the standard while the actual word for my people tends to not be known has been disheartening.

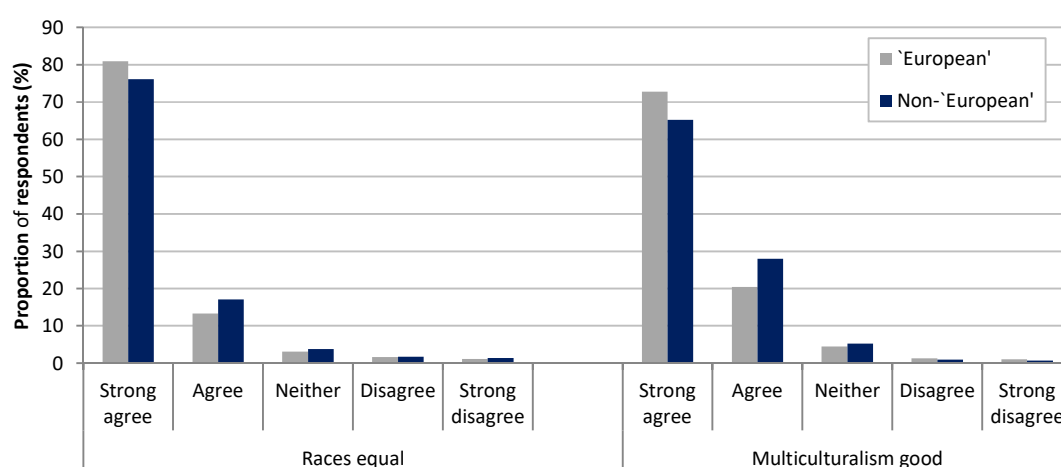
7.14 Attitudes to race

The survey included two questions drawn from the work of Nelson et al (2018) as being indicators of groups who were potentially more likely to have negative views towards other races, and were associated with what the researchers called white victimhood. These were the level of agreement with the statements "It is a good thing for a society to be made up of different cultures" and "All races of people ARE equal". However as discussed, earlier

this second statement in particular is open to interpretation as to whether it refers to intrinsically equal or outcome equal.

Responses to these questions are summarised in Figure 7.3. This shows a strong pattern of agreement with the two questions, although with a tendency for non-‘European’ respondents to state that they agree, rather than strongly agree. While, as detailed in footnote 49 some cultural response patterns may contribute to this, for the purpose of analysis here this is not seen as significant. Firstly, the concentration of extreme results is primarily only at the upper end of the distribution, and not at the lower, and for most purposes in this analysis the relative distribution between the strongly agree and agree categories is immaterial.

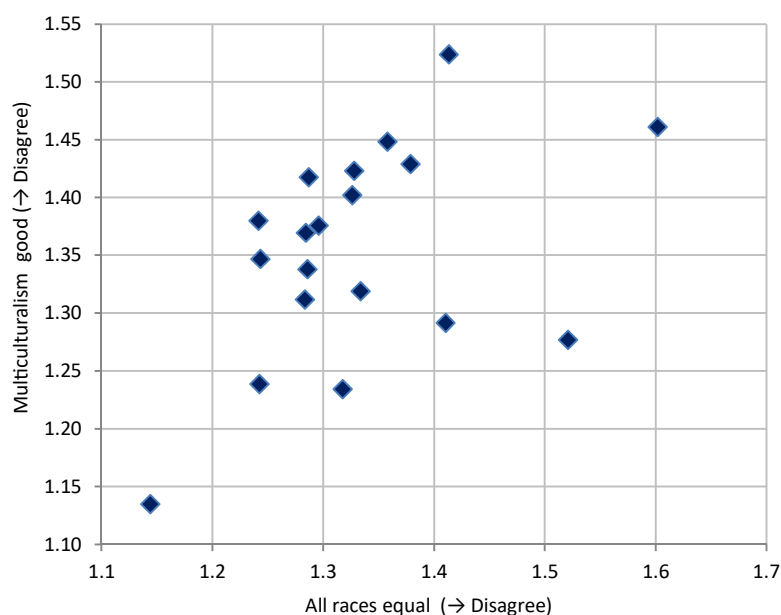
Figure 7.3 Responses to race equal and multiculturalism questions by broad ethnicity



The relationship of responses to these two questions, by main communities, is considered in Figure 7.4. In this figure the mean score of responses (coding strongly agree as 1 and strongly disagree as 5) is plotted. While there appears to be a relatively consistent result for most communities there are two exceptions: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents, and those from other Indigenous communities. In both these cases they tend to report higher levels of disagreement with the response that all races are equal relative to their views on that it is a good thing for society to be made up of different cultures. It is likely that this is a result of the extent to which these significantly disadvantaged communities which have experienced displacement and colonisation have, on the basis of their own experience, tended to respond to the question on equality based on the outcomes for their community, rather than the more theoretical conceptual basis.

Given this pattern, we have excluded these two communities from the more detailed community level analysis.

Figure 7.4 Relationship between responses on multiculturalism and race equality



7.14.1 Potentially negative racial attitudes

From the responses to these two questions a four-level scale was developed to indicate the extent to which a person may hold negative racial attitudes:

- Those who strongly agreed that all races are equal, and a multicultural society beneficial, were classified as 'Not' holding potentially negative views
- Those who reported at least agreeing with both propositions, were classified as 'Probably not' holding negative views
- Those who reported at least one neither agree nor disagree, and no disagrees, were classified as 'Possibly' holding negative views
- Those who disagreed with either of the statements were classified as 'Probably' holding potentially negative views.

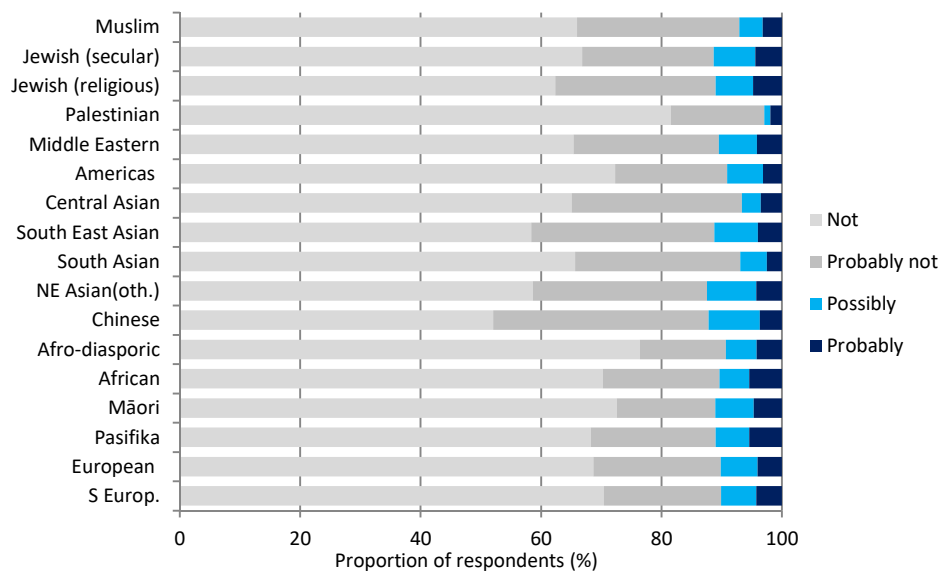
As the results are potentially also affected by social desirability bias, people saying what is socially acceptable, there is potentially a risk of the 'Not' and 'Probably not' groups being overstated.

In this and subsequent discussions it is emphasised that the classification is not a categorical statement of some people being racist, but rather an indicator of a potential to hold negative views, which is then used as an instrument to investigate outcomes.

The distribution of these, aggregated across all respondents in each community is shown in Figure 7.5. In interpreting these results we consider that the only significant conclusion which should be drawn is that within each community there is a small population who possibly or probably hold negative racial views, with this being consistently the case in each community. While there is a more marked variation between the first two categories, we consider that the differences between these groups is relatively minor, and may be impacted by factors such as aversion to extreme responses. While there are some

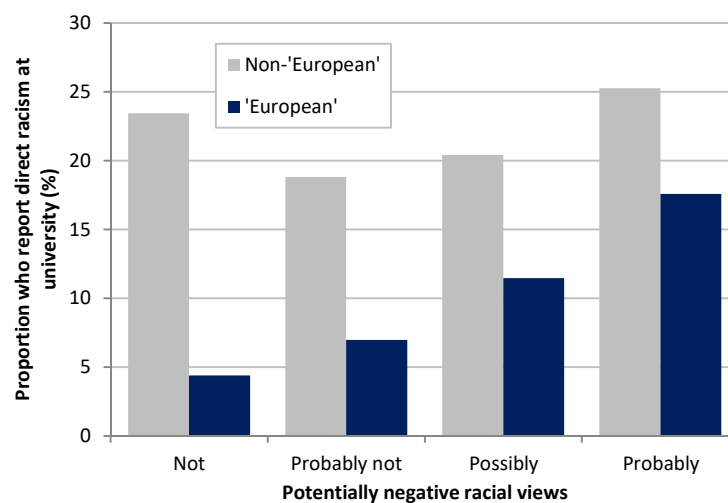
differences between the proportions in the two groups with potentially negative views, the relative size of these groups is not all that significant, and in the context of this study is not a major finding. Rather the essential issue is that all communities have a proportion of their members who may hold these views.

Figure 7.5 Potentially negative racial attitudes by community



One significant difference however between communities is the relationship between these attitudes and experiences of racism. As shown in Figure 7.6, while there is no consistent relationship for non-‘European’ respondents as a whole between their attitudes and the incidence of reported racism at university, this was not the case for those with ‘European’ backgrounds. This population shows a marked progression of incidence from 4.4 per cent for those who are assessed as ‘Not’ to 17.6 per cent for those who are identified as ‘Probably’.

Figure 7.6 Rates of direct racism at university by potentially negative racial attitudes by broad ethnicity



This is considered further in the following section.

7.15 Australian students and staff with ‘European’ backgrounds

As detailed in Chapter 2, both staff and students from ‘European’ and non-‘European’ backgrounds who had experienced racism reported that the most frequent forms of racism and racial discrimination they observed was from people with European backgrounds towards other groups. A proportion also reported that they had seen it directed towards people of European heritage, although this was cited more frequently by those with ‘European’ backgrounds. Focusing on the group of non-‘European’ staff and students, the rate of observing or experiencing this type of racism was reported as being between 13.0 per cent by international students, 13.4 per cent by academic staff and 21.2 per cent by domestic students. The differential in the level reported by ‘Europeans’ and non-‘Europeans’ could either be as a result of observation – ie the ‘European’ group was more likely to observe racism that was directed at them, or perception – what ‘Europeans’ considered to be racism was not judged by others to be.

While racism is often theorised in structural terms as between a dominant group, usually identified as white, and negatively racialised groups, and the concept of ‘reverse racism’ is dismissed, the evidence from this survey suggests, notwithstanding this, there is a need to consider these observations, along with the actual responses from staff and students to the question as to whether they had “personally experienced racism or racial discrimination”.⁷⁰

There are a number of reasons for this:

- Racially based abuse, even against the dominant group within society, can still have negative impacts on those subject to the abuse. It can also be corrosive to social cohesion, and a failure to recognise the phenomenon, even if not classified as being racism, can result in a rejection of true anti-racism measures.
- Within the university environment where there are frequently high proportions of non-European students, it is possible for those with a European background to be a minority, and be excluded.
- In the context of national and international conflicts, what is perceived and reported as racism, can be intertwined with these, along with elements of nationalism and politics.

Equally, and consistent with the theoretic approach of racialisation, it can be considered that what is perceived and reported as racism is in fact a loss of privileged position.⁷¹

7.15.1 Racial attitudes

As has been seen for all communities, only a relatively small proportion of respondents fall into the ‘possibly’ and ‘probably’ categories. This is detailed further for ‘European’ respondents, Table 7.63, for domestic students and staff by type. A notable feature is the much higher concentration of potentially negative attitudes amongst students. Indeed, in

⁷⁰ In addition, a number of respondents raised issues of historical (or some would argue still current) divisions within what may be seen as the ‘dominant’ European group. The most frequently cited in responses were Irish people who referred to oppression and colonisation by the English.

⁷¹ As has been detailed in chapter 1, as a report on the survey we have not sought to interrogate individuals’ reports of having “personally experienced racism or racial discrimination” to determine their validity, or to apply a particular conceptual framing, but rather have focused on reporting their responses to the survey.

the two staff classifications there are no respondents in the ‘probably’ classification at all, notwithstanding some 15,000 responses. The data showed marked effects by gender, and the final panel of the table shows the results for male respondents only, indicating that of the male student population some 11.2 per cent were classified as probably, holding potentially negative views and a further 11.3 per cent possibly doing so. While more negative views were also reported by both academic and non-academic male staff, the extent of this is much less marked.

Table 7.63 ‘European’ domestic students and staff respondents, by racial attitudes, respondents by type

Respondent type	Potentially negative racial attitudes:				Total
	Not	Probably not	Possibly	Probably	
Respondents (persons)					
Domestic students	10,710	3,834	1,247	1,220	17,011
Academic staff	4,369	917	279	0	5,565
Non-academic staff	7,287	2,146	424	0	9,857
Total	22,366	6,897	1,950	1,220	32,433
Distribution of respondents (%)					
Domestic students	63.0	22.5	7.3	7.2	100.0
Academic staff	78.5	16.5	5.0	0.0	100.0
Non-academic staff	73.9	21.8	4.3	0.0	100.0
Total	69.0	21.3	6.0	3.8	100.0
Distribution of male respondents (%)					
Domestic students	51.0	26.5	11.3	11.2	100.0
Academic staff	72.0	20.2	7.8	0.0	100.0
Non-academic staff	67.3	26.0	6.7	0.0	100.0
Total	59.4	25.1	9.4	6.1	100.0

The relationship between holding these views and perception of people’s experience at university with regard to indirect racism is shown in Table 7.64. This shows a usually monotonic pattern of increasing reporting of these experiences when ranked by the scale of potentially negative racial attitudes. The magnitude of the differences are very marked. For example, while just 0.8 per cent of those who are assessed as not holding potentially negative views reported hearing people frequently denigrate their culture in a racist way such denigration is reported 13.7 times more often by those who are estimated to probably hold such views.

Particularly marked are the responses to the final statement of having your identity group blamed for adverse outcomes for all. Here 24.8 per cent of the probable group reported this as occurring frequently.

At the same time a majority of respondents, even in this group, reported rarely or never being subject to this form of indirect racism, with 40 per cent or more responding to each question that they had never faced this particular form.

Again, it is emphasised that the measure is a broad indicator and not a definitive categorisation of people, so caution is required in interpreting the data other than it provides some indication that those potentially holding negative views are more likely to

report incidents of indirect racism, potentially consistent with a concept of a white backlash⁷², in response to the loss, or potential loss, of white privilege.

Table 7.64 ‘European’ domestic students and staff respondents, by racial attitudes, indirect racism

Potentially negative racial attitudes:	Even if not directed at you how frequently have you seen or heard people:					Total
	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
Using racist terms or making racist jokes and comments about the racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group with which you identify						
			- % -			
Not	1.1	3.6	16.3	24.7	54.3	100.0
Probably not	1.3	4.3	16.3	27.5	50.6	100.0
Possibly	2.5	6.0	19.4	21.5	50.7	100.0
Probably	7.1	11.2	19.8	17.5	44.3	100.0
Denigrating your culture in a racist way						
Not	0.8	1.8	8.2	18.5	70.8	100.0
Probably not	1.5	3.2	10.6	21.3	63.4	100.0
Possibly	3.3	6.6	15.4	18.5	56.3	100.0
Probably	10.4	11.6	16.0	15.1	47.0	100.0
Using negative stereotypes about your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group						
Not	1.3	3.3	13.8	22.2	59.3	100.0
Probably not	1.8	5.0	16.1	24.7	52.4	100.0
Possibly	3.7	7.7	17.5	23.0	48.2	100.0
Probably	11.3	12.7	19.4	16.0	40.7	100.0
Trivialising the negative experiences of people of your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group						
Not	1.5	3.2	11.0	18.8	65.5	100.0
Probably not	1.5	3.2	10.6	21.3	63.4	100.0
Possibly	5.1	6.9	15.3	19.9	52.8	100.0
Probably	13.4	12.9	15.1	14.0	44.7	100.0
Blaming your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group for some adverse outcome for others						
Not	2.7	4.5	13.4	16.6	62.9	100.0
Probably not	5.3	6.4	14.5	19.2	54.5	100.0
Possibly	11.2	9.8	15.7	13.6	49.8	100.0
Probably	24.8	12.2	12.3	10.0	40.7	100.0

n = 30,398

The characteristics of these populations are considered further in the next two tables, firstly in looking at the university groupings, and secondly for students by the field of study.

By the university groupings some marked differences emerge, Table 7.65, in particular for students, where the proportion who possibly or probably hold negative views ranges from 12.9 per cent at the Go8 universities to 16.5 per cent at the RUN universities. The proportion of academic staff holding potentially negative views ranges from 3.6 per cent at the ATN universities to 6.0 per cent at the RUN universities, and non-academic staff

⁷² For a more detailed discussion of the concept see Hewitt (2005). Nelson et al (2018) discuss this in the context of responses to a 2014 Australian survey of bystander experiences of racism which recorded a level of incidence of ‘anti-white ‘racism’’. They report that different analytical approaches: “reveal divergence in how reports of anti-white ‘racism’ might be understood and the tensions between different ways of approaching the analytical problem of anti-white ‘racism’” (p 355) before though concluding that these reports indicated: “there is a need to address and ameliorate the degraded socialities described by participants in our study.” (p 356).

More generally within Australia there has been a long-term recognition of the manifestation of a ‘white backlash’ against Aboriginal Australians (Perkins 1973, Goot and Rowse 1991).

reported rates from 4.0 per cent at the ATN and IRU universities to 5.9 per cent at the RUN universities.

Table 7.65 ‘European’ domestic students, and staff respondents, by racial attitudes, and university grouping

University grouping	Potentially negative racial attitudes:				Total
	Not	Probably not	Possibly	Probably	
Student – % –					
ATN	63.0	23.2	7.1	6.7	100.0
Go8	66.7	20.4	6.2	6.7	100.0
IRU	62.0	23.1	7.3	7.7	100.0
Other	62.9	22.0	7.8	7.3	100.0
RUN	58.2	25.3	8.6	7.9	100.0
Total	63.0	22.5	7.3	7.2	100.0
Academic staff					
ATN	80.4	15.9	3.6	0.0	100.0
Go8	79.5	15.2	5.3	0.0	100.0
IRU	76.2	19.1	4.7	0.0	100.0
Other	76.3	18.1	5.6	0.0	100.0
RUN	79.0	15.1	6.0	0.0	100.0
Total	78.5	16.5	5.0	0.0	100.0
Non-academic staff					
ATN	76.3	19.7	4.0	0.0	100.0
Go8	75.5	20.4	4.1	0.0	100.0
IRU	70.9	25.1	4.0	0.0	100.0
Other	73.8	21.9	4.3	0.0	100.0
RUN	69.2	25.0	5.9	0.0	100.0
Total	73.9	21.8	4.3	0.0	100.0

n = 32,443

The student results are analysed further in Table 7.66 by field of study. This again points to considerable diversity, with the proportion classified as ‘probable’ ranging from 11.3 per cent in information technology to just 4.3 per cent in the creative arts. High rates are also seen in engineering and related, management and commerce, and architecture and building.

Table 7.66 ‘European’ domestic students, by racial attitudes, and field of study

Field of study	Potentially negative racial attitudes:				Total
	Not	Probably not	Possibly	Probably	
– % –					
Nat & Phys Science	64.7	21.4	7.0	6.9	100.0
Information Tech	55.5	23.9	9.3	11.3	100.0
Engineer & related	50.2	29.2	10.7	10.0	100.0
Arch & Building	56.2	25.5	10.0	8.4	100.0
Agricult & Environ	65.8	19.7	8.1	6.4	100.0
Health	63.3	23.8	7.2	5.7	100.0
Education	62.4	24.0	7.9	5.7	100.0
Manage & Commerce	53.6	28.5	9.0	8.9	100.0
Society & Culture	68.2	19.0	5.7	7.1	100.0
Creative Arts	73.2	18.3	4.2	4.3	100.0
Other & NS	54.5	21.7	11.0	12.8	100.0

n = 17,011

7.15.2 Attitudes and experience of direct racism at university

As detailed in section 7.14.1, ‘European’ respondents who reported potentially negative racial attitudes were much more likely to report having experienced racism at university. As illustrated in Table 7.67, across both staff and students, and across male and female respondents, there is a clear relationship between the potentially negative racial attitudes as measured, and the reported rates of racism. For students those classified as ‘not’ having such attitudes the reported rate of racism is just 3.7 per cent. This increases to 7.1 per cent for those classified as ‘probably not’, 11.8 per cent for those classified as ‘possibly’ to reach 17.8 per cent for the group classified as ‘probably’. For staff the base rate of those classified as ‘not’ is higher at 4.9 per cent and the magnitude of the increase to those who are ‘possibly’ and have a rate of 10.7 per cent, is smaller.

A much lower gradient is also seen for women, whilst the rate of reported racism by males in the ‘probably’ category is 23.5 per cent, that for women is 9.7 per cent.

Table 7.67 ‘European’ domestic students, and staff respondents, by racial attitudes, experience of direct racial discrimination, by type, and main genders

Potentially negative racial attitudes:	Where experienced direct racism					Total
	University only	University and other	Total university	Other only	None	
Domestic Students						
			– % –			
Not	1.4	2.3	3.7	7.5	88.8	100.0
Probably not	2.5	4.7	7.1	11.1	81.7	100.0
Possibly	4.1	7.7	11.8	14.4	73.8	100.0
Probably	5.4	12.1	17.5	16.7	65.9	100.0
Staff						
Not	2.3	2.6	4.9	5.3	89.8	100.0
Probably not	3.3	3.4	6.7	6.1	87.2	100.0
Possibly	5.0	5.6	10.7	8.4	80.9	100.0
Probably	–	–	–	–	–	–
Female						
Not	1.6	2.0	3.6	5.7	90.7	100.0
Probably not	2.7	3.0	5.6	8.4	86.0	100.0
Possibly	3.7	5.2	8.9	11.6	79.5	100.0
Probably	3.7	5.9	9.7	13.2	77.2	100.0
Male						
Not	2.5	3.3	5.7	8.3	86.0	100.0
Probably not	2.9	5.7	8.6	9.6	81.8	100.0
Possibly	4.9	7.5	12.4	13.0	74.7	100.0
Probably	6.7	16.7	23.5	20.0	56.5	100.0

n = 31,303, 30,013 for Female/Male gender

Table 7.68 presents, as with earlier sections, some of the key characteristics of the racism reported by those in each of the classifications. There are very few consistent patterns in the data of increasing magnitude of identification of particular items across the categories for both staff and students. While both staff and students increasingly cite that they could not express their views, the magnitude of this, given the high base, is relatively small, and while students reported an increasing level of missing out on opportunities, the staff pattern is inconsistent.

Table 7.68 'European' domestic student, and staff respondents, by racial attitudes, persons who experienced direct racism at university, types, factors, participants and whole population behavioural constraints

Form and characteristic	Domestic student				Staff			
	Potentially negative racial attitudes:				Potentially negative racial attitudes:			
	Not	Probably	Possibly	Probably	Not	Probably	Possibly	Probably
	not	not			not			
				– % –				
Direct racism at university	3.7	7.1	11.8	17.5	4.9	6.7	10.7	–
Forms of racism experienced								
Singled out/Excluded	43.9	44.1	47.1	44.6	31.4	31.5	30.6	–
Inappropriate comments etc	39.4	34.9	37.0	35.3	36.3	38.1	41.7	–
Could not express views	65.8	70.9	76.1	78.4	56.6	64.0	75.0	–
Told/made to feel unintelligent	31.9	35.3	22.5	31.9	27.9	22.3	20.8	–
Missed opportunity	23.8	33.3	36.2	47.6	25.7	30.0	29.2	–
Not Trusted	30.0	29.5	21.7	25.5	29.4	28.4	26.4	–
Stopped by uni security	3.1	2.3	4.4	5.4	0.7	1.0	1.4	–
Physical harassment	6.0	4.2	2.2	9.8	2.6	5.1	1.4	–
Verbal harassment	22.7	21.1	15.9	27.9	20.3	20.3	12.5	–
Online harassment	15.1	12.6	13.0	25.0	9.1	7.1	6.9	–
Worse mark (student)	18.5	17.2	17.4	23.5	–	–	–	–
Get things free (student)	30.0	39.1	34.8	46.1	–	–	–	–
Negative assessments (staff)	–	–	–	–	18.1	18.8	18.1	–
Denied promotion (staff)	–	–	–	–	13.1	18.8	20.8	–
Reason why targeted								
Language or accent	17.6	16.2	14.8	15.8	25.3	24.1	17.9	–
Cultural/racial/ethnic	56.6	59.7	68.2	67.4	54.6	54.0	62.7	–
Skin colour/physical	47.6	60.9	65.2	75.5	25.2	34.8	43.3	–
Religion	27.6	33.6	27.4	41.8	18.3	26.2	16.4	–
Middle East conflict	17.6	13.8	14.8	15.8	19.5	15.0	10.5	–
COVID	1.4	3.2	6.7	7.1	2.4	2.7	9.0	–
Other	15.0	9.9	8.9	9.2	15.3	17.7	17.9	–
Who was engaged								
Teaching/Academic	47.3	44.1	52.9	50.5	48.7	44.7	50.0	–
Administrative staff	12.8	17.6	15.9	28.4	40.3	37.6	50.0	–
Facilities staff	5.0	5.4	5.8	10.3	4.9	3.1	6.9	–
Students	69.7	70.1	66.7	67.7	28.3	32.5	23.6	–
University leadership	18.5	19.9	32.6	33.8	38.3	32.5	38.9	–
Other	3.9	5.8	6.5	3.4	5.8	5.1	6.9	–
Impact of racism								
Limit university participation	59.5	59.4	62.3	64.7	47.6	52.3	55.6	–
Negative mental health	55.4	51.3	52.2	48.0	59.1	57.4	45.8	–
Negative studies (student)	38.9	35.6	41.3	38.2	–	–	–	–
Negative career (staff)	–	–	–	–	34.3	33.0	38.9	–
All respondents: Behavioural constraints (% who always or often)								
Uncomfortable disclosing identity	12.3	14.5	17.6	23.0	10.6	11.2	16.0	–
Uncomfortable wearing identifying items	7.5	8.7	10.4	14.0	6.4	7.1	8.4	–
Prepare for racist discussions	5.6	6.2	10.3	14.6	4.1	3.6	6.4	–
Avoid protests	3.1	6.2	8.5	15.6	1.8	3.0	4.4	–

n = 1,803 (Racism experience questions), 29,550 (All respondent behavioural)

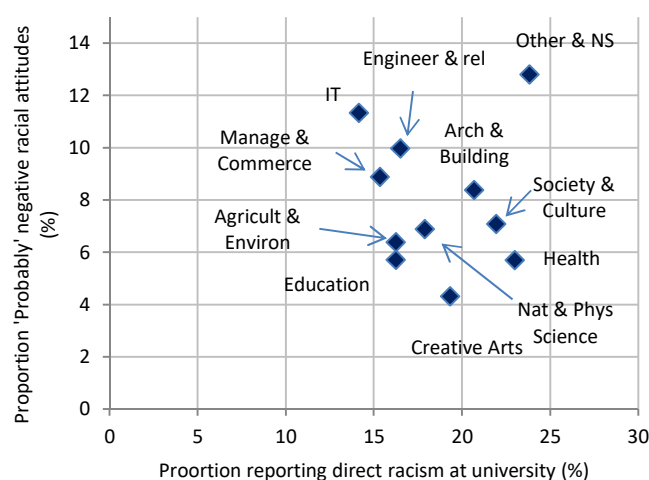
Amongst students as well as the frequent citing of culture and skin colour, religion is cited at rates of between 27.6 per cent and 41.8 per cent. In textual responses this is mainly associated with claims that Christians are being discriminated against, or other religions are being favoured. Amongst the students there is a tendency for high citing of administrative and facilities staff, along with university leadership as participants, but little variation for academic staff and students. Both students and staff reported lower rates of negative mental health consequences as they move along the scale of possible negative racial attitudes. Amongst students, while 55.4 per cent of those classified as 'not'

reported adverse mental health effects from an experience of racism, this falls to 48.0 per cent for those classified as ‘probable’. For staff the rates for adverse mental health outcomes from racism are 59.1 per cent for those classified as ‘not’ holding potentially negative racial attitudes, and 45.8 for those classified as ‘possibly’.

Moving along the scale is also associated with increasing behavioural constraints for the population as a whole, in particular in the avoidance of demonstrations.

At the same time these negative attitudes do not appear to be the key issue in the experience of racism by others. Figure 7.7 presents a plot which combines the data from Table 7.66 on the distribution of attitudes by field of study with data on the incidence of direct racism at university for students from non-‘European’ backgrounds at university⁷³ by field of study. There is no positive, and indeed a potentially negative, relationship between the two.

Figure 7.7 Relationship between domestic ‘European’ students potentially negative racial attitudes and incidence of racism at university for Non-‘European’ students, by field of study



7.15.3 Implications and the experience of racism

Do these results simply suggest that the racism reported in the survey by ‘European’ Australians and other Europeans can be dismissed? The data reported on here, while identifying a small subgroup that could be indicative of ‘white backlash’ suggests not.

Firstly, as discussed earlier, respondents from all communities, and across all groups of staff and students, report having seen acts of racism against those of European backgrounds, albeit at rates much lower than they are perpetrated. Secondly this data suggests that in absolute terms most of the reporting of racism by ‘European’ staff and students is by people who do not appear to have potentially negative racial attitudes. Specifically, over half, 52.0 per cent, of the people reporting racism are in the group identified as ‘not’ and 77.1 per cent are in the first two categories. As such the existence of apparently high rates of racism reported by the small minority with potentially negative

⁷³ This population has been selected to avoid any endogeneity, given the association between the measure of potential negative racial attitudes and self-reported levels of racism.

racial attitudes, should not detract from the fact that there are reported experiences of racism by persons in all of the categories.

As two of the many respondents who raised this issue noted:

I know there is not such a thing as reverse racism, but I have experienced disrespect from male students from [named country]. This is a related to gender but it is also culture related. And yes, it is hurtful and upsetting.

Furthermore, I have witnessed and been a target of racism against people who look European. The repeated use of rhetoric such as "all white people are racist" by some students from Asian, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, and African backgrounds is both disappointing and hurtful. As someone who is biracial, it is especially concerning to see this type of broad, racist generalization go unchallenged by both students and staff.

7.15.4 Australians and identity

While the data does not support the concept of negative racial attitudes within the Australian population as being a critical factor in identity, the survey highlighted three important issues which were raised by many of the respondents. The first is the identity of Australians who have settled or whose forebears settled in Australia, from European backgrounds. The second is how they have responded to anti-racism messages, and the third is their response to recognition of Indigenous Australians. None of these are simple, and are at times related, but from the material reviewed from the survey, they are all issues which need to at least be reported, understood, and considered in policy responses by universities.

While it may be convenient to simply dismiss these issues as being to do with white privilege, we do not consider that this is a sufficient response. Very clearly from the extensive data presented in this report white privilege does exist, and repeatedly the findings presented emphasise the challenges of a range of communities, whether defined by race, culture or religion, in being treated equitably. However, the issues go beyond this.

The first concerns identity. This was highlighted in the responses to the question used to broadly identify how people were perceived by others. The question asked: "Regardless of whether you were born in Australia or another country, we are interested in what other people at [University] think your race, ethnicity or cultural background is", and gave a range of responses including "European (such as Australian of European heritage, English, Italian, Afrikaner)", essentially seeking the 'external' dimension of identity as detailed in Figure 1.1.

The question had an additional option for those who felt none of the 10 categories provided a suitable descriptor. The write-in box received many responses, many of which simply said Australian, and others which were more extensive:

Australian - while of European descent, that migration was over 200 years ago so I do not see myself as European in any way

I am Australian - Stop adding of European heritage - I am Australian

Australian, not European (quite literally different continents)

I'm not European I'm Australian

I am about as Australian as a white person can be

I am seen as Australian. Make of that what you will! I am not seen as European.

Australian, I recognise that my family has been in Australia for a short time in comparison to First Nations people however, I don't identify with my English / Scottish heritage. That has not been my family for 200 years.

Originally Southeast Asian, but prefer to call myself Australian

While some of these responses could be interpreted from the perspective that the identity they see of 'Australian' is being white, it is clear from others that this is not the case. More generally the responses can be seen as reporting Internal cultural perspective highlighted in the matrix.

At the same time many reported being confronted in areas of universities' pedagogy, and more broadly, by views which placed this white Australian identity solely in the perspective of colonial settler roots:

As a 'white' Australian, I am quite tired of being blamed I have been in seminars where, due to being white, I have been called a 'colonist' and have been told that I am responsible for the actions of my ancestors. I can see that there is inequality and I'm happy to be an ally, but I don't want to be blamed for things I didn't do or accused of racist attitudes.

I have seen and felt how our history is portrayed and discriminated against whilst I have been attending university, although the history is not great and questionable without a doubt, does not mean our values do not matter and we are all to blame,

My perspectives and factual statements are invalidated through comparisons to colonisation—acts by distant historical figures I have no connection to. Blanket judgment erases my sense of individuality, making me feel alienated and hesitant to engage in conversations for fear of prejudgment as "part of the problem."

I did a unit on Australian history. It made me feel discriminated against because I am white. If one did not know anything about Australian history ... you would be left with the impression that the only good thing achieved since colonisation ... is that women could stand for elected office when we got the vote and that was early compared to other nations.

should be proud of its Australian culture, not trying to shame it because of the past. It's not a healthy lifestyle if people are shaming white Australians for something they had nothing to do with. All culture should be seen and acknowledged

Two of the comments addressed the issue of pedagogy directly:

Critical theories sometimes dismiss or caricature mainstream Australian culture or traditions as inherently oppressive, while simultaneously celebrating every other heritage without criticism. This selective respect undermines inclusivity rather than advancing it.

Lecturers should remember to take care when discussing issues relating to Whiteness theory and white privilege. Whilst critical discussion around these issues and theories is an important part of many Humanities units, the tone should always be professional and respectful. On a few occasions, I have witnessed lecturers slipping into more informal and aggressive language during their lectures which risks alienating students from European/White Australian backgrounds.

An important area where this does impact is with respect to the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Here it can be considered that the essential message of individuals of today not being responsible for colonisation and dispossession, but all Australians having a responsibility to acknowledge this, and address the consequences of it, is lost in many teachings and potentially generates the alienation spoken of above. When however, teaching and other messaging is done well it can be powerful and help address racism:

Since completing the course 'Diversity and Difference' within my Bachelor's degree, I have become increasingly aware of my own bias and behaviour towards other races. I came to recognise that I was a racist person. Education has played a crucial role in helping me to recognise racism in both myself and others.

It has been incredibly confronting and sobering to learn of the impact of racism in this country as well as my "white privilege" as a non-Indigenous Australian. I feel ashamed of our history and deeply saddened by the reality that Australia's First Peoples have had to and still endure as a result of discrimination.

7.15.5 Backlash

These considerations do not however preclude, as discussed above, a 'white backlash'. Indeed, there were a not insignificant number of responses which can be viewed as representing lost privilege, or indeed in some cases blatant racist attitudes:

Europeans, Christians and men are treated like shit while any other identity group is touted as pinnacles of virtue and perpetual victims. Discrimination against these groups is festering throughout Australia, Centrelink payments specifically for Aboriginals being almost double what another white skinned Australian Native would revive based solely on the color of their skin (definition of racism), classes forced upon education students dedicated to Aboriginal culture (???) and Sex education classes that cover nonsense such as switching genders, glorifying promiscuity and sodomy

I am tired of the racism towards people who look like me, "white" people. I hear from people who speak English that we have no culture and been told that we enslaved "black" people when in history they started that trade with their

own people and the Irish were slaves in the 1600 for thousands of years. I'm sick of people acting like their culture/race is better ... we all have amazing backgrounds and all amazing different people. I feel constantly that I can't say anything or my life is in danger as, out of [university], people will get upset and physical with you. It is hard to deal with the racism in today's world that attacks my culture and ethnicity and I'm not even allowed to speak up.

Leftist ideologies have lead the University to PRIORITISE people of every ethnicity and culture EXCEPT for European/ Caucasian.

I have never felt like a foreigner in my own country until coming to this university. It is beyond a joke the amount of special treatment every single 'culture' gets except for white Australians. You preach about fairness but then give more opportunities to particular group based on one thing... THEIR RACE! I was born in Australia, both my parents, and their parents were ALL born in Australia, yet I continued to be mocked at the beginning of almost every lecture, tutorial, announcement etc, by being welcomed, TO MY OWN COUNTRY.

7.15.6 Welcome to, and Acknowledgement of, Country

While this was not a specific subject in the survey it was commented upon extensively in the text responses from participants. From non-Indigenous respondents, as well as the occasional backlash as illustrated above, many argued that it was overdone, and had become tokenistic and formulaic:

Some presentations have multiple welcome to country, it is like confetti spray all over to the point that we switch off and become annoyed

I also find that it is not appropriate to have a welcome to country every single lecture or classroom environment

I feel that the Welcome to Country has, in many contexts, become more of a procedural formality than a genuine act of acknowledgement. The repetitive and formulaic way it is often delivered at the beginning of lectures, tutorials, meetings, and seminars can make it seem tokenistic. Instead of fostering meaningful respect, this monotony risks undermining the original intent and may even come across as less respectful than intended.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents presented a mix of views. One proposed, as a response to the question about what universities should do to address racism, that it should be included in all tutorials because of the importance of acknowledging Country:

Include welcome to country in tutorials so more people can be made aware of the past and make it so it doesn't have to be just at Formal Events. We should be acknowledging the land no matter the date, event or time (within reason)

Another expressed concern about the way in which Welcome to Country was not understood, and that this had led to adverse responses:

I don't like hearing about why some people think that Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country is pointless and tokenistic. I have taken to explaining greetings in the world area. For example, you wouldn't expect a world leader to not be received with some ceremony. It's respectful to acknowledge someone visiting your 'home'.

Others felt that the way it was being done was frequently formulaic and tokenistic, with others querying the frequency of its use:

I think one issue I see is that the acknowledgement of country is done quite tokenistically. I don't think the staff really understand or recognise the cultural importance of it and just do it to tick it off the list

Aboriginal people are getting tired of the attempts to acknowledge them with words rather than actions.

I think the University is heavily focused on things like Welcome to Country and waving the Aboriginal flag which I believe to superficial solutions

As an aboriginal man, I hate having to see a welcome to country before every single class. I can only imagine things such as that make those not of the same background hate such procedures as well.

Our welcome to country for example. Why do we have to go overboard with it?

Also, noted by a number of the respondents, the responses point to a considerable lack of clarity around the differences between a “Welcome to Country” and an “Acknowledgement of Country”. This lack of clarity in itself suggests that the fundamental messages are not being well transmitted.

7.16 Summary

This chapter initially considers the experience of 12 communities, and aspects of attitudes, and then some aspects of the experience of ‘European’ Australians, as revealed in the survey.

While there was considerable variation across communities, most reported rates of racism above the average found in the survey. At the same time, there was considerable variation in the nature of their experiences.

Conflict in the Middle East was cited as a key factor in the particularly high rates of racism at university identified by religious Jewish students and staff, and members of the Palestinian community, while also having an impact on members of Muslim communities, those identifying as secular Jews, and Middle Eastern communities. The extensive comments from these communities illustrated a diverse set of experiences and attitudes.

This can be seen as one manifestation of the way in which racism at university can have external roots, including conflict and national chauvinism which places one nation, or national culture, above another. Many respondents also identified a range of microaggressions they experienced, including assumptions around language, with some expressing the view that this was not always a result of any deliberate action, but rather

ignorance of other cultures, or understanding of the harmful effects of the use of stereotype based assumptions.

High rates were also identified by other communities including those from Africa and Afro-diasporic communities. In some cases, for example, the South Asian, and Pasifika communities, while particularly high rates were identified by staff from a community, the rate amongst students was not so elevated. These various patterns emphasise the need for attention to the range of experiences within communities. Also as highlighted in some of the comments, there are some communities whose experiences tend to be neglected such as Indigenous communities from other countries.

Emerging from the responses from communities was a strong critique of university structures and leadership. This was not just reflected in the number who cited university leadership as participants in the racism they experienced, but also the extensive comments which highlighted that the composition of councils, and senior leadership at virtually all Australian universities, reflects neither the ethnic composition of the nation, the university's staff, nor its students. Additionally identified in a number of communities, in particular impacting students, was a disproportionately high rate of being inappropriately stopped by university security, with the pattern strongly suggestive of racial profiling.

An additional community considered in the analysis were Australian domestic students who also identified with non-European communities. In addition to often being assumed from their appearance to be international students, these students in reporting significant levels of racism, noted that they were frequently caught between the various communities with which they identify, and frequently experiencing rejection by both.

The chapter finally considers racial attitudes and the experience of 'European' Australian students and staff. This identifies a relatively small group in all communities with potentially negative racial attitudes. While within the 'European' community this group is unusual in reporting highly elevated rates of racism, this is not the case for other communities. More generally the survey data shows, consistent with the reports from other communities, a level of racism being experienced across 'European' staff and students. The survey responses also highlight questions of identity for this group, and aspects of university pedagogy. Another issue concerns the use of Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country. This suggests a need for consultation and engagement with Universities' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders about how the university should appropriately and meaningfully use Welcome to, and Acknowledgement of Country, and the actions required to effectively communicate to staff and students the significance of these.

8 Bystander experience and actions

Seeing or hearing racism directed at others and failing to intervene, speak up or challenge it is sometimes termed bystander racism. Bystander racism is significant because failing to act when witnessing racism contributes to its persistence. Bystander anti-racism is action taken by spectators or others in response to incidents of interpersonal racism. For a range of reasons some people may feel powerless or at risk if they take action.

This chapter focuses on whether the respondent had been a bystander to racism and, if they had witnessed racism directed at others, whether they took any action.

The survey included several questions on witnessing racism, the nature of the racism witnessed and whether the respondent had taken any action, the nature of any actions taken in response to the racism witnessed, and the reasons for not taking action. The questions on bystander experiences of racism are only asked of respondents who did not report having experienced direct racism at their university. This decision was made in order to reduce the survey burden on respondents who had experienced direct racism and completed the lengthy module related to this.

8.1 Incidence of witnessing racism

The survey asked respondents, “In the last two years, have you seen or heard any discriminatory or abusive comments or behaviours directed towards other students or staff at [University] because of their race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion?” This question was only asked of respondents who did not report experiencing direct racism at university in the last two years.

A substantial minority of students and staff who had not experienced racism themselves, reported having witnessed, or been a bystander, to racism in the last two years at their current university. Academic staff were somewhat more likely to say that they had witnessed racism, 24.5 per cent, than were the other groups which ranged from 16.2 per cent amongst international students to 19.3 per cent for non-academic staff, Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Whether had witnessed racism at university, by respondent type

Respondent type:	Whether had witnessed (a), (b)			Total
	Witnessed	Had not witnessed	Not sure	
		– % –		
Domestic student	18.5	73.2	8.3	100.0
International student	16.2	70.6	13.2	100.0
Academic staff	24.5	68.6	6.9	100.0
Non-academic staff	19.3	73.8	6.9	100.0

(a) Questions only asked of those who did not report direct racism

(b) Excludes ‘prefer not to say’ responses. n = 9,357

There are relatively small differences in the rates of reporting having witnessed racism between women and men. Respondents who identified as something other than female and male are much more likely to report having witnessed racism than are men or women, for both students and staff, Table 8.2. For domestic students, academic staff and non-academic staff, the proportion reporting having witnessed racism at university in the last two years decreases with age. For international students there is no apparent relationship between age and the likelihood of having witnessed racism.

Table 8.2 Whether had witnessed racism at university, by respondent type and a range of characteristics

Characteristics	Respondent type (a)			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
% who witnessed racism				
Gender identification (b)				
Female	17.5	16.0	26.8	19.3
Male	17.9	15.5	20.0	17.3
Other	29.6	30.2	45.3	38.9
Age group (b)				
18-24 years	22.3	18.1	32.8	26.6
25-44 years	15.2	14.4	25.5	21.5
45+ years	7.9	18.0	23.8	16.7
Academic level (c)				
Level A	-	-	22.6	-
Level B	-	-	24.7	-
Level C	-	-	26.4	-
Level D	-	-	26.3	-
Level E	-	-	25.5	-
Non-academic staff level (d)				
<\$100k pa	-	-	-	17.8
\$100-\$150k pa/ no staff	-	-	-	18.1
\$100-\$150k pa / supervise staff	-	-	-	23.2
\$150k+ per annum	-	-	-	20.1
Study on campus (e)				
On campus	22.1	16.4	-	-
Remote	7.2	9.1	-	-
Student accommodation (e)				
Used	29.5	19.5	-	-
Not used	16.6	13.8	-	-
Studied part-time / full-time (e)				
Full-time	20.4	16.0	-	-
Part-time	11.7	15.4	-	-
Qualification studying for (e)				
Doctoral	20.3	14.6	-	-
Master	15.3	13.9	-	-
Oth PG degree	18.8	19.8	-	-
PG Dip/Cert	5.9	16.2	-	-
Undergrad	19.7	19.2	-	-
Dip/Adv Dip/Assoc	11.4	9.6	-	-
Tertiary preparation	5.8	16.7	-	-
Vocational	11.9	13.3	-	-
Other & Not stated	28.5	28.2	-	-

(a) Respondents who responded 'Not sure' to the question on witnessing racism are coded as not having witnessed racism in this table. (b) n = 59,752 (c) n=8,906; (d) n = 14,169; (e) n = 37,510

For both academic and non-academic staff there is no relationship evident between seniority and the likelihood of having witnessed racism. For both domestic and international students those who live in student accommodation were more likely to reported having witnessed racism. For domestic students, studying full-time is associated with being more likely to witness racism, but not for international students. There is no

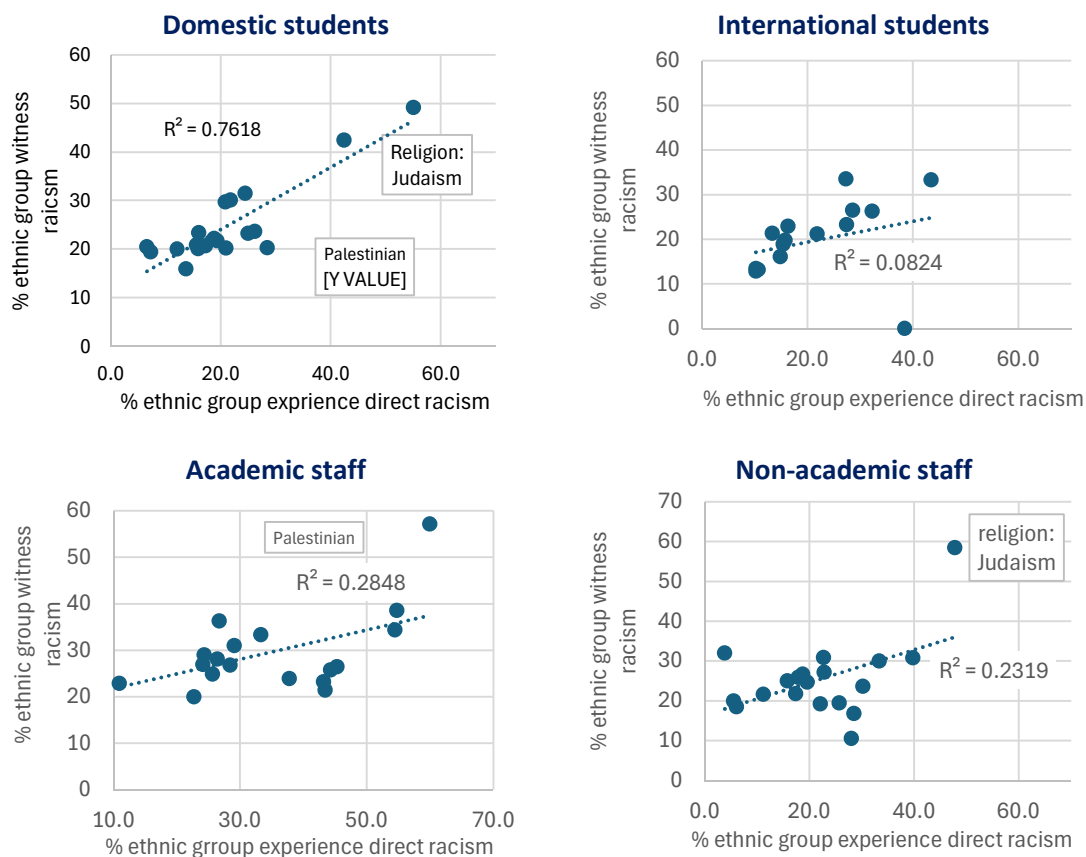
clear relationship between level of qualification being studied for and the likelihood of having witnessed racism for both domestic and international students.

8.1.1 Ethnicity and religion and witnessing racism

Because the question on witnessing racism is only asked of those who had not experienced racism at university, a smaller proportion of sub-populations which experienced higher rates of racism were asked the question on witnessing racism. This is likely to be a particular issue for understanding the association between ethnicity and witnessing racism.

In order to better understand this issue, Figure 8.1 shows the proportion of each ethnic group reporting having witnessed racism plotted against the proportion of each ethnic group experiencing direct racism.

Figure 8.1 Ethnic group rates of witness racism relative to group's experience of direct racism, by ethnic group, by respondent type



For all domestic and international students and for academic and non-academic staff, the line of best fit suggests that there is a positive relationship between the proportion of the ethnic group experiencing direct racism and the proportion reporting having witnessed racism. It is emphasised that, due to the approach of the survey in only collecting data on bystander racism from those who did not report experiencing direct racism themselves, these are pure population effects and are not potentially affected by endogeneity which may arise from an individual who experiences racism themselves at university, potentially having a different propensity to identify other racist acts.

Table 8.3 reports the rates of direct racism and witnessing racism by ethnicity and religion.

Table 8.3 Rates of direct racism and witnessing racism, by respondent type and ethnicity and religion

Ethnicity/religion (a)	Domestic student		International student		Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	Direct	Witnessed – no direct	Direct	Witnessed – no direct	Direct	Witnessed – no direct	Direct	Witnessed – no direct
	– % –							
African	21.0	27.9	27.4	14.1	43.2	38.1	28.5	47.4
Afro-diasporic Americas	25.0	42.9	32.3	22.2	43.5	16.7	28.0	0.0
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	15.7	29.3	16.3	17.2	24.2	47.5	17.4	29.2
Central Asia	28.5	45.7			54.5	71.1	39.8	50.8
Chinese	13.7	38.1	27.3	33.3	22.7	50.0	3.9	0.0
Europe	16.1	20.5	15.8	22.4	25.7	42.2	17.9	24.6
Māori	7.2	31.8	13.3	30.3	9.3	59.7	5.6	50.9
Middle Eastern	12.1	40.6		0.0	24.4	57.1	11.2	50.0
North East Asian	26.2	29.6	28.6	28.8	44.3	44.7	30.2	37.3
Other Indigenous	17.3	23.0	21.9	26.0	28.5	37.5	22.8	16.7
Palestinian	24.5	50.0	10.3	75.0	33.3	66.7	15.8	75.0
Pasifika	42.4	33.3		0.0	60.0	33.3	33.3	0.0
South Asian	18.9	31.8	10.7	25.0	45.3	66.7	22.1	61.1
Southern European	19.4	23.4	14.9	21.0	37.8	26.2	25.7	36.9
South East Asian	6.6	35.3	10.2	37.5	10.9	59.7	6.1	42.1
Not stated	16.0	21.5	15.4	17.8	26.5	32.3	19.6	29.5
Jewish (religious)	20.9	26.4	27.3	16.3	29.1	41.2	18.7	43.4
Jewish (secular)	55.1	18.3	43.5	100.0	54.8	40.0	47.8	37.5
Religion: Islam	21.8	38.1	38.5	20.9	26.8	48.6	22.7	63.2
Religion: Christianity	20.6	30.1	15.5	20.0	43.0	28.1	29.6	25.6
Religion: Other Specified	11.2	27.0	15.8	17.1	15.1	56.1	10.6	41.9
	12.8	36.4	16.3	20.1	29.5	57.7	18.0	43.0

(a) Respondents can identify up to three ethnicities.

The strongest positive relationship between the proportion of the ethnic group experiencing direct racism and the proportion witnessing racism is for domestic students. Palestinian and the Jewish (religious) students reported both high rates of direct racism and high rates of witnessing racism and this affects the estimated relationship. When these groups are excluded, there is a much weaker, but still positive relationship.⁷⁴

These patterns suggest that:

- groups that experience high rates of direct racism are also more likely to report having witnessed racism
- amongst ethnic groups that reported relatively low rates of direct racism at university, a significant minority reported having witnessed racism.

⁷⁴ An additional assessment of the potential impact of this survey design feature was undertaken by estimating probit models examining the association between ethnicity and the likelihood of having witnessed racism. Two specifications were estimated: one excluding, and one including, a variable measuring the proportion of each ethnic group that reported direct experiences of racism at university. The inclusion of proportion of each ethnic group that reported direct experiences of racism generally reduces the differences between ethnic groups, but the reduction in the differences is mostly small, with the average reduction across ethnic groups being 0.2 per cent.

It also suggests that asking these questions only to those who did not report racism has not introduced a significant bias into this data.

8.2 Nature of racism witnessed

Respondents who had witnessed racism were asked to identify the nature of the comments or behaviours. Table 8.4 reports the types of racism witnessed. For domestic students, the most common type of racism witnessed are “Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes”, 51.4 per cent, followed by “Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded”, 34.1 percent, and “Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students”, 33.7 per cent.

For international students, the pattern of types of racism witnessed are similar to domestic students with the most common being “Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes”, 43.1 per cent, followed by “Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded”, 35.6 percent, and “Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students”, 25.6 per cent.

Amongst academic staff, the most common type of racism witnessed is “Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students”, 44.6 per cent, followed by “Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded”, 36.3 percent, and “Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes”, 30.2 per cent. Non-academic staff are most likely to have witnessed “Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes”, 40.5 per cent, followed by “Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students”, 33.2 per cent, and “Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded” 30.1 per cent.

Table 8.4 Nature of racism witnessed, by respondent type

Nature of racism witnessed (a)	Respondent group:			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– % –			
Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes	51.4	43.1	30.2	40.5
Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded	34.1	35.6	36.5	30.1
Someone being told they are less intelligent	21.0	20.4	13.1	11.3
Someone being physically harassed, threatened or assaulted	4.1	11.4	4.7	5.8
Someone being verbally harassed, threatened or abused	19.3	23.3	20.8	22.0
Someone being harassed, threatened or abused online	13.6	16.3	13.0	13.5
Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students	33.7	25.6	44.6	33.2
Other	13.2	7.0	17.4	17.2

(a) Respondents could select more than one type of racism.

n = 11,361

A significant number of respondents provided write-in text responses which are illustrative.

While the focus of the question was on witnessing direct racism, a number of respondents identified that they had observed racist comments/statements about other people or groups which were not heard by the person who the comments were being made about:.

Derogatory comments made about a student to me by another student, out of earshot of the student targeted.

Staff discussing an indigenous student having too many allowances

Snarky comments made about a person's demeanour linked to their cultural identity behind their back

Talked about behind their back in a very stereotypical way which overgeneralised individual behaviours toward an entire group

A number of respondents referred to comments about the spoken English ability/accents of teachers which they perceived as being racist:

I think people who have grown up very sheltered have a tendency to dislike the teaching of ANY teacher with a non-'Australian' accent. I totally get that sometimes an accent is harder to understand but generally that comes from the fact that they probably haven't socialised properly to have met /engaged with/ been friends with someone of a race other than their own.

A teacher's intelligence being questioned due to their heavy accent or cadence

Just comments about some staff with thick accents and not being able to understand them

The main examples are students singling academic staff out in feedback due to non-Anglo accents - but those accents may be French, Indian, Arabic, Asian - there's nothing systematic about this.

There were fairly frequent mentions of racism against international students from both teaching staff and other students:

There was a teacher who told international students who had only recently came to Australia that "we speak English here" it was horrible

Comments a lecturer made to a student that her accent was too hard to understand.

A student being marginalised in a group project because of her accent

Frequently the racism reported was about stereotyping of particular groups:

Colleagues using racial stereotypes to describe/blame the behaviour of other staff when those staff are not present. Only in small meeting settings, in larger meetings people censor themselves or say microaggressions instead of direct racism (is still racism and is still important but it's easier for them to get away with)

A very common form of racism in conversations, which the speaker themselves may not even be aware of, often takes the form of stereotypes.

Being told that an individual's Religious beliefs "oppressed them" due to stereotypes without letting the person speak and hearing that white, cis people can't complain about their problems bc others have it worse

Religious stereotypes being discussed insensitively and unfairly

Someone publicly making generalisations about international students based on negative stereotypes

Lecturer making generally racist remarks and stereotyped remarks of religious and cultural groups with students from these groups present

Not directed to a specific individual, but directed at perpetuating stereotypes and mistruths by uneducated people in positions of power developing school-scale and subject-level rhetoric that perpetuates otherism

It's more subtle than this... It's someone saying things which are racist in their assumptions but not directed towards a particular person. Or, someone being recommended only white scholars and their engagement with scholars of colour being overlooked.

8.3 Action taken in response to witnessing incidents of racism

Respondents who reported having witnessed racism were asked whether they had taken action in response to any of the incidents that they had witnessed, and if they said they had taken action, whether there were also incidents that they had witnessed where they did not take any action. Those who had witnessed racism but had not taken action were asked for their reasons.

International students were the most likely to have witnessed racism and to never have taken action, 76.9 per cent of those who had witnessed racism, followed by domestic students, 68.7 per cent, non-academic staff, 52.2 per cent, and academic staff, 43.7 percent, Table 8.5.

Table 8.5 Whether took action having witnessed racism, by respondent type

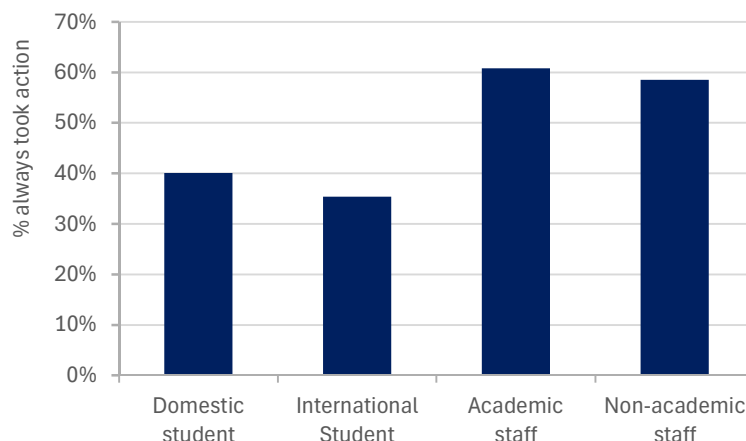
Respondent type:	Whether took action having witnessed racism			Total
	Took action in all cases	Took action in some cases but not all	Did not take action	
		- % -		
Domestic student	12.5	18.7	68.7	100.0
International student	8.2	14.9	76.9	100.0
Academic staff	34.2	22.0	43.7	100.0
Non-academic staff	28.0	19.9	52.2	100.0

n = 9,357

Of those who took action in at least some instances, academic staff and non-academic staff were more likely to have always taken action, 60.8 per cent and 58.5 per cent respectively. Four in ten, 40.1 per cent, of domestic students said they had always taken action and just

over one-third of international students who had witnessed racism said that they had always taken action, 35.4 per cent.

Figure 8.2 Always took action following witnessing racism as a proportion of respondents who had witnessed racism and taken action, by respondent type (a)



(a) n = 9,357

Respondents who said they had taken action in response to witnessing racism were also asked about the form of this: “Which of the following actions did you take in response to the most significant incident of racism that you witnessed and acted on in the last two years?”

The top panel of Table 8.6 reports the proportion of respondents who witnessed and responded to racism who took each of the types of actions. The bottom panel reports the proportions of respondents who took each of the types of actions as a proportion of those who witnessed racism (irrespective of whether they had taken action in response).

Focusing first on respondents who acted after witnessing racism, staff are a bit under twice as likely as students to have reported the incident. Only a minority of respondents asked someone from outside of the university for assistance. A higher proportion of staff asked for assistance from someone within the university, 26.8 per cent of academic staff and 25.5 per cent of non-academic staff, than students, 15.6 per cent of domestic students and 17.2 per cent of international students.

There were similar rates of comforting the person(s) targeted across the groups, with 42.5 per cent of domestic students reporting doing this, along with 37.5 per cent of international students, 45.5 per cent of academic staff and 39.8 per cent of non-academic staff.

Table 8.6 Types of actions taken in response to the most significant incident of racism witnessed and acted upon, by respondent type

Actions taken (a)	Respondent type			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
Of those who took action in the most recent case witnessed – % –				
I tried to defuse or de-escalate the situation	37.5	33.0	35.0	30.6
I confronted or disagreed with the perpetrator	62.0	42.7	44.8	39.6
I comforted the person(s) targeted	42.5	37.5	45.5	39.8
I asked for assistance from someone within the university (such as a uni friend, colleague, staff member)	15.6	17.2	26.9	25.5
I reported the incident to a lecturer, tutor, supervisor, manager, and/or the university	20.6	20.1	36.9	41.2
I asked someone from outside of the university for assistance	8.2	9.5	7.2	6.0
Other	6.6	3.4	12.0	12.0
Of those who witnessed (including who did not take action)				
I tried to defuse or de-escalate the situation	10.4	6.6	17.6	12.5
I confronted or disagreed with the perpetrator	17.1	8.6	22.5	16.1
I comforted the person(s) targeted	11.7	7.6	22.9	16.2
I asked for assistance from someone within the university (such as a uni friend, colleague, staff member)	4.3	3.5	13.5	10.4
I reported the incident to a lecturer, tutor, supervisor, manager, and/or the university	5.7	4.0	18.6	16.8
I asked someone from outside of the university for assistance	2.3	1.9	3.6	2.5
Other	1.8	0.7	6.0	4.9

(a) Respondents could select multiple actions
n = 54,585

Around a third of each group reported having tried to defuse or de-escalate the situation. Domestic students are considerably more likely to have confronted or disagreed with the perpetrator, 62.0 per cent, than international students, 42.7 per cent, academic staff, 45.5 per cent, or non-academic staff, 39.8 per cent.

The proportion taking the various actions in response to witnessing racism expressed as a proportion of all those who witnessed racism is much lower, with only a minority of domestic and international students taking each of the actions. For international students this varies from 1.9 per cent asking someone from outside of the university for assistance, with 8.6 per cent confronting or disagreeing with the perpetrator. For domestic students, it ranges from 2.3 per cent asking someone from outside of the university for assistance to 17.1 per cent confronting or disagreeing with the perpetrator.

A higher proportion of academic and non-academic staff who witnessed racism reported taking each type of action. For academic staff, except for asking someone from outside of the university for assistance, between 13.5 per cent and 22.9 per cent reported taking each action and for non-academic staff it is between 10.4 per cent and 16.8 per cent.

The combination of the various actions taken are complex, with there being 97 unique combinations. The 20 most common combinations of actions taken in response to

witnessing racism account for 80.5 per cent of all combinations of actions taken by respondents. The 20 most common are summarised in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7 Combinations of actions taken, 20 most common

	Combination of actions	Count	Cumulative % of total		Combination of actions	Count	Cumulative % of total
1	Confront	557	14.5	11	Defuse/comfort	92	64.8
2	Report	294	22.2	12	Ask assist uni/Report	86	67.0
3	Defuse, confront, comfort	270	29.3	13	Comfort/Report	85	69.3
4	Defuse	226	35.2	14	Comfort/ask assist uni/report	79	71.3
5	Comfort	208	40.6	15	Confront/comfort/report	70	73.2
6	Confront/comfort	206	46.0	16	Defuse/confront/comfort/ask assist uni/report	68	74.9
7	Other	206	51.4	17	Comfort/ask assist uni	59	76.5
8	Defuse/confront	204	56.7	18	Confront/report	59	78.0
9	Ask assist uni	111	59.6	19	Comfort/report	54	79.4
10	Prefer not to say	107	62.4	20	Comfort/other	40	80.5

n= 3,892

8.4 Reasons for not taking action

Respondents who had witnessed racism and either did not take action or had not always taken action were asked which of a list of reasons best explained their reasons for this. The most common reason selected by domestic students was that they did not think taking action or complaining would make a difference, 41.5 per cent, Table 8.8. Other common reasons given were that they wanted to avoid conflict or preserve positive relationships, 26.1 per cent, did not think it was important enough to make a complaint, 25.1 per cent, and they didn't know how to make a complaint, 22.0 per cent.

The pattern of reasons selected by domestic students is similar to that selected by international students. The main difference is that international students were more likely to want to avoid conflict or preserve relationships, 40.5 per cent compared to 26.1 per cent. International students were also more likely to be afraid of violence, abuse or backlash, 25.6 per cent compared to 14.9 per cent.

For academic and non-academic staff, the most common reason selected was other (specify) with 38.1 per cent and 39.4 per cent respectively selecting this category. The high proportion selecting the other category reflects that the response categories offered in the survey, which has subsequently been identified, lacked relevant categories; namely that the victim did not want action to be taken; that the issue was dealt with by the victim or others on the spot; and someone else was responding.

Of the reasons selected, the most common reason selected by academic staff, 30.3 per cent, and non-academic staff, 29.8 per cent, was that they didn't think that taking action or complaining would make a difference. The other reason commonly selected was that they wanted to avoid conflict or preserve positive relationships, with 19.1 per cent of academic staff and 20.6 per cent of non-academic staff selecting this reason.

Table 8.8 Reasons for not taking action following witnessing racism, by respondent type

Reason for not taking action (a)	Respondent type			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– % –			
I didn't think taking action or complaining would make a difference	41.5	37.4	30.3	29.8
I didn't know how to make a complaint	22.0	22.5	6.9	6.6
The complaint process is too complex	9.0	13.7	6.3	4.8
I wanted to avoid conflict or preserve positive relationships	26.1	40.5	19.1	20.6
I was afraid of violence, abuse or backlash	14.9	25.6	12.0	12.8
I did not think it was important enough to make a complaint	25.1	21.1	10.8	10.0
Racism is tolerated on campus	8.2	5.0	6.2	5.0
Other	21.0	10.2	38.1	39.4
Not sure	4.8	5.6	7.5	7.2
Prefer not to say	2.0	3.8	4.8	5.5

(a) Multiple reasons could be cited

n = 7,515

Only a small proportion of respondents indicated that their reason for not making a complaint or taking action was because of a tolerance of racism on campus. As identified in the table there were a large number of respondents who cited other reasons and made additional comments relating to this.

As shown above, international students were less likely to take action in response to witnessing racism. Some of the comments made by international students provide more nuanced insights:

It just feels like people make an effort to address racism but nothing ever happens/changes completely in the end. So being an international student who is aware of Australia's racist history, it just felt like something I had to deal with personally than something I had to address

Also for someone with an international student visa, this can backfire and end up siding with the other person instead cause after all they are people of the country

Non-reporting because of the wishes of the victim was also cited by a number, although frequently this was a decision which was taken because of the fears of the person subject to the abuse held for the consequences:

The victim did not want me to take it further because they were on a contract and feared it would ruin their chance of employment. Sadly, I agree.

I did not want to create a harmful or unwanted situation for the victim in the situation, who did not wish to report as the perpetrator was our supervisor (who had previously been reported for poor behaviour and no action was taken)

My friend said they were scared of their grades being negatively affected.

The issue raised in this latter comment of the relative positions of the perpetrator and the subject was raised in a number of the comments, including those of students where the behaviour was that of teaching staff.

Also cited in the responses were cases where further action by the bystander was not seen as necessary:

The person experiencing the racism clearly demonstrated that they had effectively handled it themselves

Subject of the discrimination handled it themselves professionally

The affected person raised the issue to management themselves and the incident response was handled without need for my involvement

The responsible persons took action and escalated to security/police

It was handled by another person stepping in to deal with it.

A number, as was the case cited above, noted that the person subject to the behaviour had indicated that they were intending to make a complaint directly.

One response spoke of the tension a number of respondents felt about taking action, and the tensions surrounding doing this in a work environment and with colleagues:

I think I could say 'I wanted to avoid conflict...' I was also taken aback. In one instance a colleague who was also there did say, 'you can't say that'. I don't know if this is the best approach though as perhaps the comments did need to be addressed more fully? Having said that, I was glad that someone responded to let the person know that it is was not appropriate. Myself and another colleague were I think too taken aback and unsure how to respond. The colleague who had made the racist comments was older, though not necessarily more senior. I'm not sure if I would have felt more comfortable challenging them/addressing them if they were younger?

Quite a number of the comments related to racism in a teaching environment, at times relating to teaching staff, but very frequently between students. In a number of cases these appear to have been addressed within the environment, either through the actions of those involved, or by teaching staff:

As I am an international student myself, I am afraid that it would turn towards me. though, when in class discussions and someone is being racist, I will often let them know that they are not being respectful or this point could be said in a nicer way. I think it is also having the tutor in the room is a form of security as well.

The underlying reasons for the student conflict was addressed and students were placed in different groups. The words said against each other was done by both parties and was a result caused by poor time management, so they turned on each other in the group with name calling. I gave them the opportunity to apologise and asked both parties if they wanted the matter to give a formal complaint against the other student(s).

I put the information of what I observed in my feedback of that day so that the lecturers could address it in a professional manner, which they did an amazing job doing so.

In the lecture it was raised and felt like the collective of students and lecturer acknowledged it and it was resolved

In some cases, respondents had heard comments made about another person who was not present and they felt it would be difficult to make a complaint, or they thought it was not appropriate to take action.

It was a comment made privately and not said to the person directly, which probably would just cause problems to me. I can only express my disagreement with whoever said it

More just people complaining to their friends about international students, I was eavesdropping so didn't think it was appropriate for me to step into their conversation

There were also a number of comments along the lines that “Racist comments/ stereotypes regarding Europeans seems to be accepted”. This issue is examined in Chapter 6.

8.5 Factors associated with taking action after witnessing racism, regression modelling

Of importance to this study is understanding the factors associated with whether or not a student or staff member who witnesses racism against someone else at the university takes any action.

In order to better understand this a multivariate probit model which takes into account a wide range of personal and institutional factors and has as the dependent whether the person who had witnessed racism at university took action in response to any of the incidents they witnessed or whether they had not taken action in response to any of the incidents they had witnessed. As noted above, the questions on witnessing racism and taking action were only asked of persons who had not directly experienced racism themselves.

Three separate regression models were run: domestic and international students combined, academic staff, and non-academic staff. Table 8.9 presents the estimates of the independent role of each of the explanatory variables (type of university and student and staff characteristics) in the likelihood of taking action following witnessing racism. The magnitude of the independent effect of each explanatory variable on the likelihood of taking action are presented using marginal effects. The marginal effect represents the percentage point increase in the probability of a person taking action following witnessing racism at an Australian university relative to a base case. A marginal effect, say of 5.0, represents a 5 per cent higher probability of taking action after witnessing racism⁷⁵.

The key points to take from the results of the statistical modelling are:

⁷⁵ The style of presentation in this analysis varies from the previous probit analyses where results were presented in a fractional rather than percentage form.

- International students are less likely (-6.3 percentage points) to have taken action following witnessing racism compared to domestic students
- Students, staff and non-academic staff at Go8 universities are less likely to have taken action compared to students at ATN universities. Non-academic staff at RUN universities are more likely to have taken action following witnessing racism
- For students there are no statistically significant associations with the likelihood of taking action after witnessing racism whether studying on campus or remotely, whether studying part-time or full-time and qualification level being studied for
- For academic staff, the more junior continuing staff are substantially less likely to have taken action than other academic staff
- For non-academic staff, staff earning more than \$100,000 who have no staff, those earning more than \$100,000 who have staff and those earning more than \$150,000 are more likely to take action following witnessing racism than those earning less than \$100,000
- Older students and non-academic staff are more likely to take action than younger students and non-academic staff. There is no relationship found between age and the likelihood of taking action for academic staff
- There are some statistically significant marginal effects for ethnicity, but the majority of the marginal effects are not statistically significant, and the pattern of results is hard to interpret. It is worth noting that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are more likely to report taking action and religious Jewish students are less likely to report taking action. Academic staff who were members of South Asian and South East Asian communities are less likely to report taking action
- For students and academic staff those who strongly agree with the statement “All races of people ARE equal” are more likely to take action following witnessing racism. For non-academic staff there is little evidence for an association between the extent of agreement with this question and taking action after witnessing racism
- There appears to be no relationship between the extent of agreement or disagreement with the statement: It is a good thing for society to be made up of different cultures and taking action after witnessing racism.

Table 8.9 Factors associated with having taken action after witnessing racism, probit regression model, marginal effects

Characteristic	Students Marginal effect %	Academic staff Marginal Effect %	Non-academic staff Marginal effect %
Type of student			
Domestic student	base	-	-
International student	-6.3 ***	-	-
University classification			
ATN	base	base	base
Go8	-4.2 **	-6.9 *	-8.3 **
IRU	-3.3	8.8 *	-1.8
Other	-0.9	-0.2	1.2
RUN	5.3	1.7	10.0 **
Study on campus			
On campus	base	-	-
Remote	-1.8	-	-
N/S	-0.7	-	-
Full-time/part-time			
Full-time	base	-	-
Part-time	0.6	-	-
N/S	8.5	-	-
Qualification level studying for			
Doctoral	-2.4	-	-
Master	0.6	-	-
Oth PG degree	3.0	-	-
PG Dip/Cert	3.1	-	-
Undergraduate	base	-	-
Dip/Adv Dip/Assoc	2.2	-	-
Tertiary preparation	5.4	-	-
Vocational	0.4	-	-
Other & N/S	-4.6	-	-
Type of academic contract/level			
A-B Continuing	-	base	-
A-B Fixed term/casual	-	-11.4 ***	-
C-E continuing	-	5.7	-
C-E Fixed term/casual	-	0.5	-
N/S Continuing	-	-6.7	-
N/S Fixed term/casual	-	-11.6 *	-
N/S	-	-11.1	-
Level/responsibility			
<\$100K	-	-	base
\$100-\$150k, no staff	-	-	1.7
\$100-\$150K, supervise	-	-	18.9 ***
\$150K+	-	-	19.2 ***
N/S	-	-	11.4 **
Student accommodation			
Did not use student accommodation	base	-	-
Used student accommodation	7.2 ***	-	-
N/S	2.0	-	-
English speaking background			
ESB	base	base	base
Missing	2.0	60.4 ***	4.5
NESB	3.9	-0.2	-3.2
Born in Australia			
Australian born	base	-	-
Overseas born	3.7 *	-6.4 **	-4.7
Missing	1.1	-76.6 ***	-17.3
Gender			
Female	base	base	base
Male	-0.5	-4.5	-4.1
Other	9.6 ***	-5.7	5.1
Not stated	0.2	-7.3	-14.1

	Students	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	Marginal effect	Marginal Effect	Marginal effect
	%	%	%
Age			
18-24 years	base	base	base
25-44 years	5.6 ***	10.8	12.8 **
45+ years	20.0 ***	16.9	16.8 **
Not stated	-4.5	3.5	31.9 ***
Ethnicity & religion			
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander			
Islander	14.1 ***	14.9	6.1
African	-6.5	-9.1	13.2
Afro-diasporic	10.3	-35.5	0.0
Māori	8.2	-3.0	2.0
Other Indigenous	21.1	5.4	35.3
Pasifika	0.5	-12.1	16.8
Middle Eastern	3.9	-3.7	0.5
Palestinian	-0.7	-46.5 *	0.0
Central Asian	6.5	-20.4	0.0
South Asian	-4.9 *	-20.2 **	1.4
Chinese	-1.6	5.7	-12.8 **
North East Asian	-3.7	-16.2	-19.4
South East Asian	-5.7 **	-14.9 **	-3.9
Americas	-5.8	-2.3	-8.6
Southern European	8.6 ***	4.1	0.5
European	5.0 **	3.2	6.3
Not stated	-4.2	1.8	6.0
Jewish			
Jewish (religious)	-12.1 ***	-7.7	-14.8 *
Jewish (secular)	7.0	-10.9	13.6
Other religions			
Islam	2.3	-2.3	-8.0
Christianity	-2.0	1.8	-6.7 **
Other	4.8 **	8.2 *	-3.1
Sexuality			
Hetero	base	base	Base
Gay/Queer/Lesbian	4.3	6.8	-3.7
Bi/Pansexual	5.2 ***	1.2	2.8
Demi/Asexual	-5.5	27.3 ***	14.4
Other & N/S	5.6 *	5.7	3.6
All races equal			
Strong agree	base	base	base
Agree	-6.7 ***	-14.4 ***	-4.5
Neither agree nor disagree	-2.8	-37.3 ***	-14.6 *
Disagree	-12.4 ***		-13.7
Strongly disagree	4.6	13.2	1.5
Not sure	-25.3 ***	-16.7	
Prefer not to say	-10.4	10.2	-17.3
Diversity good			
Strong agree	base	base	base
Agree	2.5	-8.4	-1.4
Neither agree nor disagree	-4.6	2.4	3.0
Disagree	-8.0 **	2.2	-8.3
Strongly disagree	-1.4	-4.2	15.7
Not sure	3.3	-1.7	-2.4
Prefer not to say	-0.8	-19.8	18.5
Extent racism is a problem at university			
Strong agree	base	base	base
Agree	-10.2 ***	-8.4 *	-2.6
Neither agree nor disagree	-11.7 ***	-8.4 *	-1.9
Disagree	-10.6 ***	-5.4	1.4
Strongly disagree	-11.5 ***	-16.9 **	-6.4

	Students	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	Marginal effect	Marginal Effect	Marginal effect
	%	%	%
Feel safe at university	base	base	base
Strong agree	-2.2	-0.2	-1.5
Agree	1.4	5.2	-1.6
Neither agree nor disagree	3.7	2.7	-1.8
Disagree	-1.3	0.0	14.7
Strongly disagree	base	base	base
Number of observations	5,097	1,560	2,018
Pseudo r ²	0.0524	0.1027	0.0798

*Indicates statistical significance at the 90% confidence level, ** indicates statistical significance at the 95% confidence level and *** indicates statistical significance at the 99% confidence level.

- Students and academic staff who strongly agreed that racism is a problem at university are the most likely to take action after witnessing racism and the marginal effects are substantial, particularly for academic staff and students. There is no association between the extent to which non-academic staff think racism is a problem at university and taking action after witnessing racism.
- There is no evidence of an association between the extent to which the respondent feels safe at university and the likelihood of taking action after witnessing racism.

8.6 Summary

This chapter focuses on the issue of witnessing racism at university and whether respondents took any action in response to the racism they witnessed. In interpreting the results reported in this chapter it is critical to keep in mind that the questions on witnessing racism were only asked of the students and staff who had not directly experienced racism themselves at university in the last two years, but this did not appear to introduce bias.

A substantial minority of students and staff who had not experienced racism themselves had witnessed racism in the past two years—24.5 per cent of academic staff, 19.3 per cent of non-academic staff, 18.5 per cent of domestic students and 16.2 per cent of international students.

The nature of racism observed varies, but common forms included racial jokes or slurs, exclusion, and challenges to professionalism—particularly toward staff with non-Anglo accents. While some incidents involved overt harassment, many were subtle, such as stereotyping or derogatory remarks made privately.

International students are the most likely to have not taken action, 76.9 per cent, followed by domestic students, 68.7 per cent. Just over half, 52.2 per cent, of non-academic staff did not take any action and less than half, 43.7 per cent, of academic staff did not take any action.

Many bystanders did not act: 76.9 per cent of international students and 68.7 per cent of domestic students took no action, compared to 43.7 per cent of academic staff. When

action was taken, it often involved confronting perpetrators, comforting victims, or reporting incidents, though reporting was less common among students than staff.

There are a range of reasons given for not taking action, with the most common reasons being they believed that taking action or complaining would not make a difference, and wanting to avoid conflict, and for international students a fear of violence, abuse or backlash. Just over one-in-five domestic and international students said that they did not know how to make a complaint.

Regression analysis highlighted factors influencing intervention: older age, staff seniority, and strong agreement that racism is a problem at university increased the likelihood of action, while international student status and the university's affiliation with certain groupings reduced it. Overall, the chapter underscores the need for institutional support and clearer reporting mechanisms to empower bystanders to act against racism.

9 University Policies and Practices

Earlier chapters have identified a number of dimensions of the relationships between students and staff and their universities and some of the aspects they see as important, including safety and respect. This chapter extends this and is concerned with the policies implemented by the universities to address racism and support equity and diversity.

9.1 Emphasis of policies

As discussed in Chapter 2, there was considerable variation in the extent students and staff felt that racism was a problem at their university, with this being significantly impacted by their own experiences. Survey respondents were also asked whether or not they considered that there was too much of a focus by their university on addressing racism relative to other problems. This also generated a diversity of responses, as illustrated in Table 9.1, although with a tendency towards disagreement with the proposition that there was too much emphasis on racism, or at least neutrality.

Table 9.1 Agreement with statement “There is too much of a focus on addressing racism compared to other problems”, by respondent type

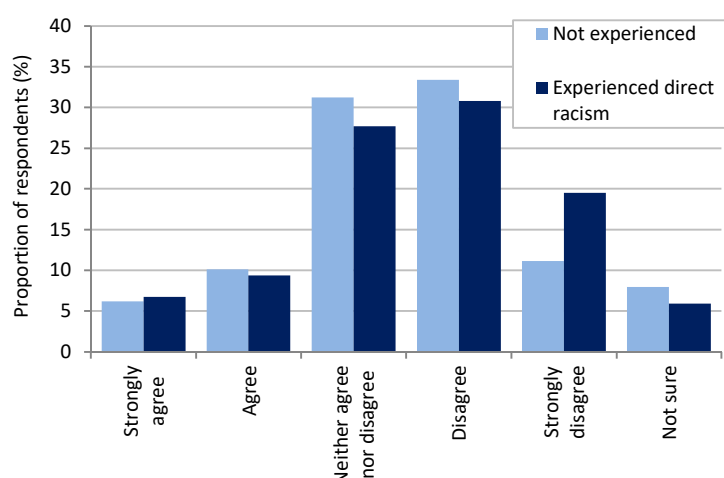
Respondent type:	Level of agreement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
	– % –						
Domestic student	8.7	10.4	30.0	31.0	12.3	7.7	100.0
International student	4.4	12.7	36.8	26.2	7.6	12.4	100.0
Academic staff	4.9	8.4	26.4	37.6	17.2	5.7	100.0
Non-academic staff	3.6	8.5	31.0	38.1	11.9	6.9	100.0

n = 70,183

Of note, however, is the not insubstantial proportion of domestic students, 19.1 per cent, and international students, 17.1 per cent, who agree that there is an over emphasis, as well as 13.3 per cent of academic staff and 12.1 per cent of non-academic staff.

As with perspectives on whether racism is a problem at their university, responses to the proposition of excess emphasis also varies with individuals’ experiences, Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1 Agreement with statement “There is too much of a focus on addressing racism compared to other problems”, by whether person had experienced direct racism at university, all staff and students



Whereas just 11.2 per cent of those who reported not experiencing direct racism at university strongly disagreed with the proposition of excess emphasis, this increased to 19.5 per cent for those who had experienced racism. Interestingly however there was little difference, 16.3 per cent and 16.1 per cent respectively, between the proportion of respondents who said that there was too much emphasis.

The pattern of responses was broadly consistent across the groupings of universities, with the range of levels of agreement being from 15.8 per cent for those universities in the Australian Technology Network, to 18.3 per cent for those part of the Regional Universities Network.

Overall, this result, while not obtaining information on whether there is too little emphasis, does suggest that there is support for the existing efforts by universities. Additionally, as the question was posed in terms of relative focus, the responses may also be affected by the degree to which universities have, or don't have, effective policies in other areas such as gender equity, and effective disability support policies and programs.

9.2 Knowledge of policies and programs

Most Australian universities have a plethora of policies and programs across many different areas of student and academic life and engagement. The survey specifically asked about respondents' knowledge of those related to racism and participation.

It is noted that while in one way this question goes beyond a simple question of direct racism; in asking more broadly about those policies designed to ensure equity and participation, these are in fact core elements of policies to address institutional racism.

As indicated, Table 9.2, the proportion of respondents reporting knowledge of these programs was well over a third amongst students and almost 60 percent amongst staff. While these figures may appear to be relatively low, given the nature of university policies, they do not appear to be unreasonable. A typical experience for teaching staff, for example, is that most students do not have any substantial knowledge of policies related to learning,

other than a broad understanding of anti-plagiarism, unless a specific issue arises, at which point they then seek out the information, that is, a reactive, rather than a proactive approach to knowledge.

Table 9.2 Are you aware of any programs, initiatives or services designed to address racism, or support the participation of particular groups, including racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups and others who face disadvantage, by respondent type

Respondent type	Whether aware of programs:			Total
	Aware	Not Aware	Not Sure	
	– % –			
Domestic student	36.5	53.5	10.0	100.0
International student	37.9	47.2	15.0	100.0
Academic staff	58.0	32.0	10.0	100.0
Non-academic staff	57.4	31.5	11.0	100.0
‘European’	50.1	40.0	9.9	100.0
Non-‘European’	39.9	47.9	12.2	100.0

n= 71,694

Non-‘European’ respondents were more likely to report that they were not aware of policies, 47.9 per cent compared to 40.0 per cent of ‘European’ respondents. This was seen within both staff groups, with a gap, some 15 percentage points, and to a lesser extent amongst international students, while for domestic students the gap was under 2 percentage points.

This is considered in more detail in Table 9.3. This combines the data for domestic and international students, and for academic and non-academic staff and considers the distribution of awareness of policies and initiatives by ethnicity and religion. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and staff report very high levels of awareness. In contrast Palestinian staff and students report low rates of awareness. While in some cases the levels of awareness are similar for staff and students, in other cases they are quite low.

Table 9.3 Are you aware of any programs, initiatives or services designed to address racism, or support the participation of particular groups, including racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups and others who face disadvantage, by ethnicity and religion

Community/Religion	Students			Staff		
	Aware	Not Aware	Not Sure	Aware	Not Aware	Not Sure
– % –						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	50.4	39.3	10.3	61.0	31.5	7.4
African	31.7	57.7	10.6	46.2	43.5	10.3
Afro-diasporic	33.5	62.9	3.6	40.0	50.7	9.3
Māori	35.6	59.8	4.6	59.1	34.1	6.8
Other Indigenous	33.9	54.8	11.3	54.5	39.4	6.1
Pasifika	35.6	51.9	12.5	51.0	41.0	7.9
Middle Eastern	31.8	58.5	9.7	43.0	46.6	10.4
Palestinian	25.7	64.3	10.0	38.2	52.9	8.8
Central Asian	33.3	54.5	12.2	48.9	34.0	17.0
South Asian	35.5	51.6	12.8	41.5	46.7	11.8
Chinese	34.8	49.7	15.5	43.3	42.4	14.4
North East Asian	34.2	56.8	8.9	46.3	41.1	12.6
South East Asian	37.7	50.3	12.0	44.8	42.5	12.7
Americas	33.2	56.3	10.4	45.2	44.4	10.3
Southern Europe	38.0	53.0	9.0	56.0	32.3	11.7
Europe	37.9	52.3	9.8	63.6	26.6	9.8
Not Stated	42.6	45.7	11.7	58.2	29.8	12.0
Jewish (religious)	31.0	63.9	5.1	48.8	42.2	9.0
Jewish (secular)	35.7	57.4	6.8	54.3	36.6	9.1
Muslim	34.0	54.1	11.9	37.5	51.1	11.4
Religion: Christianity	36.7	53.0	10.3	58.9	29.8	11.2
Religion: Other Specified	37.9	49.8	12.3	51.9	36.5	11.6
Total	36.9	51.6	11.5	57.7	31.7	10.6

n= 71,694

9.2.1 Knowledge of how to report incidents

A more specific dimension of knowledge is that of knowing how to report incidents of racism. This was asked of students and staff, regardless of their knowledge of their university's policies more generally, and the question was asked in a way which acknowledged that people while not always knowing about the policies, knew how to access information if they needed it, Table 9.4.

Reflecting the above approach to knowledge, the most common response was that while the person did not know how to make such a report, they were confident that they could find this out easily if they needed. This response was common across all groups, whether or not, they said they had a knowledge of policies. A more marked difference arises in the group who reported they neither know how to report, nor consider they can find it out easily, that is those who say they do not know.

As shown, around a quarter of all international students, and of those who have experienced racism, reported that they do not know how to report an incident, nor are confident that they can find out. The experience of those who had experienced racism is considered further in section 8.6.3.

Table 9.4 Knowledge of how to report incidents of racism at university, by type of students or staff, knowledge of policies and experience of racism

Respondent groups:	Do you know how to report an incident of racism or racial discrimination you might observe or experience				
	Yes	No, but can find out	No, I don't know	Not sure	Total
Aware of university policies – % –					
No	13.5	59.9	25.1	1.5	100.0
Yes	35.8	55.4	7.8	1.1	100.0
Student/Staff					
Domestic student	16.1	64.8	18.1	1.0	100.0
International student	20.7	51.1	26.1	2.2	100.0
Academic Staff	36.2	51.8	10.9	1.2	100.0
Non-academic Staff	36.7	52.5	9.7	1.1	100.0
Experienced direct racism at university					
No	24.7	59.6	14.6	1.1	100.0
Yes	26.9	44.6	26.8	1.8	100.0

n = 59,615

Across all universities the proportion reporting a lack of knowledge of how to report was consistently in the 15-20 per cent range, despite many universities having information on the process well displayed on their webpages, for example, as shown in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2 Example of a university website providing information and links for reporting racist incidents

Reporting racism

Reporting to Monash

Students can contact the [Safer Community Unit](#) to disclose an incident of interpersonal racism (including racial discrimination, harassment or vilification). Staff can disclose an incident by contacting the Safer Community Unit or the Manager, Ethical and Respectful Conduct in Monash HR.

	Safer Community Unit	Ethical and Respectful Conduct
Phone	03 9905 1599	03 9902 4945
Email	safercommunity@monash.edu	ethical.conduct.queries@monash.edu
Hours	Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm	Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm

[Report an incident or concern](#)

<https://www.monash.edu/about/who/equity-diversity-inclusion/areas-of-focus/anti-racism/reporting-racism>

Table 9.5 presents this data in an aggregate form for students, both domestic and international, and for combined academic and non-academic staff by community and religion. Overall this shows that for both staff and students across these combinations a tendency to respond that while they did not know, they considered that they could find it

out if needed. This pattern was persistent and strong for students. For staff this response continues to dominate, the difference in the proportion saying that they did know, relative to they could find out, is much smaller than that reported by students. Again high levels of knowledge were reported by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and students, and Palestinian staff and students were the most likely to report that they did not know.

Table 9.5 Knowledge of how to report incidents of racism at university, by ethnicity and religion

Community/ Religion	Do you know how to report an incident of racism or racial discrimination you might observe or experience							
	Students				Staff			
	Yes	No, but can find out	No, I don't know	Not sure	Yes	No, but can find out	No, I don't know	Not sure
– % –								
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	26.6	53.3	18.8	1.2	47.0	36.0	15.3	1.6
African	19.7	48.6	29.6	2.1	40.1	42.5	15.5	1.9
Afro-diasporic	19.3	52.2	25.5	3.1	32.4	45.6	22.1	0.0
Māori	16.7	66.5	16.7	0.0	41.5	49.6	8.1	0.8
Other Indigenous	16.4	56.4	23.6	3.6	36.7	50.0	13.3	0.0
Pasifika	21.5	55.1	22.0	1.5	37.6	46.8	14.2	1.4
Middle Eastern	19.7	53.0	25.6	1.7	34.9	45.3	17.7	2.1
Palestinian	12.7	58.7	28.6	0.0	19.4	64.5	16.1	0.0
Central Asian	21.6	50.3	26.5	1.6	30.8	61.5	7.7	0.0
South Asian	21.8	51.3	24.9	2.0	32.9	46.8	18.9	1.3
Chinese	16.5	57.3	24.4	1.8	28.8	54.2	15.1	1.9
North East Asian	14.4	62.2	22.2	1.1	34.7	51.9	11.9	1.4
South East Asian	16.9	60.8	21.1	1.2	30.9	52.9	14.8	1.3
Americas	15.1	59.2	25.0	0.7	31.7	51.4	15.7	1.2
Southern Europe	16.9	65.8	16.9	0.4	36.9	51.0	11.1	1.0
Europe	14.9	69.1	15.3	0.7	37.3	55.2	6.7	0.7
Not Stated	20.2	51.0	25.5	3.3	40.3	41.1	15.5	3.1
Jewish (religious)	24.2	52.1	23.1	0.6	44.4	45.4	9.3	1.0
Jewish (secular)	19.3	61.0	18.8	0.9	39.4	53.7	6.1	0.9
Muslim	19.9	53.1	25.2	1.8	33.0	46.0	19.1	1.9
Religion: Christianity	18.3	61.1	19.5	1.1	38.3	51.2	9.4	1.2
Religion: Other Specified	20.9	53.7	23.4	2.0	38.0	46.2	13.7	2.1
Total	17.4	60.9	20.3	1.4	36.5	52.2	10.1	1.2

n = 59,615

9.2.2 Assessment of anti-racism policies

Regardless of their actual reported level of knowledge of policies, all respondents were asked three questions about anti-racism policies. These covered their perception of the effectiveness of policies; the extent to which they thought they were developed with the participation of groups who may be impacted by racism; and thirdly a critical question which was designed to identify whether the policies were seen as being substantive. The questions involved stating degrees of agreement with the following three statements:

- Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism.
- Staff and students from different racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds are engaged in the design and implementation of anti-racism policies and other initiatives to improve equality.

- Approaches for addressing racism have little to do with investigating and responding to the realities of racism at university.

The pattern of responses to these questions, Table 9.6 is relatively complex:

Table 9.6 Extent of agreement with statements regarding universities' racism policies, by respondent type

Respondent group:	Level of agreement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism – % –							
Domestic student	9.7	30.0	25.8	10.3	3.8	20.4	100.0
International student	13.3	40.4	25.3	7.1	2.2	11.8	100.0
Academic staff	6.6	26.9	27.8	16.2	6.7	15.8	100.0
Non-academic staff	6.7	31.3	27.8	11.2	2.8	20.2	100.0
Staff and students from different racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds are engaged in the design and implementation of anti-racism policies and other initiatives to improve equality							
Domestic student	11.9	33.7	18.4	4.8	2.3	29.0	100.0
International student	19.9	44.4	16.8	3.6	1.2	14.1	100.0
Academic staff	8.8	31.2	17.0	8.4	3.0	31.6	100.0
Non-academic staff	8.7	33.0	16.6	5.2	1.7	34.8	100.0
Approaches for addressing racism have little to do with investigating and responding to the realities of racism at university							
Domestic student	6.2	17.9	25.5	17.1	7.4	25.9	100.0
International student	7.9	25.3	26.5	18.2	5.9	16.3	100.0
Academic staff	7.3	19.6	22.9	22.4	9.0	18.9	100.0
Non-academic staff	4.2	16.1	24.6	22.7	7.9	24.6	100.0

n = 31,579

- Overall, there was a tendency towards agreement with the first statement, that policies were effective, although a majority only existed for international students, and there were marked minor blocks of disagreement amongst domestic students and staff, along with quite a marked group of students and staff who were uncertain. At the same time the statement did not appear to gain strong endorsement – that it just 6.6 percent to 13.5 per cent of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, suggesting that confidence in the policies is relatively low.
- The proposition that the policies were based upon engagement, although with up to a third of respondents indicating uncertainty. This is not a surprising figure given that it is likely that many staff and students would have relatively little information on how policies were developed, and indeed given this, perhaps the more surprising response is the proportion who were confident that they were.
- The third question identified a more normally distributed pattern of responses, with again a substantial group being unsure. Interpreting this result is more difficult although it can be taken as suggesting that there is some uncertainty about the extent to which the policies are actually related to the problem of racism at university, with very few being willing to assert that they either strongly agreed or disagreed with the statement.

The somewhat lukewarm endorsement of the effectiveness of policies, although varying, persisted across universities. Table 9.7 shows the results aggregated by university groupings. Most marked in this are the Group of 8 universities. These had a particularly low level of strong agreement, just 6.5 per cent, along with over 20 per cent disagreeing to varying extents.

Table 9.7 Agreement with statement “Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism”, by university grouping

University grouping	Level of agreement:						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
				– % –			
ATN	8.7	33.3	26.1	9.9	3.4	18.5	100.0
Go8	6.5	28.0	28.7	15.3	4.9	16.6	100.0
IRU	9.8	32.7	25.7	8.8	3.4	19.6	100.0
Other	10.3	33.6	25.6	8.9	3.1	18.6	100.0
RUN	12.0	33.5	24.6	7.8	2.7	19.6	100.0

n = 31,579

Those who did not agree or agreed strongly with the first statement were then asked for the reason for their lack of endorsement of existing policies as being effective. Three particular reasons were included in the survey, along with the capacity to provide alternative reasons, and respondents could give multiple reasons, Table 9.8.

Over half of all respondents indicated that their reason for disagreement with the statement was because the policies were either poorly implemented or not implemented at all, with a much lesser proportion stating that it was because the policies were too weak, a result which suggests that much of the concern is to do with implementation rather than the policies themselves.

On the other hand, 40 per cent or more of respondents considered that this was because the policies were biased and did not apply equally to all groups.

Table 9.8 Reasons given for why respondents did not agree that existing rules and procedures were effective, by type

Respondent group:	Reason (a):			
	Too weak	Poorly implemented, or not implemented at all	Biased and do not apply equally to all	Other
		– % –		
Domestic student	27.1	58.1	46.8	17.7
International student	30.8	58.0	38.5	12.4
Academic staff	21.2	59.3	43.7	21.9
Non-academic staff	22.6	58.8	38.3	20.4

n = 4,714

(a) Respondents could give more than one reason.

The Go8 universities had the highest proportion of respondents considering that the policies were poorly implemented, 60.6 per cent, and that the policies were biased, 45.7 per cent. However the overall differences between the sectors were not that great, with even the lowest proportion considering that the policies were poorly implemented being

54.0 per cent in the IRU group, and the lowest with respect to bias, 38.7 per cent for ‘other’ universities.

Over 600 specific comments were made in response to the open-ended question for those who indicated ‘other’ in response to the question on effectiveness. The central themes of these were:

- Those who considered that attempting to address racism through policies and procedures was a limited strategy, and one which did not effectively tackle issues of microaggressions and so forth.

Racism is a cultural problem and one that requires a significant amount of self-awareness, self-reflection and a willingness to change opinions and behaviours - policies are there to protect the institution, not the individual. Policies don't make people less racist, they just make racism more covert.

Because societal influences such as stereotypes and microaggressions are often unconscious and so is intergenerational trauma.

I am unsure how these policies can address real-life incidents. For example, a majority of the racism I have experienced have been microaggressions targeted against my ethnic group. I think these beliefs need to be addressed at an individual level. The university as an institution cannot really change these practices. I am sure if I reported these microaggressions, the university would take action. But I feel very uncomfortable doing so, and I don't really believe reporting and taking actions against people who hate my ethnicity is going to do anything to change their minds.

- Those who viewed the effectiveness and the setting of the policies in the context of conflict in the Middle East, including the Universities Australia and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definitions of antisemitism:

Anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel is not racist and thus has no place in university policies etc., it trivialises and diminishes actual racism including actual antisemitism.

Policies have been implemented in the name of anti-racism that in practice crack down on protest and expressions of solidarity with the Palestinian people. Pro-Palestinian activism is often vexatiously reported as being antisemitic. These reports are then accepted on face value without any real examination of their content, which is often in itself racist (e.g., complaints that posters with Arabic writing on them or Palestinian symbols and clothing are "threatening").

Disfavours Jewish students, who are, in my experience, most at risk nowadays

- Those who saw the policies as impacting negatively on those with European backgrounds.

they make white people feel ashamed for being white. these policies, such as welcome to countries before every class constantly reinforce the idea that white people don't belong

Addressing this type of perspective, another respondent stated:

I believe the welcome to country at the start of every lecture can provoke discontent. I think it is important that when doing it we make it clear why it's so important to recognise. Not just from the perspective of its importance historically but explaining the importance of recognition and working to reconciliation. Explaining the inequalities that there are but that many white Australians either don't believe exist or don't believe it's their problem. Combat racism more head on by calling out and rebutting the common racist motifs.

- Those who considered that the policies were simply not sufficient:

In reality, Palestinian, Muslim, Black, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and PoC staff and students do not experience the same levels of workplace safety as their White peers. There are often symbolic statements or committees but they are not actually translating into felt safety.

I do not believe there is genuine intent behind them, or genuine engagement with people who have been affected – I think it has only come about due to negative attention in the press and reputational risk. They do not go far enough to address all aspects of racism e.g. extending to working conditions, blatant racial biases in academic culture, calling out senior staff who perpetuate racist or culturally insensitive viewpoints, stereotypes or behaviours.

9.3 Assessment of the university environment

Staff and students were also asked more broadly about the university culture and policies. These comprised both direct measures of policies, and perceptions of the institution. As well as providing direct information on outcomes at universities, in some cases these are also useful instruments for understanding the impact of racism. Similar questions were asked of staff and students although the actual wording varied, reflecting the different relationships they have with the university.

9.3.1 Staff

Staff perceptions about the university have been presented in section 5.6.1. This highlighted that while there was general support for the propositions that the university encourages and supports staff, it encourages diversity in employment and staff reflect diversity, there was much less agreement on the statement “The university senior executive or leadership reflects diversity”, with just 20.6 per cent of academic staff and 24.6 per cent of non-academic staff agreeing.

9.3.2 Students

Overall students were more positive than staff in terms of seeing the university culture as supportive, with 70.0 per cent of domestic students and 68.7 per cent of international students agreeing with the proposition, Table 9.9. They were also strongly supportive of

the proposition that the university encourages people of the same backgrounds as them to study at the institution, and that diversity is reflected in the student body and their teachers.

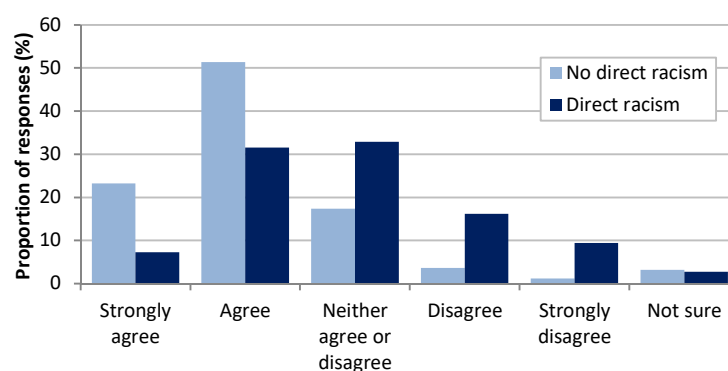
Table 9.9 Extent of agreement with statements about university support and diversity, students by type

Student type	Level of agreement with statement						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my studies – % –							
Domestic	20.8	48.8	19.3	5.6	2.4	3.1	100.0
International	20.3	48.6	20.7	4.7	1.9	3.8	100.0
The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic cultural and/or religious background to study here							
Domestic	33.5	45.4	10.9	4.3	2.0	3.9	100.0
International	33.5	48.1	11.2	3.6	1.5	2.2	100.0
The student body reflects diversity of backgrounds							
Domestic	28.0	41.5	13.1	4.5	2.1	10.9	100.0
International	23.8	47.7	14.8	5.0	1.8	6.9	100.0
My teachers reflect a diversity of backgrounds							
Domestic	24.2	41.9	15.1	11.3	3.6	3.9	100.0
International	23.6	45.8	15.0	7.4	3.0	5.3	100.0
n= 40,971							

n= 40,971

While still skewed positively, the level of support for the statement concerning the culture being supportive drops markedly for those students who reported having experienced direct racism, Figure 9.3, with a much higher proportion reporting the neutral ‘neither agree nor disagree’ response. However, despite their experience, only a quarter disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement.

Figure 9.3 The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my university studies



9.4 Positive perspectives

The focus of this report has largely been on the negative outcomes for many staff and students at Australian universities as a result of racism. As the data reported in this and previous chapters shows, many have not experienced racism, and a significant proportion of staff and students, including some of those who have experienced racism at university, reported positively on the support universities give to their studies and careers, and

reported that they feel safe in the university environment, as well as being treated with respect and feeling included.

This was reflected in the sentiments expressed by a number of respondents. Drawing upon those who reported not having experienced racism at university but having experienced it outside of the university:

I wanted to study here because of the multiculturalism and as a past student, I knew I would feel supported and make new friends with students of other races. It's great here, I love studying at [university].

I haven't experienced racial discrimination in particular (about my ethnicity), however I have received some subtle Islamophobic comments as I am visibly Muslim. Luckily, this wasn't experienced at [university] and was instead in the general public - I have found everyone, staff and students, to be surprisingly very respectful and welcoming

[university] has been one of the most inclusive communities I have experienced. I grew up ... where I have constantly heard racist remarks toward Indians. I thought it was common until I started studying at [university] where I learnt these remarks are not normal

Everyone at the University has been great, inclusive and professional all the time

I was actually shocked to not experience any racism at all. I felt like a normal person who was just there to learn. I did not experience any stares which I often do when I am in areas which are not diverse. I experience racism at work a lot but at [university] not once did I feel any racism.

9.5 Assessment of university policies of support and inclusion

More detailed questions were asked about the effectiveness of a number of specific policies and programs. As these were only asked of those who professed knowledge of university programs, they should be considered as informed views, rather than reflecting the perspective of respondents overall.

9.5.1 Staff

The nature of this limitation on the respondent group for staff is in Table 9.10. As shown, only 34.6 per cent of academic and 32.8 per cent of non-academic staff provided an assessment of the programs, because they stated that they did not know, or were uncertain about the policies and programs the university had as a whole, because they were uncertain about whether the university had a specific policy, or because they were uncertain about its effectiveness.

Table 9.10 Potential and actual staff respondents to questions on policy effectiveness

Potential respondent population by reason why not reporting on effectiveness of specific measures (a):	Staff type	
	Academic	Non-Academic
	– % –	
Did not answer questions	4.7	4.8
Not aware of policies overall	30.6	30.2
Unsure about knowledge of policies overall	10.1	11.0
Uncertain about specific policy or whether university has it	5.4	5.0
Uncertain about effectiveness	14.7	16.1
Rated the program	34.6	32.8
Total	100.0	100.0

n = 28,034

(a) Based on response to question on recruitment and promotion practices, numbers will vary slightly with the range of specific questions.

Staff were asked to assess the effectiveness of 6 “programs, initiatives and services designed to address under-representation and racism” at their university:

- Recruitment and promotion practices to address racial inequality
- Mentorship and sponsorship program(s) to address racial inequality
- Career development program(s) promoting racial equality
- Support services for people who experience racism
- Cultural safety program(s)
- Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies.

Overall, Table 9.11, most staff ranked each of these as being effective, although with up to 25 per cent of staff disagreeing. There was an overall tendency for non-academic staff to be more positive in their assessment of program effectiveness. Notwithstanding the overall positive assessment, in most cases only around 10 per cent of staff considered any program to be ‘very effective’.

Table 9.11 Assessment of effectiveness of university policies to promote racial equality and address racism, staff by type

Staff type	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
Recruitment and promotion practices to address racial inequality - % -						
Academic staff	10.3	41.1	23.9	15.5	9.2	100.0
Non-academic staff	12.2	51.2	21.7	10.7	4.2	100.0
Mentorship and sponsorship program(s) to address racial inequality						
Academic staff	9.2	43.4	26.1	13.9	7.4	100.0
Non-academic staff	11.6	50.7	26.1	8.8	2.8	100.0
Career development program(s) promoting racial equality						
Academic staff	10.2	42.7	25.0	13.9	8.2	100.0
Non-academic staff	11.8	51.7	23.4	9.7	3.4	100.0
Support services for people who experience racism						
Academic staff	11.4	47.0	22.5	13.3	5.8	100.0
Non-academic staff	14.9	56.3	20.0	6.9	2.0	100.0
Cultural safety program(s)						
Academic staff	9.9	46.2	23.9	13.5	6.5	100.0
Non-academic staff	13.4	57.3	20.5	7.0	1.8	100.0
Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies						
Academic staff	7.9	42.2	26.7	15.4	7.8	100.0
Non-academic staff	10.8	52.7	24.3	9.5	2.7	100.0
n= 9,382						

n = 9,382

Although the same broad pattern of responses was also seen when the staff were divided into two groups, those with a 'European' heritage and those without, while still maintaining a majority positive assessment, those from non-'European' backgrounds tended toward more negative assessments, Table 9.12.

Table 9.12 Assessment of effectiveness of university policies to promote racial equality and address racism, staff by whether have a 'European' heritage

Broad ethnicity	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
Recruitment and promotion practices to address racial inequality - % -						
Non-‘European’	12.2	37.1	24.3	16.2	10.2	100.0
‘European’	11.0	52.5	21.7	10.7	4.1	100.0
Mentorship and sponsorship program(s) to address racial inequality						
Non-‘European’	11.0	38.4	27.5	15.2	7.9	100.0
‘European’	10.3	53.2	25.3	8.4	2.8	100.0
Career development program(s) promoting racial equality						
Non-‘European’	11.4	39.1	25.9	14.9	8.8	100.0
‘European’	11.0	53.2	23.0	9.4	3.3	100.0
Support services for people who experience racism						
Non-‘European’	14.1	43.1	24.7	12.4	5.8	100.0
‘European’	13.2	58.3	18.7	7.6	2.1	100.0
Cultural safety program(s)						
Non-‘European’	13.0	43.0	25.1	12.6	6.3	100.0
‘European’	11.5	58.1	20.1	8.0	2.3	100.0
Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies						
Non-‘European’	10.6	39.5	26.8	15.2	7.9	100.0
‘European’	9.2	53.1	24.5	10.1	3.1	100.0

n = 9,382

Across each of these policy and program areas there was a tendency for staff at the Group of Eight universities to provide a more negative, although still on balance, positive

assessment of the programs as being effective. This is illustrated with respect to recruitment and promotion policies in Table 9.13. Whereas universities in the other groupings tended to have ‘very effective’ ratings of some 11.4 per cent to 13.3 per cent, amongst the Go8 universities this was 9.6 per cent.

Table 9.13 Assessment of effectiveness of “Recruitment and promotion practices to address racial inequality”, by university grouping

University grouping	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
	- % -					
Go8	9.6	44.8	23.6	14.8	7.3	100.0
ATN	11.4	47.0	23.9	12.6	5.1	100.0
IRU	12.7	48.7	22.1	10.6	5.8	100.0
RUN	13.3	50.0	21.7	9.5	5.6	100.0
Other	13.0	49.5	20.0	11.8	5.8	100.0

n = 9,382

Although in material terms these differences are not necessarily large, they are though potentially indicative of either lower performance (or possibly higher staff expectations) at these universities.

There were also some differences in responses by gender. In broad terms the responses by those who identified as being female tended to be somewhat more dispersed than those by males, having more responses at either end of the distribution, but with little change in the balance, with this being even more distinct for those utilising other gender descriptors.

9.5.2 Students

As with staff, only a small proportion, 16.6 per cent of domestic students and 23.8 per cent of international students, answered the questions on the effectiveness of policies and programs. The breakdown of the reasons for this are in Table 9.14.

Table 9.14 Potential and actual student respondents to questions on policy effectiveness

Potential respondent population by reason why not reporting on effectiveness of specific measures:	Student type	
	Domestic	International
	- % -	
Did not answer questions	7.2	6.8
Not aware of policies overall	49.9	44.0
Unsure about knowledge of policies overall	9.9	14.8
Uncertain about specific policy or whether university has it	6.6	4.6
Uncertain about effectiveness	9.7	6.1
Rated the program	16.6	23.8
Total	100.0	100.0

n = 48,096 (Based on response to question on mentorship programs, numbers will vary slightly with the range of specific questions.)

As with the staff questions, the questions being asked of students were prefaced as “Thinking about current programs, initiatives and services designed to support inclusion and address racism”. Given the more generic nature of the policies and programs asked about, with most not specifically identifying the issues of equality, as was the case with the staff questions, it is less certain as to whether they were answered specifically within this constraint.

Overall each of the programs: Mentorship programs; Academic skills support; Career planning; Support systems for people who experience racism; Cultural safety programs; and Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies, was rated as being ‘effective’, although with only some 20 per cent of both domestic and international students considering them to be very effective, Table 9.15.

Table 9.15 Assessment of effectiveness of university policies to promote racial equality and address racism, students by type

Student type	Assessment of effectiveness:					Total
	Very effective	Effective	Neither	Ineffective	Very ineffective	
Mentorship program(s)						
- % -						
Domestic	14.7	48.7	25.3	8.0	3.3	100.0
International	18.7	53.2	21.4	5.1	1.6	100.0
Academic skills support						
Domestic	21.6	54.2	16.1	5.7	2.3	100.0
International	24.9	55.7	14.3	3.9	1.2	100.0
Career planning						
Domestic	18.3	51.1	20.5	7.0	3.1	100.0
International	21.6	51.0	18.4	6.5	2.5	100.0
Support systems for people who experience racism						
Domestic	21.1	49.8	19.5	6.2	3.4	100.0
International	24.9	52.4	16.2	4.8	1.7	100.0
Cultural safety program(s)						
Domestic	20.6	50.2	18.0	7.2	4.1	100.0
International	24.8	54.7	14.9	4.2	1.4	100.0
Anti-racism training and/or other anti-racism strategies						
Domestic	16.7	44.6	21.2	10.1	7.3	100.0
International	22.7	49.6	18.9	6.5	2.3	100.0

n = 9,005

9.6 Support for students and staff who experience racism

Most staff and students reported not seeking support following an experience of direct racism. The proportion who do ranges from 18.8 per cent of ‘European’ domestic students to 34.7 per cent of academic staff with non-‘European’ ethnicities. Across all respondent types there was a tendency for non- ‘European’ respondents to report a high use of support, Table 9.16.

Table 9.16 Proportion of staff and students who have experienced direct racism who have sought support.

	‘European’	Non- ‘European’	Total
Proportion sought support (%)			
Domestic student	18.8	26.7	24.5
International student	20.0	24.1	24.0
Academic staff	28.9	34.7	33.4
Non-academic staff	24.7	34.3	31.9

n = 9,132

Those students who did seek support drew upon this from a number of sources. The most common was support from outside of the university, Table 9.17. The use of this ranged from 73.4 per cent by ‘European’ domestic students to 42.8 per cent by non-‘European’ international students. Many solely used this means, with the proportion which only used outside support being 63.7 per cent for ‘European’ domestic students, 45.8 per cent for non-‘European’ domestic students, and 30.1 per cent for non-‘European’ international

students. This latter figure may be impacted by the extent to which these students may not have any substantial networks outside the university environment in Australia.

Table 9.17 Students who have experienced direct racism and have sought support, source of support

Source of support (a)	Domestic students		International students	
	'European'	Non-'European'	'European'	Non-'European'
Proportion who used support using (%)				
Someone in my college, faculty or school (for example a lecturer or tutor)	21.2	23.9	(b)	28.3
Someone from my residential college/dorm/house	3.8	7.3	(b)	13.5
Student leader (for example a Class Representative or Student Union or Student Association)	4.9	5.5	(b)	8.9
Student peers from my racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious background	23.4	29.1	(b)	37.8
Indigenous Higher Education Centre/Elders on Campus	–	7.6	(b)	1.3
University counselling and wellbeing services	10.3	19.3	(b)	35.7
Someone else from the university	12.5	15.0	(b)	18.4
Support from outside the university	73.4	64.6	(b)	42.8
Only outside	63.7	45.8	(b)	30.1

n = 1,341

(a) Multiple sources of support could be identified

(b) Insufficient number of responses to appropriately classify.

Support from peers is the most frequently cited form of internal university support reported. This is particularly high for non-'European' international students where 37.8 per cent reported using this form. The use of university counselling and wellbeing services varies. These are used by a little over a third, 35.7 per cent, of the international non-'European' students, by 19.3 per cent of non-'European' domestic students and by just 10.3 per cent of domestic students with a 'European' heritage. The other frequently used source is staff such as lecturers and tutors.

When asked about other sources of support used, students reported a range of mechanisms, sometimes making specific references to university services such as the Dean of Students, but more frequently family and friends.⁷⁶ A number however also made reference to using medical practitioners and psychologists.

As seen in Table 9.16, staff, both academic and non-academic, were more likely to report seeking support. In terms of using university based support academics tended to use colleagues, with this being much more frequent amongst those who were of 'European' heritages, followed by managers and supervisors, with non-'European' staff using these more frequently. For non-academic staff the order of these two sources is reversed, using the formal role of the manager/supervisor somewhat more frequently. Non-'European' non-academic staff used both of these sources more frequently than those with 'European' backgrounds.

Around a quarter, 27.0 per cent, of all staff who sought support used facilities such as University counselling, Employee Assistance Programs, or Human Resources staff, with

⁷⁶ With modern communications this family support is not just limited to Australian students, as summarised by one international student "I would just talk with my mum and dad back at home. They would console me, they still do :)".

this use being more frequent amongst non-academic staff from non-‘European’ backgrounds, 29.3 per cent, and lowest amongst non-academic staff with ‘European’ backgrounds, 24.5 per cent, Table 9.18.

There was relatively very little engagement of unions in the process, around 11 per cent for academic staff and lower rates for non-academic staff.

Table 9.18 Staff who have experienced direct racism and have sought support, source of support

Source of support	Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	‘European’	Non-‘European’	‘European’	Non-‘European’
Proportion who used support using (%)				
University Counselling & Wellbeing services	11.1	9.2	8.5	10.7
University Employee Assistance Program	14.3	13.2	17.0	16.1
People and Culture/HR staff member	14.3	9.0	13.2	9.6
University medical staff	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.1
Colleague in my faculty, school or department	39.7	31.6	20.8	28.0
Manager/Supervisor	22.2	25.2	26.4	31.1
Head of School	13.5	11.0	1.9	1.8
Union	11.1	11.4	2.8	7.1
Indigenous Higher Education Centre/Elders on Campus	1.6	4.0	0.9	4.1
Someone else from the university	11.9	11.4	17.0	18.6
Support from outside the university	53.2	57.0	62.3	51.6
Only support from outside	40.3	39.7	50.0	39.7

n = 1,172

As with students a high proportion, around 40 per cent of all staff except for ‘European’ non-academic staff where it was 50.0 per cent, reported only using support outside of the university.

9.7 Use and experience of complaints

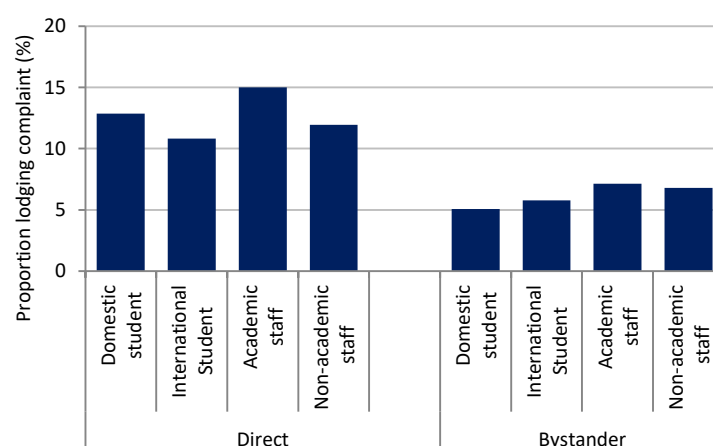
All universities have provision for receiving and considering complaints about racism as part of their overall responsibilities with regard to conduct, both in the context of their legal responsibilities concerning employees, and more widely with regard to codes of conduct of staff and students. Knowledge of how to make complaints has been discussed in section 8.2.1.

This section is concerned with the use of these mechanisms.

9.7.1 Reporting

In general, most staff and students reported that they do not lodge complaints following incidents of racism either where it is direct racism experienced by the person, or where it is observed as a bystander. As illustrated in Figure 9.4, incidents of personally experienced direct racism are reported to universities at a higher rate than those observed as bystanders.

Figure 9.4 Whether or not a complaint is made following a racism incident, by type of incident



Specifically, the rate of making complaints varies from 5.1 per cent by domestic students who are bystanders to racist conduct to 15.0 per cent by academic staff experiencing direct interpersonal racism. Reasons for non-reporting are discussed in section 8.6.3.

9.7.2 Satisfaction with complaints mechanisms

Those staff and students who have used university complaints procedures following an act of racism are in general highly dissatisfied with the outcome. This is particularly marked where it has involved direct racism.

As shown in Table 9.19, the level of dissatisfaction is less marked in the case of international students and non-academic staff reporting bystander racism. In all other categories the majority, and in many cases the overwhelming majority, of assessments are ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’, with this rising to as high as 80 per cent for academic staff reporting direct racism.

Table 9.19 Satisfaction with university response to complaints about racism, staff and students by type and nature of racist incident

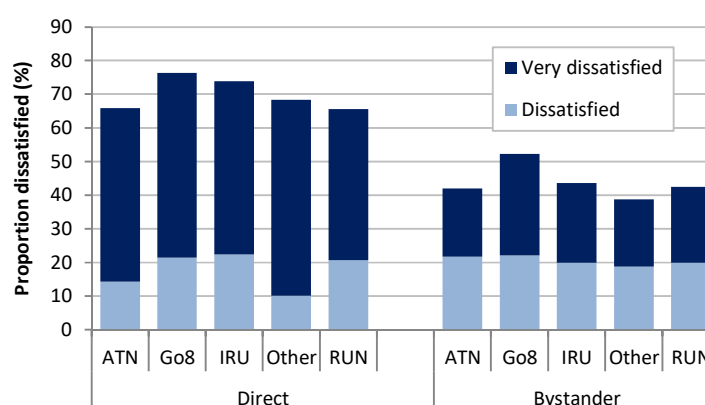
Staff and students by type	Assessment of university response:					Total
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Direct – % –						
Domestic student	5.3	9.1	16.7	18.0	50.9	100.0
International student	4.4	7.7	25.6	18.8	43.5	100.0
Academic staff	3.6	5.8	10.6	19.6	60.4	100.0
Non-academic staff	5.0	8.5	18.6	21.6	46.2	100.0
Bystander						
Domestic student	4.7	14.7	28.9	22.3	29.4	100.0
International student	16.1	32.1	24.7	11.1	16.1	100.0
Academic staff	4.9	18.0	18.9	19.7	38.5	100.0
Non-academic staff	11.2	29.6	21.1	21.7	16.5	100.0

n = 1,119 (direct), 566 (bystander)

By broad ethnicity there are no consistent patterns, while ‘Europeans’ were slightly more satisfied with universities’ performance with the handling of complaints about direct racism, they were less satisfied than non-‘European’ respondents with complaints about

racism they had reported as bystanders. While the pattern of dissatisfaction is found across universities, as seen in Figure 9.5, there are some differences between groups of universities, with somewhat higher levels of dissatisfaction being reported by staff and students attending Group of Eight universities. However, across all these groupings the overwhelming response is one of high levels of dissatisfaction.

Figure 9.5 Rate of dissatisfaction with university response to complaints about racism, by university grouping and nature of racist incident



The main reason given for being dissatisfied was that making a complaint “made no difference”, along with half of the respondents reporting that the process caused them additional distress, and that they felt they could not trust the people involved in the process.

Table 9.20 Reasons for being dissatisfied with complaints process, by type of racism

Reasons for dissatisfaction (a)	Type of racism:	
	Direct	Bystander
	(b)	
	- % -	
Process too complex	23.8	17.7
Made no difference	82.2	81.9
Not kept confidential	20.0	9.2
Not believed	29.0	15.4
Felt embarrassed/ashamed	21.0	-
Process caused additional distress	53.4	-
Felt could not trust people in process	52.9	-
Too hard to prove	28.2	-
Process too long	33.4	-
Other	18.3	22.3
Student specific		
Negatively impact grades (student)	23.7	22.3
Got into trouble (student)	15.4	7.6
Staff specific		
Negatively impact career (staff)	32.4	15.5

n = 785 (direct), 260 (indirect)

(a) Multiple reasons could be provided

(b) A more limited set of questions were asked for those who took action after being a bystander.

A significant group of respondents reported there being direct adverse outcomes for their study or employment as a result of lodging a complaint. A quarter of students who were dissatisfied with the outcome reported that complaining had a negative impact on their

grades. A third of staff, 32.4 per cent, who were dissatisfied following a complaint about the direct racism reported that their complaint, and its handling through the complaints mechanism, had a negative impact on their career, with a lesser, but still significant, 15.5 per cent of those who had lodged a complaint as a bystander, reporting a negative career impact.

Non-‘European’ respondents who complained after direct racism were more likely to cite the complexity of the process, 25.7 per cent relative to 15.5 per cent, and it being too hard to prove, 31.0 per cent to 15.5 per cent, relative to ‘European’ respondents, but were slightly less likely to report it was because they were not believed, 28.9 per cent relative to 29.6 per cent. Non-‘European’ student respondents more likely to report a negative impact on grades, 24.6 per cent to 18.8 per cent, and staff respondents on careers 33.6 per cent relative to 28.2 per cent than ‘European’ respondents, where they complained about direct racism.

Those who gave additional written responses highlighted a variety of outcomes. The most common theme of these was frustration with both the outcome and the processes:

If anything I was humiliated for complaining.

It was treated as a "misunderstanding due to cultural differences".

The offender was not made to apologise and instead the university apologised on her behalf. Unacceptable.

Admin and authority did work well but the tutor took it personally and even not admitting her mistake and stated it should not hurt me

It took seven months for me to hear back from them, and the result was that the [person cited] is a contractor and they can do nothing about it.

There is no response yet for the complaint even after one year. (Sent 2 reminders as well)

A number of the responses also asserted that universities had acted to protect those more senior, rather than addressing the complaint.

9.7.3 Reasons for not making a complaint

As observed previously only a small proportion of people who experience racism lodge a formal complaint. The most frequently given reasons for this were that there was an absence of trust in the process to actually achieve change, and a fear of the consequences for the person if they made a complaint, Table 9.21. This was consistent across both students and staff and indeed was most marked amongst academic staff.

One marked difference between the reasons given by staff and students for not complaining concerned knowledge, both of there being a capacity to make a complaint and knowledge of how to do so. This was reported at double the rate by students relative to staff. While only cited at its highest, at 19.6 per cent, by international students, this suggests a need for ongoing attention to publicising both the right to complain and the means for doing so.

Table 9.21 Reasons for not making a complaint after an experience of direct racism, by respondent type

Reason for not lodging a complaint following an experience of direct racism (a)	Respondent type:			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
		- % -		
I did not know I could complain	15.7	19.6	6.6	5.8
I did not know how to make a complaint	15.9	21.3	7.0	7.2
The complaint process is too hard, long or confusing	19.1	25.5	16.6	13.5
I did not think it was important enough to make a complaint	36.8	34.2	19.9	27.1
I was worried about the consequences of making a complaint	40.2	50.4	53.2	52.0
I felt it was too upsetting or emotionally difficult to complain	17.7	27.2	24.5	20.2
I didn't trust the complaint process to change anything	56.8	55.6	63.0	60.0
I dealt with it myself	24.8	25.2	22.3	23.1
Other	14.4	9.3	17.2	17.4

n = 7,950

(a) multiple reasons could be provided

In around a quarter to a third of cases people reported that they did not think that the event was significant enough to warrant a complaint, with a quarter reporting that they dealt with it themselves. The issue of 'insignificance' however can hide more fundamental issues. As one respondent noted:

Many interactions of racism are 'microaggressions' which the university would not take seriously but cause significant ongoing harm for students

Another recurrent theme, in particular by international students, was the impact of taking any actions on their studies, and their capacity to study in Australia.

I want to complete my course first. Then I'll make a complaint. I don't want the complaint procedure to derail my research program.

As an international student you always try to avoid these things because you're on a visa and trying to just get our studies done with.

For many however not taking action simply reflected that experience of racism was simply a constant in their lives.

Growing up brown in Australia it's just something u deal with. In my experience, complaining doesn't really do much except make yourself look bad tbh

For me, being discriminated against because of my Ethnicity has become a normal part of my life, I've always been discriminated against because I'm mixed and I've never seen anyone deal with it because "it's not a big deal", so I always brush it aside in the moment and deal with it emotionally at home, I don't think anyone would understand the pain of never being enough because I'll only ever be half of what they want

9.8 Universities and politics

Reponses to the survey also raised broader issues around the 'political' role of the university, and of students and staff, both in terms of the actual stance taken by the university on issues, and the activities that take place at university, and the interface this has with racism. Some of the respondents argued for universities to be free from politics:

I don't feel that university is the place to have political protests such as the 'Free Palestine' movement as this would be traumatic for any Jewish/Israel students. University should not be seen to be biased. The same goes for pro Ukraine protests as this may make any Russian students uncomfortable. University is for learning.

Avoid politics. We are coming on campus to study, don't harass us with your politics and let us learn what we came to learn.

In a number of cases these types of criticisms related to some universities having taken a stance on the Voice Referendum:

At the time of the The Voice referendum I felt that [university] was a very unsafe place to work. Global emails with Aboriginal salutations and an encouragement to support the "YES" position which the university supported was disgraceful and divisive. I could not speak freely on the topic ... I DO NOT WANT THE UNIVERSITIES OPINION ON POLITICAL MATTERS, EVER.

For example, the role of a university in a referendum campaign is to facilitate public debates, but [university] instead decided to tell the plebs what to think during the Voice referendum, damaging [university]'s perception of impartiality and therefore our credibility in our actual areas of expertise.

More broadly many of the responses criticised universities for what they saw as presenting a pervasive left political perspective:

The university has shifted into a political platform, straying from its core mission of education and teaching. It fosters division and discriminates against the majority. Cease pandering to politics and leftist ideologies. Universities should focus entirely on education, not politics, gender, or race.

A more general criticism was that while it was appropriate for universities to be engaged, there was selectivity on which issues they did:

[It should] take a moral stance at important times such as the Voice Referendum or against the genocide regardless of the skin-color of those involved.... The fact that [university] takes a clear stance on Ukraine/Russia war and fails to do so when at least one of the parties are non-White is racist.

When Russia attacked Ukraine, there was an immediate email from the VC, there were flags and posters across the University. The VC avoids talking about Palestine and would not be transparent about [university]'s involvement in research, its environmental and social impact.

This type of comment, along with those which mentioned calls for universities to divest from certain investments and partnerships, emphasised that inaction is as political as action, that a decision on investment is just as political as a decision to divest, a decision not to speak is as much a decision to speak.

As discussed in Chapter 1, these comments raise some of the significant issues around the natures of racism at Australian universities, and the role of universities. They illustrate the intertwining of nationality, national actions and racism, the challenge of how to

promote academic freedom, including redressing the extent to which staff and students, as reported in previous chapters, feel that they are prevented from speaking freely, yet manage the question of others taking offence on the stances they might express. These responses to the survey also raise questions about how the university engages in controversial subjects, and also emphasise the importance of interrogating university actions through an anti-racist lens.

9.9 Summary

Perceptions of whether racism is a problem at respondents' universities are strongly divided on the basis of the individual's own experience of racism, with those who have not experienced racism generally not seeing it as a problem.

Overall knowledge of programs and policies to address racism and support diversity is limited, although on the specific question of knowledge of how to report racism the most common response was that, while people lacked the immediate knowledge, they were confident they could find it if needed. There was however a substantial group of students who reported that they simply did not know. Amongst those who were aware of the policies the overall assessment of both policy effectiveness and engagement in their development tended to be positive. Where there were criticisms of the policies these were mainly about poor implementation, although some saw the policies as biased.

Most who experienced racism did not report this, and those who did make a complaint have quite high rates of dissatisfaction with the way in which this was managed. The primary reasons were that complaining made no difference. This was also the main reason given by those who did not use university mechanisms to make a complaint. When people experienced racism at university, both staff and students, said they sought their support from outside of the university.

Regarding the broader policies around diversity and inclusion, these were generally viewed positively, as were questions as to the extent universities encouraged and supported staff and students, although up to 20 percent of academic staff dissented.

Staff, as detailed in Chapter 4, and echoed in the analysis in Chapter 6, considered that there was a significant absence of diversity in the leadership of their universities.

As reported in previous chapters, the analysis of experiences of racism highlighted that a key element was that people were unable to express their views freely. At the same time as detailed in Chapter 6, many reported that protests at universities, or policies to restrict these, were dimensions of the racism they experienced. These themes are echoed more generally in responses to the survey concerning political engagement at, and by, universities. Taking these together highlights a central challenge for universities.

10 Reflections and conclusion

The Racism@Uni survey has provided a rich insight into the perceptions, views and experiences of staff and students at Australian universities. It has identified pervasive experiences of racism both direct and indirect, and some significant weaknesses across a range of mechanisms which universities have put in place, and deeper challenges around the composition, role and conduct of university leadership. This chapter focuses on these and the broader context.

The survey has also highlighted that racism in Australia is not just a problem at university. Rather racism at university is also a reflection of racism across the Australian community. And indeed, persistently across all the analysis undertaken, the rate of direct racism reported as being experienced at university is less than the respondent communities face in their broader activities.

Notwithstanding this, it can equally be considered that universities should be held to higher standards in terms of their duty of care towards students, and their role within society.

10.1 The incidence of direct racism

The incidence of racism identified in the survey is detailed in Table 10.1

Table 10.1 Survey respondents, incidence of direct interpersonal racism

Type	Incidence of racism experienced at university	Incidence of racism experienced outside university	Total incidence of racism
	– per cent –		
Domestic student	13.2	31.0	34.1
International student	18.6	46.5	50.4
Academic staff	20.5	26.0	33.2
Non-academic staff	11.8	21.7	25.6

Benchmarking against other research suggests that the Racism@Uni survey may have however been subject to response bias, that is being more likely to have been completed by those who have had an experience of racism. This type of bias is not unusual in any voluntary study. The extent of this, however, could not be determined. While, however, the absolute incidence cannot be precisely estimated, the survey points to pervasive experiences of racism and racial discrimination by staff and students at Australian universities and more broadly in the community.

10.2 The university environment

The focus of analysis in preceding chapters has largely been directed at the negative experiences of individuals at universities. At the same time, as reported in earlier chapters, even when faced with adverse events, many still reported positive aspects of attachment and the majority reported being safe. Similarly, even within some of the identified

communities which have a high incidence of racism, there are many staff and students who reported that they have not, and indeed many wrote of the positive environment they had experienced.

The survey shows however that there are deep differences in perceptions about racism at university between those who have experienced it and those who have not.

The data also shows that while there is a broader issue of racism being structurally embedded in the nature of the institutions and in courses, actual acts of direct interpersonal racism are for many infrequent. But when they occur, they have a significant impact on staff and students' mental health, studies and work:

Studying here for the last two years, I never faced it earlier. I loved my teachers; they are all amazing and are able to provide a safe learning experience. But a few days ago ... it was not at all a safe learning environment. It was kind of emotionally draining. I was not able to sleep for two nights because this affected me so much.

Equally the role of universities is one to ask hard questions and to challenge. For some of the respondents to the survey this does cause unease, in particular when it touches on areas such as the history of colonisation and dispossession, international conflicts, and religious beliefs.

It is also important to recognise that racism at university is not simply about the experience of any specific group. Rather it is about the whole of the body of university staff and students. It is about the many diverse ethnicities which make up Australia, including many with multiple, mixed, identities.

10.2.1 Academic freedom and freedom of speech

However ill-defined and contentious, academic freedom is a hallmark value of universities. Achieving it requires that people are free to express their views and understandings. One of the marked findings of the survey is the extent to which staff and students, in identifying racist acts, cite that an element of this was "Feeling that I could not express my views openly".

For those on visas this was echoed by the significant proportion who reported that they "do not express their views because it might affect your visa".

Critically this finding was echoed across groups, including those taking opposing stances on other issues.

For Australian universities which pride themselves on openness, this reveals that current policies and settings are not working, and that explicit and very frequently implicit policies and actions are constraining rather than promoting openness. It is also a challenge to staff and students. Openness means being exposed to ideas and views with which one may disagree, with views one might consider morally disdainful, or views which challenge one's own academic beliefs and interpretations. And given these views are also frequently shaped by strong moral beliefs, expression will not always be dispassionate.

One concern reported by students and staff were the implications of speaking out for their visas to study or work in Australia,⁷⁷ universities should seek to reassure these members of their community of their rights to speak openly and universities' willingness to back them.

10.2.2 University leadership

Two strong themes emerge from the survey findings. First, university leadership was frequently identified as participating in the racism experienced by individuals. Second, respondents made extensive comments about the extent that their university leadership was white and frequently privileged and not reflective of the composition of university staff, of students or of the Australia population. It could well be argued that these two themes are not independent, but rather the first follows from the second.

The extent of the identification of the role of university leadership was particularly marked in the experience of some of the communities of students and staff who faced the highest rates of racism at university, and amongst higher grades of academic staff.

10.2.3 University policies

While some university policies did garner support from survey respondents, although again with results which were dramatically impacted by the experience of racism, the two hallmarks of many particular university policies were that they were ineffective and tokenistic.

Specifically, the university complaints procedures were seen as being ineffective by those who had used them and by those who decided not to use them. In part the ineffectiveness is a result of the often slow and bureaucratic processes, but more so because they were not seen as actually changing anything.

Other university policies were seen as performative, rather than having substance or meaning. This included in many cases how Welcome to, or Acknowledgement of Country was implemented. Many staff members, in particular academic staff with non-'European' backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, reported on it being used in a tokenistic way.

Another area which was reported disproportionately by some communities was the role of university security. The pattern of responses received can only be considered as evidence of racial profiling by these services.

⁷⁷ It is probable that these concerns of staff and students have been exacerbated by reporting such as "the Coalition would cancel the visas of international students who participate in the pro-Palestinian protests" (The Australian, 28 May 2024), as well as the reporting of policies in other countries. Ministerial direction 110 notes that application of the provisions of the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) related to the character test "must be balanced against Australia's well established tradition of free expression" and "The grounds in these sub-paragraphs are not intended to provide a charter for denying entry or continued stay to persons merely because they hold and are likely to express unpopular opinions" (Giles 2024, 23) This underlines the need for universities to ensure students and staff fully understand their rights, and the need for a commitment by universities to supporting them exercising this right

10.2.4 The student experience

Much of the racism reported by students was attributed to actions of academic and other teaching staff, those with a direct responsibility to support these students in their studies.

Within the education field two items stand out. The first concerns group or project work. Many reported that, rather than this being an opportunity for students to work together, such teaching approaches operated to reinforce divisions and lead to exclusion, particularly for international students. Addressing this requires the development of more deliberative policies and strategies.

The second is the role of student placements and related activities. These need to be managed in a way to ensure they are safe and respectful to students, including protecting them from racism.

Related to the challenges of academic freedom, and some of the 'backlash' seen in the survey, there is also an obligation for university teachings to explain why. This includes helping students to learn why racism is destructive to individuals and society, why it is important to acknowledge Country, and why they might find their views and beliefs challenged. At the same time there is a need to ensure that pedagogy in areas such as critical race teaching is delivered appropriately.

International students face a heavier burden of racism both at university and outside, as well as the additional challenges they frequently face in their studies, and very often the financial load they and their families have taken on to allow them to study. Addressing this burden needs to be as much a priority as is their role in the university's balance sheet. This involves not just taking action at the university level, but also taking up the cause of these students in areas such as racism from public transport operators.

10.2.5 The staff experience

The highest level of direct racism reported in the survey was by academic staff, and this was not restricted to more junior staff.

In addition to needing to address this, the survey identified that many staff because of their ethnic background, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, are carrying an additional cultural burden and are expected by universities to go beyond their own responsibilities under the claim of 'inclusion' to undertake additional duties, which are at times nothing more than inclusion theatre for the university's benefit.

10.2.6 Individual universities

While some universities have been identified as having higher rates of racism, and there is variation in this and in other experiences across the university groupings, there is little to be gained from any concentration on the margin when the base is so high. What this survey shows is that every university has a problem which needs to be addressed.

10.3 The nature of racism

The survey has also highlighted the complexity of the experience of racism. As many respondents have indicated, not all racism is deliberate or ill-intended, but this can be just

as devastating as direct abuse. At the same time, the survey highlights many areas of cultural practice which can be difficult to navigate.

It also highlights the role of stereotypes in fuelling racism, of seeing staff and students through the lens of a national or a racial stereotype, rather than individuals, and of making assumptions.

10.3.1 The nature of racism

From the survey two important strands of racism emerge. The first is structural racism, embedded in the structure of universities (and indeed more widely across Australian institutions), what they teach as knowledge, who they admit and promote, the composition of their hierarchy, and who exerts power and influence, in large part reflecting Australia's European colonial heritage. The second is interpersonal racism, people's behaviours based on cultural assumptions and ignorance, xenophobia, views of racial, religious, or national superiority, or conflicts. Effective anti-racism policies require both to be addressed, and both bring with them harms.

Simply focusing on the first, without addressing the second, generates a gap between the lived experiences of people and the policies, undermining the support which addressing structural racism requires. Conversely addressing the second only, disguises the structural element, and presents racism as simply an issue of individual attitudes and behaviours.

10.3.2 Racism and conflict and nations

The genesis of this project was rooted in international conflict, and many students come from countries that have engaged in, been victims, or perpetrators of conflict, either internal or external. While in some cases these conflicts are military, in other cases they relate to geopolitical power and trade, or simply national chauvinism, and the consequences of believing your nation is superior to others.

Not all of these can, and some would consider should not, simply be set aside in a university environment. Indeed, inquiring into these, understanding their consequences, and the moral basis for the stances of the parties is integral to learning. For many, either from these learnings, or their own involvement, they will consider it an obligation to take a stance. At times the stances that individual staff and students take will conflict.

These factors came into play strongly in some dimensions of the survey, and we consider it appropriate for the data to be looked at through this lens.

10.3.3 Those who commit racism

The data from the survey clearly shows that while a very high proportion of the racism experienced was by white Australians and others with European heritages, this is not the only racism that is occurring at university. Rather, all groups reported racism and racial discrimination between different non-European communities, and racism within communities, as well as racism directed from these communities to those with European heritages. Specific experiences reported in the survey also reflect this.

Understanding and embedding this in policies, practices and messaging is important. To fail to do so not only results in policies which miss much of the racism which is occurring, and racism which can be as damaging for individuals as that which may come from a

dominant group in society. For universities this is important given the diversity of student and staff populations and hence the significant scope for these multiple manifestations, similarly are the issues which have been reported by those of mixed heritages.

It is also important in the messaging to those of European backgrounds that they are not just a separate class of people who are sole perpetrators of racism, but rather they, as with all other groups, have a responsibility to tackle this problem.

This is not to deny that some groups face much heavier burdens than others. It is very clear in the results detailed in previous chapters that some groups face racism at much higher rates than others, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

10.3.4 Negative racial attitudes

While the approach used in the survey and analysis is limited, it does point to a small group of respondents who have potentially negative racial attitudes. While much of the analysis in this report was focused on those with a European heritage, as part of analysis to understand the nature of racism reported by this group, as detailed similar distributions occurred for other communities.

With respect to those with European heritages the existence of these attitudes, and the sentiments of those who consider themselves a victim of anti-racism strategies, and of the changing nature of Australia and its universities, in particular in the student population, is a concern.

At the same time there is evidence of a degree of deracination and alienation across Australians with a European heritage. While some of this can be seen as losing white privilege, the data indicates that it goes beyond this. One dimension is that of their own identity and the extent to which they perceive themselves solely as Australian, with no links or identification with the lands and people they, or in many cases, generations of their ancestors came from, yet in this context are also settlers, as indeed are all subsequent waves of arrivals, regardless of their ethnicities, who live on lands which had been seized from the original inhabitants, who have never ceded sovereignty. This requires a sensitive understanding which, from many of the comments which were received in this study, many practices in universities have not sought to build.

10.4 Implications for future data collection

One of the objectives of this survey was to establish a benchmark for future surveys into racism at university. In large part we consider we were successful. The data collected through the scale of the survey is incredibly rich and provides for a detailed insight. While we consider the results to be indicative of the extent of racism, we recognise, however, given its voluntary nature, and the limited participation by some groups including students, it is not an entirely robust measure of the actual incidence. This highlights the need to complement this type of survey with other approaches, including key questions in other surveys on other topics, such as the Student Experience Survey, and various university specific surveys, which directly address racism and allow for benchmarking of this type of more intensive survey. We also note the challenges of seeking collection of data on ethnicity/race/identity, and would suggest more categorical tick box approaches, even at the risk of othering or people feeling excluded. We have noted in the introduction

extensive comments and criticisms from participants which also need to be borne in mind. Appendix I considers this in more detail. Also, in focusing on racism it needs to be recognised that there is a risk that this avoids other challenges such as sexism and ableism.

10.5 Conclusion

The survey finds extensive racism across Australian universities, with this impacting some groups more heavily than others. However, the survey also finds that racism within universities also reflects a broader pattern of racism present throughout Australian society. In fact, staff and students reported higher rates of racism in the wider community than within university settings. The survey also found that racism takes many forms and cannot be simply seen in terms of a dominant group and negatively racialised subgroups.

The survey does however show the significant challenges facing universities. These include the need to give greater attention to ensuring free speech, even at the cost of this offending some, as well as providing a better learning environment for students, and work environment for staff. Principally though there is a challenge for universities in their structure, and the composition and behaviours of their leadership.

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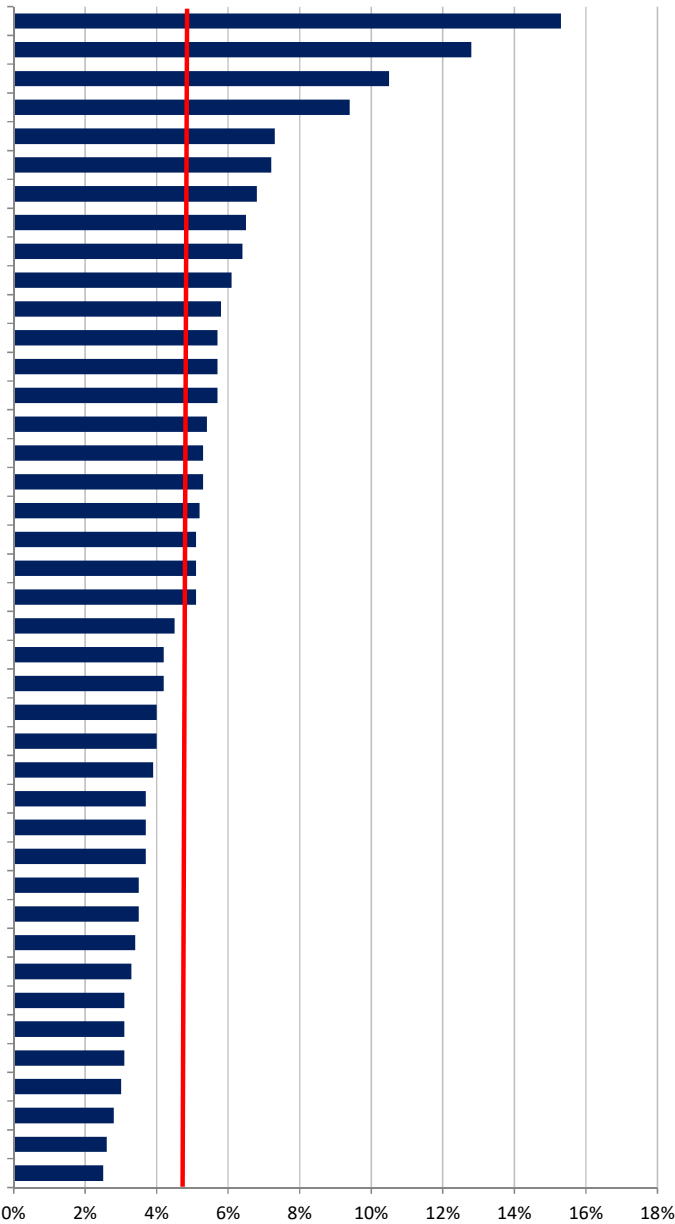
Appendix A Response Rates

This appendix considers the response rate to the survey. Three measures are used: (a) a crude response rate, the ratio of completed surveys to invitations to participate at the university level; (b) response rates by country/region of birth, and (c) total, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, aggregate population response rates.

A.1. Crude response rates by university

Across all universities the crude response rate to the survey, that is the ratio of usable responses to the number of invitations issued, was 4.6 per cent. By university the response rate varied from 2.5 per cent to 15.3 per cent, Figure A1.

Figure A1. Crude response rate by university



Details of the number of invitation emails sent, survey responses, and survey response rates for individual universities are reported in Table A1.

Table A1. University crude response rates

University	Survey responses	Number of emails sent	Survey response rate
	nfp	nfp	na
	nfp	nfp	2.5%
	nfp	nfp	2.6%
	nfp	nfp	2.8%
	nfp	nfp	3.0%
	nfp	nfp	3.1%
	nfp	nfp	3.1%
	nfp	nfp	3.1%
	nfp	nfp	3.3%
	nfp	nfp	3.4%
	nfp	nfp	3.5%
	nfp	nfp	3.5%
	nfp	nfp	3.7%
	nfp	nfp	3.7%
	nfp	nfp	3.7%
	nfp	nfp	3.9%
	nfp	nfp	4.0%
	nfp	nfp	4.0%
	nfp	nfp	4.2%
	nfp	nfp	4.2%
	nfp	nfp	4.5%
	nfp	nfp	5.1%
	nfp	nfp	5.1%
	nfp	nfp	5.1%
	nfp	nfp	5.2%
	nfp	nfp	5.3%
	nfp	nfp	5.3%
	nfp	nfp	5.4%
	nfp	nfp	5.7%
	nfp	nfp	5.7%
	nfp	nfp	5.7%
	nfp	nfp	5.8%
	nfp	nfp	6.1%
	nfp	nfp	6.4%
	nfp	nfp	6.5%
	nfp	nfp	6.8%
	nfp	nfp	7.2%
	nfp	nfp	7.3%
	nfp	nfp	9.4%
	nfp	nfp	10.5%
	nfp	nfp	12.8%
	nfp	nfp	15.3%
Total	76,131	1,671,071	4.6%
nfp not for publication			

A.2. Estimated response rates by type of staff/student and country of birth

Overall, it is estimated that, using 2024 staff and student numbers, that the response rate to the survey was approximately 3.3 per cent for domestic students, 2.9 per cent for international students, 18.3 per cent for academic staff and 22.2 per cent for non-academic staff.

Estimated response rates for staff and students by university are reported in Table A2.

Table A2 Estimated response rates by staff and student type, by university

Institution	2024 Staff and Student numbers (a)				Response rate			
	Domestic students	International students	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	Domestic students	International students	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
	– Persons –				– % –			
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	0.3	0.3	6.1	nfp
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	1.3	1.6	19.1	22.8
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	1.8	1.7	8.1	12.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.0	3.3	7.0	11.7
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.1	2.5	21.5	15.8
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.2	2.3	21.3	29.1
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.4	3.4	17.0	15.7
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.4	1.5	9.8	9.0
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.5	3.1	16.2	24.3
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.6	0.2	23.9	17.6
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.6	3.6	14.3	16.2
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.8	2.1	17.2	21.0
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	2.8	2.2	16.0	19.2
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.0	2.1	19.0	21.9
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.1	3.3	17.9	22.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.1	1.2	18.5	21.9
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.2	0.9	15.2	15.1
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.2	5.9	25.0	30.8
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.3	2.7	29.0	29.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.3	3.2	30.8	29.9
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.4	4.5	23.6	23.7
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.4	3.7	19.1	23.2
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.4	1.8	20.1	31.3
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.4	2.0	18.7	23.3
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.6	3.1	36.0	41.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.8	2.9	12.4	18.8
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.8	3.5	7.4	13.1
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	3.9	0.8	19.9	26.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.1	5.6	16.2	27.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.2	4.6	22.5	19.0
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.4	2.2	27.1	31.5
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.4	2.5	27.0	28.9
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.5	9.3	26.7	41.6
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.5	3.8	26.9	29.2
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	4.7	12.7	20.9	39.4
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	5.1	2.8	31.7	34.0
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	5.9	2.0	26.6	23.5
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	6.1	4.2	33.4	37.0
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	7.0	6.6	19.3	23.2
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	7.4	7.1	26.1	25.6
	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp	11.8	19.4	35.7	28.8
Total	1,018,956	494,717	58,866	77,461	3.3	2.9	18.3	22.2

nfp not for publication

Table A3 presents estimated response rates for staff and students by country of birth. The estimates shown in the table are likely to be underestimates for students due to the significant number of survey responses which did not provide details of their country of birth. For staff, while the estimated response for the not-stated category is lower than that

of the actual averages across the population as a whole, this is a result of limitations in the data provided by universities to the Department of Education.

Table A3 Estimated response rates by type and Region/Country of Birth

Country/Region of birth	Persons 2024 (a)				Approximate response rates (a)			
	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-academic staff
		– Persons –				– % –		
Aust & NZ	777,562	1,013	20,950	35,971	2.8	4.4	23.6	27.1
UK Ireland US								
Canada	39,167	10,279	4,253	3,938	3.5	2.5	25.3	34.8
Bal W&N								
Europe	5,915	6,876	1,862	1,061	4.2	2.8	18.2	28.3
S&E Europe	8,335	3,195	1,688	1,292	3.9	3.8	13.9	18.7
Bal Oceania	4,107	2,532	184	322	3.8	4.4	14.1	22.7
Iran	4,640	3,726	738	221	2.9	4.3	13.7	27.1
Bal MENA	16,970	9,018	735	535	2.9	2.5	21.0	24.5
Indonesia	2,546	14,097	207	449	3.3	4.1	22.2	19.4
Malaysia	6,296	11,511	565	801	3.4	3.0	17.9	24.2
Singapore	4,635	7,149	295	442	3.7	3.6	22.7	25.8
Vietnam	4,990	22,353	439	516	2.6	2.0	10.9	14.0
Philippines	13,555	6,564	151	522	2.8	3.7	23.2	20.7
Bal SE Asia	4,429	9,082	172	283	3.2	2.2	22.7	19.4
Hong Kong	5,077	10,522	261	435	3.1	2.3	18.0	22.3
China	21,082	178,782	2,618	2,067	2.6	1.5	10.5	17.9
Bal NE Asia	8,896	15,199	635	606	2.5	3.0	11.2	18.0
India	28,498	78,891	1,256	2,102	2.6	2.1	23.6	22.4
Pakistan	5,148	9,606	254	213	3.3	1.9	15.4	22.5
Bangladesh	2,930	15,806	433	189	2.6	3.0	18.9	17.5
Sri Lanka	6,982	16,400	523	534	2.5	2.6	16.6	18.2
Nepal	5,259	27,074	110	174	1.9	2.0	13.6	17.8
Bhutan	208	12,806	23	30	3.4	3.0	–	–
Bal S&C Asia	3,571	818	100	90	3.4	8.6	40.0	62.2
Bal Americas	5,997	6,437	889	929	3.8	4.0	21.4	29.2
South Africa	10,263	834	453	573	3.1	2.8	23.4	23.7
Bal Africa	13,453	12,939	780	613	2.7	3.1	20.9	23.2
Not stated (b)	8,446	1,210	18,291	22,553	62.3	264.4	11.9	12.6
Total	1,018,957	494,719	58,865	77,461	3.3	2.9	18.3	22.2

(a) Data for country/region of birth has been derived from data supplied by the Department of Education. As student and staff counts in this data differ from the counts derived from the published tables the populations have been prorated to benchmark against the published estimates.

(b) This line is for completeness. It does not represent any substantive comparison, though it does indicate that the actual response rates for individual countries/regions are a little underestimated

A.3. Estimated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff response rates

Using data published by the Department of Education, it is estimated that the response rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff were 5.9 per cent for domestic students, 37.7 per cent for academic staff and 34.0 per cent for non-academic staff, Table A4. While the Department of Education advises “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is of poor quality and should be used with caution”, and there are some additional factors noted in the table notes, the data points to a very high response rate by staff and students from these communities, significantly above the rates recorded for staff and students as a whole.

Table A4 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and student response rates

Type	2024 Number at university (a)	Survey respondents	Response rate (%)
Students	23,188	1,373	5.9
Staff			
Academic	921	347	37.7
Non-academic	1,490	507	34.0

(a) Students from: Department of Education, Higher Education student statistics collection, 2024, Table 6.2: Commencing and All First Nations Students by State and Higher Education Institution, 2024. Staff from: Higher Education staff statistics collection, 2024, Table 3.3 Number of Full-time and Fractional Full-time First Nations Staff by State, Higher Education Institution, Function and Current Duties Classification, 2024

Note: The Department of Education staff data excludes casual employees. The survey data indicates that 10.4 per cent of academic staff and 5.7 per cent of non-academic are either casual or sessional employees. No adjustment has been made for this.

Additionally, 7.2 per cent of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander academic staff reported that they were either Honorary, Emeriti, not sure or preferred not to say, in response to employment arrangements, as did 3.2 per cent of non-academic staff. No adjustment has been made for this.

A.4. Implications of response rate for survey estimates

Table A5 considers the impact of the differential response rates by university and by country of birth on the estimated incidence of racism. This should be considered as being indicative of the type of bias these introduce. Specifically, it is noted:

Table A5 Estimated rates of racism using different weighting schemes

Based on:	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non- academic staff	Total
Weighting by university student & staff numbers					
Racism at university					
– % –					
Survey	13.24	18.58	20.49	11.80	14.90
Weighted	13.61	19.10	21.04	12.14	15.45
Racism outside of university					
Survey	30.97	46.52	26.03	21.75	30.94
Weighted	31.47	47.47	26.48	22.37	35.66
Total racism (either at university or outside)					
Survey	34.05	50.44	33.19	25.62	34.93
Weighted	34.60	51.82	33.65	26.35	39.34
Weighting for Country/Region of Birth					
(Note excludes missing)					
Racism at university					
Survey	11.18	15.14	16.35	9.34	12.13
Weighted	11.21	14.97	17.48	9.82	12.48
Racism outside of university					
Survey	29.34	43.43	22.34	18.88	28.29
Weighted	29.44	44.84	24.61	20.38	33.76
Total racism (either at university or outside)					
Survey	31.97	46.70	28.23	22.01	31.60
Weighted	32.09	47.98	30.79	23.66	36.67

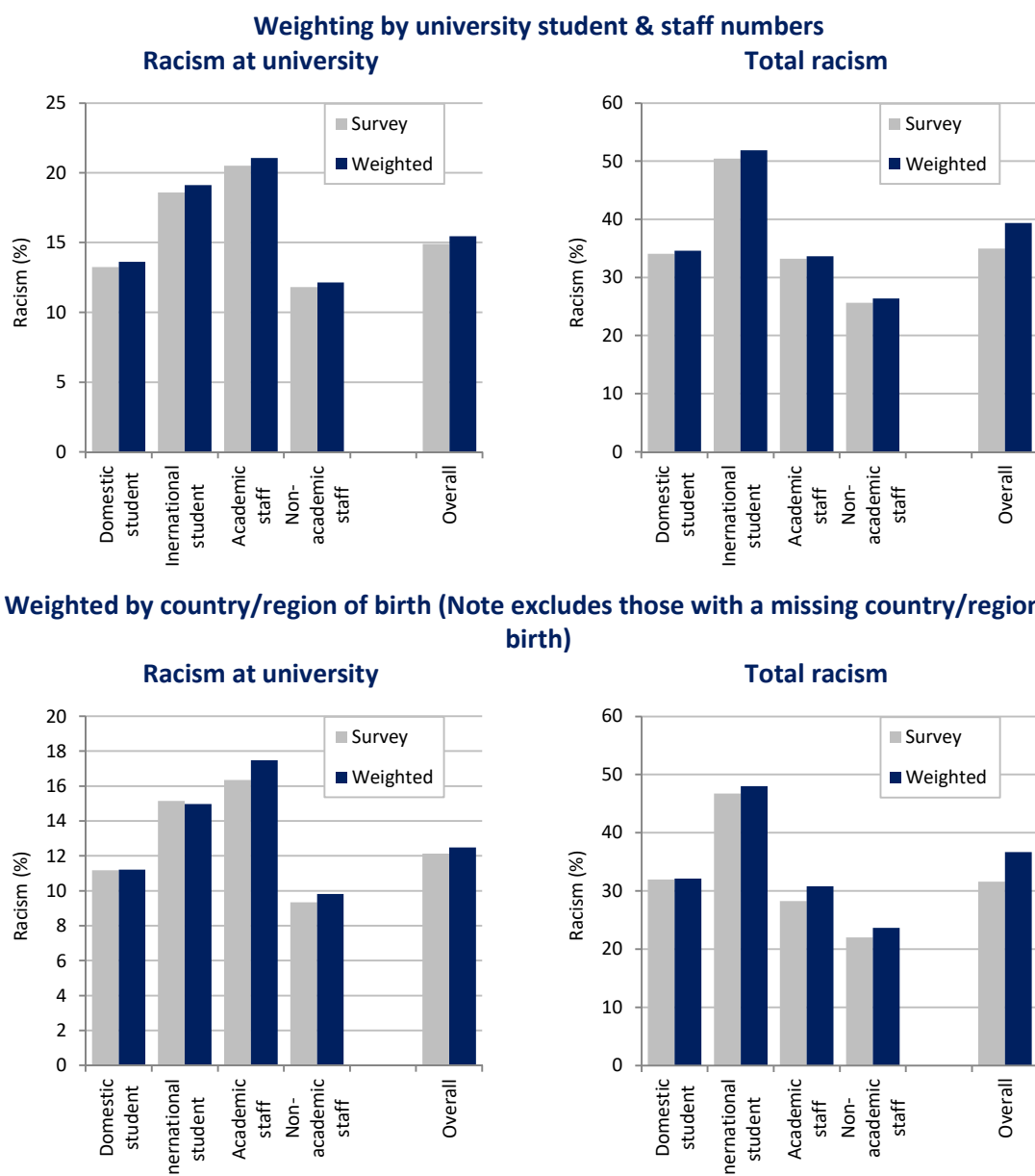
- It is probable that the major source of bias comes from the overall selection bias related to survey relevance. This has been discussed in section 2.2.
- As illustrated in the table, both university and country of birth have an impact, and as such, it would be necessary to adjust the estimates for the combined effect of both of

these factors, and potentially gender, appropriate data to undertake this was not available.

The estimation using country/region of birth has been restricted to the responses for which a country/region of birth was provided. Hence the overall base rates of racism do not reflect the whole of the survey rates.

The main effects are illustrated in Figure A2.

Figure A2 Estimated rates of racism using different weighting schemes



Appendix B University Groupings

The groupings of universities used in analysis is primarily based on membership of a number of peak organisations as detailed in Table B.1.

The university groupings used are:

- Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN)
- Group of Eight (Go8)
- Innovative Research Universities (IRU)
- Regional Universities Network (RUN)
- Those universities not a member of the other groups (Other)

Table B1: Listing of universities and groupings

University	Whether private	International students as a proportion of all students (a)	State	Students (2024) (a)
Australian Technology Network of Universities				
Curtin University		29.9	WA	57,099
Deakin University		27.1	Victoria	59,492
RMIT University		50.0	Victoria	76,226
The University of Newcastle		16.6	NSW	34,895
University of South Australia		18.3	SA	34,020
University of Technology Sydney		26.0	NSW	50,419
				312,151
Group of Eight (Go8)				
Monash University		45.3	Victoria	93,527
The Australian National University		40.3	ACT	23,981
The University of Adelaide		33.2	SA	30,679
The University of Melbourne		43.6	Victoria	75,956
The University of Queensland		39.0	Queensland	57,272
The University of Sydney		50.8	NSW	78,999
The University of Western Australia		33.5	WA	29,590
UNSW Sydney		46.7	NSW	82,604
				472,608
Innovative Research Universities (IRU)				
Flinders University		25.2	SA	24,954
Griffith University		19.4	Queensland	44,596
James Cook University		38.9	Queensland	19,880
La Trobe University		24.4	Victoria	37,594
Murdoch University		57.2	WA	24,823
University of Canberra		25.9	ACT	17,712
Western Sydney University		24.4	NSW	48,050
				217,609
Regional Universities Network (RUN)				
Charles Sturt University		10.2	NSW	35,260
CQ University		25.0	Queensland	22,164
Federation University Australia		32.1	Victoria	12,500
Southern Cross University		30.1	NSW	18,381
The University of New England		5.7	NSW	19,395
University of Southern Queensland		9.9	Queensland	20,589
University of the Sunshine Coast		11.9	Queensland	18,895
				147,184
Other				
Australian Catholic University		16.7	Multi-State	35,084
Avondale University	Private	6.7	NSW	1,079
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education		0.0	NT	23
Charles Darwin University		28.8	NT	12,717
Edith Cowan University		30.7	WA	30,904
Macquarie University		24.7	NSW	44,993
Queensland University of Technology		18.3	Queensland	52,653
Swinburne University of Technology		35.7	Victoria	45,704
The University of Notre Dame Australia	Private	8.7	WA	12,171
Torrens University Australia	Private	44.5	SA	25,499
University of Divinity	Private	10.5	Victoria	1,255
University of Tasmania		15.9	Tasmania	32,259
University of Wollongong		45.7	NSW	34,967
Victoria University		45.2	Victoria	34,813
				364,121
Did not participate				
Bond University	Private	10.5	Queensland	21,984

(a) Selected Higher Education Statistics – 2024 Student data, Table 5.6: All Students by Higher Education Institution and Liability Status, 2024, <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/student-data/selected-higher-education-statistics-2024-student-data>

Appendix C English speaking countries

There are a number of different approaches to identifying English-speaking countries. While in some cases these are limited to those countries where English is the official language, others use approaches which include countries where much education is conducted in English, especially at more senior levels, or where English is widely used as a second language.

In this report a five level classification has been used with all of the levels being used to classify a person as having an English-speaking background. The classifications are provided in Table C1.

The analysis for this report used a two levels of English Speaking Background. The first is where the person's country of birth is one of the identified countries; the second also includes those persons who have at least one parent from an English-speaking country. (In the reported results the first measure is used.)

In a small number of cases where a person has not provided their own country of birth, but has given it for a parent the person is firstly considered as being born in Australia if one parent is born in Australia, and then is given the country of birth sequentially of either the first or second parent depending upon what data was available.

Coding of English-speaking countries

The main coding is based on the Monash University list of English-speaking countries (Monash 2025) this records English speaking at two levels which are coded as:

1 = English as official Language

2 = Countries with a substantial proportion of English-speakers and/or secondary schooling taught in English

This has been complemented by the "English-Speaking Country List" published by the John Hopkins University (JHU) Office of Admissions Services (JHU 2025) where these have not already been coded as English-speaking.

3 = JHU English speaking

Reflecting the extent of English language use in Europe also included are those EU countries where 50% or more of the 15-34 year population are reported as being able to have a conversation in English, as detailed in the 2024 Eurobarometer survey (EU 2025)

4 = EU 50%

Finally, Iceland has been included. While no immediate authoritative source could be identified a range of sources indicate that well over 80 per cent of the population is English speaking.

5 = Iceland

Table C1 Classification of English Speaking Countries

SACC (a)	Country	English speaking	SACC	Country	English speaking
8402	Antigua and Barbuda	1	9103	Cameroon	2
1101	Australia	1	9226	Eswatini	2
1603	Australian Antarctic Territory	1	9207	Ethiopia	2
1199	Australian External Territories, nec	1	6102	Hong Kong (SAR of China)	2
8404	Bahamas	1	7103	India	2
8301	Belize	1	4205	Israel	2
9202	Botswana	1	5203	Malaysia	2
8102	Canada	1	3105	Malta	2
1501	Cook Islands	1	1403	Marshall Islands	2
8408	Dominica	1	1405	Nauru	2
2102	England	1	5204	Philippines	2
9206	Eritrea	1	1505	Samoa	2
1502	Fiji	1	9225	South Africa	2
9114	Gambia	1	8101	Bermuda	3
9115	Ghana	1	8406	Cayman Islands	3
8412	Grenada	1	8207	Falkland Islands	3
8211	Guyana	1	3102	Gibraltar	3
2201	Ireland	1	2103	Isle of Man	3
8415	Jamaica	1	8417	Montserrat	3
9208	Kenya	1	1513	Pitcairn Islands	3
1402	Kiribati	1	4111	South Sudan	3
9211	Lesotho	1	9222	St Helena	3
9118	Liberia	1	8427	Virgin Islands, British	3
9213	Malawi	1	8428	Virgin Islands, United States	3
9214	Mauritius	1	2301	Austria	4
1404	Micronesia, Federated States of	1	2302	Belgium	4
9217	Namibia	1	3204	Croatia	4
1201	New Zealand	1	3205	Cyprus	4
9124	Nigeria	1	3302	Czechia	4
2104	Northern Ireland	1	2401	Denmark	4
1407	Palau	1	3303	Estonia	4
1302	Papua New Guinea	1	2403	Finland	4
9221	Rwanda	1	2304	Germany	4
2105	Scotland	1	3207	Greece	4
9223	Seychelles	1	3104	Italy	4
9127	Sierra Leone	1	3305	Latvia	4
5205	Singapore	1	3306	Lithuania	4
1303	Solomon Islands	1	2306	Luxembourg	4
8422	St Kitts and Nevis	1	2308	Netherlands	4
8423	St Lucia	1	3106	Portugal	4
8424	St Vincent and the Grenadines	1	3311	Slovakia	4
9227	Tanzania	1	3212	Slovenia	4
1508	Tonga	1	2407	Sweden	4
8425	Trinidad and Tobago	1	2405	Iceland	5
9228	Uganda	1			
2100	United Kingdom	1			
8104	United States of America	1			
2106	Wales	1			
9231	Zambia	1			
9232	Zimbabwe	1			

(a) SACC – ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries

References

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<https://www.monash.edu/admissions/entry-requirements/english-language/countries>

- JHU (John Hopkins University). 2025. *Office of Admissions Services, English-Speaking Country List*.
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- EU (European Union) 2025. *Language knowledge /eu, Explore English language knowledge in Europe*.
<https://languageknowledge.eu/languages/english>

Appendix D Coding of ethnicities

The Racism@Uni survey asked people to provide up to three responses to the question F4: “Which ethnic, cultural national origin group(s) do you identify with?” This was responded to by 45,804 respondents. However, in a large number of cases these responses indicated either that they solely identified as Australian or defined their identity in terms of religious or other beliefs.

In other cases the responses referred to national identities, migration heritages, tribal and other sub-national population groups, and broad geographical regions. In a number of cases people identified in terms of their caste. This though appeared to be inconsistent and primarily involved cases of where people classified themselves as Brahmin, and in a smaller number of cases as Dalit.

As people could provide up to three responses, while in some cases some of the three responses for a person were not sufficient for the purposes of coding, other responses were, and were used. In other cases however the data was not sufficient to enable a coding to be made.

Given that ethnicity was seen as a critical variable for analysis, it was considered that simply using the viable responses and coding the others as ‘other’ was not appropriate, but rather the approach was to use the diversity of information available in the responses to construct a more comprehensive variable, or indeed as was the case, two variables. The first was a single variable which contained all of the information on each of the identities of the individual; the second was a set of dichotomous variables as to whether or not a person was a member of each of the identified groups.

While the survey was initially developed with the concept of understanding both internal and external identification (see Figure 1.1) through the inclusion of questions on how the person considered they were perceived by others (Question F5) and how they identify themselves (Question F4), given the above issues with reporting on F4, and the primacy of deriving ethnicity, data from F5 was required, as detailed below for the construction of ethnicity.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ This was further complicated by a number of respondents who sought to report on what they saw as their identity in response to question F5 rather than on external perceptions, in particular those who considered that the descriptor of ‘European’ for Australians of European heritage did not reflect their sense of their own identity.

The basis of derivation was, sequentially:

1. From an initial review of the data, and having regard to the key groups identified by the AHRC, the following categories were initially identified:

- African
- Afro-diasporic: In addition to those identifying as being Afro-Caribbean, this category also included those self-identifying as Black American, West Indian and People of Colour, and as Black where no additional information was provided
- Americas: This encompassed those identifying themselves as South and Central American, but excluded Americans and Canadians, where attention was given to their placement in other categories.
- Central Asian
- Chinese
- European
- Jewish
- Māori
- Middle Eastern
- North East Asian
- Other Indigenous: This group sought to represent those who reported that they were members of particular indigenous groups. It primarily consists of North and South American First Peoples, Sami and Inuit peoples. It is recognised that the groups significantly under-reports all indigenous groups, but is nevertheless seen as being a useful indicator of the experience of a wider range of indigenous minorities, even if they have not been able to be classified into this group.
- Palestinian
- Pasifika
- South Asian
- South East Asian
- Southern European

2. Where a usable ethnicity was able to be derived from question F4 (including varying references in own language to the country/region and taking account of different spellings and errors), this was directly coded into one of these groups. In the case of those from settler societies (primarily Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and the United States) respondents were classified as European if they reported in question F5 that this was how they were seen by others). In the case of New Zealand this allocation was facilitated by the significant number who identified as Pakeha.

3. Jewish ethnicity was initially identified in terms of any person responding to question 4 that they were Jewish (including the terms Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Litvak and Mizrahi). This was complemented by a review of responses to the open ended question at F5 using similarly open terminology, and the responses to the question on religion. In

this latter case there were a number of people who responded in terms of being Jewish but stating they adhered to a different religious belief or no religion. In these cases, while the data was used to code their ethnicity, their religion was recoded to match their stated religious belief. All of these codings were manually reviewed. For most analysis the simple ethnicity indicator has not been used and a three way indicator has been used: whether they state Judaism as their religion, (Jewish (religious)) and if not whether they identify as having a Jewish ethnicity, (Jewish (secular)) and those with neither.

4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ethnicity was taken from the response to the question A8. While the actual responses to the question of ethnicity also identified a number of people who said that they had, or thought they had, some Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, it was decided to maintain the actual declared status of people.

5. For those without a defined ethnicity, ethnicity was then imputed in 5 sequential steps, in each case with the subsequent step only applying to those whose ethnicity had not been established at that point.

6. Responses to F5 were reviewed to identify any statements of the person's ethnicity. While the actual question was concerned with externally perceived ethnicity a number of respondents discussed their actual ethnicity in the open ended question.

7. For those born in countries other than Europe and those identified in 2 above, ethnicity was derived on the basis of their country of birth.

8. Ethnicity was then imputed from language spoken at home for those who spoke a language other than English.

9. For those born in Australia, Europe, the US, New Zealand and Canada ethnicity was classified as European if they also had a parent born in these countries. While it was recognised that this had some limitations, it was considered that where these people had more diverse heritages, it was more likely that they would have identified this. Given this limitation, it was also considered excessive to attempt to group these separately into European and Southern European.

10. Ethnicity for the balance was coded on the basis of how respondents indicated that others perceived them. This stage of the imputation involved some 20,307 records. Before undertaking this, an analysis was undertaken of the relative incidence of racism, both at university and more broadly, for those with a defined ethnicity, and those in this imputation group. This suggested a high level of congruence indicating that the combination of the defined and imputed groups would not introduce any significant bias in results.

11. Following these steps there were 9,438 records for which ethnicity could not be identified. These have been recorded as not stated

12. This data was then used to derive three measures for use in the analysis.

- A combined ethnicity record which has up to three identifiers for each person. Given the large number of potential combinations, and the absence of any information implying the priority of the identities, this has been coded in an ordered way. Even

with this, however, there are 311 different combinations of ethnicity which has limited the extent to which the variable is usable in analysis.

- A series of dichotomous variables indicating whether or not the person has identified as having a particular ethnicity.
- A single dichotomous variable as to whether a person was solely identified as having only 'European' ethnicities, or not.

It is emphasised that this is an indicative coding only, and given the imputations that were required should not be treated as definitive, nor that the person does not have other identities. As indicated in the report, we see this coding as being facilitative for presenting some broad analysis and as a basis for providing an indication of where more detailed investigation may be appropriate.⁷⁹ While as such it is a useful tool it needs to be used with caution and not overlaid with other assumptions.

⁷⁹ We have also refrained from attempting to present this as being the 'white' population, noting for example that for many members of the population, such as those from Southern Europe, the division between Mediterranean people in this group and, those, for example, identified as being Middle Eastern is effectively non-existent, and as such the term is not particularly meaningful.

Appendix E Selected geographies

In broad terms these are derived from the ABS Standard Australian Classification of Countries, 2016, Cat. No. 1269.0, in part detailed below.

Pasifika (a)		
Cook Islands	New Caledonia	Samoa, American
Fiji	Niue	Solomon Islands
French Polynesia	Northern Mariana Islands	Tokelau
Guam	Palau	Tonga
Kiribati	Papua New Guinea	Tuvalu
Marshall Islands	Pitcairn Islands	Vanuatu
Micronesia, Federated States of	Polynesia (excludes Hawaii), nec	Wallis and Futuna
Nauru	Samoa	
Middle East and North Africa (b)		
Algeria	Lebanon	Spanish North Africa
Bahrain	Libya	Sudan
Egypt	Morocco	Syria
Iran	Occupied Palestinian Territories	Tunisia
Iraq	Oman	Türkiye
Israel	Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Jordan	Saudi Arabia	Western Sahara
Kuwait	South Sudan	Yemen
North-East Asia (c)		
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	Korea, DPR (North)	Mongolia
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	Korea, Republic of (South)	Taiwan
Japan	Macau (SAR of China)	
Southern Asia (d)		
Bangladesh	Maldives	Sri Lanka
Bhutan	Nepal	
India	Pakistan	
Central Asia (d)		
Afghanistan	Georgia	Tajikistan
Armenia	Kazakhstan	Turkmenistan
Azerbaijan	Kyrgyzstan	Uzbekistan
South-East Asia (e)		
Brunei Darussalam	Malaysia	Thailand
Cambodia	Myanmar	Timor-Leste
Indonesia	Philippines	Vietnam
Laos	Singapore	
Africa (f)		
Americas (g)		
Europe (h)		
Southern Europe (h)		
Andorra	Italy	San Marino
Gibraltar	Malta	Spain
Holy See	Portugal	

Notes:

(a) In structuring communities we have identified Māori peoples separately rather than including them in the Pasifika grouping. This reflects their different status as

domestic students, the relatively large size of the population and the range of perspectives with respect to inclusion. Depending upon how they specifically reported their identities this population also includes some groups such as Indo-Fijians, who may also have additional identities such as South Asian. In terms of country of birth, the concept of Oceania has been used, excluding New Zealand and Australia which have been grouped separately.

(b) In birthplace analysis Iran is treated separately due to the large population.

(c) In defining ethnicity based communities China has been treated separately from the balance of the region. This reflects Chinese students being the major group of international students, and hence of particular interest to the university sector, and the extent to which Chinese identity was asserted by respondents across a wide range of different geographies. In birthplace analysis both China and Hong Kong are treated separately based upon the size of the populations.

(d) In ethnicity South and Central Asia have been treated separately. In country of birth the major countries of South Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan have been identified separately, and the balance has been combined with Central Asia. It should be noted that more detailed ethnicity within Southern Asia was difficult as while many identified in terms of nationality, others used terms such as Sub-Continent, South Asian, Dravidian, Bengali, and Punjabi.

(e) In country/region of birth data Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines have been treated separately given their relative population sizes.

(f) In defining ethnicity Africa comprises all countries in Africa excluding those identified in the Middle East and North Africa grouping, and includes Mauritius and Madagascar, but excludes those persons who were identified as having a European heritage. In Region/Country of birth South Africa is treated separately due to the mixed ethnicity of those born there.

(g) In analysis of country/region of birth those born in the United States of America and Canada have been grouped with the UK and Ireland, as such this region is mainly South and Central America and the Caribbean. In the derivation of ethnicity persons of probable European heritage have been classified as European and those with a defined Indigenous heritage to Other Indigenous.

(h) In data on country/region of birth in addition to the separation of the UK and Ireland into the UK, Ireland, USA and Canada grouping, Europe has been split into two groups, the balance of Western and Northern Europe, and Southern and Eastern Europe. In ethnicity the Southern European group includes South Eastern Europe to encompass the Mediterranean.

Appendix F Data for figures

The following tables provide the underlying data for figures in the text. They retain the actual figure numbering as it appears in the text.

Figure 2.2 Rates of direct racism at university and elsewhere by main ethnic classifications

Community	Racism experienced	
	Outside university	At university
	– % –	
African	60.4	27.9
Americas	41.9	19.2
Australian Indigenous	61.1	36.6
Central Asia	45.9	16.3
Chinese	52.5	18.6
European	14.2	7.4
Jewish	51.3	44.5
Māori	40.5	13.8
Middle Eastern	51.8	31.8
North East Asia	54.7	22.6
Not stated	36.3	23.4
Other Indigenous	45.7	20.7
Afro-diasporic	67.4	32.6
Palestinian	58.3	43.7
Pasifika	54.1	21.2
South Asia	49.6	21.3
South East Asia	50.5	18.6
Southern European	21.4	7.5
n = 71,796		

Figure 2.3 Perception of whether racism is a problem at their university, by whether experienced racism at university

Whether experienced direct racism at university	Agreement with statement “I think racism is a problem at my university					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	– % –					
Did not experience	3.3	15.3	28.5	36.0	16.8	100.0
Experienced direct racism	25.6	43.0	18.6	8.2	4.6	100.0
n = 65,677						

Figure 3.1 Relationship between response rate and rate of direct racism experienced at university by respondent type and country/region of birth

	Domestic students		International Students		Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	Response rate	Racism rate	Response rate	Racism rate	Response rate	Racism rate	Response rate	Racism rate
	- % -							
Aust & NZ	2.8	9.7	4.4	17.1	23.6	11.6	27.1	7.0
UK Ireland US Canada	3.5	8.5	2.5	20.3	25.3	9.9	34.8	5.8
Bal W&N Europe	4.2	8.1	2.8	6.6	18.2	10.3	28.3	8.5
S&E Europe	3.9	12.9	3.8	18.7	13.9	18.7	18.7	8.9
Bal Oceania	3.8	18.8	4.4	9.4	14.1	20.8	22.7	15.7
Iran	2.9	22.1	4.3	25.8	13.7	46.9	27.1	22.2
Bal MENA	2.9	25.5	2.5	25.4	21.0	51.4	24.5	28.5
Indonesia	3.3	8.8	4.1	9.9	22.2	24.4	19.4	10.1
Malaysia	3.4	19.6	3.0	18.7	17.9	18.0	24.2	18.9
Singapore	3.7	20.0	3.6	19.0	22.7	24.6	25.8	15.4
Vietnam	2.6	17.6	2.0	14.4	10.9	21.4	14.0	18.2
Philippines	2.8	12.8	3.7	10.6	23.2	20.6	20.7	16.8
Bal SE Asia	3.2	11.9	2.2	11.2	22.7	41.7	19.4	21.6
Hong Kong	3.1	8.5	2.3	14.2	18.0	21.4	22.3	10.0
China	2.6	17.7	1.5	14.7	10.5	24.5	17.9	15.8
Bal NE Asia	2.5	18.2	3.0	16.4	11.2	26.6	18.0	22.2
India	2.6	20.8	2.1	17.5	23.6	39.8	22.4	26.6
Pakistan	3.3	14.6	1.9	18.0	15.4	54.1	0.0	0.0
Bangladesh	2.6	24.6	3.0	9.9	18.9	35.1	17.5	14.8
Sri Lanka	2.5	19.3	2.6	17.5	16.6	38.8	18.2	14.6
Nepal	1.9	10.5	2.0	6.6	13.6	13.3	17.8	3.2
Bhutan	0.0	0.0	3.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0
Bal S&C Asia	3.4	30.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bal Americas	3.8	17.0	4.0	15.1	21.4	24.6	29.2	17.0
South Africa	3.1	15.4	2.8	19.0	23.4	18.6	23.7	6.1
Bal Africa	2.7	19.3	3.1	25.9	20.9	40.8	23.2	25.7

n = 71,796

Figure 3.2 Estimated rates of direct racism using different weighting schemes

See Table A5

Figure 4.1 Student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university by whether experienced direct racism at university

Whether experienced racism at university	Agreement with statement		Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
	Strongly agree	Agree				
I have a sense of belonging						
– % –						
No	18.5	48.3	22.5	8.7	2.1	100.0
Experienced	4.4	25.6	28.1	27.8	14.1	100.0
I feel safe						
No	36.5	53.4	7.5	2.0	0.7	100.0
Experienced	11.2	43.6	23.3	15.2	6.8	100.0
I am treated with respect						
No	32.5	57.5	7.8	1.6	0.6	100.0
Experienced	6.9	42.4	27.8	16.5	6.4	100.0
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and or religion						
No	25.8	50.6	16.5	5.4	1.8	100.0
Experienced	4.6	25.6	25.7	27.2	16.9	100.0
I am included amongst my peers						
No	24.4	52.3	15.7	6.2	1.4	100.0
Experienced	6.0	32.3	24.7	25.6	11.5	100.0
I feel supported						
No	24.3	55.3	14.8	4.6	1.1	100.0
Experienced	5.5	34.6	26.8	22.4	10.7	100.0

n=44,239

Figure 5.1 Academic staff, rates of racism at university by level and main genders

Academic staff level	Proportion reporting direct racism at university	
	Female	Male
– % –		
Level A (Associate Lecturer or equivalent)	15.5	16.4
Level B (Lecturer or equivalent)	21.6	21.4
Level C (Senior Lecturer or equivalent)	20.8	22.5
Level D (Associate Professor or equivalent)	20.0	18.0
Level E (Professor or equivalent)	16.2	15.5

n = 9,858

Figure 5.2 Staff views on university support and inclusion

Statement about university	Level of agreement with statements					Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Academic staff						
			- % -			
Supports my career	12.7	40.0	25.2	14.3	7.8	100.0
Encourages employ of my type	16.5	37.9	29.2	10.8	5.6	100.0
Academic staff reflects diversity	19.1	46.3	15.1	14.1	5.4	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	5.8	17.6	20.4	32.8	23.4	100.0
Non-academic staff						
Supports my career	12.9	47.6	25.8	9.8	3.9	100.0
Encourages employ of my type	17.3	44.7	28.6	6.8	2.6	100.0
Academic staff reflects diversity	20.6	53.8	15.9	7.5	2.2	100.0
Senior leadership reflects diversity	5.9	22.3	23.1	32.0	16.7	100.0

n = 25,573

Figure 5.3 Extent of disagreement with the statement “The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious background to seek employment”, staff responses by country of birth

Region/Country of birth	Proportion disagreeing with statement “The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic cultural and/or religious background to seek employment”	
	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
	– % –	
Australia & NZ	5.1	2.2
UK, Ireland, US & Canada	5.5	2.1
Balance Western & Northern Europe	7.5	1.7
South & East Europe	10.9	3.8
Balance Oceania	5.1	2.0
Iran	22.0	15.1
Balance MENA	16.6	10.6
Indonesia	9.0	4.5
Malaysia	8.5	2.7
Singapore	6.1	4.4
Vietnam	11.7	0.8
Philippines	6.3	3.5
Bal SE Asia	11.7	7.5
Hong Kong	8.3	1.4
China	11.5	3.6
Balance North East Asia	13.3	8.9
India	11.9	4.6
Pakistan	12.8	5.8
Bangladesh	8.7	7.0
Sri Lanka	12.5	6.0
Nepal	10.9	2.2
Bhutan	0.0	0.0
Balance South & Central Asia	18.8	8.3
Balance Americas	15.4	3.7
South Africa	4.6	2.1
Balance Africa	8.5	9.2
Not stated	13.4	7.0

n = 26,351

Figure 6.1 Staff and student perceptions of belonging, safety and respect at university by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

See Table 6.7

Figure 6.2 Frequency of experiencing direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

See Table 6.12

Figure 6.3 Frequency of experiencing indirect racism if did not experience direct racism, staff and students, by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Frequency of experiencing indirect racism			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Very frequently
	-%-			
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	27.3	42.3	19.7	10.6
'European'	41.8	39.8	12.2	6.2
non-'European' & non- Indigenous	36.2	39.8	15.7	8.4

n=68,646

Figure 6.4 Population incidence of impacts reported as a consequence of direct racism at university, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (a)

Impact	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Non- Indigenous
	Student	
	-%-	
Negative mental health	20.4	8.6
Limit university participation	17.5	8.2
Limit contacts	7.4	3.5
Negative impact on studies	14.8	5.8
Other	2.6	0.8
	Academic staff	
Negative mental health	45.2	13.4
Limit university participation	36.7	11.3
Limit contacts	15.7	4.3
Negative impact on career	29.5	10.
Other	5.7	1.6%
	Non-academic staff	
Negative mental health	30.3	6.7
Limit university participation	21.7	5.2
Limit contacts	8.6	1.9
Negative impact on career	13.9	4.1
Other	5.5	1.0

Figure 6.5 Proportion of population either not experiencing direct racism or if experienced direct racism reporting that it had no impact on them, by respondent type and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Type and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander status	Did not experience any negative impacts from direct racism %
Student	
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	72.3
Non-Indigenous	87.0
Academic staff	
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	45.8
Non-Indigenous	82.0
Non-academic staff	
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	62.0
Non-Indigenous	90.2

Figure 6.6 Universities' treatment and approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff and cultures, history and stereotypes by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status

See Table 6.23

Figure 6.7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff views about expectations placed on them and treatment due to their Indigeneity

See Table 6.24

Figure 7.1 Jewish communities, experience of direct racism at university, by university grouping

University grouping	Proportion reporting direct racism	
	Jewish (religious)	Jewish (secular)
	- % -	
ATN	62.6	23.3
Go8	58.7	28.2
IRU	40.7	29.6
Other	50.4	23.9
RUN	31.0	11.9

n = 1,262

Figure 7.2 International students rate of direct racism at university by country/region of birth and gender

See Table 7.58

Figure 7.3 Responses to race equal and multiculturalism questions by broad ethnicity

	Strong agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strong disagree	Total
All races of people ARE equal – % –						
`European'	81.0	13.3	3.1	1.7	1.1	100.0
Non-`European'	76.2	17.0	3.8	1.7	1.4	100.0
It is a good thing for society to be made up of different cultures						
`European'	72.8	20.4	4.4	1.3	1.1	100.0
Non-`European'	65.2	28.0	5.2	0.9	0.7	100.0

n= 67,279

Figure 7.4 Relationship between responses on multiculturalism and race equality

Community	Races equal Mean score	Multiculturalism good
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1.60	1.46
Southern European	1.29	1.34
European	1.30	1.38
Pasifika	1.41	1.29
Māori	1.32	1.23
Other Indig.	1.52	1.28
African	1.33	1.32
Afro-diasporic	1.24	1.24
Chinese	1.41	1.52
NE Asian(oth.)	1.36	1.45
South Asian	1.24	1.38
South East Asian	1.38	1.43
Central Asian	1.28	1.37
Americas	1.28	1.31
Middle Eastern	1.29	1.42
Palestinian	1.14	1.13
Jewish (religious)	1.33	1.42
Jewish (secular)	1.33	1.40
Muslim	1.24	1.35

n = 67,279

Figure 7.5 Potentially negative racial attitudes by community

Community	Whether has potentially negative racial attitudes			
	Not	Probably not	Possibly	Probably
	Distribution (%)			
Southern European	70.5	19.4	5.9	4.2
European	68.7	21.1	6.1	4.0
Pasifika	68.3	20.7	5.6	5.4
Māori	72.6	16.3	6.4	4.7
African	70.3	19.3	4.9	5.4
Afro-diasporic	76.4	14.3	5.1	4.2
Chinese	52.0	35.8	8.5	3.7
NE Asian(oth.)	58.6	28.9	8.2	4.2
South Asian	65.7	27.4	4.4	2.5
South East Asian	58.4	30.4	7.2	4.0
Central Asian	65.1	28.2	3.1	3.5
Americas	72.3	18.6	6.0	3.1
Middle Eastern	65.4	24.1	6.3	4.1
Palestinian	81.6	15.5	1.0	1.9
Jewish (religious)	62.4	26.6	6.3	4.8
Jewish (secular)	66.8	21.8	6.9	4.4
Muslim	66.0	27.0	3.9	3.2

n = 62,932

Figure 7.6 Rates of direct racism at university by potentially negative racial attitudes by broad ethnicity

Broad ethnicity	Whether has potentially negative racial attitudes			
	Not	Probably not	Possibly	Probably
	Proportion reporting direct racism at university (%)			
Non-'European'	23.4	18.8	20.4	25.2
'European'	4.4	7.0	11.5	17.6

n = 62,932

Figure 7.7 Relationship between domestic 'European' students potentially negative racial attitudes and incidence of racism at university for Non-'European' students, by field of study

Field of study	Racism at university (a)	Proportion with probably potentially negative racial attitudes (b)
	– % –	
Natural & Physical Sciences	17.9	6.9
Information Technology	14.2	11.3
Engineering & related	16.5	10.0
Architecture & Building	20.7	8.4
Agriculture & Environ	16.3	6.4
Health	23.0	5.7
Education	16.3	5.7
Management & Commerce	15.4	8.9
Society & Culture	21.9	7.1
Creative Arts	19.3	4.3
Other & not stated	23.8	12.8

(a) n = 28,085

(b) n = 17,011

Figure 8.1 Ethnic group rates of witness racism relative to group's experience of direct racism, by ethnic group, by respondent type

Community	Respondent type							
	Domestic student		International student		Academic staff		Non-academic staff	
	Direct	Witnessed	Direct	Witnessed	Direct	Witnessed	Direct	Witnessed
	- % -							
African	21.0	20.2	27.4	23.3	43.2	23.2	28.5	16.8
Afro-diasporic Americas	25.0	23.2	32.3	26.3	43.5	21.4	28.0	10.5
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	15.7	20.9	16.3	22.9	24.2	26.9	17.4	21.8
Central Asian	28.5	20.2	–	–	54.5	34.4	39.8	30.7
Chinese	13.7	15.9	27.3	15.0	22.7	20.0	3.9	32.0
European	16.1	23.3	15.8	19.8	25.7	24.9	17.9	25.9
Māori	7.2	19.4	13.3	21.3	9.3	26.4	5.6	19.9
Middle-Eastern	12.1	20.0	–	50.0	24.4	29.0	11.2	21.6
North East Asian	26.2	23.6	28.6	26.5	44.3	25.8	30.2	23.6
Other Indigenous	17.3	20.7	21.9	21.2	28.5	26.8	22.8	27.1
Palestinian	24.5	31.4	10.3	13.5	33.3	33.3	15.8	25.0
Pasifika	42.4	42.4	–	–	60.0	57.1	33.3	30.0
South Asian	18.9	22.2	10.7	13.2	45.3	26.5	22.1	19.2
Southern European	19.4	21.7	14.9	16.1	37.8	23.9	25.7	19.4
South East Asian	6.6	20.4	10.2	12.9	10.9	22.9	6.1	18.5
Not stated	16.0	20.1	15.4	18.9	26.5	28.1	19.6	24.6
Jewish (religious)	20.9	29.6	27.3	33.5	29.1	31.0	18.7	26.7
Jewish (secular)	55.1	49.2	43.5	33.3	54.8	38.6	47.8	58.5
	21.8	30.1	38.5	–	26.8	36.3	22.7	30.9

n = 75,864

Figure 8.2 Always took action following witnessing racism as a proportion of respondents who had witnessed racism and taken action, by respondent type (a)

Respondent type	Always took action following witnessing racism
	%
Domestic student	40.1
International student	35.4
Academic staff	60.8
Non-academic staff	58.5

n = 9,357

Figure 9.1 Agreement with statement “There is too much of a focus on addressing racism compared to other problems”, by whether person had experienced direct racism at university, all staff and students

Whether experienced direct racism at university	Too much focus on addressing racism						Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	
	- % -						
No	6.2	10.1	31.2	33.4	11.2	7.9	100.0
Yes	6.7	9.4	27.7	30.8	19.5	5.9	100.0

n = 65,935

Figure 9.3 The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my university studies

Whether experienced direct racism at university	Level of agreement with statement "The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my university studies"					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
No direct racism	23.2	51.36	17.38	3.66	1.22	3.18
Direct racism	7.28	31.52	32.9	16.2	9.39	2.71

n = 40,979

Figure 9.4 Whether or not a complaint is made following a racism incident, by type of incident

Respondent type	Proportion submitting a complaint after incident
	Direct(a)
	- % -
Domestic student	12.9
International student	10.8
Academic staff	15.0
Non-academic staff	11.9
	Bystander (b)
Domestic student	5.1
International student	5.8
Academic staff	7.1
Non-academic staff	6.8

(a) n = 9,144 (b) n = 10,094

Figure 9.5 Rate of dissatisfaction with university response to complaints about racism, by university grouping and nature of racist incident

University grouping	Satisfaction with university response to complaints about racism	
	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
	Direct racism (a)	
	- % -	
ATN	14.3	51.6
Go8	21.5	54.8
IRU	22.4	51.4
Other	10.1	58.3
RUN	20.7	44.8
	Bystander (b)	
ATN	21.7	20.3
Go8	22.2	30.1
IRU	20.0	23.6
Other	18.8	20.0
RUN	20.0	22.5

(a) n = 566 (b) n=1,119

Appendix G Population counts for regression model

These are the population counts for Table 2.11.

Note these counts do not represent total populations as some observations have had to be omitted for statistical reasons

	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff
University				
Australian Catholic University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The Australian National University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Avondale University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Charles Darwin University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Charles Sturt University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
CQ University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Curtin University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Deakin University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Edith Cowan University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Federation University of Australia	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Flinders University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Griffith University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
James Cook University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Latrobe University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Macquarie University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Monash University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Murdoch University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Queensland University of Technology	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
RMIT University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Southern Cross University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Swinburne University of Technology	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Torrens University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Adelaide	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Canberra	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Divinity	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Melbourne	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of New England	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
UNSW Sydney	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Newcastle	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Notre Dame Australia	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Queensland	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of South Australia	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Southern Queensland	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Sydney	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Tasmania	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Technology Sydney	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of the Sunshine Coast	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
The University of Western Australia	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
University of Wollongong	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Victoria University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Western Sydney University	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	nfp	nfp	nfp	nfp
Study type				
On campus	24,676	12,481	–	–
Remote	7,242	288	–	–
N/S	177	81	–	–

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	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff
Study full or part-time	0	0	-	-
Full-time	21,096	11,104	-	-
Part-time	6,884	200	-	-
N/S	4,115	1,546	-	-
	0	0	-	-
Study level	0	0	-	-
Doctoral	1,744	1,891	-	-
Master	3,396	4,825	-	-
Other postgraduate degree	457	109	-	-
PG Dip/Cert	1,091	313	-	-
Bachelor	19,830	3,933	-	-
Dip/Adv Dip/Assoc	912	101	-	-
Tertiary Preparation	440	13	-	-
Vocational	0	13	-	-
Other & N/S	4,225	1,652	-	-
	0	0	-	-
Student accommodation	0	0	-	-
Used	3,685	4,413	-	-
Did not use	24,431	6,763	-	-
N/S	3,979	1,674	-	-
Academic staff				
A-B Continuing	-	-	1,870	-
A-B Fixed/Casual	-	-	2,472	-
C-E Continuing	-	-	4,001	-
C-E Fixed/Casual	-	-	771	-
N/S Continuing	-	-	319	-
N/S Fixed/Casual	-	-	686	-
N/S	-	-	106	-
Non-academic staff	-	-	-	-
<\$100k	-	-	-	6,463
\$100-150k no staff	-	-	-	3,822
\$100-150k supervise	-	-	-	2,888
\$150k+	-	-	-	1,424
N/S	-	-	-	1,852
COB - English speaking				
Missing	5,012	2,950	2,029	2,660
English speaking	24,416	3,412	6,910	12,201
Not	2,667	6,488	1,286	1,588
Born in Australia				
Australia	19,954	20	4,566	9,071
Overseas	7,140	9,865	3,612	4,706
Missing	5,001	2,965	2,047	2,672
Gender				
Female	17,092	6,459	5,032	10,193
Male	9,701	4,654	3,901	4,375
Other	1,154	143	166	237
N/S	4,148	1,594	1,126	1,644
Age (years)				
18-24	18,658	6,120	74	427
25-44	9,067	6,443	3,847	8,025
45+	3,817	162	6,053	7,625
N/S	553	125	251	372

Appendix G Population counts for regression model

	Domestic student	International student	Academic staff	Non-Academic staff
Ethnicity				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	1,283	0	332	489
African	752	434	197	183
Afro-diasporic	100	56	42	25
Māori	207	0	38	83
Other Indigenous	47	15	15	17
Pasifika	451	134	60	162
Middle Eastern	1,502	462	451	397
Palestinian	64	0	20	15
Central Asian	168	32	22	22
South Asian	2,480	3,723	771	1,077
Chinese	2,145	3,607	628	1,046
Other North East Asian	405	502	122	177
South East Asian	2,477	2,359	540	1,060
Americas	597	330	335	469
Southern European	1,860	79	428	761
European	17,969	571	5,905	10,344
Not Stated	4,236	1,784	1,260	1,810
Whether Jewish				
Not Religious	31,429	12,818	9,882	16,229
Religious	454	21	193	131
Secular	212	11	150	89
Other religions				
Islam	1,239	1,149	308	269
Christianity	7,203	1,696	1,885	3,401
Other identified	4,298	3,664	1,583	2,414
Sexuality				
Heterosexual	19,774	9,034	7,420	12,124
Gay/Queer/Lesbian	1,759	443	572	778
Bi/Pansexual	4,014	883	504	978
Demi/Asexual	758	195	84	169
Other & N/S	5,790	2,295	1,645	2,400
	32,095	12,850	10,225	16,449

Appendix H National measures on tertiary students' experience of racism

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H.1. Overview

This appendix presents selected national measures on tertiary students' reported experience of racism. For each survey, technical information is provided and demographic characteristics of those who reported having experienced racism and those who did not experience racism.

The identified surveys are:

- Mapping Social Cohesion 2023 Survey
- ABS General Social Survey 2020
- October 2021 ANUpoll
- 2024 European Social Survey
- Student Experience Survey 2024
- 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey

The definition of what constitutes racism and who is included in the student population varies for each of the data sources. Some definitions refer to a particular period in which students experienced racism, such as the last 12 months, while other definitions do not refer to a particular period. Some definitions capture the personal experience of racism, while others only capture the potential exposure such as being a member of a group that experiences racism in Australia.

The data sources included in this appendix have been chosen to cover a wide range of survey instruments and sampling approaches. Where data sources were available for multiple years, only the most recent year is used.

Table H1 shows the proportion of tertiary students who reported having experienced racism by data source and student type. Tables H2-H7 provide additional detail for each data source.

Table H1: Tertiary students' experience of racism by data source and student type, 2020-2024

	All students	Domestic students	International students
		-%-	
2023 Mapping Social Cohesion	31.8	30.8	36.6
2020 General Social Survey	11.5	8.4	*19.2
October 2021 ANUpoll	30.3	25.3	60.1
2024 Australian Social Survey International-ESS	18.1	16.7	*27.3
2024 Student Experience Survey (Undergrad.)	20.0	20.0	19.8
2024 Student Experience Survey (Postgrad.)	18.0	22.3	16.2
First Nations students			
2024 Student Experience Survey (Undergrad.)	24.9		
2024 Student Experience Survey (Postgrad.)	30.0		
2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey	37.7		

Notes: All numbers are weighted to the Australian population. The definition of what constitutes racism and who is included in the student population varies for each data source. For more information, see the details provided in the info box for each survey.

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 per cent to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

H.2. 2023 Mapping Social Cohesion

Reference period	July 2023
Population	18+ year olds whose employment situation is best described as 'Student'
Racism question	Have you experienced discrimination because of your skin colour, ethnic origin, or religion over the last 12 months?
Responses	Yes , No, Don't know, Refused
Education question	Which one of these BEST describes your employment situation? Are you...?
Responses	Employed full-time, Employed part-time, Unemployed (not working and looking for work), Retired, Student , Home duties, Something else (please specify), Don't know, Refused

Appendix H National measures on tertiary students' experience of racism

Table H.2: Tertiary students' experience of racism as measured in the 2023 Mapping Social Cohesion survey by selected demographics, 2023

	Experienced racism	Did not experience racism
	-%-	
Total	31.8	68.2
Student type		
Domestic student (i.e. Citizen)	30.8	69.2
International student (i.e. Non-citizen)	36.6	63.4
Gender		
Male	31.2	68.8
Female	34.4	65.6
Age group		
18-29 years	31.9	68.1
30+ years	31.0	69.0
Country of birth		
Australia	24.2	75.8
Overseas	43.6	56.4
Language other than English at home		
Speaks a language other than English at home	49.1	50.9
Speaks only English at home	15.1	84.9

Source: 2023 Mapping Social Cohesion.

Notes: All numbers are weighted to the Australian population.

H.3. 2020 General Social Survey

Reference period	2020
Population	18+ year olds who attend university / other higher education
Question 1	Whether experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly
Responses	Yes , No, Don't know
Question 2	Reasons for most recent incident of discrimination
Responses	Your ethnic/cultural background or appearance , Your gender, Your sexual orientation, Your age, A disability or health issue, Your marital or family status, Your political/religious beliefs, Your occupation, Other, Don't know, Not applicable
Education question	Type of educational institution
Responses	Not applicable, Secondary school/Technical college, University/Other higher education , TAFE/Institute of Technology, Other organisation

Table H3: Tertiary students' experience of racism as measured in the 2020 General Social Survey by selected demographics, 2020

	Experienced racism	Did not experience racism
	-%-	
Total	11.5	88.5
Student type		
Domestic student (i.e. Citizen)	8.4	91.6
International student (i.e. Non-citizen)	*19.2	80.8
Gender		
Male	*15.5	84.5
Female	10.6	89.4
Age group		
18-34 years	13.2	86.8
35+ years	*11.3	88.7
Country of birth		
Australia	9.7	90.3
Overseas	*21.2	78.8
Language other than English at home		
Speaks a language other than English at home	*37.5	62.5
Speaks only English at home	7.2	92.8

Source: 2020 General Social Survey. Customised table provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 per cent to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

H.4. October 2021 ANUpoll

Reference period	October 2021
Population	18+ year olds who are currently in education
Racism question	How often have you experienced discrimination in Australia because of your own ethnic origin in the following situations?
Situations	In your workplace, When renting or buying a house, In any dealings with government departments and services, When seeking services such as banking, finance, or legal services, At a shop or restaurant
Responses	Very often, Often, Sometimes , Hardly ever, Never, Not applicable, Don't know, Refused
Coding	Yes: Very often, Often, Sometimes in any situation No: Hardly ever, Never, Not applicable
Education question	Which of these descriptions applies to what you have been doing for the last 7 days?
Relevant description	In education (not paid for by employer), even if on vacation
Responses	Yes , No, Don't know, Refused
Coding	Currently in education: Yes Not currently in education: No

Appendix H National measures on tertiary students' experience of racism

Table H4: Tertiary students' experience of racism as measured in the October 2021 ANUpoll by selected demographics, 2021

	Experienced racism	Did not experience racism
	-%-	
Total	30.3	69.7
Student type		
Domestic student (i.e. Citizen)	25.3	74.7
International student (i.e. Non-citizen)	60.1	39.9
Gender		
Male	25.8	74.2
Female	32.5	67.5
Age group		
18-29 years	31.7	68.3
30+ years	27.8	72.2
Country of birth		
Australia	19.5	80.5
Overseas	49.5	50.5
Language other than English at home		
Speaks a language other than English at home	50.1	49.9
Speaks only English at home	19.3	80.7

Source: October 2021 ANUpoll.

H.5. 2024 Australian Social Survey International-ESS

Reference period	October 2024
Population	18+ year olds who are currently in education
Racism question 1	Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in this country? Yes, No, Don't know, Refused
Racism question 2	On what grounds is your group discriminated against? Open-ended question coded as: Race or colour, Nationality, Religion, Language, Ethnicity , Age, Gender, Sexuality, Disability, Other, Refusal, Don't know
Member of a group that experiences racism	Race or colour, Nationality, Religion, Language, Ethnicity
Not a member of a group that experiences racism	Other grounds or not being a member of a group discriminated against.
Education question	Which of these descriptions applies to what you have been doing for the last 7 days?
Relevant description	In education (not paid for by employer), even if on vacation
Responses	Yes, No, Don't know, Refused
Coding	Currently in education: Yes Not currently in education: No

Table H5: Tertiary students' potential exposure to racism as measured in the 2024 Australian Social Survey International-ESS by selected demographics, 2021

	Member of a group that experiences racism	Not a member of a group that experiences racism
	-%-	
Total	18.1	81.9
Student type		
Domestic student (i.e. Citizen)	16.7	83.3
International student (i.e. Non-citizen)	*27.3	72.7
Gender		
Male	*22.7	77.3
Female	14.4	85.6
Age group		
18-34 years	22.6	77.4
35+ years	*12.9	87.1
Age group		
18-29 years	*23.3	76.7
30+ years	14.4	85.6
Country of birth		
Australia	16.2	83.8
Overseas	*22.1	77.9
Language other than English at home		
Speaks a language other than English at home	29.1	70.9
Speaks only English at home	*12.1	87.9

Source: 2024 Australian Social Survey International-ESS.

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 per cent to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

H.6. 2024 Student Experience Survey

Reference period	2024
Population	Commencing and later years students
Question 1	The following statements are about freedom of expression on-campus at <Institution>. Freedom of expression can be part of the academic and social aspects of your student experience. How strongly do you agree or disagree that... I am free from discrimination, harm or hatred at <Institution>
Responses	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither disagree or agree, Agree, Strongly agree
<u>Not</u> free from discrimination, harm or hatred	Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither disagree or agree
Free from discrimination, harm or hatred	Strongly agree, agree

Appendix H National measures on tertiary students' experience of racism

Table H.6: Tertiary students' experience of racism as measured in the 2024 Student Experience Survey by selected demographics, 2024

	Undergraduate students			Postgraduate coursework students	
	Not free from discrimination, harm or hatred	Free from discrimination, harm or hatred		Not free from discrimination, harm or hatred	Free from discrimination, harm or hatred
Total	20.0	80.0	-%-	18.8	81.2
Student type					
Domestic student (i.e. Citizen)	20.0	80.0		22.3	77.7
International student (i.e. Non-citizen)	19.8	80.2		16.2	83.8
Gender					
Male	20.5	79.5		18.3	81.7
Female	19.5	80.5		19.0	81.0
Age group					
Under 25 years	19.3	80.7		18.2	81.8
25-29 years	21.6	78.4		17.9	82.1
30-39 years	21.6	78.4		18.0	82.0
40+ years	23.4	76.6		22.7	77.3
First Nations					
First Nations	24.9	75.1		30.0	70.0
Non-indigenous	19.9	80.1		22.2	77.8
Language other than English at home					
Speaks a language other than English at home	19.6	80.4		16.4	83.6
Speaks only English at home	20.0	80.0		21.0	79.0

Source: 2024 Student Experience Survey, National Report, September 2025.

H.7. 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey

Reference period	August 2022 to March 2024
Population	18+ year olds who attend university / other higher education
Racism question	Whether unfair treatment in last 12 months because Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander
Responses	Had unfair treatment , Has not had unfair treatment, Does not know if had unfair treatment, Not applicable
Education question	Type of educational institution
Responses	Not applicable, Secondary school/Technical college, University/Other higher education , TAFE/Institute of Technology, Other organisation

Table H.7: First Nations tertiary students' experience of racism as measured in the 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, 2022-2024

	Had unfair treatment	Has not had unfair treatment
		-%-
Total	37.7	62.3

Source: 2022-23 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey. Calculations using ABS TableBuilder.

Appendix I ANUpoll Racism@Uni self-selection bias report

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I.1. Assessing self-selection bias through a further independent survey

We were aware that the Racism@Uni survey was at risk of self-selection bias. Self-selection bias occurs when individuals who have a particular interest in the survey's subject are more likely to opt-in to participate than those who do not, leading to systematic differences between respondents and the wider population. In this case, the recruitment material for the Racism@Uni survey explicitly framed the study as an investigation into racism in higher education. For instance, the initial invitation email opened with a quote from Race Discrimination Commissioner Giridharan Sivaraman:

Racism harms students and staff in Australian universities. We need urgent action against racism, and your perspectives and lived experiences are central. With your help, the Racism@Uni survey can provide vital data to inform recommendations for real change.

This framing was important for clearly communicating the purpose of the survey and for encouraging engagement from those directly affected, especially population groups that are relatively small as a percentage of Australian university staff and students. However, it is also likely to have increased participation among individuals with strong experiences or opinions about racism, which may have led to an overrepresentation of such perspectives. Consequently, there is a risk of upward bias in the survey's estimates of racism's prevalence within the university sector.

To better understand the potential for self-selection bias, we added a small number of questions relevant to the Racism@Uni survey to the September 2025 wave of ANUpoll. ANUpoll is a nationally representative survey of the Australian population that is fielded several times per year. ANUpoll is not advertised as being a survey about racism and has a much higher response rate than the Racism@Uni survey, meaning that participants in the poll are less likely to self-select into survey completion on the basis of their experiences of racism. This provides an opportunity to understand more about the magnitude of the potential self-selection bias in the Racism@Uni survey.

The ANUpoll asked respondents if they had "experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years". Those who answered yes were then asked if their experience had taken place at a university as a student or as a staff member. University students, but not staff, were also asked an additional series of questions about feelings of belonging, safety, being treated with respect, feeling respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion, feeling supported, and whether or not they agreed that racism is a problem at their university.

Respondents to the ANUpoll were also asked three questions about the Racism@Uni survey itself:

- Have you heard of the Australian Human Rights Commission Racism@Uni Survey?
- Did you receive an email asking you to participate in the Racism@Uni Survey?
- Did you complete the Racism@Uni Survey?

I.2. The ANUpoll sample

The ANUpoll sample⁸⁰ included 918 university students, 178 university staff members, 107 individuals who identified as both, 2,296 who identified as neither, 10 who were not sure and 26 who preferred not to say. The remainder of this analysis focuses only on the 1,203 individuals who identified as a university student and/or staff member.

Within the group of 918 university students, there was no precise measure of domestic vs international student status. However, Country of Birth as measured in the September 2025 ANUpoll can be used. In the ANUpoll survey, 70.6 per cent (95% CI: 67.3, 73.9) of respondents reported being born in Australia, see Table I.1.

Table I.1 Country of birth for university students, unweighted, in ANUpoll.

	<i>n</i> respondents	Per cent respondents, unweighted	Per cent respondents, weighted (95% CI)
Born in Australia	656	64.0	70.6 (67.3, 73.9)
Born overseas	350	34.1	27.2 (24.1, 30.4)
Missing	19	1.9	2.2 (0.9, 3.5)

I.3. Knowledge of and completion of the Racism@Uni survey

Self-reported knowledge of and completion of the Racism@Uni survey among respondents to the September 2025 ANUpoll varied between staff and students. Among students, 42.5 per cent (95% CI: 38.5–46.5) reported having heard of the survey, and 16.3 per cent (95% CI: 13.5–19.6) reported having completed it. There was considerable variation in reported completion rates among students by country of birth. Just 14.3 per cent (95% CI: 11.3–17.9) of students born in Australia reported completing the survey, compared to 21.0 per cent (95% CI: 16.1–26.9) of students born overseas. Among staff, the respective figures were 36.3 per cent (95% CI: 28.2–45.2) and 11.3 per cent (95% CI: 7.4–16.7).

⁸⁰ The September 2025 ANUpoll was collected between 27 September and 8 October 2025. It thus went into the field very shortly after the Racism@Uni survey was closed. The target sample was 1,000 university students and 2,500 from the remainder of the population. The achieved sample was 1,026 university students and 2,474 from the remainder of the population, with 38 respondents not stating whether they were a student or not. The total sample is 3,538.

Table I.2 Knowledge and completion of the Racism@Uni Survey among ANUpoll respondents, estimates and 95% confidence intervals

	Per cent heard of survey (95% CI)	Per cent invited to participate (95% CI)	Per cent completed survey (95% CI)
Students (all)	42.5 (38.5–46.5)	39.6 (35.8–43.5)	16.3 (13.5–19.6)
Students (born in Australia)	40.9 (36.2–45.9)	37.5 (33.0–42.2)	14.3 (11.3–17.9)
Students (born overseas)	46.0 (39.4–52.8)	44.8 (38.5–51.3)	21.0 (16.1–26.9)
Staff	36.3 (28.2–45.2)	20.6 (15.0–27.7)	11.3 (7.4–16.7)

I.4. Experiences of racism

The reported rates of direct racism occurring in universities was relatively low in staff and student respondents to the ANUpoll, although the smaller number of respondents means that the precision of these estimates was quite low for staff. Specifically, 6.7 per cent (95% CI: 5.1–8.8) of students and 9.9 per cent (95% CI: 5.9–16.4) of staff reported experiencing racism in the last two years at university. However, the reported rates of experiencing racism anywhere in Australia in the previous two years, including at a university, were considerably higher. Among respondents to the ANUpoll, 26.3 per cent (95% CI: 23.2–29.6) of students and 40.4 per cent (95% CI: 30.8–50.9) of staff reported experiencing racism in the last two years in Australia.

Rates of reported experiences of racism in Australia were much higher among university students who were born overseas, 40.8 per cent (95% CI: 34.5–47.5) than among Australian born students, 21.3 per cent (95% CI: 17.9–25.0). While this pattern also held true for experiencing racism at university, in the ANUpoll survey this difference was not statistically significant.

Table I.3 Self-reported experiences of racism among ANUpoll respondents, by staff and student status and by location, estimates and 95% confidence intervals

	Experienced racism at a university (%)	Experienced racism but not at a university (%)	Experienced racism, total (%)	Did not experience racism (%)
Students (all)	6.7 (5.1–8.8)	19.6 (16.8–22.8)	26.3 (23.2–29.6)	73.7 (70.4–76.8)
Students (born in Australia)	6.0 (4.0–8.9)	15.3 (12.4–18.7)	21.3 (17.9–25.0)	78.7 (75.0–82.1)
Students (born overseas)	9.1 (6.3–13.0)	31.7 (25.8–38.3)	40.8 (34.5–47.5)	59.2 (52.5–65.5)
Staff	9.9 (5.9–16.4)	30.5 (21.4–41.3)	40.4 (30.8–50.9)	59.6 (49.1–69.2)

I.5. Selection bias in experiences of racism

There is evidence that self-selection bias may have played a substantial role in determining who completed the Racism@Uni survey, Table 4. Among students, the prevalence of self-reported racism was higher among those who had completed the survey (12.6 per cent) than among those who had not (6.1 per cent). Specifically, students who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 2.1 times (95% CI: 1.1–3.8 times) more likely to report having experienced racism than those who had not completed the Racism@Uni survey.

This selection bias appears to be much stronger for students born overseas than those born in Australia. Among students born overseas, those who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 3.4 times (95% CI: 1.5–7.4 times) more likely to report having experienced racism than those who had not completed the Racism@Uni survey. In contrast, among those born in Australia, those who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 1.4 times (95% CI: 0.4–4.4 times) more likely to report having experienced racism than those who had not completed the Racism@Uni.

It is more difficult to devise precise estimates for staff due to the relatively low number of respondents to the ANUpoll who reported working in universities. The prevalence of self-reported racism was higher among those staff members who reported having completed the Racism@Uni survey (32.7 per cent, 95% CI: 15.1–57.0) than among those who had not (8.2 per cent, 95% CI: 3.7–17.1). However, because of the wide confidence intervals around these estimates, they should be interpreted with caution. Staff who had completed the Racism@Uni survey were 4.0 times (95% CI: 1.4 - 11.0 times) more likely to report having experienced racism than those who had not completed the Racism@Uni survey.

Table I.4 Self-reported experiences of racism at university among ANUpoll respondents, by staff and student status and by self-reported completion of Racism@Uni survey, estimates and 95% confidence intervals

	Students (%)	Students (Australian born) (%)	Students (Overseas born) (%)	Staff (%)
All	6.7 (5.1–8.8)	6.0 (4.0–8.9)	9.1 (6.3–13.0)	9.9 (5.9–16.4)
Completed survey	12.6 (7.6–20.2)	8.2 (2.6–22.9)	21.6 (12.1–35.7)	32.7 (15.1–57.0)
Not completed survey	6.1 (4.2–8.6)	6.0 (3.8–9.2)	6.4 (3.6–11.1)	8.2 (3.7–17.1)

I.6. Comparison to Racism@Uni results

The ANUpoll survey results can be directly compared to those from the Racism@Uni. Table I.5 examines responses in ANUpoll among those who reported completing the Racism@Uni only. Among this group, responses for students are comparable between the ANUpoll respondents and the Racism@Uni respondents. For all students, the ANUpoll estimate was 12.6 per cent (95% CI: 7.6–20.2). This broad confidence interval comfortably contains the 13.2 per cent reported in the Racism@Uni survey. The same was true for both the Australian-born and overseas-born cohorts of students.

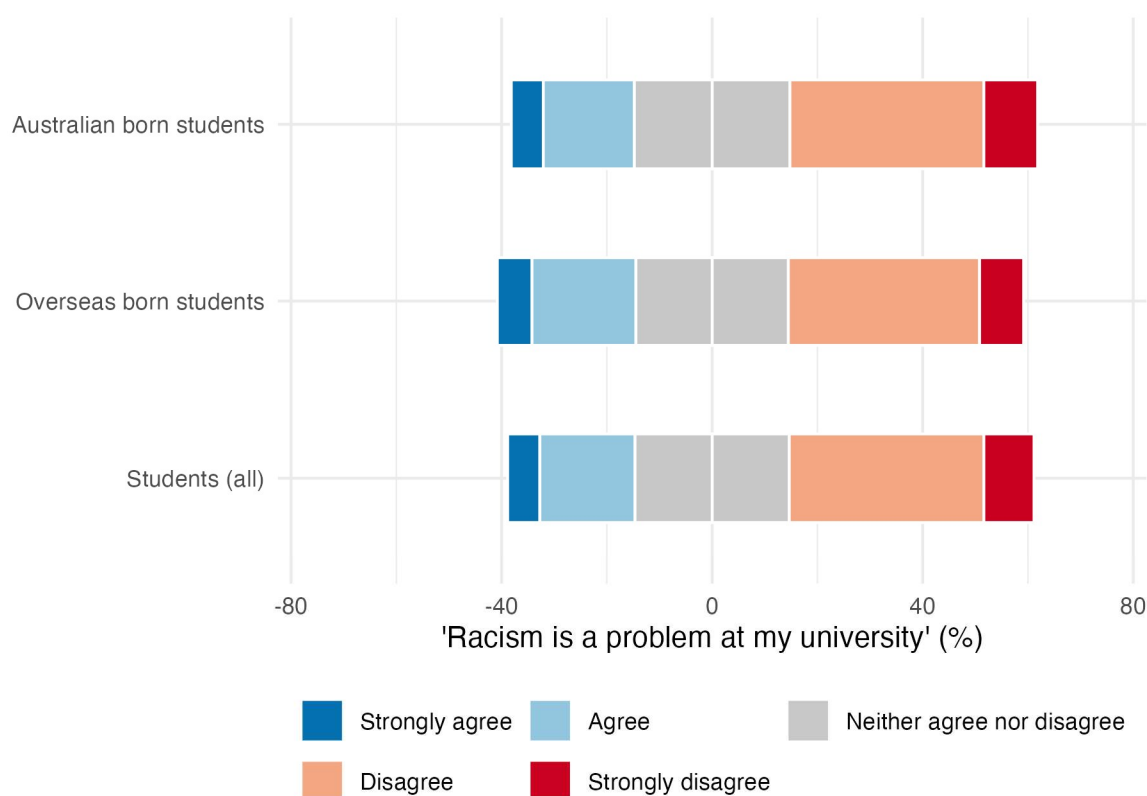
Table I.5 Self-reported experiences of direct racism at university among ANUpoll student respondents who reported completing the Racism@Uni and among Racism@Uni respondents, estimates and 95% confidence intervals

	Experienced racism at university, ANUpoll, per cent and 95% CI	Experienced racism at university, Racism@Uni, per cent
Students (all)	12.6 (7.6–20.2)	13.2
Students (born in Australia)	8.2 (2.6–22.9)	9.7
Students (born overseas)	21.6 (12.1–35.7)	15.2

I.7. Perceptions of racism at university.

In addition to questions about their own experiences of racism, university students were asked their perceptions of racism at university. Around 24.2 per cent of students reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement that “racism is a problem at my university”. In contrast, 46.5 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. As Figure I.1 shows, there were only relatively small differences in perceptions of racism depending on country of birth or voting eligibility.

Figure I.1 Perceptions of racism being a problem at university, students, by country of birth



There was no statistically significant correlation between reporting completion of the Racism@Uni survey and perceptions of racism being a problem at students' university. This suggests that while personal experiences of racism may have motivated students and

staff to complete the Racism@Uni survey, their general perceptions of racism problems at their university did not.

I.8. Feelings of belonging, safety and respect at university

Students were also asked about their feelings of belonging, safety, treatment with respect, inclusion, support and feelings of respect during discussions of sensitive issues.

Around 59.0 per cent of students reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement that “I have a sense of belonging” at university. In contrast, 14.3 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. As the figure below shows, there were only relatively small differences in feelings of belonging depending on country of birth or voting eligibility, and these differences were not statistically significant. There was no significant correlation between feelings of belonging and completion of the Racism@Uni survey.

On safety, 79.5 per cent of students reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement that “I feel safe” at university. In contrast, 7.2 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition.

Around 82.6 per cent of students reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement that “I am treated with respect” at university. In contrast, 5.2 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. Similar rates reported feeling respected in discussions. Around 68.9 per cent of students reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement that “I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion” at university, while 9.3 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed. Around 70.0 per cent of students agreed with the statement “I feel included” while 11.3 per cent did not. And 68.8 per cent of students agreed with the statement “I feel supported” while 12.5 per cent did not.

There were very few differences in feelings of belonging, feeling respected, included or supported depending on country of birth, voting eligibility, or completion of the Racism@Uni survey, Table I.6. There were some differences in feelings of safety depending on country of birth. Among students born in Australia, 81.6 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that “I feel safe” at university. In contrast, 6.6 per cent of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition. For those born overseas, the rates were 74.8 per cent and 8.6 per cent respectively. This difference was statistically significant, with Australian born students 1.1 times (95% CI: 1.0 - 1.2 times) more likely to report feeling safe than those born overseas.

Analysis showed that there were no statistically significant differences between ANUpoll respondents who reported completing the Racism@Uni and those who did not, when it came to agreement with the statements about belonging, respect, feeling respected in discussions, inclusion, safety and support.

Table I.6 Importance placed on belonging, safety and respect at university, students, estimates and 95% CI

Statement	Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have a sense of belonging	All	11.0 (8.6, 14.0)	48.0 (44.0, 51.9)	26.7 (23.2, 30.5)	11.6 (9.4, 14.1)	2.8 (1.8, 4.3)
	Australian born	11.0 (8.0, 14.8)	49.3 (44.5, 54.1)	25.7 (21.6, 30.2)	11.5 (8.9, 14.6)	2.6 (1.4, 4.8)
	Overseas born	10.9 (7.4, 15.7)	45.2 (38.7, 51.8)	28.3 (23.0, 34.4)	12.4 (8.7, 17.4)	3.2 (1.4, 7.3)
I am treated with respect	All	16.1 (13.5, 19.1)	66.5 (63.1, 69.8)	12.2 (10.0, 14.7)	4.7 (3.3, 6.7)	0.5 (0.1, 5.3)
	Australian born	16.6 (13.3, 20.4)	67.5 (63.1, 71.7)	11.7 (8.9, 15.2)	3.7 (2.2, 6.0)	0.6 (0.0, 12.5)
	Overseas born	15.3 (11.3, 20.3)	65.4 (59.2, 71.1)	13.4 (9.9, 17.9)	5.5 (3.1, 9.5)	0.4 (0.0, 99.9)
I feel respected in discussions of sensitive issues related to race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion	All	14.5 (11.9, 17.6)	54.4 (50.4, 58.3)	21.8 (18.9, 25.0)	7.5 (5.7, 9.7)	1.8 (1.1, 3.1)
	Australian born	14.4 (11.3, 18.2)	55.5 (50.7, 60.2)	21.4 (17.9, 25.3)	6.9 (4.9, 9.7)	1.8 (1.0, 3.1)
	Overseas born	14.7 (10.7, 19.7)	52.6 (45.8, 59.3)	21.5 (16.9, 27.1)	9.4 (6.4, 13.7)	1.8 (0.0, 53.7)
I feel included among my peers (other students)	All	15.4 (12.9, 18.3)	54.7 (50.8, 58.5)	18.7 (15.8, 21.9)	10.3 (8.3, 12.8)	1.0 (0.5, 2.0)
	Australian born	14.7 (11.7, 18.2)	57.0 (52.2, 61.7)	17.6 (14.4, 21.4)	10.2 (7.7, 13.4)	0.5 (0.0, 11.9)
	Overseas born	16.7 (12.2, 22.3)	49.8 (43.1, 56.4)	20.4 (15.6, 26.2)	11.0 (7.5, 15.9)	2.2 (0.8, 5.9)
I feel safe	All	19.1 (16.4, 22.2)	60.4 (56.5, 64.1)	13.3 (11.0, 15.9)	5.9 (4.4, 7.9)	1.3 (0.7, 2.4)
	Australian born	20.3 (16.8, 24.2)	61.3 (56.4, 66.0)	11.8 (9.1, 15.2)	5.8 (3.9, 8.5)	0.9 (0.3, 2.2)
	Overseas born	16.7 (12.7, 21.7)	58.1 (52.1, 63.9)	16.6 (12.9, 21.2)	6.3 (3.8, 10.2)	2.2 (0.2, 23.0)
I feel supported	All	11.9 (9.5, 14.7)	57.0 (53.2, 60.7)	18.7 (15.8, 21.9)	11.5 (9.2, 14.4)	1.0 (0.6, 1.6)
	Australian born	12.4 (9.5, 16.0)	56.0 (51.5, 60.5)	18.7 (15.4, 22.5)	12.2 (9.3, 15.9)	0.7 (0.4, 1.4)
	Overseas born	11.3 (7.9, 15.9)	59.4 (52.5, 66.0)	17.4 (13.0, 23.0)	10.5 (6.9, 15.5)	1.4 (0.0, 43.3)

I.9. Conclusions

Analysis of the ANUpoll data shows that students and staff who had experienced racism at university were far more likely to complete the Racism@Uni survey than those who had not. Among students overall, the probability of survey completion was roughly twice as high for those reporting racism compared to those who did not. This difference was even more pronounced among overseas-born students, where the likelihood of completing the survey was more than three times higher for those who had experienced racism. For staff, the gap was larger still. Staff who reported racism were four times more likely to have completed the survey than those without such experiences. These patterns strongly suggest that the Racism@Uni survey disproportionately attracted participants with direct experiences of racism, meaning its published figures on the prevalence of direct experiences of racism should be treated as an upper bound rather than an accurate estimate.

This self-selection effect appears limited to questions about personal experiences of racism. The ANUpoll analysis found no significant differences between survey completers

and non-completers on other measures, such as perceptions of racism as a problem at university or feelings of belonging, safety, respect, inclusion, and support. Responses to these broader questions were consistent across both groups, indicating that while personal experience influenced participation, general attitudes and perceptions were not systematically skewed. While the Racism@Uni survey's estimates of direct racism are likely inflated by self-selection, its findings on overall campus climate are likely to be more accurate representations of the views of the university community.

Appendix J Issues for future surveys

The Racism@Uni survey was a major undertaking and has generated a wealth of data to understand the extent, and experience, of racism in Australian universities. Designed as a benchmark survey, its findings are intended to inform future surveys to assess the implementation and effectiveness of policy responses.

This appendix summarises the lessons of the Racism@Uni survey for consideration in any future surveys. The key issues are:

- Data on prevalence should be collected as part of mainstream surveys, rather than as a specific racism survey

Surveys with a specific focus, such as the Racism@Uni survey, have significant problems with response bias. By the very name of the survey, notwithstanding how it might be promoted, it will obtain a response which is biased by the salience of the subject to potential respondents. That is, it will disproportionately be responded to by those who have an interest in the topic, either through their own experience, or interests.

We would suggest the ideal approach is to include a short module in the Student Experience Survey. At the same time, we consider that the existing questions in the Student Experience on being free from discrimination and freedom of expression be reviewed.

We would propose that the questions C1a and C1 in the Racism@Uni Survey, see Appendix K, be used. In suggesting this we consider that an approach which addresses both racism at university, and more generally, is preferred, as for many these broader experiences also impinge on their learning experience. Additionally, this allows for individuals to report on all of their experiences of racism, and obviates the risk that some experiences, such as those on the way to university, or non-university social occasions with university friends, may if they are significant, be ascribed to university.

If implemented as a regular element in the annual Student Experience Survey the recall period should be adjusted to one year.

- That this be complemented by a survey such as the Racism@Uni survey which allows for more in-depth data to be collected and the experiences of smaller sub-populations to be identified. Specifically, within this we would propose an approach and questionnaire similar to that used in this survey, with modifications to:

Collect data on ethnicity primarily using a pre-defined choice of categories, rather than open text. We would suggest some 20 or so categories, based on the existing communities but: a) ensuring better collection of data on other Indigenous peoples (using a tick box with an accessory write in explanation); b) seek a more detailed

breakdown of major groups such as South Asian, and European; and c) an approach to better identify the 'Afro-diasporic' category.⁸¹

Include a question on 'whiteness'. While we recognise how there has been some political capture of the concept, there is merit in seeking to test whether the data can be collected.

Use categorical collection of data on religion, language spoken at home and country of birth, at least for the major response groups, to minimise coding, coding error and risk of unusable data.

Expand the reasons for not taking action in bystander racism to include: that the person handled it themselves; someone else intervened, and the person did not want action taken.

Complement the bystander question, which focuses on racism towards a person, with a further question focusing on hearing more general racist expressions.

Include questions on social class and disability to enable greater attention to intersectionality.

Include caste as a grounds on which people may be subject to racism and expand the response categories to include international conflicts as a whole.

Expanding the question on between, and within, racism to include racism within European communities.

In the qualitative final question including as one of the rotating questions one which probes the nature of the actual racism experience(s) reported.

Include students in the respondents to the question on the extent to which university leadership reflects diversity.

Identify the proportion of students who have placements/internships.

Include a question on whether course materials are seen as embedding any particular racial/cultural perspective.

- Given the large amount of detailed data this type of survey would collect, if it is implemented as a complement to the regular annual data collection in the Student Experience Survey, then a biennial or triennial timing may be appropriate.

We would also draw attention to the criticisms identified in Chapter 1. A number of these are addressed in the above comments. Others such as the questions on gender and sexuality should be considered through further testing.

⁸¹ Addressing this classification in a clear categorical manner, juxtaposed with a question such as the existing F5 on external perceived identity would also clarify the different intent of internal and external identification.

Appendix K Survey Instrument

ORU - L6675A RACISM@UNI ONE

DP Analyst\
ORU\
ORU \
Client\
Template Version
Wrap-arounds...
Inbox:

CONDITION	
if(Session).toNumber()==1	
true	false
Question To Capture First Session Device Used()	Question To Capture Last Session Device Used()

screenResolutionFS - Screen resolution (First Session)

.cf-text-area {border-bottom: 1px none #e0e0e0; background-color: transparent; color: transparent;}.cf-question {background-color: transparent;}.cf-page {color: transparent;}.cf-page__question-list {background: transparent;}.cf-text-area {resize: inherit;}.cf-page__main{display: none;}

ELSE
if(Session).toNumber()==1

screenResolutionLS - Screen resolution (Last Session)

.cf-text-area {border-bottom: 1px none #e0e0e0; background-color: transparent; color: transparent;}.cf-question {background-color: transparent;}.cf-page {color: transparent;}.cf-page__question-list {background: transparent;}.cf-text-area {resize: inherit;}.cf-page__main{display: none;}

END	Condition if(Session).toNumber()==1
CONDITION	qf("quaTotal") true Question quotascript()
STOP	QuotaFull – quaTotal (RespStatus=QF1) Thank you for your interest in this survey. Unfortunately, as other respondents complete the survey, this quota has already been filled. Please close the browser to submit the survey. .cf-navigation__button {display: none;}
END	Condition qf("quaTotal")

PISinfoSHORT - PISinfoSHORT

Welcome to the Racism@Uni Survey
The Racism@Uni Survey is the first survey providing national data on the prevalence and impact of racism experienced by students and staff in Australian universities.
Who is conducting this research? The Racism@Uni survey is being conducted by a research team from POLIS: Centre for Social Policy Research (POLIS) at the Australian National University in conjunction with the Online Research Unit (ORU).
The Principal Researcher is Associate Professor Deirdre Howard-Wagner.
The Online Research Unit are administering the survey you are completing and collecting the survey data on behalf of the POLIS research team.
The Australian Human Rights Commission has commissioned the POLIS team to conduct the Racism@Uni Survey.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies HEREC (REC-0541 Howard-Wagner), and reciprocal approval from the Australian National University HREC (H/2025/0311).

SUPPORT NUMBERS If you become upset or distressed because of completing the Racism@Uni Survey, you can contact your university student or staff wellbeing and counselling support service.

Each university has its own procedures for reporting and addressing incidents of racism and discrimination. If you wish to make a complaint, please visit your university's website to find the appropriate reporting channels and support services.

A list of university support and wellbeing services can be found here.

Alternatively, you can also get in touch with some of the services listed below or visit their websites for information and support.

Beyond Blue Support Service (24/7):
1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline (24/7):
(24/7) 13 11 14 <https://www.lifeline.org.au>

Mensline (24/7):
130078 99 78 <http://www.mensline.org.au>

Suicide Call Back Service
1300 659 467

13Yarn
139276 <https://www.13yarn.org.au/contact-us-13yarn>

Transcultural mental health line (selected states only)

NSW 1800 648 911

QLD 1800 188 189

VIC <https://vtmh.org.au/>

NT <https://www.mentalhealthnt.com.au/support-for-multicultural-people>

QLife (LGBTI+, 3pm to midnight)
1800 184 527 <https://qlife.org.au/>

Further information If you require survey technical support or need any assistance regarding survey technical matters, you can contact the Online Research Unit via the following email address:
racismunisurvey@theoru.zendesk.com.

The Racism@Uni Survey project team is operating a free of charge number 1800 192 651 and email racism.uni.survey@anu.edu.au for information about the survey.

The Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee (2025-03-414) and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Research Ethics Committee (REC-0541 Howard-Wagner) have reviewed and approved this study in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023). This Statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

Should you wish to discuss the study or view a copy of the Complaint procedure with someone not directly involved, particularly in relation to matters concerning policies, information or complaints about the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Operations Manager, Bellberry Limited on 08 8361 3222.

If you would like more INFORMATION ABOUT THE RACISM@UNI SURVEY, click on this link to the detailed Participant Information Sheet. The participant information sheet can also be saved as a PDF.

Who can participate All staff and students (18 years and over) at participating Australian universities are eligible to participate in the Racism@Uni Survey.

Participation and procedures You do not have to participate in the survey unless you want to; your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you will take part in an online survey that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The survey includes demographic questions and questions about experiences of institutional and structural racism, interpersonal racism, and bystander racism. You will not be asked to provide any personally identifying information and you do not have to disclose any information you do not wish to.

If you decide you want to take part in the Racism@Uni Survey, you will be asked to click on the consent button at the bottom of this page. By clicking on this button, you are signing the consent form, and you are telling us that you: Understand what you have read. Consent to take part in the Racism@Uni Survey. Consent to be involved in the research described. Consent to the use of the anonymous information that you provide for research purposes.

Confidentiality and Data handling Survey participation will be anonymous. Any information obtained and collected from the Racism@Uni Survey will be de-identified and treated as confidential and securely stored.

We will report on the prevalence, severity, and impact of racism, considering the context and diversity of experiences. Each university will receive a report based on findings from its participants. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. The results of statistical analysis will also be reviewed prior to publication to ensure that there is no risk of identifying an individual through a set of unique personal characteristics.

The only exception to this commitment is if you disclose information indicating that someone may be at risk of harm or involved in illegal activities. This applies to open-text responses or when seeking support from the 1800 number or the Racism@Uni support emails. To protect your confidentiality, please avoid sharing sensitive information.

Once the report is finalised, the quantitative survey data (anonymous and deidentified) will be stored at the Australian Data Archives. We may include some quantitative data or thematically coded data that is derived from the qualitative data in the Australian Data Archive. Data on the Data Archives may be accessible by other researchers. Any potentially identifying information will have been removed from the stored survey data to ensure your privacy is protected.

Does the Racism@Uni Survey team have access to my personal information and email? The POLIS researchers will not know your name or any of your contact details. Your university has not provided the ORU or the POLIS research team with any of your personal information. This includes your email address from which you received an invitation to participate in the Racism@Uni Survey.

Your university will not know whether you participated in the Racism@Uni Survey.

Are there any financial incentives? If you complete the survey, you will be able to enter into a draw and have the chance to receive one of fifty \$50 gift vouchers. Your email for the draw will not be linked to the survey that you completed.

Can I withdraw from this study? You can choose to stop completing the survey at any point.

If you stop completing the survey part way through, the information you provide may still be retained depending on what point you stopped answering the survey questions.

Do I have to complete the survey in one go? Participants do not have to complete the survey in one go. You can click on your unique link and pick up where you left off.

Has this project received ethical approval? The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the Bellberry Limited Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (2025-03-414), the Australian Institute of

Please read each question and follow the instructions to record your reply. Some questions ask you to type in a comment.

Please DO NOT USE the 'Back' and 'Forward' buttons in your browser. Please use the button(s) at the bottom of each screen.

If you would like to pause the survey to return to it later, simply close the window and click on the original link to return. You will return to where you left off.

A1 - A1. Age (years)

To start with, we have some questions about you.

What is your age (in years)?

`input[type=number]::-webkit-inner-spin-button, input[type=number]::-webkit-outer-spin-button { -webkit-appearance: none; margin: 0; } input[type=number] { -moz-appearance:textfield; }`

A1pns

`#A1 {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #A1pns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;} #A1pns_content {padding-left:10px;}`

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

`f('A1').toBoolean() && f('A1').between(0,17)`

true

Question A1_ScreenOutScript()

false

Screened – A1a-screener (RespStatus=A1)

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Racism@Uni survey; however, due to ethical constraints the survey is intended for individuals aged 18 and over.

You may close this window at any time.

STOP

END

`Condition f('A1').toBoolean() && f('A1').between(0,17)`

I have read and understood the information provided about the research project in the Participant Information Sheet (PIFC), and I have had any questions and concerns about the project addressed to my satisfaction.

I understand what this project is about, and I voluntarily agree to my participation in this study.

CONSENT - CONSENT

Consent Declaration

Do you consent to participate in this research for the purposes specified in this Plain Language Statement?

- ☐ Yes, I consent to participate in this research for the purposes specified in this Statement (1)
- ☐ No, I do not consent to participate in this research for the purposes specified in this Statement (2)

CONDITION

`f('CONSENT').any(2)`

true

Question CON_ScreenOutScript()

false

Screened – Con-screener (RespStatus=CON)

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Racism@Uni survey; however, due to ethical constraints you must provide consent to participate in the survey.

You may close this window at any time.

STOP

END

`Condition f('CONSENT').any(2)`

Intro - Intro

This survey is about your experiences at ‘f(bUniversity)’ and the university’s policies.

This survey asks questions about whether or not you have experienced racism or racial discrimination. It can be upsetting and potentially triggering for some people who have had such an experience to recall it. It might be best to not complete the survey especially if you’re feeling vulnerable, distressed or at risk of self-harm. If you are distressed there are counselling and support services available, click here for more information.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey.

This survey is about your experiences at ‘f(bUniversity)’ in the last two years. Although you may be studying or employed at more than one university or have been at ‘f(bUniversity)’ for less than two years, please respond to this survey in relation to your experiences at ‘f(bUniversity)’ only.

The survey will take about 15 minutes of your time to complete and is completely confidential and anonymous.

CONDITION

f('A1pns').any('98','99')

true

false

Question A2(A2. Age group)

A2 - A2. Age group

Which of these age groups do you belong to?

- ☐ (A)

☐ 16-17 years (1)

☐ 18-21 years (2)

☐ 22-24 years (3)

☐ 25-34 years (4)

☐ 35-44 years (5)

☐ 45-54 years (6)

☐ 55-64 years (7)

☐ 65-74 years (8)

☐ 75 years and over (9)
- ☐ Not sure, or prefer not to say, but I am aged 18 years or over (98)

☐ Not sure, or prefer not to say (this will exit you from the survey) (99)

CONDITION

f('A2').any('1','99')

true

false

Question A1b_ScreenOutScript()

Screened – A1b-screener (RespStatus=A1)

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Racism@Uni survey; however, due to ethical constraints the survey is limited to individuals aged 18 and over.

You may close this window at any time.

END

Condition f('A2').any('1','99')

END

Condition f('A1pns').any('98','99')

A3 - A3.

Are you currently a student or staff member at 'f('bUniversity')'^'?

Please select one only

- ☐ Student (Vocational, Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Higher Degree Research) (1)

☐ Staff member (2)

☐ Both a student and a staff member (3)

☐ Not currently a student or staff member (4)

CONDITION

f('A3').any('4')

true

false

Question A3_ScreenOutScript()

Screened – A1b-screener (RespStatus=A1)

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Racism@Uni survey; however, this survey is intended for current staff and students at Australian universities.

You may close this window at any time.

END

Condition f('A3').any('4')

CONDITION

f('A3').any('1','3')

true

false

Question A3a(A3a.)

A3a - A3a.

Are you a domestic student, an international student or an overseas exchange student?

- ☐ (A)

☐ Domestic student (1)

☐ International student studying at an Australian campus (2)

☐ International student studying at an off-shore campus (3)

☐ Overseas exchange student enrolled at a non-Australian university (4)
- ☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('A3a').any('3')

true

Question A3a_ScreenOutScript()

false

STOP

Screened – A1b-screener (RespStatus=A1)

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Racism@Uni survey; however, this survey is only open to staff and students who are currently attending an Australian university campus on-shore in Australia.

You may close this window at any time.

END

Condition f('A3a').any('3')

A4 - A4.

Which of the following best describes how you are participating in your classes. This may include lectures, tutorials, seminars, practicals, laboratories and workshops.

☐ (A)

☐ Mostly on-campus - students and teachers are in the same physical place at the same time (1)

☐ Mostly online - students and teachers are online (2)

☐ Blended / hybrid - a mix of online and on-campus (3)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f('A3').any('1';'3')

CONDITION

f('A3').any('2';'3')

true

Question A6(A6.)

false

A6 - A6.

Are you an academic or non-academic staff member at ^f('bUniversity')^?

If you have both an academic and a non-academic job, please select the job in which you usually work the most hours.

Non-academic includes professional, administrative and technical staff.

☐ (A)

☐ Academic staff member (1)

☐ Non-academic staff member (2)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('A6').any('2')

true

Question A6a(A6a.)

false

A6a - A6a.

What is your current annual, before tax, salary range at ^f('bUniversity')^?

☐ Under \$50,000 (1)

☐ \$50,000 to \$99,000 (2)

☐ \$100,000 to \$150,000 (3)

☐ Above \$150,000 (4)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

A6ab - A6ab.

Do you supervise staff?

☐ (A)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('A6ab').any('1')

true

Question A6b(A6b.)

false

A6b - A6b.

How many staff do you supervise?

- ☐ Casual or sessional (4)
- ☐ Honorary, Adjunct, Emerita, Emeritus or visitor (5)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	$f(A6).any(1)$	true false
Question A7ab(A7ab.)		

A7ab - A7ab.

Do you supervise staff?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	$f(A7ab).any(1)$	true false
Question A7b(A7b.)		

A7b - A7b.

How many staff do you supervise?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ 1-3 staff (1)
- ☐ 3-5 staff (2)
- ☐ 5 or more staff (3)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition $f(A7ab).any(1)$

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ 1-3 staff (1)
- ☐ 3-5 staff (2)
- ☐ 5 or more staff (3)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition $f(A6ab).any(1)$

END	Condition $f(A6).any(2)$

CONDITION	$f(A6).any(1)$	true false
Question A7(A7.)		

A7 - A7.

What is your academic level?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Level A (Associate Lecturer or equivalent) (1)
- ☐ Level B (Lecturer or equivalent) (2)
- ☐ Level C (Senior Lecturer or equivalent) (3)
- ☐ Level D (Associate Professor or equivalent) (4)
- ☐ Level E (Professor or equivalent) (5)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition $f(A6).any(1)$

A7a - A7a.

What type of employment arrangement do you have with ^f(bUniversity)^?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Continuing (1)
- ☐ Continuing contingent (2)
- ☐ Fixed term contract (3)

A10 - A10.

Which Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nation, community or language groups do you identify with?
Specify all that apply. .cf-grid-layout {max-width: 15px;} #A10 {margin-bottom: 0px;padding-bottom: 0px;} #A10pns {margin-top: 0px;padding-top: 0px;}

1. (1)
2. (2)
3. (3)
4. (4)

A10pns

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition f('A9').any('1')
END	Condition f('A8').any('1','2','3')
CONDITION	f('A3').any('3')
	true
	Question A11(A11.)
	false

A11 - A11.

You have said you are both a student and a staff member.

To minimise survey length and avoid repeated questions, we would ask you to complete the rest of this survey based on your experience at ^f('bUniversity')^ as either a student or a staff member.

Do you wish to complete this on the basis of your experience as a:

- ☐ Student (1)
- ☐ Staff member (2)

END	Condition f('A3').any('3')
CON	IsInProductionModel()

END	Condition f('A6').any('1')

END	Condition f('A3').any('2','3')

A8 - A8.

Are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal (1)
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander (2)
- ☐ Yes, Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (3)
- ☐ No (4)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	f('A8').any('1','2','3')
	true
	Question A9(A9.)
	false

A9 - A9.

Do you identify with any particular Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nation(s), community or language group(s)?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I have been unable to trace the details of my heritage (97)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	f('A9').any('1')
	true
	Question A10page()
	false

Racial discrimination may occur when a person is treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation, because of their race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion.

Interpersonal racism occurs to individual people or groups of people, often in everyday settings, and is sometimes referred to as casual racism. It can come in a range of forms including abuse, harassment, humiliation, or exclusion, because of somebody's ethnicity, race, culture and/or religion.

C1a - C1a.

Have you personally experienced racism or racial discrimination in Australia in the last two years?

- ☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)
☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

f('C1a').any('1')

CONDITION

true false

Question el precedes function()

C1 - C1.

Where did these experiences of racism or racial discrimination take place?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
☐ At university as a student, including online university activity (1)
☐ At a non-university education institution, for example, at a primary or secondary school or TAFE (2)
☐ At university as a staff member or visitor (3)
☐ At a university professional, social or sporting event, even if this was not on campus (13)
☐ In non-university employment (4)
☐ When renting or buying a house (5)
☐ In any contact with security, police or other law enforcement (6)
☐ In any contact with government departments and services (such as Centrelink) (7)
☐ At a health service (such as a hospital, medical service) (8)
☐ At a shop or restaurant (9)
☐ At a sporting or public event (non-university) (10)
☐ On social media (11)
☐ Using public transport (12)
☐ Other non-university (please specify) (96) _____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

f('C1').any('1';2';3';4';5';6';7';8';9';10';11';12';13';96')

CON

	Always (1)	Often (2)	Sometimes (3)	Hardly ever (4)	Never (5)	Not applicable (97)	Not sure (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
Feel uncomfortable disclosing your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious identity (A)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feel uncomfortable wearing items of clothing or jewellery that might make your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious identity visible to others (B)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mentally prepare for possible racist conversations before entering a learning environment (C)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mentally prepare for possible racist conversations before entering your university workplace (D)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stay away from campus to avoid experiencing racism during political and other actions (such as protests, demonstrations, poster displays) (E)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not express your views because it might affect your visa to study in Australia (F)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not express your views because it might affect your visa to work in Australia (G)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Feel people assume you are an international student because of your name or your appearance (H)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C1aInfo

We are now going to ask you some questions about whether or not you have experienced interpersonal racism and racial discrimination.

true

Question C2(C2.)

false

C2 - C2.

You said you had experienced racism or racial discrimination. How often did this occur in the past two years?

	Very frequently (1)	Frequently (2)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (4)	Not sure (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
At university as a student (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At a non-university education institution, for example, at a primary or secondary school or TAFE (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At university as a staff member or visitor (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At a university professional, social or sporting event, even if this was not on campus (13)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In a non-university workplace (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When renting or buying a house (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In any contact with security, police or other law enforcement (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In any contact with government departments and services (e.g. Centrelink) (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At a health service (e.g. hospital, medical service) (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At a shop or restaurant (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
At a sporting or public event (non-university) (10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
On social media (11)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using public transport (12)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
^f(C1_96, other)^ (96)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

END

Condition f(C1)^any('1','2','3','4','5','6','7','8','9','10','11','12','13','96')

END

Condition f(C1a)^any('1')

CONDITION

(f(A3)^any('1') || f(A11)^any('1')) && f(C1)^any('1','13')

true

Question C4(C4.)

false

C4 - C4.

At ^f(bUniversity)^, have you experienced any of the following due to your race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion in the last two years?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Being singled out or excluded (1)
- ☐ Having inappropriate comments, names or jokes directed at me (2)
- ☐ Feeling I could not express my views openly (3)
- ☐ Being told I am, or made to feel, unintelligent or incapable (4)
- ☐ Missing out on an opportunity that I feel I deserved (5)
- ☐ Receiving a worse mark than I feel I deserved (6)
- ☐ Feeling I wasn't trusted (7)
- ☐ Being told I get things for free or other benefits because of my race (8)
- ☐ Being unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, threatened or abused by university security (9)
- ☐ Being physically harassed, threatened or assaulted (10)
- ☐ Being verbally harassed, threatened or abused (11)
- ☐ Being harassed, threatened or abused online (12)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f(C4)^any('1','2','3','4','5','6','7','8','9','10','11','12','13','96')

true

Question c5precodes function()

false

C5 - C5.

Do you think this happened because of any of the following factors?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ My language or accent (1)
- ☐ My cultural/racial/ethnic background (2)
- ☐ My skin colour and/or other physical features associated with my racial/ethnic identity (3)
- ☐ My religious background (4)
- ☐ Because of current conflict in the Middle East (5)
- ☐ Because of COVID (6)
- ☐ Because I am an international fee-paying student (7)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C4)^any('1','2','3','4','5','6','7','8','9','10','11','12','13','96')

C6 - C6.

Thinking about all of your experiences of racism or racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^, where did these take place?

Please select all that apply:

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ In a physical lecture theatre or similar large teaching space (1)
- ☐ In a physical tutorial, seminar or similar smaller teaching/learning space (2)
- ☐ Online in a lecture (3)
- ☐ Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar smaller teaching/learning space (4)
- ☐ In marking and or related feedback (5)
- ☐ At a professional placement, internship or work experience placement associated with the university (6)
- ☐ At a student accommodation or residences (7)
- ☐ At a university club, society, association (8)
- ☐ In a university sporting space (9)
- ☐ In a retail service on campus (such as café, shops, daycare) (10)
- ☐ In a university library and/or other study spaces (11)
- ☐ At a university health service (12)
- ☐ In a reflection room or prayer space on campus (13)
- ☐ Elsewhere on campus (for example, open space, quadrangles, parking, bus-stops) (14)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C7 - C7.

Did your experience(s) of racism and racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^ have any of the following impacts?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ A negative impact on my academic studies (1)
- ☐ A negative impact on my mental health (2)
- ☐ It made me limit my participation in university life (3)
- ☐ It made me limit my contacts to those of a similar background to me (4)
- ☐ It made me less likely to continue my studies at an Australian university (5)
- ☐ It made me less likely to consider Australia as a country I would consider moving to once my studies are finished (6)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____
- ☐ None (97)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C8 - C8.

Thinking about your most significant experience of racism or racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^, who actively participated in this behaviour?

Please select all that apply:

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ University teaching/academic staff (1)
- ☐ University administrative staff (2)
- ☐ University facilities staff including security (3)

- ☐ University students (4)
- ☐ University leadership/management (5)
- ☐ Another role (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C8a - C8a.

If you can, how would you describe the cultural, religious, or ethnic background of the individual(s) who were responsible for this most significant racist or racially discriminatory behaviour?

#C8a {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #C8aPns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;}

C8aPns

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C8b - C8b.

And what was their gender?

☐ (A)

☐ Male (1)

☐ Female (2)

☐ Both male and female (3)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C9 - C9.

Did you submit a complaint to the university after this most significant experience of racism and/or racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^?

☐ (A)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITI

f(C9).any('1')

true

false

Question C10(C10.)

C10 - C10.

How satisfied were you with the university's response to your complaint?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Very satisfied (1)
- ☐ Satisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (4)
- ☐ Very dissatisfied (5)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f(C10).any(4;5)

true

Question C11(C11.)

false

C11 - C11.

Why were you dissatisfied?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ The complaint process was too complex (1)
- ☐ Complaining did not make a difference (2)
- ☐ My complaint was not kept confidential (3)
- ☐ My grades were negatively impacted because of my complaint (4)
- ☐ I was not believed (5)
- ☐ I felt embarrassed or ashamed (6)
- ☐ The complaint process caused additional distress (7)
- ☐ I felt I could not trust the people involved in the complaint process (8)
- ☐ I got into trouble (9)
- ☐ It became too hard to prove (10)
- ☐ The complaint process took too long (11)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C10).any(4;5)

true

false

END

Condition f(C9).any(1)

CONDITION

f(C9).any(2)

true

Question C12(C12.)

false

C12 - C12.

Why didn't you submit a complaint to the university?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ I did not know I could complain (1)
- ☐ I did not know how to make a complaint (2)
- ☐ I was worried about the consequences of making a complaint (3)
- ☐ The complaint process is too hard, long or confusing (4)
- ☐ I felt it was too upsetting or emotionally difficult to complain (5)
- ☐ I didn't trust the complaint process to change anything (6)
- ☐ I did not think it was important enough to make a complaint (7)
- ☐ I dealt with it myself (8)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C9).any(2)

C12a - C12a.

Did you seek support after this most significant experience of racism and/or racial discrimination?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITI

f(C12a).any(1)

true

false

Question C13(C13.)

C13 - C13.

Where did you seek this support from?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Someone in my college, faculty or school (for example a lecturer or tutor) (1)
- ☐ Someone from my residential college/dorm/house (2)
- ☐ Student leader (for example a Class Representative or Student Union or Student Association) (3)
- ☐ Student peers from my racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious background (4)
- ☐ Indigenous Higher Education Centre/Elders on Campus (5)
- ☐ University counselling and wellbeing services (6)
- ☐ Someone else from the university (7)
- ☐ Support from outside the university (8)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C12a).any('1')

END

Condition (f('A3').any('2') || f('A1').any('1')) && f('C1').any('1','13')

CONDITION

(f('A3').any('2') || f('A1').any('2')) && f('C1').any('3','13')

true

Question C14(C14.)

false

C14 - C14.

At ^f('bUniversity')^, have you experienced any of the following due to your race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion in the last two years?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Being singled out or excluded (1)
- ☐ Having inappropriate comments, names or jokes directed at me (2)
- ☐ Feeling I could not express my views openly (3)
- ☐ Being told I am, or made to feel, unintelligent or incapable (4)
- ☐ Missing out on an opportunity that I felt I deserved (5)
- ☐ Feeling I wasn't trusted (6)
- ☐ Being unfairly denied a promotion that I feel I deserved (7)
- ☐ Being unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, threatened or abused by university security (8)

- ☐ Being physically harassed, threatened or assaulted (9)
- ☐ Being verbally harassed, threatened or abused (10)
- ☐ Being harassed, threatened or abused online (11)
- ☐ Having negative student and/or peer evaluations made about me (12)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('C14').any('1','2','3','4','5','6','7','8','9','10','11','12','13','96')

true

Question C15(C15.)

false

C15 - C15.

Do you think this happened because of any of the following factors?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ My language or accent (1)
- ☐ My cultural/racial/ethnic background (2)
- ☐ My skin colour and/or other physical features associated with my racial/ethnic identity (3)
- ☐ My religious background (4)
- ☐ Because of current conflict in the Middle East (5)
- ☐ Because of COVID (6)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f('C14').any('1','2','3','4','5','6','7','8','9','10','11','12','13','96')

C16 - C16.

Thinking about all of your experiences of racism or racial discrimination at ^f('bUniversity')^, where did these take place?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ In a physical lecture theatre or similar large teaching space (1)
- ☐ In a physical tutorial, seminar or similar smaller teaching/learning space (2)
- ☐ Online in a lecture (3)
- ☐ Online in a tutorial, seminar or similar smaller teaching/learning space (4)
- ☐ In a work meeting (5)
- ☐ In a staff space (such as a staff-room, staff kitchen/tearoom) (6)
- ☐ In a retail service on campus (for example a café, shops, daycare) (7)
- ☐ In a university library (8)
- ☐ At a university health service (9)

- ☐ In a reflection room or prayer space on campus (10)
- ☐ In performance evaluations (11)
- ☐ In a university complaints-handling service (12)
- ☐ Elsewhere on campus (for example, open space, quadrangles, parking, bus-stops) (13)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96) _____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C17 - C17.

Did your experience of racism and racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^ have any of the following impacts?

Please select *all that apply*

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ A negative impact on your academic or professional career (1)
- ☐ A negative impact on your mental health (2)
- ☐ It made me limit my participation in university life (3)
- ☐ It made me limit my contacts to those of a similar backgrounds to me (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96) _____
- ☐ None (97)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C18 - C18.

Thinking about your most significant experience of racism or racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^, who actively participated in this behaviour?

Please select *all that apply*

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ University academic staff (1)
- ☐ University professional or administrative staff (2)
- ☐ University facilities staff including security (3)
- ☐ University students (4)
- ☐ University leadership/management (5)
- ☐ Another role (please specify) (96) _____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C18a - C18a.

If you can, how would you describe the cultural, religious or ethnic background of the person(s) who were responsible for this most significant racist or racially discriminatory behaviour?

#C18a {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #C18aPns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;}

C18aPns

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C18b - C18b.

And what was their gender?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Both male and female (3)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

C19 - C19.

Did you submit a complaint to the university after this most significant experience of racism and racial discrimination at ^f(bUniversity)^?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	
$f(C19).any(1')$	
true	Question C20(C20.)
false	

C20 - C20.

How satisfied were you with the university's response to your complaint?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Very satisfied (1)
- ☐ Satisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (4)
- ☐ Very dissatisfied (5)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	$\text{if}('C20')\text{any}('4','5')$	true false
	Question C21(C21.)	

C21 - C21.

Why were you dissatisfied?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ The complaint process was too complex (1)
- ☐ Complaining did not make a difference (2)
- ☐ My complaint was not kept confidential (3)
- ☐ My career was negatively impacted as a result of complaining (4)
- ☐ I was not believed (5)
- ☐ I felt embarrassed or ashamed (6)
- ☐ The complaint process caused additional distress (7)
- ☐ I felt I could not trust the people involved in the complaint process (8)
- ☐ It became too hard to prove (9)
- ☐ The complaint process took too long (10)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition $\text{if}('C20')\text{any}('4','5')$	
END	Condition $\text{if}('C19')\text{any}('1')$	
CONDITION	$\text{if}('C19')\text{any}('2')$	true false
	Question C22(C22.)	

C22 - C22.

Why didn't you submit a complaint to the university?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ I did not know. I could complain (1)
- ☐ I did not know how to make a complaint (2)

- ☐ I was worried about the consequences of making a complaint (3)
- ☐ The complaint process is too hard, long or confusing (4)
- ☐ I felt it was too upsetting or emotionally difficult to complain (5)
- ☐ I didn't trust the complaint process to change anything (6)
- ☐ I did not think it was important enough to make a complaint (7)
- ☐ I dealt with it myself (8)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	Condition $\text{if}('C19')\text{any}('2')$	
C22a - C22a.	Did you seek support after this most significant experience of racism and/or racial discrimination?	
	☐ (A) ☐ Yes (1) ☐ No (2)	
	☐ Not sure (98) ☐ Prefer not to say (99)	
CONDITION	$\text{if}('C22a')\text{any}('1')$	true false
	Question C23(C23.)	

C23 - C23.

Where did you seek this support from?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ University Counselling & Wellbeing services (1)
- ☐ University Employee Assistance Program (2)
- ☐ People and Culture/HR staff member (3)
- ☐ University medical staff (4)
- ☐ Colleague in my faculty, school or department (5)
- ☐ Manager/Supervisor (6)
- ☐ Head of School (7)
- ☐ Union (8)
- ☐ Indigenous Higher Education Centre/Elders on Campus (9)
- ☐ Someone else from the university (10)
- ☐ Support from outside the university (11)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C22a).any(1)

END

Condition (f(A3).any(2) || f(A1).any(2)) && f(C1).any(3,'13')

CONDITION

f(A3).any(1,'2','3') //&& f(C1).any(1,'3','13')

true

false

Question C24(C24.)

C24 - C24.

Even if not directed at you, have you heard or seen people at ^f(bUniversity)^:

	Very frequently (1)	Frequently (2)	Sometimes (3)	Rarely (4)	Never (6)	Not applicable (97)	Not sure say (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
Using racist terms or making racist jokes and comments about the racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group with which you identify (A)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demigrating your culture in a racist way (B)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Using negative stereotypes about your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group (C)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trivialising the negative experiences of people of your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group (D)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Blaming your racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious group for some adverse outcome for others (E)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

END

Condition f(A3).any(1,'2','3') //&& f(C1).any(1,'3','13')

CONDITION

f(C1).any(1,'3','13') || f(C24)[A].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[B].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[C].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[D].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[E].any(1,'2','3','4')

true

false

Question C25(C25.)

C25 - C25.

Was the racism and/or racial discrimination that you have seen or experienced at ^f(bUniversity)^ between any of the following groups?

Choose all that are relevant

- ☐ (A)
☐ From people of European appearance (Australian, British, European) toward people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds (1)
☐ From people from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds toward people of European appearance (2)
☐ Between people from different culturally and racially diverse backgrounds (3)
☐ Between people from the same culturally and/or racially diverse backgrounds (4)
☐ I don't know enough about racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds to know whether the racism I have experienced or observed was between, or within, groups (5)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(C1).any(1,'3','13') || f(C24)[A].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[B].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[C].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[D].any(1,'2','3','4') || f(C24)[E].any(1,'2','3','4')

CendInfo

Before we continue with the survey, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the counselling and support services available.

Universities have their own policies and procedures for reporting and addressing racism, which should be accessible to staff and students. If you have experienced direct or indirect racism, and you have not reported it, you can still do so.

If you experience any psychological distress as a result of participating in the Racism@Uni Survey, you should contact your university student or staff wellbeing and counselling support service.

You can also get in touch with the services listed below or visit their websites for information and support.

Support and Counselling Services: Beyond Blue Support Service (24/7):

1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline (24/7):

13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au

Mensline (24/7):

130078 99 78 www.mensline.org.au
Suicide Call Back Service
1300 659 467

13Yarn
13 92 76 www.13yarn.org.au

Transcultural mental health line (selected states only)
NSW 1800 648 911
QLD 1800 188 189
VIC vtmh.org.au
NT www.mentalhealthnt.com.au/support-for-multicultural-people

QLife (LGBTI+, 3pm to midnight)
1800 184 527

Click 'Next' to continue.

D1info
We are now going to ask some questions about policies and culture at ^f(bUniversity)^.

D1 - D1.
Are you aware of any programs, initiatives or services designed to address racism, or support the participation of particular groups, including racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups and others who face disadvantage at ^f(bUniversity)^?

☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION	
f(D1^).any(2)	
true	false
Question D1aa(D1aa.)	

D1aa - D1aa.
Even if you are not aware of the programs do you know how to report an incident of racism or racial discrimination you might observe or experience (even if you have not experienced or observed such an incident)?

☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No, but I think I could find this out easily (2)
☐ No, I don't know (3)

☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END	
Condition f(D1^).any(2)	
f(D1^).any(1)	
true	false
Question D1a(D1a.)	

D1a - D1a.
Thinking about ^f(bUniversity)^, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
.cf-table-layout__cell--row-head {min-width:400px;}

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)	Not sure / I don't know (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism (A)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Staff and students from different racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds are engaged in the design and implementation of anti-racism policies and other initiatives to improve equality (B)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Approaches for addressing racism have little to do with investigating and responding to the realities of racism on campus (C)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CONDITION	
f(D1a^)[^A^].any(4^;5)	
true	false
Question D1b(D1b.)	

D1b - D1b.
In the previous question you answered that you ^f(D1a^)[^A^].any(3) ? "neither agreed nor disagreed" : ^m^f(D1a^)[^A^].any(4) ? "disagreed" : ^m^f(D1a^)[^A^].any(5) ? "strongly disagreed" : ^m^ with the statement "Existing policies, rules, and procedures are effective in addressing racism".
Is this because you believe they are:

END

Condition (f('A3').any(2') || f('A11').any(2')) && f('D1').any(1')

CONDITION

f('A3').any(2') || f('A11').any(2')

truefalse

Question D3(D3.)

D3 - D3. Thinking about the culture at ^f('bUniversity')^, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)	Not sure / I don't know (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
The culture encourages and supports me to succeed in my university career (A)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The university encourages people from my racial, ethnic, cultural, and/or religious background to seek employment at this university (B)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The university senior executive or leadership reflects a diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds (C)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The academic staff at the university reflect a diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural and/or religious backgrounds (D)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is too much of a focus on addressing racism compared to other problems (E)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

D4 - D4. The following questions are about your experience at ^f('bUniversity')^:

Have you ever had your professionalism challenged by a student? (A)

Have you ever had your professionalism or expertise challenged by colleagues and/or management? (B)

Yes (1)

No (2)

Not sure (98)

Prefer not to say (99)

	Yes (1)	No (2)	Not sure (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
Have you ever experienced racist student evaluations? (C)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Have you ever had your employment prospects impacted by racist student evaluations? (D)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Have you ever been used in a tokenistic way for diversity and inclusivity? (E)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Have you ever been inappropriately expected to do work tied to your cultural identity that is not part of your job description? (F)	☐	☐	☐	☐

CONDITION

f('hD4sum').any(1')

truefalse

Question D5 precode mask function()

D5 - D5. And do you think that your treatment was due to any of the following factors?
Choose all that apply

☐ (A) Racial/Ethnic Identity (1)

☐ Culture/Religion (2)

☐ National Identity (3)

☐ Gender, gender identity or gender expression (4)

☐ Sexual orientation (5)

☐ Living with a disability (6)

☐ Social class (7)

☐ Age (8)

☐ Political orientation (9)

☐ Academic disciplinary orientation (10)

☐ General culture at university (11)

☐ Other (specify) (96) _____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f('hD4sum').any(1')

END

Condition f('A3').any(2') || f('A11').any(2')

CONDITI

(f('A3').any(1') || f('A11').any(1'))

truefalse

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)	I don't know (98)	Prefer not to say (99)
support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and students (C)							
I feel visible or seen as a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (D)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander knowledges and cultures are valued by the university (E)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am expected to educate non-Indigenous students/colleagues about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture (F)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am expected to talk on behalf of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples (G)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am expected to perform work in relation to my Indigeneity, which is not in my position description or for which I am not appropriately remunerated (for example Indigenising the curriculum, speaking at events) (H)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Racist stereotypes about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are challenged in teaching and/or research (I)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People have questioned my Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity (J)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CONDITION

f('C1'),none('1','3','13'))

true

false

Question E1(E1.)

E1 - E1.

In the last two years, have you seen or heard any discriminatory or abusive comments or behaviours directed towards other students or staff at 'f('bUniversity')' because of their race, ethnicity, culture and/or religion?

- ☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)
☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('E1'),any('1'))

true

false

Question E1a(E1a.)

E1a - E1a.

What were these comments or behaviours?

Please select *all that apply*.

- ☐ (A)
☐ Someone being called inappropriate names or subject to racial comments or jokes (1)
☐ Someone being inappropriately singled out or being excluded (2)
☐ Someone being told they are less intelligent (3)
☐ Someone being physically harassed, threatened or assaulted (4)
☐ Someone being verbally harassed, threatened or abused (5)
☐ Someone being harassed, threatened or abused online (6)
☐ Someone having their professionalism or expertise challenged by students or staff (7)
☐ Other (please specify) (96)_____

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

E2 - E2.

Did you take any action in response to any of these incidents?

- ☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

☐ Not sure (98)

☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f('E2'),any('1'))

true

false

Question E3(E3.)

E3 - E3.

Have you also witnessed an incident where you did not take any action?

- ☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

E4 - E4.

Which of the following actions did you take in response to the most significant incident of racism that you witnessed and acted on in the last two years?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ I tried to defuse or de-escalate the situation (1)
- ☐ I confronted or disagreed with the perpetrator (2)
- ☐ I comforted the person(s) targeted (3)
- ☐ I asked for assistance from someone within the university (such as a uni friend, colleague, staff member) (4)
- ☐ I reported the incident to a lecturer, tutor, supervisor, manager, and/or the university (5)
- ☐ I asked someone from outside of the university for assistance (6)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96) _____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END Condition f(E2).any('1')

CONDITION

f(E1a').any('1';2';3';4';5';6';7';96)

true

Question E6(E6.)

false

E6 - E6.

In the last two years at ^f('bUniversity')^, have you submitted a complaint to the university after witnessing any incident of racism or racial discrimination?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f(E6).any('1')

true

Question E7(E7.)

false

E7 - E7.

How satisfied were you with the university's response to your complaint?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Very satisfied (1)
- ☐ Satisfied (2)
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (4)
- ☐ Very dissatisfied (5)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f(E7).any('4';5')

true

Question e8precodes function()

false

E8 - E8.

Why were you dissatisfied?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ The complaint process is too complex (1)
- ☐ Complaining did not make a difference (2)
- ☐ My complaint was not kept confidential (3)
- ☐ My career was negatively impacted as a result of my complaint (4)
- ☐ My grades were negatively impacted as a result of my complaint (5)
- ☐ I was not believed (6)
- ☐ The complaint process took too long (7)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96) _____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition f(E7).any('4';5')

END

Condition f(E6').any('1')

END

Condition f(E1a').any('1';2';3';4';5';6';7';96)

$$f('E2').any('2') \parallel f('E3').any('2')$$

true

Question E9(E9.)

false

E9 - E9.

In the last two years at ^f(bUniversity)^ for the incident/s in which you witnessed racism and did not take any action, which of the following best explains your reason for not doing so?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ I didn't think taking action or complaining would make a difference (1)
- ☐ I didn't know how to make a complaint (2)
- ☐ The complaint process is too complex (3)
- ☐ I wanted to avoid conflict or preserve positive relationships (4)
- ☐ I was afraid of violence, abuse or backlash (5)
- ☐ I did not think it was important enough to make a complaint (6)
- ☐ Racism is tolerated on campus (7)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (96)

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition $f(E2').any(2') \parallel f(E3').any(2')$

END

Condition f('E1').any('I')

END

Condition f('C1').none('1','3','13')

F1info

You have almost completed the survey, just a few more questions about you.

F1 - F1.

In what country or nation were you born?

```
#F1 {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #F1pns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;}
```

CONDITI

f('F2').any('1')

true

false

F1pns

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F1a1 - F1a1

In what country/countries were your parent(s) born?

```
.cf-grid-layout__row-text {max-width:80px;} #F1a1 {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #F1a1pns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;}
```

Parent 1: (1)

F1a1pns

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F1a2 - F1a2.

```
#F1a2 {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;} #F1a2pns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;}
```

Parent 2: (1)

F1a2pns

- ☐ Not applicable (97)
☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F2 - F2.

Do you speak any languages other than English at home?

- ☐ (A)
☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (2)
☐ Not sure (98)
☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F2a - F2a.

What are the main languages other than English that you speak at home?

.cf-grid-layout__row-text (max-width:20px;:} #F2a {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;:} #F2apns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;:}

- 1. (1) _____
- 2. (2) _____

F2apns

- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F2b - F2b.

Do you also speak English at home?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Condition f(F2),any('1')

F3 - F3.

Do you have a religion or spiritual belief?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

f(F3),any('1')

true

false

Question F3aPage()

F3a - F3a.

What is your religion?

For example, Aboriginal Traditional Beliefs, Mahayana Buddhism, Catholic, Anglican Church of Australia, Hinduism, Islam, Sunni, Judaism, Sikhism, Rānana Māori, Personal Spiritual Beliefs .cf-grid-layout__row-text (max-width:20px;:} #F3a {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;:} #F3apns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;:}

- (1) _____

F3apns

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

Condition f(F3),any('1')

F4 - F4.

Which ethnic, cultural national origin group(s) do you identify with?

(insert multiple answers if needed) .cf-grid-layout__row-text (max-width:20px;:} #F4 {margin-bottom:0px;padding-bottom:0px;:} #F4pns {margin-top:0px;padding-top:0px;:}

- 1. (1) _____
- 2. (2) _____
- 3. (3) _____

F4pns

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F5 - F5.

Regardless of whether you were born in Australia or another country, we are interested in what other people at ^f(bUniversity)^ think your race, ethnicity or cultural background is.

This is a question about the assumptions other people make about you or how other people see you based on your appearance – not how you identify yourself. You can select up to three.

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (1)
- ☐ European (such as Australian of European heritage, English, Italian, Afrikaner) (2)
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African (such as Lebanese, Egyptian, Moroccan) (3)
- ☐ Arabic or Persian (such as Palestinian, Jordanian or Iranian) (4)
- ☐ Black African, African American or Afro-Caribbean (5)
- ☐ Latin American / Hispanic (6)
- ☐ East Asian (such as Chinese, Korean, Japanese) (7)
- ☐ Southeast Asian (such as Vietnamese, Thai, Filipino) (8)
- ☐ South Asian (such as Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepali) (9)
- ☐ Māori, New Guinean or Pacific Islander (such as Fijian, Samoan) (10)

- ☐ Other (please detail) (96)_____
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F7 - F7.

What is your gender?

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Man or male (1)
- ☐ Woman or female (2)
- ☐ Non-binary (3)
- ☐ Trans man (4)
- ☐ Trans woman (5)
- ☐ Transitioning, affirming gender (6)
- ☐ I use a different term (please specify) (96)_____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F8 - F8.

Do you consider yourself to be...

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Straight or heterosexual (1)
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian (2)
- ☐ Bisexual (3)
- ☐ Asexual (4)
- ☐ Different identity (please specify) (96)_____
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

CONDITION

$f('A3').any('1';3)$

true

false

Question F9(F9.)

F9 - F9.

What level of university qualification are you currently enrolled in at $\wedge f('bUniversity')^{>?}$

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Advanced Diploma and/or Diploma (1)
- ☐ Bachelor Degree (2)
- ☐ Graduate Diploma and/or Graduate Certificate (3)
- ☐ Master degree (4)
- ☐ Doctoral degree (5)

- ☐ Other postgraduate degree (6)
- ☐ Vocational (skills based) (7)
- ☐ Other (please detail) (96)_____

- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F9a - F9a.

Are you currently studying as a:

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Full-time student (1)
- ☐ Part-time student (2)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

F10 - F10

What is your main field of study?

(for example, Computer Science, Sociology, Economics, Nursing).

F11 - F11.

While studying for your current qualification, have you ever lived in student accommodation or residences?

These include colleges, halls, houses or residences operated by the university or non-university organisations (such as churches and companies like UniLodge, Student Housing Australia or Urbanest).

- ☐ (A)
- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Not sure (98)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (99)

END

Condition $f('A3').any('1';3)$

F11b - F11b.

And, almost finally, two questions about how you think about different cultures and people of different racial, ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Do you wish to enter a prize draw to receive one of fifty \$50 gift vouchers?

- Please provide your email address here:

Question set spreadTag()	true	false
<code>f("indur1").toNumber()<0.1 //Update with 30% median from soft launch</code>		

Condition f("intdur1").toNumber()<0.1 //Update with 30% median from soft launch

Thank you for completing the Racism@Uni. Your answers have been recorded and you can now close the survey.

If you suffer any psychological distress as a result of participating in the Racism@Uni Survey, you should contact your university student or staff wellbeing and counselling support service.

You can also get in touch with the services listed below or visit their websites for information and support.

Support and Counselling Services:

F12info

It can be upsetting and potentially triggering to relive experiences of racism or racial discrimination. It might be best to not complete this section if you're feeling vulnerable, distressed or at risk of self-harm.

Thinking about your experiences, do you have any suggestions for how ^f(bUniversity)^x could address racism or improve inclusivity and equity?

If you have experienced being subject to, or seeing and hearing racism and/or racial discrimination at [^]^("bUniversity"), is there anything else you would like to say about your experience?

If you have experienced racism and/or racial discrimination at ^{a}(University)^{b}, do you wish to say anything else about how this affected your university student or employment experience?

Beyond Blue Support Service (24/7):
1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline (24/7):
(24/7) 13 11 14 <http://www.lifeline.org.au>

Mensline (24/7):
130078 99 78 <http://www.mensline.org.au>

Suicide Call Back Service
1300 659 467

13Yarn
139276 <https://www.13yarn.org.au/contact-us-13yarn>

Transcultural mental health line (selected states only)

NSW 1800 648 911

QLD 1800 188 189

VIC <https://vmh.org.au/>

NT <https://www.mentalhealthnt.com.au/support-for-multicultural-people>

QLife (LGBTI+, 3pm to midnight)
1800 184 527

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

BeyondBlue provides information about self-care and wellbeing tips and strategies:
www.beyondblue.org.au/personal-best-pillar/wellbeing

WellMob provides social, emotional and cultural wellbeing online resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: <https://wellmob.org.au/>

Headspace provides young people aged between 12-25 information relating to general mental health, physical health, work and study:
<https://headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/>
<https://headspace.org.au/interactive-activities/wellbeing/>

ReachOut provides information about different mindfulness, coping and self-care strategies –
<https://au.reachout.com/mental-wellbeing/self-care>

Healthtalk Australia provides self-care strategies and real-life patient, carer and health professional stories on film and audio: www.healthtalkaustralia.org/supported-decision-making/self-help-strategies/