

## Record number of Aboriginal SACE completers

**Tuesday 17 December 2019**

**A record number of South Australian Aboriginal students have completed their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).**

This year, 393 Aboriginal students completed the internationally-recognised qualification, including 159 from country South Australia – an increase on the 364 Aboriginal students who completed their SACE in 2018.

A total of 143 Aboriginal students also included a VET Certificate III qualification in their studies, compared to 132 in 2018.

And 55% of students who started their Personal Learning Plan (PLP) in 2017 completed their SACE over a three-year period.

SACE Board Chief Executive Professor Martin Westwell congratulated the achievements of Aboriginal students and reaffirmed the SACE Board's commitment to working in partnership with schools to improve SACE outcomes for every Aboriginal student.

"It's pleasing that we have had more Aboriginal students complete their SACE and we are committed to ensuring that every South Australian Aboriginal young person continues to receive their learning entitlement," Professor Westwell said.

"I commend schools for the work they are doing to improve SACE outcomes for Aboriginal students and we will continue to support them in this important work.

"We are working hard to ensure that the SACE is relevant to all South Australians and that students feel a sense of belonging and are connected with their learning.

"The introduction of the Australian Languages subject as well as the upcoming renewal of the PLP and the Research Project will provide students with many different ways to embrace and celebrate their cultural identity while demonstrating high academic excellence."

Mitchell Odegaar is the recipient of the Governor of South Australia Commendation – Aboriginal Student SACE Excellence Award. The 18-year-old from Salisbury High School will receive his commendation at an official ceremony at Government House on Tuesday 4 February 2020.

Mitchell is an inspiring Aboriginal student leader who is passionate about STEM. Mitchell received a standing ovation for his presentation on 'powerful learning' at the 2018 Aboriginal Education Conference, where he highlighted that Aboriginal students should be brave and take any opportunity that comes their way.

For his Research Project, Mitchell examined whether STEM was influencing positive change in the classroom and closing the gap. He chose to undertake more challenging SACE subjects to help him achieve his long-term career goal of becoming a Civil Engineer.

Last year, Mitchell won the overall Year 11 award for the SAASTA AFL academy and he will be Master of Ceremonies at the state's upcoming SAASTA Awards.

**Media Contact:**

Rob Johnson, Media & Communications Officer, SACE Board of SA  
0448 671 050 | [robert.johnson2@sa.gov.au](mailto:robert.johnson2@sa.gov.au)

