

22 December 2014

## **Record numbers of Aboriginal students achieve their SACE**

A record 250 Aboriginal students completed their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) this year - up from 238 in 2013 - with about one third residing in country areas.

Among those students, 136 achieved an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank - also a record - compared to 130 for the previous year, while 178 qualified to undertake a TAFE course - the highest number ever and a 12 per cent increase from 2013.

SACE Board Chief Executive, Dr Neil McGoran, said it was inspirational to witness an increase in the number of Aboriginal students undertaking and completing the SACE - a rigorous, high quality and internationally recognised qualification.

"I extend my congratulations to all the Aboriginal students who enjoyed success this year in completing their SACE, and also to those who have chosen to start their SACE journey," Dr McGoran said.

"They are to be congratulated for their hard work, commitment and perseverance - it is a tremendous achievement and they are all great role models for their communities and other students," Dr McGoran said.

"Teachers, schools and families are also to be commended for the support and dedication they have provided to students working towards this important milestone, which will open up an array of study and career options for their future," he said.

The Aboriginal student with the best overall performance in the SACE this year will receive the Governor of South Australia Commendation - Aboriginal Student SACE Award at an official ceremony at Government House in February 2015.

This year, the award goes to Kaitlin Morrison of Littlehampton who studied Biology, Mathematical Studies, Physics and the Research Project.

In addition, Kaitlin received a Governor of South Australia Commendation, along with 15 other students, for outstanding achievement in her studies, as well as demonstrating the qualities young people need for community life, citizenship and work. These students were selected by a panel which included leaders from across all school sectors, VET and the business community.

The panel found Kaitlin has a deep commitment to social justice and active citizenship. She campaigns for the rights of refugees and recently performed in artistic productions which re-told stories of the Stolen Generation. Kaitlin is also a skilled violinist with the Adelaide Youth Orchestra.

Dr McGoran said the SACE Board was committed to improving the achievements of Aboriginal students and reducing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.