

## Indigenous Education and Employment Policy

### Abstract

This Policy sets out how UTS realises the commitments and sentiments within the [UTS Reconciliation Statement](#).

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Approved by	Academic Board Meeting 11/3 on 3 August 2011 Resolution AB 11/57	
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Implementation Officer	Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning	
Relevant to	All staff and/or all students	
Related documents	<a href="#">Guiding Principles for Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country</a> (PDF 113kb) <a href="#">Indigenous Education Strategy 2015–2018</a> <a href="#">UTS Reconciliation Statement</a> <a href="#">UTS Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy 2015–2018</a> Relevant UTS Enterprise Agreements for sections relating to Indigenous Australian employment and professional development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Academic Staff Agreement 2014, Part E (46)</a> (PDF 541kb)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Professional Staff Agreement 2014, Part E (52)</a> (PDF 623kb)</li> </ul>	
Legislation	<a href="#">Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cwlth)</a> <a href="#">Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)</a> <a href="#">Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)</a>	

	<a href="#">Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cwlth)</a> <a href="#">Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)</a>
File number	UR15/214
Superseded documents	—

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## 1. Purpose

To realise the commitments and sentiments within the UTS Reconciliation Statement by ensuring the development of Indigenous education and employment across UTS by:

- establishing principles that will underpin implementation of UTS's Indigenous education and employment objectives
- setting clear objectives for the development of Indigenous education and employment at UTS that are aligned with national Indigenous higher education objectives
- embedding Indigenous protocols and acts of cultural recognition into the ceremonial life of UTS
- establishing governance structures, planning requirements, accountabilities and reporting processes for the achievement of objectives under this Policy.

## 2. Scope

This document applies to all staff and students of UTS. It should be read in conjunction with the [UTS Reconciliation Statement](#).

## 3. Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy:

An **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander** is defined as any person who:

- is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and

- is recognised by the Indigenous community in which they live as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.<sup>1</sup>

**Indigenous** means Indigenous people or a thing pertaining to Indigenous people.

‘Indigenous populations are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them and, by conquest, settlement or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation...’ (United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, ref E/Cn.4./Sub.2/L.566,1982).

In this document, with the exception of the reference to international indigenous peoples, the term ‘Indigenous’ specifically refers to the Indigenous people of Australia who are otherwise known as ‘Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders’.

**Indigenous education** means the entire Indigenous higher education enterprise.

This includes:

- the creation of equitable opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous Australians
- the opportunity and process by which all Australians can gain knowledge about Indigenous Australians
- Indigenous research
- Indigenous cultural recognition
- Indigenous community engagement
- Indigenous internationalisation.

**Indigenous employment** means the employment of Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous employment includes the employment of Indigenous people into Indigenous identified positions as well as positions not specifically identified for Indigenous people. Indigenous employment includes not only the hiring of Indigenous staff but their professional development as well as their physical, cultural and emotional wellbeing and safety.

**Indigenous research** means research about and with Indigenous Australians by either Indigenous or non-Indigenous researchers. The term also refers to research conducted by Indigenous researchers on topics that may or may not be Indigenous in nature. The development of Indigenous research includes:

- creating research development opportunities for Indigenous students and staff
- encouraging research not only relating to Indigenous people but relevant to Indigenous people
- ensuring that research relating to Indigenous people is ethical.

## 4. Policy principles

The following principles underpin all activities relating to this Policy’s objectives, set out in section 5.1.

4.1 UTS is committed to the principle of self-determination for Indigenous people. Self-determination is the internationally recognised right of Indigenous peoples to

<sup>1</sup> Note that this definition is based on the definition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander that has been adopted by the Commonwealth of Australia for administrative purposes.

control their own affairs, maintain their culture and heritage and determine their own future.

Within the context of UTS, self-determination means the right of Indigenous people to celebrate their culture and identity and to determine the direction of Indigenous education and employment subject to the established rules, management and governance structures of UTS.

This document achieves this balance by embedding the aspirations and values of Indigenous people into the UTS governance framework.

4.2 UTS acknowledges Indigenous Australians as the original Australians and ongoing custodians of 'Country' who occupy a unique place within Australian society and subsequently within UTS. UTS seeks to develop an institutional identity that takes pride in and actively seeks to identify with Indigenous Australia.

4.3 UTS acknowledges that Indigenous education is a priority area of operation, is a core business and as such occupies a status similar to internationalisation.

4.4 Implementation of this Policy is a responsibility shared across all sections of UTS and will be included in the University's staff performance management system.

4.5 This Policy and the progression of its objectives will be considered in preparation of all strategies, plans, programs and reviews across UTS.

4.6 UTS is committed to an environment that is welcoming, respectful, non-discriminatory and free of harassment for Indigenous people.

4.7 UTS acknowledges that due to past educational practices many non-Indigenous Australians know very little about Indigenous Australia. In recognition of this, and in seeking to encourage an inclusive Australian identity as well as raise the standard of professional service delivery to Indigenous Australians, UTS is committed to Indigenous Graduate Attributes. All graduates have access to knowledge of Indigenous Australians.

4.8 UTS is committed to ethical Indigenous research principles founded on respect for Indigenous peoples' inherent right to self-determination including the control and maintenance of their culture and heritage. Research that involves Indigenous people should be approached with best practice ethical standards and in consideration of human rights principles.

It is essential that Indigenous peoples be informed and active participants in any UTS related research project that concerns them. This includes ensuring that:

- engagement is done through negotiation and with free prior and informed consent
- Indigenous participants share an understanding of the aims and methods of the research
- Indigenous participants share the results of this work and are involved with decisions over how the results are used
- Indigenous people maintain control over their knowledge, with Indigenous intellectual contributions being properly attributed in relevant research findings
- material collected during the course of the research is properly preserved and protected.

4.9 UTS is committed to the development of Indigenous professional competency among its non-Indigenous staff.

4.10 UTS is committed to the achievement of educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians that are at least equal to those of other Australian students.

4.11 UTS endorses the principle of equity for Indigenous peoples and expects all its staff to be flexible and innovative in developing and delivering appropriate and effective educational programs and services for Indigenous students, and in employment of Indigenous people.

4.12 In support of Indigenous education and employment, and in recognition of the need for the development and maintenance of innovative and flexible practices, UTS is committed to the provision of additional financial resourcing to support Indigenous education and employment where appropriate.

4.13 As part of its commitment to self-determination for Indigenous people, UTS:

- is committed to Indigenous consultation in planning and implementing activities initiated in support of this Policy
- acknowledges that accountability to the Indigenous community both within and outside of the University regarding its plans, activities and achievements is essential
- will wherever practicable target places for qualified Indigenous people to participate in major and strategically significant committees, advisory groups and working parties, including committees, advisory groups and working parties that are not specifically Indigenous.

4.14 In recognition of the relatively small numbers of Indigenous staff and the considerable committee responsibilities they have UTS will ensure that Indigenous committee membership is recognised as an additional element of their workload and accommodated appropriately.

## **5. Policy statements**

### **5.1 Objectives**

In developing and delivering Indigenous education and employment, UTS aims to:

5.1.1 achieve Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate student enrolment rates that are at least reflective of state population parity

5.1.2 achieve Indigenous undergraduate and postgraduate progression and completion rates that are equal at least to those of other undergraduate and postgraduate students at UTS

5.1.3 ensure that all courses specifically offered to Indigenous students are of a high quality, appropriately supportive, academically rigorous, and are aligned to the expectations of students, Indigenous community and requirements of potential employers

5.1.4 develop Indigenous competency among its students by striving to create an environment in which all UTS students have the opportunity to gain knowledge of Indigenous Australians

5.1.5 ensure that all UTS graduates have a professional capacity to work with and for Indigenous Australians

5.1.6 develop and promote Indigenous research across UTS

5.1.7 encourage acts of Indigenous cultural affirmation and raise the status and visibility of Indigenous people and culture across UTS

5.1.8 encourage the internationalisation of Indigenous education

5.1.9 achieve Indigenous staff employment rates that are at least reflective of state population parity, and Indigenous retention rates are at least equal to those of UTS non-Indigenous staff

5.1.10 offer Indigenous staff appropriate professional development opportunities to enable them to fully realise their potential within their discipline or profession.

## **5.2 Committees**

In recognition of the unique place of Indigenous people in Australian society, and the importance the University places upon Indigenous education and employment, the following committees have been established as Vice-Chancellor's committees:

- [Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee](#)
- [Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Strategies Committee](#).

### **5.2.1 Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee**

The Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee (VCIAC) is the premier body in terms of the University's relationship with the external Indigenous community, organisations, networks and services providers, and comprises ex officio and external Indigenous members.

UTS will discourage the creation of multiple or alternative Indigenous advisory bodies or committees unless otherwise endorsed by the VCIAC.

### **5.2.2 Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Strategies Committee**

The Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Strategies Committee (VCISC) is the senior strategic committee of the University in relation to the progression of Indigenous education and employment. The committee's membership includes senior executive staff, directors, Indigenous professors and others who hold key positions at the University. Academic representation on the committee includes the Chair of the Academic Management Committee and the Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

The VCISC may form sub-committees or working groups to provide specialist advice, or to recommend initiatives for inclusion in the [Indigenous Education Strategy](#) or the [Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy](#). By way of example, sub-committees or working groups may be established to develop and progress strategies relating to:

- Indigenous research
- Indigenous studies and Indigenous content in curricula
- Indigenous recruitment and outreach
- Indigenous student services and support
- Indigenous employment
- any matter relating to the progression and monitoring of objectives contained within this Policy.

## **5.3 Indigenous recognition and cultural protocols**

In acknowledging Indigenous Australians as the original Australians and ongoing custodians of 'Country' who occupy a unique place within Australian society and subsequently within UTS, and in seeking to develop an institutional identity which

takes pride in and actively seeks to identify with Indigenous Australia, UTS is committed to the following acts of recognition and cultural protocols.

### **5.3.1 Recognition of the Traditional Owners**

As a matter of Indigenous cultural protocol, and in recognising that UTS facilities occupy Indigenous traditional lands, UTS acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and the Boorooberongal People of the Dharug Nation upon whose ancestral lands the University now stands.

### **5.3.2 'Welcome to Country' and 'Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners'**

In recognising the unique position of Indigenous Australians where appropriate, UTS will either seek a 'Welcome to Country' or give an 'Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners' at all significant UTS events. These events will include but not be limited to graduation ceremonies, conferences, open days, public events, etc.

### **5.3.3 Indigenous flags**

UTS will permanently display the Australian National Flag and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags beside each other in a prominent location on the UTS campus. The flags are also to be displayed in a prominent position at all significant UTS occasions.

### **5.3.4 Indigenous academic dress**

UTS will ensure that all Indigenous graduates, with prior UTS approval, are able to graduate wearing elements of academic dress that have Indigenous cultural relevance and which celebrate their Indigenous identity.

### **5.3.5 Indigenous Elders**

In affirming Indigenous culture and identity, and in recognition of the wisdom, knowledge and special status of Elders within Indigenous communities, UTS will seek to engage with Indigenous Elders in the advancement of Indigenous education at UTS.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

The following responsibilities and fora are designed to ensure effective implementation of the UTS Indigenous education and employment commitments.

**Accountable Officer:** Provost

**Implementation Officer:** Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning

The Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, is a significant source of advice to senior staff on the implementation of this Policy and good governance of Indigenous education and employment across UTS.

The Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, is also responsible for facilitating and monitoring the progression of the Indigenous Education Strategy.

In relation to the Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy, the Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, is the senior Indigenous stakeholder and the Director, Equity and Diversity Unit, is the implementation officer.

### **Other positions and committees**

#### **Academic Board**

Academic Board considers any matter referred to it by the VCISC that is relevant to the board's [terms of reference](#).

## **Deans**

Deans have responsibility for the implementation of this Policy within their faculty and will have relevant Key Performance Indicators and other performance measures. Deans ensure that this Policy and the progression of its objectives are specifically included in all strategies, plans, programs and reviews. Implementation of this Policy will be included in the review of all courses, faculties, schools, etc.

Deans will report annually to the VCISC on their implementation of this Policy and its objectives as set out in section 5.1 (and supported by the Indigenous Education Strategy and Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy).

## **Human Resources**

UTS will ensure that senior staff with carriage of areas relevant to Indigenous access and support, teaching and learning, research, engagement, internationalisation and employment have relevant UTS Key Performance Indicators and other relevant Indigenous education and employment performance measures included in their performance management.

## **Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning**

Apart from its external reporting, recruitment, access, support, advocacy, engagement, research and other scholarly functions, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning plays a significant role in the advancement of Indigenous education across all sections of UTS.

## **Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor will broadly report to Council on matters relating to Indigenous education and employment.

## **Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Committee**

The purpose of the VCIAC is to provide advice relating to strategic, social and cultural matters and to be the primary source of external Indigenous accountability. The VCIAC is also a source of University promotion and partnership with the Indigenous community. The VCIAC is kept apprised of the progression of objectives contained within this Policy and may make enquiries relating to any matter contained within this Policy.

## **Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Strategies Committee**

The VCISC develops, endorses, and monitors the two multi-year strategies under this Policy: the Indigenous Education Strategy and the Wingara Indigenous Employment Strategy.

The VCISC reports to the Vice-Chancellor and to the VCIAC.

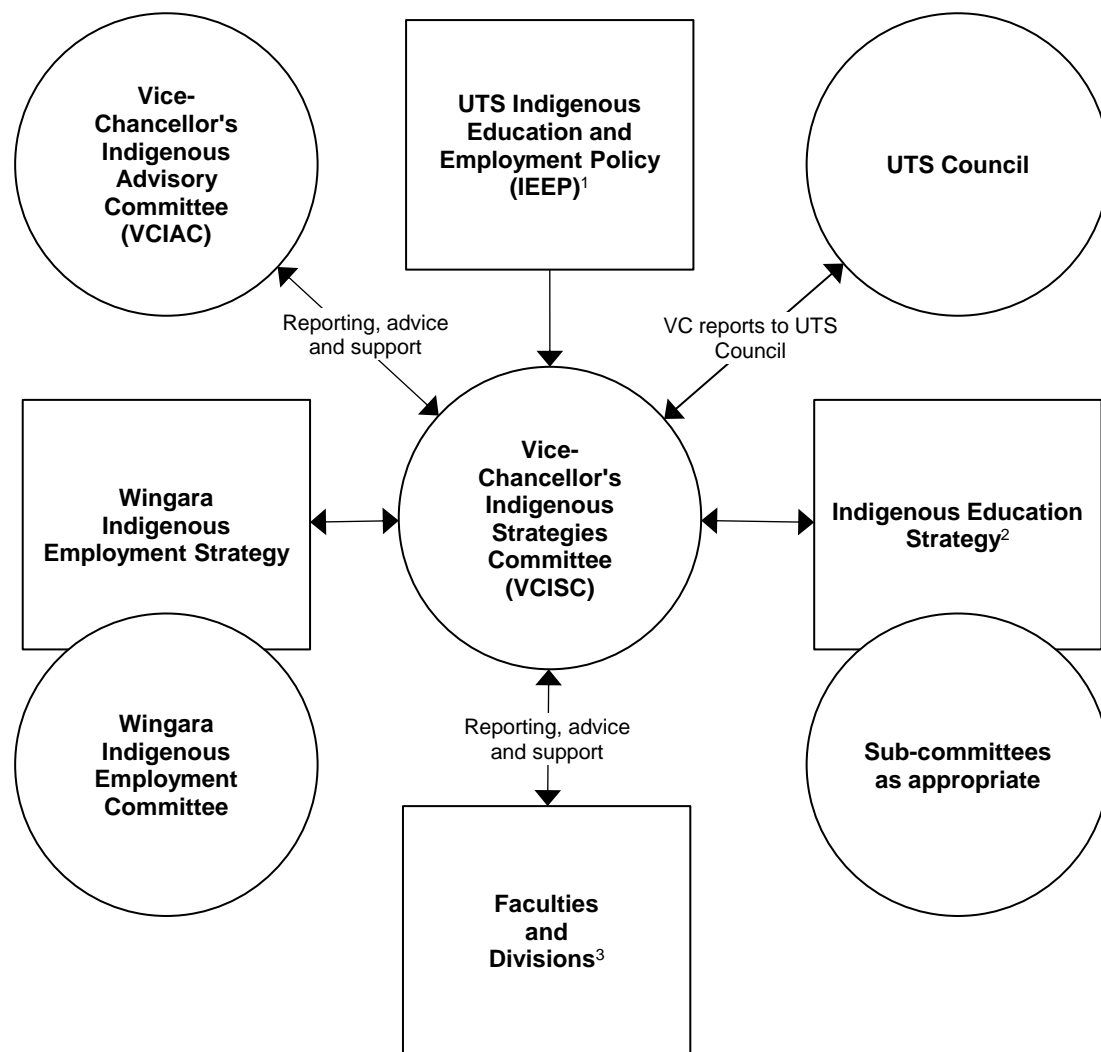
The VCISC will forward to Academic Board any matter relevant to the terms of reference of Academic Board.

## **Wingara Indigenous Employment Committee**

This is a subcommittee of the VCISC and is responsible for the achievement of objectives 5.1.9 and 5.1.10.



## UTS Indigenous Education and Employment Governance Diagram



### 1. UTS Indigenous Education and Employment Policy (IEEP)

- Objectives
- Principles
- Protocols
- Governance

### 2. Indigenous Education Strategy

In developing and progressing the Indigenous Education Strategy the VCISC may establish specialist committees or working groups relating to:

- Indigenous recruitment and outreach
  - Indigenous student services and support
  - Indigenous studies and content in curricula
  - Indigenous research,
- or any matter relevant to the progression of the IEEP.

### 3. Faculties and divisions

Faculties and divisions implement initiatives in support of the IEEP, and consult with the VCISC and its sub-committees/working groups as appropriate.

Faculties and divisions also report annually to the VCISC on implementation.

## **7. Acknowledgements**

### **Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Final Report, July 2012**

This report proposes a collaborative approach be developed involving universities, governments, professional bodies, the business sector and communities working together to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through higher education.

The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People follows on from the 2008 Review of Higher Education (the Bradley Review) by proposing measures that address what is a significant gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' and non-Indigenous Australians' higher education outcomes.

### **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

Adopted by General Assembly Resolution 61/295 on 13 September 2007.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a set of principles describing equality, non-discrimination, partnership, consultation and cooperation between Indigenous peoples and governments and their institutions. This document was officially endorsed by the Australian Government on 3 April 2009.

### **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy**

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy forms the foundation of all Indigenous education programs. The policy has been endorsed by the Australian Government, as well as all state and territory governments. The policy spells out 21 long-term, national goals, which are subsets of four major goals.

### **Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council Strategic Plan for 2006–2008**

The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) is an advisory body established by the Commonwealth Government to provide policy advice on issues concerning Indigenous Australians in higher education. In its strategic plan for 2006–2008, entitled, 'Improving Indigenous Outcomes and Enhancing Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education', the IHEAC has identified seven priority areas for development within Australian universities.

### **Australian Government Review of Australian Higher Education, December 2008 (the Bradley Review)**

Chaired by Professor Denise Bradley, the Review of Australian Higher Education was tasked to examine and report on the future direction of the higher education sector, its fitness for purpose in meeting the needs of the Australian community and economy and the options for reform. See 'Indigenous Students' and 'Indigenous Knowledge', pages 32–33.

### **Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS): Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies, 2011**

The principles contained in the AIATSIS 'Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies' are founded on respect for Indigenous peoples' inherent right to self-determination, and to control and maintain their culture and heritage. AIATSIS considers these principles to not only be a matter of ethical research practice but of human rights.

**National Health and Medical Research Council: Values and Ethics —  
Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health  
Research, 2003**

The document contains guidelines for ethical health research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In accordance with guidance from Aboriginal people it is written around a framework of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and principles.

**Australia Council for the Arts: Indigenous protocols**

The Australia Council for the Arts has produced five protocol guides that set out the legal, ethical and moral considerations for the use of Indigenous material. The protocol guides endorse the rights of Indigenous people to own and control their cultural heritage. These rights are confirmed in the 2006 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The five guidelines relate to media arts, music, performing arts, visual arts and writing.

## **8. Version control and change history**

<b>Effective date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved by, resolution no. (date)</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
01/09/2011	1	Academic Board, AB 11/57 (03/08/2011); Vice-Chancellor (sections on Indigenous employment) (03/08/2011)	New Policy.
29/01/2015	1.1	Director, Governance Support Unit (GSU) (11/12/2014)	Changes (approved under Delegation 3.17) to implement 2014 Senior Executive restructure.
20/07/2016	2	Academic Board, AB/16-2/31 (30/03/2016)	Amendments made during the scheduled review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• renumbering, reorganisation and rewording of Policy principles and objectives</li><li>• addition of new section to clarify Indigenous committee roles and responsibilities</li><li>• clarification of roles and responsibilities of other positions/committees</li><li>• updating references to Traditional Owners following closure of Kuring-gai campus</li><li>• minor editorial amendments.</li></ul>