

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES EDUCATION POLICY

1. Overview

Astra Institute of Higher Education (“the Institute”) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the ongoing custodians of Country and therefore seeks to develop an inclusive institutional identity which takes pride in and actively seeks to identify with Indigenous Australia.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the development and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples education at the Institute, in alignment with national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples education policy and guidelines.

2. Principles

In seeking to develop an inclusive institutional identity and raise the standard of professional service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Institute endorses the principle of equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Consequently, the Institute believes that preparedness by staff to be flexible and innovative in terms of educational and service delivery are essential to in developing and delivering appropriate and effective educational services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and is committed to the provision of the requisite resources to support this.

The Institute endorses consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the planning and implementation of activities initiated in support of this policy. As part of its commitment to indigenous inclusion and consultation the Institute will, where appropriate and practical, endeavour to have indigenous membership on all major and strategically significant committees and advisory groups. In addition, the Institute will endeavour to ensure that issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ education are specifically included in major strategies and plans.

3. Objectives

Astra Institute of Higher Education commits to the achievement of educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, comparable to those of non-indigenous Australian students.

In line with this commitment, the objectives of the Institute under this policy are to:

- i. increase enrolment rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to levels commensurate with those of non-indigenous Australians

- ii. improve progression, success and completion rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to levels commensurate with those of non-indigenous Australians
- iii. ensure the inclusion of appropriate indigenous content in relevant curriculum
- iv. raise the prominence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture across the Institute
- v. increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation in governance and decision making
- vi. increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples community engagement and outreach
- vii. foster international Indigenous awareness and collaborative projects

4. Actions to achieve objectives and monitor outcomes

The above objectives are supported through strategies and special provisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the following ways:

- The Institute's *Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure* provides for support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by ensuring that entry requirements do not present unreasonable barriers to access and providing for special consideration where applicable.
- The Institute's *Student Assessment Policy and Procedure, Sections 4 & 5* and *Student Progression and Exclusion Policy and Procedure, Section 4* provide for support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples assessment, progression and completion in their course of study via mechanisms such as special consideration and reasonable adjustment.
- The Institute has established a scholarship program as part of its marketing strategies in its *Marketing Plan, Section 6*, targeted at recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The scholarship value is a 50% discount of the tuition for the duration of the course, and aims to drive growth in recruitment and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The impacts of provisions and processes on the above objectives and actions to achieve these objectives are monitored and measured through the Institute's *Teaching and Learning Plan, Objective 4*.

5. Protocols

The Institute will include an Acknowledgment of the Traditional Custodians at the commencement of governing committee meetings and, as appropriate, will seek a Welcome to Country at significant Institute events including and not limited to graduation ceremonies, conferences, seminars, workshops, presentations, open days, and other public events.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples</i>	Any person who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; 2. 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.
<i>Indigenous</i>	Specifically referring to being or belonging to the indigenous people of Australia, the preferred noun for which is 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'.
<i>(the) Institute</i>	Astra Institute of Higher Education.

7. Related documents

- Diversity and Equity Policy
- Student Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Student Progression and Exclusion Policy and Procedure
- Student Selection and Admissions Policy and Procedure
- Teaching and Learning Plan

8. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	12 July 2022	Document creation
1.1	Academic Board	29 June 2023	Detail of supporting mechanisms added at '3. Objectives'. Addition of Actions to achieve objectives at '4'. Addition of '7. Related documents'

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