

Culturally Appropriate and Safe Training

Framework 2025-2028



Acknowledgement of Country

TAFE Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and respects the continuing connection to land, waters, cultures and family that First Nations peoples uphold. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We recognise that teaching and learning has taken place on Country for over 60,000 years and two-way learning is an important part of our reconciliation journey.

Artwork from TAFE Queensland's Reconciliation, Action Plan artwork 'Connecting Knowledge – Connecting Cultures' by Riki Salam. Visit tafeqld.edu.au/RAP to view the Reconciliation Action Plan



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Vision

Our vision is to create a learning environment that is spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Purpose

The purpose of this framework is to foster respect and inclusion by:

- making teaching and learning accessible and relevant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities
- offering flexible, culturally safe, and sensitive delivery and assessment methods that accommodate diverse learning styles
- ensuring accessibility and the availability of assistive technologies
- recognising and honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, self-determination, and governance, integrating their voices and perspectives into our organisational culture and educational practices.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety acknowledges the multidimensional cultural and spiritual structures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including connections to land, waters, cultures, and family. It is recognised that cultural safety is an ongoing journey that requires continuous learning and unlearning to address biases and relearn cultural values and norms. Cultural safety is met through actions which recognise, understand, respect, and nurture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, and communities. Only an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person can determine whether it is culturally safe.

Culturally appropriate and safe training



Initiative

-  Improve employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
-  Increase the participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in vocational and higher education training.
-  Create and establish new vocational and higher education pathway programs to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Definition

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is an individual of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as such, is accepted by their community, and whose membership is determined by their group's laws and customs.

Acknowledgement

This framework was developed in close consultation with members of the TAFE Centre of Excellence Health Care and Support Cultural Practices Subcommittee. We acknowledge the following organisations for their expertise and guidance during the design of the framework:

- Australian Catholic University
- CheckUP
- Department of Trade, Employment and Training
- Indigenous Allied Health Australia
- Institute of Urban Indigenous Health
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council
- Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Queensland Nursing and Midwives Union.

Initiatives	Activities	Communicate	Connect	Collaborate	Care
 	Identify flexible and safe learning options to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	- Share success stories of collaborative approaches and flexible learning options through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supported platforms and non-Indigenous platforms. - Document and share collaboration methods and new flexible learning options with TAFE Directors Australia and the National TAFE Community of Practice to encourage further implementation and/or pilot programs across the country.	- Connect with delivery experts to explore alternate delivery options to support positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. - Connect with education technology experts to explore emerging technologies to support positive learning outcomes.	- Collaborate with relevant industries to identify appropriate flexible learning options for their workforce (new and existing). - Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives (such as Elders, key stakeholders and/or relevant members of the community) to co-review and co-design flexible learning options to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	- Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with various accessible, safe, and anonymous methods to provide feedback (including discrimination) regarding their learning experience. - Methodically source feedback from educators and industry to determine the effectiveness of flexible learning options. - Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with a variety of safe learning environments utilising emerging technology.
 	Identify and socialise learning pathways to support the career goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Co-design appropriate materials with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to demonstrate a variety of training pathways for students.	Connect with Aboriginal Controlled Community Registered Training Organisations (ACCRTOs), Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and/or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to understand preferred learning pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Collaborate with ACCRTOs, ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to co-design and co-evaluate training pathway materials to identify continuous improvement activities.	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to design a personalised training pathway aligned to their learning or career goals.
  	Invest in continuous skill development and training programs that align with local economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	- Share success stories of collaborative approaches and positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. - Document and share collaboration methods and positive outcomes with TAFE Directors Australia and the National TAFE Community of Practice to encourage further implementation and/or pilot programs across the country.	- Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to understand local economic opportunities. - Connect with relevant industries to explore how quality training can support local economic opportunities.	- Collaborate with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to co-design training solutions to capitalise on local economic opportunities. - Collaborate with relevant industry organisations to co-design and contextualise training solutions to capitalise on local economic opportunities.	Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to create shared goals that enhance engagement and economic opportunities.
  	Establish pilot programs to support industries and the skilling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Communicate pilot program opportunities through ACCHOs, and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and supported platforms.	- Connect with employers in regional, remote, and rural locations to target program participants. - Connect with employers to understand specific skill requirements or skill gaps of the workplace.	- Collaborate with employers to ensure training content is appropriately contextualised for the needs of community and the workforce. - Collaborate with ACCRTOs, ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for co-evaluation to identify continuous improvement activities.	Provide wrap-around support services to pilot program participants which may include scholarships, mentor programs, access to technology, learning support services, etc.

Key



Improve employment outcomes



Increase participation and completion



Create and establish new vocational and higher education pathways



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Initiatives	Activities	Communicate	Connect	Collaborate	Care
  	Identify flexible and safe learning options to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	At application • Access to Indigenous Student Support Officers (ISSOs). • Information about external scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. • Fact sheets and posters advising potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students about: - VET or higher education study options - the documentation required to provide an application for study - 'away from base' course lists - subsidies, ABSTUDY, scholarships, study assistance and where to go to get additional advice or support. During study • Access to ISSOs. • Fact sheets and posters for ISSOs to support the student journey and provide assistance in a culturally supportive way. • Fact sheets and posters advising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students about: - Impacts to learning which require intervention (life happens and things may have changed) - Situational guidance for missed classes, assessment extensions, and study load adjustments - Information sessions regarding learning support. Post study • Fact sheets and posters providing information about career counselling and job placement services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (e.g. ISEP – connects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to jobs nationally, career advancement opportunities, funded to 2028). • Publication of recruitment events (expos, etc) through postings on e-boards, noticeboards, or through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supported platforms.	• Connect with relevant governing and funding bodies to maximise funding options available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. • Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to further explore gaps in support services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. • Connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to identify planned cultural activities to ensure support systems/services are available.	• Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to co-design and co-evaluate support services and resources.	• Engage with the community to ensure awareness of community cultural activity (planned and unplanned). • Engage with the community to identify appropriate strategies to ensure study support is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students during unplanned activity. • In the final stages of study, ensure that refresher information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support services and external job placement resources are provided to help their transition into the workforce.

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  	Establish mentorship programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and employees.	- Mentor and mentee undertake training prior to engaging in the program, this would include: - clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of both mentor and mentee, including setting realistic goals for the relationship (building trust and active listening) - benchmarks regarding regularity of meetings and yearly group activities.	- Mentor and mentee undertake training prior to engaging in the program, this would include: - mentors offering reinforcement of the support mechanisms available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, how to access, and who to contact - health and wellbeing strategies for managing stress and maintaining a healthy work-life balance - understanding and knowledge of cultural activity within family and community.	- Mentor and mentee undertake training prior to engaging in the program, this would include: - acknowledgement of cultural backgrounds, traditions, and values to foster mutual respect and understanding - self-reflection activities to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students understand their strengths, areas for growth, and build confidence - potential opportunities for resume review, job search strategies, and interview techniques.	- Mentor and mentee to be matched prior to program commencement. - Collaborate with ACCRTOs, ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for co-evaluation to identify continuous improvement activities.
  	Identify and socialise leadership pathways and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Design appropriate materials to demonstrate a variety of training and employment pathways to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in leadership roles.	- Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and relevant organisations to understand community and workforce leadership needs and requirements. - Identify existing community and workplace leaders to participate in engagement activities.	Collaborate with community and workplace leaders to co-design and contextualise training materials, identify co-delivery opportunities, and ensure proposed training meets the needs of the employee, student and/or workforce.	Emerging leaders identified by employers will be supported through a co-designed and culturally safe mentorship program. Please see 'Establish mentorship programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and employees' section for more information.
 	Collaborate for success with identified representatives.	- Share success stories of collaborative approaches through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supported platforms and non-Indigenous platforms. - Document and share collaboration methods and efforts with TAFE Directors Australia and the National TAFE Community of Practice to encourage further implementation across the country.	- Connect with ACCRTOs, ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and relevant organisations to understand community commitments and preferred pathways for students. - Identify existing community and workplace leaders to participate in engagement activities.	- Collaborate with community and workplace representatives to co-design and contextualise training materials, identify co-delivery opportunities, and ensure proposed training meets the needs of the employee, student and/or workforce. - Collaborate with ACCRTOs, ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for co-evaluation to identify continuous improvement activities.	Engage with community and workplace representatives to understand the goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be able to share in the journey and plan for shared success.

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Initiatives	Activities	Communicate	Connect	Collaborate	Care
  	Identify and implement early engagement and taster programs in schools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students.	Design appropriate materials to demonstrate a variety of training pathways to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students.	- Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to understand specialised employment and training pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students. - Connect with ACCHOs, and/or ACCOs, governing and funding bodies to identify additional support services (outside of the training provider) available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. - Connect with industry to determine suitability of workplace-based learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school-based students.	- Collaborate with ACCHOs, and/or ACCOs, and governing and funding bodies to establish networks or partnerships to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students' preferred training and employment pathways. - Collaborate with industry to co-design taster programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students to make informed training decisions. - Collaborate with industry to explore simulated training opportunities where workplace-based learning is not suitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school-aged students.	- Provide wrap around support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school-based apprenticeship/ traineeship students. - Support services may include mentor/buddy programs, access to technology, learning support services, and mental health and wellbeing support. - Share success stories with school-based students showcasing successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates.
 	Support inclusive educator capability.	- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student communication to be reviewed and contextualised to ensure cultural safety and appropriateness. - Educator biographies to be shared with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students prior to training to 'get to know your educator'. - Educators undertaking delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will have completed appropriate cultural awareness training in the last 12 months.	Registered Training Organisations (RTO) and educator/s to connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses during delivery planning to discuss cultural appropriateness and safety of training programs.	- RTOs and educator/s to collaborate with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to explore and learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history, in preparation for training delivery. - RTOs and educator/s to collaborate with co-delivery representatives within the local community. - RTOs and educator/s to ensure early identification or feedback received from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students regarding inappropriate content and/or engagement is addressed instantly. - Please see 'Collaborate for success with identified representatives' section for more information.	- Educator/s to learn about the goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be able to share in the journey and plan for shared success. - Educator/s to learn and have clear understanding of cultural activity that may impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
  	Establish training and employment networks, partnerships and engagement to promote opportunities.	- Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employers. - Share success stories of partnerships and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student outcomes through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supported and non-Indigenous platforms. - Establish networking events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employers and other employers to share successes, challenges, and strategies. - Host training and employment events to bring together employers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates and job seekers.	- Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to identify employers and understand the needs of remote, regional and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. - Connect with organisations seeking to increase their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to participate in networking events (to be held in regional, rural and remote locations).	- Partner with employers to secure workplace learning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. - Facilitate collaborative relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates, job seekers, and employers through attraction and retention strategies.	Engage with employers who are committed to supporting and nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and workforce.
 	Advocate for first in family to undertake further education.	- Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student milestones, journeys, and/or success stories. - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students invited to share their personal journey at student events (e.g. graduation, induction, networking events).	Connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni to share their education journey/story.	Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni for feedback and insights to improve the learning experience for future students.	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni and students to ensure celebrating success activities are respectful and safe for everyone involved.

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Culturally appropriate and safe training toolkit

Use this toolkit as a guide during the consultation, planning, design, development, and implementation/delivery of any training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Connect

Consultation and planning

Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to:

- learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Councils, corporations, and organisations
- understand community protocols required to visit identified communities
- be aware of planned community activities to avoid training schedule conflicts
- be prepared for unplanned activity that could impact training schedule
- identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives to participate in collaboration activities.

Collaborate

Design and development

Collaborate with ACCHOs, and/or ACCOs, and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, industry, and workforce representatives to:

- co-design and contextualise training materials
- identify co-delivery opportunities with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, Elder and/or industry representative
- contextualise learning materials to ensure the content and methods are culturally appropriate, safe, engaging, and meaningful
- learn about the goals of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be able to share in the journey and plan for shared success.

Communicate

Implementation and delivery

Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to:

- ensure communication content is culturally safe, engaging, respectful and appropriate
- co-identify the most appropriate communication methods and platforms
- ensure images are culturally safe, engaging, respectful and appropriate.

Engage with marketing teams to:

- ensure communications meet content and brand requirements
- ensure terminology used to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is consistent
- ensure language is culturally safe, engaging, respectful, consistent, suitable, and succinct.

Care

All stages

Connect with ACCHOs and/or ACCOs and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to:

- learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Councils, corporations, and organisations
- understand community protocols required to visit identified communities
- be aware of planned community activities to avoid training schedule conflicts
- be considerate of unplanned community activity and obligations and have support strategies for participants
- identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives to participate in partnership and collaboration activities.

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The information contained in this guide is correct at time of printing, May 2025. For the most up-to-date information refer to our website at tafeqld.edu.au/tce
In many areas of Australia it is considered offensive to publish photographs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are deceased. Readers are warned that this document may inadvertently contain such photographs.

Artwork elements from TAFE Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan artwork 'Connecting Knowledge – Connecting Cultures' by Riki Salam, We are 27 Creative.
Visit tafeqld.edu.au/rap to view the Reconciliation Action Plan.



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