

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Support Policy



SECTION 1

Statement of Acknowledgement

The Institute of Health and Nursing Australia (IHNA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out guidelines for ensuring, providing and promoting non-discriminatory, inclusive practices and processes to provide equal opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- 1.2 In addition, this document aims to define the intentions of IHNA in relation to its commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and reconciliation among all Australians. IHNA supports the concept of equal opportunity and is committed to providing all staff, students and prospective students with a working and learning environment which values diversity, respects differences and provides an environment that is safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying or discrimination.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy supports the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015, The Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017 and other regulatory and accreditation requirements. All staff and contractors employed or engaged by IHNA are obliged to comply with this policy.
- 2.2 The policy has been developed and implemented to support and provide clear instruction and guidance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and IHNA staff about matters pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2.3 This policy relates to the provision of all training and support services offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and procedures and approaches that ensure that IHNA training programs are responsive to the diverse needs of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and prospective students.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 This policy acknowledges that Australian Federal and State legislations make it unlawful for organisations to discriminate against individuals because of their age, gender, race, marital status, sexuality or physical or intellectual disability. IHNA aims to deliver courses in a fair, open, transparent and equitable manner, irrespective of age, disability, colour, race, gender, religion, sexuality, family responsibilities or location.
- 3.2 IHNA will work to establish itself as a site of exemplary practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' education and training.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence and capabilities** means student and staff's knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, contemporary realities and protocols, and proficiency to engage and work effectively in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts and expectations (adapted from Universities Australia, Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities, October 2011).
- 4.2 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person** means (as adopted by the Commonwealth of Australia for administrative purposes) any person who is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and is accepted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in which they live as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- 4.3 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's education** means educational opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; and the opportunity for all Australians to gain knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, contemporary realities, and protocols.
- 4.4 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives** means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews, histories, cultures, law and lore, values, beliefs, languages, lifestyles, and roles.
- 4.5 **Self-determination** is the internationally recognised right of Indigenous peoples to control their own affairs, maintain their culture and heritage and determine their own future.
- 4.6 **Student** means any student admitted undertaking an IHNA course.
- 4.7 **Student lifecycle** means the recurring IHNA processes and experiences for individuals from prospective student applicant, student, alumni, and parent of a future student.

- 4.8 Worldview means a set of beliefs and values that are honoured and held by several people.

5. Principles

The following principles underpin IHNA's approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learning, teaching, and training:

- 5.1 whole-of-institute and equitable approach across the student life-cycle;
- 5.2 Accountability of all executive and staff members of IHNA;
- 5.3 Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledges and voices in all that we do;
- 5.4 Self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- 5.5 Fostering an environment that is welcoming, respectful, culturally safe, non-discriminatory, and free of harassment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- 5.6 Student retention, completion, growth and success at all levels of education and training;
- 5.7 Recognition and valuing of traditional and contemporary histories, values, languages, culture and knowledge;
- 5.8 Respect and civility among and between staff and students;
- 5.9 Opportunities for engaging in the governance, decision making, planning, delivery and evaluation of education and training; and
- 5.10 Proactive support of students and staff through co-creation, collaboration, consultation, and inclusion.

6. Guidelines

- 6.1 IHNA endeavours to provide an environment of support and care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students that is conducive to cultural understanding and sensitivity.
- 6.2 Where a student identifies as an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander during enrolment or orientation it is recorded in the Student Management System and notification made to the relevant Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the student is offered the opportunity to contact the Academic Director (who is a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Support Committee) if that is their wish. It is the responsibility of the Course Coordinator to ensure that appropriate referrals are made.

7. Teaching and Assessment

- 7.1 All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are to be offered support to assist them to participate in the training and in assessment activities. IHNA may provide support services, or arrangement for services, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and prospective

students. To ensure that all curriculum and training materials are inclusive of student needs, IHNA considers cultural and diversity and the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

8. Harassment and Victimization

8.1 IHNA supports the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and endeavours, wherever possible, to protect them from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

9. Marketing

9.1 All IHNA marketing material is to include words to indicate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are welcome to apply for all courses.

10. Recording

10.1 All documentation and records are to be filed on the students record in the Academic Hub StudentManagement System.

11. Relevant legislation:

- 11.1 This policy was developed having regard to the following:
- a. Closing the Gap, Australian National Report on Schooling, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage
 - b. AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research (the AIATSIS Code)
 - c. United Nations, Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2008.

12. Responsibility

12.1 The Academic Director has overall responsibility for implementing this policy. Other responsibilities are outlined within the policy. The Academic Director will review this policy annually, or in case of legislative changes requiring amendments.

SECTION 3

13. Associated information

Related Internal Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Support • Committee, Terms of Reference
Related Legislation, Standards, and Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards for RTOs 2015 • Enrolled Nurse Accreditation Standards 2017
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SRTO2015 Stds and sub-standards	Standards for RTOs 2015 - Clauses 1.1 to 1.4 and 2.2 - Clauses 1.5 and 1.6

14. Change History

Version Control		Version 3.0
Version No.	Date	Brief description of the change, incl version number, changes, who considered, approved, etc
V.3.0	10/03/2021	Overall review and editing of the document including nomenclature, definitions, responsibility, policy statement and inclusion of principles, Version 3.0, approved by Academic Board on 10/03/2021
V.4.0	12/03/2024	Updated in new template and logo