Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Employment Strategy 2018-2020

Respect and recognition
ACU acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples culture and heritage and the traditional custodianship of the lands on which the University is situated.

**Acknowledgement**

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**Our Mission**

As a Catholic university, ACU’s Mission is central to the University, and informs all that we do, for our staff our students and our communities by integrating the dignity of the human person, advancing the common good, and embedding ethical and social justice considerations into our core activities of student learning and teaching, research and engagement with the communities we work in.

**Our commitment**

Inspired by our mission and values as a Catholic university, ACU has a critical role to play in achieving a just Australia in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ rights as First Peoples are recognised, respected, celebrated and enjoyed. Our key principal is to retain and continue to expand our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and reach the national parity rate of 3% employment.

Our strategy for employment and development will build on the positive work of previous Strategies by continuing to create quality and sustainable work opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
1. **Culture**

A welcoming and safe workplace.

2. **Retain and build**

Retain and invest in growing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

3. **Investing in our people**

Supporting development, participation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

**Our culture**

We are a welcoming and safe workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that is grounded in the University’s Catholic Mission and Values, where the dignity of all people is paramount and we are an employer of choice for Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander staff.

To achieve this we will;

- deliver high quality professional educational material that facilitates learnings that are culturally safe and inclusive
- develop a Cultural Capability Framework
- provide an annual program of Cultural Awareness Workshops
- create campus environments that are welcoming and inclusive of prominently displaying of local nation(s), language, art and landscapes
Retain and build our own

We will achieve 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employment.

To achieve this we will:
• Develop, implement and facilitate annual employment and engagement plans
• Explore collaborations and non-traditional partnerships that facilitate ACU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student transition to an ACU employee
• Develop a suite of resources that supports managers to reach competence in cultural understanding, and, how to actively engage and support employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Investing in our people

We will develop and implement strategies that support workforce and individual development, participation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

This will be achieved by:
• Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and supervisors to increase engagement through development conversations
• Investing in opportunities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives Information Sessions and ACU’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week that provide a focus for engagement and inclusion of all
• Promote and share the stories of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
• Promote and celebrate the achievements of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through a range of University internal communication media
The building of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce has been long recognised as a key enabler of broader improvements in higher education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ATSHEAC 2015). Having a visible presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics as both teaching and research staff of a university across disciplines is essential. It reflects back to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate and postgraduate students that the institution recognises and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and high quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching and learning content.

Having a visible presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as professional staff, in ‘mainstream’ and identified positions is valuable. It identifies to students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the wider university staff that the University is inclusive and responsive to the need for the diversity of staff members to reflect the diversity of the community it serves.

ACU’s longstanding commitment

ACU has a long commitment to, and involvement in the education and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This commitment, which is borne out of ACU’s Catholic mission recognises the fundamental dignity of all people, this commitment was first expressed by the University’s Senate in 1998 in its Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation.

The core of this statement is acknowledged as follows:

- Indigenous Peoples of Australia are the original inhabitants of this country
- The imposition of Non-Indigenous settlement has had and continues to have a devastating impact on the lives and cultures of Indigenous Peoples
- The effects of dispossession and loss of their cultures are ongoing and significant

Although the Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation is 20 years old it is always in play across all of the University’s endeavours, including the recruitment and development of its workforce.

ACU’s plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and development (2018-2020), will build on the positive work of previous Strategies by continuing to create quality and sustainable work opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This Strategy is informed by the learnings and achievements of the Indigenous Employment Framework of 2012-2014 and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Employment Strategy of 2015-2017.

The developments include goals and aspirations as expressed by the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, communities from where our campuses are located, and by the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Student Engagement Committee (ATSIESEC) and the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Reference Group (Reference Group).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Employment Strategy 2018-2020 sets out principles and actions to guide our path to becoming the university of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The goodwill shown towards ACU’s employment and engagement agenda has grown and is tangible, we acknowledge the many ACU staff both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and non Torres Strait Islander who have contributed to our growth. We urge all ACU staff to enact this new strategy, and invite students, alumni and partners to help ensure its success.
ACU has a role to play in achieving a just Australia in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ rights as First Peoples are recognised, respected and enjoyed. Our key principle is to keep and grow ACU’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to reach the national parity rate of 3% employment.

Our Strategy recognises the national context that influences employment in the Indigenous Higher Education space. One influence is the Australian Department of Education and Training data that details that in 2017 there were 440 (full time equivalent or 392 in 2017) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

Our Strategy and its Action Plan are further influenced and informed by the principles and intent set out in the University’s wider strategies, which include:

- ACU’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (KRA 4.2 the University has a sustainable staffing profile that meets the changing needs of the University’s operations. The University continues to cultivate the knowledge, capabilities and skills of its staff to align with the strategic directions and priorities.)
- ACU’s Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017, (and its successor) (Section 6.2 Indigenous Employment)
- Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017-2020
- ACU’s Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2020
- ACU’s Indigenous Education Strategy and the Indigenous Student Success Program Guidelines 2017 (ISSP)
- ACU’s Research Intensification Strategy
- Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 (Part A, Section 2.2, Diversity and Equity)

Another influence is the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People final report 2012. This has given all universities clear directions and priorities, and will guide our initiatives to address disparities in Indigenous higher education outcomes.

The University in place an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Reference Group (ATSIERG) Chair by the University’s Chief Operating Officer. ATSIERG brought together the functional leads of significantly large units to discuss and advance actions that could result in increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. Between the Peoples and Culture Advisory Committee and ATSIERG additional measures were put in place by the University, but little progress was made within functional lines.

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An alternative approach directly engaged with Senior Executive and Executive and discussed how together significant changes in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples would be achieved; keeping in line with commitments made by the University. The Senior Executive and Executive acknowledge that the student population and workforce needs to be representative of the diversity of the population. Acknowledging that there is an investment in increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, it is understood that growth could be accommodated within Portfolio budgets and identified strategies and programs that have been successful and those that had not.

Our greatest challenge is to meet the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population parity rate and the employment target set by the BSP funding for universities of 3%. Given that there is small pool of ‘ready-made’ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics, the Executives conversations became a platform to explore how to ‘grow our own’ as a whole university that would include activities in both traditional and non-traditional partnerships across the University. Examples included how research institutes can grow the post-graduate cohort for faculties to consider employment and development of early career academics.

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**Our culture**

ACU will build a welcoming and safe workplace grounded in the University’s Catholic Mission and Values.

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<tr>
<th>INITIATIVES</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACU will ensure a welcoming and safe workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff that is grounded in the University’s Mission and Values.</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff feel that ACU is a welcoming and culturally safe place</td>
<td>Develop by July 2018, then socialise a Cultural Capability Framework, that includes all executive staff and all new senior staff complete a Cultural Capability training program</td>
<td>FP&amp;E &amp; HR, Senior Executive and Executive</td>
<td>July 2018 and ongoing</td>
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<td>Faculty staff to facilitate opportunities for all students to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait to their courses of study</td>
<td>Learning and Teaching Centre (LTC) develops by June 2018, then socialises training for curriculum and assessment design in relation to Indigenous knowings, perspectives and pedagogical practice all Faculty staff (academic and professional)</td>
<td>LTC and Faculties</td>
<td>June 2018 and ongoing</td>
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<td>ACU is an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</td>
<td>Staff participation in Cultural Awareness Workshop has increased by 10% in each year of the Strategy</td>
<td>All new staff complete a Cultural Awareness Workshop as a component of their induction</td>
<td>FP&amp;E and HR</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>Provide annual program as well as offer tailored Cultural Awareness Workshops</td>
<td>FP&amp;E and HR</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>ACU staff are encouraged to participate in organised engagement activities</td>
<td>By February each year provide an annual program of information sessions and activities such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives information sessions and ACU’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week</td>
<td>FP&amp;E and HR</td>
<td>February each year</td>
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<td>Resources are developed in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff about appropriate protocols and terminology and are available on ACU’s web sites</td>
<td>Develop by June 2018, then maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities which are then are accessed for implementation into work practices such as Learning and Teaching</td>
<td>HR and LTC</td>
<td>June 2018 and ongoing</td>
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<td>ACU’s faculties and institutes identify and build a supportive workplace culture to grow early career academics and researchers and ARC candidates</td>
<td>ACU’s Faculties and Institutes develop engagement plans by December 2018 to participate in ACU’s Cultural Capability Framework to assist build a workplace culture that is culturally safe</td>
<td>Deputy Vice Chancellor Research, ACU Institutes, FP&amp;E &amp; HR</td>
<td>December 2018 and ongoing</td>
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<td>Campus environments have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and culture as prominent displays of nations, languages, art and landscapes are developed in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities</td>
<td>By June 2019 create campus environments which share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People’s knowledges and cultures that are welcoming and inclusive of things such as prominent displays of nations, languages, art and landscapes</td>
<td>HR, FP&amp;E, Associate Vice Chancellor, Campus Deans and Properties and Facilities</td>
<td>June 2019 and ongoing</td>
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**Retain and Build**

ACU will ensure its staff profile is flexible and adaptable to deliver on the University’s strategic objectives.

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<td>Develop and implement strategies to achieve 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation</td>
<td>Each Faculty and Directorate has established a KPI of 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. Partnerships and collaborations (including nontraditional faculty/ directorate partnerships and collaborations) are developed to assist the Faculties and Directorates achieve their KPI 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parity in both the Professional and Academic employment streams. The University socializes recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as a mainstream activity.</td>
<td>By December 2018 Faculties and Directorates have investigated and developed a plan for implementation to support reaching the KPI of 3% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. Initiatives may include “Grow our Own” programs supporting student and Alumni into ACU career pathways. Current examples include the COO Portfolio Graduate Program, Faculty of Health Science Indigenous Accelerator Model, Office of the Provost’s Indigenous Staff Research Scholarship.</td>
<td>Heads of Schools, Directors &amp; HR</td>
<td>May and November each year</td>
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<td>A suite of resources are developed that support the range of activities to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</td>
<td>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment website is reviewed in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network by May 2018, then maintained and updated annually.</td>
<td>HR &amp; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
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<td>Foundational activities enable an employment pipeline that facilitates students seeing ACU as an employer of choice.</td>
<td>By September 2018 develop an annual roadshow program that engages with current students, Graduates and Alumni to facilitate ACU to grow its own pool of potential employees.</td>
<td>Heads of Schools, Directors &amp; HR</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
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<td>ACU provides and maintains for the employment of at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person as a senior executive staff at the level of Pro Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, or equivalent level.</td>
<td>The Directors of FP &amp; EP and HR will jointly prepare a paper for consideration Senior Executive to create a position of PVC Indigenous.</td>
<td>FP &amp; EP and HR</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
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**Investing in Our Peoples**

Valuing ACU’s Workforce. ACU invests in its workforce and individual’s development, participation and involvement.

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<td>Develop and implement strategies that support workforce and individual development, participation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</td>
<td>Supervisors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff engage in ongoing conversations to support performance excellence, career planning and coaching to aid development of the individual.</td>
<td>Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to develop an annual program of information sessions and activities such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspective, information sessions and ACU’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week.</td>
<td>HR &amp; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff actively participate in engagement activities.</td>
<td>Facilitate quarterly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network meetings, providing the opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to be aware of university policies, procedures and resources and discuss cultural matters.</td>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>ACU staff engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment page posts on Workplace.</td>
<td>Develop an annual program of messages, articles and activities to share on Workplace.</td>
<td>HR &amp; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff achievements are acknowledged and celebrated.</td>
<td>Utilise Workplace and the Staff Bulletin to promote and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievements.</td>
<td>HR &amp; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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MORE INFORMATION

Shaelene Cubillo, National Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment
P: 07 36237492
E: Shaelene.cubillo@acu.edu.au