# CULTURAL CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

**Cultural Capabilty**
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Jasmine Miikika Craciun is a proud Barkindji, Malyangapa designer and artist with a passion for telling the stories of, and communicating to, diverse groups of people.

The Cultural Capability artwork should be viewed in a clockwise direction:
Yellow (top left) is "To Know", Green (top right) is "To Do", Pink (bottom right) is "To Belong", Blue (bottom left) is "To Be".

# INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The University of Newcastle has a long and proud history of being a leader in tertiary institutions in terms of education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and employability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The University is now working to ensure this commitment is applied to a whole of life approach whereby the institution closes the gap in disadvantage and provides the best possible outcomes for all students, staff and the wider community.

Improving the student experience is at the heart of the University's Student Success Strategy. Students should feel prepared, at all stages of their student journey, and most importantly, they should feel like the University of Newcastle is a place where they belong.

To achieve this, the University has developed a Cultural Capability Framework. The Framework has been co-designed with key stakeholders within the University and externally which aligns with the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the University.
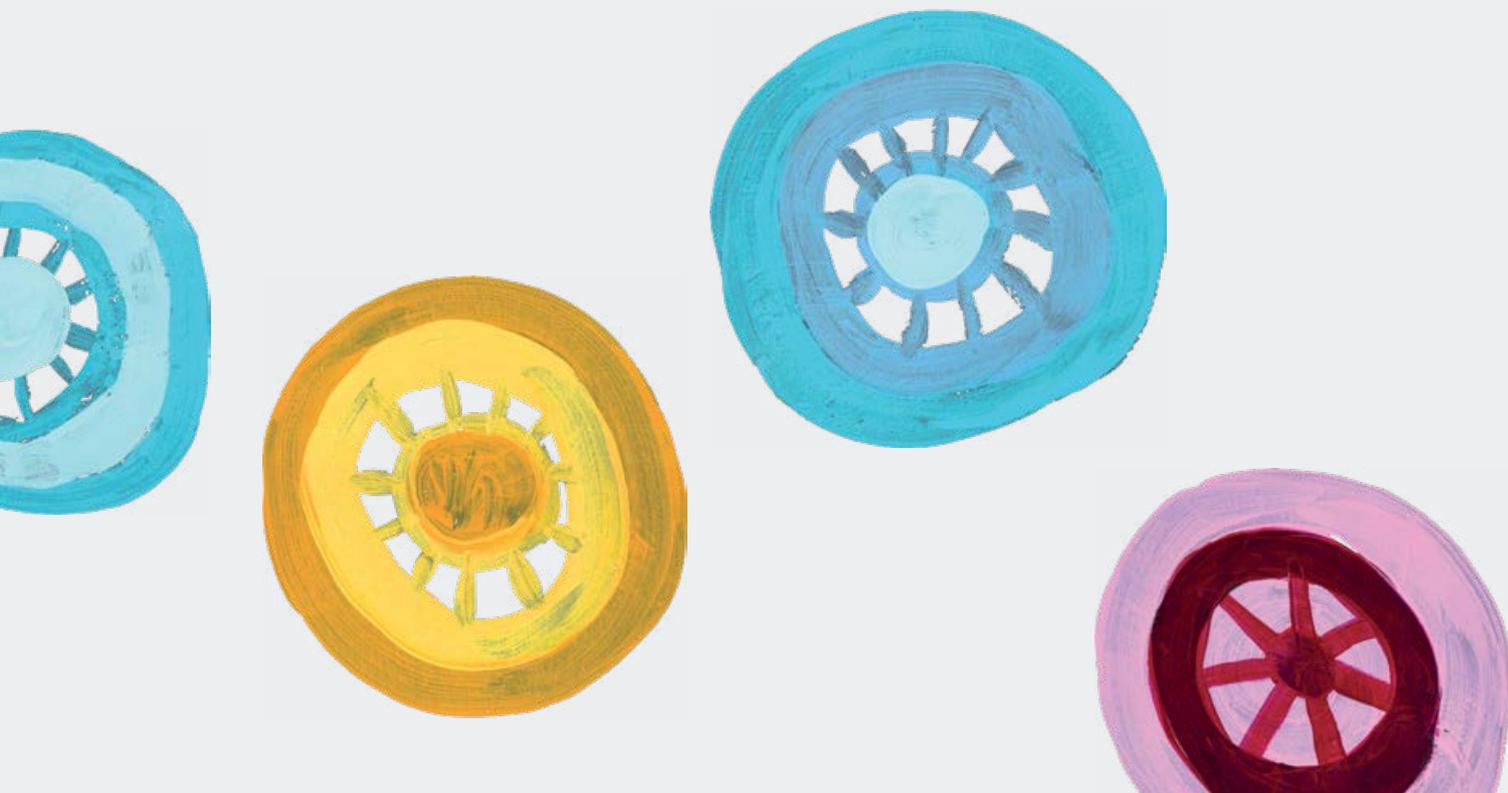
# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our students and staff live, have come from and are educated on.

## STATEMENT FROM
# NATHAN TOWNEY
**PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR INDIGENOUS STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP**

As Pro Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Strategy and Leadership, I am committed to ensuring that all staff and students of the University of Newcastle understand the role they can play in improving life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Staff will have the opportunity to build their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are embedded across all curricula. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students will be supported in a culturally safe environment that values their knowledge and experiences.

# CULTURALLY CAPABLE UNIVERSITIES

Cultural safety and cultural capability are inter-related concepts. When applied to contexts such as universities, which are both workplaces and providers of services, they are vital to improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff as well as to the health of the institutions themselves and their ability to be enriched by diverse perspectives and knowledge, as well as contribute to social justice outcomes.

Cultural capability when augmented by ideas of cultural safety moves beyond understanding cultural difference, to recognising the factors that produce and maintain inequalities. It requires a fundamental shift to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective(s) including in defining success. Such fundamental shifts are necessary to open pathways to behavioural change and ultimately, improved practice and greater equality.

The University of Newcastle is committed to creating an '...organisational culture which is committed to social justice, human rights and the process of reconciliation through valuing and supporting Indigenous cultures, knowledges and peoples as integral to the core business of the institution.'[1] To achieve this, the University has developed the Cultural Capability Framework to stimulate thinking and actions on what can be done to meet the cultural capability goals of the University which are:

To increase the sense of cultural safety and belonging among Indigenous students and staff throughout the whole of University environment and build the cultural capability of University of Newcastle students and staff to understand Indigenous culture, history and contemporary issues.

It is important to acknowledge that the University of Newcastle has a long history in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled at the university and has undertaken substantial work in previous years that has resulted in positive outcomes for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the University. In particular, the Wollotuka Institute has an important role in representing and supporting Indigenous Australians studying at University. Through its work, Wollotuka and the University of Newcastle more broadly are regarded as leaders in Indigenous education in Australia.

The University of Newcastle has appointed a Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Leadership to drive change across the University. There is substantial work that is occurring concurrently, focusing on increasing better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. In particular, we note:

- The development of an **Indigenous Education Framework** and a **Reconciliation Action Plan**.
- **Participation rates** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are **well above the state and sector averages** and have continued to climb.
- The University has the highest Indigenous student enrolment in the sector, representing a **participation rate of 3.8%**.
- The University of Newcastle is renowned for the Indigenous Health programs, **graduating over 110 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors**.

This framework draws on the principles of best practice to achieve cultural capability as identified in the Behrendt Report and the Universities Australia Framework/Guiding Principles[2]. The Cultural Capability Framework is applicable to all staff working within the University delivering services to and providing support for students, staff and community.

Non-Indigenous people engaging with the Cultural Capability Framework creates an opportunity to experience a true representation of Australian history through an Indigenous lens. Staff will be able to reflect on current educational settings within Australia and how their perception of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people influences their practice. Staff are supported by a continuum which serves as a roadmap to move from Cultural Awareness towards Cultural Responsiveness, thus creating behavioural change on an individual and organisational level.

1  Guiding Principles for the Development of Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities.
2  Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Report. Larissa Behrendt 2012 https://docs.education.gov.au/node/36825
Universities Australia Indigenous Cultural Competency Framework https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/policy-submissions/diversity-equity/indigenous-higher-education/indigenous-cultural-competency-framework/

# THE FRAMEWORK

The framework creates a structure for all staff at the University of Newcastle to reflect on their practices and provides a roadmap to identify areas of action necessary to enable the best possible outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and the wider community.

The framework comprises four domains and six (6) standards to achieve behaviour change and create a culturally capable University. These are: To Know, To Do, To Belong and To Be[3]. Figure 1 provides details on the aspiration of each domain. The Framework is adaptable and can be applied to any area, level or role within the University. The Framework can be used for strategic planning, performance development, teaching and learning and as a reflection tool to measure progress. Strengths in different domains will be more important in some segments of the University than others dependent on the role of the staff member.

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3  The framework draws upon the Australian Public Service Commission Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability: A Framework for Commonwealth Agencies, 2015, adapted for use by the NSW Public Service Commission
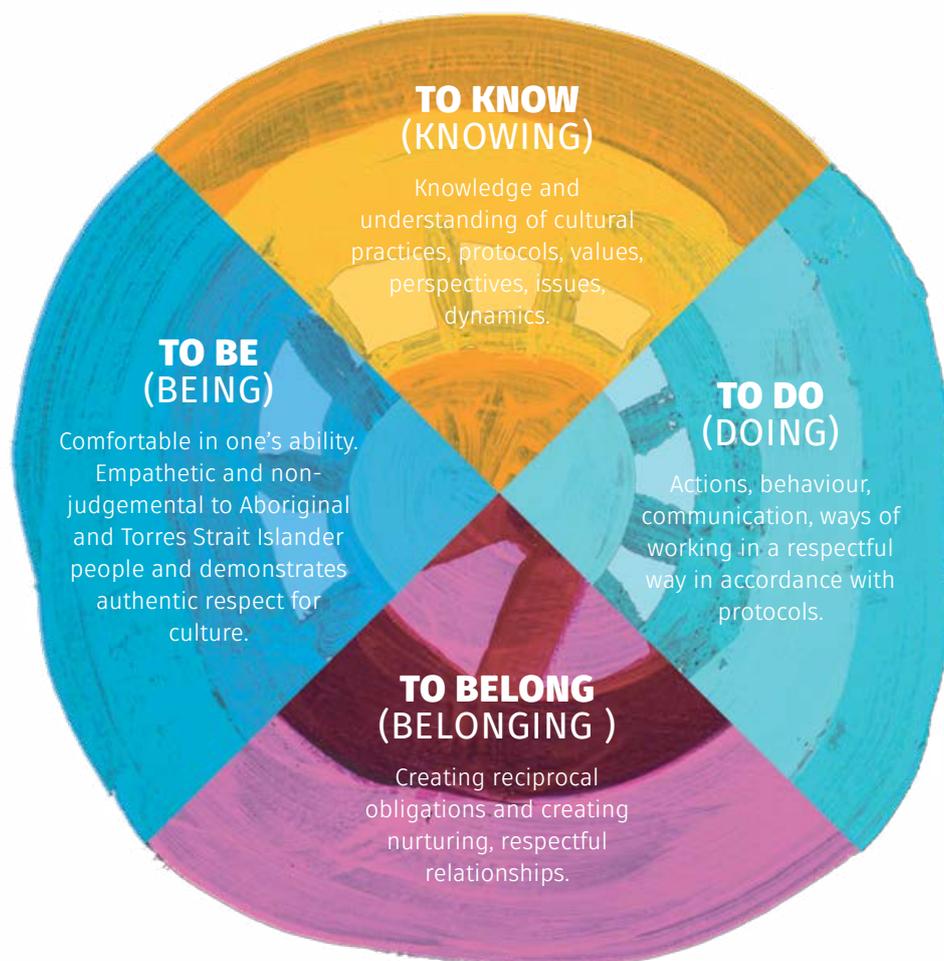
**FIGURE 1:**
## DOMAINS OF CULTURAL CAPABILITY

The domains are mapped across a continuum that enables staff to reflect on individual and institution wide progress and to develop strategies towards being culturally capable and responsive (starting from culturally aware in the short term, to being culturally responsive as the end goal).

We acknowledge there are various definitions and meanings for 'cultural capability'. For this framework:

Cultural capability refers to the skills, knowledge, behaviours and systems that are required to plan, support, improve and deliver services in a culturally respectful and appropriate manner.[4]

Figure 2 illustrates the three tiers of cultural knowledge and practice that are required to create a truly culturally capable environment.

4  Queensland Health definition of cultural capability in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

**FIGURE 2:**
## STAGES TO WORK TOWARDS CREATING A CULTURALLY CAPABLE ENVIRONMENT[5]

### CULTURAL SECURITY

Ensure cultural needs are included in policies and practices

### CULTURAL SAFETY

University staff and students contemplate power imbalances, cultural differences and the rights to supportive and equitable opportunities in a university setting

### CULTURAL AWARENESS

University students and staff understand the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Starts to look and compare different attitudes and experiences. It looks at how personal experiences, attitudes and prejudice can influence the lives of others, particularly in a university setting

According to Coffin, a leader in cultural competency theory, to achieve cultural security and responsiveness there must be:

- **Brokerage:** two-way communication whereby the student and staff member are equally informed, respected and important in the discussion. One of the best ways to achieve this is through listening and yarning, thereby developing faith and trust through a person-centred model.
- **Resource allocation:** a recognition by the higher education system of the importance of employing and consulting with key influencers within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison staff in schools and Elders are required. Coffin emphasises the need for employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and liaison officers to understand the local needs and cultural connections in the area.
- **Policies:** the provision of services through consultation with the Elders and community stakeholders. The community acts in partnership with the University and the higher education system to ensure a culturally secure provision of education services. This may inform change in policies and general business practice.

The framework has been developed with these points as guiding principles and identifies areas which they apply.

From a co-design workshop and best practice research based on the findings from the Behrendt Report and Universities Australia's Best Practice Guiding Principles, six (6) key standards and associated actions for the University to focus activity on in the immediate, medium and long term were identified. These include:

1. Teaching and Research
2. Leadership
3. Resources
4. Physical Environment
5. Indigenous Student Success
6. Community Relationships

The Cultural Capability Framework also aligns with the University of Newcastle Leadership Framework. It is the responsibility of all staff at the University to uphold the identified standards and work towards creating a Culturally Responsive environment. This is achieved through Executive Leaders, Senior Leaders, Middle Leaders and Individual Contributors all moving along the Cultural Capability continuum.
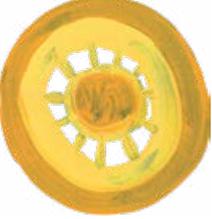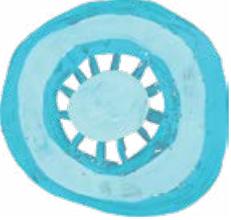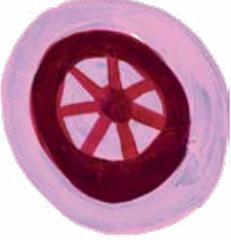
**FIGURE 3:**
# THE CULTURAL CAPABILITY WHEEL

The Cultural Capability Wheel diagram demonstrates the Leadership Framework aligned with the six (6) key standards of the Cultural Capability Framework.

**TABLE 1:**
## DOMAIN INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

The expected outcomes of each of the domains and the six (6) standards of activity are as follows:

| DOMAIN | STANDARD |
|---|---|
|  **KNOWING:** To Know<br><br>Knowledge and understanding of cultural practices, protocols, values, perspectives, issues, dynamics. | **1. Teaching and Research:** All graduates of the University of Newcastle are culturally capable and can undertake the best standards of ethical research. |
|  **DOING:** To Do<br><br>Actions, behaviour, communication, ways of working in a respectful way in accordance with protocols. | **2. Leadership:** Leaders who develop and sustain individual and institutional wide focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and communities.<br><br>**3. Resources:** Allocation of resources to optimise the education and employment outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. |
|  **BELONGING:** To Belong<br><br>Creating reciprocal obligations and creating nurturing, respectful relationships. | **4. Physical environment:** Campus environments are culturally welcoming and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.<br><br>**5. Indigenous students' success:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve parity across all academic disciplines. |
|  **BEING:** To Be<br><br>Comfortable in one's ability. Empathetic and non-judgemental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and demonstrates authentic respect for culture. | **6. Community Relationships:** The University of Newcastle operates in partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and disseminates culturally capable practices into the wider community. |

## KNOWING

### 1. TEACHING AND RESEARCH

**STANDARD:**

All graduates of the University of Newcastle are culturally capable and can undertake the best standards of ethical research.

| PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS | INDICATORS |
|---|---|
| Develop knowledge and cultural capability to teach and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to enable them to achieve success. | Educators and students have greater knowledge of our shared history, wrongs of the past, and their impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<br><br>Educators know how culture and experiences shape the learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural capability is recognised as a formal Graduate Attribute or Quality. | All graduates of the University of Newcastle are equipped with cultural knowledge and understanding to work in a culturally safe way into their working career. |
| Indigenise curriculum and course content. | Educators know how to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, pedagogies and content into curriculum and learning activities. |
| Conduct ethical and culturally safe research. | All staff understand the process and protocols to conduct ethical research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and are equipped to support their students in ensuring the research they undertake is best practice. |

## CONTINUUM

| CULTURAL AWARENESS (Emerging) | CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (Developing) | CULTURAL SAFETY (Capable) | CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS (Proficient) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1<br><br>Educators undertake cultural capability online course. | 1.1.2<br><br>Educators undertake cultural capability workshop. | 1.1.3<br><br>Application of cultural capability training to create a working and learning environment that is culturally safe where students can thrive. | 1.1.4<br><br>Educators proactively deal with any challenges or gaps as they arise to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. |
| 1.2.1<br><br>Educators reflect on their understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and how to engage and teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 1.2.2<br><br>Educators understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students bring diverse perspectives to the content being taught and to the workplace. | 1.2.3<br><br>Educators encourage culturally diverse perspectives to be raised in the classroom and workplace. | 1.2.4<br><br>Educators create a culturally safe classroom by applying their knowledge of histories, cultures and languages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. |

| CONTINUUM | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CULTURAL AWARENESS** (Emerging) | **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** (Developing) | **CULTURAL SAFETY** (Capable) | **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** (Proficient) |
| 1.3.1 Educators are aware of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are enrolled in their courses. | 1.3.2 Educators understand the cultural and linguistic proficiency of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students when monitoring, assessing and providing feedback. | 1.3.3 Educators identify that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may have barriers to engagement and completion of courses and raise these issues appropriately. | 1.3.4 Educators proactively identify the issues that are barriers to completion of courses and flexibly work through appropriate processes to ensure course completion. |
| 1.4.1 Educators investigate strategies and resources for incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in curricula and teaching. | 1.4.2 Educators have identified resources and materials to support learning. | 1.4.3 Educators apply Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives to the content being taught. | 1.4.4 Educators embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives in all University curricula to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understandings which form the foundations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural capability. |
| 1.5.1 Researchers review existing mechanisms, guidelines and protocols to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants are culturally safe and methodologically sound. | 1.5.2 Researchers create mechanisms, guidelines and protocols to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants are culturally safe and methodologically sound. | 1.5.3 Researchers implement mechanisms, guidelines and protocols to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants is culturally safe and methodologically sound. | 1.5.4 Researchers leverage the guidelines in appropriate ways to respond to challenges and unique circumstances ensuring cultural safety and methodologically sound research. |
| 1.6.1 Research leaders identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues as key research themes within the University. | 1.6.2 Research leaders develop an adequately funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy to build research capacity and promote key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research themes. | 1.6.3 Research leaders appoint an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior executive or professorial level position to lead and coordinate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research in areas of institutional strength. | 1.6.4 Research leaders proactively consider and reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in their research. |

| DOING<br><br>2. LEADERSHIP | STANDARD:<br><br>Leaders who develop and sustain individual and institutional wide focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and communities. |
|---|---|
| **PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS** | **INDICATORS** |
| Develop a clear vision for achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff success. | University leaders involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the development of University plans.<br><br>University leaders ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and employment outcomes are defined in operational plans and reported annually.<br><br>Leaders share best practice and innovation in education with colleagues and across education networks. |
| Build staff capability for effective teaching, student support and community engagement. | Leaders support staff to build individual capability for developing their knowledge of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, people, cultures and languages.<br><br>Leaders recognise the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to lead innovative approaches to engaging and teaching students. |
| Governance mechanisms incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and leadership. | Provide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on University governing bodies, including Council, Academic Senate, Organisational Board(s) and Committees.<br><br>Employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders across the University. |
| Demonstrate transparency and accountability. | Create a framework for regular and robust reporting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student outcomes.<br><br>Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes in the Key Performance Indicators of University organisational units and senior staff.<br><br>Share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander plans and outcomes with the broader community. |

## CONTINUUM

| CULTURAL AWARENESS (Emerging) | CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (Developing) | CULTURAL SAFETY (Capable) | CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS (Proficient) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1.1 Leaders are aware of the importance of developing a vision that is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations. | 2.1.2 Leaders align the vision with the needs and expectations of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Leaders and staff understand the commitment to all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 2.1.3 Leaders work with students, staff and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members on the development of a vision. Leaders and staff demonstrate a commitment to high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 2.1.4 Leaders, in collaboration with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, have developed a strong, sustainable education partnership that reflects the expectations and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Leaders and staff demonstrate a commitment to high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in a culture of continuous improvement. |
| 2.2.1 Leaders and staff begin to reflect on their own knowledge and beliefs about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and peoples. | 2.2.2 Leaders know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and have participated in local cultural awareness raising. Leaders and staff understand that their own beliefs and preconceptions have an impact on the way they engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Leaders commit to the need to build the cultural capability of staff to teach and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff effectively. | 2.2.3 Leaders and staff have deepened their understandings about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, peoples, cultures and languages, including the local and national contexts. Leaders and staff demonstrate respect for the diversity and differences of the community, and provide opportunities for all staff and students to develop understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, peoples, cultures and languages. | 2.2.4 Leaders and staff respect and are responsive to local historical and contemporary cultural contexts. Leaders engage staff in University-wide approaches to teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Leaders monitor and provide specific feedback to all staff about the extent to which teaching practices are responsive to the needs of individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |
| 2.3.1 Leaders research innovative approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. | 2.3.2 Leaders discuss with staff ideas and innovative approaches to improve the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 2.3.3 Leaders create and support opportunities for staff to develop innovative teaching practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 2.3.4 Leaders and staff, in partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, develop and implement flexible, adaptive and innovative approaches to improve the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |

| CONTINUUM | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CULTURAL AWARENESS** (Emerging) | **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** (Developing) | **CULTURAL SAFETY** (Capable) | **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** (Proficient) |
| 2.4.1 Leaders establish new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander appointments at Senior Executive, Director and Managerial levels to lead Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. | 2.4.2 Leaders develop appropriate strategies and plans which are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures to address and enable the University's Indigenous Education Framework and corporate documents. | 2.4.3 Senior University leaders recognise the barriers and opportunities to overcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inequity and inequality, and initiate processes which lead to better outcomes and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and the wider community. | 2.4.4 Senior University leaders proactively apply effort and respond flexibly and energetically to the challenges of recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community representatives. |
| 2.5.1 Leaders review membership of existing decision-making committees. | 2.5.2 Leaders establish protocols and procedures for seeking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on University governing bodies, Boards and Committees. Leaders embed targets to improve diverse representation on committees. | 2.5.3 Leaders demonstrate their commitment and active involvement in enhancing Reconciliation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. | 2.5.4 Leaders achieve diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on all University of Newcastle decision making bodies. |
| 2.6.1 Leaders are aware of the importance of reporting to the community about the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and employment initiatives. | 2.6.2 Leaders report to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members about performance. | 2.6.3 Leaders engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members about the outcomes and the performance of the University in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education outcomes. | 2.6.4 Leaders report to the school council/board on the achievements and progress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and engage local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in discussions about the value and success of targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and initiatives. |

| DOING<br><br>3. RESOURCES | STANDARD:<br><br>Allocation of resources to optimise the education and employment outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff |
|---|---|
| **PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS** | **INDICATORS** |
| Develop cultural capability to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student, staff and communities to feel a sense of belonging and connection to the University. | Staff have greater knowledge of our shared history, wrongs of the past, and their impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<br><br>Staff know how culture and experiences shape the learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |
| Acknowledge and value the expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. | Staff draw on the knowledge and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in engaging students and the community.<br><br>Staff support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to identify and pursue leadership and career development opportunities. |
| Allocate financial resources and appropriate staff resources to support the learning needs of students and staff. | Leaders, in planning the staff profile, give specific consideration to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes. |

| CONTINUUM | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CULTURAL AWARENESS** (Emerging) | **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** (Developing) | **CULTURAL SAFETY** (Capable) | **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** (Proficient) |
| 3.1.1 Staff undertake cultural capability development online course/s. | 3.1.2 Staff undertake cultural capability workshop or face to face training. | 3.1.3 Staff apply the cultural capability training to create a working and learning environment that is culturally safe where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students can thrive. | 3.1.4 Staff proactively deal with any challenges or gaps as they arise to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. |
| 3.2.1 Staff are aware of the value of a diverse staffing profile and workforce plans to identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and their roles. | 3.2.2 Staff understand the roles and responsibilities of all staff Including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. | 3.2.3 Staff respect the knowledge and expertise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff bring to the workplace. | 3.2.4 Staff draw on the expertise and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and work with them to develop their skills and knowledge to support all students. |
| 3.3.1 Leaders/staff use evidence to inform the allocation of funding and resources to targeted initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes. | 3.3.2 Leaders allocate financial resources and targeted support initiatives to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes. | 3.3.3 Leaders incorporate funding and support resources into plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff success. | 3.3.4 Leaders seek input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members, in relation to planning and budgeting to ensure specific funding is allocated to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. |
| 3.4.1 Leaders establish programs for the career and leadership development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. | 3.4.2 Staff develop processes to encourage the promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff into career and leadership development programs. | 3.4.3 Staff demonstrate that they are supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in attaining improved career and leadership development outcomes. | 3.4.4 Staff members proactively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to develop their careers by offering development opportunities such as mentoring, shadowing and/ or acting in roles. |

# BELONGING

## 4. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**STANDARD:**

University of Newcastle campus environments are culturally welcoming and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures

| PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS | INDICATORS |
|---|---|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and community feel a connection to place. | Students, staff and the wider University of Newcastle community understand the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connection to place. |
| Cultural inclusion is valued and celebrated. | The University of Newcastle is culturally inclusive and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. |
| Establish a physical environment that is welcoming for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and community. | Staff engage Aboriginal students, staff and community members in developing an environment which displays and respects their histories, cultures and languages. Staff and students use local Aboriginal community facilities and sites to enable students to learn in settings connected to local histories, cultures and languages where appropriate. |

## CONTINUUM

| CULTURAL AWARENESS (Emerging) | CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (Developing) | CULTURAL SAFETY (Capable) | CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS (Proficient) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1.1 Develop a cultural plan which recognises the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connection to place in conjunction with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. | 4.1.2 Implement a cultural plan which recognises the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connection to place at each University campus. | 4.1.3 University of Newcastle students, staff and the wider community connects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to the University. | 4.1.4 University of Newcastle staff and students proudly affirm their campus as a place that promotes and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and connection. |
| 4.2.1 Display an "Acknowledgement of Country" in a prominent location on major University documents, marketing materials and University websites. | 4.2.2 Ensure the establishment and promotion of prominent displays of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and language on each campus and the establishment of on-campus community events. | 4.2.3 University of Newcastle staff and students understand the meaning and significance of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, language, acknowledgements and events. | 4.2.4 University of Newcastle staff and students actively engage in events, can make an Acknowledgement of Country where appropriate and feel that culture is part of the fabric of the University. |
| 4.3.1 Staff are aware that the physical learning environment can influence the culture and ethos of the University. | 4.3.2 Staff understand the value of creating a physical environment that displays and respects the cultural and linguistic heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. | 4.3.3 Staff consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to develop an environment which displays and respects their cultural and linguistic heritage. | 4.3.4 Staff – in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and community – have worked together to establish a sustainable physical environment which reflects the cultural and linguistic heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |

## BELONGING

### 5. INDIGENOUS STUDENTS' SUCCESS

**STANDARD:**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve parity across all academic disciplines

| PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS | INDICATORS |
|---|---|
| Establish a supportive and safe learning environment to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students feel a sense of belonging. | Staff know about factors in the local Aboriginal community that may have an impact on student engagement.<br><br>All students and staff are aware of, and demonstrate respect for, the cultural diversity of the community.<br><br>Staff have positive interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.<br><br>The University supports an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can be strong in their cultural knowledge, heritage and identity. |
| Student support services are culturally appropriate. | Staff work productively with other agencies to support the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.<br><br>Staff put in place appropriate steps to support the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. |

| CONTINUUM | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CULTURAL AWARENESS** (Emerging) | **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** (Developing) | **CULTURAL SAFETY** (Capable) | **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** (Proficient) |
| 5.1.1 Staff are aware of the importance of having an inclusive learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 5.1.2 Staff understand the importance of creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The University notes publicly the importance of cultural diversity and the need to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to feel connected to the learning environment. | 5.1.3 Staff utilise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' connection to their community to build the capacity to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Staff engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members about how they prefer to see their culture represented. | 5.1.4 Staff and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members have established an enduring and effective partnership. Cultural values and traditions have been incorporated into the learning environment. Staff have supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to build confidence, showcase and share their culture, and participate in events of cultural significance. |
| 5.2.1 The University publicly promotes a commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Reconciliation. | 5.2.2 The University allocates financial resources and targeted support initiatives to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff outcomes and community engagement. | 5.2.3 The University allocates targeted funding and support resources into plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Units. | 5.2.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Units are supported to provide a culturally safe environment. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are supported to learn about and express their cultural identity. |
| 5.3.1 The University has policies and processes related to the health and wellbeing of all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. | 5.3.2 Staff understand that personal, community and cultural factors may have an impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student engagement. The University has plans and procedures in place to monitor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at educational risk. | 5.3.3 Staff identify the barriers/ challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may have to engage and raise these issues appropriately. Staff take appropriate steps to maintain continuity of learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Staff make appropriate education adjustments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander l students at educational risk. | 5.3.4 Staff use effective case management procedures to monitor the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at educational risk. |

# BELONGING

## 6. COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

**STANDARD:**

The University of Newcastle operates in partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and disseminates culturally capable practices into the wider community

| PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS | INDICATORS |
|---|---|
| Establish and maintain positive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. | Relationships are based on the principles of self-determination, reciprocity, social and restorative justice, equity and mutual respect. Acknowledgement is given to the cultural diversity amongst the local community and the richness of spirit this diversity brings to place. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members are respected as integral and made welcome when attending cultural, academic and ceremonial events. |
| Leadership in reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. | Recognised as a leader in reconciliation in the region and achieve Elevate RAP status. |
| Engage professionally with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait community members and organisations. | Staff practice culturally safe and appropriate ways of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students and the wider community. Staff draw on the expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, community members and organisations to enrich learning experiences for students. Input from the community is respected and valued acknowledging expertise and skills. |
| Awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and achievements. | Staff celebrate the achievements and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. Staff and students participate, as appropriate, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events and activities. Staff and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members share experiences and knowledge to support student learning. |
| Accessible and engaging communications and information for all students and staff across all regional and remote locations to increase connectedness. | Communications are engaging and reflective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The use of virtual networks and other technology-based solutions to provide greater access to universities by remote and regional students. |

| CONTINUUM | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CULTURAL AWARENESS** (Emerging) | **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** (Developing) | **CULTURAL SAFETY** (Capable) | **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** (Proficient) |
| 6.1.1 The University of Newcastle publicly commits to progressing reconciliation and the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan. | 6.1.2 Leaders and staff understand the commitment to reconciliation and actively engage in the Reconciliation Action Plan. Students understand the importance of Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. | 6.1.3 Staff demonstrate support for reconciliation and incorporate actions within planning and operational processes. | 6.1.4 Leaders and staff advance reconciliation through external networks and partnerships. The University of Newcastle is leading reconciliation action across the regions and locations. |
| 6.2.1 Establish mechanisms, cultural protocols and codes of conduct to guide the University in its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. | 6.2.2 Establish procedures and protocols to ensure the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members in formal and ceremonial University occasions. Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for their contributions as external community members on University committees. | 6.2.3 Strengthen formal structures that obtain the views of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on an on-going and regular basis. | 6.2.4 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee is embedded as part of the various University consultation processes and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input is sought, welcomed and appropriately used across all University Committees. |
| 6.3.1 Create a centralised University website for information and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities undertaken by the University that is easily accessible, well presented and regularly updated. | 6.3.2 Develop a communications plan to coordinate and target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities within the University. | 6.3.3 Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communication plans at all campuses and undertake virtual events to link external students to activities on campus. | 6.3.4 All students and staff know where to go to for information on University of Newcastle activities related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples. |
| 6.4.1 Develop a calendar of events to celebrate and showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. | 6.4.2 Implement calendar of events to acknowledge and celebrate key significant dates. | 6.4.3 Establish an award for University of Newcastle commitment to Reconciliation. | 6.4.4 All University of Newcastle students and staff engage in at least one event celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures over the University year. |

# OUTLINE OF CONTINUUM STAGES

## CULTURAL AWARENESS

Cultural Awareness involves the acknowledgment that cultural differences exist amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) cultures and other cultures.

Acknowledging cultural difference involves developing a basic knowledge and understanding of how the different cultural worldviews of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may require different approaches than other cultural groups. This requires individuals to explore and reflect on one's own cultural identity, their attitudes, beliefs, values and practices and how these may influence peoples from different cultural backgrounds.

Providing broad information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, worldviews, beliefs, values and practices to University Boards/Councils, staff and students can increase cultural awareness throughout a University community.

## CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Cultural Understanding builds on awareness through the development of attitudes and behaviours based on recognition, sensitivity and respect for the differences and similarities amongst cultural groups. Understanding requires an exploration of one's prejudices or biases, how these have formed and how these can impact on our behaviours and attitudes towards others.

There is a deeper understanding about how the historical experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has, and still is, impacting on the current experiences (challenges and strengths) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today. Understanding can develop appreciation, respect and further curiosity for different cultures.

For universities, visible and genuine celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, successes and achievements, helps to build a culturally inclusive environment and develop positive relationships within campus communities.

## CONTACT

Please use the '**Bula Wiyawiyelli**' SharePoint for further support including;

· Cultural Capability professional development
· Supporting resources
· Maligagu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment information
· Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
· Indigenous community contacts
· Indigenous Strategy and Leadership news

For enquires or information about the Cultural Capability Framework please contact:
**Jake MacDonald**
Indigenous Executive Support and Engagement Officer
Jake.Macdonald@newcastle.edu.au

## CULTURAL SAFETY

Cultural Safety is the shared respect, value and willingness to continually share knowledge and learn from people with different cultural backgrounds to our own. There is knowledge and understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's cultural connections, responsibilities and practices are core to a person's social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

This requires the ability to evaluate individual interactions and environmental factors that may impact on peoples of different cultures. This involves effectively putting attitudes and behaviours, formed through cultural understanding, into practice.

Individually, this is the ability to engage with others with understanding and sensitivity to potential differences in communication, professional practice, community engagement and cultural and family obligations.

Environmentally, this is the ability to recognise power imbalances such as, inappropriate policies and procedures, which may impact on people of a different culture and explore strategies that may enhance cultural safety within a University.

For universities, this means learning about and acknowledging the different needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the University community as well as building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations within and external to the University.

## CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Cultural responsiveness is the effective engagement and promotion of the socio-economic, political and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is having the ability to effectively forge relationships with people from other cultures, actively engage in ongoing learning, re-evaluation and participation in creating positive change within environments.

Creating culturally responsive environments is to use a decolonising, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led approach to be responsive to the diverse needs, backgrounds, experiences and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This involves respectful and genuine engagement and relationship building with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Cultural Responsiveness is valuing the knowledge and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the experts in leading cultural change within policies and practice to create a culturally capable environment for all.

For universities, there is an understanding that strategy and policy development that is responding to the cultural needs within the university must be led by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

## LIST OF RESOURCES

Universities Australia. (2011) National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities

Goerke V, Kickette M, Taylor K (2015) International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives: University of Sydney.

The University of Newcastle (2014), Leadership Framework

The University of Newcastle (2018), A New Education Framework

The University of Newcastle (2018), Student Future State Experience Map

The University of Newcastle (2019), Curriculum Design Principles

The University of Newcastle (2019), Digital Capabilities

The University of Newcastle (2019), New Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The University of Newcastle (2019), Our Commitment to Indigenous Employment: Maligagu

The University of Newcastle (2019), Student Success Strategy 2019-2022

Andersen C (2019), enhancing cultural capability as a graduate attribute at the University of Tasmania, Research and Reviews: Journal of Education Studies pp 7-18