
National Academy of Professional Studies (NAPS)

Indigenous Education Policy, Strategies and Action Plan

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1. Policy Rationale

Indigenous Australians are amongst the most disadvantaged groups in Australia as measured by almost every socio-economic indicator. NAPS is committed to increased access to the professions and general advancement of Indigenous Australians.

2. Policy Context and Objectives

This policy is applicable generally to the whole institution, ie the National Academy of Professional Studies.

In its early years, the vast majority of NAPS students are likely to be international students. Over time, however, and as NAPS increases its domestic student load, we are committed to providing educational access and access to the professions for Indigenous Australians.

In line with these policies, priorities and principles, NAPS' objectives are to:

1. Increase Indigenous undergraduate enrolment rates each year.
2. Improve Indigenous attrition, progression, success and completion rates so that they reach levels commensurate with those of other Australians.
3. Gradually introduce appropriate Indigenous content into NAPS curriculum.
4. Raise the awareness of Indigenous culture across NAPS.
5. Develop and seek opportunities for Indigenous community engagement and outreach.

Following this policy is NAPS initial strategic action plan detailing specific action steps designed to achieve NAPS objectives in promoting access and success for Indigenous students.

3. Policy Overview and Principles

NAPS acknowledges Indigenous Australians as the original Australians and ongoing custodians of "Country" who occupy a unique place within Australian society.

NAPS is committed to the achievement of educational outcomes for Indigenous Australians, comparable to those of other Australian students.

NAPS endorses the principle of equity for Indigenous Peoples.

In providing its educational services NAPS aims to be flexible and innovative in its efforts to support educational opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

NAPS will provide sufficient resources in support of enhancing opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

4. Definitions

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence and capabilities means student and staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' cultures, histories, contemporary realities and protocols, and proficiency to engage and work effectively in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' contexts and expectations (adapted from Universities Australia, Guiding Principles for Developing Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities, October 2011). In reference to the Sydney CBD where NAPS is located, the traditional owners are the Gadigal people, of the Eora nation.

Indigenous Australians refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (as defined by the Commonwealth of Australia for administrative purposes) any person who:

- a) Is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- b) Identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Education Policy; or
- c) Is accepted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in which they live as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Indigenous Peoples' Education means: a) Educational opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; and b) The opportunity for all Australians to gain knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, contemporary realities and protocols.

Indigenous Perspectives means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' worldviews, histories, cultures, law and lore, values, beliefs, languages, lifestyles and roles.

Student means any student admitted to undertake a NAPS course.

Student Life-Cycle means the recurring NAPS processes and experiences for individuals from prospective student, applicant, student, alumni, and possible donor or parent of a future student.

5. Application

NAPS acknowledges that a greater understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledges, skills, values and contemporary issues will advance our communities.

NAPS is committed to developing supporting collaboration with relevant government departments and other agencies and education providers to improve support for the education and training of Indigenous Australians.

NAPS will promote higher education access and success for Indigenous Australians by providing necessary cultural and academic support necessary to achieve participation rates, progression and completion rates equivalent to other Australian students and throughout their student-life cycle at NAPS.

NAPS will include Indigenous perspectives and culture as it seeks to develop among all of its students a level of Cultural competencies and capabilities required for success in the professions.

NAPS will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is appropriately attributed when developing units and delivering materials to students;

NAPS will ensure its courses are culturally sensitive to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

NAPS will provide appropriate cultural and pastoral support for Australian Indigenous students.

NAPS will provide appropriate support to assist Indigenous Australian students with career transition, for example by providing career advice and encouraging them to participate in professional bodies.

NAPS will report annually to Academic Board on academic outcomes achieved in relation to Indigenous Australian students.

6. Policy Review

NAPS is committed to good Governance so will be reviewing this policy at least every three years to ensure it is still relevant and promoting best practice in this area. There may also be changes to this policy and related procedures at other times to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this policy may forward their suggestions to their supervisor or to the NAPS Registrar.

7. Further Assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further advice be required staff should contact the NAPS' Registrar.

Part II: NAPS' Strategic Initiatives and Action Steps to Promote Success with Indigenous Students

Introduction:

Consistent with the policy objectives stated above, NAPS will undertake the following action steps to support and enhance academic success with Indigenous Australian Students:

- NAPS acknowledges that a greater understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledges, skills, values and contemporary issues will advance our communities.
- A key component of successful Indigenous students' support efforts is to have people in leadership positions who have experience in this important area. It should be noted that our Vice-President/Dean/Director of Studies, Prof Ram Vemuri has decades of successful experience working with, teaching and researching about Indigenous communities and education. Prof Clark (Chairman of our Board), President/CEO Prof Blay and Academic Board Chair, Prof Flood all have had relevant significant engaging with Indigenous communities and students and promoting Indigenous participation and success in higher education.
- NAPS will be proactive in engaging staff who are themselves Indigenous or have a background and experience working with Indigenous communities.
- As NAPS begins its focus on increasing its domestic student numbers, NAPS will engage with our local Indigenous community groups in order to identify how we can best encourage and support Indigenous student entry into professional program offerings and success in the professions.
- NAPS will, once it focuses on the domestic market (estimated within the first 3 years) budget for and offer 1-3 scholarships to encourage participation in the professions by Indigenous students.
- NAPS will encourage staff and students to engage with our local Indigenous community and external groups (e.g Redfern Legal Aid). For example, students will be encouraged to volunteer their support, speakers will be invited to address students about Indigenous issues, etc.

- NAPS will develop supporting collaboration with relevant government departments and other agencies and education providers to improve support for the education and training of Indigenous Australians.
- NAPS will encourage staff and students to engage with our local Indigenous community and external groups (e.g Redfern Legal Aid). For example, students will be encouraged to volunteer their support, speakers will be invited to address students about Indigenous issues, etc.
- NAPS Vice-President/Dean/Director of Studies or their nominee will take responsibility to ensure NAPS remains informed of reports, best practices and resources that will enable NAPS to be aware of and participate in efforts to promote academic success for Indigenous students.
- These developments will be considered and acted upon to guide NAPS continuing growth, development and improvement in this area.
- NAPS will seek to partner with relevant professions, such as accounting, and support mutual efforts of NAPS and Accounting bodies to support Indigenous participation and success in higher education and professional practice.
- NAPS will promote higher education access and success for Indigenous Australians by providing necessary cultural and academic support to achieve participation rates, progression and completion rates equivalent to other Australian students and throughout their student-life cycle at NAPS.
- NAPS' Vice-President/Dean/Director of Studies or their nominee will collect and report to Executive, Academic Board and Board of Directors on NAPS' progress in relation to Indigenous students. This progress will be benchmarked against other higher education institutions.
- NAPS' Executive, Academic Board and Board of Directors will monitor progress, consider external developments (eg major government reports and research) and take steps to ensure appropriate progress and continuous improvement in this important area.
- NAPS will include Indigenous perspectives and culture as it seeks to develop among all of its students a level of Cultural competencies and capabilities required for success in the professions.
- In consultation with students, faculty and staff and recognising the importance of cultural IQ as a valuable skill for all professionals, NAPS will add to its Skills Hub, relevant material and other resources that promote and encourage growth and development in this area.
- Guest speakers, network development and other activities will also be encouraged to help to create an educational environment that supports NAPS students, faculty and administrators as we seek to become a culturally sensitive and supportive professional community.
- NAPS will ensure its courses are culturally sensitive to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Research indicates that one of the most important strategies in higher education success for Indigenous students is excellent teaching. Effective teachers know their students. They are aware of their needs and background and sensitive to cultural issues and individual learning styles and needs. NAPS is committed to hiring and supporting skilled and knowledgeable teachers who are dedicated to Indigenous student success.
- NAPS will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is appropriately attributed when developing units and delivering materials to students.

- NAPS will provide appropriate cultural and pastoral support for Australian Indigenous students. This will include, among other actions:
 - Assessment of learning needs
 - English language, numeracy, study-skills and other support
 - Measures to ensure a smooth orientation to higher ed studies at NAPS
 - Student advice and counselling
 - Early risk assessment and intervention as required
 - Peer-to-peer mentoring
 - Support for the development of constructive and caring teacher-student relationships both within the classroom and through student societies and other extra-curricular activities
 - Affirming Aboriginal student's cultural identity
 - Any other assistance that may be required

- NAPS will provide appropriate support to assist Indigenous Australian students with career transition, for example by providing career advice and encouraging them to participate in professional bodies.
- Once NAPS begins to enrol its first domestic students it will report to Academic Board on academic outcomes achieved in relation to NAPS success in admitting and supporting Indigenous Australian students.
- NAPS Vice-President/Dean/Director of Studies will prepare and submit to Academic Board an annual report of NAPS activities and success in relation to the admission and success of Indigenous students. Academic Board will in turn make recommendations to NAPS executive regarding any additional recommendations and reforms required in light of the Report.
- NAPS will support teaching and staff development and research related to higher education success for Indigenous students.

APPENDIX 1: Selected Resources and Links

Existing learning, teaching and research resources:

- [ACER resources and publications to support Indigenous learners](#)
- [Australian Learning and Teaching Repository documents](#)
- [Case studies from the Innovative Research Universities](#)
- [Guidelines on Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities.](#)

Links to key stakeholder groups:

- [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](#)
- [NIRAKIN](#)
- [The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education](#)
- [Reconciliation Australia](#)
- [Career Trackers](#)

Sample Comprehensive Established University Policies Related to Indigenous Success in Higher Education:

University of Tasmania Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Engagement:
<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/jritXPVtMWBmrFHxDqJbRCQWLCHxzJJHlwjcVFsBbSfnbPBxQCm mLDLMpVbBWqTpJxbjbDnL?projector=1&messagePartId=0.2>

Southern Cross University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy: 2017-2020:
<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/jritXPVtMWBmrFHxDqJbRCQWLCHxzJJHlwjcVFsBbSfnbPBxQCm mLDLMpVbBWqTpJxbjbDnL?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

Relevant Legislation

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW);
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act (Cth);

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015;
- The Educational Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS): 2000 The National Code
- Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2018
- National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007;
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy 1989
- National Strategy for the Education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 1996–2002

- United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights definition of "Indigenous Peoples". U.N., UNESCO, ref: E/Cn.4./Sub.2/L.566, 1982.

NAPS

Approving Committee/Body	Board of Directors and Council
Date of Initial Approval	1 December 2021
Date of Effect	1 November 2022
Review Schedule	Every 3 years from commencement
Policy Owner	Board of Directors and Council
Policy Contact	Registrar
Delegated Actor (include if applicable)	Chair of Board of Directors and Council
Related Documents	SS000: Student Handbook SS007: Orientation Practice and Procedure SS001: Student Grievance and Academic Appeals Policy SS011: Students at Risk: Early Intervention Policy SS012: Student at Risk: Early Intervention Procedure SS013: Student Progression and Exclusion Policy SS014: Student Progression and Exclusion Procedure SS019: Student Code of Conduct A001: Academic Course & Unit Development Policy A004: Assessment Policy A006: Moderation Policy HR002: Access and Equity Policy HR014: Anti-Discrimination Policy HR013: Induction Procedures NAPS Teaching, Learning and Institutional Benchmarking Plan NAPS Equity and Diversity Policy

Applicability to Higher Education Standard Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (Cth	Standard 1.1.1 on Admission Section 1.3 on Orientation and Progression Standard 2.2.1 need for providers to accommodate the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups Section 2.3 on Wellbeing and Safety Section 3.3 on Learning Resources and Educational Support Section 7.2 on Information for Prospective and Current Students
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Document History

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1.0	Board of Directors Council	Original Version	1 December 2021
2.0	Board of Directors Council	Changes not documented	1 April 2023
3.0	Registrar	Delegations section added	19 May 2025