

# First Nations Peoples Policy

## 1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. Charles Darwin University (CDU) honours First Nations knowledges and cultures and recognises and celebrates First Nations history, heritage, uniqueness, and diversity. The University is based in the Northern Territory and is committed to prioritising and advancing the needs of the Northern Territory, which boasts a population comprised of over 30 per cent First Nations peoples.
- 1.2. The University is committed to becoming the most recognised university for Australian First Nations training, education, and research.

## 2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework to manage University activities that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities, particularly in the Northern Territory.

## 3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This Policy applies to all staff of the University and all other members of the University community including students, contractors, and adjuncts.

## 4. POLICY

- 4.1. CDU will:
  - a. honour Australian First Nations knowledges and cultures;
  - b. support for the process of truth-telling;
  - c. build a culture of reconciliation;
  - d. consult and engage with relevant members and Elders of First Nations communities about University programs, plans, strategies, and policies that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities;
  - e. respect First Nations peoples' traditions, lands, country and environment, and their tangible and intangible heritage, languages, and knowledges;
  - f. support the preservation of First Nations' languages and knowledges;
  - g. support the repatriation of sacred/secret objects;
  - h. enhance delivery and expand training and education opportunities in regional, rural, and remote communities;
  - i. promote training, learning, research and teaching in Australian Indigenous knowledge systems;
  - j. respect the environment of First Nations lands, including saltwater, desert and tropical regions;
  - k. develop opportunities for the recruitment, retention, and professional development of First Nations staff;
  - l. develop pathway programs for First Nations peoples in professional areas in which they are



- underrepresented;
  - m. enhance First Nations student participation, retention and success in Higher Education and Vocational Education Training;
  - n. undertake research with First Nations peoples in a deep and genuine partnership that is ethically sound and in accordance with all appropriate legislation and codes;
  - o. maintain a public commitment to First Nations engagement, participation, and success through symbolic, documentary, and strategic actions; and
  - p. undertake all activities that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities in accordance with legal requirements.
- 4.2. Responsibility for the achievement of this Policy rests with the Council, the Vice-Chancellor, and Senior Executives. All University staff are expected to understand, consider, and enact the principles outlined in the Policy.

### Specific Responsibilities and Authorities

- 4.3. The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for shaping an organisational culture and environment conducive to genuine engagement, inclusion, and celebration of First Nations peoples' and communities' knowledges and cultures, across all levels of the University.
- 4.4. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership (DVCFNL) is responsible for developing, reviewing, and implementing policies, procedures and guidelines that specify the University's requirements on matters relating to First Nations peoples, particularly regarding access to University programs and activities; and the fostering and promotion of understanding, sensitivity, and respect for First Nations cultural heritage amongst students and staff.
- 4.5. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Strategy (PVCES), in conjunction with the DVCFNL, is responsible for:
- a. ensuring there are teaching activities that relate to First Nations issues, interests, and priorities; and
  - b. monitoring such activities are carried out, as appropriate, in compliance with relevant University policies and procedures.
- 4.6. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation (PVCRI) in conjunction with the DVCFNL, is responsible for:
- a. fostering research activities that relate to First Nations issues, interests, and priorities; and
  - b. monitoring such activities are carried out, as appropriate, in compliance with relevant University policies and procedures.
- 4.7. Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans and Directors are responsible for ensuring the First Nations Peoples Policy is implemented and complied with within their relevant portfolios.
- 4.8. Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the First Nations Peoples Policy in College and team-level activities by all staff of the College (including adjuncts and casual staff) and reporting on compliance to the DVCFNL and members of the Senior Executive as appropriate. Senior Managers are also responsible for negotiating with the First Nations Leadership office to ensure that appropriate levels and types of assistance are deployed to ensure that First Nations students of the University successfully complete their studies.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1. Definitions of key terms can be found in the CDU Glossary.
- 5.2. In the context of this document:
- a. Australian First Nations peoples means a person who is an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait

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Islander person, who identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and who is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in the community where they live or have lived;

- b. Senior Executive means a staff member of the University holding the position of Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, or Chief Financial Officer, or equivalent;
- c. Senior Manager means a staff member of the University holding the position of Director or Dean or equivalent; and
- d. Staff member means anyone employed by the University and includes all continuing, fixed-term, casual, adjunct, or honorary staff, or those holding University offices or who are a member of a University committee/council.

**6. NON-COMPLIANCE**

- 6.1. Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the [Staff Code of Conduct](#) or the [Student Code of Conduct](#), as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures.
- 6.2. All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Governance Framework, [Fraud and Corruption Control Policy](#) and [Whistleblower reporting \(Improper Conduct\) Procedures](#).

**RELATED AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Legislation	<a href="#">Charles Darwin University Act 2003</a> <a href="#">Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984</a> (Cth) <a href="#">Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989</a> <a href="#">Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education Act</a> <a href="#">Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976</a> (Cth)
Policy	<a href="#">Educational Quality and Excellence Framework Policy</a> <a href="#">Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy</a> <a href="#">Human Resources Policy</a> <a href="#">Indigenous Employment Policy</a> <a href="#">Intellectual Property Policy</a> <a href="#">Naming Rights Policy</a> <a href="#">Research Ethics Policy</a>
Procedures	<a href="#">Institutional Repository Procedure</a> <a href="#">Procurement Procedures</a> <a href="#">Research Data Management Procedure</a>
Definitions	<a href="#">CDU Glossary</a>

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## GOVERNANCE

Responsible Executive	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, First Nations Leadership	
Implementation Officer	Director, First Nations Leadership	
Category	University Management	
Approving authority	Vice-Chancellor	
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## DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description
1.00	4 May 2005	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of original document and upload to CDU website</li> </ul>
1.01	24 Oct 2007	Vice-Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated titles</li> </ul>
1.02	29 Dec 2010	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document converted to new template</li> <li>Added statement of authority, definitions, and document history</li> <li>Updated titles and minor amendments throughout</li> </ul>
1.03	28 Jan 2011	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated hyperlinks and titles</li> <li>Minor amendments</li> </ul>
1.04	10 Jan 2012	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated hyperlinks, titles, and committees</li> </ul>
1.05	15 Dec 2012	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated hyperlinks</li> </ul>
1.06	15 Dec 2017	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Converted document to new template</li> <li>Updated definitions, hyperlinks, titles, and names of acts of Parliament</li> </ul>
2.00	1 Dec 2021	Vice-Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete review and rewrite of document</li> <li>Title changed from “Indigenous Peoples Policy” to “First Nations Peoples Policy”</li> </ul>

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