

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Education Policy



1. Scope

This policy is applicable to students and potential students applying for entry into a course of study at Holmes Institute (Holmes).

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy provides Holmes' principles, commitments and objectives for developing and delivering education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- 2.2 This policy has been developed, having regard to a number of contemporary reports. These include Australia's national and international obligations including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, endorsed by the Australian Government; the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy; Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017 – 2020; and the recommendations in the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Final Report 2012.
- 2.3 Holmes is committed to providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with access to educational opportunities with Holmes. While the majority of Holmes' students are international students, it is possible that Holmes will, in future expand its student body to include an increasing number of domestic students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **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).
- 3.2 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples** mean (as adopted 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
 - c) Is accepted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in which they live as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- 3.3 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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.
- 3.4 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives** means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' worldviews, histories, cultures, law and lore, values, beliefs, languages, lifestyles and roles.
- 3.5 **Parity** means 'equality' or 'equivalence' of participation and outcomes in higher education between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and other Australians.
- 3.6 **Student** means any student admitted to undertake a Holmes' course.
- 3.7 **Student Life-Cycle** means the recurring Holmes processes and experiences for individuals from prospective student, applicant, student, alumni, and possible donor or parent of a future student.
- 3.8 **Worldview** means a set of beliefs and values that are honoured and held by a number of people.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 Holmes acknowledges and pays respect to:
 - a) The Jagera, Yuppera, Ugarapul and Dungibara peoples and all their descendants both past and present as traditional owners of the land on which Holmes' Brisbane campus sits;
 - b) The Yugambah people and all their descendants both past and present as traditional owners of the land on which Holmes' Gold Coast campus sits;
 - c) The Darug, Tharawal (also historically referred to as Dharawal), Cabrogal and Wiradjuri peoples and all their descendants both past and present as traditional owners of the land on which Holmes' Sydney campus sits; and
 - d) The Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) peoples of the Kulin Nation and all their descendants both past and present as traditional owners of the land on which Holmes' Melbourne campus sits.
- 4.2 This policy provides the Holmes's principles, commitments and objectives for developing and delivering education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- 4.3 Holmes makes the following commitments in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' education:
 - a) Academic and Corporate Governance:
 - i. Recognising the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to self-determination and engagement in decision making that impacts on their own lives and maintaining, controlling, protecting and developing their heritage and culture;
 - ii. Acknowledging that a greater understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledge, skills, values and contemporary issues will advance our communities; and
 - iii. Supporting collaboration with government and higher education providers to improve support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' education, training and research.
 - b) Transition to Training and Higher Education:

- i. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to access, grow and succeed in training and higher education; and
 - ii. Providing Holmes admission pathways to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- c) Student Success:
 - i. Providing socio-economic, cultural and academic support to achieve parity in the access, participation, retention, completion and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- d) Cultural Competences and Capabilities for all Students:
 - i. Promoting understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary perspectives, knowledge, spirituality, skills, values and culture across Holmes;
 - ii. Assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to develop positive identities that are supported by their knowledge of, and pride in, their own cultural heritage and academic, technological and social skills; and
 - iii. Producing graduates who demonstrate cultural capability and have the skills and knowledge to provide genuinely competent services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- e) Teaching and Learning Programs:
 - i. Ensuring Holmes meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as an education provider of choice;
 - ii. Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is appropriately attributed when developing and delivering to students; and
 - iii. Ensuring that Holmes courses are culturally sensitive to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- f) Cultural and Pastoral Support:
 - i. Providing dedicated staff and services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' experience at Holmes;
 - ii. Ensuring Holmes's campuses and study locations are welcoming, respectful, supportive, non-discriminatory and free of harassment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, and provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with study spaces where they feel culturally safe; and
 - iii. Equipping all Holmes members with critical skills to recognise and counter prejudice in all its forms.
- g) Career Transition:
 - i. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' career choices and employment opportunities both within and beyond their communities;
 - ii. Encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership of professional bodies; and
 - iii. Encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to undertake post-graduate education.
- h) Monitoring and Course Progress:

- i. Student metrics, including progression rates, completion rates and attrition rates, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be compiled and analysed each semester. The analysis will include a comparison to student metrics for the Institute overall and reasons for any differences between the two cohorts will be explored and strategies developed to close the gap; and
- ii. On an annual basis a report on performance reports on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' academic performance and the outcomes of strategies employed will be presented to the Academic Board.

5. Legal Obligations:

5.1 Holmes is committed to compliance with all Commonwealth and State laws including:

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (Cth);
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW);
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld);
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).

5.2 The Holmes' Access, Equity, Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy set out its commitment to providing an environment free from unlawful discrimination, unlawful harassment, vilification, victimisation, and unlawful adverse action and ensuring that employees and students are treated with integrity and respect.

6. References:

This policy was developed having regard to the following:

Council of Australian Governments' Education Council, [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy](#)

Commonwealth Department of Education and Training, [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy](#)

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council \(ATSHEAC\) Recommendations](#)

Universities Australia, [National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities](#)

Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Implementation Officers	Director of Student Engagement in liaison with Campus Directors
Review Date	February 2023
Approved by	
	Governing Council
Associated Documents	

Academic Conduct and Integrity Policy and Procedures
Admission Requirements Policy and Procedures
Code of Conduct Policy
Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure
Monitoring Course Progress Policy
Student Support Policy

Version	Brief Description of the Changes	Date Approved	Effective Date
1	New Policy	2 March 2020	2 March 2020