

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Acknowledgment Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) This Policy provides the key principles which state VU's commitment to pursuing social justice and equity for Aboriginal people and to the improvement of Indigenous Australian education and employment outcomes.

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This policy applies across the University.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Aboriginal

(4) There is an extensive definitions list which will be captured into the Policy Library as part of the overarching Definitions Glossary.

## Section 4 - Policy Statement

(5) Through the Vice-Chancellor's leadership of the Indigenous Participation Strategy and through the work of the Senior Leadership Team and the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, the University aims to further develop and enhance Indigenous knowledge's across the institution, strengthen the University's Indigenous research culture and engage respectfully with Aboriginal people and communities.

(6) The following principles will guide VU's operations:

- a. Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, in accordance with the Yannonit Employment Strategy (YES), will:
  - i. create and foster a culturally safe environment that welcomes, nurtures and recreates community, a community that is embedded in relationship to land, culture, law, and Elders;
  - ii. share Indigenous knowledge, and translate and embed Indigenous practices into all its work, research, and curricula;
  - iii. be accountable to Indigenous cultural values, protocols and norms, in a way that is respectful for all people through mutually engaged relationships.
- b. VU will continue to deliver the Bachelor of Arts (Kynandoo) program and other Indigenous programs.
- c. In conjunction with academic and teaching staff of Moondani Balluk, VU will continue to develop and deliver an Indigenous curriculum within all Higher and Vocational Education programs and include an Indigenous component in all Core Graduate Attributes. In doing so the status of Indigenous Australian culture, knowledge and studies on campus will be enhanced and the curriculum will be responsive to addressing ongoing societal and institutional privilege and power that result in subsequent racism and disadvantage. The development and delivery of Indigenous curriculum will be implemented in a staged process taking into account Indigenous

academic and teaching staff workload and resources.

- d. VU will continue to develop and improve its Aboriginal education and employment strategies to assist the achievement of equity between Aboriginal people and other Australians in access, participation and outcomes in both its higher education and vocational education sectors.
- e. VU will continue to implement the YES and actively encourage Aboriginal people to equip themselves with the skills, knowledge and experiences that are valued in the employment market.
- f. In collaboration with Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, the University will engage in Equal Partnerships with the Aboriginal community in the West and North of Melbourne. It will target programs and provide space to enable capacity building by Aboriginal people and develop an agreed protocol on the roles and responsibilities of Indigenous Australian leaders and Elders.
- g. The University, in collaboration with Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, will develop an Indigenous Australian research protocol and guidelines for postgraduate studies and Indigenous research. It will foster Indigenous researchers and Indigenous related or focused research projects and promote an Indigenous Visiting Fellow Scheme.
- h. An Acknowledgement of Country will be conducted by the University at public meetings and the first yearly meeting of Council, the Academic Board, and all its sub-committees. The formal words of Acknowledgement should be used on these occasions, as provided in the Acknowledgment Procedure associated with this policy, and will be included on the University web page, Staff Splash Screen, in online course handbooks and Unit Outlines.
- i. VU will provide agreed symbols that acknowledge and represent Aboriginal Peoples on each campus and formulate and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan that is congruous with this Policy.
- j. In conjunction with the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, VU will continue to maintain Indigenous pedagogy, knowledge production and transmission via the implementation of the University's Indigenous Participation Strategy, the Indigenous Education Statement and the Wurreker Plan.
- k. The University, via Moondani Balluk, will continue to provide pastoral care and support services to Aboriginal students across the pre-tertiary and tertiary sectors.
- l. In instances where the delivery of the Acknowledgment of Country on University land involves different tribal groups, the Acknowledgment of Country should be modified to recognise the appropriate groups. In these instances, advice should be sought from the Director, Moondani Balluk.
- m. Where the University decides to purchase Indigenous art, it will be with advice from the Director, Moondani Balluk.

## **Section 5 - Procedures**

(7) Nil

## **Section 6 - Guidelines**

(8) Nil

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	1st September 2014
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Aboriginal"** - The use of the word Aboriginal throughout VU Policy and Procedure refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people connected to and/or residing in South East Australia.