

Aboriginal Education and Cultural Equity Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy states Victoria University's commitment to pursuing social justice and equity for Aboriginal people, and to the improvement of Aboriginal Australian education and employment outcomes.

Section 2 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: 2.2.2 Diversity and Equity; 6.2.1g Corporate Monitoring and Accountability.

(3) [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#)

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies across the University.

Section 4 - Definitions

(5) Aboriginal

(6) Cultural Safety

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(7) The commitment of Victoria University in providing employment, educational and development opportunities for Aboriginal people and educating staff and the wider community on Aboriginal culture, is informed by the following documents:

- a. [Victoria University Strategic Plan 2016-2020](#)
- b. [Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy 2017-2020](#)
- c. [Yannoneit Employment Strategy 2019 - 2021](#)
- d. [Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017-2020](#)

Part A - Governance

(8) Through the Vice-Chancellor's leadership and implementation of the Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy, the University aims to:

- a. Ensure access and success for Aboriginal people in tertiary education programs;

- b. Further develop and enhance Aboriginal knowledge across institutions;
- c. Strengthen the University's Aboriginal research culture;
- d. Engage respectfully with Aboriginal people and communities.

(9) Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, in accordance with the Yannonait Employment Strategy 2019 – 2021 and Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy, will:

- a. Create and foster a culturally safe environment that welcomes, nurtures and recreates community;
- b. Community that is embedded in relationship to land, culture, law and Elders;
- c. Share Aboriginal knowledge;
- d. Translate and embed Aboriginal practices into all its work, research and curricula;
- e. Be accountable to Aboriginal cultural values, protocols and norms, in a manner that is respectful for all people through mutually engaged relationships.

(10) The University Council, Executive and its organisational units are committed to supporting the Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit in achieving this strategy.

Part B - Guiding Principles

(11) The following principles and actions will guide VU's operations framed across three key aspirations, informed by the [Bathelmun Yalingwa Strategy](#) - Gamadji (Grow), Dambunmon (Share) and Jerraboongun (Connect):

- a. Gamadji (Grow) and Dambunmon (Share):
 - i. 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 and will be included on the University web page, staff splash screen, in online course handbooks and unit outlines;
 - ii. Where the delivery of the Acknowledgment of Country on University land involves different Traditional Owners, the Acknowledgment of Country should be modified to recognise the appropriate groups. Advice should be sought from the Director, Moondani Balluk or the University webpage;
 - iii. Enhance the status of Aboriginal Australian culture, knowledge and heritage on campus;
 - iv. Provide agreed symbols that acknowledge and represent Aboriginal peoples on each campus;
 - v. Where the University decides to purchase Indigenous art, it will be with advice from the Director, Moondani Balluk;
 - vi. Continue to provide the Indigenous stole at no charge to students at graduations;
 - vii. Continue to deliver the Aboriginal Yulendj (Knowledge) and Community minor within the Bachelor of Arts program and other VU programs;
 - viii. Enhance the status of Aboriginal Australian culture, knowledge and heritage on campus;
 - ix. Continue to develop and deliver an Aboriginal curriculum within its educational programs;
 - x. Include an Aboriginal component in its Graduate Capabilities;
 - xi. Work towards implementation of the Universities Australia Indigenous course Accreditation Guidelines;
 - xii. The curriculum will be responsive to addressing ongoing societal and institutional privilege and power that result in subsequent racism and disadvantage;
 - xiii. The development and delivery of Aboriginal curriculum will be implemented in an equal partnership with Aboriginal academic and research staff.
- b. Jerrboongun (Connect):
 - i. Engage in equal partnerships with the Aboriginal community in the West and North of Melbourne;
 - ii. Target programs and provide space to enable capacity building by Aboriginal people;

- iii. Develop an agreed protocol on the roles and responsibilities of Aboriginal Australian leaders and Elders;
- iv. Develop an Aboriginal Research Strategy;
- v. Continue to create and maintain Aboriginal pedagogy, knowledge production and transmission;
- vi. Continue to provide pastoral care and support services to Aboriginal students enrolled in University tertiary education programs.

Employment

(12) Continue to implement the [Yannoneit Employment Strategy 2019 - 2021](#);

(13) Actively encourage Aboriginal people to equip themselves with the skills, knowledge and experiences that are valued in the employment market.

Section 6 - Procedures

(14) Nil

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	1st September 2020
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Accountable Officer	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
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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.

"Cultural Safety" - An environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.