

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Policy

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NOTES: Released for University-wide comment from 17 Dec 2018 to 1 Feb 2019 inclusive (FS)

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Purpose

In accordance with the Australian Human Rights Commission, *Face the Facts: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2014*, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to be the most disadvantaged in Australia in many facets including health, education and employment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a life expectancy 10 years less than non-Indigenous people and report to have a national unemployment rate of 52.2% compared to 24.4% non-Indigenous employment. *The Closing the Gap Report 2018* states unemployment rates have decreased since 2014 marginally, and is currently not on track.

Federation University Australia (FedUni) under the Higher Education Act 2003 and Indigenous Student Assistance Guidelines, have an agreement with the Federal Government to increase overall Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment within the University to 3%, which is national parity.

The University acknowledges the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in employment and is committed to redressing this by continuing to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. This *Policy* confirms the University's commitment to the employment and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and employees of the University and providing opportunities for development and capacity building.

Scope

This Policy applies to the recruitment and merit selection, induction, professional development, career planning and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and employees of the University.

Legislative Context

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- Federation University Act 2010
- Racial Discrimination Act (Cth) 1975
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (VIC) 2001
- Equal Opportunity Act (VIC) 2010
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (VIC) 2006
- Workplace Relations Act (Cth) 1996

Definitions

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| Aboriginal People: | Persons of Aboriginal descent, who identify themselves as Aboriginal people and are accepted as Aboriginal people by their community in which they live or have lived. |
| Confirming Aboriginality: | Ensuring that an applicant that has applied for an Identified or Targeted Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander position is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, that they identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and that they are accepted as such by the community in which they live or have lived. |
| Cultural Awareness Training: | Training to promote understanding of the cultural differences between themselves and employees from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and backgrounds. |
| Deadly Careers Expression of Interest Register: | A repository of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander resumes of potential applicants for vacant positions held electronically in Human Resources. |
| Delegated Officer: | An employee of the University who is responsible for approving actions at stages of the recruitment and merit selection process. The person delegated will depend upon the type of position being filled. (Refer to Delegations – Contract, Financial, Staffing and Tender Policy as Authorised by the Council of the University.) |
| Identified Position: | An applicant must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in order to be eligible to apply or be the incumbent of the position. |
| Induction: | The University orientation program that provides specific employment related information for new employees. |
| Key Selection Criteria: | The skills, knowledge and experience required to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. |
| Media: | Means of communication that widely reach people, in particular, radio, social media, newspapers and magazines, and other mean relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. |
| Mentoring: | A developmental partnership whereby a senior staff member of the University or an appropriate external person shares knowledge, skills, information and their experiences to foster the personal and professional growth of another employee. |
| Merit Selection: | Selection based on merit where the best possible match is made between qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities and relevant experience of the applicants, and the selection criteria in the position description. |
| Policy Administration Management System (PAMS): | The University approved centrally controlled policy repository (policy library) which is the authoritative source for all University-wide policies and procedures, accessible through the FedUni website policy portal. |
| Professional Development Plan: | A developmental process that documents the goals, strategies and resources for training and development during the performance management cycle. |
| Referees: | Professional people or Community Elders who can provide feedback about an applicant. |

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| Aboriginal People: | Persons of Aboriginal descent, who identify themselves as Aboriginal people and are accepted as Aboriginal people by their community in which they live or have lived. |
| Review: | A formal, comprehensive review of a policy or procedure conducted by the Policy Sponsor for the purposes of establishing the need for amendment (major or minor) or further development. |
| Sourcing Channels: | Identification of media and techniques to attract applicants to the University. |
| Special Measure/s: | Section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, allows the University to impose reasonable restrictions on eligibility criteria on the basis that the measure is 'promoting or realising substantive equality for members of a group with a particular attribute'. |
| Supervisor: | A staff member who has designated responsibility for managing and overseeing the work and development of other staff. |
| Targeted Position: | Positions that have been targeted to increase the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees within the University. An applicant must be able to confirm Aboriginality in order to be eligible to apply. |
| Torres Strait Islander People: | Persons of Torres Strait Islander descent, who identify themselves as Torres Strait Islander people and are accepted as Torres Strait Islander people by the community in which they live or have lived. |

Policy Statement

- The University will contribute to the process of equality and reconciliation by committing to increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the implementation of the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Procedure](#).
- The University will utilise and promote Special Measures, section 12 and 28 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and take appropriate affirmative action measures in recruitment, selection, retention and staff development in both mainstream and designated careers to achieve equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- In the implementation of this Policy, associated Procedure and employment matters generally, the University will respect the cultural, social and religious systems practiced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and employees.
- The University acknowledges that active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in cultural, religious and ceremonial activities is likely to enhance their effectiveness as employees of the University and therefore support participation in such activities.
- The University is committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are supported by University policies and procedures aimed at making the University more culturally responsive and responsible.
- The University acknowledges that the long-term effectiveness of the Aboriginal Education Centre is dependent on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being the overwhelming majority of employees in the Centre.
- The University identifies the positions of Manager, Aboriginal Education Centre and Co-coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment, Aboriginal Education/Liaison Officers as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander positions.

Supporting Documents

- Barring Djinang: The Victorian Government's 5 year strategy to improve public sector employment outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.
- Closing the Gap Report 2018
- Equal Opportunity and Valuing Diversity Policy

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- Federation University Australia [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce](#) Strategy 2018-2020.
- Federation University Australia Union Collective Agreement 2015-2018
- Higher Education Support Act 2003.
- Indigenous Student Support Assistance Grants Guidelines 2017.
- National Best Practice framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities 2011.
- National Indigenous Higher Education Framework and Workforce Strategy.
- Reconciliation Australia 2017 – 2022.
- Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2012.
- [Victorian TAFE Teaching Staff Multi-Business Agreement 2009](#).

Responsibility

- University Council (*as the Approval Authority*) is responsible for monitoring the implementation and outcomes of this policy and its accompanying procedure/s.
- Director, Human Resources (*as the Policy Sponsor*) is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy and scheduling its review as delegated by Council.

Promulgation

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Policy will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of:

1. an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;
2. distribution of e-mails to Deans and Deputy Deans/ Head of Department / University staff; and/or
3. documentation distribution, eg posters, brochures
4. Notification to Schools/Portfolios/Directorates.

Implementation

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Policy will be implemented throughout the University via:

1. An Announcement Notice under 'FedUni News' on the University website and through the Federation University Australia Policy - 'Recently Approved Documents' webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;
2. Inclusion on the Federation University Australia Policy, Procedure and Forms website;
3. Memorandum from Director, Human Resources to Senior Management of University, and/or
4. Incorporation into [Recruitment and Merit Selection Policy](#) and Recruitment and Merit Selection Procedure Training conducted by Human Resources.

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