



## Indigenous Governance Policy and Principles for Implementation

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Indigenous Governance Policy is to state the University's commitment to the support and promotion of Indigenous Governance at Curtin; and to identify the principles to guide the implementation of the Policy.
- 1.2 "Indigenous Governance" means direct and active Indigenous involvement in the University's core activities of teaching and learning, and research and development. It also means direct and active Indigenous involvement in decision-making about:
  - the **structure** through which the University determines the framework, objectives and monitoring processes for Indigenous engagement in decision-making, teaching and learning, and research and development;
  - the **principles** for attaining the objectives of:
    - enhancing the access, participation, progress and graduation of Indigenous Australians in academic award programs
    - providing for Indigenous participation in the University's principal decision-making and policy-formulation bodies
    - providing for the employment and training of Indigenous Australians in academic and professional positions throughout the University;
    - effective community engagement in relation to Indigenous matters;
  - the **means** of attaining those objectives; and
  - the **arrangements for monitoring the University's performance** in achieving those objectives.

### 2. APPLICATION

Centre for Aboriginal Studies

### 3. EXCEPTIONS

*Nil*

### 4. DEFINITIONS

(Note: Commonly defined terms are located in the [Curtin Common Definitions](#). Any defined terms below are specific to this document)

#### **AAC**

The Aboriginal Advisory Committee of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies which draws its membership from the Indigenous community of Perth; and provides advice to the Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies on cultural and operational matters.

#### **CAS**

Means the Centre for Aboriginal Studies which has oversight for Indigenous education and research.

#### **CIPC**

The Curtin Indigenous Policy Committee which replaces the Aboriginal Education Plan Implementation Committee (AEPIC).

### 5. POLICY STATEMENT

- 5.1 Curtin is committed to Indigenous Governance to enhance the position of Indigenous Australians, and to promote decision-making that is inclusive and acknowledges multiple perspectives.
- 5.2 A key Objective in the University's 2009 - 2013 Strategic Plan is to "continue commitment to Australia's Indigenous communities to enhance equity and access to higher education."
- 5.3 The strategies will be reflected in

- Indigenous policy development, implementation, monitoring and reporting
- Indigenous employment policy and practices including Indigenous staff support services
- Indigenous cultural awareness for Curtin staff
- Indigenous student support services
- Indigenous Australian studies
- Research of benefit to, and involving Indigenous people and communities.

The "Policy on the Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies" describes the way in which the University expects Faculties to involve CAS in teaching and learning, and research and development, for and about Indigenous Australians, and the creation of images around Indigenous themes.

## 5.4 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 5.4.1 Indigenous policy development, implementation, monitoring and reporting:** to enable the Indigenous community - through the AAC and the CAS - to effectively participate in policy and other decision-making processes which affect higher education for and about Indigenous people in the University.
- 5.4.2 Indigenous Employment policy and practices:** to increase the level of Indigenous employment in the University, in line with the demographics of Indigenous representation in the Western Australian community. The latter will be used as the basis for benchmarking and monitoring.
- 5.4.3 Indigenous Cultural Awareness for Curtin staff:** to enhance staff members' knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australians and their culture, as a means of promoting reconciliation, social justice, the benefits of a culturally inclusive curriculum, active support of diversity, and an informed respect for Indigenous peoples.
- 5.4.4 Indigenous Student Support Services:** to improve the achievement levels, access, retention, progression and graduation rates of Indigenous students by offering appropriate support services.
- 5.4.5 Indigenous Australian Studies:** to recognise Indigenous Studies as a distinct discipline to be incorporated into the range of units and courses offered by the University.
- 5.4.6 Research of benefit to, and involving Indigenous people and communities:** to promote and support research that is of benefit to Indigenous communities, and which increases the Indigenous research capacity of Indigenous Australians.

## 6. PRINCIPLES

### 6.1 PRINCIPLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

#### 6.1.1 Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies (CAS)

The CAS plays a key role in supporting the University's efforts to achieve the objectives of its policy on Indigenous Governance.

The "Policy on the Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies" describes the way in which the University expects Faculties to involve CAS in teaching and learning, and research and development, for and about Indigenous Australians, and the creation of images around Indigenous themes.

#### 6.1.2 Curtin Indigenous Policy Committee (CIPC)

The CIPC is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and draws membership from senior University officers across Faculties and Areas. The CIPC reports to the Planning and Management Committee, with appropriate referral of academic issues to the Academic Board. The CIPC has responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the Strategic Objectives across the University and reporting on these matters to the Planning and Management Committee.

The Constitution of the CIPC is attached.

### 6.1.3 Indigenous Policy Development and Implementation

Indigenous people aspire to be responsible for, and determine their future, based on their understandings of their community's needs and aspirations. The University will develop and maintain effective mechanisms to enable Indigenous people to take responsibility for, and have meaningful input into policy and management decisions relevant to the interests of their community.

In accordance with the *Professional Competencies and Backgrounds which should be represented on the Membership of the Council* of the policy "Identification of Candidates and Selection Process: Office of Chancellor and other Members of the Council", the University will use its best endeavours to ensure that there is an Indigenous Australian member of the Council. The Executive Committee of the Council, which acts as the Nominations Committee for the Council will seek advice from the AAC in the identification of appropriately qualified candidates for this office.

### 6.1.4 Indigenous Employment Policy and Practices

The University expects all Faculties and Areas to give effect to the University's *Diversity Policy*. In particular, the *Procedures for the Employment of Indigenous Australian Peoples* specifically identifies the following:

- Active engagement in the employment of Indigenous Australians
- Accommodating the special needs of Indigenous Australians by way of mentoring, training and appropriate association with the CAS; and by providing them with the opportunity to contribute at all levels across the University
- Providing career paths for Indigenous Australians which are flexible and sympathetic to individual circumstances and needs at particular times
- Participating in relevant Australian and State Government programs that encourage increased Indigenous employment.

### 6.1.5 Indigenous Cultural Awareness for Curtin Staff

The *Diversity Policy* reflects the value which the University places on the development of students and staff as citizens of the world, emphasising an international outlook, cultural diversity and an informed respect for Indigenous Peoples. Cross-cultural knowledge and understanding are necessary to help the interpretation and understanding of the words and actions of people from different backgrounds. Staff without such cross-cultural knowledge and understanding require assistance to become more informed of cultural and cross-cultural perspectives.

Funding will be included in the University's annual recurrent budget, for the provision of Indigenous cultural awareness training for Curtin staff. CAS is a recognised provider of the *Ways of Working - Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Program* which can be used to create a University culture which supports a harmonious and culturally aware workplace:

- All new non-Indigenous staff will attend such training as part of their induction program;
- All continuing non-Indigenous staff will have access to such training as part of on-going staff development.

The CAS will work with relevant areas of the University to deliver training.

### 6.1.6 Indigenous Student Support Services

Access, participation, retention, progression, and completion rates for Indigenous Australian students at the University and in higher education nationally are not currently commensurate with those of the general Australian student population.

Each Faculty will develop targets and strategies to improve access and retention of Indigenous students. Faculties are encouraged to work with the CAS to achieve these objectives.

The CAS recognises the importance of providing students with a strong foundation of support whilst undertaking studies; and of ensuring that students are supported in their academic, cultural and personal pursuits and responsibilities. To improve Indigenous student retention and progression, the CAS offers a variety of support

services to Indigenous students in undergraduate courses - both those conducted under CAS auspices, and others.

Specifically, the objective of the CAS Student Services Office is to ensure that every Indigenous student is enabled and supported in their participation and completion of higher education courses. The CAS Student Services Office will work with all teaching and support areas to assist Indigenous access, participation and success. The effectiveness of such support services will be regularly reviewed in response to monitoring data and student feedback.

The employment of an Indigenous Counsellor in the University Counselling Service will complement Faculty initiatives by providing culturally-sensitive and appropriate counselling support for Indigenous students.

#### **6.1.7 Indigenous Australian Studies**

Consistent with the objectives of the Strategic Plan, all Faculties/Schools will give consideration to the incorporation of Indigenous studies in their courses. The CAS will assist Faculties/Schools to identify areas where Indigenous studies may be introduced into their curricula, and also with negotiating appropriate collaborative delivery options.

#### **6.1.8 Research of benefit to, and involving Indigenous people and communities**

The Policy on the Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies (Schedule One) describes the specific procedures which are to be observed in Indigenous education, Indigenous research and the use of Indigenous images. The CAS will work in collaboration with the Office of Research and Development to promote and support research of benefit to Indigenous communities, and which increases the research capacity of Indigenous people.

CAS and the Office of Research and Development will

- make available to researchers a Statement of principles which has been developed to guide research work undertaken in an Indigenous context;
- develop a Code of Ethics for Indigenous research;
- arrange Indigenous membership on the University Human Research Ethics Committee;
- provide opportunities for Indigenous people to conduct research relevant to their own society; and
- provide opportunities for Indigenous people to develop their research skills.

### **7. LIST OF SCHEDULES**

[Schedule A - Constitution of the Curtin Indigenous Policy Committee](#)

Schedule B - Monitoring of Policy

Schedule C - Professional Competencies and Backgrounds Represented in the Membership of the Council

Schedule D - Policy Implementation Plan

### **8. OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS/LINKS**

[Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies Policy](#)

[Diversity Policy](#)

[Employment of Indigenous Australia Peoples Procedures](#)

[Statement on Reconciliation and Commitment](#)

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<b>Approval Authority</b>	Planning and Management Committee
<b>Review Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013

#### REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date	Committee / Board / Executive Manager	Approval / Resolution Number	Key Changes and Notes
New	Approved	25/07/2006	Planning and Management Committee	PMC 59/06	Document No 00757/06 as amended
	Administratively Updated	20/03/2008	Director, Legal and Compliance Services		Reformatted and Amended to Reflect Organisational Chart
	Administratively Updated	19/08/2009	Director, Legal and Compliance Services		Formally Reviewed, Minor Text Amendment
	Administratively Updated	17/06/2010	Director, Legal and Compliance Services		Amended to Reflect Organisational Change
	Administratively Updated	04/03/2014	Director, Legal and Compliance Services		Title change from Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic to Provost and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
	Administratively Updated	06/10/2015	Director, Legal and Compliance Services	EC 76/15	Executive Manager Title Changes

### MONITORING OF POLICY

Commencement date: 25 July 2006

Policy component	Measure	Data and Source	Reporting
Staffing and Training	Achievement of Divisional targets related to employment of Indigenous peoples	Indigenous staff employed - number, level	Annual report to Planning and Management Committee Monitoring meeting - Culture theme
Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training for staff	Training sessions: - number attendees - number and areas	CAS/Staff Services training records	Annual report to Planning and Management Committee
Indigenous Student Support Services	IAF PI's - access, participation, success, retention Number of scholarships awarded annually to Indigenous students Summary of issues reported by Indigenous students	DEEWR IAF portfolio Student Services - Scholarships CAS Student Services Coordinator & Indigenous Counsellor	Annual report to Planning and Management Committee
Indigenous Australian Studies	Number of units containing Indigenous Australian Studies in courses offered by the Faculties	Faculty Deans, Teaching & Learning	Annual report to Planning and Management Committee
Research of benefit to and involving Indigenous people and communities	Number of research proposals approved by HREC annually requiring approval under the Code of Ethics for Indigenous Research, or requiring resubmission, or rejected Number of research studies involving Indigenous researchers supported by the University annually Number of Indigenous HDR students Number of Indigenous participants in research short courses	HREC records University Planning Director, CAS	Annual report to Planning and Management Committee

**PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND BACKGROUNDS WHICH SHOULD BE REPRESENTED  
IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL**

**Higher Education: Teaching and Learning** is one of the University's core activities. The University is committed to the achievement of national and international excellence in all its teaching endeavours. Desirable: individuals who have an outstanding record as university teachers, or as scholars of higher education pedagogy.

**Higher Education: Research and Development** is one of the University's core activities. The University is committed to the enhancement of its research profile, and to the appropriate protection and commercialisation of research outcomes. Desirable: individuals who have an outstanding research performance record, or knowledge and experience of research management, or research development.

**Finance:** National Governance Protocol 5 requires that a University governing body must have at least two members with financial expertise "as demonstrated by relevant qualifications and financial management experience at a senior level in the public or private sector".

**Commerce:** National Governance Protocol 5 requires that a University governing body must have at least one member with commercial expertise "as demonstrated by relevant experience at a senior level in the public or private sector".

**Law:** A legal practitioner, and particularly one whose practice is in corporations law and risk management, would provide a valuable perspective to the Council's exercise of its responsibilities.

**Regional Interests:** The University has a commitment to Western Australia's rural and regional communities. The *Curtin University Act 1966* as amended by the *Universities Legislation Amendment Act 2005* provides for up to three persons to be appointed by the Council from persons who are members of bodies that represent the interests of the University in locations other than its principal campus. Desirable: understanding of, commitment to, and management or representational experience in regional/rural communities or regional/rural businesses.

**International Background or Experience:** The University is a major Australian provider of higher education to international students, and is committed to internationalisation of its endeavours. Desirable: knowledge of, and experience in international business (whether commerce or finance), or international education, or international affairs more generally.

**Indigenous Australian Aspirations, Needs, Culture:** The University has a national reputation as a leading Australian University in Indigenous higher education. The University has also gained national recognition for supporting Indigenous social justice by way of Indigenous projects and initiatives, including the employment of Indigenous Australians in areas outside the Centre for Aboriginal Studies. Desirable: Indigenous Australians who have played a significant role whether in Western Australia or another state, or nationally, in the articulation of Indigenous aspirations, needs and culture, and/or been a major contributor to state or national projects for the betterment of Indigenous Australians.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Revision Ref. No.	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date	Committee/Board	Resolution Number	Document Reference
New	Approved	26/10/2005	Council	TBA	01243/05



## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Commencement date: 25 July 2006

Action	Person responsible	Date for completion	Completed
Secure Indigenous community representation on University Council CAS to be represented on the HREC	Chair of CIPC and Director, CAS Director, CAS and Chair, HREC	Dec 2006	
Work with Faculties and Areas to set targets for employment of Indigenous staff in line with the 'Employment of Indigenous Australian peoples' Policy	Director, EE & SJ	Dec 2007	
Obtain funding for the provision of Indigenous cultural awareness training Work with Staff Services and EE&SJ to implement training sessions.	Chair of CIPC and Director, CAS Director, CAS	CIPC to determine	
Employment of an Indigenous Counsellor in the University's Counselling Services	Provost	Aug 2006 (2 days per week)	
Develop: - a statement of principles to guide research undertaken in an Indigenous context - a Code of Ethics for Indigenous Research (These will replace the current <i>Procedures for Conducting Educational and Research Activities Involving Australian Indigenous People</i> which will be rescinded)	Director, CAS	Dec 2006	