

Definition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Course Content

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Description	This policy defines what evidence is needed for a course to satisfy the minimum requirements to qualify as one that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course content and the criteria against which Course Convenors should assess whether their courses contain such components.

Related documents

[Qualifications Procedure](#)

[Program Attributes and Requirements Procedure](#)

[The Griffith Graduate](#)

[\[Purpose\]](#) [\[Short Definition\]](#) [\[Rationale\]](#) [\[Detailed Definition\]](#)

1. PURPOSE

The University received the Final Report of the Inclusive Practices in the Curriculum - Indigenous Australian Studies Working Party in June 2005. In implementing the recommendations in that Final Report, the [Academic Plan 2021 – 2025](#) now requires the University to assess and revise its curricula (if appropriate) to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course content in relevant contexts. Course Convenors are responsible for assessing whether their courses contain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and the Course Profile system will be used to collect that assessment in a systematic and efficient manner.

The data collated through the Course Profile system will enable the University to monitor the development of inclusive practices in the curriculum; identify good practice; and support colleagues in their efforts to implement the Strategic and Academic Plan targets. The information collated will also enable the University to benchmark its inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course content.

2. SHORT DEFINITION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content may take several forms, however, there are two ways in which the University has identified its presence in its curriculum.

- Course includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander embedded content: curriculum content embedded in a course within a broad subject or topic; and
- Whole course is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific: curriculum content designed as a stand-alone course addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content as its primary focus.

3. RATIONALE

Griffith's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curricula follows an increasing national awareness of the need to incorporate such content into relevant areas of study and the complex and innovative ways in which Universities are approaching this task. The University therefore seeks to increase staff, student and community awareness of this issue and identifies how such content can be included in Griffith's curricula by the criteria discussed in Sections [2.0](#) and [4.0](#).

4. DETAILED DEFINITION

The terms used in this policy have been approved by the Inclusive Practices in the Curriculum - Indigenous Australian Studies Working Party and the Learning and Teaching Committee during the deliberations on the Working Party's Final Report in 2005.

At Griffith University the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course curriculum is taught has been identified as:

- Course includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander embedded content: curriculum content embedded in a course within a broad subject or topic; and
- Whole course is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific: curriculum content designed as a stand-alone course addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content as its primary focus.

There are many ways in which this Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content manifests in course curriculum. The following questions have been developed to assist Course Convenors in their assessment of whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is or is not present in the curriculum.

4.1 Course includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander embedded content

- Does course content address a specific subject area or topic as an embedded part of a larger question e.g. specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues affecting treatment in an emergency situation?
- Is the curriculum of a traditional/original subject area broadened by reference to or inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content?
- Does the curriculum prepare students for professional roles within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?
- Is the curriculum taught or supported by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

4.2 Whole course is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific

- Is the curriculum designed specifically to focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues/culture/history/knowledge?
- Has the curriculum been developed in conjunction with members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?
- Does the curriculum prepare students for professional roles within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?
- Is the curriculum taught or supported by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?
- Are curricular arrangements in place with external providers to facilitate the participation of Indigenous Australian students in this course? For example, collaboration with TAFE?

When present, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course content is to be integrated into the course structure and take a form that is appropriate to the course aims.

During the consideration of the two terms in this definition, Course Convenors will also have to decide how the course content is incorporated into the curriculum.

Curriculum categorised as Course includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander embedded content may have for example, a single lecture or a string of lectures on a broad topic that includes material about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues; or readings comparing

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences with those of other First Nation Peoples, or guest seminars on how to appropriately administer emergency care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in hospital.

Whole course Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific curriculum will, in contrast, have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experience and/or knowledges as its primary focus for the whole course and will bring in comparative or contextual situations to support the issues under discussion.

To help Convenors with their assessment of their curriculum, the following extracts from course descriptions show how some convenors have described content and how those courses and their descriptions could be categorised under the two definitions contained in this policy.

4.3 Example extracts showing course includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander embedded content

- Furthermore, advance topics on pharmacy speciality will also be covered which include drug utilisation evaluation; medication reviews; veterinary pharmacy; and the aboriginal healthcare system. Each week consists of four hours of lectures and three hours of practical sessions in the dispensary. The practical sessions are designed to utilise a problem-based approach to teaching and learning, and is designed to prepare students with strong pharmaceutical care plans, written and oral communication skills.
- This course focusses on the exchanges between peoples and individuals usually considered on opposite sides of racial, colonial and imperial frontiers. We investigate a series of historical case studies illustrating a range of cross-cultural exchanges, in Australia but also beyond, and ranging from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. They include: colonization in the Pacific; early Sydney; Indigenous and settler peoples in colonial Queensland; and First Nations peoples and colonisers in North America.

4.4 Examples of extracts showing whole course is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific curricula

- This course is designed to enable students to understand how planning may assist indigenous communities to develop and achieve their aspirations, as well as how those rights and interests are recognised and protected.
- This course traces the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples of Australia from colonisation to the present by using Aboriginal standpoint in a political science context. The course will explore and challenge theoretical and cultural perspectives that underpin and describe both the policies being pursued and Aboriginal engagement within them. Lectures and tutorials will examine the values and political philosophy that directed and gave shape to these social and political movements and, in particular, Aboriginal demands, investment and ownership in the continuing process of liberalisation.
- This course describes and analyses the various historical, political, institutional and practical forces which have shaped welfare and health practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It critically examines ideas and practices which shape contemporary approaches and it engages students in the development of practices which foster relationships for collaboration and change.
- This course explores and challenges a number of theoretical and cultural perspectives that impinge upon the relationship between Indigenous Australians and the law. We will also explore the achievements of Indigenous Australians and the obstacles challenging them in their journey towards equality and the recognition of their rights. Throughout this unit, students will be introduced to a diverse and stimulating range of issues reflective of contemporary Indigenous Australia today.
- This course aims to facilitate a shift in the attitudes, knowledge and awareness of health practitioners in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and health. The course identifies Issues in History, Contemporary Issues, and it analyses the impacts of western society on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social organisation and culture.