

P-8.43 CULTURAL SAFETY POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that ECTARC Training Services (ETS) create and maintain culturally safe environments where all individuals, and particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, feel respected, included, and supported. Cultural safety is not only a human right but an organisational responsibility that must be embedded at all levels.

Cultural safety is embedded through governance, systems, leadership and everyday practice. It is a shared responsibility across all roles and is maintained through reflection, relationship and accountability.

Implementation of this policy is supported by ECTARCs Reconciliation Action Plan, co-developed with community stakeholders including First Nations stakeholders.

Scope

This policy applies to all:

- Students, including children, young people, adults and those from culturally diverse backgrounds,
- Personnel, contractors, volunteers and employer / community work placement hosts,
- Learning and service environments, both face-to-face and online,
- Governance, operations, communications and stakeholder relationships, and
- All partnership arrangements, subcontracting, procurement and delivery undertaken with or on behalf of ETS.

Definitions

Cultural safety means creating environments where all people feel respected, valued and free from any challenge, denial or assault on their identity, culture, beliefs or lived experience. Cultural safety includes respect for religious identity, belief systems and cultural practices, ensuring individuals are not subjected to discrimination, stereotyping or hostility extending beyond cultural awareness or sensitivity to focus on shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge. Cultural safety is determined by those who experience it, not by the organisation. It is achieved when systems, structures and relationships uphold dignity, agency and belonging for everyone including, but not limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people of diverse faiths, genders, abilities, and backgrounds.

Cultural capability is the ongoing development of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that enable individuals and organisations to work respectfully and effectively across cultures. It involves continuous learning and reflection to recognise one's own biases and assumptions while valuing and engaging with different worldviews, communication styles and cultural practices. Cultural capability supports safe, inclusive and responsive environments for all people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other culturally diverse communities.

Personnel development includes learning on:

- Cultural diversity.
- Racism and bias.
- Religious discrimination.
- Respectful engagement with culturally and religiously diverse communities.

Use of Sensitive Terms

The terms 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander', 'Aboriginal', 'Indigenous' and 'First Nations' may be used interchangeably in ETS' work. Using these terminologies, ETS seeks to acknowledge and honour diversity, shared knowledge and experiences as well as the right of stakeholders to define their own identities.

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Deployment

Cultural safety is essential to equitable access, engagement and achievement in education. It supports student wellbeing, strengthens cultural identity, and mitigates systemic barriers and trauma. Cultural safety is defined by those who experience it, not by the organisation.

ETS has zero tolerance for racism, discrimination or vilification based on culture, ethnicity, faith or belief systems. This includes antisemitism, Islamophobia and discrimination directed toward any religious community.

Cultural safety is created through both structural design and daily practice. The following organisational commitments apply across training delivery, employment, governance and community engagement.

ETS:

- Delivers training to all personnel on unconscious bias, racism and their ongoing impacts.
- Embeds reflective practice in personnel supervision, professional learning and leadership development.
- Commits to the development, consultation and implementation of ECTARCs Reconciliation Action Plan
- Co-designs programs, strategies and communications with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders where relevant.
- Recognises and respects First Nations perspectives on safety, healing, knowledge and wellbeing.
- Trains personnel to recognise and respond to the social and emotional wellbeing needs of students.
- Dedicates financial, staffing and time resources to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led initiatives, events, research and partnerships.
- Addresses cultural safety objectives in organisational plans and risk frameworks.
- Holds executive leaders accountable for cultural safety implementation and progress.
- Routinely collect and act on feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities.
- Integrates cultural safety KPIs into performance and outcome monitoring activities.
- Includes First Nations representation or engagement advice and feedback in governance & decision-making bodies where appropriate.
- Reviews all major organisational decisions for cultural safety impact.
- Allocates dedicated funding for cultural safety roles and partnerships.

Learning environments must be free from behaviour that demeans or marginalises individuals because of:

- Cultural identity.
- Ethnicity.
- Religion.
- Language.
- Nationality.

Children and Young People

In addition to these commitments, ETS ensures that:

- Child-friendly, culturally safe communication tools are available.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are engaged with using preferred protocols.
- Cultural identity is respected and supported in all interactions.

First Nations People

In addition to these commitments, ETS:

- Acknowledges the unique experience of First Nations people in Australia.
- Recognises that First Nations peoples do not always have the same level of access to VET as non-Indigenous Australians, nor the same positive experiences.

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- Actively addresses unconscious bias, racism and discrimination, and supports self-determination for First Nations people.
- Supports progression and leadership opportunities, resourcing for community partnerships and co-designed training models with First Nations stakeholders.

Building Cultural Capability

Cultural learning is ongoing, reflective and embedded in supervision, induction, and professional development. Capability is measured through application and reflection, not attendance.

Inclusive Entry Pathways

ETS ensures entry pathways for First Nations learners and personnel are culturally safe, flexible and strengths-based. Processes include supported enrolment, verbal application options, recognition of prior experience, and visible cultural support roles from first contact.

Partnerships

ETS builds and sustains culturally safe partnerships with First Nations organisations and communities. Partnerships are based on reciprocity, shared decision-making and long-term relationship, not transaction.

Monitoring and Evaluation

ETS monitors and evaluates cultural safety processes to ensure performance is effective and outcomes are met.

A process of performance monitoring, evaluation, and reporting has been established and implemented.

ETS continually improves the effectiveness and efficiency of processes. Process performance and outcomes are regularly audited to identify and remove causes of existing and potential problems, as well as to uncover any opportunities for improvement.

VERSION CONTROL	DATE RELEASED	NEXT REVIEW	APPROVED BY	AMENDMENT
Version 1	March 2026	March 2027	ECTARC Leadership	New Policy