GREAT GUIDE TO INDIGENISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

This Guide is designed to support CQUniversity staff in their Indigenisation practice. Indigenisation of the curriculum will transform the University's landscape by recognising and appreciating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of knowing, ways of being and ways of doing.

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The *Great Guide to Indigenisation of the Curriculum* has been produced by CQUniversity Australia, with grant funding made possible through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP).

The HEPPP is a Commonwealth initiative that aims to ensure that all Australians from low SES backgrounds who have the ability to study at university have the opportunity to do so. It provides funding to assist universities to undertake activities and implement strategies that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low SES backgrounds, as well as improving the retention and completion rates of those students.

CQUniversity is known within the Australian higher education sector as the nation's most inclusive university. We respect and seek full participation from staff and students, and the community, and value the diversity of their backgrounds, experience and culture.

CQUniversity defines itself by who it embraces, rather than who it excludes and because of this the University is proud to have the highest ratio of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, compared to any other Australian university.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CQUniversity recognises and acknowledges the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of the land that makes up Australia.

We acknowledge and pay our deepest respects to Elders past, present and future throughout Australia. In particular, we pay our respects to the peoples on whose Country this research was carried out.

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1 SUMMARY

Indigenisation of the curriculum involves recognising and introducing Indigenous knowledges across our teaching practice. It is a challenging and complex process that will benefit all staff, students, graduates and local communities. Indigenisation processes valorise and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems in ways that prepare graduates for work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.

CQUniversity is committed to Indigenisation of the curriculum. It will transform the University's landscape by recognising and appreciating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of knowing (epistemologies), ways of being (ontologies) and ways of doing (axiologies) (Martin, 2003). This Guide is designed to support CQUniversity staff in their Indigenisation practice. This *Great Guide to Indigenisation of the Curriculum* will include a secondary online resource that will be developed over time. This resource will feature discipline specific sources that may aid staff who seek to include Indigenous perspectives in their curriculum.

2 INDIGENISATION AND CQUNIVERSITY'S CORE BUSINESS GOALS

CQUniversity's core business goals are structured into three areas:

1. Engagement and engaged enterprise
2. Engaged learning and teaching, and
3. Engaged research and innovation.

Indigenisation is relevant in each area.

2.1 Engagement and engaged enterprise

Indigenisation requires meaningful and sustainable engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both internally (within the University) and externally. This includes engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are academics and experts within CQUniversity's disciplines, as well as experts within communities and organisations.

Meaningful and sustainable engagement can be achieved if CQUniversity staff have:

• Mechanisms for engaging with and obtaining the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on an on going basis
• Commitment to reading literature produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Indigenous peoples.

Meaningful engagement underpins outreach, scholarship and support programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities. Indigenisation is a process based on social justice whereby the connections between CQUniversity and Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander communities are strengthened to the point where CQUniversity's environments (both physical and online) are culturally safe spaces for Indigenous peoples. Section 6 of this document – *A framework for Indigenisation of the curriculum* – provides more information on relevant strategies of Indigenisation.

2.2 Learning and teaching

Efforts to Indigenise the curriculum involve valorising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies and epistemologies within CQUniversity's practices. In this way, Indigenous methods of learning and teaching are respected and appreciated within both physical and online spaces.

For both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, Indigenisation of the curriculum has various purposes, all of which expose them to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. While Indigenisation of the curriculum may complement cultural responsiveness training, it focuses on teaching and learning Indigenous scholarly content. Williamson and Dalal (2007) identify how an Indigenised curriculum impacts the teaching and learning experience of students in ways that recognise dominant cultural paradigms, cross cultural learning, cultural protocol sensitivity and social justice issues. The social justice component is discussed at length in section 6.

Students need direct access to tools and opportunities to critically explore the major paradigms of their discipline and consider how those paradigms influence the profession's impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Knowledge and skills can be taught in ways that require students to examine their own values. This is important because historical events were based on cultural value assumptions and are understood through a cultural lens. The presentation of historical events should require students to assess whether they understand and agree with those values.

As students develop skills relevant to their future professions, their teachers can make explicit the understanding that effective interaction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cannot occur without an examination of professional values – particularly the values professionals hold in relation to their own cultures and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (Universities Australia, 2011). Through Indigenisation, Indigenous worldviews are taught alongside non-Indigenous worldviews.

Section 6 of this document – *A framework for Indigenisation of the curriculum* – provides more information on learning and teaching strategies.

2.3   Research and innovation

Efforts to Indigenise practices in research and innovation concern the decolonisation of some existing research methods and methodologies, and building (or value-adding) to others. Indigenisation involves valuing and empowering Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous research methods and methodologies. One aspect of this is to ensure that Indigenous issues are identified as key research themes within CQUniversity. In addition, mechanisms must be in place to ensure that research with Indigenous populations is culturally safe and appropriate. Section 6 of this document – *A framework for Indigenisation of the curriculum* – provides more information.

3   WHY INDIGENISE THE CURRICULUM?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and communities are under-represented within Australian tertiary institutions (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew & Kelly, 2012). This under-representation is a social justice issue that impacts both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Five key documents and initiatives inform CQUniversity's commitment to Indigenise the curriculum:

1. The Australian Government's Closing the Gap initiative
2. The *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Behrendt et al., 2012) (also known as the Behrendt report)
3. CQUniversity's *Reconciliation Statement* (n.d.)
4. CQUniversity's *Reconciliation Action Plan* (RAP) (n.d.), and
5. CQUniversity's *Indigenous Education Statements* (2012; 2013).

These documents and initiatives collectively address the issues of Indigenous disadvantage and spotlight the colonial efforts of marginalisation against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, epistemologies and pedagogies.

The Australian Government's Closing the Gap initiative aims to reduce Indigenous disadvantage by targeting health, housing, early childhood, economic participation and employment outcomes (see COAG, n.d., for more information about the Closing the Gap targets and relevant initiatives). From the perspective of tertiary education, factors relevant to Closing the Gap include Indigenous participation, retention and educational outcomes.

In 2011, the Australian Government commissioned a review of higher education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The final report discusses Indigenous disadvantage in tertiary education and emphasises the role of universities in improving the socioeconomic positions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities (Behrendt et al., 2012). The report outlines four specific targets for Closing the Gap in university education:

1. Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments
2. Improving retention rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
3. Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers within universities, and
4. Increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional and academic staff within universities.

The report also included 35 recommendations regarding:

- The achievement of parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, researchers, and staff (both academic and professional)
- Transformation inside tertiary institutions (concerning Indigenous-specific units and courses, whole-of-university policies, events and cultures)
- The success of current Commonwealth Government programs that aim to inspire better tertiary education outcomes for Indigenous Australians
- Acknowledgement and equality for Indigenous knowledges in higher education.

Cultural competency is another aspect of Indigenisation that is relevant to all tertiary students and staff. Recent reports indicate that there is increasing emphasis in Australian higher education on developing graduates with Indigenous cultural competency. The Universities Australia (2011) report, for example, recommends that Indigenous cultural competency should be included as a formal graduate attribute. This recommendation stems from earlier work by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (see James & Devlin, 2006) as well as from work by individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics (Collard, Walker & Dudgeon, 1998; Nakata, 2007). The Behrendt report (2012) similarly recommends that graduate capabilities should be aligned with Indigenous knowledge and perspectives (Recommendation 14) (discussed in Flavell, Thackrah & Hoffman, 2013).

CQUniversity's Indigenisation efforts are guided by the Behrendt report and relevant internal documents. *CQUniversity's Reconciliation Statement* supports recognising that 'knowledge, experience, and scholarship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are a necessary part of Australian scholarship'. This is echoed in *CQUniversity's Reconciliation Action Plan*. Similarly, the *CQUniversity Indigenous Education Statement 2013* states that 'CQUniversity has made a commitment towards Indigenisation of the curriculum. All new and reviewed units in the University that seek approval will need to provide evidence of Indigenisation of the curriculum'. Where relevant, staff are encouraged to consider including Indigenous perspectives in all new and reviewed units.

4 INDIGENISATION OF THE CURRICULUM: WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

CQUniversity is committed to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap initiative, overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, and developing graduates with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. Indigenising the curriculum is an important aspect of this commitment.

CQUniversity has clear expectations for Indigenisation:

- The CQUniversity community is encouraged to think about how to include Indigenous perspectives in their respective teaching and learning, with support from both the Office of Indigenous Engagement, Learning and Teaching Services and experts within the fields.

- Heads of Course and their teams are key stakeholders for ensuring their courses embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems, pedagogies and research methodologies in ways that complement the course's learning outcomes and are appropriate for the discipline.

- Heads of Course are encouraged to liaise with the Office of Indigenous Engagement, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars within Schools, experts on Indigenising curriculum and with experts from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop approaches that enable all students to develop into culturally responsive graduates. There are a growing number of Indigenous graduates in a range of disciplines and an increasing number of professional Indigenous associations with whom Heads of Course are encouraged to consult with on their courses. For example, the Indigenous Allied Health Association, the Council of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives and so on.

The process of Indigenising the curriculum is complex, challenging and ongoing (similar to other forms of curriculum design and development). A sequential process is likely to be helpful. The sequence recommended here parallels the sequence proposed in CQUniversity's *Great Guide to Internationalisation of the Curriculum* (2012) and *Top Ten Tips for Internationalisation of the Curriculum* (Donovan et.al, 2012).

The seven-step, recommended sequence for Indigenising the curriculum at CQUniversity includes:

1. Identify the history of the discipline in relation to its treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Question how this discipline has approached, subjugated, marginalised, excluded, categorised, and/or (mis)treated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2. Develop shared understandings within the course team regarding Indigenous knowledges, pedagogies and methodologies within the context of the discipline.

3. If possible, create a core disciplinary unit that relates to professional practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within their respective profession/discipline. This core unit may feature Indigenous discipline-specific ways of knowing, being and doing as articulated by Indigenous scholars and publications concerning Indigenous issues that are relevant to a student's professional practice within their discipline. This unit can be embedded and normalised into the disciplinary course and given epistemological equality in the same spirit as non-Indigenous knowledge systems.

4. Examine other units that can build on a core disciplinary unit. Audit or map the existing units within the course that enable students to build their knowledge of these systems.

5. Aggregate the audit/mapping findings to establish how each unit contributes to the desired Indigenous knowledge systems.

6. Identify any gaps across the course that might contribute to the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems.

7. Where appropriate, enhance units to address the identified gaps.

5 RELEVANT CONCEPTS ON INDIGENISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

CQUniversity staff may consider several concepts when Indigenising the curriculum. These concepts are intended to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' worldviews and how those worldviews relate to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Relevant concepts include:

- **Indigenous epistemologies:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of knowing and theories of knowledge, which involve values and cultural components
- **Indigenous ontologies:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of being, and ways of understanding reality and existence
- **Indigenous axiologies:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of doing, which are driven by values that inform the ways Indigenous peoples perceive and assess the world
- **Indigenous methodologies:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews that shape, design and understand knowledges
- **Indigenous methods:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practices, tools, techniques and ways of doing that gather and valorise knowledges
- **Plurality:** the rich diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today
- **Indigenous pedagogies:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of learning, teaching, critical reflection and passing on knowledges
- **Context:** the time period and setting in which Indigenisation is situated. Particularly relevant to context is the ongoing role of colonisation in marginalising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their epistemologies and pedagogies (as highlighted through the Closing the Gap initiative). While Indigenisation at CQUniversity centres on education, we acknowledge that other factors of disadvantage are significantly linked to education.

An Indigenised curriculum involves constant review and assessment to ensure that the principles and concepts of Indigenisation are met. It will actively assess dominant cultural paradigms, recognise the complexities of cross-cultural learning, develop students' sensitivity for cultural protocol, and address social justice issues. Table 1 summarises the requirements of an Indigenised curriculum with embedded Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies.

Table 1: An Indigenised curriculum, with embedded Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies
(see Williamson & Dalal, 2007, p. 53)

An Indigenised curriculum:	
1.	Identifies and critically assesses dominant cultural paradigms and the ways in which knowledges are located within and contribute to cultural systems. Acknowledges and unpacks cultural perspectives and the ways in which the 'other' is framed (e.g., Kumashiro, 2000; Lampert, 2003).
2.	Recognises the complexities of cross-cultural understandings but seeks to be culturally inclusive and accommodating of the diversity of Indigenous ways of knowing. Implies a critical reframing of what it means to be Australian (e.g., Nakata, 2002).
3.	Provides in-depth and contextualised understandings of lived cultures (including knowledges, values and procedures) within Indigenous societies, recognising both the current significance of 'traditional' knowledges/skills and the dynamics and diversity of contemporary Indigenous cultures and communities (Nakata, 2002).
4.	Acknowledges and develops sensitivity to appropriate cultural protocols and research ethics for engaging with Indigenous communities.
5.	Addresses the issues of social justice for Indigenous peoples and supports the development of informed and active social change professionals.
6.	Enables consideration of the inter-relationships between local Indigenous communities and global processes.
7.	Utilises appropriate pedagogical and assessment strategies which recognise alternative ways/means of knowing and alternative skill sets. Draws on the expertise of Indigenous peoples and communities.
8.	Recognises that embedding Indigenous perspectives is not simply an adding mechanism but involves a reorientation and reframing of the curriculum.

6   A FRAMEWORK FOR INDIGENISATION OF THE CURRICULUM

This section presents the conceptual framework that underpins CQUniversity's strategy for Indigenisation of the curriculum. The framework is designed to challenge existing learning, teaching and research practices in ways that include Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. As this is a document outlining the philosophies behind Indigenisation, more practical examples and resources will be published in an online secondary resource of the *Great Guide to Indigenisation of the Curriculum.*

CQUniversity's 8-facet framework for Indigenisation of the curriculum includes:

1.   Yarning up and valuing Indigenous knowledges
2.   Normalising the presence of Indigenous knowledge systems
3.   Utilising Indigenous pedagogies
4.   Decolonising research methodologies
5.   Community in the classroom
6.   Third spaces within tertiary places
7.   Developing and including graduate attributes
8.   Social justice principles.

6.1   Yarning up and valuing Indigenous knowledges

Yarning Up and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledges can include:

•   **Conducting yarning circles**
•   **Creating databases of Indigenous content.**

Indigenous knowledges in academic disciplines are often marginalised, ignored and unknown to scholars. While there are increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics, and the published literature on Indigenous knowledge systems continues to grow, many courses are still largely informed by non-Indigenous theories, perspectives and worldviews. Yarning Up and valuing Indigenous knowledges seeks to transform this problem.

Yarning Up refers to a process of acknowledging and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of knowing, being and doing within a discipline through a deep conversation and the exchange of information and ideas. When disciplines lack a relevant body of published Indigenous literature (such as Aviation or Paramedic Sciences), multidisciplinary approaches can be used to inform the curriculum, using literature from related disciplines.

Two strategies can encourage change in the spirit of Yarning Up:

•   **Academic yarning circles:** Yarning circles are an Indigenous pedagogical practice, where a space is dedicated towards teaching and learning and individuals engage in deep conversations and the exchange of ideas. Academic staff might be unaware of the literature that features Indigenous knowledges. A regular yarning circle might be an appropriate method of exploring these knowledges, giving staff an opportunity to reflect upon their unit/s, and thinking about how the issues, systems and epistemologies fit with or challenge the foundations of unit/s.

•   **Exploring knowledges by creating databases:** Schools/divisions and disciplines can develop and maintain relevant lists of publications, books, journal articles, videos and case studies. Databases are primarily discipline specific, located within schools/divisions and regularly updated. A database that specifically features Indigenous content relevant to the discipline can inform lecture content and topics.

6.2   Normalising the presence of Indigenous epistemologies within the curriculum

Normalising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing includes:
- **Creating core disciplinary unit/s**
- **Auditing and mapping existing units**
- **Creating follow-on units**
- **Presenting and labelling Indigenous knowledge systems.**

Indigenous knowledges are increasingly emerging and being recognised by Australia's tertiary institutions (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006). In some units, educators dedicate one week or one topic to Indigenous issues. Other units feature core disciplinary units that are solely dedicated to working with Indigenous peoples and communities.

At CQUniversity, a key aspect Indigenising the curriculum is the creation of a core disciplinary unit. In addition, Heads of Course and other staff may commit to integrating Indigenous content across the whole study course, rather than simply developing a separate unit (to help ensure that the core disciplinary unit does not become tokenistic). Integration of content needs to be planned carefully, since there is a danger that fully integrated content may lose coherence. It is also important to recognise that some academics may need upskilling to acquire the required skills, understanding or value systems needed to teach the material in a culturally appropriate way.

For most disciplines at CQUniversity, a mixture of core disciplinary Indigenous-based content, combined with integrated material, is probably the best option. Follow-on units can feature Indigenous content in a way that builds on the core disciplinary unit.

The processes of normalising Indigenous epistemologies within courses is influenced by the ways that staff present Indigenous content and surrounding discourses. Staff are encouraged to present these epistemologies with the same level of importance as non-Indigenous knowledge systems. Labelling non-Indigenous knowledge is part of this process: non-Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing need to be labelled, rather than considered the 'norm'.

The normalising of Indigenous epistemologies in the curriculum further involves challenging widespread myths that disciplines outside the Arts and Social Sciences do not lend themselves to Indigenisation. For instance, recent Indigenous STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs and initiatives challenge such perceptions by normalising Indigenous perspectives and knowledges in these fields. The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) has multiple science pathway programs for Indigenous tertiary students (CSIRO 2016), and various Indigenous and non-Indigenous scientists have collaborated on joint research papers on the advantages of combining Indigenous and non-Indigenous scientific knowledges (see Bohensky, Butler, & Davies, 2013; Green, Billy & Tapim, 2010; Leonard, Parsons, Olawsky & Kofod, 2013; Yibarbuk, et al. 2001; Ziembicki, Woinarski, & Mackey, 2013). *Indigenous Engineering* (2016) has a number of resources guiding academics on including Aboriginal perspectives in designing Engineering and Technology curricula in tertiary education. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance (2016) has a number of conferences and resources concerning Indigenous perspectives in mathematics. The engagement with these sources can enable staff to normalise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing within STEM disciplines.

6.3 Utilising Indigenous pedagogies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching are significant parts of Indigenisation. Indigenous pedagogies can involve:

- **Yarning circles**
- **Storytelling and self-reflection**
- **'Both-ways' philosophy.**

To complement the valuing of Indigenous epistemologies, CQUniversity staff can acknowledge, learn, respect and embrace Indigenous ways of teaching and learning. These pedagogies fit easily into the context of face-to-face tertiary education, but need to be shaped and adapted for online teaching. Staff are encouraged to move beyond the traditional approaches of lectures, workshops and tutorials, to embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of learning and teaching. Relevant examples include:

- **Yarning circles:** As mentioned previously, yarning circles are spaces dedicated to teaching and learning, where individuals engage in deep conversations and exchange ideas. Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010) identify four types of yarning: (1) social yarning – which are considered, informal conversations, (2) research topic yarning – which occurs in the context of research (and is relevant to the discussion about decolonising research methodologies, below), (3) collaborative yarning – which occurs between two or more people and is ideally suited for tutorials, and (4) therapeutic yarning – which are emotionally charged conversations about personal stories and trauma.

- **Storytelling and self-reflection:** Storytelling and self-reflection are both parallel processes and Indigenous pedagogies. By engaging in storytelling and self-reflection, staff can demonstrate inclusiveness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of doing and being. Watkin Lui (2015) describes Indigenous pedagogies that include the teaching styles of self-reflection, storytelling, use of metaphor, and use of 'we' instead of 'you' expressions.

- **'Both-ways' philosophy**: 'Both-ways' is a philosophy of education that brings together 'both' ways of approaching knowledge: it recognises both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions of knowledge and Western academic processes and cultural contexts. In this way, 'both-ways' philosophy embraces the values of respect, tolerance and diversity (see Ober & Bat, 2008).

6.4 Decolonising research methodologies

Throughout colonial history, many Australian research methodologies have worked to oppress, subjugate and colonise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Decolonising CQUniversity's research practices and methodologies is important within this context. At CQUniversity, decolonisation involves:

- **Valuing Indigenous knowledges in relation to research methods and methodologies**
- **Ethical approaches to research with Indigenous peoples and communities**
- **Becoming aware of the history of research in Australia**
- **Networking with Indigenous researchers.**

Research is an important aspect of CQUniversity's work – both in conducting research and sharing its outcomes. Research is conducted at many levels, by academics, research officers, research assistants and postgraduate students. Several undergraduate courses feature research components. Each discipline is informed by its own research practices and histories, and by the relevant literature for discipline-specific qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods practices.

CQUniversity staff need to be aware of the history of research in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As Fredericks and Ward (2014, p. 190) point out, since 'the earliest days of Australian colonisation, ill-formed perceptions and assumptions have guided policies and interactions with Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander peoples'. Smith (1999) also identifies the history of research in marginalising, subjugating and oppressing Indigenous peoples.

To decolonise research methodologies at CQUniversity, staff are encouraged to:

- Teach, adopt and appreciate Indigenous research methodologies (For examples, see Smith, 1999; Chilisa, 2011; Walter & Andersen, 2013; Walker, et al., 2014) in the same spirit as they teach Western-oriented research

- Conduct ethical research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, as defined by Indigenous peoples themselves (For examples, see AIATSIS, 2012; NHMRC, 2003; NHMRC, 2005; Laycock, et al., 2011)

- Build students' awareness of the history of research in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the responsibility and importance of undertaking ethical research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and their communities

- Network and engage with Indigenous researchers in their fields (For examples, see Laycock, et al., 2009; NIRAKN, n.d.).

6.5   Community in the classroom

Community in the classroom is about creating stronger links between CQUniversity and Indigenous communities. This will strengthen the ability of staff to Indigenise the curriculum. Community in the classroom is a process of networking, which can be achieved by:

- **Epistemological equality**
- **Visiting communities**
- **Engaging Indigenous experts as paid lecturers and teachers.**

Universities are spaces that have historically excluded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This exclusion partly explains the under-representation of Indigenous staff and students at universities. As part of Indigenisation, staff need to network and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Three strategies that can guide this process:

- **Epistemological equality:** Epistemological equality places Indigenous epistemologies on an equal footing with Western epistemologies. Zubrzycki et al. (2014) discuss it as a method where 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges redresses the prominence of Western models … and requires the curriculum development process to occur in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' (p. 18). Staff can aim for epistemological equality by networking with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are experts in particular fields and engaging them to teach students.

- **Visiting communities:** Staff are encouraged to become familiar with communities and community services that are relevant to their discipline. For example, staff can engage with community-controlled health organisations, legal services, community centres, creative arts and performance organisations, land councils and cultural services. These spaces may be suitable for student visits and for the placements required by some CQUniversity courses. The Office of Indigenous Engagement is developing a document that lists of institutions and organisations that staff can visit and engage with.

- **Indigenous staff:** Whenever appropriate, staff can engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as paid lecturers, teachers, technical staff and professional staff. In addition, staff may consider engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in industry, in curriculum and course committees, and in any other formalised structures that influence curriculum and teaching within CQUniversity.

6.6   Third spaces within tertiary places

Indigenisation challenges us to reconceptualise CQUniversity's environment as a space where both Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices are exchanged independently.

The idea of a 'third space' within a university provides a way to conceptualise learning environments in a post-colonial context. Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) discuss 'third spaces' as being crucial to the Indigenisation of a university teaching environment.

The 'third space' is an independent space that sits between the colonised and coloniser. As Zubrzycki et al. (2014) argue that 'it is in this space that new knowledge, insights and understandings about identity and positioning emerge. A defining feature of the 'third space' is tension and uncertainty. It is a contested space in which previous ways of knowing and doing are challenged and changed, where differences need to be understood in order that new understandings and ways of doing can emerge' (p. 19).

Academic staff at CQUniversity are encouraged to conceptualise their virtual and face-to-face teaching environments as spaces that are independent of Euro-centric, traditional environments, where various knowledge systems can be appreciated. The 'third space' should not be considered as only a physical location (such as a lecture theatre, tutorial or workshop setting) but can also be a virtual space (such as Moodle sites, where discussion forums appreciate a variety of perspectives) (Brien & Fredericks, 2015; Fredericks & Brien, 2014).

6.7   Developing and including graduate attributes

CQUniversity has university-level graduate attributes that influence the learning outcomes within courses of study and their units. Behrendt et al. (2012) describe graduate attributes as learning outcomes, generic skills, competencies, core abilities and values that graduates develop through their university education. Indigenous graduate attributes are for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous graduates. Developing Indigenous graduate attributes is part of CQUniversity's Indigenisation strategy. Indigenous graduate attributes refer to the benchmarks and qualities within courses that are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and issues. For CQUniversity, the development of Indigenised graduate attributes can be achieved by modifying existing course learning outcomes.

Numerous other universities, both in Australia and overseas, have introduced an Indigenous attribute/s and their work can also be drawn upon. CQUniversity's *Great Guide to Creating and Using Effective Learning Outcomes* provides useful direction for implementing this aspect of Indigenisation. Indigenous graduate attributes can enrich the quality of education within CQUniversity. Ideally, CQUniversity graduates who achieve relevant course learning outcomes are culturally responsive and knowledgeable in their work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In developing relevant graduate attributes, it is important to consider:

- **Course Learning Outcomes**
- **National accreditation bodies**
- **Assessment items.**

For advice and direction on modifying existing course learning outcomes, staff may consider a local community or regional approach, contact Indigenous experts in their disciplines, and develop discipline-specific Indigenous graduate attributes that reflect and appreciate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems. Professional and national accrediting bodies can help in identifying relevant graduate attributes and, in some cases, may list existing, relevant attributes (for example, in Social Work and Nursing). Other universities also offer examples of relevant graduate attributes.

Learning guides and unit outlines should reflect these graduate attributes in ways that appreciate the rich diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems.

6.8 Social justice principles

Social justice principles and the social position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australian society are important aspects of Indigenising the curriculum. For CQUniversity, this includes a commitment to:

- **Self-determination**
- **Increasing Indigenous staff numbers**
- **Student retention**
- **Cultural responsiveness.**

As explained earlier, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are commonly disadvantaged within Australian tertiary education. Indigenisation involves recognising this disadvantage, then bringing together both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and working together to address it.

These following factors are significant aspects of a social justice approach to Indigenisation:

- **Self-determination:** people have a right to make their own decisions about their affairs and outcomes. In working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, CQUniversity staff need to prioritise principles of respect and support communities to manage their own affairs and make their own decisions.

- **Increasing Indigenous staff numbers:** there is a shortage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics within Australian universities. CQUniversity schools/divisions are encouraged to actively look for opportunities to increase the numbers of Indigenous staff at the University. This could include creating identified lectureships and opportunities to mentor upcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate and postgraduate students. There are currently around 450 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enrolled in PhD courses throughout Australia. Some of these individuals may be ideal employees.

- **Student retention:** for a variety of reasons, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are less likely to complete their university education than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Staff are encouraged to mentor known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within particular courses. Students may need individual support to maintain their enrolment.

- **Cultural responsiveness:** cultural responsiveness is developed through learning and reflection and by at times undertaking professional development that assists in facilitating knowledge and skills. Staff at CQUniversity are encouraged to improve their cultural responsiveness by completing cross-cultural training, offered by our University and by communities.

7 COURSE AND UNIT DEVELOPMENT

Graduate outcomes are used to guide unit design, learning outcomes and assessment practices. For this reason, the unit design relevant for Indigenisation of the curriculum can begin with the development of learning outcomes that are inclusive and adequately reflect Indigenous knowledges as they relate to a particular discipline and professional practice within this discipline. These Indigenous graduate attributes will then guide relevant changes at the level of unit design, learning outcomes and assessment.

As part of the process of Indigenisation, unit design, learning outcomes and assessment can be inclusive of Indigenous knowledges and topics, and may also address current issues topical within Indigenous communities. At the unit level, Indigenous learning outcomes can be developed within the context of disciplinary learning outcomes and reflect the graduate attributes relevant for the discipline and career path.

Examples of unit learning outcomes, learning activities and assessment items currently used in CQUniversity units are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Examples of learning outcomes and assessment items

Unit learning outcome	Learning resources and related activities	Assessment
Demonstrate knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, issues and experiences within the criminal justice system	Students examine the issues of Indigenous over-representation within the criminal justice system Students examine government reports, literature and documentaries regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences within the criminal justice system Indigenous workers and community liaison officers visit students and are guest lecturers	Students examine case studies within the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
Demonstrate knowledge of the Indigenous definitions of place and Country	Unit materials include Indigenous-authored texts supported by visiting guest speakers from Indigenous and other cultures	In tutorials, workshops and yarning circles, students discuss: What is the impact of colonisation upon Indigenous relationships with places and Country? Compare and contrast Indigenous definitions of place to non-Indigenous ways of understanding place
Compare and contrast different Indigenous models and therapies in counselling	Unit materials feature readings that examine culturally appropriate therapies and models in conjunction with the current curriculum Show students a documentary film on Indigenous therapy methods	Students write critical reflections on either the Ngarlu model (Roe, 2000) or Dadirri (Atkinson, 2002) Students examine: How do these Indigenous models fit within the framework as developed by accrediting bodies?
Demonstrate knowledge of Indigenous sustainable agricultural practices	Students read and learn about bush tucker and native Australian plants	Students profile one of the following agricultural bush tucker products: • Bush Plum (Carissa lanceolate) • Lemon Myrtle (Backhousia citriodora) • Lady apple (Syzygium suborbiculare) • Rock fig (Ficus platypoda) • Rock Morning Glory (Ipomoea costata) • Karkalla (Carpobrotus rossii) Students are asked to describe the historical and current Indigenous uses of this food source. Consider the ecological sustainability, social impacts and economic viability of this product and hence assess its suitability as a commercial crop.
Demonstrate an ability to promote and prescribe appropriate and safe physical activity and training programs for individuals and communities	Students examine reports on Indigenous health disadvantage and community initiatives on increasing physical activity within Indigenous communities	Studies have shown that community-oriented efforts to increase physical activity among Indigenous people are successful approaches. Students examine the *Deadly Choices* initiative by Queensland Health that aims to close the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

While the process of valuing of Indigenous knowledges, skills and perspectives will be discipline-specific, some generic graduate capabilities may be useful across disciplines. These generic capability statements, which may assist in developing learning outcomes and assessment criteria, are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3 Generic graduate capabilities (see Williamson & Dalal 2007, p. 53)

Generic graduate capabilities may include the demonstrated capacity to:
1. Be critically aware and capable of deconstructing their own cultural situatedness and its relationship to the construction of Indigenous knowledges, peoples, etc
2. Be critically alert to the complexities of cross-cultural understanding and the acquisition of cross-cultural sensitivity
3. Value and engage with diverse forms of knowledge, 'other' ways of knowing, and their pertinent/related practices
4. Understand Indigenous cultures and cultural values including the complexity and diversity of Indigenous communities and their contemporary concerns
5. Actively contribute to contemporary debates on the delivery of social justice for Indigenous peoples
6. Recognise and practise appropriate professional skills with respect to their engagement with Indigenous peoples

7.1   Strategies of Indigenisation

At CQUniversity, Heads of Course, Unit Coordinators and Lecturers are responsible for designing and enhancing an Indigenised curriculum. It is encouraged that staff critically reflect on their own perspectives of Indigenous Australians and consider how certain disciplines are shaped in ways that render Indigenous knowledges as tokenistic or invisible. Indigenisation is a complex and challenging process for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as it may involve challenging the normalised worldviews within disciplines.

These suggestions may assist you in developing strategies to Indigenise the curriculum:

- Adopt Indigenous pedagogies in ways that complement Western-oriented teaching styles of lectures, workshops and tutorials. Consider pedagogical frameworks which complement Indigenous ways and worldviews.

- Appreciate the diverse knowledge systems within Indigenous communities, including any complexities and paradoxes. Accept and acknowledge the role of colonisation in shaping these knowledges. At the same time, value diversity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

- Build personal and professional networks with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are experts in your discipline.

- Challenge post-colonial and post-colonising norms and whiteness within disciplines. Further, challenge the idea of 'universal knowledge' within your discipline.

- Complete modules on cultural safety, cultural awareness and cultural responsiveness – developed by CQUniversity and communities.

- Decolonise existing research methodologies and learn Indigenous ways of conducting research.

- Develop an interest in Indigenous scholarship, perspectives, theories and current affairs that take place within communities.

- Develop learning outcomes that have Indigenous components.

- Develop a core-disciplinary unit in each course that is dedicated to Indigenous epistemologies, topics and issues. In addition, allow for a 'flow-on' impact, where subsequent units feature Indigenous epistemologies that inform the content.

- Enable both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to complete assessments that have a focus on Indigenous issues, topics and case studies.

- Encourage your school/work group to establish academic yarning circles among staff and build databases of materials that feature Indigenous content
- Involve yourself in groups, seminars, conferences and workshops exploring Indigenous issues, knowledges and perspectives
- Participate in regular critical reflection of your theoretical frameworks, methods, practices and intellectual traditions
- Reconceptualise your teaching environment in ways that empower Indigenous peoples
- Research and inform yourself about the Nation/Country you are working on or where your campus is located
- Utilise online media (audio and visual) such as ABC Indigenous, NITV and SBS
- Work on strategies to retain Indigenous students within your courses.

8   FURTHER ASSISTANCE

This Guide is a starting point for academic staff to Indigenise their curriculum. All CQUniversity academic staff are responsible for developing course-based strategies that embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing. The CQUniversity Conceptual Framework presented in Section 6 of this document guides this work.

Indigenisation is an ongoing process that requires staff to be constantly alert to new issues and to emerging publications and workshops by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are experts within particular fields. It is encouraged that academic staff review their content every semester.

Staff can contact the Office of Indigenous Engagement, Indigenous scholars, and experts within communities for support and guidance through the processes of Indigenisation. Please contact the Office for further information and for ongoing support.

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