



# First Peoples Education Policy

V1.0 September 2023

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## 1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this First Peoples Education Policy (“**Policy**”) is to publicly affirm the College's commitment to supporting the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the educational environment of the College.

### 1.2 Scope

This Policy has been prepared in accordance with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, the *Navitas Reconciliation Action Plan 2022*. It therefore sets out how the College complies with relevant standards and regulations regarding the support for participation of First Peoples.

The Policy applies to all staff (regardless of their employment status – ongoing, casual, honorary, visiting/ guest), and students of the College. It further intends to capture those individuals who contribute to the academic environment of the College, such as contractors, volunteers and members of governing committees.

The Policy is applicable on the College's physical campuses, and in digital College environments.

## 2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

### 2.1 Acknowledgement of Country

Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd (The College) acknowledges the people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which the College's campuses are located:

- La Trobe College Australia is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation; and
- La Trobe University Sydney Campus is located on the lands of the The Gadigal of the Eora Nation.

The College pays respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The College recognises and respects the continuing living cultures of First Peoples.

### 2.2 Principles

The College affirms its commitment to the following principles which underpins the approach to First Peoples learning and teaching.

- a. whole-of-College approach across the student life-cycle, from recruitment, admission, participation and progress, graduation and transition to the University,
- b. accountability of all members of the College, senior staff and educators,
- c. recognition and valuing of traditional and contemporary histories, values, languages, culture and knowledge;
- d. respect and civility among and between staff and students,
- e. opportunities for engaging in the governance, decision making, planning, delivery and evaluation of education.

#### 2.2.1 The College Strategy to engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The College outlines its strategies to engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples (Attachment 1).

### 2.2.2 Engaging with La Trobe University

The College is privileged to be able to access a range of support services offered by La Trobe University. Services available from the University are outlined in Attachment 1.

## 3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

| Responsibility   | CDP | AD | AB | GB |
|--|-----|----|----|----|
| Maintain currency of policy  | A   | R  | I  | I  |
| Foster an environment that aligns with policy principles   | A   | R  |    |    |
| Seek reports on the implementation of the principles within the college                              | A   | R  | R  | I  |
| CDP = College Director & Principal, AD = Academic Director, AB = Academic Board, GB = Governing Body |     |    |    |    |
| R = Responsible, A = Accountable, S = Supporting, C = Consulting, I = Informed                       |     |    |    |    |

## 4.0 COMPLIANCE

### 4.1 General

The College Director & Principal will ensure that staff are informed about this Policy through staff meetings and other internal communications.  
Students will be made aware of this Policy through the College website and through the educational experiences with their Academic Staff.

### 4.2 Breaches

Academic Staff who breach this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct.  
Students who breach this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### 4.3 Relevant Legislation & Reference Material

The College maintains compliance with the legislation relating to academic freedom:

| Legislation/<br>Reference Material  | Reference   |
|---|---|
| <a href="#">Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</a> | 2.2.2 Diversity and Equity<br><br>"Specific consideration is given to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples."<br><br>6.2.1 (g) Corporate Governance<br><br>"The provider is able to demonstrate, and the corporate governing body assures itself, that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including:<br>g. educational policies and practices support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures." |

## 5.0 DEFINITIONS

Unless the contrary intention is expressed in this Policy, the following words (when used in this policy) have the meaning set out below:

| Term  | Meaning & Usage   |
|---|---|
| Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Person | Source: s51 (25) of the High Court of Australia (1983): "An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which they live."<br><br>The use of the abbreviation 'ATSI' to describe people is considered offensive and must be avoided. |

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Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd trading as La Trobe College Australia ABN 92 143 736 789 TEQSA PRV12186 – Institute of Higher Education, CRICOS Code 03312D; La Trobe University TEQSA PRV12132 – Australian University, CRICOS Code 00115M

| Term                   | Meaning & Usage   |
|------------------------|---|
| Aboriginal             | <p>Lowercase refers to a First Nations person from any part of the world and does not necessarily refer to an Australian Aboriginal. The College's preference is that "Aboriginal" should always be capitalised.</p> <p>Generally, not inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people, and therefore, "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples" should be used when referring collectively.</p> <p>"Aborigine" is offensive and must be avoided. "Aboriginal" must never be abbreviated.</p> <p>"Aboriginal" should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. For example, "Aboriginal students".</p> |
| Torres Strait Islander | <p>Refers to a person or a descendant from the Torres Strait Islands to the north of mainland Queensland, Australia. The College's preference is that "Torres Strait Islander" should always be capitalised.</p> <p>Generally, not inclusive of Aboriginal people, and therefore, "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples" should be used when referring collectively.</p> <p>"Torres Strait Islander" must never be abbreviated.</p> <p>"Torres Strait Islander" should be used as an adjective, not as a noun. For example, "Torres Strait Islander students".</p>                           |
| First peoples          | A collective name for the original people of Australia and their descendents. This is an acceptable term.   |
| Indigenous             | While this term is in common use, it was developed without consultation, and some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people believe the term diminishes their identity and homogenises an array of cultures. In some instances, it may be unavoidable to use the term (e.g. responding to government organisations), and in this case, it should be capitalised as "Indigenous Australians". The College's preference is for the use of "First peoples" or "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander".  |
| Self-identifying terms | Aboriginal people may choose to identify themselves using terms drawn from their languages and specific areas (e.g. Murri, Koori, Noongah, Palawa, Kulkalgai). It is usually not appropriate for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to use these terms, and best practice is to ask for individual preference about what the person wants to be called.   |
| Elder                  | The traditional meaning of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elder is someone who has gained recognition within their community as a custodian of knowledge and lore, and who has permission to disclose cultural knowledge and beliefs. Recognised Elders are highly respected people within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.   |
| Mob                    | A term identifying a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people associated with a particular place or country. This is a culturally significant term associated with identity, and it is not appropriate for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to use this term.  |
| Nation                 | A culturally distinct group of people associated with a particular culturally defined area of land or country. Each nation has boundaries that cannot be changed, and language is tied to that nation.  |
| Traditional Owner(s)   | An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person or group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people directly descended from the original Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of a culturally-defined area of land or country, and has a cultural association with this country that derives from their bloodline back to Country, traditions, observances, customs, beliefs or history of the original Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of the area.  |

## 6.0 REVIEW

This Policy is tested and reviewed at least every 24 months and when at the time of any changes to the regulatory compliance requirements, legislation, regulation and guidelines. This review process aims to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction of The College and continued relevance to Navitas' current and planned operations.

## 7.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All records in relation to this document will be managed as follows:

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| Record type | Owner                        | Location              | Retention                                       | Disposal           |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|--------------------|
| Policy      | College Director & Principal | Policy Hub / Intranet | Permanently with control in place for revisions | Policy Hub archive |

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## ATTACHMENT 1

### STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

The College is committed to supporting the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the educational environment of the College.

| THEME                 | STRATEGY  | PROVIDER                              |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Fees and Scholarships | Each year, a consideration is made to one Access Scholarship being offered to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student to undertake a full qualification in any discipline.   | College after approval from the Board |
| Admission             | <p>The Admissions Policy fundamentally provides for alternate admission pathways, where students have not successfully engaged in secondary study, or have been away from study for a number of years. For example, mature-age entry, work experience, vocational study may all contribute to improving the successful entry of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>The University allocates a number of places in high demand programs (e.g. medicine and allied health) to students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.</p> | <p>College</p> <p>University</p>      |
| Orientation           | Local Aboriginal Elders are invited to Orientation Week to conduct a Welcome to Country Smoking Ceremony for Australian and International students.   | University                            |
| Participation         | <p>After enrolment, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are contacted by the College's Student Counsellor and connected with the University's First Peoples Student Success Team.</p> <p>This will also expose students to the range of opportunities available at the University, for example galleries and fine arts academics working in the space of Aboriginal Art, units or degrees in First People's History and Culture, specialized research units focused on First People's issues.</p>  | College and University                |
| Participation         | A range of events are observed/ celebrated on campus including NAIDOC Week.   | College & University                  |

| THEME         | STRATEGY   | PROVIDER                 |
|---------------|--|--------------------------|
| Participation | <p>Raising cultural awareness is embedded through the teaching and learning experience through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscription to Indigenous-run learning platform, which gives academic staff access to content created by First Peoples,</li> <li>• Incorporating First Peoples literature and films into the teaching materials, and embedding themes, story and language into curricular projects,</li> <li>• Including cultural awareness as a Graduate Attribute, and then designating the particular units in which First People modules will be taught/ practiced/ assessed.</li> </ul> | College                  |
| Graduation    | Graduate awards for high performing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are considered.   | College                  |
| Governance    | <p>Governing body is supplied with data that demonstrates the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Where there is cause for improvement, strategies are enacted to support.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are considered when nominating students to attend College governing committees.</p> <p>This First Peoples Education Policy affirms the College's commitment to educational policies and practices supporting the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>   | College & Governing Body |
| Staff         | A range of cultural awareness materials and training webinars are delivered to promote reconciliation and ensure that best practice is followed in terms of recruitment.   | Navitas HR               |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Policy Title         | First Peoples Education Policy   |   |
| Policy Owners        | College Director and Principal   Campus Director LTUSC   |   |
| Brief Description    | <b>This policy publicly affirms the College's commitment to supporting the</b> participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the educational environment of the College.               |   |
| Key Stakeholders     | All Staff  |   |
| Approval Body        | Board of Directors   | 25 October 2022   |
|                      | LTCA Academic Board  | 22 September 2023   |
|                      |  |   |
|                      |  |   |
|                      |  |   |
| Relevant Legislation |  |   |
| Related Policies     | Enrolment Policy<br>Enrolment Procedure<br>Access, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy<br>Student Grievance Policy<br>Academic Integrity Policy<br>Special Consideration and Deferred Assessment Policy |   |
| Related Guidelines   |  |   |
| File information     | TBC  | Version number V1.0   |
| Date Effective       | 22 September 2023  | Next Review Date December 2025  |
| AMENDMENT HISTORY    |  |   |
| Revision Date        | Version  | Summary of changes  |
| 9/9/2023             | V1.0   | Initial Release, following external experts report on meeting governance requirements |
|                      |  |   |
|                      |  |   |

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