Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Procedure

1 Purpose

To outline the initiatives and processes for increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, career growth and engagement across all areas and levels of the University.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Employees across all areas of the University involved in:

- workforce planning, attraction, selection, recruitment, and appointment decisions;
- supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees; and/or
- supporting the engagement and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees.

3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines the initiatives and processes available to increase the attraction and recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the University, and the range of employment conditions and benefits in place to develop and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees once employed at the University. This Procedure is read in conjunction with the *UniSQ First Nations Strategic Workforce Framework 2024-2025*.

This Procedure aligns with:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*: Standard 6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability

4 Procedures

4.1 Attraction and Recruitment

This section provides information specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce planning, attraction, and recruitment. It is to be read in conjunction with the Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Procedure and the relevant knowledge article.

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4.1.1 Employee Value Proposition

The University is committed to working towards being recognised as a First Nations employer of choice, and will consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees to gain insights into reasons people choose the University and the areas for improvement. These insights will be used to develop themes for a tailored Employee Value Proposition, which will form part of all University of Southern Queensland First Nations advertising and attraction activities.

4.1.2 Workforce Planning

People Partners and the Senior Advisor, First Nations Workforce Strategy will work with all work areas across the University to build growth strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the University.

4.1.3 Identified Positions

An 'Identified position' refers to a position that may be filled by a person of a particular attribute, such as race. In the case of this Procedure, race includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld). For the purposes of an Identified position, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander means a person:

- is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person; and
- is accepted and recognised as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person within their community.

Under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld), there are three exemptions that can be considered for application of Identified Positions:

1. **Genuine occupational requirement exemption.** These positions require an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander to fulfill the role responsibilities because of the involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues pertaining to, and having direct interactions with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
2. **Equal opportunity (special) measure exemption.** These positions are positive actions for addressing disadvantages faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to ensure equal rights and opportunities as others in communities.
3. **Welfare measure exemption.** These actions could be developing employment or training initiatives to enhance conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander geographically because of high rates of severe disadvantage compared to others in the community.

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Further information and examples of these exemptions for applying for an Identified position can be found in the relevant knowledge article.

More information is provided in the relevant knowledge article or by contacting People Portfolio.

The position description for an Identified position must contain the rationale and legislative information to support compliance with the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld). The required wording can be found in the relevant knowledge article.

4.1.3.1 Attraction and Advertising

Identified positions should be advertised through usual recruitment channels as well as promoting the position in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific publications, and through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks.

The Senior Advisor (First Nations Workforce Strategy) will distribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees and can assist with other networks, including promotion to UniSQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and Alumni where appropriate.

4.1.3.2 Selection Panels

Identified positions must have at least one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representative as part of the Selection Panel. Preferably the representative is an Employee at the University but it may be appropriate for an external Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Non-Indigenous panel members are required to complete the UniSQ Understanding the Importance of First Nations Cultural Capability training.

It is appropriate for the Panel to ask applicants if there are any cultural considerations that should be made when constituting the Selection Panel.

4.1.3.3 Shortlisting

Panels are encouraged to consider Achievement Relative to Opportunity when reviewing applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Further information is available in the relevant knowledge article.

Note for Academic Roles, candidates must meet the required academic standards.

4.1.3.4 Interviews

Interviews for Identified positions must be structured in such a way to enable the collection of sufficient evidence to confirm that the applicant(s) selected have the required cultural knowledge, skills, experience, and motivation to carry out the requirements or duties of the role. The People Portfolio will support Selection Panels with the development of culturally appropriate

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interview questions upon request.

4.1.4 Confirmation of Heritage

Individuals who are recommended for appointment to Identified positions will be required to provide confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage prior to commencement.

Confirmation of Heritage may be provided in one of the following:

1. a certified copy of the applicant's Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Status that has been issued by an incorporated Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community Organisation and stamped with the Organisation's Common Seal; or

2. a written reference (on letterhead and signed) from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community Organisation stating that the applicant is, and identifies as, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and is accepted and recognised as such within their community.

In circumstances where an individual is unable to provide evidence from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Community Organisation as per 1 or 2 above, two Statutory Declarations confirming their heritage are required:

- a signed statutory declaration by the applicant and witnessed by a Justice of the Peace (JP) stating that the applicant is, and identifies as, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person; and

- a JP witnessed statutory declaration completed by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service Provider, confirming that the applicant is, and identifies as, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

4.1.5 Talent Pool and Pipeline

A First Nations Talent Pool is available to support the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are interested in working at the University can submit a CV to the 'UniSQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Talent Pool' through the link on the University's Jobs webpage. It is also open to current Employees seeking additional opportunities.

Hiring Managers in work areas are encouraged to contact the Senior Advisor, First Nations Workforce Strategy to review the Talent Pool for potential candidates for continuing, fixed term and casual employment opportunities.

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4.2 Employment Conditions and Benefits

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees have access to a range of conditions and benefits to facilitate a safe workplace and to support cultural engagement. These include:

4.2.1 Disclosure

Disclosure of an Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander person's cultural identity is the voluntary act of releasing personal information for a specific purpose. Disclosure allows a person to communicate openly and authentically in appropriate ways.

Employees can disclose that they identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person through the Human Resources Self Service system. An Employee may also choose to inform their supervisor and team members, however in some cases may choose for their identity to remain private.

An Employee's information will be used for the purpose of data analysis and development of programs beneficial to Employees, and to enable the University to provide tailored supports.

4.2.2 Cultural and Ceremonial Leave

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and ceremonial leave allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees time off from work for the purpose of fulfilling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural and Ceremonial Responsibilities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and ceremonial leave is non-cumulative and unused leave will not roll over from year to year.

Employees are entitled to 10 days' paid and 15 days' unpaid Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and ceremonial leave per year. Applications are to be made via the HR Self Service system, and are approved by the Supervisor.

Employees may elect to take annual leave in lieu of unpaid Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and ceremonial leave.

4.2.3 Substitution of Australia Day

Employees may substitute the annual Australia Day public holiday for an alternate day in the same year, subject to genuine operational requirements and agreement with their supervisor.

Employees who receive approval to work on the Australia Day public holiday at their request, are not entitled to the payment of overtime rates. Applications are to be made via the Service HUB public holiday substitution form, and are approved by the Supervisor.

4.2.4 Language Allowance

In recognition of the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, if an Employee who is proficient in these languages is required by the University to provide

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substantial teaching delivered in those languages, or when representing the University in the course of their employment if the use of those languages is required for extended communication purposes, they will be entitled to an annual language allowance of $3,000.00 per annum.

Language proficiency will be determined by confirmation from the relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community Elders.

An Employee who is required by the University to use their language should submit a Service HUB Allowance Claim, along with appropriate evidence of the nature of the request, for approval by their Supervisor.

4.2.5 Support Networks

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees have an established First Nations Employee Support Network.

This Network is Indigenous led with the focus of providing peer support relating to socio-economic factors that impact or influence employment retention for First Nations professional and academic staff Employees.

Supervisors are encouraged to support engagement and participation in the Network, subject to ensuring operational requirements are met.

4.2.6 Cultural Awareness and Competency Training

All Employees are required to undertake training to increase understanding of cultural sensitivity, safety, and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Additional training is provided for supervisors and team members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees.

The University also provides other focused development opportunities and cultural awareness and cultural competency training to increase the cultural knowledge and understanding of supervisors and Employees, particularly those who lead and/or regularly engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees, Students and communities. Further information can be obtained by contacting the People Portfolio.

4.2.7 Career planning, capability development, and support

The University encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees to actively engage in career planning and to develop the capabilities needed for career advancement. To support this, People Portfolio offers development, mentoring and support options specifically tailored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees.

4.2.8 Work allocation

The University supports and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees to

participate in approved University activities including professional development, diversity and inclusion, cultural and ceremonial or community engagement related initiatives.

Participation in these activities should be recorded as part of an Employee's work allocation. Employees must receive approval from their manager and Supervisor for their involvement in these activities (including the time commitments and level of involvement) prior to any participation. Managers and Supervisors are encouraged to discuss time allocation requirements with the Employee through performance planning and review, and work allocation discussions.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer
Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Employee Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	11/4/2025
Effective Date	11/4/2025
Review Date	15/4/2029
Relevant Legislation	*Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) *Human Rights Act 2019* Enterprise Agreement
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Marketing and Brand Policy
Related Procedures	Advertising Procedure

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Related forms, publications and websites	First Nations Identified Positions Knowledge Article Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO) Knowledge Article Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols First Nations Strategic Workforce Framework 2024-2025 Human Resources Self Service People Portfolio Website Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified positions
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Student A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled. University The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.
	Definitions that relate to this procedure only
Keywords	
Record No	13/342PL

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