Graduate Attributes Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') seeks to be Australia's most connected university, courageously making a difference in the Northern Territory, Australia and beyond. Through connections and relationships, CDU students can realise the benefits of learning, undertaking research and working together to grow our communities.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This policy outlines the University's Graduate Attributes, which inform curriculum design, delivery and assessment, extra-curricular activities, and students' critical self-reflection of their learning journey.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) The Graduate Attributes apply to students enrolled in higher education and vocational education and training (VET) courses at AQF Level 5 and above, inclusive of coursework and research. Graduate Attributes are aligned with, and should be fulfilled by, attainment of the course learning outcomes or competency requirements.

(4) Graduate Attributes do not replace professional attributes but are distinct in themselves. Professional attributes associated with professional bodies will be adhered to and aligned in the curriculum.

(5) Graduate attributes are fully realised within the entirety of degree programs and VET qualifications AQF Level 5 to 9.

Section 4 - Policy

Graduate attributes

(6) Graduate Attributes manifest in both physical and digital forms. They are steeped in deep discipline-specific knowledge that follows globally-acknowledged sustainability practices.

(7) Our students will be:

a. information literate;
b. imaginative and enduring innovators;
c. culturally responsive in their engagement with First Nations communities and issues;
d. impactful and influential leaders;
e. ethically and socially just; and
f. creative and courageous communicators.

Evidencing graduate attributes

Information literate

(8) Students are information literate when they can:

a. find, analyse, and critically evaluate arguments and use evidence from a full range of sources;
b. apply interdisciplinary knowledge to solve real world problems;
c. apply professional knowledge and skills in a workplace related to the discipline;
d. demonstrate a knowledge of research methodologies appropriate to their disciplines and use these as a tool to make evidence-based decisions;
e. access, analyse, evaluate, create and act using all forms of media communication (including newspapers, radio, television, websites, apps and social media); and
f. critically and ethically use generative artificial intelligence and related technologies to support information discovery, analysis, and knowledge creation, including evaluating outputs for accuracy, bias, and appropriate attribution.

Imaginative and enduring innovators

(9) Students are imaginative and enduring innovators when they can:

a. discover learning opportunities when seeking to find new solutions to old problems;
b. demonstrate thought leadership through the synthesis of emerging disciplinary trends and technology; and
c. generate creative works and perspectives across new and emerging fields.

Culturally responsive in their engagement with First Nations communities and issues

(10) Students are culturally responsive when they can:

a. privilege First Nations standpoints;
b. engage in issues associated with First Nations communities;
c. engage with new forms of First Nations knowledge sharing; and
d. demonstrate a respect for the values and knowledge of First Nations peoples through academic rigour within the discipline.

Impactful and influential leaders

(11) Students are impactful and influential leaders when they can:

a. independently manage and plan their careers, identifying and pursuing diverse and evolving pathways within and beyond their discipline;
b. seek and apply global knowledge and perspectives into their industry;
c. develop and demonstrate professional characteristics that reflect authentic leadership, integrating their personal values with their professional identity; and
d. engage transparently and respectfully in culturally and/or linguistically diverse contexts to contribute to meaningful, sustainable, and contextually appropriate change.

Ethically and socially just

(12) Students are ethically and socially just when they can:

a. sustain the principles of academic integrity in their professional practice;
b. consistently apply the principles of digital equity;
c. promote and advocate for social and civic responsibilities, human rights, and sustainability associated with their industry;
d. be familiar with and practice where possible the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; and
e. critically evaluate and apply generative artificial intelligence in ways that uphold ethical standards, minimise bias, and promote equity and social justice.

Creative and courageous communicators

(13) Students are creative and courageous communicators when they can:

a. communicate clearly with others with courage, curiosity, and discernment; and
b. employ sophisticated electronic and creative media use in workplace communications and collaborations, with transparency and critical awareness.

(14) Teaching and Learning Connect provides information on how units and courses may align their learning outcomes to the Graduate Attributes.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(15) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(16) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(17) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	26th June 2026
Review Date	26th June 2028
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	17th June 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Lisa Papatraianou Deputy Provost
Implementation Officer	Laura Fairbrother Associate Director Curriculum Assessment and Teaching Development
Enquiries Contact	Laura Fairbrother Associate Director Curriculum Assessment and Teaching Development --- Teaching and Learning Connect

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"First Nations people" - Means a person who is an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, who identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and who is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in the community where they live or have lived.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.