First Nations Workforce Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') honours the knowledges and cultures of Australian First Nations peoples ('First Nations peoples,') and recognises and celebrates First Nations history, heritage, uniqueness, and diversity. The University is committed to increasing participation, employment and engagement of Australian First Nations people in the University community and to being the most recognised university for Australian First Nations training, education, and research.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This policy outlines the principles to support the appointment, engagement, development and retention of First Nations peoples at the University.

(3) This policy should be read in conjunction with the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 (the Agreement), CDU Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026 and the Australian First Nations Peoples Policy.

(4) The Recruitment and Selection Policy provides information on First Nations Priority Recruitment activities and identified First Nations positions.

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This policy applies to all employees and members of the University community.

Section 4 - Policy

(6) The University is committed to being the employer of choice for First Nations people and will work to attract, recruit, engage, develop and retain First Nations people at all levels to appropriately represent the First Nations population in the Northern Territory.

(7) The University is committed to embedding First Nations culture, perspectives and knowledge and to developing employment and engagement strategies and programs that support the career paths of First Nations people.

(8) The First Nations Workforce Plan reflects the CDU Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026; and related University First Nations policies, procedures and initiatives underpinned by the following principles:

a. respect for the cultural/social and religious practices of First Nations Australians;
b. recognition of and respect for First Nations ceremonial activities, cultural practices and identity;
c. recognition of First Nations knowledge as a significant contributor to other bodies of knowledge;
d. recognition of the scholarship First Nations employees bring to the University; and
e. recognition and protection of First Nations intellectual property and knowledges.

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(9) The University will:

a. increase the number of First Nations people appointed at all levels in the University across professional, academic and research employee cohorts;
b. ensure relevant policies and practices support the achievement of relevant employment targets as established in the Agreement and successor agreements;
c. develop targeted attraction and employment initiatives to support the personal and professional development of First Nations employees at all levels throughout the University;
d. provide increased opportunities for personal and professional development of First Nations people, both internal and external to the University and through the leveraging of new and existing strategic partnerships;
e. provide increased opportunities for developing leadership capability for all First Nations professional and academic employees;
f. ensure work environments are culturally and psychologically safe and foster respect for, collaboration with, and empowerment of, First Nations employees;
g. ensure all recruitment practices are culturally appropriate, psychologically safe, flexible, accessible and welcoming to increase First Nations employment across all positions and at all levels in the University; and
h. embed First Nations perspectives and knowledges into University core business to guide strategies that support the career paths of First Nations employees both within and external to the University.

(10) In accordance with the Agreement, the First Nations Workforce Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will provide oversight of the First Nations Workforce Plan.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(11) 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.

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

(13) All employees 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	19th December 2025
Review Date	19th December 2028
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
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Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Ruth Wallace Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership
Implementation Officer	Ruth Wallace Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership
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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.

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