First Nations Peoples Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') honours First Nations knowledges and cultures and recognises and celebrates First Nations history, heritage, uniqueness, and diversity. The University is based in the Northern Territory and is committed to prioritising and advancing the needs of the Northern Territory, which boasts a population comprised of over 30 per cent First Nations peoples.

(2) The University is committed to becoming the most recognised university for Australian First Nations training, education, and research.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework to manage University activities that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities, particularly in the Northern Territory.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all staff of the University and all other members of the University community including students, contractors, and adjuncts.

Section 4 - Policy

(5) CDU will:

a. honour Australian First Nations knowledges and cultures;
b. undertake all activities that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities in accordance with legal requirements.
c. maintain a public commitment to First Nations engagement, participation, and success through symbolic, documentary, and strategic actions; and
d. undertake research with First Nations peoples in a deep and genuine partnership that is ethically sound and in accordance with all appropriate legislation and codes;
e. enhance First Nations student participation, retention and success in Higher Education and Vocational Education Training;
f. develop pathway programs for First Nations peoples in professional areas in which they are underrepresented;
g. develop opportunities for the recruitment, retention, and professional development of First Nations staff;
h. respect the environment of First Nations lands, including saltwater, desert and tropical regions;
i. promote training, learning, research and teaching in Australian Indigenous knowledge systems;
j. enhance delivery and expand training and education opportunities in regional, rural, and remote communities;
k. support the repatriation of sacred/secret objects;

l. support the preservation of First Nations' languages and knowledges;
m. respect First Nations peoples' traditions, lands, country and environment, and their tangible and intangible heritage, languages, and knowledges;
n. consult and engage with relevant members and Elders of First Nations communities about University programs, plans, strategies, and policies that impact upon First Nations peoples and communities;
o. build a culture of reconciliation;
p. support for the process of truth-telling;

(6) Responsibility for the achievement of this Policy rests with the Council, the Vice-Chancellor, and Senior Executives. All University staff are expected to understand, consider, and enact the principles outlined in the Policy.

Specific Responsibilities and Authorities

(7) The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for shaping an organisational culture and environment conducive to Indigenous engagement,inclusion, and celebration of First Nations peoples' and communities' knowledges and cultures, across all levels of the University.

(8) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership (DVCFNL) is responsible for developing, reviewing, and implementing policies, procedures and guidelines that specify the University's requirements on matters relating to First Nations peoples, particularly regarding access to University programs and activities; and the fostering and promotion of understanding, sensitivity, and respect for First Nations cultural heritage amongst students and staff.

(9) The Provost (Provost), in conjunction with the DVCFNL, is responsible for:

a. ensuring there are teaching activities that relate to First Nations issues, interests, and priorities; and
b. monitoring such activities are carried out, as appropriate, in compliance with relevant University policies and procedures.

(10) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection (DVCRCC) in conjunction with the DVCFNL, is responsible for:,

a. fostering research activities that relate to First Nations issues, interests, and priorities; and
b. monitoring such activities are carried out, as appropriate, in compliance with relevant University policies and procedures.

(11) Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans and Directors are responsible for ensuring the First Nations Peoples Policy is implemented and complied with within their relevant portfolios.

(12) Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the First Nations Peoples Policy in Faculty and team-level activities by all staff of the Faculty (including adjuncts and casual staff) and reporting on compliance to the DVCFNL and members of the Senior Executive as appropriate. Senior Managers are also responsible for negotiating with the First Nations Leadership office to ensure that appropriate levels and types of assistance are deployed to ensure that First Nations students of the University successfully complete their studies.

Section 5 - Definitions

(13) Definitions of key terms can be found in the CDU Glossary.

(14) In the context of this document:

a. Australian First Nations peoples 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;

b. Senior Executive means a staff member of the University holding the position of Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, or Vice-President Corporate and Chief Financial Officer, or equivalent;
c. Senior Manager means a staff member of the University holding the position of Director or Dean or equivalent; and
d. Staff member means anyone employed by the University and includes all continuing, fixed-term, casual, adjunct, or honorary staff, or those holding University offices or who are a member of a University committee/Council.

Section 6 - Non-Compliance

(15) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct – Staff 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 2022 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(16) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Code of Conduct – Staff and Code of Conduct - 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	Historic
Effective Date	15th January 2022
Review Date	1st December 2024
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	1st December 2021
Expiry Date	25th June 2025
Responsible Executive	Ruth Wallace Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership
Implementation Officer	Reuben Bolt Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership
Enquiries Contact	Ruth Wallace Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Senior Executive" - An employee of the University holding the position of Vice-Chancellor and President, Vice-President, Assistant Vice- Chancellor, Provost, University Secretary, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer or equivalent.

"Faculty" - An organisational and academic unit in the University that delivers courses and conducts research.