



Indigenous Education
and Research Centre

VICE CHANCELLOR'S INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Creating a Brighter Future for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Peoples





1. Establishment

- 1.1. James Cook University acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people, educators and innovators of this country, and that we will collectively seek to build a future that is based on truth-telling, mutual understanding, hope, empowerment, and self-determination.
- 1.2. To ensure JCU's Indigenous staff and students have a voice on policy implementation and decisions that impact them, there shall be an Indigenous Advisory Committee ('the Committee') reporting to the Vice Chancellor.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of the Committee is to provide strategic advice to the Vice Chancellor addressing the unique needs and issues of JCU's Indigenous staff and students and the broader community where relevant. Its primary purpose is to inform the University's decision-making process and initiatives, concentrating on overarching strategic considerations rather than operational matters.

3. Functions, Duties and Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Committee shall advise the Vice Chancellor on:
 - 3.1.1. Indigenous education, employment, cultural and/or Indigenous community matters that may assist the University in achieving its Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives relating to Indigenous self-determination and empowerment;
 - 3.1.2. the development, amendment or disestablishment of University policies and procedures that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students;
 - 3.1.3. University responses to government higher education policy developments on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander priorities;
 - 3.1.4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student matters including whole of University strategies for curriculum, equitable access, participation, retention and success;
 - 3.1.5. development of the University's Indigenous cultural capabilities, including the strategic direction and frameworks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and research;
 - 3.1.6. the implementation and outcomes of strategies to increase the employment and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in academic and non-academic roles at the University, in particular the Indigenous Workforce Strategy;
 - 3.1.7. the views, interests and/or identified issues that affect Indigenous staff and students and, where relevant, the communities the University serves;
 - 3.1.8. the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to self-determination in relation to their lands and waters, knowledge, culture, language and history; and
 - 3.1.9. other such matters as may be referred to it by the Vice Chancellor or other committee of the University including Council or Academic Board.

4. Membership

- 4.1. The Committee comprises the following members:
 - Deputy Vice Chancellor, Indigenous Education and Strategy (Chair)

- Head, Indigenous Teaching Program
- Head, Indigenous Research
- Head, Indigenous Student Services
- Indigenous student (undergraduate)
- Indigenous student (postgraduate/HDR)
- Two Indigenous community members

5. Secretariat

5.1. The Secretariat shall provide the resources necessary for the performance of the Committee.

6. Attendance by Others at Meetings

6.1. When a member is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, that member may nominate a person to attend on their behalf to represent that member and their organisational responsibilities.

6.2. The Chair may invite other staff members and persons external to the University, as required for the purposes of the Committee, to attend meetings as advisors. **Convening a Meeting**

7.1. The Committee shall meet as often as necessary, at least four times per year, in order to perform its functions. Meetings shall be convened by either the Chair or the Secretary of the Committee.

7.2. The Secretariat shall cause to be sent in reasonable time to all members of the Committee a notice of meeting. Proposals for agenda items from Committee members are to be submitted to the Secretariat for consideration for inclusion on the agenda. The Chair shall determine the agenda and preside at meetings.

7.3. The Committee will have a Deputy Chair elected by the Committee. Whenever a vacancy occurs in the office, the Committee will elect a Deputy Chair. If the Deputy Chair is absent also, the members present shall elect one of their number to preside.

8. Conduct of Meeting

8.1. The Chair will preside at all meetings of the Committee.

8.2. In general terms, the Chair will seek consensus on matters before the Committee that require a decision. A consensus outcome will be endorsed by the Chair as a decision of the Committee. Where consensus on a matter cannot be reached, the Chair will decide on the matter, informed by the Committee's deliberations.

8.3. A quorum exists at a meeting of the Committee if a simple majority of its members are present.

8.4. Typically, where guidance is sought from the Committee, it will be synthesised from the collective input of its members, encapsulating the collaborative discussion rather than isolating individual responses.

9. Managing culturally sensitive matters

9.1. Where an issue is identified as culturally sensitive, the Committee is able to proceed according to cultural practices (e.g., with only Indigenous people present at the time of discussion). Non-Indigenous people on these occasions will be required to leave the meeting.

9.2. Any decisions arising from discussions held during this time will be relayed to other attendees when they return to the meeting.

10. Reporting Obligations

10.1. As soon as practicable after each meeting, the Secretary will make available minutes of the meeting that have been confirmed by the Chair. The minutes will include:

10.1.1. advice, with recommendations as relevant; and

10.1.2. confirmation of action taken in respect of any matter for which the Vice Chancellor has delegated to be actioned.

11. Executive Actions/Circulating Resolutions

11.1. Where circumstances do not allow a matter, relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the Committee, to be put to a scheduled meeting, and consultation with the Committee is required, the Chair will cause the matter to be considered by circulating resolution. The principles and procedures adopted by University Council for managing business by circulating resolution apply.

12. Annual Review of Terms of Reference

12.1. These Terms of Reference are to be reviewed annually.