



# POLICY

**Policy Title:** Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Country

**Policy Owner:** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous)

**Keywords:** Aboriginal  
Torres Strait Islander  
Welcome to Country  
Acknowledgement of Country

**Policy Code:** PL101 [CI005]

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## 1. INTENT

ECU is committed to reconciliation and recognises and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures and histories.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

ECU students, staff and Council members.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

| TERM                       | DEFINITION  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Aboriginal                 | People who are descended from, and identify as, Aboriginal and are accepted as such by the Aboriginal community with which they associate.    |
| Acknowledgement of Country | The formal recognition of traditional custodians of the land at the commencement of a significant ECU event by a senior representative of the |

| TERM                   | DEFINITION  |
|------------------------|---|
|                        | University who is not an Aboriginal person.   |
| Nyoongar               | <p>The traditional custodians of the land in the South West of Western Australia, from Geraldton to Esperance.</p> <p>The spelling adopted by ECU is that used by the Whadjuk people (the Perth Metropolitan Clan). Alternatives are Noongar and Nyungar.</p>                                 |
| Significant ECU events | Formal events or gatherings, including conferences, meetings and celebrations hosted by ECU, at which large numbers of students, staff and/ or members of the community are present.  |
| Torres Strait Islander | People who are descended from, and identify as, Torres Strait Islander and are accepted as such by the Torres Strait Islander community with which they associate.  |
| Welcome to Country     | <p>The formal ceremony at the commencement of a significant ECU event to welcome guests and recognise the traditional custodians of the land.</p> <p>The ceremony is performed by an Aboriginal Elder or other recognised Aboriginal person from that area and with authority to Welcome.</p> |

#### 4. POLICY CONTENT

- 4.1. This policy supports ECU's commitment to reconciliation and recognises and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures and histories. The policy sets down the protocol for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at significant ECU events, as a symbolic gesture of healing, reflecting the desire to learn and work together in harmony.
- 4.2. At the commencement of all significant ECU events, the traditional custodians of the land must be recognised. Other occasions and media for recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are: at the commencement of the display of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags; at academic sessions at the commencement of each semester; and in the reproduction of *ECU's commitment to reconciliation* in official documents and webpages.

#### Recognition at the commencement of significant ECU events

- 4.3. A *Welcome to Country* or an *Acknowledgement of Country* must take place at the commencement of all significant ECU events. These ceremonies are conducted in accordance with the *Guidelines for Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*.

#### Display of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags

- 4.4. The flying of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags is a reminder of ECU's commitment to reconciliation and to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The flags are flown in accordance with the requirements of the *ECU Flags Policy*.

## Recognition at the commencement of semester

- 4.5. Academic staff conducting lectures, seminars and tutorials are encouraged to cite *ECU's commitment to reconciliation* and/ or acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land at the commencement of each semester. Further advice is provided in the *Guidelines for Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*.

## Recognition in official documents and webpages

- 4.6. Important ECU publications, including official documents (correspondence and reports) and webpages will cite *ECU's commitment to reconciliation* and/ or acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the land. Information on the University's Reconciliation Action Plan may also be provided where appropriate. Further advice is provided in the *Guidelines for Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*.

## Suitable wording for recognition

- 4.7. Suitable forms of words for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and country at commencement of semester and in ECU publications are shown below:

*ECU's commitment to reconciliation: Edith Cowan University is committed to reconciliation and recognises and respects the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, cultures and histories.*

*ECU acknowledges and respects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the traditional custodians of the land.*

*ECU acknowledges and respects its continuing association with the Nyoongar people, the traditional custodians of the land upon which its campuses stand.*

## 5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following

### *Policy Owner*

The Policy Owner, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous) has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

### *ECU students, staff and Council members*

ECU students, staff and Council members are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- 6.1 The policy is supported by the following Guidelines:

- *Guidelines for Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Country*

- 6.2 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- *ECU Flags Policy*

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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|------------------------|--|
| Policy Owner           | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous)                    |
|                        |  |
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## 8. APPROVAL HISTORY

|                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Policy Approved by:         | Vice-Chancellor          |
| Date Policy First Approved: | 22/09/2008               |
| Date last modified:         | 12/12/2014               |
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