

Indigenous Australian Content in Courses and Subjects Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The ethos of Charles Sturt University (the University) is described by the Wiradyuri phrase 'yindyamarra winhanganha' – the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in.
- (2) This policy is intended to ensure that graduates embrace this ethos in their personal and professional lives by equipping them with:
- a. understanding of their cultural and historical positioning and the implications for knowledge and practice
 - b. knowledge, skills and attributes of Indigenous cultural competence and responsiveness, and
 - c. professional skills in their discipline based on high-quality, culturally responsive professional education.
- (3) The University's First Nations Strategy defines the University's approach to Indigenous education, which is founded on principles of cultural competence, social justice and reconciliation. This policy is intended to effect that strategy.
- (4) The [Course and Subject Procedure - Coursework Design](#) defines the University's graduate attributes, which include Indigenous cultural competency. This policy states requirements to ensure this aspect of curriculum design and delivery.
- (5) The University recognises the right and the authority of Indigenous Australians to oversee Indigenous Australian content in its courses and subjects.
- (6) Accordingly, this policy:
- a. defines requirements for Indigenous Australian content in courses and subjects, and
 - b. authorises the Indigenous Board of Studies to assure the quality and integrity of this content.
- (7) This policy is closely related to, and should be read alongside:
- a. the [Course and Subject Policy](#) and related procedures, and
 - b. the [terms of reference](#) for the Indigenous Board of Studies.

Scope

- (8) This policy applies to:
- a. all courses and subjects offered by the University, including courses delivered by partners on behalf of the University
 - b. all staff involved in the design, development, approval, delivery and review of courses and subjects, and
 - c. in particular, courses and subjects with Indigenous Australian content and the staff who design, develop, approve, deliver and review them.

References

(9) Where a supporting document is referenced, it will be listed on the associated information tab.

Section 2 - Policy

Course and subject design

(10) Undergraduate courses of more than 64 points volume of learning and master by coursework courses will include Indigenous Australian content and must be aligned with the [Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework](#). In particular, they must:

- a. include a stand-alone Indigenous Australian Studies subject in the first full-time year of the course, or
- b. where that is not possible, include a module of Indigenous Australian content of at least four points volume (for example, half the weighting of an eight-point standard subject) as early in the course as possible.

Either of these components will be a foundation for further Indigenous Australian content integrated throughout the course.

(11) They must also:

- a. include integrated discipline-specific Australian Indigenous studies content consistent with the developmental sequence in the [Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework](#), in subjects or modules in the middle and later years of the course, or embedded as assessable learning in discipline/professional studies subjects, and
- b. use a range of culturally appropriate and responsive teaching, learning and assessment methods across the course, including authentic case studies, field trips and activities, and Indigenous scholarship and expertise that develop student capabilities in line with the [Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework](#).

(12) Coursework courses of less than 64 points volume must include discipline-specific Australian Indigenous studies content consistent with the developmental sequence in the [Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework](#), which adheres to Clause 11(b) for endorsement by the Indigenous Board of Studies.

(13) Micro-credential courses are exempt from the above requirements.

(14) Courses offerings outside of Australia may apply for an exemption from the above requirements with the Indigenous Board of Studies in the course approval process.

(15) Indigenous Australian studies (other than discipline-specific Australian studies) may be delivered through stand-alone subjects, as modules within hybrid Indigenous Australian subjects, or as modules within subjects that do not have any other Indigenous Australian content.

(16) Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies may be delivered through stand-alone subjects, as modules within subjects, or by assessment of relevant Indigenous Australian content throughout the course.

Indigenous Australian subject content

(17) For a subject to be classified as an Indigenous Australian studies subject, discipline-specific or hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subject, every topic and assessment task of the subject must have or assess Indigenous Australian content.

(18) Any module of Indigenous Australian studies (that is not discipline-specific) within a hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subject or other subject not classified as Indigenous Australian studies, will:

- a. be at least half the duration of the subject, and
- b. allocate an assessment weighting of 50% to the Indigenous Australian studies module and 50% assessment weighting to the discipline-specific module.

Section 3 - Procedure

Responsibilities

(19) The [terms of reference](#) of the Indigenous Board of Studies state the functions of the board, which include:

- a. advising on Indigenous Australian content in courses and subjects
- b. endorsing proposed changes to subjects, modules, learning activities, assessment tasks, assessment processes, benchmarking and resources for subjects that have Indigenous Australian content
- c. monitoring subject outlines of Indigenous Australian studies subjects and subjects that include modules of Indigenous Australian content
- d. endorsing courses as compliant with the Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework, and
- e. approving applications for subjects to be classified as Indigenous Australian studies subjects, hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects or discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies subjects.

(20) Faculties will:

- a. ensure that courses are designed to develop students' Indigenous cultural competence by incorporating Indigenous Australian content across the course
- b. ensure that Indigenous Australian content is endorsed or approved, as relevant, by the Indigenous Board of Studies
- c. collaborate with the School of Indigenous Australian Studies to develop and deliver hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects
- d. ensure that academic staff who design and/or deliver modules of discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies complete required Indigenous cultural competency professional development, and
- e. support provision of more in-depth cultural competency professional development contextualised for disciplines.

(21) The School of Indigenous Australian Studies will:

- a. provide advice and support to course and subject designers and course and subject teams in the design, approval and delivery of courses and subjects with Indigenous Australian content
- b. teach all Indigenous Australian studies subjects and modules, other than discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies modules, and
- c. collaborate with faculties to design and deliver hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects.

(22) The Division of Learning and Teaching, and in particular its Gulaay team, will:

- a. provide advice, training and cultural immersion experiences to course and subject designers and course and subject teams to support them in designing and delivering courses and subjects with Indigenous Australian content, and
- b. ensure that all continuing and contract academic staff undertake the First Nations Cultural Awareness Journey online induction module.

Teaching responsibilities

(23) The School of Indigenous Australian Studies will teach:

- a. all modules of Indigenous Australian studies subjects, and
- b. all modules within hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects, other than the discipline-specific modules.

(24) The relevant school or faculty may teach discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies subjects, or discipline-specific modules within hybrid Indigenous Australian studies or may collaborate in teaching them with the School of Indigenous Australian Studies.

(25) The [Course and Subject Procedure - Delivery Management](#) states requirements for service teaching, whereby one academic unit teaches some or all of a subject in a course managed by another academic unit.

(26) Exceptions to teaching responsibilities (e.g., for Institutional Partners) may be granted by the Indigenous Board of Studies as required.

Professional development

(27) Gulaay in the Division of Learning and Teaching:

- a. provides training, resources, learning materials and cultural immersion experiences to help staff comply with the requirements of this policy, and
- b. curates the Indigenous Education Strategy Collection in the University's Digital Object Management collection and the graduate learning outcomes support website.

(28) Faculties are strongly recommended to arrange in-depth professional development on:

- a. Indigenous cultural competence from Gulaay, and
- b. design and delivery of Indigenous Australian content, contextualised for their disciplines, in collaboration with the Chair, Indigenous Board of Studies.

(29) This in-depth development is particularly needed for staff who deliver discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies subjects and modules, and discipline-specific content in hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects: see the conditions for Indigenous Board of Studies approval in the section on endorsement and approval of Indigenous Australian content below.

(30) Faculties will ensure that casual staff who teach in subjects with Indigenous Australian content have completed the First Nations Cultural Awareness Journey online induction module.

Development of Indigenous Australian content

(31) Subject designers will consult and seek support from the Indigenous Board of Studies if the subject will have any Indigenous Australian content.

(32) The Division of Learning and Teaching and the School of Indigenous Australian Studies support the design, approval and implementation of subjects and modules of Indigenous Australian Studies including discipline-specific content.

(33) Course Directors and subject conveners are advised to engage early and often with the Chair of the Indigenous Board of Studies and the Academic Lead (First Nations Curriculum) for:

- a. advice at the start of course and/or subject design

- b. involvement of the School of Indigenous Australian Studies and Division of Learning and Teaching in course/subject design teams as needed, and
- c. support in developing the submission to the Indigenous Board of Studies.

Endorsement and approval of Indigenous Australian content

(34) The [Course and Subject Policy](#) states the University's authorities to approve different types of course and subject proposal.

(35) Where a course is of a type required to be aligned with the [Indigenous Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework](#) and the First Nations Cultural Safety Graduate Learning Outcome, the Indigenous Board of Studies must have endorsed the course as compliant before the Faculty Courses and Subject Review Panel can endorse the course proposal.

(36) The Indigenous Board of Studies must:

- a. approve the classification of a subject as either an Indigenous Australian studies subject, a discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies subject, or a hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subject, and
- b. endorse proposals for integration of Indigenous Australian content across a course

before the Faculty Courses and Subject Review Panel can endorse the subject proposal.

(37) For the Indigenous Board of Studies (Board) to approve a subject's classification as Indigenous Australian studies, discipline-specific or hybrid Indigenous Australian studies, the Board must be satisfied of the following four points:

- a. The subject abstract describes the Indigenous Australian content.
- b. The learning outcomes are aligned with the graduate outcome of Indigenous cultural competence and with the Indigenous Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework.
- c. The teaching, learning, assessment and resources are culturally appropriate and respectful.
- d. The staff who will teach the content have had the necessary level of professional development in Indigenous cultural competence to deliver this type of content.

(38) Submissions of course or subject proposals to the Board must be in the relevant template on the Office of Governance and Corporate Administration website.

(39) The Board may endorse proposals on the condition that the faculty or school makes changes to the proposal. This conditional endorsement will lapse if the faculty or school does not respond within six weeks of being notified of the Board's conditions for approval.

(40) The Board will notify the executive dean of the proposing faculty and University Courses Committee of its actions and decisions.

(41) The Office of Governance and Corporate Administration will keep a register on its website, and update this within two weeks after each meeting of the Board, recording:

- a. content endorsed
- b. subjects classified as Indigenous Australian studies subjects, discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies subjects or hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subjects, and
- c. courses approved as compliant with Indigenous Australian content requirements.

Approval of changes to Indigenous Australian content

(42) Before a change is approved to a subject classified as an Indigenous Australian studies subject, a discipline-

specific Indigenous Australian Studies subject or a hybrid Indigenous Australian studies subject:

- a. the faculty must have submitted the proposed change to the Indigenous Board of Studies, and
- b. the Board must have approved the subject to retain its classification after the change.

Recording Indigenous Australian content

(43) The following data on Indigenous Australian content of courses and subjects will be recorded in the Curriculum Design, Accreditation and Publication system:

- a. Course-level data:
 - i. whether the course is required to comply with the Indigenous Cultural Competency Pedagogical Framework (ICCPF), and
 - ii. Indigenous Board of Studies endorsement of the course as ICCPF-compliant, listing the subjects for the course of which the board has approved the classification as Indigenous Australian Studies, discipline-specific or hybrid Indigenous Australian studies, and the date of this endorsement, and
- b. Subject-level data:
 - i. classification of the subject as Indigenous Australian content, discipline-specific Indigenous Australian content, or hybrid Indigenous Australian content (if the subject is so classified), and
 - ii. date of Indigenous Board of Studies approval of this classification, or
 - iii. for other subjects, whether the subject contains Indigenous Australian content.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(44) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(45) For the purposes of this policy, the following terms have the definition stated:

- a. Course director – includes titled ‘Course Director’ and roles titled “Course Coordinator’ where this title is still used.
- b. Coursework course – as defined in the policy library glossary.
- c. Discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies – any area of inquiry within Indigenous Australian studies that is specifically related to the theoretical and practical knowledges required for a professional discipline, such as Indigenous clinical health and mental health, Indigenous policing, Indigenous education curriculum in schools and other educational settings, and Indigenous ecological knowledges.
- d. First Nations – is a collective term that acknowledges the sovereignties of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. Indigenous Australian Studies is a term that names an academic discipline.

Notes: Indigenous Australians/First Nations Australians use a wide range of terminology that is considered acceptable to name the populations as a whole.

In curriculum design, academics and students are exposed to a range of terminology through the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. When developing curriculum, consider the content of the subject and the disciplines within which the content is integrated. Understand the diverse use of terminology and establish a nuanced, context-responsive approach.

While the best approach is to use the names of each First Nation group, this is not always representative of

the content in a subject or course. This policy encourages the use of 'Indigenous Australian' or 'First Nations' interchangeably when discrete, self-naming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups is not contextually relevant.

- a. Hybrid Indigenous Australian studies – a combination, in a subject, of Indigenous Australian studies and discipline-specific Indigenous Australian Studies.
- b. Indigenous Australian content – comprises Indigenous Australian studies, discipline-specific Indigenous Australian studies and hybrid Indigenous Australian studies.
- c. Indigenous Australian studies – the broad area of inquiry related to Indigenous Australian knowledges, cultures and heritages, and histories and issues that affect or are of concern to Indigenous peoples and communities today. Where this term is used without the adjectives 'discipline-specific' or 'hybrid', it means subjects, or modules within subjects, taught by the School of Indigenous Australian Studies. These studies can be foundational, intermediate, and/or capstones and equip Indigenous and non-Indigenous students with critical skills to deconstruct their standpoints in relation to Australian culture and institutions, to support Indigenous Australian self-determination.
- d. Module – a component within a subject which includes topics, learning activities on these topics and at least one assessment task on these; this term is also used for a professional development offering for staff.
- e. Point – a measure of volume of learning, equivalent to between 17.5 and 20 learning hours.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	5th June 2025
Review Date	11th September 2029
Approval Authority	University Secretary
Approval Date	5th June 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Unit Head	Christopher Orchard Chair, Indigenous Board of Studies
Author	Christopher Orchard Head, School of Indigenous Australian Studies
Enquiries Contact	Christopher Orchard Chair, Indigenous Board of Studies

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Point" - A measure of volume of learning, equivalent to between 17.5 and 20 learning hours.