

Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity Policy

Section 1 - Overview and Scope

(1) The University of New England (UNE) strives to provide an environment that respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, and culture. Through the Indigenous Strategy, UNE is committed to creating meaningful opportunities for people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity, status or heritage.

(2) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity is unique and sacred. People applying for UNE opportunities identified for Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons are required to establish their Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity, status, or heritage.

(3) This Policy applies to all individuals seeking to establish their Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity, status, or heritage within UNE, and to all UNE Representatives involved in processes related to confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity.

(4) Within this Policy:

- a. Part A outlines the requirements for confirmation
- b. Part B outlines the process for confirmation
- c. Part C outlines the appeal process for unsuccessful applications

Part A - Requirements for confirmation

(5) UNE adopts the working criteria to establish Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity. Individuals seeking to establish their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity must provide [evidence](#) that they:

- a. are of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; and
- b. identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person; and
- c. are accepted as such by the community in which they live or have lived.

(6) UNE Representatives must ensure when advertising or promoting relevant positions or programs the requirement for confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity is included in promotional materials.

(7) Requests for confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity must only be made by the relevant UNE Representative, in the context of the specific function or role in which Confirmation of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity is required, for example the Chair of a selection panel, or relevant committee.

(8) All requests for confirmation of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity must be made to the applicant in writing, setting out:

- a. the context in which confirmation is needed;
- b. the form in which Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity is required;

- c. the process by which the applicant is to submit the required information;
- d. contact details for organisations that can assist applicants to obtain Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity, and access to culturally sensitive counselling services; and
- e. the reasonable timeframe by which the applicant is to submit documentation.

(9) Applicants for a specified opportunity who have already provided UNE with Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity are not required to make an application for confirmation on multiple occasions. The applicant should note the date of previous Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity on their application.

Part B - Process for confirmation

(10) Applicants are required to provide [evidence](#) as outlines in Table 1, using the [checklist](#).

Table 1

Criteria	Evidence	Not accepted
Applicant is of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> applicant's birth records and evidence of an immediate family member's confirmation of Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander status. Immediate family members includes anyone of shared genealogical descent in relation to the applicant (excludes relative by associate or marriage); a letter signed by an authorised member of an incorporated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation, who has the authority to administer confirmation of Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity, status, or heritage on the organisation's letterhead; documentary evidence from public sources such as government records, newspapers, court proceedings, and/ or public documents that identify a family member and establishes Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander identity in writing. 	ABSTUDY documentation will not be accepted as evidence of confirmation. Any letter signed by an authorised member of an incorporated Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisation cannot be an immediate family member of the applicant.
Applicant identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-identification as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. The applicant should identify themselves as such on application and/ or enrolment forms as applicable. 	
Applicant is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they live or have lived	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a letter signed by a prominent community member or an authorised member of an Aboriginal Land Council or incorporated Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation on the organisation's letterhead. 	

(11) The application and evidence will be reviewed by the requesting UNE Representative (Clause 7), or delegate, using the Confirmation of Aboriginality and/or Torres Strait Islander Checklist. The results of the review will be ratified by a Panel as established in Clause (12).

(12) A Review Panel is constituted by the Director Oorala Aboriginal Centre where Confirmation of Aboriginality and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity is an inherent requirement for UNE opportunities.

(13) The Review Panel membership is as follows (members can be substituted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor if required when members are unavailable):

- a. Team Leader Oorala, or Representative nominated by the Team Leader
- b. People and Culture Aboriginal Employment Consultant

- c. UNE Elder in Residence or Elder from the community.

(14) The Review Panel may

- a. request additional information from the applicant in order to reach a decision;
- b. conduct a review of evidence provided to ensure contact details and letters of support are correct and legitimate.

Part C - Appeals for unsuccessful application for confirmation

(15) Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome in writing by the Director of Oorala, who will provide guidance on evidence requirements, and advised of opportunities to address any issues.

(16) The Director of Oorala will advise the unsuccessful applicant that they may appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) if the unsuccessful applicant believes that the process and/or application of this Policy has not been correctly followed.

(17) Appeals on the process and application of policy may be forwarded to the DVC by email (dvc@une.edu.au), and must be submitted within ten (10) days of the applicant being advised that their application was unsuccessful.

(18) The DVC will review the appeal and provide the appellant with a written outcome, stating the reasons for their decision, within 20 working days of receiving the appeal. Where the appeal is upheld, the DVC will notify the relevant UNE representatives who will note the applicant has the relevant Confirmation of Aboriginality and/ or Torres Strait Islander Identity, and take the necessary administrative process to record the Confirmation.

Section 2 - Authority and Compliance

(19) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, consistent with the [Vice-Chancellor Functions Rule](#), makes this Policy.

(20) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, as Policy Steward, may make associated documents that support the implementation and operation of, and compliance with, this Policy.

(21) This Policy operates from the Effective Date. Previous rules and procedures relating to the confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date.

(22) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to this Policy where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of this Policy would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must:

- a. be documented in writing;
- b. state the reason for the exception; and
- c. be recorded in the relevant Records Management System (RMS).

(23) UNE will maintain records of all requests for Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity and any documentation submitted to meet this requirement, in an appropriate Records Management System (RMS).

(24) Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity documents will be treated as confidential and held by the University under current processes for the storage of identity documents.

(25) UNE Representatives responsible for managing application processes will ensure the University's digital records

are updated to reflect the applicant's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identity.

(26) As the working definition requires Indigenous Australians to publicly identify it is assumed that individuals applying for Indigenous-specific opportunities consent to having their heritage recorded in University statistics.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Applicant for specified UNE opportunities	Comply with this Policy Provide documentation as set out in this Policy
UNE Representatives	Comply with this Policy
Director Oorala Aboriginal Centre	Convene Review Panel Advise unsuccessful applicants of the process for appeal
Review Panel	Reviews applications
Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Implementation, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this Policy Reviewing appeals for unsuccessful applicants, and advising appellants of the decision Making associated documents to support the implementation and operation of, and compliance with, this Policy
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer	Approving and documenting any exceptions to this Policy

Section 3 - Quality Assurance

(27) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this Policy, and will report any issues to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	26th March 2023
Review Date	26th March 2026
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	21st March 2023
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"Records Management System (RMS)" - The University of New England installation of HP TRIM, or equivalent replacement system, under the control of the Records Management Office.

"Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander" - Is a person who is of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and is accepted and known as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which he or she has lived.