

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Education Policy



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Approved by	Stanley College Academic Board
Authorised Officer	Registrar
Supporting documents, procedures and forms of this policy	<p>Student Support Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Diversity and Equity Policy</p> <p>Student Services Plan</p> <p>Student Support Guide</p> <p>Student Progress Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Admissions Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Course Development and Review Policy and Procedure</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Staff Workforce Plan</p> <p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>Rationalisation of ATSI Strategy 2017-2019</p>
Related Legislation and Codes of Practice	<p>Admissions Transparency Implementation Plan, June 2017</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework 2015, Part A: Standard 1.1 (Admission) and 2.2 (Diversity and Equity)</p> <p>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011</p>
Audience	Public

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The policy details Stanley College's support for the participation and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in higher education courses.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all staff and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people studying at or seeking to apply to study at Stanley College.

3. DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)	A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives (High Court of Australia (1983)).
Cultural safety	An environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe and inclusive of cultural and academic diversity.
Deficit Thinking	A term encompassing various theories that conjecture that the lack of student educational achievement is due to the student's race, culture or socioeconomic status.
Western Academic Culture	An academic environment where the dominant academic culture is based on Western traditions and values.
Western Culture Capital	The accumulated knowledge, behaviours and skills that demonstrate one's cultural competence in Western society.

4. POLICY PROVISIONS

Principles

4.1 Stanley College recognises that increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) participation and success in higher education is critical to addressing ATSI disadvantage.

4.2 Stanley College acknowledges the complex and unique challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples seeking to participate and succeed in higher education. Stanley College has developed a strategy based upon the following:

- a. An understanding of the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who:
 - i. Participate in institutions largely governed by Western academic culture; and
 - ii. Receive support often based upon assessment or assumptions of a student's Western culture capital.
- b. Recognition that:
 - i. Barriers to ATSI success in higher education remain, and
 - ii. More effective institutional responses are needed to support the tertiary preparation of many ATSI students.
- c. An assessment of Stanley College's experience.
- d. Consultation with ATSI admission specialists.

4.3 Where an ATSI student seeks entry to Stanley College once higher education operations commence, this policy is designed to empower the ATSI candidate and ascertain how that student's success and completion in higher education is best supported.

- 4.4 ATSI applicants are supported at all stages, including:
- a. General enquiries and pre-admission;
 - b. Course selection (if required);
 - c. Student Readiness;
 - d. Entry and transition;
 - e. Progress and completion (which includes ongoing support based on the transition and scaffolding framework for developing student capability); and
 - f. Any case by case management strategies developed either in response to progress data, or as requested by the student.

Student Support Available

4.5 Student Support is a function of the student experience at Stanley College and is factored in to all stages of student life. Transition and support processes have been built into pre-admission, application and entry, course design and delivery, and student progress.

4.6 The student support framework has a close relationship with several Stanley College policies including *Course Development and Review Policy and Procedure*, *Student Support Policy*, *Student Progress Policy and Procedure* and the Stanley College Code of Conduct. The support framework has been designed to incorporate case by case management options.

4.7 The following student support services are available to all students:

- a. English Language and Academic Assistance;
- b. Learning Resources;
- c. Information Technology;
- d. Student Consultation;
- e. Translating and interpreting services;
- f. Legal services;
- g. Emergency and health services;
- h. Counselling services;
- i. Mental health services;
- j. Pastoral care;
- k. Special needs or disabilities support;
- l. Participation in Student Guild activities;
- m. Careers Advice; and
- n. Employment liaison services.

4.8 These services will be organised by the Student Services Office, depending on student's needs. Further details can be found within the *Student Support Policy and Procedure*.

4.9 Stanley College seeks to establish a culture where students are encouraged to choose their own framework of experience within a supportive environment. Stanley College encourages communication, self-reflection and self-determination in assessing the need for, and actively seeking support available. This is supported by a proactive approach to student support and making support services readily available and accessible.

4.10 Stanley College is committed to the fostering of a place of cultural safety by ensuring:

- a. All support is offered sensitively and in confidence;
- b. Referral of students to support organisations which are culturally relevant to the students' needs;
- c. Courses are designed to incorporate appropriate terminology and content promoting cultural safety for all and including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia;

- d. The adoption of an appropriate terms register relevant to Aboriginal people and culture;
- e. General staff training in cultural awareness;
- f. A case by case strategy to manage absenteeism due to cultural or family commitments of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- g. Detailed cultural awareness training for Academic or Academic Support staff;
- h. Cultural awareness practices in the classroom; and
- i. Awareness of “deficit thinking” in relation to minorities.

Monitoring and Review

- 4.11 The Registrar will monitor the participation, progress and completion of ATSI students.
- 4.12 The findings will be presented to Stanley College’s Academic Board and used to improve the admission policies and the teaching, learning and support strategies for ATSI students.

References

- Anderson, A., & Pechenkina, E. (2011). *Background paper on Indigenous Australian Higher Education: Trends, Initiatives and Policy Implications*. Australian Government.
- IHEAC. (2006). *Improving Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education. Report to the Minister for Education, Science & Training*.
- Pechenkina, E. (2011). Who needs support? Perceptions of institutional support by Indigenous Australian students at an Australian university. *Multi-Disiplinary Research in the Arts*, 1-21.
- Williams, R. (2008). Cultural safety: what does it mean for our work practice? . *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health.*, 23(2):213-214.
- Zacharias, N. E. (2016). *Moving Beyond Acts of Faith: Effective Scholarships for Equity Students*. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education.