



PROCEDURE NAME:	Cultural Competency – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	NO.	1.5.1
Approved By:	Controlled Documents Committee	Approval Date:	28.02.2019
Document Owner:	Director, Services and Operations	Next Review Date:	28.02.2022
Related Policy:	1.5 Person Centred Care and Cultural Competency		

1. PURPOSE

QEC is committed to acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) as the First Peoples of Australia recognising their unique cultural and spiritual relationship to the land and sea. QEC recognises the valuable contributions made by and the strength and diversity of Aboriginal People and their communities, past, present and future.

In looking to the future, QEC needs to acknowledge the past to understand and respect the history, culture and heritage of Aboriginal People to inform who we are. QEC is committed to Reconciliation. This document sets out to embed cultural respect into QEC practices.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to Board members, QEC staff, clients, visitors, visiting organisations, stakeholders, program partners and contractors.

3. DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. The identity of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Person is determined when:

- A person is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
- A person identifies as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and;
- Must be accepted as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they live.

Culture the customary beliefs, social forms and material traits of a racial, religious or social groups. Also it refers to the set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterize a system, company or corporation.

Cultural Competence is a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that enable a system, agency or professionals to work effectively in cross cultural situation.

Cultural Awareness is understanding cultural difference, cultural diversity and an awareness that cultural differences may necessitate a different approach to people of that other culture.

Cultural Respect is attitudes and values that accept and promote the uniqueness, diversity and strengths of the other culture.

Cultural Responsiveness the ability and skill to relate effectively with people of another culture.

4. PROCEDURE

QEC recognises and respects Aboriginal Australians as the First People and custodians of the state’s lands and waters. QEC are proud to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land.

QEC is committed to strengthening of the relationship between Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal communities. QEC aims to builds respect for and understanding of Aboriginal culture within all QEC programs.

QEC supports Aboriginal people's pride in their culture and helps to build respect for and understanding of these cultural beliefs among culture and issues; learning the history and legacy of colonisation and dispossession in Victoria can be confronting; recognising Victoria's rich and continuing Aboriginal cultural heritage can be inspiring.

QEC draws on the Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework to support its journey of Cultural Competency across the organisation. The Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework to build better partnerships and as a resource for employees to utilise when engaging with Aboriginal people. QEC seeks to establish cultural safety for Aboriginal People attending QEC buildings and programs.

Acknowledgement of Country demonstrates respect for Aboriginal People as traditional custodians of the land and demonstrates our respect for Aboriginal people and their culture. QEC programs interpret issues of Aboriginal children's safety, stability and development through the lens of Aboriginal culture.

The following principles guide its work with Aboriginal families:

- Considerations of cultural needs is important for all children
- Aboriginal people as First Peoples, have particular cultural needs and rights
- Colonisation has impacted negatively on the culture of Aboriginal peoples and this has implications for Aboriginal children and families
- Connection to culture and community enhances the resilience of Aboriginal children and families
- All people have a right to self-determination and the protection of their particular culture
- Strong cultural connection provides a promising future for Aboriginal children and young people.

All QEC staff regularly participate in education and training which enhances the understanding, awareness and needs of Aboriginal people. QEC will participate in activities which display commitment to Aboriginal culture and issues.

QEC is also committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. It is the right of every child to be immersed in their culture including kin, community, cultural practices and identity. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children must not be denied their right to enjoy their identity and culture, to maintain their kinship ties and to maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters with which they have connection under traditional laws and customs.

5. RELATED QEC DOCUMENTS

- 1.5.2 Cultural Competency - Demonstration of Respect
- 1.5.3 Cultural Competency – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People
- 1.5.4 Person Centred Care – Clients with a Disability

6. RELATED LEGISLATION AND EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS

- Aboriginal Cultural Competency Framework
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020
- <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/tipsheet-cultural-safety-aboriginal-children.pdf>
- 2013 – 2015 Reconciliation Action Plan, Law Institute of Victoria
- Aboriginal Cultural Competence Framework Victorian Government

7. KEY WORDS

Aboriginal People, Culture, Cultural Awareness, Acknowledgement of Country

8. APPENDIX

None