

# First Nations People Education Policy

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy details Perth Bible College’s support for the participation and success of First Nations people in higher education courses.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
- 2.1.1 all staff of Perth Bible College; and
  - 2.1.2 all First Nations people seeking to apply to, or studying at, Perth Bible College.

## 3. Responsibility

- 3.1 The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

## 4. Definitions

<b><i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</i></b>	A person of Aboriginal Australians or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives (High Court of Australia (1983)).
<b><i>First Nations People</i></b>	Specifically refers to the Indigenous people of Australia who are otherwise known as "Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

## 5. Policy Provisions

### Principles

- 5.1 Perth Bible College recognises that increasing Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islander people’s participation and success in higher education is critical to addressing the disadvantage of indigenous peoples (IHEAC, 2006).
- 5.2 Where an indigenous Australian person seeks entry into a course offered by Perth Bible College, this policy is designed to empower the candidate and to ascertain how Perth Bible College can support the student’s success and completion in the course.

- 5.3 Perth Bible College recognises the necessity for all Australians to work together to promote a cohesive community embracing multiculturalism, social justice and values that respect the land and the heritage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- 5.4 Perth Bible College aims to be sensitive to Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and culture.
- 5.5 Specific consideration will be given to the recruitment, admission, participation, and completion of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### **Admission Consideration**

- 5.6 Perth Bible College will aim to identify a person of Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islander descent applying to study at Perth Bible College at key communication points, including:
  - 5.6.1 in-person enquiries.
  - 5.6.2 phone enquiries; or
  - 5.6.3 via the Admissions Form.
- 5.7 All First Nations Peoples applicants will be assessed to determine key factors that may impact upon their student experience. Perth Bible College will meet with the prospective student to determine:
  - 5.7.1 the student's education aspirations.
  - 5.7.2 course suitability.
  - 5.7.3 how the student can be further supported to ensure course completion; and
  - 5.7.4 whether the student needs to be assessed under the College's alternative admissions process.

### **Alternative Admissions Process**

- 5.8 Alternative Admissions Process should be used by First Nations Peoples applicants who are unable to enter via the general admissions process (as outlined in the *Admissions Policy* and accompanying procedure).

### **Student Support Available**

- 5.9 To aid all students studying at Perth Bible College, there are a number of student support services available to all students (as outlined in the *Student Support Policy* and accompanying procedure).

- 5.10 Perth Bible College encourages communication, self-reflection, and self-determination in assessing the need for, or actively seeking, support. All students, regardless of backgrounds, will be required to proactively seek support offered by Perth Bible College to ensure success in their course. As the student support services available are readily available and accessible, this approach is supported.
- 5.11 Additionally, due to small class sizes, all students are in regular communication with lecturers and tutors who also provide additional support, where required.

### **Fostering a Place of Cultural Safety**

- 5.12 Perth Bible College is committed to fostering a place of cultural safety for all students and staff. Perth Bible College ensures the following:
- 5.12.1 all support is offered sensitively and in confidence.
  - 5.12.2 any referrals to support agencies for students are culturally relevant to the student's needs.
  - 5.12.3 courses are designed to incorporate a standard of appropriate terminology and content when promoting cultural safety for all, including indigenous peoples.
  - 5.12.4 general staff training in cultural awareness; and
  - 5.12.5 a case-by-case strategy to manage absenteeism due to cultural or family commitments of Aboriginal Australians Torres Strait Islander peoples.
  - 5.12.6 acknowledges the culture of First Nations peoples and encourages active dialogue on reconciliation with First Nations peoples.
  - 5.12.7 Either a Welcome to Country (by an evangelical Christian Noongar Elder) or an Acknowledgement of Country will be stated at all PBC formal functions, such as graduation ceremonies.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- 5.13 The Dean of Students will monitor the participation, progress and completion of all First Nations Peoples studying at Perth Bible College.
- 5.14 The findings will be included in the benchmarking report and presented by the Dean of Studies to the Perth Bible College Academic Council and used to improve the admission policies and the teaching, learning and support strategies for First Nations Peoples students.

## 6. Policy Information

<b>Date first approved:</b> July 2021	<b>Date of effect:</b> July 2021	<b>Date last amended:</b> 28/09/2021	<b>Date of next review:</b> 28/09/2021
<b>Approved by</b>		Principal	
<b>Authorised Officer</b>		Dean of Students	
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy</b>		<i>Admissions Policy</i> <i>Admissions Procedure</i> <i>Student Support Policy</i> <i>Student Support Procedure</i> <i>IHEAC. (2006). Improving Indigenous Culture and Knowledge in Australian Higher Education. Report to the Minister for Education, Science &amp; Training.</i>	
<b>Related Legislation and Codes of Practice</b>		<u><i>Higher Education Standards Framework 2015, Part A: Standard 2</i></u> <u><i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011</i></u>	
<b>Audience</b>		Public	

## 7. Version History

Review Table			
Date	Review Type	Summary of Changes	Review person/group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduled</li> <li>• Policy amendment</li> <li>• Admin update</li> </ul>		
28/07/2021	Scheduled	Review and general clean up	BoM
28/09/2021	Admin update	Change of language to ensure consistency.	Chris Burton