

# Teaching, Learning and Enacting the Education Principles of Indigenous Australian matters (EPIAM) at The University of Queensland

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Teaching, Learning and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters (EPIAM) at The University of Queensland

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*Indigenous studies as a field of scholarly endeavour is in a crucial phase of development at present. It has begun to progress from being 'about' Indigenous peoples to being centred on negotiating the complex terrain of anti-colonial enquiry (Phillips, 2008, p. 1)*

## **Introduction**

This volume of the Research Report Series reflects on findings from a project undertaken by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at The University of Queensland. The project explored the ways in which the “Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters” (EPIAM) policy is enacted in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment approaches by courses in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Faculty of Arts at The University of Queensland. The EPIAM policy was established in 2007 and provides a basis to develop strategies to improve the understanding of students and staff of Indigenous issues and to recognise the importance and contribution of Indigenous knowledge as an emerging discipline. The University of Queensland’s EPIAM policy explicitly includes a variety of specific strategic teaching and learning objectives. Introductory and advanced level courses in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ABTS) major attempt to address these objectives in order to improve student learning. However, before this project was undertaken the efficacy with which the specific teaching and learning objectives of the EPIAM policy were enacted in pedagogical processes at The University of Queensland was unknown.

Led by Liz Mackinlay from July 2008-July 2009, the project aimed to assess how teaching and learning approaches in Indigenous Australian studies courses at The University of Queensland achieved the goals of EPIAM. In this regard, this project attempted to address one of the key strategies of the University’s 2008-2010 Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan to review curriculum and research activities to determine how best to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and intellectual traditions. As the quote from Phillips above emphasises, Indigenous Australian studies is in a crucial phase of development and this report contributes to discussions about the ways Indigenous Australian studies is incorporated into university teaching and learning. The report focuses on findings about the experience and effectiveness of pedagogical processes in Indigenous Australian studies at The University of Queensland for both students and teachers. It is hoped that the results of this project will help improve students’ engagement and encounter with the discipline of Indigenous Australian studies and with Indigenous Australian peoples, cultures, and knowledges.

## Positioning Myself and the Project

My background is in Indigenous studies and music, and I completed a PhD working with Indigenous women performing contemporary music in 2006. Since then my research has shifted to a collaborative framework and I have undertaken a number of research partnerships with Indigenous researchers and colleagues (e.g., Barney & Solomon, 2010; Barney & Proud, 2010). I have also worked on a number of teaching and learning projects as part of my role in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at The University of Queensland. This project gave me space to further collaborate with Indigenous colleagues. My specific role was to work closely with the lecturers to collect and analyse data on each of their individual courses, undertake overarching analysis of all data collected, and write and prepare this final report.

Indigenous Australian matters have become an important focus at The University of Queensland over the last few years. In 2007, the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Indigenous Australians (CALDIA) Subcommittee of The University of Queensland Senate Standing Committee for Equity, Diversity and the Status of Women proposed to the Vice-Chancellor that The University of Queensland mark 2007 as a year of focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, in recognition of the fortieth anniversary of the 1967 Referendum. This was subsequently endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive and the Vice-Chancellor approved strategic funds to support activities and events during the year.

As part of this focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity and Indigenous Australians Subcommittee (CALDIA) also proposed that guidelines be developed for teaching and research at the University which related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters. A working party, consisting of then Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, Michael Williams, Deputy Director Jackie Huggins and Lecturer Norm Sheehan, drafted comprehensive principles. This was then considered by the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Higher Degree Research Committee. The finalised Statement of Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters was then passed via Academic Board to Senate for approval. The University of Queensland was the first to have a set of principles in this nature. The policy was then launched in 2007 during UQ's Diversity Week, with the theme "We All Count" (Michael Williams, individual interview).

## About the Courses

The project was undertaken from July 2008-July 2009 to allow for data collection in courses in semester 2, 2008 and semester 1, 2009. Five courses that were part of the ABTS major at The University of Queensland at the time of the study were focused on. All of these courses were taught through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit.<sup>1</sup>

### **ABTS1000: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives**

ABTS1000 is an introductory course in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies drawing extensively upon Indigenous Australian history and culture to provide insight into contemporary Australian issues. As well as providing a series of lectures from an academic viewpoint, the course draws upon the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from a diverse range of backgrounds. This provides students with a unique perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experiences as well as the broader human experience in Australia. Students are expected to engage critically with key issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. The course aims to provide students with the necessary academic skills to establish a balanced understanding of the cross-cultural dimensions of the issues and perspectives relevant to Indigenous Australians. The teaching staff actively draw upon visiting scholars to give students ample opportunity to engage with the experiences of Indigenous people. The learning objectives of this first year course are quite explicit in terms of the critical engagement, dialogue and reflection expected of students:

1. Engage with knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and identity.
2. Understand the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and identity have been constructed throughout colonisation.
3. Understand the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are researching back, articulating their own histories, cultures and identities.
4. Engage in dialogue regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and how these issues fit in the contemporary contexts at individual and whole social movement levels.

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<sup>1</sup> Since this project was undertaken, one of the courses is no longer taught (ABTS2040) and there have been a number of staff changes in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit resulting in some changes to curriculum and pedagogy in the remaining courses.

5. Engage with introductory skills in critical analysis, and how these can be employed to reveal the power relations implicit in colonial discourse.
6. Engage in an introduction to conceptions of social healing and relational responsibility.

In semester 1, 2009 the course had an enrolment number of 138 students drawn from a wide variety of disciplines including arts, education, journalism and engineering and it is a popular course with incoming international exchange students. In 2009 the course was taught by Norm Sheehan and the course is also a compulsory introductory course for first year social work students at The University of Queensland. It is the core foundation course for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Bachelor of Arts at The University of Queensland and it delivers the core principles and understandings relevant to this discipline.

### **ABTS2010: Aboriginal Women**

This course actively addresses the omission of Aboriginal women from much of mainstream teaching and research, as well as presenting balanced viewpoints to redress misinformed and inaccurate perceptions and understandings of Aboriginal women today. Through lectures and tutorials presented by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women, both students and lecturers explore historical and contemporary issues identified as relevant by Aboriginal women. In this way the class hopes to create a space for Aboriginal women's voices to be heard, have authority and enter into a dialogue with our own. While the course was developed by Liz Mackinlay, in semester 2, 2008 the course was taught by Kim Orchard and 10 students were enrolled. Through lectures and tutorials presented by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women, students and lecturers explore historical and contemporary issues identified as relevant by Aboriginal women. A major theme running through this course is to compare, contrast and critically analyse mainstream representations of Aboriginal women with the words and knowledges of Aboriginal women themselves. The course objectives are:

1. Recognise and understand the social, historical, political and cultural roles of Aboriginal women in contemporary Aboriginal and mainstream societies.
2. Understand the similarities and differences between the perspectives and life experiences of Aboriginal women and others.
3. Understand the impact of colonialism on the experiences of Aboriginal women historically and in contemporary contexts, and consider your own positioning in relation to this.

4. Interpret, critically analyse and reflect upon discourse about and by Aboriginal women with reference to social, historical, political and cultural contexts.

### **ABTS2020: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Approaches to Knowledge**

ABTS2020 is a second year elective in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies which explores Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander approaches to knowledge and the interaction between Aboriginal and Western modes of inquiry. In semester 2, 2008 the course had 15 students and was taught by then Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit Michael Williams. The course profile outlines that “Respect is a key principle for the success of this learning paradigm because the maintenance of individual diversity is a key Indigenous learning principle. Sharing different viewpoints demonstrates this respect within the boundaries of personal, cultural and religious integrity and dignity that these classes are designed to model and promote”. The course objectives are to:

1. Engage with Indigenous Knowledge and culture, and encounter Indigenous identities.
2. Understand the cultural differences within and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Indigenous groups.
3. Understand the significant elements of Indigenous Knowledge systems.
4. Understand the principles of Indigenous approaches to Knowledge.
5. Apply practical experience in Indigenous Knowledge/Learning paradigms.

The course attempts to teach students that Indigenous knowledge is a living knowledge and as such it cannot be packaged into simple units for ‘knowledge transmission or transfer’ that can then be measured by a formal assessment. The course also aims to challenge students with information about Indigenous cultures while engaging them in an Indigenous Knowledge/Learning paradigm. In this course students will ultimately increase their understanding of the importance of respect within the boundaries of personal, cultural and religious integrity; raise their awareness of establishing a balanced understanding of any given aspect of Indigenous worldviews; and examine and share different viewpoints.

### **ABTS2040: Black Australian Literature**

ABTS2040 is a second year elective in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. The course was taught by Sam Watson and in semester 1, 2009 had 13 students. The course considers the strength and purpose of Black writing and traced the development of the Indigenous literary voice from the days of first contact. Through this course students



explore the role of the individual within the tribal community and the complexity of the tribal structure. These factors were and still are critical influences on Aboriginal communication and determine genre, methodology and content. The course objectives are:

1. Relate Indigenous Australian writing to broader social, historical and political contexts.
2. Interpret and critically analyse the writings of Indigenous Australian authors.
3. Recognise the diversity of literature created by Indigenous Australian writers.
4. Identify some major issues relevant to Indigenous writers including the importance of land within Indigenous reality and Aboriginal consciousness, the impacts of colonial violence, devastation and forced removal from traditional homelands, and the significance of issues of identity, audience and gender.
5. Access and make use of the scholarship on Black Australian literature to devise and confidently deliver written and oral reports relating to Indigenous Australian literature.

### **ABTS3020: Working with Indigenous People**

ABTS3020 is a third year course in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies that aims to provide students with a broad understanding of the ethical, conceptual and practical issues encountered in working with Indigenous people. The course was coordinated by Ian Lilley and Sean Ulm and had 14 students in 2008. It engages with some of the main conceptual and practical issues that arise in working with Indigenous people, especially in research contexts. The focus of the course is on Australia, but examples are also be drawn from Asia, the Pacific and the Americas. Indigenous Australians and other people from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds are involved in teaching.

The course profile notes that it “is not an exercise in political correctness and will not attempt to provide quick and easy recipes for instant success. Rather, it aims to encourage both an analytical and practical view of the major theoretical and practical questions raised by Indigenous and non-Indigenous commentators from a range of scholarly and political persuasions”. Overall, the course attempts to develop students critical, reflexive, ethical and independent research skills and aims to achieve this through a practice-based approach which emphasises the diversity of Indigenous Australian lives, experiences, cultures, histories and ways of knowing. This should help students engage critically in discourses about Indigenous Australian peoples and cultures. A central tenet of this approach is to ground abstract issues in practical examples. Learning activities address real-world issues that students will encounter upon graduation. ABTS3020 in 2008 was

centred around a series of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) packages supported by more traditional lectures. This structure links often abstract concepts of professional ethics to concrete real-world problems. The emphasis is on the diversity of Indigenous worldviews is enhanced by occasional guest lectures by Indigenous scholars and community members.

1. Relate issues of working with Indigenous people to broader social, historical and political contexts.
2. Demonstrate a sound grasp of the practical realities and theoretical implications of working with Indigenous people.
3. Understand the types of discourses in which work with Indigenous people is undertaken both historically and today, and your own positioning to these.
4. Refine your skills in the self-directed acquisition and critical analysis of information relevant to a defined problem.
5. Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a small group, undertake independent research and share the results of that research with peers.
6. Enhance your capacity to articulate your results clearly, concisely and on time, in oral and written forms of the sorts required in the workplace and in higher degree research.

## Literature on Indigenous Australian Studies in Higher Education

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education has been a topic of research for many years (e.g., Bridges, 1968; Christie, 1985, 1995; Crowley, 1993; Folds, 1987; Harris, 1980, 1999; Hughes & Andrews, 1988; Keefe, 1992; Loveday & Young, 1984; Lampert & Lilley, 1996; McConaghy, 2000; Arbon, 2008). The ways Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are taught in university contexts has had less focus.

Craven's (1999) edited collection, although focusing on the inclusion of Indigenous Australian studies in primary and secondary schools, highlights the importance of teaching Indigenous Australian studies. She defines Indigenous Australian studies as:

the study of Aboriginal societies or Torres Strait Islander societies past and present, including histories, cultures, values, beliefs, languages, lifestyles and roles, both prior to and following invasion (Curriculum Corporation cited in Craven, 1999, p. 15).

Craven points out that there are important reasons why Indigenous Australian studies should be taught, including contributing to social justice, teaching the truth about Australia's colonial history, and benefiting both non-Indigenous and Indigenous students by teaching them about Australia's rich cultural heritage (1999, pp. 23-25). Nakata (2006, p. 265) notes that Indigenous studies in universities "is a discrete and nowadays expansive field of academic study and inquiry in universities across this nation" and is cross-disciplinary drawing on concepts, analysis, theories and methodologies from disciplines in the academy as well as Maori Studies, Native American studies and other international Indigenous studies contexts (2006, p. 267).

A number of researchers have reflected on their experiences teaching Indigenous Australian studies in higher education contexts (e.g., Blaskett, 2009; Konishi et al., 2008; Mackinlay, 2007; McGloin, 2008; Nicoll, 2004). For example, Konishi et al. (2008) note that in their experiences teaching a large introductory Indigenous Australia studies course, "it was no easy task to convey to young non-Indigenous Australian students the particular history and experience of Indigenous Australians" (2008, p. 1). Further they emphasise that "teaching Indigenous Australian studies requires you to give yourself over to students in a way that is unimaginable in many other tertiary subjects" (2008, p. 2). McGloin (2008) explores her role as a non-Indigenous educator working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff from diverse disciplinary and cultural backgrounds who teach Aboriginal studies to Indigenous, domestic Australian, International and Study Abroad students. She emphasises that "teaching of Aboriginal Studies involves a struggle to decentre self-interest by foregrounding collaboration, unity, and community as central tenets of a developing pedagogical praxis" (McGloin, 2008, p. 83; also see McGloin, 2009). Mackinlay

has extensively reflected on her experiences in the context of teaching and learning Indigenous Australian women's music and dance. She focuses on her involvement with students and guest lecturers/performers and examines the embodied approach to teaching and learning that happens in this context. She also reflects on her role as a non-Indigenous academic married to an Aboriginal man and mother of two Aboriginal sons and the "complexities of speaking from and of 'in-between spaces'" (p. 51; also see Mackinlay 2008, 2009). Nicoll (2004) also discusses her role as a non-Indigenous educator teaching Indigenous content to non-Indigenous students. She demonstrates how "critical whiteness theory can be used to shift the pedagogical focus from the racialised oppression of Indigenous Australians to the white middle-class subject position that is a direct product of this oppression" (Nicoll, 2004). Elsewhere, Barney and Mackinlay (2010) explore various ways of incorporating and enhancing reflection in teaching and learning Indigenous Australian studies and examine how reflection can assist students and teachers in exploring their assumptions, expectations and positionings in relation to Indigenous Australian music.

### **Developing Culturally Appropriate Pedagogical Models in Indigenous Australian Studies**

The importance of finding culturally appropriate methods in teaching and learning Indigenous Australia studies has been explored by a number of scholars. Nakata (2006, p. 267) emphasises the disjunction between Indigenous knowledge systems and Western university education systems and notes that Western knowledge is quite different from Indigenous knowledge. He suggests that Western knowledge is deeply implicated in the historical mistreatment and continuing position of Indigenous people in Australia and cannot fully understand Indigenous histories, knowledges, and experiences. Bin-Salik (1993, p. 12) also emphasises that universities are heavily involved in the construction of knowledge and therefore need to consider their role in Indigenous studies. Similarly, Bird-Rose (1996) describes a double bind inherent "in the encounter between Indigenous knowledge systems which include boundaries of exclusion and silence, and the colonising demand for information" (Bird-Rose, 1996, p. 6) and there have been some attempts to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and culturally appropriate pedagogical models in teaching Indigenous Australian studies within universities.

Biermann and Townsend-Cross (2008, p. 146) notes that "while Indigenist research methodologies and Indigenous epistemologies have featured heavily as topics of Indigenous students' postgraduate writing over the past two decades, there has not been, with the exception of Hughes' et al. (2004) work, a similar focus and emphasis on Indigenous pedagogies or teaching methodologies". They note that there have also been

some attempts at describing an Indigenous pedagogy, for example the Deakin-Bachelor Teacher Education (D-BATE) Program (Wei et al., 1991), the Curriculum Development Centre of the Department of Education, Employment and Training (Hughes et al., 2004), and by Indigenous Australian academic Paul Hughes (Hughes et al., 2004). These attempts, however, were based on the premise of responding to perceived particular Indigenous learning styles (Christie, 1985; Harris, 1980; Harris & Malin, 1994). Biermann and Townsend-Cross (2008, p. 150) describe Indigenous pedagogy as being grounded in “relatedness, reciprocal responsibility and caring for the land and sea”.

Ober (2009) explores “both-ways” Indigenous teaching philosophy that underpins course programs and operations at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in the Northern Territory. She describes both-ways as a shared learning journey, student-centred learning and as a way of strengthening Indigenous identity. She notes that “both-ways education is about drawing on and acknowledging skills, language, knowledge, concepts and understandings from both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems” (Ober, 2009, p. 39).

Asmar’s (2010; also see Asmar et al., 2009) research explores the concept of “Indigenous teaching” which she defines broadly as Indigenous academics teaching non-Indigenous students and the reverse – non-Indigenous academics teaching Indigenous students. Drawing on interviews with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, she provides 12 approaches to “Indigenous teaching” (<http://www.indigenousteaching.com/>):

1. Connecting students and community
2. Help students walk in other’s shoes
3. Locate local issues in global contexts
4. Make sure classroom is safe
5. Maintain (and model) high standards
6. Provide scaffolding when needed
7. Get students to question/interpret ‘the facts’
8. Help students know themselves better
9. Model dialogue
10. Let students draw on own experiences
11. Show relevance for future jobs/careers
12. Have fun!

A number of these approaches are also used by teachers in Indigenous Australian studies classrooms at The University of Queensland. Yet there are also other teaching and learning approaches emphasised including the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL), reflection, and storytelling as teaching and learning tools, which will be discussed in more detail in the findings section.

## Data Collection

The project used qualitative methods drawing on data from multiple sources and data collection and this included classroom observations, student free-writes, focus group interviews with students, individual interviews and group interview with staff, reflective writing assessment pieces, and mapping of course profiles onto EPIAM. Analysis took place between July 2008 and June 2009 and this is detailed further in the table below:

Method	Key question	Source	Time of collection
Classroom observations	What teaching and learning approaches are most effective in ABTS courses?	Observations by Research Officer	Jul-Oct 2008 Feb-May 2009
Student free-writes	What are current students' experiences in ABTS courses? What teaching and learning processes are effective?	Current ABTS1000, ABTS2040, ABTS2010, ABTS2020, ABTS3020 students	Jul-Oct 2008, Feb-May 2009
Student assessments	How effective are the assessment methods in ABTS courses in relation to EPIAM objectives, with particular emphasis on reflective teaching and learning processes?	Current ABTS1000, ABTS2040, ABTS2010, ABTS2020, ABTS3020 students	Nov 2008, June 2009
Mapping course profiles onto EPIAM policy	What pedagogical approaches do teachers enact to achieve the explicit teaching and learning objectives of EPIAM within the ABTS major?	Course profiles	July 2008, Feb 2009
Focus group with students	What is the experience of these pedagogical approaches like for learners in the context of tertiary Indigenous Australian studies?	Current ABTS1000, ABTS2040, ABTS2010, ABTS2020, ABTS3020 students	Nov 2008, June 2009
Focus group with Lecturers	What is the experience of these pedagogical approaches like for teachers in the context of tertiary Indigenous Australian studies?	Lecturers	Nov 2009
Individual interviews with Lecturers, Indigenous member of senate, Elders from the Indigenous community	What teaching and learning approaches do lecturers, Indigenous member of senate and Elders think works and what could be improved?	Lecturers, Indigenous member of senate, Elders	Nov 2008, Feb 2009, June 2009

The data collection methods used in this project took multiple forms and are detailed below with descriptions of the sources of data, question to be answered, strengths and limitations, argument for choosing these methods, feasibility and analysis processes.

### **Classroom Observations**

I observed classroom activities in ABTS2020 and ABTS3020 during semester 2, 2008 and ABTS1000, ABTS2010, and ABTS2040 during semester 1, 2009. The strength of this data collection method was that it allowed documentation of the teaching and learning activities undertaken by teaching staff in ABTS courses.

### **Student Free-Writes**

The written responses from current ABTS1000, ABTS2040, ABTS2010, ABTS2020, and ABTS3020 students from three free-writes were conducted to compare their experiences at different stages of the courses and their understandings of reflections. The strengths of this data collection method is that free-writes were able to be incorporated as a regular element of teaching activities to focus student attention on their own learning and to develop the quality of student reflective writing. They were also quick and easy to implement within the classes in consultation with the lecturers. Some possible limitations of this form of data collection are that it was time-consuming to analyse large numbers of student responses. This data was analysed using thematic analysis to examine the shift in the quality and depth in reflection throughout the course.

### **Students' Assessment**

Reflective essays and journals are a feature of ABTS assessment and students' reflective journal entries and reflective essays from the current ABTS1000, ABTS2040, ABTS2010, ABTS2020, and ABTS3020 students were also analysed to evaluate whether students have moved from descriptive writing to critical reflection. Moon's (2006, pp. 161-163) four levels of reflection: descriptive writing, descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection, and critical reflection, which was used to analyse the levels of reflection in students' assessment. The strengths of this method are that it holds the potential to permit in-depth reflection and student identification of issues. It also allowed flexible responses which could be completed in students' own time using paper-based or other creative mediums (first person language, photographs, poetry, drawings).

## Mapping Course Profiles onto EPIAM Policy

The course profiles were mapped onto the relevant EPIAM statements about teaching and learning to examine whether the policy was embedded in ABTS course profiles, course information, learning objectives, lecture outlines and assessment items. The relevant EPIAM teaching and learning statements are listed below:

### General EPIAM Statements about Teaching and Learning

- Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community.
- Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.
- Embed into the University's curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.

### Institutional Objectives

- Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University's academic programs.
- Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching.
- Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and communities.
- Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples.
- Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities.

### Specific Educational Principles

- Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy.
- Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula.
- Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples.
- Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula.



This evaluation form allowed me to visually map the courses onto the relevant EPIAM policy statements in order to assess whether the ABTS courses make the goals of EPIAM explicit in the courses.

### **Focus Group Interviews with Students**

I conducted two focus group interviews with Indigenous Australian studies students, one in November 2008 and the other in June 2009 to explore their experiences undertaking Indigenous studies and their understandings of reflection and reflective writing. A list of questions for the focus groups is attached (Appendix 7). Open ended, semi-structured interview questions proposed by feminist researchers like Levesque-Lopman (2000, p. 111) satisfied our agenda of allowing students to express their ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own voices and with their own language, rather than through my voice. The role of the interviewer was to ask questions and listen carefully to the experiences of performers or as Levesque-Lopman articulates to “listen in stereo” (2000, p. 103).

One of the main advantages of the focus group method is the emphasis on students’ learning experiences from reflective writing during ABTS2102. Another strength of this evaluation form is that focus groups can produce a “rich body of data expressed in the respondents’ own words and context” (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 12) about their experiences and beliefs (Morgan, 1998, p. 10). A possible limitation of focus groups is that minority views can prevail if assertively expressed and students may be reluctant to speak openly about issues they faced during the course. This was countered by my experience with focus group interviews to perform the role of moderator.

The process of analysis could be likened broadly to grounded theory in which the researcher derives her/his analytic categories directly from the data, not from preconceived concepts or hypotheses (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Glaser, 1994; Charmaz, 1994, 2001, 2004; Strauss & Corbin, 1997). However, my approach was not strictly grounded theory as I did not follow the grounded theory methods of coding, memo writing, and theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz 2001, 2004; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004; Seale, 2004) but instead engaged in broader thematic analysis, as I looked for common themes in the interviews. While there are many procedures and theories for the analysis of interviews, drawing out the themes in the interviews provided the analytical tools to generate meanings from the interview transcripts.

### **Focus Group Interview and Individual Interviews with Staff**

A focus group interview was also undertaken with academic staff from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit to explore kinds of teaching and learning approaches that are most successful in ABTS classrooms, what they hoped students learnt about Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges and the ways the EPIAM objectives are enacted in Indigenous studies courses. Six academic staff members who taught into the 2008-2009 major were also consulted and individually interviewed to gain their perspectives on their experiences as teachers in specific ABTS courses. Open ended, semi-structured interview questions were also used in these interviews. In the following section I will discuss each form of data separately in relation to each key question.

## The Findings

### **Findings 1: Classroom Observations: What Teaching and Learning Approaches are Most Effective in ABTS Courses?**

Classroom observations were undertaken between July-October 2008 and February-May 2009. Classroom activities were video recorded and also notes were taken. Effective teaching and learning approaches observed were the use of dialogue, reflection, and storytelling as teaching and learning tools. All of the lecturers used storytelling as a mode of teaching and learning. As Michael Williams noted in the first class of ABTS2020, “Stories are important to the course” and this was also echoed in the other classes with lecturers telling stories to teach important concepts and issues relating to Indigenous studies. The ABTS classes also used dialogue as a teaching and learning method. Bohm et al. (2004, n.p) describes dialogue as “a way of exploring the roots of the many crises that face humanity today. It enables inquiry into, and understanding of, the sorts of processes that fragment and interfere with real communication between individuals, nations and even different parts of the same organization”. Dialogue occurred through small group discussions in ABTS2020, the use of Problem-Based Learning in ABTS3020 and through the use of “dialogue groups” in tutorials for ABTS1000. Dialogue was used as an important tool to explore difficult and emotional issues particularly relating to the traumas of Australia’s colonial history. Linked closely with dialogue was the importance of relationships as a teaching and learning approach. Michael Williams asked students to “engage with yourself and others” and noted that “students find brothers and sisters in the class”. These relationships were also formed through a fieldtrip to Stradbroke Island offered to students at the end of each semester.

The importance of reflection, respect, and responsibility was also emphasised through all of the courses. Students in ABTS1000 were asked to reflect on their journey through the course. Students used a diverse range of mediums to do this including artwork (e.g., Figure 1), music, and poetry. Creative expression was encouraged in the courses and reflecting on their own identities in relation to Indigenous people was emphasised. These themes are explored in more details within other findings below.



Figure 1: ABTS1000 student group mural as reflection on the course

## **Findings 2: Student Free-writes: What are Current Students' Experiences in ABTS Courses? What Teaching and Learning Processes are Effective?**

A number of themes emerged from student free-writes in relation to effective teaching and learning approaches in ABTS courses and each of these is discussed below.

### **Dialogue**

Many students wrote about the effectiveness of dialogue as a teaching and learning approach in the ABTS courses. Comments included:

The class gives us the opportunity to discuss, in depth the complexities of working with Indigenous people (ABTS3020 FW 2, no. 6)

I'm looking forward to the "yarn" as it is a great medium to communicate thought and understanding" (ABTS2020, FW 3, no. 2)

Dialogue is so effective in being able to share thoughts, feelings, and differing values which are very important in this course (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 23).

Never before have I been in a forum where such issues could be so openly discussed (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 23)

Enjoying the interactivity of discussion in groups, finding it a good learning experience (ABTS3020 FW 2, no. 2)

My experience in the course has been wonderful in the sense that I have dialogue and discussion with my group (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 31)

Learning about the process of dialogue has been interesting for me as it has given me confidence to speak up to people (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 32)

The best aspect of the course was the dialogue. I think it's an interesting approach to knowledge (ABTS1000, FW 3, no. 27)

One student noted the use of dialogue fitted with their understandings of Indigenous pedagogies as it was “reflective of ways of Aboriginal learning with many informal group discussions” (ABTS3020 FW 2, no. 9). Many students commented that the dialogues that took place in class challenged their assumptions and expectations in relation to Indigenous Australian people, histories and cultures:

Open discussions have been instrumental in challenging the way I think and understand (ABTS2020, FW 2, no. 3)

The dialogue sessions have been a little challenging. Boundaries are challenged (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 12)

What we discuss is interesting and challenging (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 28)

Dialogue really challenged me in a lot of ways (ABTS1000, FW 3, no. 17)

As Brookfield (1995) notes, challenging students' assumptions is an important part of teaching and learning in higher education. He suggested that one way to “hunt” students is through reflection.

### **Challenging Expectations through Reflection**

Students noted in free-writes that the reflective writing activities through reflective journals and reflective essays also created a space to express themselves and be more aware of their thought processes and the possibility of learning through reflection:

The diary entries – they were a really good way to gather thoughts and work out what it was exactly that I felt” (ABTS1000, FW 3, no. 30)

I can reflect on what was said during dialogue, I can express my feelings and opinions (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 4)

The diary entries are a great way to gather your thoughts and reflect on what was discussed (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 12)

Students also stated that the process of reflective writing assisted them in exploring their assumptions about Indigenous Australian people:

Like a metamorphosis has changed my perspective on different issues (ABTS2020, FW 3, no. 2)

I have learnt the limitations of my insight (ABTS2010, FW 2, no. 1)

I have been challenged to look at how I think about social constructions in mainstream society regarding Indigenous cultures (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 18)

I have found that the focus on reflexivity has made me more realise the extent of my assumptions about Aboriginal people (ABTS2010 FW 2, no. 1)

My thoughts about racism and social constructs have been challenged for sure (ABTS1000, FW 1, no. 1)

The statements from students show evidence of self questioning, engagement and critical evaluation of their perspectives which are all characteristics of deep reflection (Mezirow, 1990; Moon, 2006).

### **Storytelling as Teaching**

As Stasiuk (2010, p. 88) notes, “storytelling is an integral part of life for Indigenous Australians. Before the arrival of Europeans and continuing after; gathered around the campfire in the evening stories were and are still shared; passed from one generation to the next”. Students also noted that this was a method used in ABTS classrooms:

I was surprisingly intrigued by the way the lectures and tutorials took form in a kind of storytelling style in the lectures and dialogue in the tutes (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 35)

The best aspect of this course is the style in which it is conducted. The small groups help facilitate learning from each and interacting with the material together which helps shape understanding (ABTS2020, FW 3, no. 2)

The role of storytelling was important (ABTS2040, FW 2, no. 10)

I have learnt how knowledge, dialogue, kinship and stories play a major part of Indigenous knowledge and cultures (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 30)

This aligns with other Indigenous scholars both in Australia and internationally such as Martin (2008) and Kovach (2009) who explore storytelling as methodology, connecting it to Indigenous ontologies and the relationships Indigenous people have with their world.

### **Forming Relationships**

Students also discussed the relationships they formed in ABTS classrooms with each other and viewed “relationship” as important to the teaching and learning processes that occurred:

It has been a much more fun learning experience than the usual lecture format. More contact with other students and lecturers (ABTS3020 FW 2, no. 1)

It is about relationships and stories (ABTS3020 FW 2, no. 9)

Self-growth, met great people (ABTS2020, FW3, no. 1)

Relationship based, interconnected, everything has its place, fit” (ABTS1000, FW2, no. 1)

This links closely with comments from lecturers which will be discussed under Findings 6 and 7.

### **Emotions**

Students also discussed the emotions they experienced in ABTS classrooms and noted that the classes created a space to express these emotions:

Scary, exciting, emotional (ABTS2020, FW 3, no. 3)

I did not expect to feel the negative responses I have experienced to be so acutely shameful (ABTS2040, FW 2, no. 11)

Enlightening, confronting, enjoyable (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 5)

It’s nice to have a place to vent feelings, attitudes and receive feedback without facing mainstream ignorance and prejudice (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 7)

I have really enjoyed the course and thought some of the issues are difficult to talk about, I’m glad I have had the opportunity (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 27)

Thought-provoking, challenging, difficult, different and fascinating” (ABTS1000, FW 3, no. 12)

I wanted to connect with my heart this year...a friend suggested this course because she had done it and found it to be positively intense/intense in a positive way (ABTS1000, FW 2, no. 21)

This final comment illustrates the ways ABTS courses can connect with the whole person (heart and mind, or inner and outer life) towards capacity for compassion, community and

change. This links closely with transformative education theory which places increasing emphasis on shifts taking place ontologically as well as epistemologically, so learners become actively engaged in new avenues for social justice (Garde-Hansen & Calvert, 2004). It also links closely with a critical pedagogy agenda which emphasises the importance of educating students to be “truly humanized social (cultural) agents in the world” committed to social justice, democracy and freedom from oppression (Darder et al., 2009, p. 9) and raises questions about whether lecturers are responsible for an ethics of care to help students make their way through these complexities of their emotions.

### **Findings 3: Students Assessments: How Effective are the Assessment Methods in ABTS Courses in relation to EPIAM Objectives, with Particular Emphasis on Reflective Teaching and Learning Processes?**

Not all the ABTS courses drew on reflective assessment items. Therefore this data focuses on themes that emerge from the reflective essays and diaries from ABTS1000 and ABTS3020. Similar themes to the free-writes are evident in these reflective writings.

#### **Challenging Assumptions**

Students noted that reflective writing created a space for the students to challenge their expectations and assumptions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and question their understandings of Indigenous history.

I felt challenged by the exercise (not to mention uneasy) (ABTS3020 essay 1)

I was confronted by my own ideas about gender in and out of Aboriginal community settings (ABTS3020, essay 1)

I think that the best approach is to acknowledge prior assumptions (ABTS3020, essay 3)

This course has allowed a complete change in both my perspectives and opinions of the history or, and issue pertaining to Indigenous people (ABTS1000, tute diary, no. 7)

Students here comment on the transformations that can take place in students learning through reflection. Reflection therefore has the potential to safely and sensitively create a space where students can explore their assumptions and challenge their expectations of Indigenous peoples.

#### **Emotions**

The reflective writing assessment items also provided a space for students to explore the emotions they experienced during class. As one student reflected:



Michael Williams was introducing the class and what I remember him saying – “you whitefellas have gotta stop feeling guilty”. At this time, I was an abandoned child’s mind in a mature aged student’s body. Frightened, out of my depth, and very raw (ABTS3020, essay 1)

Other students noted that writing reflectively allowed them to engage with their emotions and come to terms with the feelings they experienced:

I have been very touched with all these issues throughout the semester and feel like the only thing that I need now is apply all this theory in the field (ABTS3020, essay 6)

I surprised myself with how intensely and passionately I engaged and related with certain issues that arose. I believe it is so important for people to feel that level of emotion and be able to discuss openly the feelings (ABTS1000, tute diary, no. 3)

I have been coming to terms with my own emotions – why I feel the way I do and how these feelings may or may not have changed (ABTS1000, tute diary, no. 8)

There’s such a stark contrast when compared to my science courses where everything is based on facts, leaving no room for emotions (ABTS1000, tute diary, no. 12)

Here students highlight the difference of ABTS classes to other disciplines. Savin-Baden (2000, p. 55) aptly comments that “learning is about engaging different dimensions of ourselves in the learning process. Emotions and feelings are often the ones that are most neglected in learning” and hooks (1994, p. 155), too, notes that the “restrictive, repressive classroom ritual insists that emotional responses have no place”. The reflective nature of ABTS classrooms provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the kinds of emotional and intellectual discomforts they are experiencing.

### **Relationships**

The importance of relationships within the classroom and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people was another key theme explored in reflective writing assessment items, particularly in ABTS3020:

I would hope that anyone with an awareness of these issues would be better equipped to work with Indigenous people and that for myself personally this knowledge will enable me to establish respectful and where possible, meaningful relationships (ABTS3020, essay 3)

I would hope that this will make me better equipped to work with Indigenous people (ABTS3020, essay 3)

Developing positive personal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is key to effectively carrying out research (ABTS3020, essay 4)

We have to interact with the community in order for them to act normally instead of having an unknown person in their home (ABTS3020, essay 6)

Developing long-lasting and meaningful relationships is an important theme discussed by scholars in Indigenous studies (see Barney & Solomon, 2009; Huggins, 2008; Mackinlay, 2008) and non-Indigenous people are increasingly being asked by Indigenous people to acknowledge their positioning and their place in the colonial story (Huggins, 1998; Smith, 1999). Reflective writing allows students to discuss these relationships and their roles in future if they work in Indigenous communities and with Indigenous peoples.

#### **Findings 4: Mapping Course Profiles onto EPIAM policy: What Pedagogical Approaches do Teacher's Enact to Achieve the Explicit Teaching and Learning Objectives of EPIAM within the ABTS Major?**

The course profiles, course information, learning objectives, lecture outline and assessment items from ABTS1000, ABTS2020, ABTS2010, ABTS2040 and ABTS3020 were mapped onto the specific teaching and learning statements in the EPIAM policy (See Appendix 2). Below I discuss how the general EPIAM statement about the significance of Indigenous Knowledge is embedded within the courses to illustrate how this was done. For other information on how the teaching and learning objectives of EPIAM are enacted in the courses see Appendix 2.

Overall, some of the EPIAM statements are more successfully incorporated and embedded than others. For example, the "contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning" was clearly achieved through inclusion of Indigenous lecturers and guest lecturers. Other EPIAM principles, such as "international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching" was less successfully implemented. Ways to ensure EPIAM in explicit within the ABTS courses are discussed further in section four.

## **Findings 5: Focus Group Interviews with Students: What is the Experience of these Pedagogical Approaches like for Learners in the Context of Tertiary Indigenous Australian studies?**

### **Dialogue**

The importance of dialogue as a teaching and learning approach was also emphasised by students during two focus group interviews. One student noted that the experience was of being talked “with” rather than “at”:

Michael Williams was speaking and it just resonated with me. The nature of being talking with rather than at, talking about reflecting on my perception of the world, my place in the world, in Australia. I thought this is the reason I am at uni...I’m really interested in learning for the sake of learning. I talked to Michael and a couple of other people and decided to throw myself into it (interview 1)

Other students noted the inclusive nature of this approach where all students’ perspectives are valued and the important learning they gained from their peers:

More relaxed, more inclusive, more dialogue. In normal classes you’re just talked to they don’t really care what you think. In these courses it seems like they genuinely try to find out what we do think and try to challenge those things. It’s a more holistic approach. Looking at whole learning experience rather than the check boxes I feel like they tick in Law. Say this sentence, say that, then assessment you just get a tick when you say each thing... (interview 1)

Learning from everyone in the group as well. Towards the end, I would have liked to continue further and to see where it would have gone further on (interview 2)

One student noted that this use of dialogue was similar to what they understood about Indigenous pedagogies but that it was still taking place in the Western setting of the university classroom:

We’d often sit there and yarn she’d call it, have our little yarning circles. It’s probably conducive to Indigenous ways. [but] In lots of ways it isn’t – it’s still in a Western setting, in a classroom, teacher on students... (interview 1)

Dialogic learning styles are considered central to many Indigenous pedagogies, whereby students and teachers “look after, learn from, and teach each other” (Davison, 1998, p. 8). Alongside dialogue and interaction with peers however, Indigenous pedagogy allows students to assert independence by “observing, listening and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction” (Battiste, 2002, p. 15). Another student noted

that they felt that dialogue was important for reconciliation processes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Australia:

Yarning, dialoguing is so important, that's what I got, like that dialoguing is so important for reconciliation (interview 1)

This aligns with reconciliation discourse that emphasis that engaging and continuing dialogue is a key feature of successful reconciliation. Komesaroff (2008, p. 6) notes that "untrammelled communication may not be possible but some kind of dialogical contact always is, at least where there is a readiness to pass beyond the tyranny of violence and fear". While Lederach (1999) suggests that reconciliation involves the creation of a "social space" where this communication across race, culture, religion and politics can occur. The ABTS classrooms create this "social space" where dialogue can occur.

### **Inclusion of Indigenous Australian Voices**

The inclusion and privileging of Indigenous voices was also a theme discussed by students in the focus group discussions. Students noted it was important to hear about Indigenous experiences directly from Indigenous people, whether that was through Indigenous lecturers in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, through guest lecturers or through video and audio stimulus:

I really found it was interesting to have a point of view of Aboriginal people to explain what they thought was the issue that was going on (interview 2)

I've really enjoyed learning from the Indigenous people in the Unit (interview 1)

We had some guest lectures from Jackie Huggins, Lionel Fogarty who came and talked about their books. It was very interesting to have lectures from the authors of the books (interview 2)

The importance of student's engaging with these Indigenous voices was also emphasised by a student in ABTS2010:

We had to include Aboriginal women's voices, first thing I did was go get a quote and she sat us down and said you actually have to call Indigenous people [for assignment] we learnt to do that, set up interviews, speak to Aboriginal people...(interview 1)

This emphasises the importance of student's actively engaging with Indigenous people through ABTS courses to come to an understanding of Indigenous people's experiences and their own positioning in this process.

### Reflection as a Teaching and Learning Tool

Students also noted that reflection was an effective teaching and learning approach in ABTS courses. Students noted that it allows space to explore their emotions and also to challenge and question their assumptions about Indigenous peoples, histories and cultures:

I think it's a good thing to do each week. By the end of the lecture you're confused, you really need to get something down, these are the important things, this is what I think about it (interview 2)

It gave a chance to talk about what you did in your dialogue then you had a week to reflect on that and write what you talked about in your dialogue and then change your views depending on what other people said (interview 2)

The process of having the discussion and writing them down afterwards, putting them on paper, handing them in, it does confirm what your ideas are (interview 2)

To know that you don't know everything and you don't make assumptions I think is better than to make ones that are going to be harmful...there aren't really easy answers, just finding more understanding of the questions and problems (interview 2)

Another student noted the difference in this reflective work to other courses she had done in Science and Law:

In many other areas Science, Law it is rote learning and you just look to the assessment and the end of the subject I never think back about it. Yet with these subjects it is really good to sit down think back over it and place it all in your fields of perception and consciousness and compare that to other things. To actually just sit down and think about everything you've learnt, how you feel about it, it's really valuable you get a lot more out of the course from doing that (interview 1)

A number of non-Indigenous students noted that reflection was important to work through identities as non-Indigenous people and their place in colonial history:

I've often questioned myself coming from a white perspective (interview 1)

Certainly I found it really important to recognise in ABTS2000 my inherent racism, a white woman in Australia, for me to acknowledge stuff about me and kind of set it free in that context rather than to make an assumption. I guess I'm very much into dialoguing about digging deeper and deeper and that's why reflection is so important because there will come a time when I'm working with vulnerable people and whether Indigenous or not and the power that I might give myself can directly affect someone

else and if I'm not used to reflecting then it can be a negative thing, and I've seen that happen all of my life (interview 1)

Reflection therefore has the potential to safely and sensitively create a space where a "pedagogy of discomfort" (Boler, 2004, p. 120) allows these strong reactions, difficult emotions and uncomfortable dialogues to be negotiated. Again this raises the question of the role of lecturers in helping students to work through the complexities of being non-Indigenous students studying Indigenous peoples and issues.

### **Challenging Assumptions**

Students discussed how through reflection, and the other approaches taken in the ABTS courses in general, their assumptions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures were challenged:

I came in with what I thought were reasonable assumptions, reasonable ideas regarding the issues and what had been attempted, what had worked and what hadn't. I think the difficult thing is not only have I had everything questioned and had to revisit all my views and opinions (interview 2)

It seems like they genuinely try to find out what we do think and try to challenge those things (interview 1)

That's what I thought, and my assumptions were challenged. (interview 1)

I'm glad I did it because if I hadn't done it I wouldn't have questioned what I thought (interview 2)

Another student noted that while it challenged her assumptions, it also helped her to build on the knowledge she already had about Indigenous issues and the way the materials become "part of you":

A really deep level of learning, it's not like rote learn this list of five million things, it's integrated into what you know already and how it fits into what you know and where it goes. It becomes part of you, it's not something you start off the top of your head because you learnt it, you see it on the page... (interview 2)

Here the engagement of the whole person is evident and ways ABTS classrooms open up the possibility for students to engage both with their minds and hearts.

### **Relationships**

The importance of relationships within the class between peers and between students and lecturers was also noted as a unique part of ABTS courses. One student noted that

after one course finished she travelled with a number of students to Kakadu in the Northern Territory:

You become really close to people as well. In one ABTS subject in I think it was ABTS2000 I did. Anyway three of us and another girl went to Kakadu after the course. We just kind of went together and we're still all good friends and yeah I feel closer to my lecturers like I feel...a responsibility as a student to share that knowledge appropriately and not inappropriately like in more Western contexts. (interview 1)

Similarly, another student noted that although the class fieldtrip had to be cancelled, the students arranged to undertake their own field trip to meet Aboriginal people:

The field trip was cancelled but we organised ourselves together anyway, and we actually met an Aboriginal elder that had an art gallery and we were able to learn about what her culture was, she was able to explain the paintings, why there's women's and men's paintings for example (interview 2)

Another student in the second focus group discussion also noted that the relationships she formed in tutorials continued outside of the classroom where they continued their dialogue about the issues:

After our tutorial we'd go and get coffee and continue what we were talking about 'cause we thought it was really important, we'd catch up during the week. Not because we wanted to be really good at what we were doing but just because we liked talking about the issues that were coming up in our tutorial (interview 2)

### **Respect and Responsibility**

The importance of respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the responsibility of students and lecturers to engage with the knowledge they have been given was another theme in the focus group discussions. A non-Indigenous student noted:

I was made to feel aware of a responsibility for my action in the future and try to see the different points of view because what we focus on it's so, the way we deal with it, justify it on they had good intentions or whatever but the fact is, it's still had such horrific implications for future generations it's really important to understand that to focus on that as well (interview 2)

The level of respect is different. Everyone respects each other (interview 1)

It's relaxed, [but] there's a responsibility (interview 1)

I feel...a responsibility as a student to share that knowledge appropriately (interview 1)

This points to the importance of the issues of accountability, respect and responsibility in relation to research with Indigenous people and issues.

**Findings 6 and 7: Focus group and individual interview with staff: What is the experience of these pedagogical approaches like for teachers in the context of tertiary Indigenous Australian studies? What teaching and learning approaches do lecturers think works and what could be improved?**

**Unique Teaching and Learning Approach but Difficult to Define**

The lecturers interviewed individually and in the focus group discussion noted that the teaching and learning approaches undertaken in the ABTS courses were “unique” but difficult to define:

But I think it is just a quite unique way that we apply teaching and impart the knowledge and learning to our students that is very different thing from the rest of the university (Jackie Huggins, focus group).

I still find it extremely difficult to put my finger on what it actually is that produces these results (Ian Lilley, focus group)

I’m not worried by not having a clear understanding of it, I think that’s part of its vibrancy (Michael Williams, focus group)

I think the strength has been that we all basically share the same goal and aspiration and frameworks so that we have that level of trust in each other (Sean Ulm, individual interview)

Despite the difficulty in defining the approach, staff noted that there are a number of commonalities in the approaches taken in ABTS courses which are discussed below.

**Problem-Based Learning (PBL)**

Staff noted that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is used in preference to many other approaches in ABTS classrooms. PBL involves students working in small groups with a lecturer or a tutor to discuss a set problem, followed by a systematic, student centred enquiry process:

Liz Mackinlay and I [Sean Ulm] sat down and completely redesigned the course to move away from a chalk and talk model to a PBL-based model which I’d seen Liz implement effectively in the other courses. This one seemed to be really well suited in subject matter to that sort of model. Basically we built it from the ground up retaining the contextual global perspective that Ian developed which worked really effectively



with the more applied PBLs and the response has been really good to that sort of framework. We try to canvass core issues that people will encounter and because the student group is so diverse now being a capstone for the major it's not really disciplinary-based in one discipline. I think that's a strength and a weakness. The strength is that the course has the ability to appeal to all those needs of the students in the course, but I think basically all the teaching staff come from an anthropology background so I think there is that coherency to it (Sean Ulm, individual interview)

PBLs really seemed to make a difference. I wouldn't have done it by choice simply because I wouldn't have thought of it and was a bit dubious about how it might work, but the students are really extended by the PBLs. They are really good ways of focusing on some of the issues (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

The use of PBL was investigated in detail in the 2010-11 ALTC funded project led by Elizabeth Mackinlay (see [www.teaching4change.edu.au](http://www.teaching4change.edu.au)). The study took place in five key centres: The University of Queensland, Monash University, University of Technology Sydney, Charles Darwin University and University of Newcastle (Mackinlay & Barney, 2010). The main aim of the project was to explore how PBL is enacted in Indigenous Australian Studies at universities offering comprehensive programs in Indigenous Australian Studies and what makes PBL transformative education in these contexts. An outcome of the project was a change in terminology—PBL has become PEARL. While the project team started with the term “PBL”, it became clear as the project progressed that the terminology being used was not politically or pedagogically appropriate. As the data began to reveal, the research team became increasingly uncomfortable with the colonial underpinnings and associations of the term “Problem-Based Learning” and began to explore the possibility of redefining what we do as something else entirely. The shift from PBL to PEARL was unexpected but has resulted in exciting possibilities for migrating and extending theories of teaching and learning in Indigenous Australian studies into critical pedagogy and critical race studies (Mackinlay & Barney, in press).

### **Storytelling**

The use of storytelling as a teaching and learning approach was also discussed by staff. Michael Williams described this as “a different way of talking” (Michael Williams, focus group). Jackie Huggins noted that storytelling was an important part of the pedagogical approach:

I think very much we are storytellers in the process, biographers as well, bring into it aspects from our life and our community, where we stand on certain political positions, in a very real way that sometimes is not structured, sometimes it is not chronological, is not lateral, it can be cyclical. All those ways to engage and to promote

and to speak in the words that we wish to get across. That is the real dynamic of our life (Jackie Huggins, focus group)

Non-Indigenous lecturers also use this storytelling method to explore their own experiences and engagement with Indigenous Australian issues. Ian Lilley notes:

I don't necessarily tell them stories that always show me in the kind of white knight or shining hero: here is what happened to me, sometimes I wasn't able to resolve the situation. But just doing stuff like that, it humanises it all (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

The importance of storytelling as a pedagogical approach is therefore used by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff to explore diverse topics relating to Indigenous Australian studies.

### **Inclusion of Indigenous Voices**

Lecturer's also noted the importance of including Indigenous voices throughout their courses by including guest lecturers where ever possible:

The other thing is that seems to me that we have an inordinate number of extra people coming in as guests from the community and we are prepared to accept a range of different views from the extreme to the other extreme. I think that influences the way we develop our thinking on things (Michael Williams, focus group)

Being able to bring in guest lecturers and that's the stuff that also makes a difference (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

Sean Ulm also raised the issue of the importance of having funding to bring guests in:

I'm concerned that we do [need to ] have more Indigenous voice in the course and I'm not sure of another way to do that (Sean Ulm, individual interview)

The use of video footage is another way that Indigenous voices are brought into the ABTS classroom.

### **Reflection**

Reflective writing and reflective journals are another key teaching and learning approach in the ABTS courses and plays an important role in challenging students expectations and assumptions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, assisting them to question their understandings of Indigenous issues, explore their own identities in relation to Indigenous people (see Barney & Mackinlay, 2010). Jackie Huggins described the teaching and learning approach as:

Teaching that is reflective as well and gets them thinking about themselves just as much and how much their whiteness in fact mitigates or informs their learnings and how they are able to apply this in the process (Jackie Huggins, focus group)

Similarly, Sean Ulm noted that:

[Reflection] clearly resonates well that all the philosophy that runs through all the courses allowing people to examine their personal responsibility and orientation and feeling. It's one of the few tools that allows people to critique the way they feel about things and try to articulate with reference to a body of theory that there's reasons why people feel particular ways about things and reflection's are really good way for people to challenge those underlying assumptions might be to do with their socialisation or the way their peer group feels about your issues rather than necessarily how, bringing their critical view to their own feelings they can explore those things. That's the critical thing they need in the field (individual interview with Sean Ulm)

Liz Mackinlay agreed and emphasised that:

I think that is about, you were talking about reflection Jackie, in all my courses I am always modelling on how to be reflective in the things that I say and how I interrogate myself. The teaching—as well is getting students to reflect—is reflective (Liz Mackinlay, focus group)

Reflection is therefore an important tool for ABTS teachers to think critically about their teaching in order to be self-aware and critically reflective on their teaching. It also allows space for students to acknowledge the role of emotion in their learning and to recognise their prior experience and thoughts. It created student awareness of learning to be gained from reflection and helped them to identify themes and patterns in their reflections. It also helped students to be able to relate their reflections to relevant literature on Indigenous performance and illustrated changes in understanding about Indigenous performance. These outcomes align with the literature which highlights the benefits of reflective writing as a tool for facilitating student learning in higher education (e.g., Clarke, 2004; English & Gillen, 2001; George, 2002; Ling, 2005; Morrison, 1996; Moon, 2006; Patton, 2006).

### **Emotions**

Undertaking Indigenous studies can be both emotionally and intellectually challenging. Discussion in and around Indigenous Australian issues necessarily involves talking about the violence of colonialism, the racism often inherent in white imaginings of Indigenous people, and the continued oppression of Indigenous people today. This is, as hooks (1994,

p. 154) describes—difficult material. It moves away from that—cozy, good feeling into the realms of awkward memory and knowing (McConaghy, 2003, p. 11). Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students can find themselves exploring, experiencing and processing emotions, memories, and other aspects of themselves that were previously unknown (Butterwick & Selman, 2003, p. 14). These emotions are acknowledged by the teaching staff and the importance of giving students the skills to ask difficult questions and engage emotionally and personally with intellectual material was emphasised:

Giving them intellectual resources if you like, emotional resources too, to deal with what can be extremely confronting issues that arise either physically when you go to the field or dealing with people in the office just having to read through stuff. And I think the mix of chalk and talk and PBL and personal anecdote seems do the trick in that regard (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

Michael also noted the importance of lecturers being open about their own emotions in the classroom:

As you said (Liz) “we don’t hide from them” and that is one of the defining features of what we do we are open to them we open ourselves to them we don’t hide behind our roles. We are very open to being accessed (Michael Williams, focus group)

ABTS classroom provides an opportunity for students and lecturers to air and talk through the kinds of emotional and intellectual discomforts they are experiencing, and via this discursive exchange create the possibility to replace old ways of knowing and being with something new (Boler, 2004, p. 129).

### **Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Staff**

While there is debate about the place of non-Indigenous researchers and teachers within Indigenous studies, all of the ABTS staff noted the roles that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff in the Unit play. Jackie Huggins noted that:

We all speak the same language, which is really true. We think the same, in terms of the same philosophy, we have to reach and strike students to enable their productivity and their ways of knowing and their learning, I think it's quite powerful (Jackie, focus group)

Ian Lilley noted that being a non-Indigenous teacher is not always an easy position but that Indigenous students accept his approach:

In the past when I have had Indigenous students ... who have come on staff and gone on to other things, they have all reacted positively. I think they all go into the course

with some trepidation of this white fella up here telling us all this kind of stuff and come out seeing things in a very positive light. I have never had a negative response to that course from any of the Indigenous people who have been in it. Some are pretty stropy people so I'm pretty pleased with that. And in that sense it works both ways, with the non-Indigenous students and the [Indigenous students] (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

This connects closely with the importance of relationships between staff and also between staff and students who take ABTS courses.

### **Relationships**

The importance of meaningful relationships between staff and between staff and students was emphasised as another important feature of ABTS courses:

I think that the basic tenement is the relationship that we all have between us as well as the relationship that we are able to form with students and other parts of the Academy (Jackie Huggins, focus group).

Liz Mackinlay noted that relationships were extremely important in the classroom and reflected on the importance of relationship as a teaching and learning approach (see Mackinlay, 2005):

The approach we adopt is to stay true to the way I have been taught and that's to sustain a sense of family or relationship as a basis for any teaching approach. And that is relationship in a very broad sense both to a relationship with yourself and to the material you are talking about and to Indigenous people: so trying to always sustain that sense of connectedness and not objectivity at any level, because if we're trying to enact a social justice, we don't do ourselves any favours by being disconnected. I think I try and model and be true to my own teachers and try to teach in a similar way (Liz Mackinlay, focus group)

The importance of these relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and responsibilities to Indigenous peoples was also emphasised by Michael Williams:

The relationship issue is very important. We spend a lot of time - more time than I have observed in other departments - spending with students, taking the time to get to know them as the relationship develops (Michael Williams, focus group)

### **Reflecting on the EPIAM Policy**

All of the staff reflected on the importance of the EPIAM policy. Michael highlighted that the ABTS courses linked closely with the policy:

For me it is how we work out exactly what the task is, what we are doing that represents a model to engage with the EPIAM policy. We have Indigenous knowledge content, engagement with community, we talk to ourselves [laughs]. It is one of those things that is difficult to get a pitch on. I am still thinking through the relationship of EPIAM to what we are doing. Clearly we're doing what the EPIAM is asking, how that then impacts on students and other staff when they are confronted with it - most people are willing to engage with it and see the issues and the commonsense approach to it (Michael Williams, focus group)

Ian Lilley agreed and suggested that ABTS3020 is driven by the principles found in the EPIAM policy:

the EPIAM document came out of the same sorts of thinking in the Unit amongst the staff that produced courses like 3020 and some of the other ones particularly 3020 I would say and various attempts at 1000, in that it really is a course driven by my understanding of the issues behind the EPIAM document and the need to help the wider community feel better with the issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs generally, research in particular. And so you read through the EPIAM document, the reconciliation statements, those issues of bringing understanding of both sides is really important (Ian Lilley, individual interview)

Liz Mackinlay pointed out that the EPIAM policy gives official sanction to the ways all of the ABTS lecturers attempt to teach and contribute towards social justice for Indigenous Australians:

For me, even though EPIAM has only come in recently, one thing I see the document doing is giving official credence to some of the more political and social justice motivations we have for teaching so we can use that as a platform for very actively - rather than under the radar - but to be more active as teachers in doing some of those things in education settings that can work towards the other political and social justice through education aims. It gives us greater reign, push and backing to do that (Liz Mackinlay, focus group)

Sean Ulm noted that all of the ABTS courses provided students with exploring other ways of knowing which is at the core of EPIAM:

At the heart of the EPIAM document is the idea to embed other ways of knowing across the curriculum so that our graduates are more tolerant of other ways of viewing the world rather than a Western tradition. I think that all of the ABTS offer the opportunity for students to explore other ways of thinking about things. I think more and more areas of the University are open to those sorts of ideas. Courses

like ABTS3020 directly challenge students to re-examine the validity of viewing particular problems from one angle. The whole pedagogical framework is about challenging those traditional and encouraging students to adopt a more multi-vocal view of issues. I think unless these sorts of courses are supported by other courses that students are doing across the University the success of those may not ultimately be as successful as they could be (Sean Ulm, individual interview)

At the same time, Ian Lilley emphasised that before this project there had not been any specific analysis of the ways that EPIAM is explicitly included in the ABTS courses:

We haven't looked back and said "how do we make that explicit?"...We have got the EPIAM document, we just cut and paste essentially from the EPIAM document into our graduate attributes and then it becomes explicitly—in course outlines—we tell the students explicitly what we are doing, not just hope they get it because they're in our class. We actually put it there in the words of the EPIAM document. That's sort of like phase 2: up until now the EPIAM has come out of what we do. Now we need to feed back into what we do, from the EPIAM document as a formal instrument of university policy to make clear and explicit in all our paperwork that that's what we are doing and refer to the fact that it is there (Ian Lilley, focus group)

Clearly, the EPIAM policy is important and implicit within the teaching and learning approach taken by staff in the ABTS major. However, post-project implementation will involve making EPIAM more explicit in courses through discussing EPIAM in ABTS classes, including EPIAM statements in course profiles, learning objectives and assessment items. This will be discussed further in the overall findings.

## Overall Findings

The findings illustrate that Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at The University of Queensland all use very similar approaches in their classrooms: reflection, dialogue and storytelling as teaching and learning tools as well as Indigenous voices through Indigenous lecturers and/or Indigenous guests as teachers throughout their courses. Underpinning their teaching is the importance of developing relationships between teachers and students in teaching, inclusive curricula, and respect for the knowledge of Indigenous peoples is also emphasised in their teaching.

A number of staff also employ Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in their classrooms in preference to other approaches (Mackinlay & Barney, 2011). This is because the dialogic nature of PBL provides an opportunity for students and lecturers to air and discuss with each other the kinds of emotional and intellectual discomforts they are experiencing (Boler, 2004, p. 129). PBL approaches also have strong resonance with the autonomous, embodied and experiential nature of teaching and learning in Indigenous cultures (Hooley, 2000).

Focus group interviews with students, student free-writes, reflective assessment items, and classroom observations illustrate that student's experiences of these teaching and learning approaches were very positive. Students emphasised how their learning was enhanced through reflection and reflective writing, dialogue and interaction with Indigenous perspectives through Indigenous lecturers and Indigenous guests, and the personal narratives and experiences of non-Indigenous staff who work closely with Indigenous people. They emphasised that much of the material was challenging, at times emotionally difficult, and made them question their assumptions and expectations of Indigenous Australian issues and history. Yet reflection, collaboration and dialogue provided ways of working through this material. Students also provided suggestions for ways to improve individual courses, which will be explored by individual teaching staff. Individual and focus group interviews with staff illustrated that the teaching and learning approaches of staff are similar and they share similar goals. Staff attempt to challenge student's assumptions about Indigenous Australian issues through reflection, dialogue, building relationships with students, and giving students intellectual and emotional resources for respecting Indigenous knowledge and understanding colonial histories in Australia. Staff also attempt to include diverse Indigenous voices in their teaching yet strive to keep coherence in their courses. They all draw on their own research experiences working with Indigenous people in their teaching and emphasise that reflection is a critical part of Indigenous Australian studies courses at The University of Queensland. As



Chalmers' notes (2005, p. 163), the inclusion of Indigenous people's voices within the classroom:

does not involve inviting a local Indigenous dance troupe to come into your class to give you an exotic display of Indigenous "culture" and asking these Aboriginal tourist performers to paint up, blow their didgeridoo, clap their boomerangs and dance like animals. It does, however, mean getting local Indigenous people in to talk about themselves in the way in which they want you to "know" about and relate to them.

These sentiments are also emphasised by teaching staff who are very aware of colonial stereotypes of Indigenous Australian people and attempt to resist and challenge these assumptions and expectations through their teaching.

The analysis of data illustrates that the pedagogical approaches used by teachers in Indigenous Australian studies courses at The University of Queensland are enacting the goals of EPIAM. From mapping the courses onto EPIAM's goals, it is evident that the general EPIAM statements about teaching and learning, institutional objectives and specific education principles in EPIAM are implicit in the course profiles, outlines, learning objectives, lecture outlines and assessment items. Analysis of the data also illustrates that some specific statements in the courses relate directly to achieving EPIAM. Findings illustrate however, that the goals of EPIAM could be made more explicit in the course content, course profile, outline, learning objectives and assessment. The focus group interview with staff illustrated that while EPIAM was understood and implicit in the ways staff approach their courses, there was agreement that this could be made more explicit throughout courses. Focus group interviews with students and individual interviews with staff outside of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit who teach Indigenous Australian studies indicated that there is not wide awareness of the EPIAM document and this needs to be addressed through further circulation and discussion of EPIAM across The University of Queensland.

Reflective essays and journals are a feature of the assessment, and analysis of this assessment demonstrated that reflective writing allows space for students to explore their own identities in relation to Indigenous Australian knowledges and perspectives, make connections to theory, rethink initial reflections and question their understandings of Indigenous Australian issues. Non-Indigenous students in Indigenous Australian studies courses at The University of Queensland often speak and write about their feelings of shame and responsibility for Australia's history of colonisation. Maddison (2009) notes that non-Indigenous people are often so paralysed by "white guilt" that they are often unable to move beyond this paralysis. Analysis of students' reflective writing illustrates that it provided a space for students to articulate these feelings and write openly about

their emotions and the messy politics of relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people in Australia. Focus group interviews with students however illustrated that students often needed further guidance with reflective writing and further learning activities to facilitate and guide students' reflection. Models of pedagogy relating to EPIAM's teaching and learning policy objectives have begun to be developed. The models illustrate how the key teaching and learning processes used by lecturers are embedded within EPIAM's statements about teaching and learning, institutional objectives and specific education principles.

The project's major positive effects are that there is now an understanding of the experiences and effectiveness of pedagogical processes in Indigenous Australian studies at The University of Queensland for both students and teachers. This will help improve student's experiences undertaking these courses. It will also improve students' engagement and encounter with the discipline of Indigenous Australian studies and with Indigenous Australian peoples, cultures, and knowledges. The data collected from individual and focus group interviews, and assessment and reflective writing material indicates the successful types of pedagogy used in Indigenous Australian studies courses. This can be used to help other staff who teach Indigenous Australian studies across The University of Queensland use EPIAM-appropriate teaching and learning approaches that embed Indigenous ways of knowing into the curriculum. Further analysis of the teaching and learning enacted in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major will enable staff to focus on ways to retain students and ensure their successful completion of this program. This in turn addresses one of the key strategic goals of the EPIAM policy; that is, to promote and expand Indigenous Australian studies as a discipline.

Indigenous Australian studies is certainly an expanding discipline in universities across Australia and as Nakata notes (2006, p. 265), there is a need for "disciplinary and scholarly issues within Indigenous studies" to be "interrogated and yet retain the necessary cohesion and solidarity so important to the Indigenous struggle". The EPIAM policy could be adapted as a model by educators at other universities as a way of recognising and promoting understanding of and respect for Indigenous Australian peoples, their knowledge and cultures. Importantly other universities are also establishing their own policies and strategies (e.g., Indigenous Education Strategy at University of Sydney, The University of Melbourne's Reconciliation Action Plan) which highlights that Indigenous studies "is in a crucial phase of development" (Phillips, 2008, p. 1). The role of EPIAM beyond The University of Queensland will also be further explored through the newly established Australian Indigenous Studies Learning and Teaching Network. Funded by the Office of Learning and Teaching and led by myself, Cindy Shannon and Martin Nakata, the network will link with the policies and strategies of universities, engage in key discussions

on the core principles for Indigenous Australian studies and support links between universities that offer comprehensive programs of Indigenous Australian studies. Overall, the network will extend the work of this project by providing an important platform from which scholars can strengthen teaching and learning processes within Indigenous Australian studies, to educate students and assist them in translating their new awareness and understanding into positive thought, practical action and change towards a more socially-just Australian society.

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## Appendix 1 Relevant EPIAM Statements about Teaching and Learning

<b>General EPIAM statements about teaching &amp; learning</b>
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community.
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.
Embed into the University's curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.
<b>Institutional objectives</b>
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University's academic programs.
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching.
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and communities.
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples.
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities.
<b>Specific educational principles</b>
Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy.
Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula.
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples.
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula.

## Appendix 2 Mapping of Courses onto EPIAM Statements

ABTS1000: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Approaches to Knowledge	Course profile	Course information	Learning objectives	Lecture outline	Assessment items
<b>General EPIAM statements about T &amp; L</b>					(tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam)
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community	Y	Y “course drawing extensively upon Indigenous Australian (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) history and culture to provide insight into contemporary Australian issues”	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y throughout the course incorporate Indigenous knowledge	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.	Y	Y “providing a series of lectures from as academic viewpoint, the program will attempt to draw upon the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from a diverse range of backgrounds through occasional guest lecturers/speakers”, “community Elders and guest speakers will be presenting”.	Y 1, 4	Y throughout the course: Norm, Kym, Stanley, Janine	Y tutorial diaries
Embed into the	Y	Y “As well as providing a series of	Y 1, 2, 3,	Y course topics	Y tutorial diaries

University's curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.		lectures from as academic viewpoint, the program will attempt to draw upon the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from a diverse range of ...this will provide students with a unique perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experience as well as the broader human experience in Australia".	4, 5, 6	throughout incorporate Indigenous knowledge	
<b>Institutional objectives</b>					
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University's academic programs	Y	Y "the program will attempt to draw upon the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from a diverse range of backgrounds".	Y 1, 2, 3	Y each course topic incorporates Indigenous worldviews	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching	Y	Y?	Y 5, 6?	Y inclusion of Native American perspectives and lectures by Michael Redshirt and his sister Carol	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and	Y	Y "Students should be aware that Aboriginal and TSI community protocol required them to remain in lectures and performances	Y 1	Y each week traditional owners acknowledged,	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam

communities		conducted by senior people from the community until the speaker or performer has finished. This protocol is out of respect to our community Elders”		discussion of protocols womens/mens business etc	
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples	Y	Y no specific statement	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y each course topic incorporates Indigenous knowledge, particularly early in the course the topics focus on Indigenous Knowledge	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities	Y	Y no specific statement	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y Guest lecturers and each topic incorporates Indigenous Knowledge	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
<b>Specific educational principles</b>					
Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge,	Y	Y “community Elders...will be presenting or participating in certain lectures”.	Y 1	Y Guest lecturers from Aboriginal community	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam

views and traditions inform education and pedagogy					
Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula	Y	Y no specific statement	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y “students progress as co-learning and take full advantage of the availability of guest lectures conducted by senior people from the community”	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples	Y	Y “this will provide students with unique perspective on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s experiences...engage with the experiences of Indigenous people in contemporary Australian society”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y Use of dialogue	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula;	Y	Y “students will be expected to engage critically with key issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs”.	Y	Y Sharing our different viewpoints demonstrates this respect ... that these classes are designed to	Y tutorial diaries, negotiated group statement, take home exam

				model and promote.	
<b>ABTS2010: Aboriginal women</b>	<b>Course profile</b>	<b>Course outline</b>	<b>Learning objectives</b>	<b>Lecture outline</b>	<b>Assessment items</b>
<b>General EPIAM statements about T &amp; L</b>					
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community	Y	Y “the word and knowledge of Aboriginal women themselves”.	Y 1	Y 2: Understanding issues in contemporary society 3: Cultural heritage 4: native title and land rights	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.	Y	Y “Lectures and tutorials presented by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women”.	Y 2	Y Kim, Jackie and other guests	Y Oral presentation, research essays and reflection
Embed into the University’s curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.	Y	Y “analyse mainstream representation and discourses of Aboriginal women with the word and knowledge of Aboriginal women themselves”.	Y 1, 2, 3	Y course topics throughout incorporate Indigenous knowledge	Y Oral presentation, possibly research essays
<b>Institutional objectives</b>					
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of	Y	Y “recognition and critical understanding of the social, political and cultural roles of Aboriginal women in	Y 1, 2, 3,	each course topic incorporates Indigenous	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University's academic programs		contemporary Aboriginal and mainstream societies".		worldviews	
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching	?	Y? "academic research and discussion, recognition and critical understanding of the social, political and cultural roles of Aboriginal women in contemporary Aboriginal and mainstream societies".	Y 4	Y Week 3: Aboriginal women's rights: A global perspective	Y? Possibly Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and communities	Y	Y "critical understanding of the social, political and cultural roles of Aboriginal women..."	Y? (implicit in 1, 2, 3, 4)	Y implicit throughout course	Y? Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples	Y	Y "analyse mainstream representation and discourses of Aboriginal women with the word and knowledge of Aboriginal women themselves".	Y 1, 2, 3	Y each course topic incorporates Indigenous women's knowledge esp. Week 4 and 5	Y? Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities	?	Y "analyse mainstream representation and discourses of Aboriginal women with the word and knowledge of Aboriginal women themselves".	Y 1, 2, 3, 4	Y Guest lecturers and each topic focuses on Indigenous women's Knowledge	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
<b>Specific educational</b>					



<b>principles</b>					
Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy	Y	Y “Lectures and tutorials presented by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4	Y each topic draws on knowledge, worldviews and traditions held by senior women	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula	Y	Y “through academic research and discussion...students and lecturers explore historical and contemporary issues identified as relevant by Aboriginal women”.	Y 4	Y Guests, use of PBL,	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples	Y	Y “presenting balanced viewpoints to redress misinformed and inaccurate perceptions and understandings of Aboriginal women today”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4	Y all topics	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula;	Y	Y...”critical understanding of the social political and cultural roles of Aboriginal women...balanced viewpoints to redress .misinformed and inaccurate perceptions of Aboriginal women today”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4	Y Throughout the course	Y Oral presentation, research essays, personal reflection

ABTS2020: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Approaches to Knowledge	Course profile	Course outline	Learning objectives	Lecture outline	Assessment items
<b>General EPIAM statements about T &amp; L</b>					(Triad, written assignment and reflective oral)
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community	Y	Y “Philosophy and ethics of teaching and learning applied in this program aim to model Indigenous approaches to knowledge”.	Y 1, 3, 5, 6	Y throughout the course Week 1: overview of Aboriginal approaches to knowledge 2: Land 3: Ed and Indigenous knowledge 4: Dreaming 5: cross-cultural communication 6. Identity and communication 7. morality 8. art 9. Indig knowledge and context 11. TSI 12. Indigenous	Y Triads, assignment, oral

				science	
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.	Y	Y “Guest lectures conducted by senior people from the Aboriginal and TSI community”.	Y 4	Y throughout the course: Michael, others	Y Triads, assignment, oral
Embed into the University’s curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.	Y	Y “This program aims to challenge students with info about Indigenous cultures while engaging them in an Indigenous knowledge/learning paradigm”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y course topics throughout incorporate Indigenous knowledge	Y
<b>Institutional objectives</b>					
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University’s academic programs	Y	Y “Indigenous knowledge is making sense of the world”. “The aim of establishing a balanced understanding of any given aspect of Indigenous worldviews”.	Y 5	Y each course topic incorporates Indigenous worldviews	Y Triads, assignment, oral
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching	?	Y “Staff and students are required to engage in open and frank discussions in which the widest possible range of views can be presented or challenged”.	Y 2	probably?	Y Triads, assignment, oral
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and	Y	Y “Students should be aware that Aboriginal and TSI community protocol required them to remain in lectures and performances	Y 1	Y Week 1, Week 5: cross-cultural communication, Week 6: cultural	Y Possibly triad, assignment, oral

communities		conducted by senior people from the community until the speaker or performer has finished”.		identity and communication	
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples	Y	Y “Indigenous knowledge...is a living knowledge and its very nature demands that it remain in a state of becoming to maintain the vitality of our learning together”.	Y 1, 3, 5, 6	Y each course topic incorporates Indigenous knowledge paradigms	Y Triads, assignment, oral
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities	Y	Y “Respect is a key principle for the success of this learning paradigm...sharing our different viewpoints demonstrates this respect within the boundaries of personal, cultural and religious integrity and dignity that these classes are designed to model and promote.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y Guest lecturers and each topic focuses on Indigenous Knowledge	Y Triads, assignment, oral
<b>Specific educational principles</b>					
Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy	Y	Y “Guest lectures conducted by senior people from the Aboriginal and TSI community”.	Y 4	Y Guest lecturers from Aboriginal community	Y Possibly triads, assignment, oral
Development of strategies	Y	Y “Respect is a key principle for	Y 1, 2, 3,	Y the program is	Y Triads, assignment,

to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula		the success of this learning paradigm,,, sharing our different viewpoints demonstrates this respect within the boundaries of personal, cultural and religious integrity and dignity that these classes are designed to model and promote ”.	4, 5, 6	explicitly structured to guide each individual student towards a personal engagement with the knowledge presented	oral
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples	Y	Y “In the Indigenous knowledge paradigm students are required to be co-learners through addressing their own interpretations of meaning at a deep personal level and supporting others as they attempt to learn openly communicating their questions, perceptions and feelings”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y Use of discussions, videos, dialogue	Y Triads, written essay, oral
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula;	Y	Y “Respect is a key principle for the success of this learning paradigm, sharing our different viewpoints...”	Y 4	Y Sharing our different viewpoints demonstrates this respect ... that these classes are designed to model and promote.	Y Triads, assignment, oral



<b>ABTS2040 Black Australian Literature</b>	<b>Course profile</b>	<b>Course introduction</b>	<b>Learning objectives</b>	<b>Lecture outline</b>	<b>Assessment items</b>
<b>General EPIAM statements about T &amp; L</b>					Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community	Y	Y we shall we considering the power and intent of Indigenous Australian literature	Y 1, 2, 3, 4,	Y the course topics discuss Aboriginal society, songs, stories, legends, rituals, and focuses on periods of writing	Y Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.	Y	Y no specific statement	Y 1, 5	Taught by Sam, with guest lecturers including Yvette Holt, Anita Heiss, Denis Foley, Elders from community	Y Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Embed into the University's curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.	Y	Y development of the Indigenous literary voice	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Y the course topics discuss Aboriginal society, songs, stories, legends, rituals, and focuses on periods of writing	Y Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
<b>Institutional objectives</b>					
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in	Y	Y trace the development of the Indigenous literary voice	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Y topics from perspectives of Indigenous writers	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay

the University's academic programs					
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching	Y	Y?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	?	
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and communities	Y	Y?	Y 1	Y discussion of protocols throughout lectures	Tutorial presentation?, written tutorial paper?, essay?
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples	Y	Y you will ultimately increase your understanding of the purpose of Black writing, raise your awareness of the development of the Indigenous literary voice and examine how Indigenous writers use their page to explore the relationships between land, people and their own mythology".	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Y Sam, with guest lecturers including Yvette Holt, Anita Heiss, Denis Foley, Elders from community	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities	Y	Y trace the development of the Indigenous literary voice	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Y lectures on land, Aboriginal society, songs, stories, legends, rituals, and focuses on periods of writing	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
<b>Specific educational principles</b>					
Recognition of the knowledge, worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and	Y	Y we shall also look at the role of the individual within the tribal community and the complexity of the tribal structure...	Y 1, 3, 4,	Y Guest lecture from senior elder in Brisbane Indigenous	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay



how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy				community	
Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula	Y	Y no specific statement	Y 1	Y Guests	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples	Y	Y a general introduction to Indigenous writing and the history and development of the Indigenous literary voice	Y 1	Y throughout course	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula;	Y	Y we shall we considering the strength and purpose of Black writing	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Y throughout course	Tutorial presentation, written tutorial paper, essay

<b>ABTS3020: Working with Indigenous peoples</b>	<b>Course profile</b>	<b>Course outline</b>	<b>Learning objectives</b>	<b>Lecture outline</b>	<b>Assessment items</b>
<b>General EPIAM statements about T &amp; L</b>					
Acknowledgement of the significant value of Indigenous Knowledge in enriching the University community	Y	Y	Y 1, 2,	Y Week 8: community directed and academic research  PBL 2: Waiting for Harry  Week 9: cross-cultural communication  PBL 3: Mungo lady	Blackboard resource discovery – focus on an Indigenous scholar;  PBL essays – critical response to one of questions  Reflective essay – reflecting on way you have engaged with theories, knowledges, and discourses
Contribution of Indigenous staff and students in educating others about Indigenous Knowledge and ways of learning.	Y	Y “Our emphasis on the diversity of Indigenous worldviews is enhanced by occasional guest lectures by Indigenous scholars and community members”.	Y 1, 2, 3	Y, through out the course	? Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Embed into the University’s curriculum Indigenous Knowledge alongside traditional discipline content.	Y	Y	Y 1, 2, 3	Y throughout the course	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
<b>Institutional objectives</b>					
Incorporate understanding of the worldviews and intellectual	Y	Y “major theoretical and practical questions raised by	Y 1, 2, 3	Y PBL 2, 3 and lectures	Blackboard resource discovery,

traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the University's academic programs		Indigenous and non-Indigenous commentators from a range of scholarly and political persuasions".			PBL essays, reflective essay
Facilitate international understanding between and about Indigenous peoples on the basis of the highest levels of scholarship in teaching	Y	Y "engages with some of the main conceptual and practical issues that arise in working with Indigenous people, especially in research contexts. The focus is on Australia, but examples will also be drawn from Asia, the Pacific and the Americas".	Y 1	Y Week 9:cross-cultural communication and through out	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Inclusion of the protocols and ethical considerations for working with Indigenous peoples and communities	Y	Y "this course aims to provide you with a broad understanding of the ethical, conceptual and practical issues encountered in working with Indigenous people".	Y 1, 2, 3,	Y throughout course	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Nurture and promote the expansion of Indigenous Knowledge as an academic discipline based on the worldviews and intellectual traditions of Indigenous peoples	Y	Y?	Y 1,2, 3	Y throughout course	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Secure and maintain the pivotal role of Indigenous Knowledge in teaching and encourage this recognition by local, national and international communities	Y	?	Y 1, 2, 3	Y throughout course	
<b>Specific educational principles</b>					
Recognition of the knowledge,	Y	Y "guest lectures by Indigenous	Y 1, 2, 3	Y Guest lectures	Blackboard

worldviews and intellectual traditions held by senior people in Indigenous communities and how their knowledge, views and traditions inform education and pedagogy		scholars and community members”.		from Michael, and throughout course	resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Development of strategies to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge in curricula	Y	Y “participation in the problem-based learning packages...”	Y 5	Y use of PBL	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Recognition and action upon the responsibility to facilitate understanding between and about Indigenous peoples	Y	Y “help you engage critically in discourses about Indigenous Australian people and cultures”.	Y 3	Y throughout course	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay
Students are provided with the opportunity to further develop, maintain and respect an understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian issues through inclusive curricula;	Y	Y “Indigenous Australian lives, experiences, cultures, histories and ways of knowing”.	Y 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Y throughout course, particularly PBL	Blackboard resource discovery, PBL essays, reflective essay

## Appendix 3. Information Sheet for Students

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### PROJECT TITLE:

**Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous  
Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland**  
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS (Cohort 1 – Students)

Our names are Liz Mackinlay, Michael Williams, Jackie Huggins, Sam Watson, Sean Ulm, Ian Lilley and Kate Barney and we are undertaking research as part of an examination of teaching and learning processes in Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland. This research is being conducted as part of a research project through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland.

The primary purpose of this research is to examine how the “Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters” (EPIAM) policy are achieved in teaching, curriculum and assessment approaches by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Faculty of Arts. The results [of this project will help improve students’ engagement with the discipline of Indigenous Australian Studies and with Indigenous Australian peoples, cultures, and knowledges. Knowing what kinds of teaching processes are successful in “ABTS” classrooms will enhance student and teacher interaction in future offerings.

This research will be conducted from July 2008 to July 2009. Participants will be required to partake in reflective writing activities about their perceptions and experiences. Participants will also be invited to participate in a focus group interview on their experiences as a student undertaking Indigenous Australian Studies at the conclusion of the semester. With the permission of participants, classroom activities, discussions and interviews will be audio and video recorded for documentation and analysis purposes.

The focus group interview will take place at the University of Queensland in a location will be negotiated with the participant. The research session with each participant will take approximately 1 hour. All participants will be given the opportunity during and after the interview to discuss the processes and products of the project.

Participation in this research project is confidential, voluntary and each participant has a right to withdraw at any time. The data will remain in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland and stringent conditions will apply regarding who has access to this material. It is anticipated that some of the findings from the research will be published in scholarly journals, presented in conference and seminar papers, and included in a written research report. Participant’s identities will not be disclosed at any time.

This study also adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the Research Officer on this project (Kate Barney), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer on 07-3365-3924.

## Appendix 4 Participant Consent Form for Students

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### PROJECT TITLE:

**Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous  
Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland**

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM Cohort 1 (Students)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name), give my consent to participate in the research project titled: “Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland”.

I have read the information sheet and I consent to undertake reflective writing activities on my experiences as a student studying Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland

Yes

No

I understand that classroom activities may be video recorded and that I may be interviewed by the researchers about my experiences as a student undertaking Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland.

I give my permission for the classroom activities and interview to be audio and video taped for research purposes (please tick one of the boxes below)

Yes

No

I hereby declare that I understand my participation in the research project is voluntary. I understand that the information I provide to the researchers is confidential and that the information obtained from me and my identity will not be disclosed publicly (please tick one of the boxes below).

Yes

No

I am also aware that I am in a position to negotiate this with the researchers at any time and I am free to withdraw from the research project at any time without being compelled to stay.

I understand that the information I give in this research project will be used for study purposes on which the University of Queensland's "Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters" (EPIAM) policy are achieved in teaching, curriculum and assessment approaches by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Faculty of Arts and that it may be published in book or journal article form and presented in conference and seminar papers.

I give my permission for my interview data and written responses to be held securely and stored at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland for the duration of this project (please tick one of the boxes below).

Yes

No



I am aware that one of the results of this project will be the production of a written research report which will be available on-line via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit website and that my identity will never be disclosed.

Participant's signature:

.....

Date: ...../...../.....

Signature of witness:

.....

Date: ...../...../.....

## Appendix 5 Information Sheet for Staff

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### PROJECT TITLE:

**Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous  
Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland**  
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS (Cohort 2 – Lecturers)

Our names are Liz Mackinlay, Michael Williams, Jackie Huggins, Sam Watson, Sean Ulm, Ian Lilley and Kate Barney and we are undertaking research as part of an examination of teaching and learning processes in Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland. This research is being conducted as part of a research project through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland.

The primary purpose of this research is to examine how the “Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters” (EPIAM) policy are achieved in teaching, curriculum and

assessment approaches by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Faculty of Arts. This research will be conducted from July 2008 to July 2009. The results of this project will help improve students' engagement with the discipline of Indigenous Australian Studies and with Indigenous Australian peoples, cultures, and knowledges. Knowing what kinds of teaching processes are successful in "ABTS" classrooms will enhance student and teacher interaction in future offerings. Participants will be required to partake in group and individual interviews on their experiences as a teacher of Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland. With the permission of participants, classroom activities, discussions and interviews will be audio and/or video recorded for documentation and analysis purposes.

The group interview and individual interview will take place at the University of Queensland in a location will be negotiated with the participant. The group interview will take approximately 30 minutes and the individual research session with each participant will take approximately 30 minutes. All participants will be given the opportunity during and after the interviews to discuss the processes and products of the project.

Participation in this research project is voluntary and each participant has a right to withdraw at any time. The data will remain in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland and stringent conditions will apply regarding who has access to this material. It is anticipated that some of the findings from the research will be published in scholarly journals, presented in conference and seminar papers, and included in a written research report. Participants will be consulted before any information is made public.

This study also adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the Research Officer on this project (Kate Barney), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer on 07-3365-3924.

## Appendix 6. Participant Consent Form for Staff

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### PROJECT TITLE:

**Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous  
Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland**

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM Cohort 2 (Lecturers)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name), give my consent to participate in the research project titled: “Teaching, Learning, and Enacting the Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters (EPIAM) at the University of Queensland”.

I have read the information sheet and I understand that I will be interviewed by the researchers about my experiences as a lecturer teaching Indigenous Australian Studies at the University of Queensland.

I give my permission for classroom activities and the interview to be audio and/or video taped for research purposes (please tick one of the boxes below)

- Yes
- No

I hereby declare that I understand my participation in the research project is voluntary. I understand the information obtained from me and my identity will not be disclosed publicly unless I specifically give my permission (please tick one of the boxes below).

- Yes
- No

I am also aware that I am in a position to negotiate this with the researchers at any time and I am free to withdraw from the research project at any time without being compelled to stay.

I understand that the information I give in this research project will be used for study purposes on which the University of Queensland’s “Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters” (EPIAM) policy are achieved in teaching, curriculum and assessment approaches by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major within the Faculty of Arts and that it may be published in book or journal article form and presented in conference and seminar papers.

I give my permission for my interview data to be held securely and stored at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland for the duration of this project (please tick one of the boxes below).

- Yes
- No

I am aware that one of the results of this project will be the production of a written research report which will be available on-line via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit website and that I will be consulted and my full consent given before any information obtained from me is used in this written report.

Participant’s signature:

.....

Date: ...../...../.....

Signature of witness:

.....

Date: ...../...../.....

## Appendix 7 Draft Interview Questions for Students

Tell me about your experience in this course? How would you describe what happened?

What made you interested in ABTS courses?

What did you learn about Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges?

Were your expectations or assumptions about Indigenous Australian studies challenged?

Which module in the course had the most impact on you? Why?

How would you describe the teaching approach? How does it fit with your understanding of Indigenous knowledge and cultures?

Are you aware of the EPIAM policy?

How effective do you think the assessment methods were?

What was your experience of the assessment for this course?

The course used reflective writing as assessment. What do you now understand by the terms “reflection” and “reflective writing”?

Were you given enough guidance on the reflective journal?

How did writing a reflective journal help you to rethink and reconsider your understandings of Indigenous Australian people?

In what ways did writing the reflective journal challenge your assumptions about Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges?

In what ways did using the reflective journal confirm your expectations of Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges?

Do you think you might use what you have learnt about reflection in any future courses?

Are you likely to write your reflections down for other purposes?

What changes can you suggest to improve this course?

Will you do any more ABTS courses?

## Appendix 8 Draft Interview Questions for Lecturers

Can you describe the course you teach?

Can you describe your experience as a teacher in this course?

What do you hope students learnt about Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges from your course?

What kinds of teaching and learning approaches do you think are most successful in your ABTS classroom?

How effective do you think the assessment methods were?

Which assessment item do you think was most effective in meeting the course aims and objectives?

How do you think the reflective essays/journals assisted students?

Are you familiar with Education Principles on Indigenous Australian Matters (EPIAM) policy?

In what ways do you think the EPIAM objectives are enacted in your course?

What do you see as the main issues facing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies major at UQ?

## Appendix 9 Student Freewrite Questions

### Freewrite 1

What do you hope to learn in this course?

What do you expect to learn from the assessment?

What do you understand by the terms “reflection” and “reflective writing”?

### Freewrite 2

Describe your experiences in this course so far.

What have you learnt about Indigenous peoples, cultures, knowledges?

Can you comment on how your expectations of Indigenous Australian studies have been challenged.

How effective do you think the assessment methods have been so far?

Would you suggest any changes or improvements to this course so far?

### Freewrite 3

Overall, how would you describe your experience in this course?

What was the best aspect of the course?

Can you suggest any improvements for this course?

Do you think the assessment has effectively assessed your learning?

Which assessment item was most engaging and helpful for your learning?

Will you consider undertaking another ABTS course at UQ?