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Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers

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Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers

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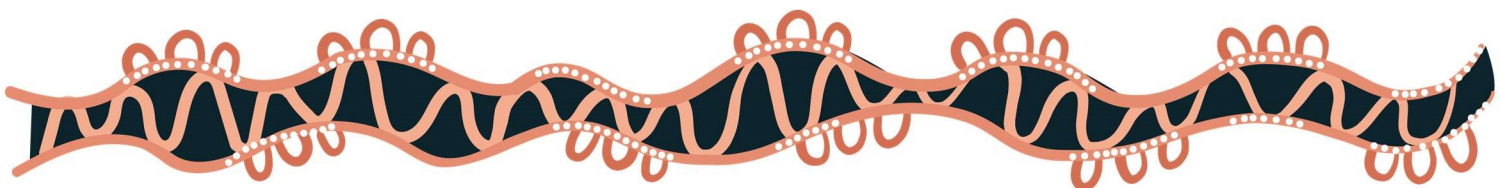
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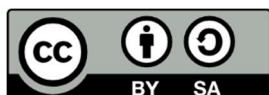
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www.yourstoryourjourney.net



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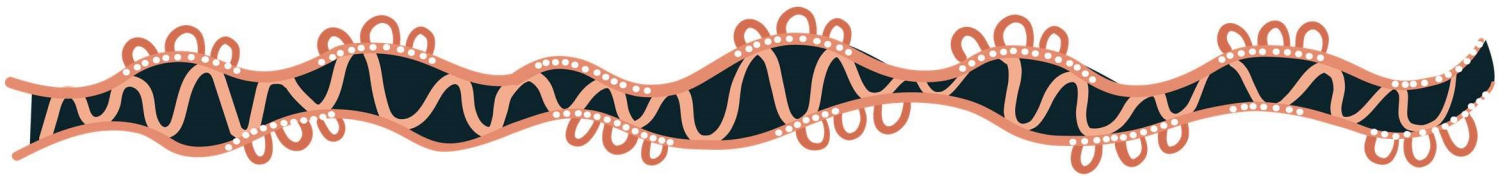
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List of acronyms used

AITSL Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

APST Australian Professional Teaching Standards

Executive summary

The *Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* two-year project has culminated in a unique interactive website (see www.yourstoryourjourney.net) that houses a number of learning and teaching tools, strategies and resources designed to support all those working to improve the educational success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools, Australia's First Nations peoples. It is intended to be used in teacher education programs (pre-service and in-service), by teachers and school leaders, and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The resource has been created to help all educators form relationships and partnerships with local communities, parents and caregivers to achieve better educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The resource positions educators as powerful agents of change.

The project began from the premise that school education has traditionally involved ways of thinking and learning imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, more often than not with little to no opportunity for input or collaboration. This lack of recognition and involvement has to date served only to continue the silencing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' voices that lies at the centre of our nation's history, and impedes real progress towards reconciliation (Uluru Statement from the Heart, 2017). The need to address this issue and work instead to privilege and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences and knowledges, ensuring they are at the centre of the embodied enactment of schooling in every community, has been (and will continue to be), at the very heart of this project and has guided the project at all stages of its development.

The project has built on the momentum for reconciliation and change, drawing from institutional recommendations in the Australian Government's *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Final Report* (2012). One of the recommendations notes the need for all teachers to have access to professional development that increases their capacity to teach and advise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Recommendation 4). Further, improving teacher education around the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students is a major Australian teacher education and schooling priority area reflected in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Specifically, teacher education (pre-service and in-service) has been tasked with better preparing all teachers and leaders to 'engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community' (Standard 7, *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)) and to know how to work more inclusively with parents/caregivers from diverse backgrounds to lift the achievements of all students. This is particularly the case in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families (Standards 1.4 and 2.4, AITSL).

Professional development in regards to addressing these standards is acknowledged as vitally important and funding to date has supported a number of 'partnership' resources that have

already been created and developed to educate teachers about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture. For example, the highly regarded What Works project (2009; 2011; 2018), the *Respect, Relationships, Reconciliation* website (<https://rrr.edu.au>) and the AITSL professional development resource (see <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/a-unit-outline-and-content-for-professional-learning-units-to-support-teachers-in-meeting-focus-areas-1.4-and-2.4>) are three such Australian government-funded resources created by, for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators. Up to this point, however, these resources appear to be underutilised, with many teachers, teacher educators, leaders and pre-service teachers still either unaware of or ill-equipped for the best ways to ensure better outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. As a consequence, partnerships between schools, teacher education providers and communities continue to suffer and can appear fragile and difficult to develop.

The challenge for this project, therefore, has been to develop a fresh approach to professional development and reconciliation and, ultimately, to produce a 'go to' resource for all teacher education providers, schools and communities, tailored to diverse individual learning needs. Rather than (re)produce another partnership resource as a product, an iterative, inquiry-learning approach has been adopted, culminating in an interactive website resource that powerfully connects the learner to resources for their context. This process has focused on the learning process of enactment and embodiment, essentially connecting the individual learner to a learning community through inquiry and their own self-reflection to the particular strategies and resources they need for their context.

This same design process has been applied to all stages and outcomes of the project. The project has produced a set of principles and guidelines, a set of strategies and resources, and a professional development package, all housed in an interactive website. Linking all aspects to further external sites and encouraging deep learning is a reflect–inquire–reflect learning model. Ultimately, the project has created an educative, agentic, hopeful, collaborative, inquiry-learning model, where all learners are acknowledged and catered for, no matter their level of experience.

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Narrative

1. The rationale for the project: Professional development in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The Australian Professional Teaching Standards (APST) highlight that all educators across the four stages of development – Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead – need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding according to the following foci.

- **Focus 1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**
Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of the impact of culture, cultural identity and linguistic background on the education of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
- **Focus 2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians**
Demonstrate broad knowledge of, understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages.
- **Focus 7.3 Engage with the parents/carers**
Understand strategies for working effectively, sensitively and confidentially with parents/carers.

While there has been a significant increase in government-funded, quality professional development resources to address these standards, there remains a large gap in their uptake, resulting in a lack of any real evidence of their positive impact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The reason for this is twofold. First, there are still too few Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander educators working in the education and professional development space, making learning opportunities few and far between. Second, while there has been an increase in the development of quality materials and resources, many teachers report they are relatively ignorant of such resources or ill-equipped to engage and use them. Sometimes an excuse is made that such professional development is not required as ‘there are no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students in my class’, highlighting a significant issue in both teachers’ lack of understanding of the standards and the longstanding social injustice implications. In short teachers either don’t see the relevance or don’t know how to use the resources and, as a result, they sit on the ‘virtual shelf’.

A further reason lies in the traditional modes of professional learning often adopted for teachers and leaders in any given topic. Professional development packages often use either a knowledge transmission or exchange model, whereby content is presented and the learner engages with the material, with the option for certification or assessment added. For example, this model or approach might work well when training teachers and leaders about food allergies and how to help students who suffer from anaphylaxis. This mode, however,

does not work as well in educating teachers and leaders about cultural responsiveness and the ways in which to engage in and with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers (Focus 7.3); understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experiences, histories, knowledges, cultures and communities (Focus 2.4), or appropriate pedagogical approaches (Focus 1.4).

The explanation for this is that the content matter appears particularly confronting and challenging, with the existence of what has been described by a United States researcher as 'white fragility' (DiAngelo, 2011). This is explained as a phenomenon whereby 'white' people experience (sometimes overwhelming) negative feelings (for example, shame, fear, anger, resentment etc.) when speaking about race, racism and cultural diversity. These negative feelings and emotions appear to make it even more difficult to engage in professional development in this topic. A vicious cycle ensues, with people feeling embarrassed or even defensive about their lack of knowledge and skills and reluctant to ask questions or to expose their lack of professional learning. This combination can lead to further silence and ignorance, with teachers and leaders often afraid, resentful, defensive, patronising or aggressive in regards to professional development in the best ways to support culturally diverse students.

Such positioning will never move us towards reconciliation. To cut across this downward spiral, the *Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* resource adopted a particular socio-cultural framework with two complementary social theories and created a new mode of professional learning, one that begins with the self as learner and has been designed to be a supportive space to enable each individual to engage and learn from their own stage and context, through a scaffolded inquiry design approach.

2. Methodology: The Reflect–Inquire–Reflect learning approach

The project deliberately used a broad socio-cultural theoretical framework with two complementary social theories namely a community of practice (Wenger, 2000) approach and a 'both-ways' and 'two-way learning' (Ober & Bat, 2007) approach consistent with the project aims and deliverables. A Ganma process (see Figure 1; see also Marika, 1999) underpinned and informed the content and design elements, enabling and acknowledging the meeting and mixing of two streams of knowledges (Indigenous coming from the Land and non-Indigenous coming from the Sea). Where these two streams meet is the space for new generative and collaborative knowledges to be created. Both-ways was used as a philosophy of education that 'brings together Indigenous Australian traditions of knowledge and Western academic disciplinary positions and cultural contexts, and embraces values of respect, tolerance and diversity' (Ober & Bat, 2007).

The project took the approach that learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework and is mediated by the different perspectives among the co-participants. The project focuses on co-participation that brings about learning in the initial teacher education and schooling sector to enable multiple perspectives and diversity to flourish.

Figure 1 A Ganma process



The learning design also drew from storytelling, inquiry and reflexive thinking as learning tools consistent with the methodological approach. Storytelling is used throughout the resource as a powerful way to bring the learner's story to the collective story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The learner (including teachers, teacher educators, pre-service teachers, principals and community members) can enter into the interactive website from multiple points and engage from their own level of awareness. In short, learners move through a reflect–inquire–reflect design. The iterative design enables all learners to view the resources already developed by, with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as supportive and tailored for their own individual needs.

The reflect–inquire–reflect approach (see Appendix E for an example in action) was specifically developed for this project to address the current lack of real engagement by teachers and leaders in professional development in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. It was also used to position teachers and leaders as powerful agents of change. The design adopted acknowledges that any learner can come into the resource from a position of their own level of understanding and seeking answers to their personalised questions. Asking questions and learning are celebrated and rewarded as legitimate ways of professional learning and a powerful way to cut across social injustices. As such, the resource acknowledges that sometimes we do not know what we don't know, but that it is not okay to remain in a state of ignorance. In this approach, the resource is about developing ways of knowing and ways of being in a supportive learning environment. The resource supports, in essence, a personalised learning journey encouraging and fostering the development of deeper awareness.

3. Project outcomes, deliverables and impacts

The *Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* two-year project (See Appendix C: Evaluation Report for timeline) focused on developing a fresh approach to professional learning and a 'go to' resource designed to support all those working to improve the educational success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools. It is intended to be used in teacher education programs (pre-service and in-service) by teachers and school leaders, and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The

resource has been created to help all educators form relationships and partnerships with local communities, parents and caregivers to achieve better educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The resource positions educators as powerful agents of change.

This project ultimately seeks to improve future outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a grounded model of addressing social and educational inequality at the grassroots level: namely, by starting with schools and teachers and building effective partnership and relational tools to maximise and create effective school–university–community links. The value of this project is that it addresses the ‘how to’ of establishing, building and sustaining partnership work in relation to partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community through initial teacher education curriculum and professional partnerships design. It will be the ‘go to’ site for all schools, communities and teacher education providers, as well as serving as an exemplar for the methodology for developing effective higher education culturally responsive partnerships.

Benefits

As result of this project, curriculum renewal, community engagement and culturally responsive practices for teacher education courses, early learning and schools will benefit Australian higher education, schooling and classroom learning and teaching in the following ways.

- Teacher education institutions and schools will have access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expert advice via principles, guidelines and resources on effective strategies for building culturally responsive partnerships and design based on best practice and the highest quality material available.
- Teachers, teacher educators and school and community leaders will benefit from one ‘go to’ connected centralised resource that can help guide curriculum and professional experience designed with quality materials and improve opportunities for school-community partnerships to be embedded in all initial teacher education course design.
- Teacher education graduates and teachers will be better prepared against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and be ‘community-ready’ for all school communities, with appropriate theoretical and conceptual understandings to complement their practical skills.

Deliverables

The *Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* project set out to achieve the **following four deliverables**.

1. A national set of **partnership principles and guidelines** informing all initial teacher education providers and school communities to better support pre-service (and in-service) teachers and leaders in knowing how to establish, build and sustain more inclusive and effective local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school-community partnerships.

2. A national set of higher education **strategies and partnership materials and resources** to assist teacher educators, local Elders and school communities in their curriculum and professional experience planning and professional learning in assisting pre-service teachers, teachers and leaders to build successful school community-based partnerships.
3. A **professional development package** containing context-specific illustrations and demonstrations for pre-service teachers and teachers in the 'how to' of establishing, building and sustaining effective school community partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and communities.
4. A **central website repository** to house all the materials and resources developed and allow easy access for all teacher education providers and school communities.

All deliverables and components described above are now located on one easily accessible central data repository site (www.yourstoryyourjourney.net).

The Guide (Appendix D) provides a text-based, user-friendly document designed to provide a comprehensive guide to all aspects of the project.

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Appendix A

Certification

Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)

I certify that all parts of the final report for this OLT grant provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Name:  Date: 28/2/19

 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)

Professor Abby Cathcart

Appendix B

Impact plan

This project will have a long term and sustainable impact **as it begins with all teachers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in schools and at the grassroots addressing social and educational inequality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**. Longitudinally it will enable a ‘cultural shift’ in the Australian education higher education landscape and will normalise powerful and effective partnerships and relationships with schools and community, with teachers and Elders and with Indigenous and non-Indigenous teacher-educators and researchers.

The project and website was launched on the day Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a major incentive for teachers to teach in remote and Indigenous communities. This resource specifically prepares teachers to be culturally responsive and well equipped to be learners for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It was endorsed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across sectors as an exemplary resource to change hearts and minds.

The website was launched with over thirty people from across a broad range of sectors (see launch invitation list) in attendance. Invitations were sent to key national bodies including the Australian Council of Deans of Education, Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Australian Teacher Education Association, Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies Network, and the Principal and Parents Association. Where people were not able to attend, specific follow-up meetings have been scheduled. Since the launch, the Department of Education (Queensland) and Independent Schools Queensland have both committed to ensuring all teachers have the opportunity to engage with and learn from this resource.

A key feature of the website is the Log-In feature, which will enable teachers at various stages of their development to upload evidence against the three standards (1.4, 2.4 and 7.3). Teachers will be able to annotate and provide examples of strategies and activities that they used in their learning context. If they choose they can share their evidence with their principal and/or mentor. It is expected that this feature will build a set of exemplars for teachers at different stages of their careers.

All three universities represented in the team have adopted the resource into their initial teacher education. For Queensland University of Technology, Ms Alison Quin (a member of the team) has now been employed to teach the Indigenous units and will document and track pre-service teacher impact as part of the overall course evaluation.

The team will deliver a number of workshops appropriate to its own context and is attending the Australian Teacher Education Conference at the University of the Sunshine Coast from 3-6 July 2019.

Appendix C

Evaluation Final Report

Final Report on Evaluation of QUT OLT Project – 14 January 2019

Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community to improve student outcomes

Prepared by Professor Karen Trimmer, University of Southern Queensland

Project Aims and Focus

This OLT project has been developed with the aim of providing a culturally responsive teacher education curriculum and professional experience resource to better prepare teachers and leaders to work more inclusively with parents/caregivers in order to lift the achievements of Indigenous students. It builds on previous OLT research on preparing teachers to teach in communities and aims to enact Indigenous theoretical perspectives into pedagogical practice for teachers through online professional development (PD). The project aligns to AITSL Standard 7 of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to 'engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community'; AITSL Standards 1.4 and 2.4 (2011); and builds strategically on the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Final Report (Behrendt, et. al., 2012). The methodology of the project uses a broad socio-cultural theoretical framework based upon the community of practice approach of Wenger (2000) and the 'both ways' and 'two way learning' of Ober & Bat (2007). This is conceptualised through the Ganma process (Marika, 1999) model that provides a visual framing that represents the meeting and mixing of two streams of knowledges.

Phase 1 of the project involved the establishment of the network group and the development of the culturally responsive communication protocols. A Reference group of expert Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and practitioners, as well as representatives from key national and State based association bodies was convened, who met with the research team providing advice on development of the conceptual approach, methodology and draft resources. Meetings were conducted face-to-face and also via teleconference. Whilst there was some difficulty experienced in having all members of the reference group available simultaneously, there was significant engagement by 4 of the 5 members throughout the project that provided valuable direction and input.

Following consultation with the reference group, Phase two was amended as this group of experts saw no need for new work but rather recommended that the research team pull together existing research and resources so that they could be accessed and used by teachers. The deliverables of strategies and tools as part of a professional development package to be available through a dedicated website remained as initially proposed and have now been completed. The deliverables and the process to achieve them are discussed in greater detail below.

Timelines

The initial grant for the OLT project (ID 16_5428) was signed in June 2016 with Monash University for completion over 2 years concluding 31 October 2018. Due to relocation of the grant to the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), following a change in employment of the Chief Investigator, there was a significant delay in commencement of the project. As a consequence the milestones required

some adjustment but the research team met regularly (in person three times, via teleconference three times and ongoing via email as required) to progress of the project. A research assistant was recruited in May 2018 who provided invaluable assistance to the research team in relation to conduct of the literature review, addressing feedback from the Reference group and in coordinating the learning design work for the web-site.

Contact was made regarding external evaluation of the project in December 2016, however the process of formal approval for appointment of the external evaluator occurred in November 2017. The evaluation of funded research projects is a requirement of the funding body for the purpose of making judgments on the value and effectiveness of the project, but also has dual objectives of adding value to the project itself through formative feedback to the research team. The role of the evaluator was agreed to be that of a critical friend and sounding board providing formative input and secondly to provide a summative evaluation at the conclusion of the project. This final report reports both the formative evaluation and summative review of the project based on evaluation of the research process and the deliverables of the project.

Formative Evaluation

The amended Phase two of the project involved a meta-analysis of relevant literature from which an annotated bibliography was completed and gaps and questions identified to guide the research project. Following this initial research, the development of principles and guidelines for Phase 3 were developed simultaneously with a self-reflection tool in line with the proposed methodology and theoretical underpinning guiding the project. The literature was used to develop academic statements of intent and questions around how an individual could engage in learning inquiry and investigation around their own practice. Initially, as a component of the developed materials the team developed a draft survey for the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) sector and schools. The intent of this survey was to focus respondents on raising their own personal awareness, and to develop individually appropriate strategies that ITE's, teachers and leaders could use as a tool.

Feedback from the Reference group challenged the team to ensure that their approach was not 'reactive' and in response the tool was subsequently reframed from a continuum measure to a self-reflection tool and the language changed to better achieve the aim of providing pedagogical content to lead to a change in practice. This reflective thinking was adopted as the overarching approach to developing the project outcomes. Significant discussion took place in regard to appropriate terminology for the project in regards to "First Nations" or "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" with research evidence available in support of each option. On balance it was decided to use "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" as the alternative was not in common use throughout all States of Australia. Throughout this process the research team was responsive to views from each team member and the evaluator to engage in collaborative decision-making and enable transformative practice as a team, in order to develop high quality resource materials through the process. This collaborative approach and engagement with feedback worked to ensure that the principles and guidelines were grounded in Indigenous theoretical perspectives, and that relationality was a focus evident in development of all materials. Culturally relevant stories were developed to align with the 'two way' learning model and assist with the relational links between cultural narrative and academic exposition for each of the five principles: Togetherness, Relationality, Proactivity, Community, and Critical discernment that underpin the resource.

Summative Evaluation

The summative evaluation confirms that the outcomes and deliverables of the project have been achieved in accordance with the project proposal, and within the allocated timeline and budget. The interactive website designed to support educators in improving the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Australian schools has been completed. This professional development website provides interactive resources including learning and teaching tools, reflective activities to develop personal learning and strategy development, and links to current resources. Links to examples of resources and key search terms were provided to enable users to Google up to date relevant content themselves in keeping with the experiential and explorative engagement required with an inquiry based approach. This approach to resources and content also ensures that it will be generalisable for each participating teacher and their own individual context. The intent of this revised approach is to empower teachers to engage, to both unlearn as well as learn about Indigenous knowledge, and to give them agency to incorporate the new knowledge into their practice.

This individual inquiry approach promotes engagement by allowing participants to reflect on their personal thinking and context. The site also allows for participants to upload and record their reflections, learning and activities and artefacts they may create arising from these (such as, annotated worksheets, samples of student work, lesson plans, etc.). This capability of the site has the advantage of allowing teachers to keep records demonstrate evidence of professional development and learning that are required to meet AITSL standards, and related performance management processes within their school and education system. Enabling this feature required the research team to resolve issues related to confidentiality for participant teachers if they upload their personal reflections, photos, stories, developed learning resources, etc. onto a personal workbook page. In discussion with the website development team a “Log-In” feature was developed that enables both confidential recording of personal learning and uploading of evidence of learning and artefacts.

These key outcomes on the website include:

1. A national set of partnership principles and guidelines.
2. A national set of strategies and partnership materials and resources (print based, audio and visual) to assist teacher educators, local Elders and school communities.
3. A Professional Development package containing context specific illustrations and demonstrations for pre-service teachers and teachers in the ‘how to’ of establishing, building and sustaining effective school/community partnerships.
4. A mechanism for secure and confidential recording of personal learning evidence achieved via the PD package.

Impact

The evaluation was unable to determine impact outcomes of the project or their sustainability at this point given that the report coincides project deliverable of creation of the website. Ideally impact measurement needs to occur one or more years after the innovation has been fully operational. Given that a priority of the project longer term is on making a positive impact for educators, communities and Indigenous students it is recommended that the research team consider what evidence, beyond access and uptake of the resources, they will use going forward to determine effectiveness of partnerships between schools and community as a consequence of this project; and how this may work to improve outcomes for students.

However, indicative potential for future impact is evidenced by the iterative inquiry learning approach; the strategic approaches provided for forming relationships and partnerships with local communities; and the links to prior successful professional development projects in this area. Research evidence from the extant literature supports each of these aspects of the project in regards to potential capacity to impact teachers learning, parent and community relationships with schools and in the longer-term student outcomes.

The iterative inquiry learning approach for professional development developed for this project focuses on individual learning needs with an approach that encourages self-reflection on current understandings and local context with the aim of development of knowledge and strategies specific to both the individual and the context of their school and community. This is a different approach from many PD programs and resources which provide the same material and activities to all participants regardless of their experience. Such an approach has the potential to be taken up by teachers and more easily applied to their individual context as it is not dependent on their previous knowledge, level of experience or depth of current relationship with community, but rather encourages those with little or no previous expertise as well as those with more developed knowledge to benefit from pro-actively engaging with the resource.

The educational leadership literature related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education provides clear evidence that relationality and ‘two way’ leadership and are key to engaging and empowering community, developing collaborative partnerships with community and as a consequence improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Trimmer & Dixon, 2019). The focus on these demonstrated aspects of successful engagement and collaborative learning provides confidence in the potential capacity of this resource to meet the aims related to improvement of engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers to achieve better educational outcomes for students.

This project has built on previous online professional development resources, including the What Works project (2009); the *Respect, Relationships, Reconciliation* website (University of South Australia, 2013) and the Australian Institute for Teachers and School Leadership (AITSL) professional development resource (2013). Rather than competing with these resources, this project has focussed on filling the gap that enables individuals to develop their own personal understandings, strategies and resources that should enable them to make better use of other available resources also.

A key component of the initial impact of this project will be the national dissemination strategy. This will commence with a launch for approximately 50 key stakeholders in Brisbane on 14 February 2019 and will be followed by a presentation at the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) conference in July 2019. These events have been designed to ensure that there is maximum exposure of the project outcomes via the website, and uptake of the teacher education curriculum resources within it which will build the potential for sustained impact from the resource over time. The first event is a national launch focussed on educational leaders who can impact on the initial uptake of the resource so that awareness is raised for teachers and pre-service teachers to use it. The second is an academic and professional conference that will disseminate information about the resource to both academics and teacher practitioners more broadly and ultimately lead to publication of a journal paper about the project.

Findings

- Finding 1: The focus and scope of the completed project are consistent with the original proposal, reviewed literature and feedback from the expert Reference group.
- Finding 2: The outcomes and deliverables of the project have been completed, are culturally appropriate and consistent with Indigenous research theory as per the aims of the project.
- Finding 3: The project was completed by the end of 2018 as per the agreed timeframe and has been delivered within the allocated budget.

Recommendations

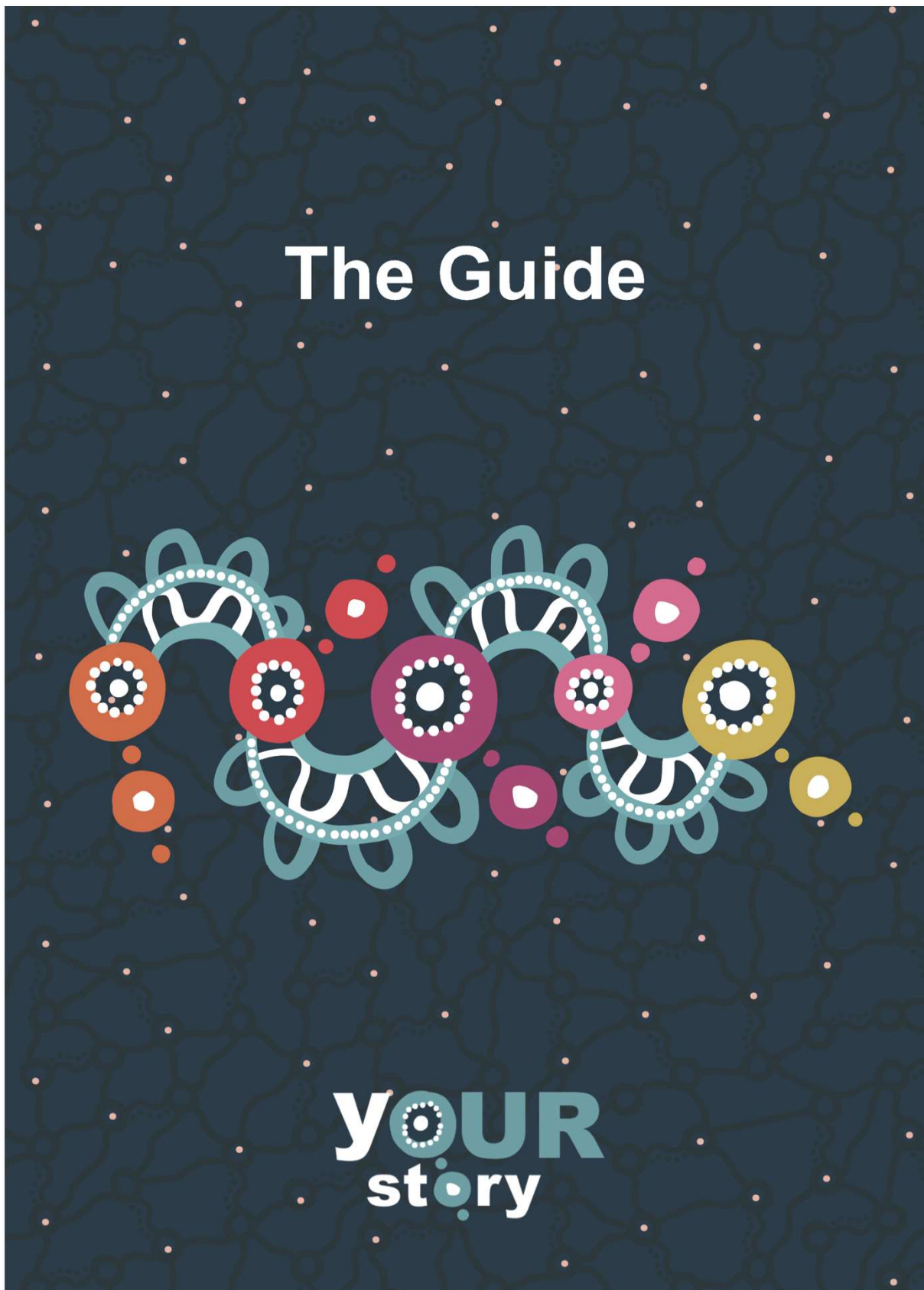
- Recommendation 1: That the research team consider what evidence, beyond access and uptake of the resources, they will use going forward to determine effectiveness of partnerships between schools and community as a consequence of this project; and how this may work to improve outcomes for students.
- Recommendation 2: That further opportunities to promote the website be pursued with higher education pre-service teacher providers and education systems to raise awareness of the resource developed and encourage its use within their pre-service and in-service programs.

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- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2013). *Insight: A unit outline and content for professional learning units to support teachers in meeting Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4*. Monash University, Edith Cowan University & Charles Sturt University. Victoria: Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership.
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Appendix D

Project materials: Guide to the project



Acknowledgement

We acknowledge all the Countries you are on and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the importance of the local stories of the traditional custodians of the land on which *you* are learning.

Welcome!

Welcome to you all! This guide compliments the website www.yourstoryourjourney.net and has been designed to help you navigate the *engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* professional development resource or what has now become known as **Your Story Our Journey.**

This **Guide** has five parts to help you find the information you need:

Part one provides helpful background information providing the thinking that contributed to the overall development and design of the resource package.

Part two defines the learning principles that guide your inquiry and action.

Part three explains the professional learning context and how to record your learning journey.

Part four provides an example of how you can begin your learning journey and engage with all the design features of the website.

Part five acknowledges and thanks all those who contributed to the creation of this resource.

Why the resource is called, Your Story Our Journey.

The words, **Your Story Our Journey**, reflects the essence of the project. The project is essentially a professional learning journey, starting with your story. This short statement below, crafted with us by our reference group, best captures our intent and has guided our journey.

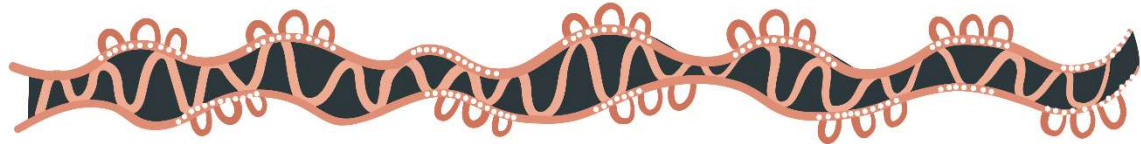
In education, we celebrate that schools are places that bring together

teachers, students, families and community members through myriad extended links.

'Your story' becomes 'our story', 'my school' becomes 'our school', 'what do I know?' becomes 'what do we know?', 'your journey' becomes 'our journey'.



Part One: Background



What informed the development of the resource?

The project team was guided by our aim, which is to support a connected education community to find ways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to be heard, and to collaborate to achieve an educational experience for all Australian children and young people that acknowledges our past, enriches our present, and supports us to move towards a better future.

As part of the initial framing of the project, the team sought advice from experts in our reference group. We acknowledge that schooling in the Australian context has been a prime example of ways of thinking and learning imposed on to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with little to no input by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This lack of recognition has to date served to continue the silencing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' voices that lies at the centre of our nation's history and impedes real progress towards reconciliation (Uluru Statement from the Heart, 2017).

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The need for privileging and honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences and knowledges, and ensuring they are at the centre of the embodied enactment of schooling in every community, is at the very heart of this project and has guided the resource at all stages of its development.



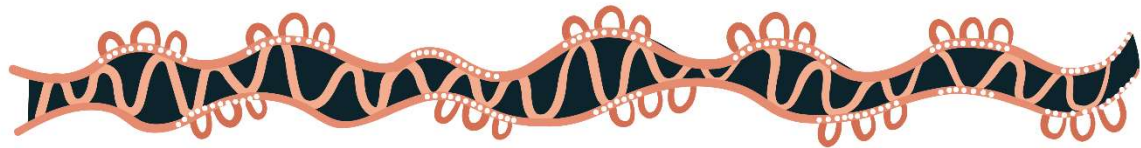
What professional development approach has been adopted?

We have created a 'reflect-inquire-reflect' approach to help you build up your learning and experience in an iterative way. It was developed to facilitate every learner coming into the resource from their own level of understanding and seeking answers to their personalised questions. Asking questions and learning is celebrated in this resource and rewarded as a legitimate way of engaging in your own professional learning. It is a powerful way to cut across social injustices. We have chosen a professional development approach that focuses on the learner – *you*. Have you ever been to a professional learning session where you spend a day learning about a particular topic? Often it is great to have such a day where you are immersed in new knowledge and thinking and have the chance to talk with colleagues. However we know it is common to return to the everyday and you find it hard to put into practice what appeared so easy to learn on the day.

To try and address this, we have designed a professional learning approach that you can come back to, time and time again. As your knowledge and expertise expands, you can try new approaches and further reflect on your learning, creating a powerful learning cycle. We have sought to develop a resource that is deeply personal as well as tailored... a bit tricky to do when we don't know you! However, we feel that you know yourself and so we begin always with a series of inquiry questions where you can reflect on what you know (and perhaps more importantly, don't know) to help then map out and guide your learning.

We acknowledge upfront that many people do not know as much about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the best ways to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as they would like to, and that is OK. That is why this professional development resource has been developed! What is not OK, is remaining in a state of ignorance because of fear or shame or denial. This resource is designed to be supportive and helpful. Once you have found out more about what you know and don't know, you are provided with examples of resources and strategies to trial and learn about. Of course, there will always be some trial and error as you learn, practice, reflect and learn again. This can be challenging work. You are encouraged at every step, to do deep learning and really engage with the broad range of quality materials that have been created by and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, scholars and researchers.

Part Two: The learning principles



What are the learning principles?

There are five learning principles that guide your professional learning journey. They are **Relationality**, **Togetherness**, **Critical discernment**, **Pro-activity** and **Community**. While we hope the words themselves carry their meaning, here is a brief definition of each term, provided in the context of this resource:

- **Relationality** in education means working *through* relationships.

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- **Togetherness** means working *together as a team*.
- **Pro-activity** means *actively seeking connections with an open and engaged mindset*.
- **Community** means *knowing the story of the community* and how the school *connect* together.
- **Critical discernment** means making *deliberate and informed choices* about using your resources and teaching strategies.

Where did the learning principles come from?

The team, with support from the reference group, used an extensive literature search to identify and synthesise five guiding learning principles that inform and have underpinned the entire design and development of the resource. These five principles reflect a standpoint of reconciliation. We acknowledge that these principles may not always reflect all views; they are to be used as a way to establish a mindset, a way of *thinking, learning and being*.

Each principle is explained now further and accompanied by way of a story, a narrative, as written by one of our team members, to help us relate to its meaning and also an explanation, thus providing two ways to approach the concepts. A reference to a key resource or literature is then provided to help you read and understand more about the principle. In many ways you can start your learning journey at this point and the readings are a way to get you thinking and reflecting on

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the learning principles. They are not intended to be the 'last word' or a definitive work but a resource to help you engage with the principles and your story.



Relationality

You can skim across the surface like a water strider bug, but you won't be able to effect change. To improve education and life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, you need to be woven into their web. This doesn't mean you lose your identity or need to be different, but you need to know learners, families, schools, teachers, people, country and history, and to identify or create your connection to all of these.

Explanation

Relationality in an educational context means working through relationships. We connect through relationships, we form partnerships based on relationships. These relationships need to be carefully and deliberately developed and maintained. Our relationships need to be based on genuine personal/professional connections. They need to be built on reciprocity and to be beneficial to everyone involved. Relationships are the foundations of partnerships, and involve developing trust and respect, and valuing differences.

A resource to start you learning more....

McLaughlin, J, Whatman, S, Ross, R & Katona, M 2012, 'Indigenous knowledge and effective parent-school partnerships: issues and insights' in J Phillips and J Lampert (eds), *Introductory Indigenous studies in education: reflection and the importance of knowing*, 2nd edn, Pearson Education Australia, Frenchs Forest, NSW, pp. 178–195



Togetherhness

Think of a waterway that absorbs all the creeks that feed into it, making space for the new waters to cross-mingle to create one new entity – a river. When working together, all partners make different contributions, but all voices are heard. This might require making new spaces and processes for school-community partnerships to thrive.

Explanation

Togetherhness means working together as a team to promote the active involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in school governance and teaching activities. The process for engagement needs to be flexible and reflect practices of inclusivity, provide capacity building for community members, reflect the sharing of power, provide opportunities to participate in decision making and include appropriate accountability measures that help shape school and community partnerships.

A resource to start you learning more....

Aboriginal Services Branch 2009, *Working with Aboriginal people and communities: A practice resource*, NSW Department of Community Services, viewed 30 August 2018 http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/docswr/_assets/main/documents/working_with_aboriginal.pdf



Critical discernment

Throw a stone into the river and it causes ever-widening ripples. The choices we make in learning and classroom practice also create ripples, expanding our ability to contribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights and reconciliation.

Explanation

To teach in the spirit of reconciliation and through a rights-based perspective, there needs to be a level of critical discernment in the way in which culturally appropriate resources are chosen and pedagogical strategies employed. Racism, either overt or covert, exists in many publications and practices so there is a need for teachers to be skilled to critically read, reflect and select appropriate materials and strategies in their classrooms.

A resource to start you learning more....

Website: <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/a-unit-outline-and-content-for-professional-learning-units-to-support-teachers-in-meeting-focus-areas-1.4-and-2.4>



Pro-activity

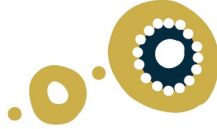
It can be easy to see where two waterways meet – they might have different colours, or one might carry lots of leaves. Eventually, the two sources merge to make the one river. Similarly, your community-school partnership will be built through the contributions of diverse people. You will need to be pro-active to identify different perspectives and have an open and engaged mindset to bring them together into the one endeavour.

Explanation

Pro-activity means working from an open and engaged mindset, actively participating in partnerships with others and communicating with all members of the broader school community. Being pro-active requires accepting responsibility to actively participate in partnership with others. It means adopting an inquiry stance and being mindful of your role as a listener and a learner, and how you position yourself in relation to others.

A resource to start you learning more....

Website: <https://www.narraqunnawali.org.au/>



Community

A river might look like one defined waterway, but it is formed by many smaller creeks feeding into it. Communities are like this, many individuals joined as one entity. We are connected in diverse ways: through family and kinship, relationships with place, shared history, attendance at a particular school. It's the connections between the individuals that make the community.

Explanation

To create good school-community partnerships, we need to know the story of the community, who is in it, how the school fits in and how everyone connects. As individuals, we need to know about ourselves and our connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and community. Understanding yourself and your community is an important step to be able to engage successfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. Relationships and understanding that are built with students and the community provide a positive platform for school-based learning. Knowing the community can provide educators with valuable opportunities to engage in pedagogical practices that build on students' cultural capital.

A resource to start you learning more....

ACECQA. (n.d.). *Engaging with Aboriginal Communities: Where do we start?* [PDF]. Accessed at <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/acecqa/files/NEL/engaging-with-aboriginal-communities1.pdf>



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Part Three: Your professional learning journey



Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures and the best ways to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

This professional learning resource has been developed to support all those working to improve the educational success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in early learning centres, schools and higher education institutions. It is intended to be used in teacher education programs (pre-service and in-service), by educators, teachers and school leaders, and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The resource has been created to help educators to form relationships and partnerships with communities and parents to achieve better educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It has been particularly designed to enable and position educators as powerful agents of change.

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) requires that all teachers and school leaders must meet Standards, according to the four stages of career progression (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished, Lead). There is a professional responsibility for all teachers and leaders to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures and the best ways to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Here are the relevant focus areas:

- **Focus 1.4** Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- **Focus 2.4** Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

- **Focus 7.3** Engage with the parents/carers

How can I record and show the evidence of what I learn?

To enable you to record your professional learning against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, we have provided two approaches for you to document and share your learning.

1: Self-reflection on your learning journey

Throughout the website, you have the opportunity to reflect on the provided questions and activities, and record your thinking and learning directly on the webpage. You can then print your responses, or send your notes to yourself. You can choose to share this with others or keep the information as your own personal record of your learning. This part of the website is not shared with anyone else and is only for you.

2: Uploading evidence of learning

The website also has a Log-In feature that enables you to upload evidence of your understandings and capabilities for APSTs 1.4, 2.4 and 7.3 and according to your career stage and development. Examples of evidence could be worksheets, student work samples, lesson plans, video, parent discussions etc. Each piece of evidence you upload can be assigned to a particular APST and has an accompanying space where you can annotate and explain how this evidence demonstrates your capabilities against that APST. No one else can see this information unless you choose to share it with them. To be able to upload and store the evidence, you will need to register to access this area.

All details about reflecting and recording your learning are provided on the website.

A process of unlearning to learn?

While we have focused on your professional learning throughout the entire design of this project, we would like to note that sometimes you will be 'unlearning' to learn. Reflection questions are used throughout the resource and have been developed as part of an 'unlearning-relearning' process. Sometimes, we have to unpack and unpick our existing knowledge to make space for new knowledge and new ways of doing things.

This means you will be often encouraged to question what you currently think and why. For example, we might ask you, where have you learnt the information? Perhaps, as an example, what you think you might know has never been questioned and there is more to know from different sources to those you might have heard from in the past?

We have aimed to help you consider the sources of information to date you might have used and perhaps to broaden and widen your reference list. Throughout all the resources and strategies we provide in this resource the materials and readings have been written and created either *by or with* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This resource is *full* of reflection questions! Reflection helps learning and unlearning in a variety of ways:

- It provides an opportunity to capture our ideas and make them obvious.
- It can generate insights and even 'aha' moments.
- It can give us time to pause and process new ideas, which sometimes can be challenging – that's learning!

These questions appear throughout the website and we have provided them here as a comprehensive list for you to consider the types of questions you might like to continue to pose to yourself and others as part of the unlearning to learn process.

What do I know now?

- It might seem odd to identify precisely what you know, but we often rely on assumptions and these can mislead us.

What do I *not* know?

- This is about identifying the current gaps in your knowledge and capabilities.

What do I do?

- This is about identifying what you do in your teaching practice that contributes to forming strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school relationships, and that stems from those strong relationships. It is possible that your current practice is not, or is only a little bit, mediated through a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples– school relationship.

What credible sources is my knowledge based on?

- Sometimes we ‘just know things’ and it can be an interesting exercise to work out where our information came from. It might be from friends and family, social media, school or university, books you’ve read, TV shows and movies you’ve watched, and so on.
- Credible sources will differ for every context and you will need to have sharp discernment skills to work out appropriate sources. Identify the stakeholders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples - school relationships and find sources of information that are, or include, their direct voices.

What’s causing these gaps in my knowledge?

- This is a deceptively simple question and finding the answers might be challenging, both in the sense of ‘hard to find’ as well as ‘confronting’.
- Always probe further than your initial answer. For example, your first answer might be: “It’s because I don’t know any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. You can take this further by asking “Why do I not know any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?” “I was never taught this at school” becomes “Why was I never taught this at school?”

| 17

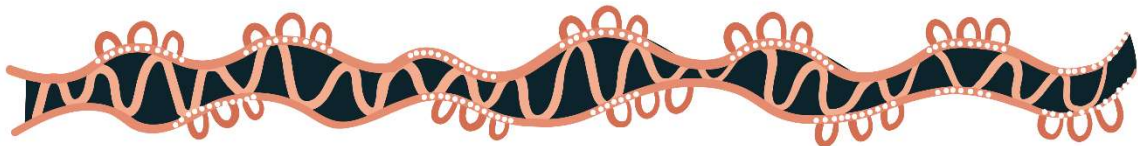
Why do I do it this way?

- Similar to questions already encountered in this journey, answering this question can present challenges. We often just do things a certain way without really interrogating why it's that way and not another way.
- Our first responses to this question can be simple, but it's worth going deeper. For example, you might answer, "it's how everyone else in the school is doing it", but take it further: why does this influence my practice?

How can I find out what I need to know?

- Always look for resources that have been created or designed by, or in collaboration with, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Part Four: Using the website for your professional learning

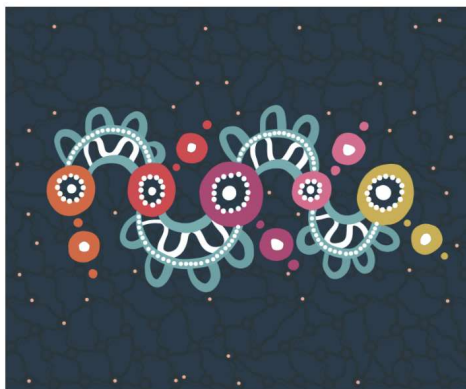


How can I use the website?

Your learning journey is personal. This website is thus designed to allow you to take a personal journey and reflect on your learning along the way. This resource supports you using three powerful tools for learning: storytelling, inquiry and reflection. If you are not sure where to start with the website (although we have tried to make it as intuitive and interactive as possible), we have also provided a framework for you here to help you follow your professional learning pathway, starting with a story to stimulate your thinking and inquiry.

Start - Our Learning Your Journey animated story

We encourage you to begin on the website homepage and watch the animated narration of *Our Learning Journey*. We have started with a story because stories are powerful teaching tools that convey messages and knowledge. Through this story, you can engage with the visual elements of the website designed by artist Ms Rachael Sarra, and encounter the language and principles that will guide the rest of your learning journey.



After listening to the story you can reflect or discuss these questions:

- What do you think is meant by the story?
- What interests or intrigues you?
- What aspects did you like?
- What aspects did you not like or understand?

Your responses to these questions is another way to begin your learning journey and are an example of how the learning process works in this resource.

Engaging with the Learning Principles

We recognise that everyone's learning journey is unique. You will have a focus that is unique to you, your role, the place you are working in and the people you are teaching and working with. **Choose the principle/s that are important for you.** Choose a principle by hovering over the design on the website and then clicking on one of the 5 principles.



Here is a brief reminder of their definition:

- **Relationality** in education means working *through* relationships.
- **Togetherness** means working together as a team.
- **Pro-activity** means actively seeking connections with an open and engaged mindset.
- **Community** means knowing the story of the community and how the school connect together.
- **Critical discernment** means making deliberate and informed choices about using your resources and teaching strategies.

Statements of Intent

For each principle, we have created a set of *Statements of Intent*. These provide ideas for you to think about, and highlight the important knowledges, skills and attitudes that embody and enact the principle.

For example, here are the Statements of Intent for the principle of **Community**.

- I can acknowledge the Country we are on, and respect 'on Country' stories.
- Our school is informed by and draws on local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to compose and deliver *Acknowledgement of Country* and *Welcome to Country*.
- I learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the people themselves, and respect their ways of identifying themselves and relating to others.
- I contribute to our school being a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- I consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to appropriate curriculum and ensure community members contribute to curriculum in the way they want to.
- I advocate for and facilitate the incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into governance mechanisms at our school.

Reflective questions

Each Statement of Intent has a set reflective question for you to consider. They can be used to question yourself on your level of awareness, understanding and knowledge under each principle.

We have provided a 'slider' that you can adjust so that you can measure your own level of confidence in response to the question.



The sliders provide a visual 'snapshot' of where you are now in your knowledge and skills at the point of time and can change each time you do it. These are not intended to be used like quiz questions that test what you know. Instead, these are meant to be a visual way to reveal the knowledge or skills that you can develop.

You can use the sliders to continually assess your own capability or knowledge and skill. The aim is not to have all sliders to the right! The more we learn, the more we realise there is more to learn! Your knowledge will also change according to your role, career progression and the context in which you are learning and working.

For example, here are the reflective questions under each Statement of Intent for **Community.**

- **I can acknowledge the Country we are on, and respect 'on Country' stories.**
 - *How can our school acknowledge the Country we are on, and respect 'on Country' stories?*
- **Our school is informed by and draws on local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to compose and deliver *Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country*.**
 - *What are our school's protocols around Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country?*
- **I learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the people themselves, and respect their ways of identifying themselves and relating to others.**
 - *How do local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people identify themselves and relate to others, and how does the school respect this?*
- **I contribute to our school being a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.**
 - *How do we make our school a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?*

- **I consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to appropriate curriculum and ensure community members contribute to curriculum in the way they want to.**
 - *How can we work together to develop local First Nations curriculum?*
- **I advocate for and facilitate the incorporation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into governance mechanisms at our school.**
 - *How can our school incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into school governance?*

You can use the slider to honestly reflect on your level of knowledge, skills and awareness. Once you have a picture of your stage of learning, you can then begin to identify what you need to inquire more about. To help you do this, we have provided scaffolding and links to resources and strategies for you so that if you do not know, or you are not sure where to begin or the right question to ask - you can take the proactive step to identify how you can find out and record your learning journey.

Embarking on your learning journey through inquiry

Below are some questions, you might like to ask, followed by lots of examples of advice, resources and strategies (and some more questions!) to support you to answer the questions for yourself and appropriate to your context.

- **How can our school (or learning environment) acknowledge the Country we are on, and respect ‘on Country’ stories?**
 - The best way to find out about Country and how to respect ‘on Country’ stories is to talk to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community members.
 - [*Engaging with Aboriginal communities: Where do we start?*](#) has useful tips and links to help you identify who to contact in your local area.

- [Inside and outside knowledge](#) introduces the idea that there are protocols around who owns what knowledge, and who determines how it should be used.
 - What strategies could your school implement?
- What are our school's protocols around *Acknowledgement of Country* and *Welcome to Country*?
 - Ways for schools to Acknowledge Country and Welcome people to Country need to be determined by consulting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. [Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country: A guide for Victorian schools](#) has information and protocols.
 - In some places, the impact of colonisation has caused disagreement about Country and the people who live in the community. Navigating this requires awareness and sensitivity.
 - What does your school (or place) currently do?
 - What consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is this based on?
 - In what variety of ways can Country be acknowledged in your school?
 - You may also be interested in this [Welcome to Country app](#).
- How do local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people identify themselves and relate to others, and how does the school respect this?
 - Across Australia, there are many ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people relate to each other. This may be through kinship, or relationships. For all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, relationships are important. The best way to find out how local First Nations people relate to others is to talk to local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.
 - Who could you talk to find out more about local ways of relating?

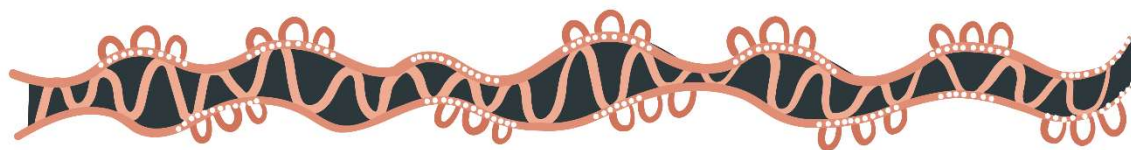
- How could your school respect these ways of relating and knowing each other, in governance, curriculum and teaching?
 - This online [Kinship Module](#) has information about ways that some Aboriginal peoples relate to each other.
- How do we make our school a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?
 - [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Cultural Needs](#) provides information about the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and provides a reflective framework for educators to think about how they can work in this space.
 - What strategies could our school use?
- How can we work together to develop local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander curriculum?
 - [Aboriginal community engagement in primary schooling](#) provides an example of a school- Aboriginal community unit of learning co-developed by teachers and Aboriginal community members, demonstrating how to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and knowledge.
 - What would our school need to do to make an activity like this happen?
 - [Embedding Indigenous knowledges in curriculum](#) provides guidance, information and resource links.
- How can our school incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into school governance?
 - The [Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity \(LEAD\): School-based audit tool](#) helps schools audit their current practice and provides strategies for improving practice.
 - How does our school shape up in the audit?
 - Who do we need to include in our conversations about this?
 - What strategies could our school put in place?

A cycle of learning

This series of questions and processes outlined in this guide is just an example of what has been created for you in the entire resource package. The website houses all the steps to enable you to re-enter the site again and again to continue your learning journey. It's important to remember that learning never ends. You've thought about what you know, asked questions, sought answers, and now you can think about what you know *now*, ask *more* questions and seek answers, and so on. We encourage you to continue to investigate and deepen your learning. Enjoy!

Find all information at: www.yourstoryourlearningjourney.net

Part Five: With thanks



Who made this website possible?

The Engaging and Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers project was funded by the Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching. We would also like to acknowledge the support from the various institutions in which the project team and reference group members worked: Queensland University of Technology, Edith Cowan University, Charles Sturt University, University of Southern Queensland, James Cook University and Monash University.

Who made the website?

This project brought together a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and academics who recognised the need for a 'how to' professional development resource that would support initial teacher education providers and school communities to best meet the needs of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' learning needs. The project was led by Professor Simone White (QUT) with team members, Professor Peter Anderson (QUT), Dr Graeme Gower (ECU), Associate Professor Matt Byrne (ECU), Maria Bennet (CSU), Alison Quin (QUT) and Anna Darling (Monash). The team were advised by Geraldine Atkinson (VAEAI), Professor Jeanne Herbert (CSU), Professor Martin Nakata (JCU) and Professor Jo-Anne Reid (CSU). Professor Karen Trimmer (USQ) was our evaluator and critical friend.

Together with our creative design partner, *Gilimbaa*, our creative artist Rachel Sarra, and our technical design support team, *Thirteen Digital*, we have created a supportive professional learning journey resource for you.



We hope you enjoy this resource as much as we enjoyed creating it for you.

Appendix E:

The reflect–inquire–reflect model in action

Reflect: Where am I in the story?

What do I know now?

- It might seem odd to identify precisely what you know, but we often rely on assumptions and these can mislead us.

What credible sources is my knowledge based on?

- Sometimes we ‘just know things’ and it can be an interesting exercise to work out where our information came from. It might be from friends and family, social media, school or university, books you’ve read, TV shows and movies you’ve watched, and so on.
- Credible sources will differ for every context and you will need to have sharp discernment skills to work out appropriate sources. Identify the stakeholders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander–school relationships and find sources of information that are, or include, their direct voices.

What do I *not* know?

- This is about identifying the current gaps in your knowledge and capabilities.

What’s causing these gaps in my knowledge?

- This is a deceptively simple question and finding the answers might be challenging, both in the sense of ‘hard to find’ as well as ‘confronting’.
- Always probe further than your initial answer. For example, your first answer might be: “It’s because I don’t know any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people”. You can take this further by asking “Why do I not know any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?” “I was never taught this at school” becomes “Why was I never taught this at school?”

What do I do?

- This is about identifying what you do in your teaching practice that contributes to forming strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander–school relationships, and that stems from those strong relationships. It is possible that your current practice is not, or is only a little bit, mediated through a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander–

school relationship. This is okay at this point, because you're about to start making changes!

Why do I do it this way?

- Similar to questions already encountered in this journey, answering this question can present challenges. We often just do things a certain way without really interrogating why it's that way and not another way.
- Our first responses to this question can be simple, but it's worth going deeper. For example, you might answer, "It's how everyone else in the school is doing it", but take it further: why does this influence your practice?

Inquire: What is my part in the story?

How can I find out what I need to know?

- The first step is finding a question that you seek to answer! We have provided some to help you on your journey.
- The second step is finding appropriate sources and resources to inform your answers. For every question we have framed, we've provided a resource and strategy that you can refer to. Always look for resources that have been created or designed by, or in collaboration with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

What changes can I make?

- Use the strategies and resources provided to identify things you could implement in your practice.
- While it can be tempting to aim for everything, be sure to consider your context: your professional role, current experience, available resources. Aim for the achievable.
- When deciding on changes in practice, it's good to know why you're doing them. It might be because it's easy, or achievable, and that's OK. It's important to acknowledge this, and how it is influencing the extent or type of changes you are suggesting.

Reflect: How do I continue our story?

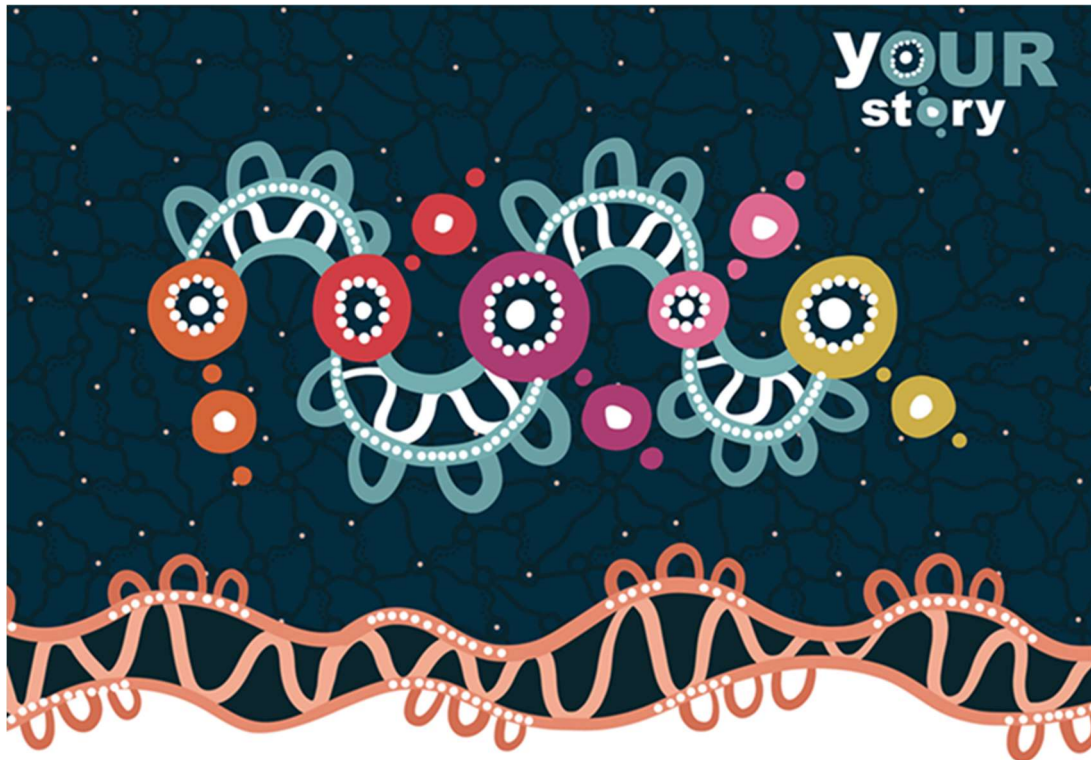
- Now that you have learned more and determined ways to change your practice, you have the opportunity to begin the reflection cycle again. Learning never stops!

- What do I know now? Can I expand my sources of knowledge?
- What else can I learn? What's influencing the things I am learning?
- What can I do? Why am I choosing to do those things?

Appendix F:

Launch event information

Launch of the Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers



**Please join us in the launch
of the Your Story website**

Thursday 14th February 2019

The Talking Circle State Library Queensland
Cultural Centre, Stanley Street, South Brisbane

3pm - 5pm

RSVP: simone.white@qut.edu.au
by January 31st 2019

Afternoon tea provided



Invitations

A little bit about the project...

- The *Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers* two-year project has culminated in a unique interactive website (to be launched at event) that houses a number of learning and teaching tools, strategies and resources, designed to support all those working to improve the educational success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools. It is intended to be used in teacher education programs (pre-service and in-service), by teachers and school leaders, and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The resource has been created to help all educators to form relationships and partnerships with local communities, parents and caregivers to achieve better educational outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The resource positions educators as powerful agents of change.
- We will be gathering at the Queensland State Library: Talking Circle (Cultural Precinct, Stanley Place, South Brisbane) commencing at 3pm on the 14th of February, 2019 with a Welcome to Country. The launch will be an opportunity to gather together to hear about the **Our Story, Our Journey** interactive website and how you can best use the professional education resource. The event will end at 4.30 with drinks and finger food. We do hope you can join us. Please rsvp to simone.white@qut.edu.au

Acceptance list of people attending the Engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and caregivers project launch

14th of February

3-5pm

Talking Circle, Queensland State Library

Team members

- **Prof Simone White** QUT Associate Dean (International and Engagement)
Faculty of Education – Project Leader
- **Prof Peter Anderson** QUT Director of Indigenous Research and Engagement –
Project team member
- **Ms Alison Quin** QUT Faculty of Education - Project team member
- **Dr Graeme Gower** ECU School of Education - Project team member
- **A/Prof Matt Byrne** ECU School of Education - Project team member
- **Ms Maria Bennet** CSU School of Education - Project team member

Reference group member

- **Ms Geraldine Atkinson – President of Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc**

Geraldine represents all Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) in Australian States and Territories on the Ministerial Taskforce for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA).

Representing Indigenous Creative company who partnered with us – Gilimbaa

- **David Williams** – Director (performing)
- **Amanda Lear**
- **Katherine Ogg**

Guests

QUT Guests

- **Vice Chancellor Professor Margaret Sheil** QUT
- **Pro Vice Chancellor Angela Leitch** QUT Indigenous Strategy
- **Prof Carol Nicoll** QUT Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education
- **Ms Fiona Smallwood** - Oodgeroo Unit
- **Dr Levon Blue** – Coordinator - [National Indigenous Research and Knowledges Network \(NIRAKN\)](#)
- **Brodie Johnson** – Indigenous Research and Engagement
- **Taal Hampson** – Indigenous Research and Engagement
- **Dr Elizabeth Curtis** – QUT Director of Professional Experience
- **Dr Juliana McLaughlin** – QUT Creative Industries
- **Professor Anne Hickling-Hudson** – QUT Adjunct Professor
- **Prof Tania Broadley** – QUT former Assistant Dean, Teaching and Learning

Representing the various education sectors

- **Rosemarie Koppe** – **Representing Independent Schools Queensland** – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education officer
- **Dr Marian Prete** – Representing the Queensland Department of Education and Training - Rural, Remote and International
- **Brian O’Neill** – Representing Society for the Provision for Education in Rural Australia
- **Kevin SIRRIS** – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principal Policy Advisor

Representing Kelvin Grove SC

- **Lauren Hovelroud** – Teacher at Kelvin Grove SC

- **Melissa Kelly** – Teacher at Kelvin Grove SC

Representing other southeast Queensland universities

- **Prof Karen Trimmer** – USQ School of Education
- **Prof Patricia Morwell** – (UQ) Head of School of Education

- **Representing the Development team who partnered with us – Thirteen Digital**

- **Chris Clark** – Design team
- **Lisa Eichholz** – Design team
- **Megan Geach** – Design team
- **Laura Perm-Jardin** – Design team
- **Caleb Gittens** – Design team