

# **ACU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Guide**

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## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Guide Contents

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# 1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Guide

ACU is committed to being an Employer of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and encourages the ACU community to take a proactive approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.

This guide supports the University's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and provides information on implementing recruitment and selection practices that are culturally appropriate and inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

If you require further information, support or advice, please contact the Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Employment on [firstpeopleemployment@acu.edu.au](mailto:firstpeopleemployment@acu.edu.au)

## 1.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identified Positions

Managers can consider a couple of options when recruiting for vacant roles to be filled by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander candidates:

### 1. Genuine Occupational Requirement

You may identify positions where a genuine occupational requirement of the position requires the position holder to be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. For example:

- roles which involve developing or implementing policies, programs or services specifically targeting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, staff or liaising with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- academic and research positions with responsibility for delivering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum and teaching and research agenda

In these circumstances, it is important that the advertisement and position description clearly states that the position is only open to candidates who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We recommend the following wording (yes, we know it's very formal, but it ensures we comply with discrimination legislation).

*ACU considers that being Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander is a genuine occupational requirement for this position under s 42 of the Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)/ s 14 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW), s 25 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)/ sub-s 56(2) of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)/ sub-s 26(3) or s 28 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) [select applicable]. The position is therefore only open to people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.*

### 2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Targeted Positions

It is also possible to identify positions specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples under Special Measures. This approach doesn't require the candidate to hold any "formal" responsibilities relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples supports ACU to reach the 3.2% target it has set in the enterprise agreement. We encourage all faculties and business units to take proactive steps to recruit through targeted positions and embed these roles in their structures.

Again, it's a formal approach but the position description and advertisements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Special Measure (Identified) positions should include the following statement in the advertisement text:

*The filling of this position/these positions is intended to constitute a special/equal opportunity measure under section 8(1) of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth), and [select appropriate jurisdiction/s from: s 27 of the Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT) / s 105 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) / s 65 of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA) / s 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and s 8(4) of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)]. The position is therefore only open to people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.*

## 1.2 Attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates to my role

Ensuring that your recruitment process is culturally inclusive is a great way to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates to your role. You could do this by:

- using Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) artwork or Indigenous artwork on your recruitment material (candidate packs, advertising)
- providing candidates with information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment at ACU and/or being prepared to share information and answer questions during the interview process
- advertising roles on indigenous job boards and through internal and external community networks

## 1.3 How do I know that an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander has applied for my role?

When an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander candidate has applied for your role, you'll receive an alert via email when the advertised position closes. You'll also see a flag in the recruitment system when you commence reviewing applications.

## 1.4 Culturally safe recruitment practices

Recruitment processes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates should mirror those of other candidates, in that they should be fair and transparent. It is important to keep in mind however, that ensuring processes are fair and equitable can require that we treat people differently, rather than the same.

We also need to be mindful that ACU has made bold commitments around increasing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and this means that hiring managers have a positive duty to support this commitment.

Our recruitment processes need to be culturally safe and inclusive so if you are hiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, we suggest you keep the following in mind:

- When advertising positions, consider writing selection criteria that includes the option of educational qualifications **or** equivalent relevant experience.
- There should be an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person on the interview panel. The [Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment](#) can assist with locating appropriate panel members.
- Ensure panel members understand the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates may meet the selection criteria that may be different to other candidates
- Create an interview setting that is inclusive and welcoming, for example having indigenous flags present or providing a copy of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's Plan to candidates.
- Be mindful that some candidates need some time and space to respond so don't hurry them through the interview process.
- All hiring managers should undertake the 2-hour ACU Cultural Awareness training.
- ACU has developed an online cultural awareness module that can be undertaken as a refresher at any time. You can do this by logging onto the ACU Staff Learning Hub.

## 1.5 Confirmation of Aboriginality or Confirmation of Torres Strait Islander Heritage

Where an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander candidate is successfully placed into a role for an Identified position (either as a genuine occupational requirement or as a targeted position), ACU is required to confirm their Aboriginality or Torres Strait Islander status.

Hiring managers need to ensure that they obtain the confirmation **before** an offer is made.

### 1. What is confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status?

Confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Status is confirmation from an incorporated Aboriginal or Torres Strait Organisation, stamped with the common seal that a person:

- Is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- Identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and
- Is accepted as such within the community in which they live or have lived

Please be aware that obtaining confirmation can take some time as not all community members have access to the documentation. Further, the impact of the Stolen Generation policies means family connections, documentation or family records proving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage may have been lost and/or connection to their home community affected.

## 2. What happens if the candidate can't get confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status?

If a candidate is unable to confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander there is an option to complete a Statutory Declaration, which must include the following three statements:

- a. you are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and that you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person;
- b. information you have about your Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Family (please include names and details of where you are from); and
- c. why you are not able to have your Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Status confirmed by a Local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Land Council or another Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Organisation.

In addition to the Statutory Declaration, the candidate will also be required to provide a letter from a recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community member either from their current community or a community in which they have lived. This community member should be a representative of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Organisation or Co-Op and must not be related to the candidate.

## 3. Can a family member's Confirmation be used if the candidate does not have their own?

Unfortunately, no. Each candidate needs to have their own Confirmation to meet the Government designated application requirements.

## 1.6 Providing a culturally safe work environment

Managers and supervisors need to ensure that all staff members feel comfortable and safe in their work environment. Some practical tips to create and safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples includes:

- Attending Cultural Awareness Workshops and/or encouraging other staff in your team to do the same.
- Completing the online cultural awareness module, especially if it's been some time since you attended the workshop. You can complete at any time by logging onto the ACU Staff Learning Hub.
- Avoid stereotyping and taking a 'broad brush' view of the capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. All workplaces are made up of people who have different personalities, abilities, beliefs and interests and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are as individual as anyone else.
- Keeping lines of communication open when supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Don't assume you know what might be required, take the time to ask questions and talk to your team member.
- Actively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events on campus and encourage your team to get involved.
- Ensure the behaviour of all staff members in the work unit is appropriate. Address any potential discrimination, harassment and/or cultural insensitivity as soon as it occurs.
- Be mindful that it is offensive to ask an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff person about their quantum of Aboriginality. For example, whether someone is 'part' or 'full' Aboriginal or indeed, 'full blood'. The term 'caste' in any manner is also unacceptable.
- Avoid telling people that they don't 'look' Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. A person's appearance has no bearing on their cultural identity, beliefs, traditions, practices and/or the family/community in which they were raised.