

WORKFORCE STRATEGY

CHAPTER 1: ABORIGINAL WORKFORCE PLAN

2021–2031



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education

INTRODUCTION

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees play an important role in education and we are committed to bringing their cultural knowledge, experience and perspectives into everything we do.

To achieve this, we need to work together. We all need to understand what success looks like and commit to take personal action - it's everybody's responsibility.

The Department for Education Aboriginal Workforce Plan 2021-2031 outlines how we will build and grow our Aboriginal workforce. It identifies our commitments, how we will measure success and the key actions we will take in the first 3 years of the plan, which we will review and build on in future years.

The plan has been developed as part of the Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019. It is also the first chapter in our Workforce Strategy:

CHAPTER 1 Aboriginal Workforce

Design Phase 2020
Implementation Phase
2021 – 2031



CHAPTER 2 Educational Leaders and Teachers

Design Phase 2021
Implementation
Phase 2022 – 2032



CHAPTER 3 Classroom and Student Support

Design Phase 2022
Implementation Phase
2023 – 2033



CHAPTER 4 Corporate and Administrative Support

Design Phase 2023
Implementation Phase
2024 – 2034



WORKFORCE
STRATEGY

We know that having a strong Aboriginal workforce is key to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people and creating an environment where all Aboriginal people can thrive. This plan is designed to help us achieve that goal.

We also need to support our non-Aboriginal workforce to be culturally responsive in the way they work and interact with Aboriginal people. We need to create learning and work environments where our Aboriginal employees, children and young people can be at their best, and where Aboriginal families and communities feel welcomed and supported to engage in their children's learning.

To sit alongside this plan, we are developing a Culturally Responsive Framework. This framework will guide how we create a culturally-safe and inclusive environment in which Aboriginal people can work and learn. It will be based on evidence and support our non-Aboriginal people to build their awareness and capability.

Everyone has a role to play in growing and building our Aboriginal workforce and creating a culturally responsive workplace. By working together, we will strengthen the outcomes for our Aboriginal workforce, as well as the children and young people who look to them as role models.

To develop this plan, we:

- Looked at information and consultation used to develop the Aboriginal Education Strategy, including feedback from employees, students and community
- Identified and considered current workforce initiatives related to Aboriginal employment
- Talked to employees from the People and Culture Division and the Aboriginal Education Directorate about emerging themes to inform the vision for the plan
- Undertook 2 stages of consultation on the draft plan:
 - Stage 1 – online survey open to all employees
 - Stage 2 – yarning circles where groups of employees discussed the plan in more detail through open dialogue and storytelling, held face-to-face and online in metropolitan and regional locations
- Consulted with Aboriginal employees in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands through an Anangu language consultation session.

More than 255 employees provided input to help shape this plan.

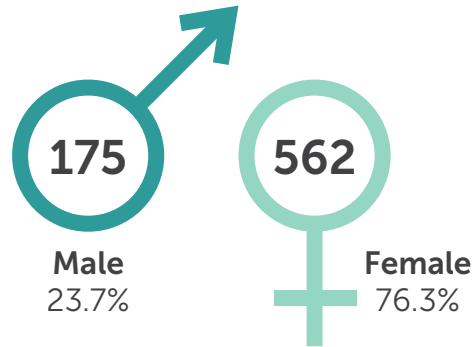
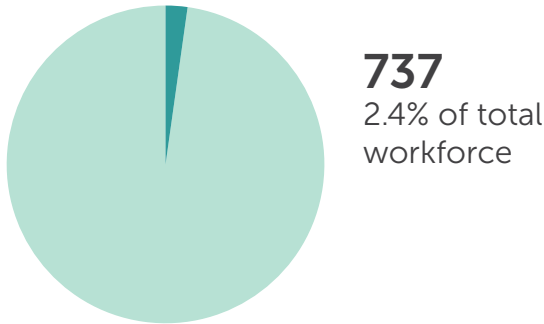
Thank you for contributing your valuable time, experience and knowledge.

The word 'Aboriginal' is used throughout this document as inclusive of people who identify as Aboriginal, Anangu, Torres Strait Islander or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

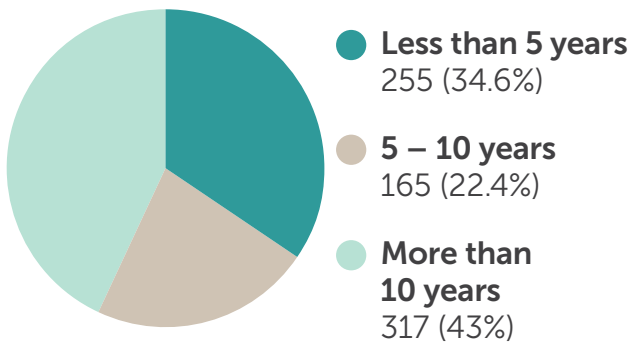
OUR CURRENT ABORIGINAL WORKFORCE

AS AT JUNE 2020

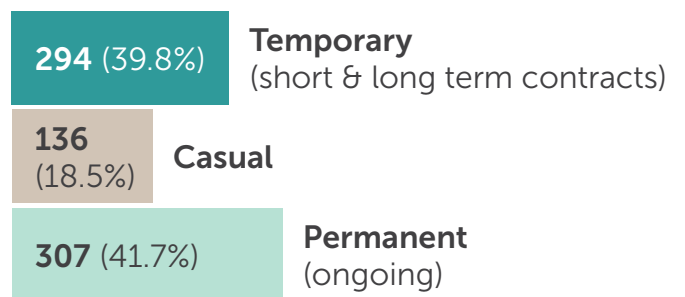
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYEES



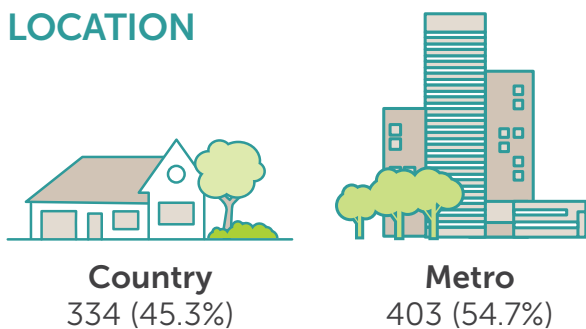
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT



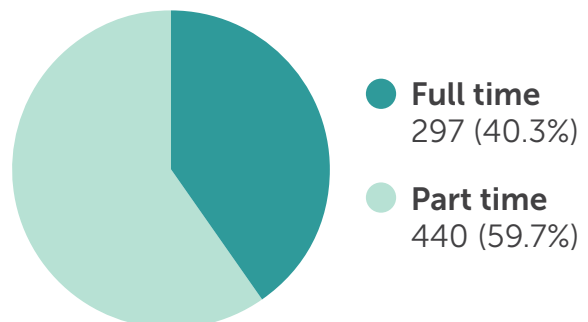
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT



LOCATION



STATUS



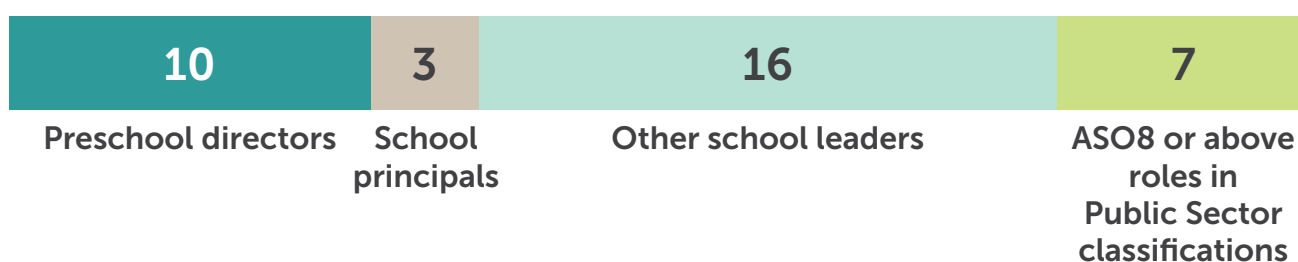
ROLES



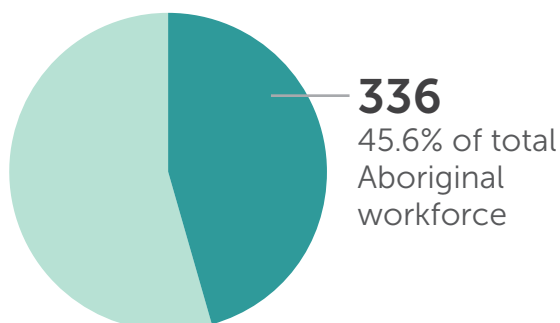
- **Corporate** 32 (4.3%)
- **Preschools** 55 (7.5%)
- **Schools** 645 (87.5%)
- **Other** 5 (0.7%)

LEADERSHIP

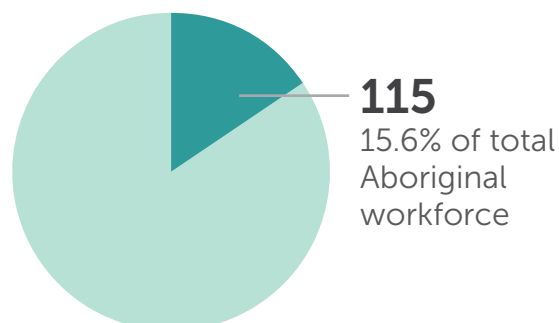
29 School and preschool leaders
(preschool directors, principals, deputy principals, seniors and band B leaders)



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION WORKERS



TEACHERS



2020 PERSPECTIVE SURVEY

47% of Aboriginal employees participated

73% engagement rate

39% (on average) had a current performance and development plan

The survey told us the following 2 factors are important for the engagement of our Aboriginal workforce:

- **Performance and development**
Valuing feedback and performance conversations and active support for professional learning
- **Reward and recognition**
Feeling valued, appreciated and recognised for their contributions

WORKFORCE STRATEGY VISION

Enable every person in our workforce to perform at their best, so that together we achieve growth for every child, in every class, in every school and preschool.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION STRATEGY VISION

Each Aboriginal child and young person is a proud and confident learner, achieving at their highest potential.

This plan will contribute to the department’s vision for workforce and Aboriginal education by focusing on these key themes:



Develop cultural awareness, understanding and respect in our workplaces



Enable Aboriginal employees to build lifelong careers



Support Aboriginal employees to be leaders in the workplace



Work together with Aboriginal employees to implement this plan

Welcoming, empowering, respecting and valuing our Aboriginal workforce.



DEVELOP CULTURAL AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT IN OUR WORKPLACES

We recognise Aboriginal people as the First Nations people of Australia and have strong cultural values, through their continuous connections to culture, kin and country. We are committed to supporting the wellbeing of Aboriginal people in our workplaces by developing our workforce practices to incorporate cultural values and understanding. This will create inclusive environments that respond to Aboriginal students' cultural needs, empowering them as proud and confident learners.

We are committed to...

- Creating the department as a culturally safe workplace in which the environment, structures, policies and processes enable Aboriginal employees to fully participate, feel valued and supported
- Implementing approaches that listen to the voices of Aboriginal employees and involve them in decision making relating to their work
- Building awareness, understanding and respect of Aboriginal culture within the department
- Developing all employees to respond respectfully and responsively when engaging with Aboriginal colleagues, students, families and communities.

In 2031 success means...

- Non-Aboriginal employees demonstrate their understanding of Aboriginal culture in their everyday practices and interactions, and all employees are inclusive and respectful in their interactions with each other
- Aboriginal employees provide feedback that the department values their views, preferences, experience and knowledge and that it informs and influences decisions
- Aboriginal employees provide feedback that they are well supported in the workplace
- Aboriginal employees actively engage in and contribute to the department's policy design and implementation processes.

2021 – 2023 Actions

1. Deliver the Culturally Responsive Framework as the basis for building the cultural capability of the department.
2. Determine how the department will measure its cultural responsiveness in an objective and meaningful way, and establish a baseline to monitor progress.
3. Design a learning support program to provide workforce development across the department to work toward being a culturally responsive organisation.
4. Develop and implement a guide for our workforce that explains cultural protocols and respectful ways of working, which acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal nations, their cultures and communities.
5. Develop and support the department's Aboriginal Workforce Network to share workforce perspectives, build positive and supportive relationships, and support self-care and wellbeing.
6. Encourage and promote the participation of all staff in celebrating Aboriginal people's local community events that build relationships alongside Aboriginal families and communities.



ENABLE ABORIGINAL EMPLOYEES TO BUILD LIFELONG CAREERS

We understand that for Aboriginal employees the impact of employment extends beyond the individual, to family and community. We are committed to providing Aboriginal employees with secure employment and opportunities for career development to build on the value they bring to the department. This will provide visibility for our Aboriginal students of the pathways to success available for them.

We are committed to...

- Developing the department's workforce practices to be accessible and welcoming for Aboriginal employees
- Increasing employment of Aboriginal people within the department, and actively supporting employment within corporate divisions, schools and preschools beyond roles identified for Aboriginal people
- Making the department's Aboriginal employment visible so that Aboriginal people see a career path in the department and identify it as a place they want to work
- Supporting Aboriginal employees with career options that are focused on realising the aspirations and potential of individuals and recognising the value they bring to the department.

In 2031 success means...

- The department employs more Aboriginal employees, specifically in teaching roles
- The department provides Aboriginal employees with viable employment through the level of permanent positions and hours of work available
- The department provides more training and development, and Aboriginal employees actively engage to further build their skills and effectiveness
- Aboriginal employees' capability is reflected in their progression across a broad range of roles
- More Aboriginal people apply for employment with the department
- More Aboriginal people undertake initial teacher education and traineeships with the support of the department
- Aboriginal students consider the department as a future employer.

2021 – 2023 Actions

1. Create a departmental performance and development plan (PDP) guide for leaders to support them to implement the process in a culturally inclusive way, so that Aboriginal employees are supported with capability development and career pathways.
2. Undertake a project to:
 - a) review the positions within the department that are designated for Aboriginal employees to create clarity, transparency and consistency in the roles and responsibilities, classification levels and career pathways to acknowledge and leverage the skills and capabilities that exist within the department's Aboriginal workforce
 - b) review the process for recruitment, selection and deployment to create clarity and alignment with other school-based processes to reflect quality, merit-based appointment outcomes.
3. Determine an approach to professional learning for Aboriginal employees that strengthens connections between employees and provides access to structured development, with consideration of employees in regional and remote locations.
4. Review and strengthen recruitment and selection strategies, tools and resources to create access to employment for Aboriginal people.
5. Review and improve the department's Aboriginal traineeship program and the Amy Levai Scholarship program as pathways into employment, and strengthen the department's support mechanisms once Aboriginal trainees and graduates are employed through these programs.



SUPPORT ABORIGINAL EMPLOYEES TO BE LEADERS IN THE WORKPLACE

We recognise Aboriginal people are leaders in their communities. We are committed to creating space for our Aboriginal employees to bring this knowledge and experience into the department. Visibility of culture, identity, language, country and belonging will strengthen the learning and development of our Aboriginal students.

We are committed to...

- Supporting Aboriginal employees into formal leadership roles across our department, and developing a strong pipeline of Aboriginal employees who aspire to leadership roles
- Providing support for Aboriginal employees to act on their leadership aspirations so that Aboriginal leadership within the department is sustainable into the future
- Creating opportunities for Aboriginal employees to influence outcomes through the department's consultation and engagement processes.

In 2031 success means...

- The department employs more Aboriginal people in formal leadership roles
- More schools and preschools have Aboriginal employees participating as part of their leadership structures
- Aboriginal employees have a positive perception in relation to their career development and growth
- Aboriginal employees provide cultural leadership, specifically in the revival of First Nations languages
- Aboriginal students and families feel supported by the department, through their interaction with the entire workforce.

2021 – 2023 Actions

1. Review the department's Future Leaders Initiative to facilitate Aboriginal employees' participation to support their career progression.
2. Identify leadership development opportunities that support Aboriginal employees to build on their capability, and implement a supportive model to deliver these opportunities.
3. Review the department's approach to Aboriginal language instruction to support opportunities in school sites to teach First Nations languages, including determining an appropriate employment structure.
4. Develop a network of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to sponsor and mentor other Aboriginal people into leadership.
5. Develop a network of Aboriginal people to support non-Aboriginal leaders to create more inclusive workplace practices.



WORK TOGETHER WITH ABORIGINAL EMPLOYEES TO IMPLEMENT THIS PLAN

We are committed to collaborating with Aboriginal people through equal participation and shared decision-making to keep culture strong, build Aboriginal Nations and enhance learning and participation for both our Aboriginal students and employees.

We are committed to...

- Demonstrating accountability for delivering the outcomes of this plan
- Sharing responsibility for the actions and assessing their effectiveness
- Evolving the actions in this plan to respond to the needs of our Aboriginal workforce.

In 2031 success means...

- Our Aboriginal workforce is engaged, committed and confident in their role in strengthening the learning outcomes for children and young people
- Aboriginal employees feel supported, empowered and involved in the future of the department's workforce
- Non-Aboriginal employees understand what it means to be culturally responsive and work in ways which demonstrate this
- Aboriginal parents and carers are confident to engage with the department in the education of their children
- The agreed actions under this plan for 2021 – 2023, and in subsequent years, are delivered as promised
- We have evaluation measures that show the progress the department has made towards what it has committed to.

2021 – 2023 Actions

1. Identify the data sources and baseline measures that we will use to evaluate whether our actions are supporting the outcomes the department has committed to.
2. Determine and publish specific quantitative workforce targets to measure success in 2031.
3. Develop a monitoring and reporting framework to measure progress of the actions in the plan.
4. Develop effective ways to openly communicate and acknowledge progress made under this plan, demonstrating transparency to our Aboriginal employees and community.
5. Determine the next set of actions under this plan, to be delivered in 2024 – 2026.



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education