

Aboriginal Voice: Aboriginal education policy consultation framework

This is a mandated framework under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this framework must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting operational policies](#) page.

Overview

This framework provides a mechanism for embedding input from Aboriginal staff at all stages of the development and design of departmental policies, projects, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and standards in a flexible, sustainable and ongoing manner that aligns with commitments and actions under the *Aboriginal Education Strategy* and the *Reconciliation Action Plan*.

Scope

This framework applies to all departmental staff.

Staff must follow this framework when developing, updating and deleting policies, projects, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and standards in all areas of the department, unless the Senior Executive Group (SEG) determines that a particular policy, project or strategy falls outside the scope of this framework.



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Detail

The framework enables Aboriginal voice and expertise to be embedded at all levels of policy making and project development, and engages Aboriginal knowledge, expertise, experience and understanding from staff across all levels of the department.

The Department for Education has a wealth of expertise and experience in its Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workforce, and this framework is a means by which this expertise, experience and understanding of the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal education across the system can be drawn upon and proactively included in the development, design and reform of policies and projects for our education system as it works towards its world class ambition.

The framework embeds input from Aboriginal staff at all stages of the development and design of departmental policies, projects, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and standards. It does so in a flexible, sustainable and ongoing manner that:

- aligns with the aspiration, guiding principles, commitments and actions under the *Aboriginal Education Strategy* and the *Reconciliation Action Plan*.
- ensures a proactive avenue for Aboriginal voice to be heard in the early stages of development of departmental planning, design, implementation and evaluation of policy, strategy and projects to optimise Aboriginal educational and life outcomes (as opposed to retroactively reviewing proposals after they have been developed and elaborated).
- aligns with and strengthens the department's delivery against existing strategic and operational infrastructure including the Corporate Governance Framework, the Strategic Policy Model, Operational Policy Framework, and Stakeholder Engagement Framework.
- does not duplicate the existing Aboriginal Impact Statement process or overlap with the mandate for other Aboriginal-focused employee consultation groups such as DAWN and AWIG.
- ensures broad advice across the depth of the department's policies and operation.

Operation of the framework

The framework embeds Aboriginal voice in policy planning, design, implementation and evaluation within the department.

1. All levels of policy-making and project development must consider that Aboriginal expertise, experience and perspectives are heard at the earliest opportunity in the process.
2. For operational policies, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and standards covered under the [operational policy framework](#), the first step of the process for major edits or new policies includes that policy officers must consider that Aboriginal expertise, experience and perspectives are heard at the earliest opportunity, alongside [applying a gender lens in the workplace](#) and consideration of the principles of [workplace equity and respect](#).
3. To enable Aboriginal Voice to be heard at the earliest opportunity in the policy process, Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for compiling and maintaining a register of members from

across the department with relevant experience and expertise, who are capable of and willing to provide high level strategic, program, planning and policy advice as requested within the department (the “Aboriginal Voice Consultation Network Register”).

4. Members on this register are recruited by an expression of interest process. By submitting their names, members agree to their names being made available to policy owners.
5. Members on the register will be approved by the Director of Aboriginal Education and endorsed by Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning.
6. Once identified and enrolled on the register, members are able to be allocated to provide advice and participate in the development of key reforms at the outset of the policy making process, and through the natural cycle of policy.
7. Policy owners and authors are responsible for contacting members directly or may seek advice from Aboriginal Education Directorate on appropriate people to approach. If staff on the register are contacted to provide advice and feedback, they will have the option of declining involvement at that point in time.
8. Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for updating and publishing the register annually, and updating contact details at regular intervals to ensure accuracy.
9. Policy owners and authors are required to complete an [Aboriginal impact statement declaration](#) for all for all new policies, major edits and policy deletions in accordance with the requirements of the [operational policy framework](#).

Roles and responsibilities

Aboriginal Education Directorate

Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for compiling and maintaining a register of members from across the department with relevant experience and expertise, who are capable of and willing to provide high level strategic, program, planning and policy advice as requested within the department. (The “Aboriginal Education Policy and Strategic Project Consultative Register.”)

Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for recruiting members by an expression of interest process advertised to staff through internal communication channels, annually and as required. Where there are gaps within the knowledge and expertise of the register, Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for actively inviting recruitment or will provide alternative nominees.

Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for updating and publishing the register annually and updating contact details at regular intervals to ensure accuracy.

Aboriginal Education Directorate are responsible for liaison with Operational Policy to ensure the framework is reviewed regularly within required timeframes.

Director of Aboriginal Education

The Director of Aboriginal Education is responsible for approving membership on the register and for submitting their names for endorsement by the Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning.

Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning

The Executive Director, Curriculum and Learning is responsible for endorsing members on the register who have been approved by the Director of Aboriginal Education.

Policy owners and project managers

Policy owners are required to ensure Aboriginal voice, perspectives and expertise has been included within their work. Where expertise may be required from Aboriginal staff located within schools or preschools, it is the responsibility of the policy owner to support and enable their active participation throughout the development process, which may include funding release from their site.

Aboriginal expertise, experience and perspectives must be considered at the earliest opportunity, alongside [applying a gender lens in the workplace](#) and the principles of [workplace equity and respect in the development and editing of all department policies](#).

It is important that policy owners seek out information prior to engaging in consultation to ensure consultation is reflective of the different Aboriginal communities and peoples that reside and operate within South Australia.

Definitions

Aboriginal

This document uses the term 'Aboriginal' to refer to people who identify as:

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

This usage is preferred by Aboriginal South Australians and the department.

Aboriginal impact statement

A declaration on the part of policy owners that confirms that the education, safety and wellbeing needs of Aboriginal children and young people, and the needs and interests of Aboriginal people and their communities have been considered and where relevant, appropriately addressed in the development of a policy proposal or document.

Consultation

Consultation forms part of the process for developing new policies and making major edits to existing policies.

Consultation involves a genuine opportunity for all relevant people or groups to actively contribute and provide feedback in the development of departmental policies.

Aboriginal consultation is an exchange involving a two-way flow of information. It is an important process that empowers Aboriginal staff, families and communities to help make decisions on matters that affect the care and protection of Aboriginal children and young people.

Framework

A structure or frame of interlinked content. The governance framework is the department's overarching framework document.

Operational policy

The department's Operational Policy Team oversee the [operational policy framework](#) which applies to department operational policies, procedures, guidelines, frameworks and standards developed under the framework.

Policy information

[Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019-2029](#)

[Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2021](#)

[Aboriginal Workforce Plan 2021-2031](#)

[Operational Policy Framework: creating, updating and deleting operational policies page](#)

[Strategic Policy Model](#)

[Cultural Responsiveness Framework](#)

[Stakeholder engagement guidelines for corporate staff](#)

Supporting information

[World Class Education Strategic Plan](#) and [2021 Action Plan](#)

[Corporate Governance Framework](#)

[National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#)

[South Australian Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan 2021–2022](#)

Related legislation

Nil.

Related policies

[Operational policy framework: creating, updating and deleting operational policies page](#)

Record history

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