

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTICIPATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Policy Code	STU04
Policy Lead	Chief Executive Officer/Principal
Approving Authority	Board Of Directors
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Version	2023.1
Relevant legislation or external requirements	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESFs: 1.1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3.4, 6.2.1g) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cth) Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
Related ASA Documents	Student Support Framework Quality Assurance Framework Student Admissions Policy Student Admissions Procedure Student Code of Conduct Student Consultation and Wellbeing Policy Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure Discrimination, Bullying, and Harassment Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

This Policy affirms and supports the commitment of Australian School of Accounting (ASA) to the participation and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in courses at ASA.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all ASA applicants, students, staff, volunteers and contractors.

3. Principles

ASA supports participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and acknowledges the enrichment that such inclusion brings to ASA. ASA seeks to be sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures and be responsive to the diverse needs of all students and applicants.

ASA gives specific consideration to the recruitment, admission, participation, and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

ASA acknowledges the importance of centering student knowledge and experience, and the individual, in supporting student success.

ASA complies fully with all relevant legislation and seeks to address the historical disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	Any person who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; 2. identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and 3. is recognised by the Indigenous community in which they live as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
applicant	A person who has applied to study at ASA.
benchmarking	An external referencing activity that typically consists of focused improvement through relationships with a benchmarking partner or partners, but can also include comparing course design against publicly-available information and market intelligence. Benchmarking may vary depending on context. For example, in the context of course accreditation, benchmarking involves comparing performance outcomes and/or processes of similar courses of study delivered by other providers. 'Internal benchmarking' against other relevant courses offered by the provider may also be undertaken.
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	The Chief Executive Officer is the highest organisational role for ASA and performs the role of Principal as well as their other duties.
equitable participation	A quality of being fair and impartial, including the creation of equivalent opportunities for participation in Australian higher education for historically disadvantaged or underrepresented student populations.
historical disadvantage	The disadvantage resulting from historic patterns of institutionalised and other forms of systemic discrimination
accommodation	The process of adapting or adjusting an item, area, or process to enable equitable access.
reasonable adjustment	These are administrative, environmental, or procedural alterations in the learning situation which remove barriers for people so that they can perform the inherent requirements of the course of study. This could mean adjustments to the mode of delivery or written material or the assessment process and timeframe. An adjustment is reasonable if it takes into account the requirements of the person and balances the interests of all parties affected.
Special Consideration	Special consideration is when ASA provides an alternative or different method of assessing a students' achievement of learning outcomes. Students may apply for Special Consideration if they have or are experiencing an illness, injury or misadventure during a study period or their course enrolment. A request for Special Consideration may not be granted and must be applied for within specific time periods.
student	Includes enrolled students, students who have been accepted for enrolment but who have not yet commenced.

5. Policy Statement

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are under-represented in the higher education system. The most important factors identified as leading to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' premature withdrawal from studies include financial pressures, social or cultural alienation caused by the academic demands of study, and insufficient academic support.

ASA commits to monitoring the participation, progress, and completion of ASA courses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when there are enrolled students who meet the definition.

Wherever possible, ASA will seek to address the historic and continuing disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples which results in their under-representation in higher education enrolments and employment.

Admission to all courses provides specific entry requirements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ASA may offer scholarships to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support more equitable participation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be consulted in relation to their study requirements and supported throughout their enrolment and period of study until completion at ASA.

Australian School of Accounting will provide reasonable accommodation within the learning environment for students who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a range of services including, but not limited to:

- reasonable adjustment;
- special consideration; and
- personal and academic support services.

Data will be collected through the admissions and assessment processes, student experience, and completion rates in order to analyse the participation and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at ASA.

External benchmarking exercises with other higher education providers will also inform ASA's reporting on participation, progress, and completion rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The CEO will report annually to the Board of Directors on this data and the findings will be used to inform identified recruitment, academic, and support strategies.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for fostering a welcoming and inclusive community and ensuring that all staff abide by all documents in ASA's policy suite.

The Director Student Experience is responsible for ensuring that all students are treated fairly and equitably. They are also responsible for ensuring that students' grievances are handled in accordance with the *Student Grievance Policy* and associated procedure.

The Academic Dean is responsible for ensuring that all learning, teaching, and assessment is appropriately inclusive and supports the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Academic Dean will present monitoring reports of the participation, progress, and completion of ASA courses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when there are enrolled students who identify as such.

7. Relevant HESFs

As a registered education provider, ASA operates under various laws and regulations. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with such laws.

This Policy and the associated Procedure comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 which specifies that:

Standard 1.1 Admission

1. Admissions policies, requirements and procedures are documented, are applied fairly and consistently, and are designed to ensure that admitted students have the academic

preparation and proficiency in English needed to participate in their intended study, and no known limitations that would be expected to impede their progression and completion. [...]

Standard 1.3 Orientation and Progression [...]

4. Processes that identify students at risk of unsatisfactory progress and provide specific support are implemented across all courses of study.
5. Trends in rates of retention, progression and completion of student cohorts through courses of study are monitored to enable review and improvement.
6. Students have equivalent opportunities for successful transition into and progression through their course of study, irrespective of their educational background, entry pathway, mode or place of study.

Standard 2.2. Diversity and Equity

1. Institutional policies, practices and approaches to teaching and learning are designed to accommodate student diversity, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of students' backgrounds.
2. Specific consideration is given to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. Participation, progress, and completion by identified student subgroups are monitored and the findings are used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those subgroups.

Standard 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety

1. All students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the support services that are accessible if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their education.
2. Timely, accurate advice on access to personal support services is available, including for access to emergency services, health services, counselling, legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services.
3. The nature and extent of support services that are available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health, disability and wellbeing needs.
4. A safe environment is promoted and fostered, including by advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance safety and security on campus and online.

Standard 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support [...]

4. Students have access to learning support services that are consistent with the requirements of their course of study, their mode of study and the learning needs of student cohorts, including arrangements for supporting and maintaining contact with students who are off campus.

Standard 6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability

1. The provider is able to demonstrate, and the corporate governing body assures itself, that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including: [...]
 - g. educational policies and practices support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures [...]

8. Version Control

This Policy has been reviewed and approved by the Australian School of Accounting Board of Directors as at December 2023 and is reviewed every three years.

This Policy and Procedure is published and available on the Australian School of Accounting website <https://www.asahe.edu.au/policies-and-forms/>.

Change and Version Control				
Version	Authored by	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
2023.1	Director Quality and Compliance	Updated policy to include clear detail regarding equity and admission. Mapped to HESFs. Benchmarked against 6 other Higher Education Providers.	12/12/2023	18/12/2023
Previous version archived. New Policy code and numbering system implemented.				
3.0		Board of Directors Approval	17/08/2022	17/08/2022
2.0		Board of Directors Approval	04/11/2020	04/11/2020
1.0		Council Approval	26/07/2018	26/07/2018