1. Purpose

1.1 The Central Australian Institute of Technology Higher Education (CAIT Hi-Ed) recognises and respects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of Australia and its islands. We honour the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which the Melbourne Campus stands, paying our respects to their elders past and present.

1.2 The Institute endorses the Australian Government's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (1989), which aims to enhance the availability, responsiveness, and effectiveness of education services. This is to ensure equity in access to and participation in education, alongside achieving equitable and appropriate educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

1.3 The primary purpose of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education policies and procedures is to promote equitable access to quality education for Indigenous Australians, recognising the unique cultural heritage, experiences, and needs of these communities. This policy aims to close the significant educational gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students receive the support they need to succeed academically while honouring and supporting the continuation and expression of their cultural identities.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all CAIT Hi-Ed staff, including academic and administrative personnel. This policy encourages all staff to engage in professional development related to Indigenous knowledge and cultural sensitivity, ensuring that the entire Institute is committed to fostering an environment of inclusion, respect, and understanding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

3. Policy

3.1 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples education policy and procedure at CAIT Hi-Ed is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and culturally safe learning environment that supports the educational aspirations and outcomes of Indigenous students.

4. Principles

4.1 The CAIT Hi-Ed is committed to fostering equitable educational outcomes for all students by removing barriers, promoting inclusivity, and celebrating the strengths of Indigenous learners. In doing so, we also strive to close the gap in educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed and thrive.

4.2 The CAIT Hi-Ed fosters a culturally safe environment where Indigenous students and staff feel respected and valued.

4.3 The CAIT Hi-Ed is committed to engaging with Indigenous communities in meaningful and respectful ways, ensuring that their voices are heard in decision-making processes.

4.4 The CAIT Hi-Ed is accountable to its Indigenous students, staff, and communities, and it strives for continuous improvement in creating an inclusive and equitable academic environment.

4.5 The CAIT Hi-Ed will ensure that government-specific funding for Indigenous Australians supports Indigenous student success and will provide additional financial support where feasible.

5. Procedure

5.1 Student Support and Engagement

- CAIT Hi-Ed will establish a dedicated Indigenous Student Support Office to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with academic, cultural, and personal matters.

- Students will have access to academic mentoring, tutoring, and culturally appropriate counselling services.

- Orientation programs will include sessions on Indigenous student support services, ensuring that students are aware of available resources.

5.2 Cultural Awareness and Staff Development

- All staff, including academic and administrative personnel, will be required to undertake cultural awareness training on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and perspectives.

- CAIT Hi-Ed will encourage ongoing professional development for staff to enhance their understanding of Indigenous education and student needs.

- The Institute will integrate Indigenous cultural knowledge into teaching practices and curriculum design to foster inclusivity.

5.3 Community Engagement and Partnerships

- CAIT Hi-Ed will actively pursue with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build meaningful relationships and ensure their voices are included in decision-making.

- The Institute will seek to establish advisory committees that actively include Indigenous perspectives, inviting Indigenous representatives to contribute to the development of policies, curriculum, and student support programs.

- The Institute will work towards developing partnerships with Indigenous organisations to explore opportunities for internships, research, and employment pathways for Indigenous students, recognizing the need for flexibility and meaningful engagement.

5.4 Financial and Scholarship Support

- CAIT Hi-Ed will allocate specific scholarships and financial aid to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

- Government funding designated for Indigenous education will be managed transparently to maximize student support.

- Eligible students will be provided with guidance on applying for external Indigenous scholarships and funding programs.

5.5 Inclusive Curriculum and Research

- The Institute will incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and contributions across various disciplines in its curriculum.

- Research initiatives that focus on Indigenous issues will be encouraged, ensuring ethical and community-driven research practices.

- Indigenous guest lecturers and scholars will be engaged as integral contributors to academic programs.

5.6 Monitoring and Accountability

- CAIT Hi-Ed will establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to track Indigenous student enrolment, retention, and graduation rates.

- An annual review of this policy and its implementation will be conducted, with feedback sought from Indigenous students, staff, and community representatives.

- The Institute will publish reports on the progress and effectiveness of its Indigenous education initiatives.

6.   Responsibilities

6.1   The principles outlined in this policy form the foundation of the Institute's approach to Indigenous learning, teaching, and research. All members of the Institute share the responsibility for implementing these principles.

7.   Authority and Compliance

File Number	HEP022
Status	Current
Approval Authority	Academic Board.
Legislative Compliance	• Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 • Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) • Racial Discrimination Act 1975 • Australian Government's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (1989) • Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
Supporting Documents	• CAIT Hi-Ed Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy • CAIT Hi-Ed Indigenous Mentoring and Tutoring Guidelines • CAIT Hi-Ed Indigenous KPI Framework • CAIT Hi-Ed Indigenous Financial Scholarship Framework • CAIT Hi-Ed Indigenous Scholarship Application Form
Related Documents	• CAIT Hi-Ed Governance Framework • CAIT Hi-Ed Equity and Diversity Policy and Procedure • CAIT Hi - Ed Course development and Approval Policy and Procedure
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	• Standard 1.1; ss 1 • Standard 1.3; ss 1 – 2 • Standard 1.5; ss 1 • Standard 2.2; ss 1 - 3 • Standard 3.2; ss 2 • Standard 3.3; ss 1 & 3 • Standard 5.3; ss 4 • Standard 6.2; ss 1
Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS Act) and National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	• Standard 2; ss 1 • Standard 2.2; ss 3 • Standard 3; ss 1 • Standard 5; ss 3 • Standard 6; ss 1 – 3 • Standard 7; ss 2 • Standard 8; ss 14 • Standard 10; ss 2
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean.
Responsible Executive	CEO.
Enquiries Contact	Academic Dean.
Effective Date	

Expiry Date	Not applicable
Next Review	3 Years from the effective date

Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed by the Academic Board every three years.

Version History			
Version No	Approved by	Approval Date	Revision Notes
1.0	Academic Board	7/3/2025	