

Aboriginal Community Engagement Strategy



2022 - 2026



MY WELCOME

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia where we live and work, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

Our headquarters in Townsville is home to the Wulgurukaba People and just south is home to the Bindal People. This includes the Hinchinbrook channel, Palm Island, Magnetic Island and the greater Townsville region.

Fitness Institute is very proud to develop our first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy. With our headquarters in Townsville, we attract a large variety of First Nation students to our face-to-face course.

Recently, I attended the AUSactive Senior Management Summit and the Fitness Awards in Sydney in late October 2022. We were lucky to have Australian Performer, Mitch Tambo delivering a speech on inclusion as well as a powerful Welcome to Country before the Awards Ceremony.

The big takeaway from this event was to make sure that all Indigenous students are made to feel welcome and safe in our environment. This could be as simple as casual conversation from our trainers and admin staff mentioning that we are looking forward to seeing them again at the next class.

Our engagement strategy will ensure that our staff stay up to date with the best teaching and engagement strategies to ensure that we can get more Indigenous students into employment as trainers.

Our last two classes have seen the highest percentage of Indigenous students in the past 12 years. This is reassuring to our staff to know that we are attracting more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to our class.

Before we enrol our students, we always make sure that we are a good fit. There has been a common theme of our last cohort, that our students want to make a change for both them and their communities.

This aligns perfectly with our student motto: Embrace the Opportunity, Boost your Skills and Make the Change!

Our student's "Why" can then be the motivation for our "mission" to deliver world class education.

Philip Sherriff

Managing Director



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DECLARATION OF INTENT:

In the Short Term (within the next 12 months) and ongoing, Fitness Institute will:

1. Increase cultural awareness amongst all staff with discussions about teaching Aboriginal students with sensitivity and developing an understanding of specific needs and knowledge regarding Aboriginal cultural protocols.
2. Ensure all support, training and assessment staff are aware of current information around teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, such as:
 - I. Education.vic.gov.au: Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
 - II. Victorian Institute of Teaching: Teaching Learners for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
 - III. Australian Education Research Organisation: Knowing your students and knowing Country
3. Add an Acknowledgement of Country to selected online and printed materials as a demonstration of respect for the traditional custodians and the continuing relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their country.
4. Aim to boost communication with specific government departments by ensuring all Fitness Institute Management are aware of and regularly review information contained on the following state based web pages:
 - QLD – Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
 - NSW – Department of Customer Service
 - WA – Aboriginal Affairs
 - SA – Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation
 - NT – Office of Aboriginal Affairs
 - ACT – Community Services
 - VIC – First Peoples State Relations

In the Long Term, Fitness Institute aims to increase enrolments from students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent over the next 5 years by a minimum 10% pa.

Individual First Nations students targets for the next five years are set at:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. 2022 Calendar Year: 22* (*Current as of 14/11/2022) | 4. 2025 Calendar Year: 31 |
| 2. 2023 Calendar Year: 25 | 5. 2026 Calendar Year: 35 |
| 3. 2024 Calendar Year: 28 | |





1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Fitness Institute proudly acknowledges and celebrates the First Peoples of Australia and their ongoing strength in upholding some of the world's oldest living cultures. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia where we live and work, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

Fitness Institute acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, their communities, and cultures. Throughout this strategy, we refer to the Aboriginal Australian Community as inclusive of the many different First Nations Peoples throughout Australia, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

2. ABOUT US

Since 2009, Fitness Institute has coached, inspired and empowered trainers Australia Wide!

Our Student Motto

Embrace the Opportunity, Boost your Skills and Make the Change! We encourage everyone with a passion for health and fitness, to have an opportunity to find the career that they deserve. We encourage our students to learn new skills and to enjoy their new career helping others change to a healthy, active lifestyle.

Our Point Of Difference

Our team is In the Industry - for the Industry. All staff at Fitness Institute have experience in the Sport, Wellness, Fitness and Recreation Industry. Even the Directors and Management Team are fully qualified Coaches & Trainers.

Our Mission

Our team strives to provide our students with the very best education experience possible in the Health and Fitness Industry every day.

Our Vision

To provide the highest quality online learning experience to students all around Australia and improve the health, fitness and wellbeing of our great nation!

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3. FITNESS INSTITUTE'S ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

3.1 - Background

Located in Far North Queensland, Fitness Institute's Face to Face courses have consistently attracted members of the local Indigenous community.

Over the years the team of Fitness Institute have continually reviewed its processes and mode of delivery to ensure a high level of service provision is provided. The outcome of this continual improvement activity has been initiatives such as the VIP support program and individualised training plans and support.

Consultation has included reaching out to Indigenous students past and present for feedback along with guidance provided by representatives of the DSDSATSIP.

Participation in careers days and initiatives conducted by local schools has also formed a part of Fitness Institute's outreach program.

In addition to this, a variety of government publications have been referenced in regard to the preparation of this strategy including:

- Humans Rights Victoria - Aboriginal Community Engagement Strategy
- Mission Australia: Reconciliation Action Plan
- The Government of NSW – Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2020 - 2025



3.2 - Approach

Fitness Institute's strategy includes actions that will span five years. The plan's progress will form part of the annual compliance calendar for review, and this is where goals can be reviewed and plans adjusted as required.

To achieve the short-term goals identified, Acknowledgement of Country will be included on the website.

Information will be provided to all staff and an annual review of the plan will form part of the compliance calendar going forward.

In essence, it is the intention of Fitness Institute's Directors to ensure:

1. All courses are accessible and inclusive
2. Student services and support can be tailored to an individual's needs
3. Language Learning and Numeracy challenges can be accommodated
4. Awareness of services and education around physical fitness and healthy eating is increased in the community
5. The Engagement plan, its successes and challenges are reviewed and monitored at least annually, with targets and objectives reviewed and adjusted as required
6. Ways to recruit Aboriginal people are explored when positions become available



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