

Aspect Policy

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Acknowledgement & Commitment



Acknowledgement to Indigenous Australians

The Board of Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) and Aspect staff recognise Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people as the First Nations Peoples of Australia. We acknowledge the cultural and spiritual links that the many Aboriginal nations have with the land, sea and environment. We acknowledge these many nations as the traditional custodians of the different regions we know as Australia.

These Aboriginal nations witnessed European settlement and have endured despite the massive changes to their lives, land and lifestyles. Aspect acknowledges the extensive detrimental impact that a loss of countries has exacted on the culture and customs of Aboriginal nations. In spite of these impacts, Aboriginal people have retained their pride, sense of identity, cultures and customs.

Commitment to Indigenous Australians

The Aspect Board and staff are committed to working with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander nations to implement its Reconciliation Action Plan. The Plan is driven by the Aspect Strategic Plan and demonstrates Aspect's growing knowledge base and cultural competence. The Plan is active in promoting greater levels of understanding across our services, systems and business streams on the importance of including Aboriginal people in decision making and in business and service planning processes.

The Plan is a 'living and dynamic' commitment that promotes respect, autonomy and self-determination, while providing the basis for any negotiation or collaboration between Aspect and Aboriginal people.

Aspect accepts its responsibilities in developing greater networks with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people and services, and commits to sharing this awareness of the rich history of Aboriginal Australia through its work. Aspect acknowledges this as the basis of a true and open communication that demonstrates cooperation, mutual respect, understanding and trust.

Aspect commits to ensuring people maintain and strengthen connection to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and community, through culturally competent services and appropriate community linkages which respect a person's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identity. This commitment applies through all assessment, planning and actions that promote cultural safety and connectedness and respect the cultural and spiritual identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

External Framework

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Acknowledgement & Commitment policy upholds the requirements of the National Standards for Disability Services Standard 2: Participation & Inclusion, to use promote community and cultural connection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The policy also speaks to the Disability Standards for Education 2005 Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimisation which requires that the organisation prohibit harassment, abuse or victimisation by a staff member to



a student with disability, and requires that staff are trained in identifying and reporting suspected abuse, neglect, harassment and victimisation of students, and actively engage in the prevention of it in any circumstances as part of the educational environment.

Critical Definitions

Culturally competent - describes individuals and organisations with a set of behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, skills, practices and processes which enable effective work in cross-cultural settings. It is more than cultural awareness. It means that individuals and organisations are proactive, rather than responsive, regarding cultural diversity to ensure effective and relevant service delivery or supports.

Legislation References

International

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

National

Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)
Australian Education Amendment Bill 2017 (Cth)
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Disability Services Act 1986 (Cth)
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

New South Wales

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 (NSW)
Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
Education Act 1990 (NSW)

Victoria

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)
Disability Act 2006 (VIC)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (VIC)

South Australia

Disability Services (Rights, Protection and Inclusion) Amendment Act 2013 (SA)
Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)
Education Act 1972 (SA)
Education (Compulsory Education Age) Amendment Act 2007 (SA)
Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (SA)
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
Racial Vilification Act 1996 (SA) Education Act 1972 (SA)

Australian Capital Territory

Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)
Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)