Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

When planning a course of study, teachers should identify ways to strengthen students’ appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives by encouraging engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:

- frameworks of knowledge and ways of learning
- contributions to Australian society and cultures
- ways of life and social contexts.

The Indigenous perspectives section of the QCAA website has a collection of resources to help teachers engage with Indigenous histories and peoples [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/577.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/577.html).

The QCAA’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Handbook (available from [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/8848-teaching.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/8848-teaching.html)) includes information about:

- establishing a supportive school and classroom environment
- consulting and collaborating with local Indigenous communities
- dealing with sensitive issues
- selecting appropriate resources and texts
- removing barriers to student success and engagement.

Specific advice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

A unit which embeds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives must comply with local Indigenous community protocols and guidelines. The school must therefore first build relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are protocols for engaging with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and the Queensland Government has protocols for engagement documents. These can be found at [www.datsima.qld.gov.au/people-communities/protocols-for-consultation](http://www.datsima.qld.gov.au/people-communities/protocols-for-consultation).

Resources are also available at the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). Of special help is a guide to establishing connections with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and this can be found at [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3035.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3035.html).

When developing units of work, it is essential to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school staff or sector regional officers and local Elders or community members for input, advice, guidance, and approval. It is important to adopt their input and advice into the unit of work, and to understand and be guided by local protocols.
Useful websites

Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee (QIECC) 2012, www.qiecc.eq.edu.au

Learning experiences

Teaching and learning experiences are designed to provide ideas and suggestions that teachers may adapt, expand or modify to suit their own contexts. In some cases they also provide a foundation from which assessment may be developed.

Sample learning experiences

The following are examples only and are not listed in any particular order:

- research Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander natural resource management strategies, including fire-stick farming
- identify native Australian plants used by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples, considering medicinal and functional properties
- invite local community members to accompany students on field-based learning experiences where appropriate
- explore the history of local agricultural environments, including past and present resource management strategies. Discuss the changes that may have occurred over time due to changing perspectives, research and education
- consider the legislation designed to protect Australian land and the implications of legislation for all parties.