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 Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) website has a collection of resources to help teachers engage with Indigenous histories and peoples [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/577.html](http://www.qsa.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), under ‘Teaching and Learning’) 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 Music

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples music is a rich and integral aspect of community life and culture. As with all Indigenous arts, Indigenous music is not just a form of self-expression. It is a response to the world that conveys meaning and has a spiritual purpose. Through song, dance and storytelling, music is used to pass on and explain stories of creation, spirituality and beliefs.

Students can gain knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures through exploring the various forms of music produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and through the diversity of music-making practices. They also need to develop appreciation of responding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art works in a culturally sensitive and responsible manner.

A music curriculum incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives should ensure:

- respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- respect for the rights of the traditional owners of artworks, songs, stories and dances
• use of accurate and up-to-date resources
• accessibility for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. When planning practical learning experiences that incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, it is important to involve the local communities, as appropriate.

Useful websites

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts 2012  

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and culture 2013  

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Office 2013  
www.apraamcos.com.au

Australian Government 2013, Dare to Lead  
www.daretolead.edu.au

Australian Government 2013, Dare to Lead, Cultural experiences  
www.daretolead.edu.au/DTL08_CulEx_Main

Commonwealth of Australia 2013  
www.indigenous.gov.au

Department of Education, Training and Employment 2012, Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in schools: A guide for school learning communities  

Eight Aboriginal Ways of Learning 2013  
www.8ways.wikispaces.com

Indigenous perspectives support materials  
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3035.html

National Curriculum Services 2013, Indigenous Education Resource Update  

Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Committee (QIECC) 2013  
www.qiecc.eq.edu.au