

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ADVISORY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Commencement date: September 2014

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group (**the Group**) has been established to provide ACARA with advice regarding:
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority in the Australian Curriculum
 - protocols and cultural sensitivities that need to be taken into account by ACARA business units as ACARA proceeds with its curriculum, assessment and reporting programs.
- 1.2 These terms of reference set out the overall structure and operation of the Group.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Group will be requested by ACARA to provide advice in relation to matters referred to in 1.1 above and on:
- a) the development of the Australian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 12 as a curriculum for all young Australians, designed to support 21st century learning and includes advice:
 - to writing teams at defined stages throughout the project
 - on the groups or individuals who are to be consulted
 - on documentation prepared during the curriculum development process
 - on the suitability and quality of curriculum documents (for consultation or for approval by the ACARA Board/Curriculum Committee).
 - b) development and implementation of the national assessment program (NAP) that measures students' progress in key learning areas including alignment with the Australian Curriculum and participation of students in the NAP tests
 - c) a national data collection and reporting program
 - d) communication strategies and key groups that should receive information from ACARA.

- 2.2 The Group provides advice on matters only. It has no delegation of authority and is not a committee of the ACARA Board.

3. Membership

3.1 The Group will comprise the following:

- a) up to 12 experts invited by ACARA to be members of the Group, up to four of whom will be representatives of state and territory Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies; the remainder will be selected from applicants who have submitted an Expression of Interest
- b) at least one Torres Strait Islander person
- c) the general manager, curriculum (or nominated representative), a member of the ACARA Board and the senior project officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education as ex officio members of the Group, able to participate in discussion but without voting rights.

3.2 The senior project officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education will be a conduit between ACARA and the Group

3.3 Meetings will be chaired by an elected member of the Group, and the deputy chair will also be elected by the Group.

3.4 Only members of the Group and invited ACARA officers can attend or participate in any meetings. Observers may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Chair/s.

3.5 External expertise may be accessed to assist in the work of the Group by invitation from the Chair/s.

3.6 Formal mechanisms will be agreed to at the first meeting where members will have the opportunity to consult with a broader constituency Group.

3.7 Before accepting the position, nominees must declare formally, in writing, to ACARA any potential conflicts of interest (financial, material or partiality) directly relating to the purpose of the Group. The members will be asked to confirm and declare any conflict of interest at each meeting given that individuals' circumstances may change.

3.8 Where a circumstance arises preventing the member from fulfilling their duties to the Group, or where a member is otherwise unable to appropriately fill their role, **on the advice of the Advisory Group**, ACARA reserves the right to seek a replacement member.

4. Appointment of members

4.1 Membership of the Group is through invitation by the chief executive officer, or his or her delegate, following selection from applicants who have submitted an Expression of Interest.

4.2 Membership of the Group will be reviewed annually in line with the review of the Terms of Reference of the Group. Every two years, half of the group will resign and Expressions of Interest advertised to find suitable replacements.

5. Meetings

- 5.1 Meetings will be held as determined by ACARA.
- 5.2 If a member is unable to attend a meeting for any reason, then apologies should be sent as soon as practicable.
- 5.3 A quorum of half plus one is required for Group decisions to be binding. Where a decision needs to be made where a quorum is not present, a flying minute will seek ratification.
- 5.4 Meetings will proceed regardless of whether a quorum is present.

6. Administration

- 6.1 ACARA's Cross-curriculum priority team will be responsible for the provision of secretariat services to the Group and will act as the primary point for communication between members and ACARA.
- 6.2 ACARA's Cross-curriculum priority team will be responsible for the review of the Terms of Reference for the Group on an annual basis.

7. Guiding principles

- 7.1 Members are to agree to the following principles:
 - a) They will maintain confidentiality in relation to all information or data considered by the Group unless otherwise agreed to by the Group or by the ACARA CEO.
 - b) They will not to make public comment on behalf of the Group or ACARA.
 - c) They will recognise ACARA's decision-making role in the development of the Australian Curriculum.