

Apprenticeships
Are Us



INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT POLICY STATEMENT

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

The Greater Western Sydney area has the largest population of Indigenous Australians in NSW. Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd is therefore well placed to provide opportunities to, and to partner with, Indigenous Australians, especially those in Greater Western Sydney, to achieve sustainable economic and social outcomes in line with our Mission, Goals and Strategic Plan.

This policy aligns with the *Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) 2023* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2022*, which provide guidelines for increasing employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians and ensuring equitable access to job training and apprenticeships. These legislative frameworks support Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd.'s commitment to improving labour market participation for Indigenous Australians.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd recognises that Indigenous Australians are statistically amongst the most disadvantaged groups in Australia. This includes employment. Improved labour market participation is central to achieving positive outcomes for individuals and their families in terms of social and economic engagement.

In addition, Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd acknowledges that Indigenous Australian Apprentices and Trainees are central to the development of teaching and research of Indigenous knowledge, which is critical to the higher education sector and society.

The *Fair Work Act 2009* (as amended in 2023) reinforces the importance of non-discrimination and inclusive workplace policies. Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd adheres to these regulations, ensuring that all employment decisions involving Indigenous Australians are free from bias and support equal opportunity.

Underpinning this policy is Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd.'s commitment to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and to the provision of equal opportunity in employment together with the promotion of inclusion through valuing diversity in the workplace.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd is committed to improving Indigenous enrolment and progression rates across all levels of organisation and encouraging post trade development at the completion of the apprenticeship or traineeship.

SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy:

- a. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander - is defined as any person who:
 - i. is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
 - ii. identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and
 - iii. is recognised by the Indigenous community in which he or she lives as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

This definition is the same as the definition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander that has been adopted by the Commonwealth of Australia for administrative purposes.

SECTION 3 - POLICY STATEMENT

This policy describes the principles underpinning Indigenous Australian employment and engagement (in the context of employment) at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd.

OBJECTIVES

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd seeks to:

- a. Increase the participation rate and employment outcomes of Indigenous Australians across all levels at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd to at least reflect participation levels in society.
- b. Be an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians within Greater Western Sydney.
- c. Develop leading strategies and contribute to shaping the national agenda in Indigenous employment and engagement.
- d. Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will also focus on intersectionality within Indigenous employment, ensuring that the unique challenges faced by Indigenous women and other underrepresented groups are addressed. This aligns with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2022* and the *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2024*.
- e. Redress, through affirmative action in employment, the past disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians.
- f. Create a work environment that is free from discrimination, promotes an understanding of Indigenous culture, and is culturally respectful and inclusive.
- g. Ensure all staff, particularly those involved in recruitment and management, undertake mandatory cultural competency training, as outlined by the *NSW Government's Cultural Competence Guidelines 2024*. This training will enhance understanding and respect for Indigenous culture in the workplace.
- h. Build and develop a positive working relationship with the community and relevant stakeholders about improving employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

PRINCIPLES

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd aims to:

- a. Provide an environment where Indigenous employees are encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- b. Celebrate the knowledge, skills and history of Indigenous Australians and recognise the cultural diversity this knowledge brings to the workplace.
- c. Provide a workplace where cultural, social and religious systems practiced by Indigenous Australians are respected.
- d. Include representation of Indigenous employees across a wide range of areas and levels of the organisation.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will strive towards these guiding principles by undertaking the following actions:

- ***Employment and career***

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd aims to achieve a level of employment participation by Indigenous Australians at the level of their representation in the community, or greater, noting that Indigenous Australians make up 2.5% of the Australian population and 2.2% of the NSW population.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd aims to increase retention in the workforce and long-term career and employment prospects for Indigenous Australians.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will promote and support its Indigenous Australian Employment Strategy as the foundation of Indigenous Australian employment at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd and incorporate the Indigenous Australian Employment Strategy within its employment policies, including the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will seek to:

- a. Develop innovative employment programs to attract Indigenous Australians to all levels and types of employment at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd. These will include apprentices and trainees, graduate-entry, early career, middle and senior level programs in general and executive positions.
- b. Develop programs to provide employment pathways for Indigenous Australians, including transition from study to employment or entry into the workforce - such as indigenous Pre-Apprenticeship courses.
- c. Positively and proactively seek to recruit Indigenous Australians and provide Indigenous identified positions and designated positions where appropriate.
- d. Provide targeted induction and orientation programs for Indigenous Australian employees.
- e. Offer career development programs such as training, education, mentoring, job exchange, and other professional learning initiatives to build individual skills and leadership capacity. These programs will assist in retaining Indigenous Australians at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd on "whole of career" pathways.
- f. Provide targeted support for Indigenous Australian employees transitioning from apprenticeships into higher-level roles within the organisation. This includes offering access to dual trade qualifications, in accordance with the *Australian Government's Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) 2023*.
- g. Work with external partners to develop scholarships and support for work placements.
- h. Provide other support mechanisms and networks for Indigenous Australian employees, including conferences, seminars and forums.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will further support Indigenous Australian employment by adopting Government initiatives that promote increased Indigenous Australian employment participation. For example, the NSW Government Guidelines for Aboriginal Participation in Construction.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will provide support to managers and supervisors in the process of recruiting and selecting Indigenous Australian employees and managing and supervising Indigenous Australians on apprenticeships and traineeships, or other employment programs. This will include support in undertaking career development planning, performance and review processes, and reward and recognition.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd encourages Indigenous Australian employees or potential employees to identify themselves.

- **Engagement**

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will seek to engage with external organisations (community, businesses, industries, and government), starting with the Greater Western Sydney region to foster alliances and partnerships, and to develop programs that improve Indigenous Australian employment opportunities.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will also prioritise engagement with Indigenous-owned businesses in line with the *Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) 2023*. Partnerships with Indigenous suppliers will support broader economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians and enhance Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd.'s social procurement efforts.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will seek opportunities to raise awareness of cultural diversity within employment by cooperating or partnering with external organisations and businesses including developing and providing training programs in cultural diversity within the workplace.

All initiatives under this policy will align with the *Closing the Gap 2020* framework, supporting Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd's efforts to contribute to the national targets for reducing Indigenous disadvantage in employment, health, and education.

- ***Policies***

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd aims to build mutually beneficial partnerships based on respect through the participation and contribution of Indigenous Australian employees in employment-related decision-making processes. This will include membership of certain selection panels, and involvement in staffing strategy development. To ensure cultural diversity is embedded within the University, all UWS-wide employment or staff-related strategies or policies will give consideration to the cultural diversity of the community in which Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd operates.

Training programs on cultural diversity for staff will be developed and, once in place, attendance will be a requirement for all staff participating in recruitment and selection processes.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd encourages Indigenous Australian employees to participate in cultural diversity programs and services such as activities, committees and networks organised by the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement and align with the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will incorporate into its policies and procedures the opportunity for Indigenous Australian employees to participate in cultural activities and events, such as national days of observance, e.g., NAIDOC.

COMMUNICATION

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will place the Indigenous Employment and Engagement Strategy on its web site.

APPRENTICESHIPS ARE US LTD INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYMENT AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd has established a number of bodies to advise on and monitor its activity and progress on providing opportunities for employment and for engaging with Indigenous Australians.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd will monitor progress against its Indigenous Employment and Engagement Strategy by reporting annually on key metrics, including Indigenous employee retention rates, participation in development programs, and leadership progression. This data will be reviewed as part of the organisation's broader diversity and inclusion reporting obligations, in line with the NSW Government's Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2024.

Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd has developed an Indigenous Australian Employment and Engagement Strategy (the Strategy) to attract, retain and develop Indigenous Australian staff at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd. The Strategy is the principal document outlining the Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd.'s objectives, areas of focus and implementation plan for Indigenous Australian employment at Apprenticeships Are Us Ltd. It was developed as part of the Indigenous Employment and Engagement project which aims to maximise employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians and is committed to promoting the benefits of inclusiveness and diversity in the workplace to all employees (including diverse knowledge, skills, histories, traditions and cultures of Indigenous Australians).

AUTHORISATION

Michael Wentworth



Managing Director

Apprenticeships Are Us Limited

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Authorised by	Authorisation Date	Sections	Amendment
1.1			All	N/A
1.2	M. Wentworth	01/02/2018	All	Change of CEO
1.3	M. Wentworth	08/05/2023	All	Cover page
1.4	M. Wentworth	15/10/2024	All	Cover page, minor information update