Research into options for community/university management of Indigenous cultural heritage for the Indigenous Research Network, Griffith University

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This report has been produced as a part of the assessment for ARCH 8508 Directed Study in Cultural Heritage Management Graduate topic in the Department of Archaeology, Flinders University.
Executive Summary

For a number of years Griffith University has pursued a commitment to Indigenous curriculum with a focus on the undergraduate programs on offer. The issues and complexities of dealing with the positioning of Indigenous cultural knowledge within the dominant western paradigm have prompted this study. The study aims to identify ways of managing the impact the western system has on people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities during the knowledge collection and sharing process. The study will explore the physical impact of the universities expanding infrastructure as well as the more subtle impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture that occur during both research and academic activities.

The literature review included the topics of; Aboriginal cultural heritage management, Indigenous copyright issues (particularly in regard to oral knowledge, the documentation of ethnographic practices and the conservation and revival of language), Federal and State legislation and regulation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols. Where possible the review gave preference to Indigenous collective authorship.

Four case study universities were reviewed as part of the study across a range of symbolic indicators of partnership with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples where the institute was located. These universities were Griffith University, Flinders University, Southern Cross University and the University of New England. The indicators that were sought by scanning the universities public web profile were; acknowledgement of Traditional custodians, Specific policy for management of impact to either tangible or intangible aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage, celebration of working partnerships with local Aboriginal groups and more specifically with local aboriginal groups and evidence the university intended to educate students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Australia.

The results were mixed and ranged from 100% demonstrated to 100% absence of evidence depending on the symbolic indicator. This prompted the following recommendations to ensure respectful management of potential impact to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values by university activities.

- Urgent and extensive dialogue is needed.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander groups need to articulate their expectations to universities.
- Meetings need to commence between all university stakeholders.
- Disclosure of the existence or lack of any current university policies, procedures or protocols.
- Aboriginal and cultural heritage assessments from historic times undertaken from both a scientific and a cultural significance perspective.
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Introduction

The aim of this project was to explore options for managing both tangible and intangible aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture within a university context. The intention is to develop discussion prompts for the purpose of generating meaningful dialogue between institutions and local Indigenous communities on how Indigenous cultural heritage impact can and should be managed.

Griffith University’s Indigenous Research Network (IRN) is a group of Indigenous researchers affiliated with Griffith University. The membership includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and post graduate research students. Since its formation the IRN has been considering the equity of partnership in knowledge production and transfer of Indigenous curriculum. The members are conscious of the need for transparency in all matters relating to cultural heritage management to avoid misunderstanding and concern within Indigenous communities. This transparency needs to be over all aspects of cultural impact. The IRN stresses that transparency of process does not equate to disclosure of content. Further the IRN asserts that all aspects of culture to be affected by university processes, policies and practices should be determined by those with the cultural authority to make a decision within the specific context identified.

University Case Studies

For the purpose of this study four universities were identified as case studies. They are: Griffith University; Flinders University; University of New England and Southern Cross University. The assumption is that research into the universities’ public web based profiles will highlight applications of desirable Aboriginal cultural heritage management. The universities were selected in consultation with the industry partner based on collective knowledge of success in some aspect of Indigenous cultural interaction.

Griffith University is located along the Gold Coast/Brisbane development corridor in south east Queensland. It has five main campuses named according to their location. They are: South Bank; Nathan; Mt Gravatt; Logan and the Gold Coast. Flinders University is located at Adelaide in South Australia. The University of New England’s original campus is located at Armidale in north western New South Wales. The Southern Cross University is another rapidly expanding multi campus university with locations at Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Byron Bay, Port Macquarie and Tweed Heads (Lakeside and Riverside) in the north of New South Wales and also at Coolangatta Qld. (Gold Coast Airport Precinct).

Conservation and Protection Legislation and Guidelines

The conservation and preservation of Indigenous cultural heritage is legislated and regulated by the Australian Government and the various states. On the National level the relevant legislation is embodied in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 regulated by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984, the Australian Heritage Act 2003 and Native Title Act 1993.
Following is a list of the relevant state legislation relating to this study. In Queensland the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* and the *Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003* operate. New South Wales has the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the *Heritage Act of NSW 1977*. South Australia has the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*. All current government Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation is premised on Indigenous community input into decision making. This requires observing various local protocols and processes.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge Dr Glenda Nalder, Research Fellow, Dr Chris Matthews Coordinator, Ms Marg Grenfell, Senior Administration Assistant and Mr John Graham of the IRN, Griffith University for their contributions to this directed study.

**Literature Review**

There are two distinct but not discreet aspects of potential Aboriginal cultural heritage impact that need to be considered for this directed study. The first is the possibility of physical impact to the tangible aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage, be they objects or places, as part of modification to the environment from development and its associated infrastructure. The second is the possibility of impact on the intangible aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage that may occur in the way cultural knowledge is collected, stored and transferred, for example, as part of a university’s research and academic activities (Nakata, 2007; Francis & Liew, 2009).

The scope of cultural heritage management considered through this literature review ranged from the conserving and protecting of physical objects and places to considering the complexities of copyright over oral history and ethnographic documentation. For that reason literature was selected for review that provided an overview of the perceived effectiveness of the regulation to meet the intention of the legislation and the expectations of the Aboriginal stakeholders. The selection for review also considered the Indigenous collective expression of appropriate processes and protocols for engaging with Indigenous communities on matters of Indigenous cultural heritage management. In the second category preference has been given to Indigenous authors particularly those presenting the perspective of the collective as opposed to those presenting an individual opinion. This researcher also acknowledges the same “significant influence” on this research of what has been previously documented by Francis and Liew as a *De-colonising Methodology* (2009 p. 7).

In Australia historically, legislation to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage has been around since the early 1970’s evidenced by Western Australia’s *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and exists in all Australian states. In the last few years, many of the states, including the three covering the university case studies, have undertaken reviews of either the legislation itself or the requirements and regulations governing its implementation. In New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia the respective recent and current reviews have and are undergoing various processes of community consultation. The intent of the reviews to provide, or be seen to provide, opportunity for Aboriginal people to provide input into the process is evident. This reinforces the prevailing government position, emphasised by all state legislation, of viewing
Indigenous Australians as the primary determinants of their own cultural heritage (NSW DECCW 2010).

All the main campus locations for the four universities chosen as case studies for this directed study are on land traditionally care-taken by Aboriginal Indigenous Australians. The islands of the Torres Strait are covered by Queensland legislation. Queensland separates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage legislation into two distinct documents. This is evidence of the uniqueness and connection to specific locations of each. The word Aboriginal will be used in preference to Indigenous in this document to reflect the authority of the Traditional Custodians of the university locations researched. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributions to the collective Australian Indigenous understandings of cultural heritage management have been included in the literature review. Predictive modelling of Aboriginal cultural heritage within a specific location to qualify cumulative impacts is a vital part of information required by an Aboriginal group for consideration prior to development of any proposals for protection and conservation management (Guilfoyle, 2006; Ridges, 2007).

There was much discussion with the IRN prior to the commencement of this directed study around a shared understanding of the theoretical framework for the study. The consensus was that it be carried out by an Indigenous research design. This is similar to participatory action research. Feedback loops are embedded in every step to maintain a level of authority over the process. Indigenous research methods have been articulated by various authors in recent years (Martin, 2008; Coghill & Nalder 2007). It is generally accepted that the processes are difficult to describe in western terms. The theoretical concept of Symbolic Interactionism and the Deviance of universities from an Aboriginal perception of the norm in symbolic representation of respectful partnership is considered. This relates primarily to the exploratory research of the case study universities’ public web profiles undertaken. The symbols expected to be evident on the public web profile equate to criteria utilised to measure the visibility of the local Aboriginal population within the university space. The constructivism embedded in this study relates to the collective consciousness of the Aboriginal cultural group and their relatedness to others. Deviation from that collectiveness is also highlighted when it is evident in the partnership agreements researched.

One of the principles guiding this study is articulated in the act’s purpose in Queensland: i.e., “There is a need to establish timely and efficient processes for the management of activities that may harm Aboriginal cultural heritage” (Qld Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003). The second principle directing this study is the premise that universities are agents of change, and as such public universities have a social justice responsibility towards the vulnerable members of the community (WINHEC 2003; Bradley, 2008, p. 32 Williams, 2007; IHEAC, 2007, p. 3). The correlation between Aboriginal cultural heritage maintenance and Aboriginal wellbeing has been recognised (COAG, 2009; Anaya, 2009; Gamesharajah, 2009).

Examples of formal agreements utilised to guide community engagement and consultation for the purpose of managing Aboriginal cultural heritage, whether it be for tangible or intangible aspects of culture have been reviewed. These mechanisms acknowledge continuous cultural authority and include all stakeholders (Tripcony, 2004; Henning, Rigney, Wallis, Trevorrow, Rigney & Trevorrow, 2007; Walker, XXXX; WetlandLink BMP, 2010 Ngarrindjeri Tendi, Ngarrindjeri Heritage.
It is imperative that in the intangible management area, knowledge transfer within the university research and academic contexts remains uncorrupted. That is to ensure the intent is appropriate and that some level of ‘authority’ over the ‘telling of the knowledge’ is retained. Reasons for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concern over how the initial transfer of knowledge is undertaken, are as diverse as the communities and individuals the process indirectly or directly affects. To begin to explain the concept of power relationship is just the beginning in a partnership. What any sharing of knowledge has to consider is the perspective of ownership or else it is merely another form of dispossession where knowledge is the commodity at stake and custodianship of it is at danger of being lost to non-Indigenous individuals and institutions and often no longer accessible to Indigenous communities and individuals (Williams, 2007, p. 107; Morgan 2003).

Torres Strait Islander scholar Martin Nakata adds: “Indigenous knowledge systems and Western knowledge systems work off different theories of knowledge that frame who can be a knower, what can be known, what constitutes knowledge, sources of evidence for constructing knowledge, what constitutes truth, how truth is to be verified, how evidence becomes truth, how valid inferences are to be drawn, the role of belief in evidence, and related issues” (2007(b), p.8).

The vital and holistic relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge has with a specific location and specific bloodlines is evident in mechanisms and documents supporting Traditional Owners and knowledge holders such as exhibited in the companion documents Our Plan and Our Investment Strategy developed by the South East Queensland Traditional Owners Land and Sea Management Alliance (Nalder & Neve, 2009 pp 4-5).

Indigenous scholars from around the world refer to the situatedness and locatedness of Indigenous cultural ownership, sense of identity and its expression through language. The linking of culture and Indigenous knowledge to the practice of a group of individuals means that a uniform description of these elements is inadequate and restrictive. (Hellsten, 1999, pp. 19-20, Nakata, 2004, p 13)

Nationally and internationally concern has been raised continuously over all aspects of knowledge and cultural transfer from that shared with archaeologist and scientists accessing cultural landscapes to those engaging with the local school to broaden the understandings of an area’s shared history. A primary issue is the use of the knowledge after it is shared. Trepidation exists in many Indigenous communities over what happens next. Maintaining a level of control over future used of that shared knowledge is often expected. The intent by the Indigenous community is to prevent appropriation of knowledge for an unspecified agenda. Protecting the integrity of the knowledge shared is critical to many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge holders as well. Subject matter being interpreted through the lens of those who do not recognise and appreciate its value is a primary concern.

More and more there appears to be calls for a “cultural Authority” approach to knowledge sharing. Terri Jankie, a long time advocate for Intellectual Property Copyrights for Indigenous peoples at the AIATSIS Conference in Canberra on the 30th September 2009 called for the formation of a Cultural Authority to oversee all matters of appropriateness to ‘speak for Country’. The vision was for an authority made up of Indigenous Australians. The perceived need for a formal legal entity to
deal with such matters implies that contention already exists and that disputes are
difficult to settle without better knowledge of the issues from an Aboriginal or Torres
Strait Islander local perspective.
This study was prompted by the absence of comprehensive studies on Aboriginal
cultural heritage management to deal with the suite of issues encountered within the
current university context. Previous studies have illuminated specific components
rather than covered an holistic approach. There have been studies carried out on
documenting or recording Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage to
conserve it, studies to minimise impact to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
tangible cultural heritage, studies to develop protocols for consultation and
engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, studies on the
concept of Indigenous copyright and studies on sharing cultural knowledge within a
dominant culture centred educational context. This study intends to draw together best
practice across a range of Aboriginal cultural heritage management contexts together
to provide a proactive, community authorised protocol and procedure to cover all
potential impacts from university activities.
Methods

The industry partner was insistent that the research for this project be informed by appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols and processes. The commitment to this became evident at the first meeting. The members the IRN selected to work with me on the directed study all had traditional connections to the area. The IRN is coordinated by an Aboriginal academic, with traditional connections to the area of south east Queensland. The development of the aims and methodology for the directed study was enhanced by significant contributions provided by three members of the university staff who acknowledged their strong traditional connections to South East Queensland.

In consultation with the IRN a selection of Australian universities was nominated, based on collective knowledge of positive outcomes on Aboriginal cultural heritage matters, to be case studies. An environmental scan was undertaken of the selected universities to determine how they publicly portray Aboriginal cultural heritage management on their university websites. The criteria or symbolic evidence sought from the websites included:

- Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners/Custodians;
- Specific policy for management of impact to either tangible or intangible aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage;
- Evidence of working partnerships with local Aboriginal groups;
- Evidence of the intention to educate students on Aboriginal culture.

Information on successful and sustainable working partnerships that the case study universities have with any Aboriginal groups was analysed for consistent themes. All relevant legislation regulating the conservation and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage was examined. Examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage management plans and Aboriginal education strategies were sourced as examples of good practice for comparison and recommendation. Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments were accessed for all the case study locations and regional modelling profiles were sought online. The Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the language data base AUSTLANG were searched for information on the case study locations available in the public electronic media. The intention was to compare locally accepted information with that housed in “expert” national repositories.

Dialogue throughout the study has been ongoing with industry partner representatives. When the result of the research detailed above was completed and reported to the IRN an additional process was discussed to attempt to source examples of existing university policy on Aboriginal cultural heritage management. The additional method to be employed is the contact of the case study institutions by email to their external relations representative. The purpose is to authenticate the existence of policy, procedures or protocols explicitly to manage potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage. Discussion and dialogue has commenced around whether the study needs to be carried out in a staged manner.
Discussion/Results/Analysis

Universities like any other entity must comply with national and state regulatory requirements and legislation maintaining to the conservation and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage. This study expands on those principles to include the impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage by knowledge collection, storage and transference under university research and academic activities. The parameters in which the study was conducted included: Aboriginal research methodology; Aboriginal protocols and the maintenance of cultural authority over the process. Because the four universities chosen as case studies all are located on Country that was Traditionally Aboriginal land prior to contact, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to the generic connotations of the word Indigenous.

**The results for Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians/Owners**

**Griffith University**

South Bank, Nathan and Mount Gravatt campuses are situated on the land of the Yugarabul, Yuggera, Jagera and Turrbal peoples.

Logan is situated on the land of the Yuggera, Turrbul, Yugarabul, Jagera and Yugambeh peoples.

The Gold Coast is situated on the land of the Yugambeh / Kombumerri peoples

(Information from the First Peoples link on the Griffith University homepage)

**Table 1. Griffith University**

**Flinders University**

Welcome to Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research.

Yunggorendi First Nations Centre provides a focal point for Indigenous students
and Indigenous research and teaching at Flinders University. The Centre was established in 1990 as part of the University’s commitment to recognising Indigenous Australian’s unique position as First Nations people and to encourage and support Indigenous peoples participation and success in higher education.

The Centre is located on Kaurna Land and recognises and respects the Kaurna cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to the land, sky and water. Yunggorendi is a Kaurna word meaning “to impart knowledge, to inform, to communicate”.

The Centre is housed in a purpose built building, Yunggorendi Mande (meaning shelter) and provides Indigenous students with a culturally significant space where they can relax, connect with fellow students and complete their studies.

(Information from the Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research accessed via the Research link on the home page by selecting Centres and Institutions under the Our Research heading)

Table 2. Flinders University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of New England</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Information</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**13 February 2008: The Prime Minister’s Apology**

**GenerationOne End Indigenous Disadvantage: Take Action Now** — Launched 19 March 2010

**Welcome to Country**

**Yugga danya Ngawanya**
(I am a Man of the Anaiwan people.)

**Roonyahra tanya tampida Ngawanya**
(This is the ancestral land of the Ngawanya.)

**Ootila tanya yoonyarah**
(I welcome you to this land.)

This is the ‘Welcome to Country’ given by Steve Widders, a descendant of the original custodians of the land, the Ngawanya aka Ainawan* people, at the NAIDOC Aboriginal Flag Raising Ceremony at Booloominbah, 9 July 2007. (*Anaiwan is the English pronunciation of Ngawanya. There are approximately 300 words in the local Anaiwan dialect, many having been lost or having no known translation.)

**The traditional custodians**

At the University of New England graduation ceremonies, the Vice-Chancellor acknowledges firstly the Anaiwan then the names of neighbouring tribes; the Dhunghutti to the south-east, the Gumbaingerri to the north-east, and the Kamilaroi to the west.

Many local Aboriginal residents have claim to at least one but as many as all these...
groups. There is much evidence and research that documents the Anaiwan as the original inhabitants and acknowledges the other groups as being associated with and having extensive interaction with the land on which Armidale was settled.

Tribal boundaries change with the physical landscape, hence Anaiwan is on the Tablelands, and Dhunghutti is on the eastern side of the Pt Lookout escarpment down to the coast at Kempsey north of the Macleay River. Gumbaingerri is a coastal tribe whose lands come inland south of Grafton and east around Guyra and Ebor. The Kamilaroi are a plains group west of the Gwydir River and the Great Divide.

Tamworth is in Kamilaroi country which ends at the top of the Moonbis, and where Anaiwan begins. Uralla, Bundarra and places such as Hillgrove, Wollomombi, Rockvale, Tilbuster, Black Mountain, Dumaresq, Tingha, Inverell and all places within that boundary are Anaiwan country.

Aboriginal people looked after the land and did not claim exclusive ownership by building fences or other barriers. They were custodians. Their responsibility and boundaries changed with the physical landscape. As well as the land, the custodians were responsible for such things as the animals, waterways, flora, ceremonial grounds, food supplies, plants and vegetation which contained medicinal qualities.

(Information from UNE homepage via the staff link followed by the Employment link and Equity link then Indigenous Information tab)

Table 3. University of New England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Southern Cross University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acknowledging Traditional Custodians</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Cross University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which its campuses are located.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We encourage our staff and students to acknowledge our Indigenous communities at the start of public events and events of significance.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You may wish to simply state that the gathering acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, or you may wish to specifically acknowledge each Indigenous community. The following wording provides a guide.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lismore Event</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I would like to acknowledge the Widjabal People of the Bundjalung Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Byron Bay Event</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to acknowledge the Arakwal People, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coffs Harbour Event</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to acknowledge the Gumbaynggirr People, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gold Coast Event - (Southern Cross Drive, Bilinga)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our campus stands and pay tribute to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elders past and present, and acknowledge the unique role they play in the life of the region.

Tweed Heads event - (Caloola Drive and Brett St)

I would like to acknowledge the Nganduwal Minjungbal People of the northern end of Bundjalung country, Traditional Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place, and pay tribute to the unique role they play in the life of this region.

(Information accessed from the Homepage link titled “welcome to Country” below the location icon)

Table 4. Southern Cross University

**Specific policy for management of impact to either tangible or intangible aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage:**

An environmental scan located no evidence of specific policy procedure or protocol for Aboriginal cultural heritage management at any of the four case study universities. The websites were keyword searched for the phrase “Aboriginal cultural heritage management”. The number of results was noted and the first ten investigated for evidence of current cultural heritage management with Traditional Custodians/Owners. No evidence was identified in the primary ten results for any of the four universities.

Search Results were:

**Griffith University** returned 102 fully matched documents.
**Flinders University** returned 585 results
**Southern Cross University** returned 165 results
**University of New England** returned a total of 245 results.

When that method failed to provide any evidence of current policy procedure or protocol the policy section of the university webpage was searched.

**Griffith University Policy Library** returned 64 policy entries divided into 9 sections with zero Aboriginal cultural values results,
**Flinders University Policies and Procedures** returned 232 policy entries in 14 sections with zero Aboriginal cultural values results
**Southern Cross University List of SCU Policies** returned 117 policy entries with zero Aboriginal cultural values results
**University of New England Policies** returned 286 policy results in 10 sections with zero Aboriginal cultural values results,

Therefore none of the four universities demonstrated any evidence of a policy, procedure or plan to deal with potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural values through building development, research, curator practices or academic activities. This is not to say that the case study universities do not have any policy, procedure or plan to deal with potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural values by their activities; just that their public web profiles show no evidence of it. Omission of material gives the impression it is irrelevant or insignificant.
Evidence of working partnerships with local Aboriginal groups

The results from that research were as follows, Griffith University’s commitment to a whole–of-University approach to inclusive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education includes the creation of a curriculum that is informed by and respects the knowledge systems of our first peoples-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The university has numerous internal resources on which to draw for Indigenous expertise (GU, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander: First peoples, Learning and Teaching, 2009). The current Indigenous commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusive Curriculum Development and Implementation Project consolidates efforts contributed over the last decade in not only curriculum, but also in Indigenous Policy, Indigenous Employment, Community Partnerships, Student Support (GUMURRII) and Research (Indigenous Research Network) and is vital to the success of the project. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders inform university directions at senior management level and the Elders in Residence Program provides evidence of community partnership at a campus level (GU Strategic Plan 2009-2013; GU IRN draft Strategic Plan 2009-2013).

Southern Cross University has a joint venture with the School of Environmental Science and Management, the Bundjalung Nation Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and National Resource Management Community, Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, Cultural Heritage Division (previously National Parks and Wildlife Division). The result of that project has seen ‘the creation of a highly secured, user-friendly computer-based record keeping system through which Aboriginal communities can record and own their cultural knowledge’. The project is accessible online at Wetland Link the Bundjalung Mapping Project.

Partnerships with other Aboriginal groups

For Flinders University I reviewed Caring for Ngarrindjaeri Country: Collaborative research, community development and social justice.

This is an alliance between Flinders University and the people of the Murray River and Coorong area of South Australia. It highlights a lot of positive protocols and community capacity building. Because it is not with the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which the university sits it raises questions around the appropriateness of this material being collected and stored on the Country of others and whether the cultural authority of the Traditional groups considered in the process.

Evidence of the intention to educate students on Aboriginal culture

A search of each case study web site for the wording of “Graduate Attributes/values/capabilities” demonstrated that only half of the universities highlighted Indigenous aspects of social or cultural understanding specifically. Those were Griffith University and Southern Cross University.
Evidence of compliance with legislation regulating the conservation and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage

The web based public profiles provided no evidence of compliance with either Federal or State legislation or regulation maintaining to the management of potential impacts to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage or wider values.

The Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (AVCC) in a response to *Building Better Foundations* in May 2005 reflecting on the history of universities in Australian, acknowledges “a long tradition of autonomy” and how the establishing legislation provides each university Council with the responsibility to oversee the direction of the university (AVCC, 2005 p:1). The response goes on to state that since 1973 while the Commonwealth has become the main Government funder the States have seen the legislation establishment of all but one of the universities. The response provided an appendix listing the Legislative Requirements of Universities but no specific reference to any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage legislation or regulation. The three page list included Environmental protection Act 1994, Environmental protection regulation 1998 and the Queensland Heritage Act 1982, Queensland Heritage Regulation 1992.

Among the recommendations contained within *Room to Move, Room to Excel – Commonwealth and State Regulation of Universities* was the following: “The AVCC recommends that governance be determined at the individual university level by concentrating on development and implementation of local responses within the framework of the National Protocols and general legislation (AVCC, 2005, p: 8).” This principle is not evident in the environmental scans of the university web profiles undertaken for this directed study.

**AUSTLANG website**

The results from the web search of the database for the locations of the case study universities were as follows:

**Flinders University** based at Adelaide, South Australia returned one confirmed language – Kauma. The search returned numerous other neighbouring languages in close proximity.

**University of New England** returned one confirmed name in the search - Nganyaywana. It also returned numerous neighbouring languages.

The site provided additional information. It stated “the name Nganyaywana comes from Crowley (1976, 22-23) who uses Nganjaywana as a cover term for two closely related dialects or sub-tribal units, Himberroong and Inuwon, however these are not listed separately in Austlang. Distinction was made between Nganjaywana and Enneewin which share 65% lexicon though Tindale (1964) calls both Anaiwan. They are treated as the same language by (Wafer, Lissarrague, 2008 page 199 – 200)”.

**Southern Cross University** has multiple campus locations. The main campus at Lismore returned Nyangbal which is a dialect of Bundjalung according to Crowley 1978. Nwiyabel also a dialect of Bundjalung listed with Widjabal according to Crowley.
Southern Cross campus at Coffs Harbour returned the confirmed language - Gumbaynggir information from Eades 1979 and provides additional comments. Ba:nbay data by Hoddinett is almost the same so concludes that Ba:nbay is a dialect of Gumbaynggir. The Tweed Heads campus returned one language group - Nganduwal which is a dialect of Bundjalung. Byron Bay campus returned – Minjungbal.

**Griffith University** is also a multi campus university. Gold Coast campus returned two language groups - Ngarahngwal and Ngara:ngbal. The Ngarahngwal information was credited to Sharpe 2005 and Oates 1975 was the Ngara:ngbal source. Logan campus returned the same results as the Gold Coast campus. Mt Gravatt had no confirmed language group but the Turubul is the only group listed and its status is listed as potential. Sharpe says the Turubul and Yakara could be either dialects of the same language or the same language, Watson 1943 treats Tarabul as a group name of the Yugarabul and that their language is Yugarabul. Tindale treats Turubul as a language spoken by the Jagera and Undanbi. Nathan campus results are the same as Mt Gravatt. South Bank campus adds the Yagarabul to the Turubul.

AUSTLANG treats the Jagera, the Turubul and the Guwar and the Jandai as closely related.

**Themes consistent with successful Aboriginal cultural heritage management partnerships and negative influences on those partnerships.**

Review of a number of partnership documents external to the case study universities provided some consistent themes on what contributed to successful working partnerships for Aboriginal cultural heritage management. The successful mechanisms all included early dialogue between those who’s activities had the potential to impact Aboriginal cultural heritage and those who were the knowledge holders and custodians of the cultural values at risk. Early discussion and information sharing about the potential impacts and the perceived need for them to occur contributes to a shared understanding of what maybe possible and identifies what is totally unacceptable. All successful Aboriginal cultural heritage management mechanisms also included regular and rigorous ongoing evaluation for the life of the activity.

Many well displayed and wonderfully written documents reviewed for this study provided no indication of involvement in their development by a representative sample of the Aboriginal community or any ongoing commitment by the potential impact entity to incorporate the document produced into their wider planning and regulating processes. An example of this negative impact on Aboriginal heritage management partnerships came from a local government council in the north coast area of New South Wales. The councils web page publicly displayed and highlighted
their Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan however their draft local environmental plan (LEP) did not refer to that document (McIntyre-Tamwoy, 2009). The document has since been removed from the web profile.
Conclusions and recommendations

The research indicated a gap in the perceptions of what a working partnership between a university and a local Aboriginal community should look like. Exploring existing university frameworks or strategies for options on managing potential impact to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural values in an holistic way, provided no results. The wider research undertaken as part of this directed study however, prompts some recommendations on how potential impacts to cultural values can be managed in a respectful way by a collaborative partnership between the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and universities. The perception of not publicly developing and implementing any policy, procedure or protocol for potential impact to tangible cultural heritage implies to the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, that the university may have even less respect or consideration for intangible impacts to cultural values. Research and academic activities may suffer from any negative community perception of the institutions “good will” or intent.

To address this omission the following steps are recommended;

- The initiation of urgent and extensive dialogue between the university and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on multiple levels around how the university currently manages potential impacts. If policy, procedures and protocols exist, how were they developed and who was involved?
- This dialogue needs to cover the scope of the potential impacts and therefore needs to consider whether the specific partnership intends to consider tangible impacts separately from intangible ones.
- All stakeholders need to be involved.
- What is considered to be significant and relevant from the perception of potential impact needs to be determined by the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities. The authority on all matters of cultural value needs to lie with the knowledge holders and the Traditional Custodians.
- Full Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments need to be undertaken from a scientific and a cultural significance perspective.

As stated earlier this study was prompted by the absence of any easily accessible comprehensive study on the range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values management issues, encountered as part of a university’s activities. It does not propose a generic management mechanism but instead strongly suggests that there is indeed “a need to establish timely and efficient processes for the management of activities that may harm Aboriginal cultural heritage (QLD Aboriginal Cultural heritage Act 2003). Further the study concludes that similar and equitable consideration be given to proving the same timely and efficient management mechanisms to information and materials collected, developed, stored and transferred as part of a university’s research and academic activities. This material is also of cultural value and as such deserves respectful management that maintains local cultural authority.
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