



## Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

1st July, 2025 – 30 June, 2026







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## **Acknowledgement of Country**

*CUC Central respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we learn, work, and gather, and recognises the deep connection of culture and knowledge. CUC Central acknowledge the diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and pays respect to elders, past, present, and future. This land was, is, and always will be Aboriginal land.*









## About the Artwork and Artist

This artwork is a representation of Country Universities Centres commitment to reconciliation. Through symbols of interconnected meeting places, it showcases the regional and rural communities that have access to quality higher education opportunities because of CUC.

**From communities in the desert, to those in the bush, and those by the sea, this artwork celebrates the rich diversity of First Nations people and communities.**

The arched symbols at the top and bottom of the piece have been included to represent our 'pillars of strength' which are our Elders who we listen to and learn from as they continue to guide us in our journey to reconciliation and beyond.

The flowing river in the centre is bordered with symbols of people and yarning/talking sticks, which I have used to represent truth telling in education. The yarning sticks represent respect and empowerment as the person holding the stick shares knowledge while others listen respectfully.

Surrounding this are natural elements including waterholes, gum leaves and wattle which have been included to symbolise a connection to Country and the eternal relationship between Country and reconciliation.

The background is filled with clusters of coloured dots, each representing a student or a staff of CUC that are coming together to honour and celebrate our culture throughout their higher education journey.

Caitlin Trindall is a proud Gomeroi woman and the creator of Mirii Art. As a multi-disciplinary artist and businesswoman, Caitlin draws upon her own life experiences to create unique contemporary artworks that bring Aboriginal art and culture into everyday spaces and conversations.

Born and raised in Sydney, on Dharawal Country, Caitlin has always been encouraged to explore her creativity, with her parents and grandparents all engaging in various creative art forms. Caitlin first began painting in 2016 as a way to connect to her Grandfather in Narrabri despite being physically apart. Inspired by her Grandfather, her business Mirii Art is dedicated to promoting Aboriginal culture and cultural practices through various art forms including hand painted art, digital art, public art projects, and creative workshops.

## Message from the CEO

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan marks an important step for CUC Central. It formalises our commitment to reconciliation and sets out practical actions we will take as an organisation.

We will strengthen our cultural awareness, celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, embed culturally respectful practices across our policies and systems, and seek guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. These actions will help us build respectful partnerships and ensure CUC Central continues to evolve its approach to reconciliation.

As a small remote team working across many places, we understand reconciliation cannot be uniform. Each community has its own history, culture, and custodians. By CUC Central taking this first reflective step, we hope to encourage affiliated CUC Centres to consider how they may walk their own reconciliation path with their local communities.

The actions in this plan focus on relationships, respect, and opportunity. They include identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders across our areas of work, reviewing our policies for

cultural safety, investigating employment and procurement opportunities, and ensuring our staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools to engage respectfully. These deliberate steps will help reconciliation become part of our everyday work.

I thank our Reconciliation Working Group and our RAP Champion for leading this process. This is the beginning of a longer journey for CUC Central, and we are committed to walking it with respect and care.

### **Chris Ronan**

Chief Executive Officer  
Country Universities Centre





## Statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia

### Inaugural Reflect RAP

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Country Universities Centre to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

**Country Universities Centre joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.**

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with over 5.5 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Country Universities Centre to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Country Universities Centre, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**

Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia





## Our Business

Country Universities Centre (CUC) Central collaborates with regional communities across Australia to establish and support the operations of community-owned Regional University Study Hubs. The CUC Centres (Network) have an affiliation with CUC Central to provide equitable access to higher education and vocational opportunities, ensuring that students can access, persist, and succeed in further education.

The CUC model is developed by regional communities for regional communities, fostering equitable access to education through tailored student support and outreach activities. Designed to be responsive to the unique needs of each location, the model empowers communities to take ownership of local challenges and solutions.

CUC Central operates as an independent entity and does not govern the CUC Network; however, it holds influence through the expertise provided across three core pillars: Widening Participation, Student Services and Workforce Development and Graduate outcomes. CUC Central currently employs nine staff who work remotely across Eastern Australia, supporting a Network of 28 Centres in 42 communities. At present, we do not have any identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees within the Central team.

The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) applies specifically to CUC Central, with individual Centres within the CUC Network independently managing their own reconciliation commitments. However, through this plan, CUC Central seeks to influence and encourage broader engagement with reconciliation initiatives across the network.





## Our RAP

Country Universities Centre (CUC) Central is developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to strengthen its commitment to fostering an inclusive and culturally aware environment that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities across regional Australia. The organisation's mission to improve access to higher education for regional and rural Australians aligns closely with the principles of reconciliation—equity, respect, and opportunity for all.

Acknowledging the historical and contemporary disparities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, CUC Central recognises the role it can play in contributing to improved educational outcomes. The RAP formalises this commitment, providing a structured and transparent framework to embed reconciliation principles within its operations.

While the RAP is specific to CUC Central, it is intended to influence and encourage broader reconciliation efforts across the CUC Network, where individual Centres determine their own commitments.

The RAP will be implemented through a collaborative and proactive approach, working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and stakeholders to ensure reconciliation principles are meaningfully embedded across CUC Central's operations, policies, and practices. Key actions include:

- Providing cultural awareness training for staff
- Integrating culturally responsive practices into organisational frameworks
- Celebrating key events such as NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week
- Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and Elders to inform and shape practices

CUC Central embraces a place-based approach to reconciliation, recognising that each community has its own distinct history, culture, and needs. As a remote workforce operating across multiple locations, the team is committed to building genuine relationships with the communities in which they work and live. This approach ensures reconciliation is not a one-size-fits-all concept but a dynamic and responsive process tailored to local cultures and perspectives.

CUC Central's reconciliation journey reflects a commitment to listening, learning, and meaningful action. The development of this RAP marks a significant step in formalising these efforts, ensuring reconciliation is not only an aspiration but an ongoing, lived practice embedded within the organisation's culture.





**The Country Universities Centre (CUC) is committed to reconciliation and fostering meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our approach is shaped by partnerships and collaborations that guide our reconciliation journey.**



## Our Partnerships

The CUC operates as a network of community-owned Regional University Study Hubs, each governed by an independent board. While we do not govern these boards, we work in partnership with them, providing guidance and resources to support reconciliation efforts within their local contexts.

To support the development and implementation of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we have partnered with Cross Cultural Consultants. Their expertise is helping to shape our RAP journey, ensuring it is grounded in culturally appropriate practices and aligns with the perspectives and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.





## Current RAP Activities

To date, we have undertaken the following activities:

- Formation of a Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) to guide and oversee the RAP's implementation.
- Developed a Terms of Reference for the RWG to outline its purpose and responsibilities.
- Established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation within the RWG
- Appointed a senior leader as RAP Champion, Danielle Keenan, Director of Student Services, is responsible for championing reconciliation internally and advocating for meaningful engagement across the Country Universities Centre network. This includes leading CUC Central's efforts to embed culturally respectful practices, increase awareness and accountability, and support the development of authentic relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- Commissioned of RAP Artwork by an Aboriginal artist to visually represent our reconciliation journey. This artwork will be featured on the cover of our Reflect RAP and incorporated into marketing and promotional materials.

The commissioned piece reflects key themes that guide our reconciliation efforts, including:

- Truth-telling in education and its role in reconciliation;
- Fostering respect among staff, students, and communities;
- Promoting cultural safety and awareness across our Network;
- Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' cultures within our communities; and
- Building meaningful relationships with diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.





The background of the page is an aerial photograph of a lush green forest. Overlaid on the right side of the image is a large, vertical Aboriginal dot painting. It features three circular motifs, each with concentric rings of dots and a central dot, connected by wavy lines. The colors of the painting are earthy, including browns, oranges, and greys. On the far left edge, there is a vertical strip of colorful patterns, including circles and dots in shades of blue, orange, and yellow.

## **CUC Central's Internal Commitment to Reconciliation**

CUC Central has taken proactive steps to integrate reconciliation into its organisational culture. As a remote workforce, its role is to ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and resources to support reconciliation efforts internally and across the Network.

This commitment reflects CUC Central's role in supporting reconciliation, ensuring that both internal practices and network-wide initiatives contribute to respectful and lasting relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. As this journey continues, CUC Central remains dedicated to strengthening reconciliation activities and developing new strategies that foster inclusive and culturally aware learning environments across the CUC Network.



# Relationships

## Action Statement

Leverage our influence to support and facilitate the building of strong, respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and our partners. Through framework setting and best-practice guidance, we will promote culturally safe, reciprocal, and inclusive engagement across CUC Central and the CUC Network to advance reconciliation.







| Action   | Deliverable  | Timeline              | Responsibility                             |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres | • Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within the CUC Networked communities or sphere of influence.   | Jun 2026              | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | • Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within the CUC Networked communities or sphere of influence.   | Jun 2026              | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | • Create tools/templates to support identification and mapping of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations at a regional level to share with the CUC Centres | Mar 2026              | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
| 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).           | • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.  | May 2026              | Director Network Engagement                |
|  | • RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.   | 27 May- 3 June, 2026  | Chief Operating Officer                    |
|  | • Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.   | 27 May- 3 June, 2026  | Chief Operating Officer                    |
|  | • Dedicate a professional development (PD) session for staff internally and within out Network during NRW about reconciliation.  | 27 May- 3 June, 2026  | Director Network Engagement                |
| 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.                               | • Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all internal staff and the CUC Network.  | Sept 2025             | Chief Executive Officer                    |
|  | • Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.  | Mar 2026              | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | • Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.   | Jun 2026              | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
| 4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.               | • Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.  | Mar 2026              | Director Quality and Compliance            |
|  | • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.  | Annually January 2026 | Chief Operating Officer                    |
|  | • Identify and share relevant tools/templates/guides for internal (CUC Central) and the CUC Centres on best practice anti-discrimination policies/procedures                             | Jun 2026              | Chief Operating Officer                    |





# Respect

## Action Statement

As an organisation working across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, CUC commits to fostering respect by embedding cultural awareness and anti-racism principles into our professional development and onboarding processes. By creating safe, inclusive spaces and prioritising ongoing education, we aim to lead by example, promoting respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights across our Network and Centres.





| Action   | Deliverable  | Timeline | Responsibility                             |
|--|--|----------|--|
| 5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete feasibility study for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.</li> </ul> | Jun 2026 | Chief Operating Officer                    |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>   | Mar 2026 | Chief Operating Officer                    |
| 6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase staff understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters where each person works remotely.</li> </ul>   | Jun 2026 | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>                             | Dec 2025 | Chief Operating Officer                    |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols within CUC's Network.</li> </ul>              | Dec 2025 | Chief Operating Officer                    |
| 7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst internal CUC Central staff and the CUC Network about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>   | Jul 2026 | Director Network Engagement                |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce CUC Network staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in their local area.</li> </ul>   | Jul 2026 | Director Network Engagement                |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CUC Central staff to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>   | Jul 2026 | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |





# Opportunities

## Action Statement

As an organisation that values education as a fundamental right, particularly for those in regional and remote areas, CUC commits to fostering lifelong learning and creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. By leading by example, CUC will ensure our frameworks support best practice, embrace diverse knowledge, and provide a sense of belonging and ownership in education for our students. Through our actions, we aim to inspire and model opportunity-building across the CUC Network.





| Action  | Deliverable   | Timeline | Responsibility          |
|---|---|----------|-------------------------|
| 8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities within our organisation.</li></ul>   | Jun 2026 | Chief Operating Officer |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li></ul> | Mar 2026 | Chief Operating Officer |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review and develop templates for exit interviews to support specific data collection around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee retention.</li></ul> | Jun 2026 | Chief Operating Officer |
| 9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li></ul>  | Jun 2026 | Finance Officer         |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate Supply Nation membership and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business networks or chambers of commerce.</li></ul>                             | Jun 2026 | Finance Officer         |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Share appropriate resources and information to the CUC's Network on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement.</li></ul>                                | Jun 2026 | Finance Officer         |



# Governance

| Action   | Deliverable   | Timeline                             | Responsibility                             |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.</li> </ul>  | July 2025, January 2026<br>June 2026 | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing Review on the effectiveness of RWG</li> </ul>  | July 2025, January 2026<br>June 2026 | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</li> </ul>  | 1 Jul 2026                           | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
| 11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> </ul>   | 30 Sept 2025                         | Chief Executive Officer                    |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> </ul>   | 30 Sept 2025                         | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally</li> </ul>   | December 2025<br>June 2026           | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</li> </ul>  | 30 Sept 2025                         | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
| 12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.</li> </ul> | December 2025<br>June 2026           | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Reconciliation Australia RAP Impact Survey Guide 2024 and to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.</li> </ul>                                    | August 2026 annually                 | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>   | 30 September 2026, annually          | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |
| 13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.</li> </ul>   | 31 June 2026                         | RAP Champion (Director - Student Services) |





## Contact Details

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