

Partnership Agreement

between the NSW Aboriginal Education
Consultative Group Inc. and TAFE NSW

2026 – 2030



Foreword

We are proud to present this partnership between the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG) and TAFE NSW - an enduring collaboration grounded in respect, cultural integrity and a shared commitment to ensuring that every Aboriginal student is known, valued and empowered to thrive. Our partnership recognises the NSW AECG as the peak body for Aboriginal Education and Training in NSW and affirms that culturally responsive and community led education and training is essential to improving outcomes for Aboriginal students and advancing self-determination.

TAFE NSW is honoured to continue its partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW AECG). The organisation's leadership and strong community networks enrich and strengthen the work we do across the state. Our shared commitment to ensuring that every Aboriginal student is known, valued and supported reflects not only our responsibilities as an education provider, but our belief that culturally responsive, community centred learning is essential to student success.

This agreement builds on the proud legacy of the NSW AECG, the extensive network of Local and Regional AECGs, and the NSW Government's broader vision for an equitable, high quality vocational education and training system as outlined in the NSW Skills Plan 2024–2028. Together, we acknowledge the challenges ahead - including persistent skills shortages, regional inequities, and the need for stronger pathways for Aboriginal students - and we commit to addressing these through collaborative, place based, culturally informed approaches.

At the centre of this work is our shared belief that Aboriginal cultures, languages and identities must be embedded meaningfully in teaching, learning and governance. Through co-designed programs, cultural capability development for educators, and strengthened accountability mechanisms, we will continue to support culturally safe learning environments where Aboriginal students can succeed with confidence, pride and belonging.

As we look toward the future - one shaped by emerging industries, Net Zero transformation, digital evolution and the need for a resilient workforce - we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that Aboriginal students are not only included but positioned as leaders in shaping the state's skills landscape. This includes working together to enhance TAFE NSW's role as a strong and stable public provider, to create pathways to meaningful employment, and to uphold the principles of the National Skills Agreement and Closing the Gap priorities.

Our joint vision is clear: a future where Aboriginal students across NSW have equitable access to quality training, are supported at every step of their learning journey, and graduate with the skills, cultural grounding and confidence to lead in their communities and industries. Through this partnership, we honour past generations, empower today's students, and build strong foundations for the generations to come.



Mr Ray Ingrey

President, NSW AECG



Ms Chloe Read

Managing Director, TAFE NSW

For the purposes of this Partnership Agreement, the term Aboriginal refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

What we agree

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (NSW AECG Inc.) and TAFE NSW agree to work together to ensure that every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander TAFE NSW student achieves their potential through vocational education and training.

The outcomes we will achieve by working together

- The vocational education and training outcomes for Aboriginal people will be as good as or better than those of the general TAFE NSW student population.
- On completion of any accredited training, Aboriginal people will confidently express their knowledge and achievement through a self-determined pathway such as meaningful employment, undertaking further training or continued capability development.
- The development of the NSW AECG as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and education service provider.
- TAFE NSW campuses and facilities are known and connected to NSW Aboriginal communities, including through both Regional and Local NSW AECGs.
- Support the delivery of the National Skills Agreement, Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.
- Actioning all the NSW Closing the Gap Priority Reforms.
- Affirmative progress made on the NSW Closing the Gap Socio Economic Outcomes 5 – 8 and 16 – 17.

How we will do this

- The NSW AECG will support these aims by providing appropriate cultural and community knowledge and understandings to TAFE NSW teachers and other TAFE NSW staff through professional learning, including “Connecting to Country”.
- The NSW AECG will work with TAFE NSW on the development and implementation of relevant vocational education and training policies and programs and will support consultations, through the NSW AECG network, with communities, Elders, knowledge holders and custodians relevant to Aboriginal people to achieve its aims.
- The NSW AECG will support the strengthening of connections between TAFE NSW campuses and all levels of the NSW AECG.
- The NSW AECG will work with TAFE NSW on the delivery of Closing the Gap reforms and key contributing projects.

What we will see

- TAFE NSW recognises that the NSW AECG is the peak advisory body for the education of Aboriginal students in NSW by:
- Always consulting with the NSW AECG on matters related to the vocational education and training of Aboriginal people
- Always work with the NSW AECG in developing and implementing policy and programs which support vocational education and training for Aboriginal people.
- TAFE NSW embeds Aboriginal cultures, community and heritage across its organisation.
- TAFE NSW is culturally safe, inclusive and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people, including through the services it funds and regulates, and the staff it employs.

- Provides support for Aboriginal students at key transition points throughout the learning continuum whilst connected to TAFE NSW.
- Aboriginal peoples and communities have shared ownership and better access to archive materials for languages revitalisation.
- Aboriginal communities have better access to Country for languages learning and education.
- TAFE NSW will work to build the capability and capacity of the NSW AECG toward recognition and accreditation as an RTO, including support through the National Skills Agreement and opportunities for shared services.

Tracking progress

- TAFE NSW and NSW AECG will report on the progress of this Partnership Agreement at the end of each financial year and will be represented in their Annual Reports.
- A robust and co-designed monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework will be implemented to ensure that there is progress against all Priority Reforms and mentioned Socio-Economic Outcomes.

What communities will experience

- Through the partnership, NSW AECG and TAFE NSW will work toward delivering cultural, social and economic outcomes through the life of the agreement.
- A shared approach will see appropriate place-based cultural and community knowledge delivered to TAFE NSW teachers and staff through professional development and learning.

For each TAFE NSW location

- Aboriginal people will find each TAFE NSW campus to be welcoming, respectful and culturally inclusive.
- Each TAFE NSW campus will be respectful of Country and the connection Aboriginal people have to Country.
- Aboriginal people are enabled and supported to engage with any TAFE NSW course.
- Aboriginal people are connected to place-based employment and industry pathways through their Regional and Local NSW AECG.
- Aboriginal people are empowered to re-engage with further training with TAFE NSW.
- Aboriginal people are supported to build on their capability to further training through vocational education and other relevant pathways.

Aboriginal students

- Aboriginal students find TAFE NSW campuses engaging, and culturally safe places to learn.
- Aboriginal students believe they can succeed at TAFE NSW, and they do succeed.
- Aboriginal students are enabled to stay connected to their heritage, language, culture, family and country.

Non-Aboriginal students

- Every TAFE NSW student understands the heritage and culture of the Aboriginal Peoples on whose land/s they live and learn on.
- Every TAFE NSW student transitions out of TAFE NSW with an understanding of Aboriginal heritage and culture of the Country they learn on.
- Every TAFE NSW student supports the tenants of reconciliation through genuine interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Peoples.

Teachers

- All teachers have completed Aboriginal cultural capability professional development, with refresher courses every three years.
- All teachers demonstrate that they understand Aboriginal communities have high expectations and work in collaboration with Aboriginal community organisations and communities to ensure Aboriginal students achieve these expectations.
- The NSW AECG and TAFE NSW will work together on an approach for recruitment of relevant positions to ensure appropriate representation of Aboriginal people in those processes.
- All teachers strive to ensure a culturally safe teaching and learning environment for Aboriginal students.

Other staff

- Senior positions have been identified and created for Aboriginal educational leaders across a wide range of levels within TAFE NSW.
- All non-teaching staff demonstrate that they understand Aboriginal communities have high expectations and work in collaboration with Aboriginal community organisations and communities to ensure Aboriginal students achieve these expectations.
- All non-teaching staff have completed Aboriginal cultural capability professional development, with refresher courses every three years.
- All non-teaching staff strive to ensure a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal students, staff and communities.

