

UNIQ You Cultural Safety Framework / Policy

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Purpose

This Cultural Safety Framework sets out how UNIQ YOU creates, maintains and continuously improves culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, staff, advisors and communities.

Cultural safety is integral to child safety. UNIQ YOU recognises that safeguarding cannot be achieved without respecting cultural identity, community authority, lived experience and the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

This Framework supports the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, including the Universal Principle relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety.

Our Commitment

UNIQ YOU is committed to:

- Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identities, systems and community structures
- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel safe, valued and heard
- Embedding cultural considerations into governance, employment, risk management and program delivery
- Actively challenging racism, bias and systemic inequity
- Valuing lived experience and cultural knowledge in leadership and decision-making

We acknowledge the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and structural disadvantage. We commit to ensuring our policies, practices and systems do not contribute to cultural harm.

What Cultural Safety Means at UNIQ YOU

At UNIQ YOU, cultural safety means:

An environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, where cultural identity is respected and protected, and where policies, procedures and behaviours do not undermine cultural dignity.

Cultural safety goes beyond awareness training. It requires systemic reflection, accountability and structural inclusion.

Governance and Leadership Responsibilities

The Board and leadership team are responsible for embedding cultural safety into organisational governance.

This includes:

- Reviewing cultural safety priorities annually
- Monitoring complaints and incident trends for systemic cultural issues
- Including child safety and cultural safety as standing governance agenda items
- Ensuring cultural considerations are integrated into risk management processes

Leadership is accountable for ensuring that cultural safety is not treated as a standalone initiative, but as a cross-organisational responsibility.

Workforce and Representation

UNIQ YOU recognises that representation strengthens safeguarding.

Employment policies and procedures are reviewed to:

- Remove systemic barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation
- Recognise cultural knowledge and lived experience as valuable forms of expertise
- Support equitable access to leadership and decision-making roles

Recruitment and professional development processes acknowledge that cultural knowledge, community leadership and lived experience are strengths that contribute to organisational capability.

Safe and Inclusive Environments

UNIQ YOU promotes culturally safe environments by:



- Encouraging inclusive and respectful language
- Taking a zero-tolerance approach to racism
- Providing safe reporting pathways for cultural harm
- Avoiding processes that may retraumatise children
- Ensuring children can express concerns in ways that are accessible and culturally respectful

Where appropriate, culturally safe referral pathways will be offered.

Training and Capability Development

All staff, volunteers and advisors receive training that includes:

- Cultural safety principles
- Understanding unconscious bias and systemic barriers
- Trauma-informed practice
- Awareness of the impacts of colonisation and intergenerational trauma

Cultural safety is incorporated into induction, professional development and performance discussions.

Responding to Racism or Cultural Harm

UNIQ YOU has zero tolerance for racism.

Reports of racism or culturally unsafe conduct may be raised through:

- Leadership channels
- The formal complaints process
- The child safety reporting pathway

All reports are treated seriously, investigated appropriately and managed with procedural fairness.

Investigation processes will consider cultural context and aim to avoid further harm or marginalisation.

Continuous Improvement and Measurement

Cultural safety is monitored through:

- Review of complaint trends
- Risk assessment outcomes
- Workforce training completion
- Feedback from participants and stakeholders

Cultural safety priorities are reviewed annually and documented within governance processes. Where possible, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives will inform policy refinement.

Relationship to Other Policies

This Framework should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy
- Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Screening Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Managing Breaches Plan

All policies must be implemented in a manner consistent with this Cultural Safety Framework.