Queensland response to the Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages draft Framework

July 2013

Contents

1.   Introduction

The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the *Australian Curriculum: Languages Foundation (F)[1] to Year 10 Draft Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*, published in May 2013. This feedback is provided in partnership with Education Queensland (EQ), Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) and Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ). Queensland supports the development of an Australian Curriculum that will provide consistent and explicit curriculum expectations across the nation.

This response is a summary of the collated Queensland feedback from:

- representative curriculum and learning area committees of the QSA, including the QSA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committee

- representatives and advocates of the three schooling sectors, representing 1400 EQ schools, 296 Catholic schools and 188 Independent schools.

Queensland's consultation identified a range of strengths, key issues and concerns, and also provided some suggested ways forward for consideration by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) when redrafting the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages.*

The stakeholders who contributed to the Queensland response support the development of a framework for the teaching of Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander languages.

In addition to contributing to the Queensland response, QCEC and ISQ have elected to submit their own responses to ACARA. These responses contain detailed feedback on each aspect of the draft curriculum.

2.   Overall strengths and key issues

2.1   Overall strengths

- The draft *Foundation–Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* (the Framework) provides a starting point for schools and communities to implement a language program for first language learners, language revival learners and second language learners.

- The Framework:
    - recognises and supports student identities
    - promotes intercultural understanding and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
    - provides a platform for broadening student and community awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, community and language
    - acknowledges that Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait languages belong to the communities in which they originate, are spoken and are being revived
    - specifies when discussions, reflections and explanations should be conducted in English, to allow learners to develop and grasp abstract concepts.

---

[1] The Foundation Year (F) of the Australian Curriculum is Prep (P) in Queensland and refers to the year before Year 1. Children beginning Prep in January are required to be five years of age by 30 June.

- The aims are appropriate and represent a broad view of language and culture. The first three aims align with the view of language in the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

- The glossary is comprehensive and the definitions are helpful.

2.2 Key issues

Status of the document

During the Brisbane community engagement meeting on 22 July, ACARA representatives clarified that the Framework is not a curriculum document but a set of guidelines outlining how to develop state-based syllabuses. If this is the case, then the document:

- needs to clearly articulate this purpose

- should not use the same organisation as the draft *Australian Curriculum: Languages*, as this makes it look like a curriculum document rather than guidelines

- needs to have a title that clearly distinguishes it as a set of guidelines for curriculum writers rather than a document to be used to inform teaching and learning programs.

Framework

Queensland stakeholders support the development of a framework for the teaching of Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander languages; however, it would be difficult to support the release of the Framework without a reconceptualisation of its structure.

- Using the structure that was used to develop and deliver the Asian and European languages curriculum does not work in this context. Applying a Western academic process to language learning is at odds with a community-based Indigenous approach to language learning.

- The Framework should include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic frameworks developed and used by Indigenous peoples.

- Currently the Framework does not provide:

   - an adequate basis to meet the intended purpose of developing language-specific curriculums and programs

   - adequate rigour for a language program

   - opportunities for students learning languages within this Framework to use language in contemporary contexts and to express contemporary identities.

Principles and protocols

- The Principles and Protocols section:

   - should be renamed *Processes for developing protocols.* ACARA cannot provide protocols that will be appropriate for all Indigenous communities, but can provide advice and guidelines about the processes that should be followed by schools to engage with the local community to collaboratively develop protocols

   - needs to be placed at the front of the curriculum document to ensure teachers engage with this section before beginning any planning

   - does not emphasise enough that Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages cannot be implemented in a school without complete local community involvement

- is not explicit in telling schools/teachers the processes that must be undertaken
- lacks detail about how schools can liaise with local community.

See Section 3 of this report for more detail about the issues and ways forward for the *Principles and protocols* section.

Curriculum architecture

The issues surrounding the curriculum architecture and ways forward are outlined in Section 4. Many of the concerns would be addressed if the Framework is reconceptualised.

The concerns raised by stakeholders include the lack of:

- inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic frameworks developed and used by Indigenous peoples
- distinction between the different pathways and in the expected knowledge, depth of understanding and language skills in content descriptions and achievement standards.

Ways forward

Framework

- Reconceptualise the structure of the Framework to avoid the use of Western academic approaches to language learning.
- When developing the appropriate structure for this language learning context undertake a thorough scan of:
  - curriculum documents for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages currently in use around Australia, and for Indigenous languages internationally, particularly in Canada
  - the QSA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Syllabus. This document provides a structure that takes into account:
    - knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages as systems of meaning
    - the unique linguistic characteristics of these languages.
      http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior/snr_atsi_languages_11_syll.pdf
- Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic frameworks developed and used by Indigenous peoples, for example:
  - *My Land My Tracks: A framework for the holistic approach to Indigenous studies* developed by Ernie Grant, Dijirabal/Djirrabal Elder and published by the Innisfail and District Education Centre. The holistic approach to learning promotes cross-cultural understanding
  - approaches outlined in the QSA *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Handbook 2010* that illustrate how knowledge and knowing are integrated and holistic. These are tools to gain further insight into how the worldviews of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be and can be incorporated into the planning, design and delivery of teaching and learning. The approaches are outlined in detail in Section 4.
    http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/8848.html#teaching
  - Indigenous inquiry skills are used to explore knowledge uniquely associated with inquiry into and with Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities. These skills are associated with:
    - reciprocating knowledge
    - deep listening
    - reflecting and revisiting
    - respectful interactions
    - managing and recognising local community protocols

3.   Principles and protocols

Consultation participants support:

- the principle that "each Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language is recognised as belonging to a group of people who are the language owners or custodians"
- the statement that "thorough and ongoing consultation processes" are needed to determine who is appropriate to teach the language because the "ultimate authority regarding the choice of target language rests with the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community".

However, this section of the draft Framework raised significant concerns. The principles and protocols section is the backbone of the curriculum. As it currently stands this section does not provide adequate advice and guidelines to support teachers who are working towards implementing an Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language.

Consultation participants raised the following concerns:

- Without the elevation of the place and importance of the principles and protocols an enthusiastic but naïve teacher could decide to introduce a language that was not appropriate and this would cause damage to language learning.

- The Principles and Protocols section:
  - needs to be placed at the front of the curriculum to ensure teachers engage with this section prior to beginning any planning
  - should be renamed *Processes for developing protocols*. ACARA cannot provide protocols that will be appropriate for all Indigenous communities, but can provide advice and guidelines about the processes that should be followed by schools to engage with the local community to collaboratively develop protocols
  - should include examples of community models of knowing to assist teachers to engage with local community to develop appropriate protocols for the implementation of language (see Appendix 1)

- does not emphasise enough that an Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language cannot be implemented in a school without complete local community involvement; school representatives should not underestimate the amount of time that might be involved in building trust and understanding for both parties in order for implementation to occur
- lacks detail about how schools can liaise with local community.

- Clear advice and guidelines need to be provided so schools understand the processes that must be undertaken prior to planning for implementation and during implementation. This would include information specifically about how schools initiate engagement with local community. Questions that schools need to ask and have answered as part of this process include:
  - Who at the school would coordinate initial and ongoing involvement of the Elders/Owners of the target language?
  - How would they go about identifying who to speak to in local community?
  - What roles would these people have in on-going language learning in the classroom?
  - What resources and support would be available for the local community language experts?
  - What would true engagement with relevant communities look like "on the ground"?

- Some of the text in the *Implications for implementation* section should be included in the *Principles and Protocols* section; this will ensure it is found much earlier in the document. The first paragraph in particular has some important advice that teachers should have from the start of their engagement and planning.

- There is confusion between the last sentence under *Principles* that states the "ultimate authority regarding the choice of target language rests with the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community" and the last sentence under *Protocols* that states, "at a particular point in time there may be no agreement by the local community'". It must be clarified that without agreement from local community there cannot be implementation of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language.

- All respondents expressed concern about the school having the "right" people to teach the Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language that is offered.

- Awareness about the protocols surrounding the use of audiovisual and multimodal resources needs to be clarified. When teachers consider using technology to support the teaching of language they must consult with the local community.

Ways forward

- Rename this section "Processes for developing protocols".
- Refine and strengthen the principles and protocols section:
  - place at the front of the document
  - include examples of community models of knowing to assist teachers to engage with local community to develop appropriate protocols for the implementation of language learning (see Appendix 1)
  - emphasise that an Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language cannot be implemented in a school without complete local community involvement
  - include detail about how schools can liaise with local community
  - emphasise that without involvement and agreement from local community there cannot be implementation of an Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language
  - include a case study to illustrate how a school successfully liaised with local community to implement a language into its curriculum offerings
  - provide advice or direction about where to access culturally appropriate resources.

- Use the following documents to refine the principles and protocols:
  - *Building relationships with local communities.* This QSA resource provides advice on how schools can liaise with local community.
    http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/approach/indigenous_build_relationship.pdf
  - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages in Education Queensland Schools: A guide to implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabuses.* This resource, developed by Education Queensland, aims to support principals to engage effectively with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities to implement the QSA syllabuses. www.qsa.qld.edu.au/12794.html#teaching
  - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages: Trial Senior Syllabus 2011.* Appendix 2 outlines local community models of knowing, a community inquiry model and community engagement advice. www.qsa.qld.edu.au/12794.html#syllabus (See also Appendix 1 of this document, which reproduces the text in full).
- ACARA is invited to contact QSA to discuss the detail in the above documents and the process undertaken in developing these documents.

4. Curriculum architecture

Consultation participants believe strongly that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic frameworks need to be included to achieve a deeper understanding and connectedness to the subtleties and complexities of distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.

The inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander frameworks developed and used by Indigenous peoples would:

- illustrate how knowledge and knowing are integrated and holistic

- provide tools for supporting teachers to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of working into the curriculum.

Consultation participants also believe strongly that using the same structure and framework as that used to develop and deliver the Asian and European languages curriculums does not work in this context. Applying a Western academic process to language learning is at odds with a community-based Indigenous approach to language learning. This has not allowed for an integrated holistic view of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages as part of Indigenous knowledge.

In addition, the Framework may not be viewed as a rigorous language program because:

- Level 1 is achieved after seven years (Foundation to Year 6)

- Level 2 is achieved at the end of Year 10.

In contrast, for other languages Level 4 is achieved at the completion of Year 10 in the Foundation to Year 10 sequence.

Ways forward

- Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic frameworks developed and used by Indigenous peoples, as detailed in Section 2.3.

4.1 Pathways

In general there was support amongst consultation participants for the three Pathways, however some concerns were raised.

- The different pathways lack distinction, with very little difference in the expected knowledge, depth of understanding and language skills in content descriptions and achievement standards.

- Achievement should vary according to pathway. First-language learners and second-language learners are expected to achieve the same level and work through the same content descriptions in the same number of hours, which is a denial of prior experience, knowledge and understanding of the language and culture.

Without real differences in curriculum architecture, it is meaningless to suggest there are different pathways within the framework.

Language Revival pathway specific concerns

- The need to reconceptualise the structure of the Framework is most pronounced for the Language Revival pathway. In this pathway, much of the learning students will be engaged in will involve language retrieval, for example:
  - locating and researching sources
  - collecting information
  - recording words and grammar
  - using language and cultural artefacts to create a language product.

  The current strand and sub-strand structure does not support this.

- The sub-strand structure is especially problematic. For example, sub-strand *1.2 Obtaining and using information.* When a language is being revived it is unclear how learners take what language they can find and shape it into a communicative function.

- Language revival represents a significant challenge and requires advice and guidelines to be provided to assist teachers to shape their teaching and learning programs. Advice and guidelines will ensure a comparable approach to language revival across the country.

- It is unclear what the role of English is in this pathway.

- Students will need to be researchers of language in the Language Revival pathway; this poses challenges with regard to accessing speakers of a particular language and appropriate resources.

Ways forward

- Reconceptualise the structure of the Framework to avoid the use of a Western academic process to language learning, given that the strand and sub-strand structure is especially problematic for the Language Revival pathway.
- Reconceptualise the strand and sub-strand to support the type of learning that will occur in the Language Revival pathway.
- Differentiate each pathway with distinctly different band descriptions, content descriptions and achievement standards requiring different knowledge, depth of understanding and sophistication of language skills.
- Make explicit that the rebuilding of language needs to be based in the local community, with the school playing a part in the process, not leading it. Include realistic and practical ways for this to be achieved.

4.2 Band descriptions, content descriptions and content elaborations

- All band descriptions should include the use of the target language for daily interactions, including in the classroom, and some academic work. However, this only appears in the Year 7 to Year 10 band description.

- Feedback on the content descriptions indicates that:
  - they do not offer a broad view of language and there is little recognition of students needing to use their language in contemporary contexts
  - the Language Revival Learner Pathway content descriptions are too similar to the content descriptions in the First Language Learner Pathway and Second Language Learner Pathway
  - there is not adequate differentiation between Level 1 and Level 2
  - they often describe tasks more than knowledge, concepts, skills and processes for teaching and learning
  - they are not useful in terms of determining the level of language
  - they include terms that are vague, imprecise and uninformative for teaching purposes
  - they are sometimes incorrect, for example, recount is non-fiction however, 'recount journeys' has been included as part of the 'responding to and expressing imaginative experience' sub-strand
  - verbs are not used consistently across levels and across pathways.

- Some content elaborations simply restate the content description.

- Higher-order thinking skills are incorporated clearly in the Understanding strand but need to be more explicit in the Communication strand.

- It is not always possible to have written texts to represent the sounds of spoken texts in Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages. This means some of the content descriptions and aspects of achievement standards will be very difficult to implement.

- There is a much greater emphasis on linguistics and developing awareness of language knowledge through researching the language, than on developing language proficiency in the target language. This imbalance is especially true for the revival pathway.

- It is not made clear in the documentation how the key concepts and processes accompanying each content description are organised or sequenced, nor is it made clear how they are to be used.

- Consultation participants cautioned against using information and communication technology for language learning. There is concern that some teachers and schools might consider this an alternative to using people in their local community to teach the language.

Ways forward

- Include statements in all band descriptions that identify the use of the target language for daily interactions, including in the classroom, and some academic work.
- Revise the content descriptions to:
  – ensure they are specific, and precisely describe key concepts, processes and texts
  – describe the level of language required, that is, whether it is formulaic use, modelled or rehearsed language or the ability to manipulate language in different contexts
  – provide a progression in the range and complexity of language requirements across levels
  – describe the key concepts of language to be taught in traditional, cultural and contemporary contexts
  – ensure accuracy and appropriateness for the strands and sub-strands to which they belong
  – revise the elaborations to illustrate and exemplify the content descriptions
  – ensure consistent use of wording, including use of verbs across levels and pathways.

Achievement standards

The achievement standards:

- are not sufficiently aligned or matched to the pathways to be useful.

- are very lengthy and difficult to read in the current format.

- lack higher-order thinking.

  In addition:

- The achievement standard at the end of Year 6 is identical for each of the three pathways.

- A single achievement standard for Foundation to Year 6 is too broad.

Ways forward

- Revise the achievement standards to:
  – align to the pathways
  – show progression in the development of students' understandings and capacity with language skills
  – include higher-order thinking.
- Develop more achievement standards across the Foundation to Year 6 year levels.

5.   Appendix 1

The following text forms Appendix 2 of QSA's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (Trial) 2011* (pages 52–58). The original document is available from: www.qsa.qld.edu.au/12794.html.

Community models of knowing

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Senior Syllabus (2011)* interacts with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies of knowledge that are connected with living communities, traditions and processes.

The syllabus supports the following ideals:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages belong to the communities in which they originate, are spoken and are being revived

- only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can define their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols and processes for their languages and knowledge

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language, knowledge and community principles need to be the foundation upon which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum is created in this syllabus

- many voices can contribute to "knowing" in a community. In a school environment, language and linguistic disciplines are essential components of learning languages, however, when teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages there must be an appropriate fit with the living communities from which the language is derived, used and owned.

- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Senior Syllabus creates a space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self-define the terms of entry, engagement and exit for schools seeking to meaningfully and mutually inquire into their knowledge.

The Senior Syllabus in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in defining the terms of entry, engagement and exit with their knowledge.

Indigenous inquiry skills inform student learning across all areas of study and must be informed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in which the school and target language exist. To this end it is recommended that concepts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community self-definition, determination and cultural strengths be formalised into a Community Model of Knowing (CMK).

The shape of CMK documents should be flexible, enabling different ways of representing knowledge. However, if a CMK is being shared with a school for the purposes of this syllabus then a mutually comprehensible language, interpretation or translation should be negotiated with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The CMK should be revisited when the relationship between school and community needs to be reaffirmed. This may be every three years or less according to community relationships and interaction with a community model of inquiry. A CMK may take the form of:

- a painting that represents the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's protocols, their principles of knowledge and the resulting interaction, and might be accompanied by a translated story, or a local person with knowledge of the painting could be invited to talk to students about its meaning

- a combination of language phrases, words and symbols with an English translation
- a poster, list of principles, audiovisual text and/or booklet.

Invitation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

The syllabus invites Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to articulate community models of knowing to clearly indicate terms of entry, engagement and exit for their languages and knowledge. The principles and productions of a CMK will be similar to memoranda of understanding, contractual agreements or ethical clearances, which the community may already have established with researchers in fields such as linguistics, health, law or higher education. The constitutions of Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, or other statements of self-definition of practice and processes, may also contain relevant information for the formation of a CMK.

An important feature of the CMK is that it is formed by the community as a means for others to engage with, inquire into, respond to and reflect on their language and knowledge. The CMK has been conceptualised to assist students, teachers and community in knowing the boundaries, open knowledges and restricted areas when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and knowledge principles.

The three living documents of the community models of knowing are:

- settlement statement
- community inquiry model
- community engagement advice.

These may be represented through the following diagram. Each component of the community models of knowing is interrelated and autonomous.

These three documents serve as a means to create mutually enriching relationships among Aboriginal communities, Torres Strait Islander communities and schools wishing to undertake a course of study in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to participate in the design and implementation of the curriculum has the following advantages:

- provides entry into an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for inquiry into their language, community, knowledge, country, place, memories
- presents engagement in language learning, communication and principles associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- ensures that entering into an inquiry process is respectful and connected with community principles of reciprocity and ownership of knowing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities reserve the right of ownership over their languages and language products developed from the sharing of this resource and community knowledge.

Settlement statement

A settlement statement is an affirmation from the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. It chronicles what it means to be part of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community and allows that community to define itself as distinct from other communities, in particular from the local non-Indigenous community.

The purpose of a settlement statement is to clearly establish how the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community, and the traditional owners and language groups, are defined according to the community. In some communities, a settlement statement may be exclusively the domain of the local traditional owners; in others the Indigenous community may include many groups but privilege the traditional owners, who may or may not be present on country.

The settlement statement should indicate the name of the local traditional language group and identify the language to be taught in schools on that country or place.

A settlement statement for use within classrooms should indicate clearly:

- the local language group and local language

- the land, country, and sea areas of the local language

- connections with the local language group if another language is to be taught and learnt in the community.

The settlement statement can also set out respectful connections between traditional language groups and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the area.

Example settlement statements

Example one:

We are the …………………………………………people from
……………………………………….

Our language group is called …………………………………………………….

Our country stretches from ………………………………………………… to ………………………………………… and from
…………………………………………………. to …………………………………………

Example two:

We are the ………………………………… who live on …………………………… country.

We are the local people of this community and respectfully acknowledge the ………………………………… people whose language is sleeping.

We the ………………………………… people, with the blessing of the local community, believe that ………………………………… language should be taught in the local schools.

Community inquiry model (CIM)

The second living document is a community inquiry model (CIM) that is community generated and owned. A local community may choose to give a more appropriate, localised name to the CIM. The CIM, is a model of inquiry that is the basis for authentic community relationships, as it clearly sets out the protocols and processes associated with school interaction and use of community knowledge and language. It is the core of the Indigenous Inquiry Skills strand and creates the space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander processes in curriculum design and implementation.

A community inquiry model is a statement of individual community self-identification about the community's country, place and living systems. It is also a statement of identification about other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and outsiders, including coexisting with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian communities.

Certain conditions apply when inquiring into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, knowledge, beliefs, histories, culture, and language. These conditions protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by establishing clear boundaries, open and closed areas of investigation and interaction, as well as appropriate methods of investigating, managing and using Indigenous knowledge. Establishing a relationship based on a model of inquiry sets up a process and practice of interacting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as equal participants, as well as accepting and respecting different approaches to knowledge and languages.

In a school setting, welcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities into teaching and learning activities will be made possible by creating and using a community inquiry model that includes assessment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being and knowing.

The CIM is the formalising and implementation of community protocols, knowledge principles and language-specific advice from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective. The use of a CIM will deepen the learning of students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and languages.

The CIM reinforces the view that both in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and in non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities knowledge comes with certain conditions and that this is connected to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge principles.

Communities are encouraged to define the terms for inquiry in terms of their own language and knowledge so that schools may interact respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

In Queensland, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities may not have been formally invited to explore their cultural strengths and knowledge principles within a school educational context. Schools should provide opportunities to do this by sponsoring, facilitating and instigating processes that allow these discussions to occur. For example, schools may provide a designated space for meetings.

Example community inquiry model (CIM)

Respect — We, the……..…………. people, believe that everyone should respect our country and all living beings who are a part of it. We believe that our knowledge, stories, and language can only be interacted with through respect, as our people have done for thousands of years. Respect means listening respectfully, treading lightly on country and our waterways, respecting life and those who have come before us.

Respecting our …………………… knowledge means accepting that there is open and closed knowledge and that this is defined by our community.

Respect also means how a person carries and holds themselves in public and private life. It is how a person interacts with others, other beings in the environment and how their actions and words display respect.

Reciprocity — We, the ……………….. people, believe in the principle of reciprocity. This principle applies to our knowledge, including learning ………………. language. It is related to our principles of balance and having reciprocal relationships. In return for the gift of our language and knowledge, learners should reciprocate in kind, displaying the principle of respect, acknowledging where the knowledge has come from and gifting ………………… community with the fruits of ……………… investment, which could include presentation of their knowledge to the community.

Care for one another — When people are invited onto our country and accept that invitation, we would like them to honour the ancient principle of responsibility for all in a community: the concept of caring for one another. The ..……………….. would like all students, adults and learners to care for one another when investigating or using language, practising our teachings and living on our country.

Listen deeply to Elders — The ……………… believe that when learning one has to listen deeply to understand the different messages being communicated by our Elders. Listening deeply can mean not interrupting a speaker, refraining from asking too many questions, paying attention to the story being told. Sometimes our Elders speak through stories that have been passed down, and it is important to listen deeply to all things.

Revisit relationships with our community — Part of maintaining relationships with our community is to respectfully revisit that relationship to reconnect with and negotiate the terms of engagement, or even exit. We believe that it is vitally important to revisit relationships with our community. This is part of what it means to maintain your welcome on our country. To come and seek permission for entry into our knowledge about the world or the physical world around you is only beginning the relationship. We consider it rude and disrespectful if people seek permission or contact with us once and then assume they have our community's undivided support. We are living communities linked to ancient ways of maintaining balance and harmony. We implore that you revisit relationships, which could be in the form of a distinct meeting, including ceremony and symbols.

Just as we revisit country and engage in mutual relationships within country, we invite outsiders to revisit relationships with us and engage in mutual, reciprocal relationships.

Community engagement advice

Community engagement advice outlines the terms of engagement applicable to a particular community. It also reflects what the community is prepared to offer schools in their area and sets out the boundaries in which interaction can occur in a manner that is respectful of the local community.

In some areas human resources available for schools may be limited. When this is the case, schools should adapt to what the community is prepared to offer so that a mutually beneficial relationship can be established.

Terms of engagement are those suggested by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and could include:

- a local language speaker to be invited to share knowledge with students

- an invitation for schools to participate in local community events where the TL is used

- an invitation for class groups to attend a tour or talk given by a local TL group representative and to then explore negotiated content

- an invitation for class groups to connect with a local TL group each term by participating in an excursion on country, to a language centre or another learning place

- an invitation for a class group to attend and participate in a community event such as the Drumley Walk, a four-day journey that re traces the walking path of a local Yugambeh man from Beaudesert, south of Brisbane, to Southport on the Gold Coast.

We the ………………. people would like to invite the ………………. school to connect with our community once a term at the …………………. Aboriginal Corporation.

During these excursions we would like to provide learning opportunities, such as listening to ……………….. language, listening to Elders, and experiencing language on country.

We would also like to make available our own teachers/Elders to engage with the local schools. They are available for paid work as …………… language and culture teachers.

We the ……………… …..…. school would like to accept the invitation from the ………………. people to connect with their community once a term at the ………………. Aboriginal Corporation.

We agree to respect the ………..…………. people, their country, place, knowledge, stories, and language and accept that there is open and closed knowledge defined by their community. Engagement with this knowledge may occur through the moderation processes associated with the Queensland system of externally moderated school-based assessment. We agree to respect the knowledge provided in this context.

We are grateful for the gift of knowledge and language; we recognise ownership by the ………..…………. community and agree to give back to the community any resources that may result from this sharing.

We will ensure that all students, teachers, adults and learners care for one another when investigating or using this language, practising the teachings of the community, and/or living on country. We will also agree to listen deeply to Elders and other community members to understand the different messages being communicated.

As part of maintaining relationships with the ……………… …..…. community we the ……………… …..…. school will respectfully revisit that relationship to reconnect with and negotiate the terms of entry, engagement or even exit, in order to maintain our welcome on country and engage in mutual, reciprocal relationships.

Signatories

……………….. …………..   ……………….. …………..

Community representative/s   **School Principal/delegate**