

# Here We Belong: CQUniversity Strengthens Support for First Nations Students



CQUniversity has officially opened a new First Nations Precinct at its Rockhampton North Campus.

The new space is a purpose-built cultural and learning hub designed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and strengthen connection with community.

It provides First Nations students with a culturally safe environment where they can access support and feel a sense of belonging that supports their success at university.

Spanning multiple buildings, the precinct brings together spaces for cultural practice, learning, teaching, research and gathering.

CQUniversity Vice-President of Indigenous Engagement, Professor Adrian Miller, said the precinct marked an important step in creating a university environment where First Nations students feel supported to succeed.

With more than 20 locations across Australia, CQU welcomes First Nations students from regional, remote and national locations across vocational education, undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

"A culturally safe space allows students to express and share their identity, culture and language while feeling respected and valued," Prof

Miller said.

"When students feel they belong, their wellbeing and academic success naturally follow."

Prof Miller said the precinct will also play a vital role in strengthening relationships between students, community and the University.

"While this space has been designed primarily to support First Nations students, it also provides opportunities for all students to learn, connect and engage respectfully with culture," Prof Miller said.

"By embedding and elevating First Nations knowledges, cultures and leadership, we are creating a place where genuine reconciliation and shared learning can flourish," Prof Miller said.

The precinct carries the traditional name *Yirragu Nulu Nhugul*, meaning "Here We Belong," reflecting its role as a place of connection, belonging and shared responsibility between the University and First Nations communities.

Developed in consultation with the Darumbal People, the Traditional Owners of the land, the naming and design were guided by community representatives to ensure the space reflects local knowledge, language and culture.

Traditional language, artwork, design elements and outdoor spaces throughout the precinct

honour Country and create a welcoming environment for students, families, staff and visitors.

The project was developed in response to growing First Nations student enrolments and the need for visible, culturally grounded support spaces on campus.

CQU has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students currently studying across all study levels at the Rockhampton campus, with the precinct expected to host cultural activities, community events and student support programs year-round.

"We want First Nations students considering university to know they belong here and that we are committed to supporting them to not only begin their studies but thrive and succeed," Prof Miller said.

The opening acknowledged the cultural significance of the space and the contributions of community. Going forward, the precinct will support First Nations students through culturally safe programs, services and opportunities to connect and thrive at university.

*First Nations students at CQU are supported across vocational education and training (VET), undergraduate and postgraduate study pathways, with tailored support available throughout their education journey. To learn more about studying at CQU, visit [cqu.edu.au/firstnations](http://cqu.edu.au/firstnations).*



CQUniversity Vice-President of Indigenous Engagement, Professor Adrian Miller.



CQUniversity unveils First Nations Precinct in Rockhampton.

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