

Multicultural Plan

2025–2028





Acknowledgement of Country

TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to elders past and present and we are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas as well as their rich contribution to society.

We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities form the foundation of cultural diversity within New South Wales. Hundreds of cultures, languages and kinship structures have long been embedded in the lands of Aboriginal Countries throughout the state. We acknowledge and celebrate these diverse traditions, customs and cultures that have existed since the beginning of time.

We will continue to value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote their rights and interests. In doing so, we acknowledge the wrongs of the past, respect the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and commit to embedding equality and equity throughout all areas of our organisation by integrating inclusive and innovative opportunities that will result in stronger relationships built on respect and trust.

© Amy Allerton, contemporary Aboriginal Artist of the Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung and Gamilaroi nations.

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Message from the Managing Director



I am proud to present the TAFE NSW Multicultural Plan 2025–2028 (the Plan). As Australia’s largest vocational education and training provider, and a leader in the sector, we hold a unique position to role model both the meaning and the value of cultural diversity and inclusion in places of work and learning.

TAFE NSW is an important part of local communities across the state, delivering hands-on training to around 400,000 people each year. Around one-third of students identify as being from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as do one-eighth of our employees. For this reason, our commitment to prioritising diversity in our planning, decision-making and service delivery is very real. The actions we take become part of the lived experience of thousands of our students, employees and communities.

As the public training provider, TAFE NSW has a responsibility to implement and report on initiatives that meet the needs of our culturally diverse society, and to embed the principles

of the Multicultural NSW Act 2000 in the ways in which we operate. TAFE NSW is also recognised as a designated Multicultural Policy and Services Program (MPSP) agency, further reflecting our important role in supporting and serving the people of NSW.

It is not enough to simply acknowledge and accommodate diversity. To truly break down barriers to participation, support inclusion and realise the benefits that come with diverse perspectives, ideas and experiences, we must embrace and celebrate diversity. To borrow the perfect quote from American educator and author Stephen Covey: ‘Strength lies in differences, not similarities’.

The Plan strives to deliver lasting positive experiences for our culturally and linguistically diverse students, employees and visitors. It outlines the goals we are working towards, guided by the principles of equity, respect and dignity. These goals are aligned to the four focus areas of the NSW Government’s MPSP Framework – service delivery, planning,

leadership and engagement – and are connected to clear actions and measurements of success.

Ultimately, our objective is to break down barriers to participation, enable access to services and programs, and deliver multicultural equity in NSW public education and our workforce.

To grow stronger through our differences.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "CRead".

Chloe Read
Managing Director,
TAFE NSW

“

It is not enough to simply acknowledge and accommodate diversity. To truly break down barriers to participation, support inclusion and realise the benefits that come with diverse perspectives, ideas and experiences, we must embrace and celebrate diversity.

”

Message from the Executive Sponsor, Raf Marcellino



Diversity in skills education offers considerable benefits to enhance students’ learning experiences and outcomes. Diverse teachers bring a variety of teaching styles, perspectives and experiences, catering to different learning preferences and needs.

A culture of diversity helps students develop cultural awareness, acceptance and sensitivity to help create workplaces where difference is embraced and not shunned. Diverse teachers and staff can better relate to and support students from different backgrounds, creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Having diverse role models in skills education inspires and motivates students, and shows them that success is achievable regardless of their background. Our diversity enriches the educational experience and equips students with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

The Plan is a meaningful and practical approach to supporting a diverse, inclusive and safe learning environment for our students, our teachers and the communities we serve. I am proud to sponsor this plan, and I encourage all colleagues to embrace it and make it a plan of successful and effective actions for the TAFE NSW community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Raf Marcellino".

Raf Marcellino
Executive Director,
TAFE NSW



About this plan

At TAFE NSW, our students and employees, their lived experiences and the diverse communities they represent are integral to our identity and inclusive culture.

As the NSW Government’s public provider of vocational education and training, TAFE NSW aims to enable all people to participate in and contribute to all aspects of public life. By recognising diverse experiences within the community, this plan outlines targeted actions to foster inclusion. It focuses on the needs of individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and addresses intersectional factors such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, disability, gender and LGBTIQ+ identity.

The Plan responds to our requirements as a government agency to implement a multicultural plan.

It is guided by the MPSP framework provided by Multicultural NSW, the Multicultural Plan has also been mapped against the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan 2024–2027. TAFE NSW is committed to creating workplaces and educational spaces where dignity, trust, respect and the promotion of diversity and inclusion is valued. Our culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees reflect the community of NSW.

The impact we seek to achieve through this plan

Impacts

1. Students, employees and community members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds feel safe, valued and respected at TAFE NSW.
2. Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds achieve their education and employment goals at TAFE NSW.
3. TAFE NSW employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are supported to develop professionally at all levels of the organisation.

How we will measure our progress

- Employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds report improved wellbeing and increased participation.
- Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds report feeling valued and safe.
- The number of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who achieve their goals at TAFE NSW increases.
- Increase in the proportion of employees who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds at all levels.
- Retention of employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is the same as or higher than it is for TAFE NSW employees overall.



About TAFE NSW

TAFE stands for Technical and Further Education. TAFE NSW is Australia's largest vocational education and training provider. Each year, around 400,000 students enrol in our courses and training. We aim to skill the workforce for the future through high-quality, personalised education and training.

We provide an extensive range of courses and qualifications to suit everyone from school leavers to career changers and businesses.

We offer short courses, apprenticeships and traineeships, and qualifications from certificates to diplomas and advanced diplomas. TAFE NSW is also registered as a higher education provider and offers degree-level programs.

We provide a range of study options from full time to part time, online and in person, or a combination of these. TAFE NSW also offers the training and qualifications small businesses need to support growth. For larger businesses wanting to develop their workforce skill set, we deliver customised training and accredited qualifications anywhere, any time and in a range of delivery modes.

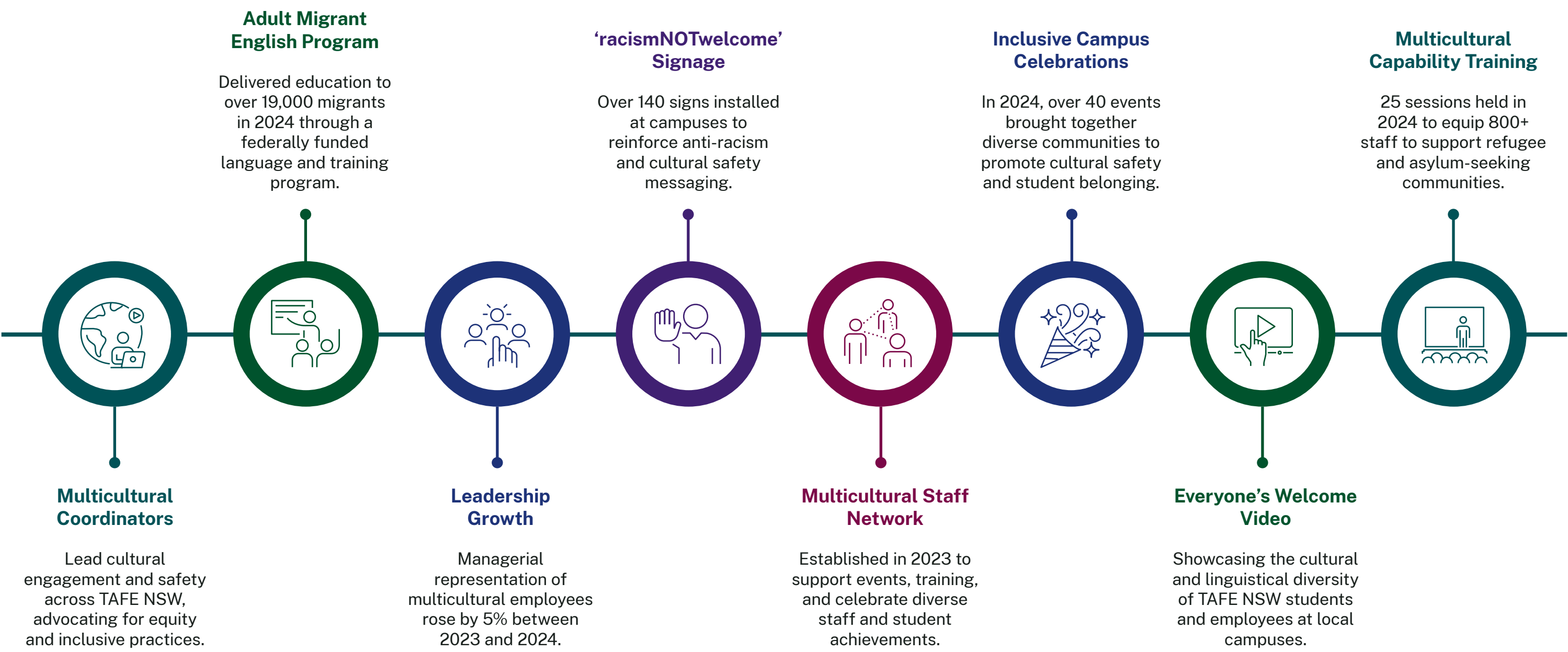
As the NSW Government's public provider of vocational education and training, we:

- provide education and support services to meet the skills needs of individuals and the workforce
- consult with industry and communities to ensure that our learning programs and support services are relevant
- provide individuals, groups and communities that face barriers to access with specialist services to support participation in education and other programs
- support students to progress to further studies at TAFE NSW, university or other training providers.



Our journey

TAFE NSW is committed to improving the training and employment outcomes of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The following examples provide a snapshot of TAFE NSW’s multicultural footprint and support.



Our commitment

TAFE NSW is committed to the intentional and meaningful inclusion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in all aspects of life, to ensure equal opportunities, participation and respect for diverse traditions, perspectives and identities.

Our priority is to ensure the perspectives and ideas of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are central to the decision-making processes that may impact them. By embedding the guiding principles of the Multicultural NSW Act and engaging with those who have lived experience, we aim to build an environment that is genuinely inclusive, culturally responsive and accessible for all.

Our overall goal is to break down barriers to participation, enable access to services and programs, and deliver multicultural equity in public education in NSW. By doing this, TAFE NSW seeks to contribute to building community, equality and a sense of belonging for all students, employees and the wider community.



Story share

A commitment to inclusion shapes my legal and policy work as the Principal Legal Counsel at TAFE NSW. I was born in apartheid-era South Africa, where racial segregation and discrimination were a daily reality for many. My early experiences instilled in me a deep passion for social justice, which continued to grow after I migrated to Australia in the 1980s.

I commenced a Master of Legal Practice in 2004. In 2010, I co-founded the Muslim Legal Network NSW with five fellow lawyers. What began as a support network for young legal professionals from underrepresented communities quickly evolved into an educational platform. Through community legal education seminars, we brought together lawyers, law students and academics to deliver vital legal knowledge and support. Over time, our focus expanded to address important issues like racial vilification laws and counterterrorism legislation, which disproportionately affect people of colour and Muslim communities.

I continue to advocate for authentic inclusion—championing spaces where people can show up as their full selves without fear of discrimination or exclusion.

At TAFE NSW, I prioritise equity for diverse communities. In every policy review and initiative I support, I carefully consider how our decisions impact marginalised groups, including individuals with disabilities and those from culturally diverse backgrounds. I promote a proactive approach to anti-racism, recognising that dismantling systemic privilege requires ongoing self-awareness and intentional action. My ultimate goal is to help make fairness and equal opportunity real—not just aspirational—in our education systems and broader communities.

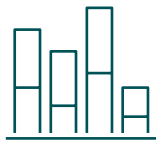
**Zaahir Edries (he/him),
TAFE NSW Principal Legal Counsel,
working on Gadigal Country.**

“ I continue to advocate for authentic inclusion — championing spaces where people can show up as their full selves without fear of discrimination or exclusion. ”



Guiding principles

This plan is guided by principles of equity, respect and dignity. Its aim is to help ensure all individuals, regardless of ability or background, can access opportunities and thrive in an inclusive and culturally safe environment. These principles shape our actions to remove barriers and foster meaningful participation for everyone.



Data

We are committed to data collection practices that are ethical, inclusive and aligned with our goal of responding to the intersectional experiences and needs of socially, culturally and linguistically diverse communities in NSW.



Inclusive design

We are dedicated to inclusive design by creating programs, services and facilities that are accessible and responsive to the needs of all individuals, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. TAFE NSW ensures that everyone has the opportunity to engage and thrive in their learning environment.



Safe and inclusive spaces

We advocate that physical and digital spaces are accessible, welcoming and culturally appropriate to meet the needs of all students, employees and the community. This is to ensure safety, dignity, comfort and equal participation regardless of ability or background.



Accessibility

We prioritise physical, digital and technical accessibility and cultural safety for all students, employees and community members. Through prioritising, we ensure that students, employees and community members can be their authentic selves in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bias and harm.



Employment

We aim to proactively attract, recruit and retain employees by providing culturally safe, accessible, inclusive and flexible processes. This includes creating targeted and identified multicultural positions, and providing workplace adjustments and career development opportunities.



Marketing and communications

Authentic representation of social and cultural diversity and culturally relevant content are embedded in TAFE NSW messaging. This includes internal and external communication, brand campaigns and recruitment processes. We commit to inclusivity and accessibility in marketing and communication materials by using appropriate language, content and imagery that reflect the diversity of TAFE NSW students, employees and communities.



Safe and respectful practices

We promote safe and respectful practices by fostering an inclusive culture that embraces diversity and encourages mutual respect among all our employees and students. Through targeted diversity and inclusion initiatives, TAFE NSW aims to prevent discrimination, support equity and create a safe, welcoming environment for all.



Capability

We are committed to ongoing education and training to build multicultural capability. We actively promote continuous learning and professional development programs that are vital for ensuring safe, inclusive and responsive approaches and practice, to meet the needs of learners, employees and the communities we serve.



Governance

TAFE NSW is dedicated to implementing and delivering diversity and inclusion initiatives to strengthen our reputation and attract students, employees, industries, partners and communities who value social impact. We will track and follow legal and regulatory standards and ensure alignment with the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan and the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan.



Policy

When developing a policy, lived experience must be embedded into the co-design and consultation process to ensure that the perspectives of those directly affected by the policy are represented. This approach provides insights and solutions to make policies more relevant and more effective.



Stakeholder engagement

Inclusive stakeholder engagement plays a vital role in the co-design and collaboration of projects, programs and initiatives. This approach fosters partnerships built on trust and reciprocity, and delivers impactful outcomes to diverse communities across the state.

Story share

As the granddaughter and daughter of Lebanese immigrants, I have a deep understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by immigrants and refugees from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Having spent over three decades as a teacher, community engagement specialist and advocate for multicultural equity at TAFE NSW, I see education as a powerful space where migrants and refugees can build knowledge, agency and lasting connections.

I believe education lays the foundation for the best possible life—or in the case of many refugees, the opportunity to rebuild their lives so they and their families can heal and thrive. I also believe that as a public education provider, TAFE NSW has a responsibility to ensure that learning programs and services respond not only to vocational needs but also support community-building and civic participation.

In my work with multicultural communities, I'm deeply committed to the principle and practice of education as a human right. I strive to ensure that everyone can participate in ways that are empowering and culturally safe.

**Paula Abood (she/her),
TAFE NSW Multicultural Coordinator,
living and working on the lands of the
Wallumedegal people**

“

I see education as a powerful space where migrants and refugees can build knowledge, agency and lasting connections.

”



Focus Area 1: Active leadership



TAFE NSW leaders at all levels actively champion and embed a culturally inclusive workplace across the organisation. They seek to foster innovation, creativity and collaboration by bringing together a community rich with skills and experiences.

Goals:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse students have equitable access to all services and opportunities at TAFE NSW.
- The proportion of employees who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds increases at all levels.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse employees can fully participate in career development opportunities.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure equitable allocation of people and resources to support, design and deliver programs that are responsive to culturally and linguistically diverse students and local multicultural communities.
- Provide anti-racism education and training for all TAFE NSW employees.
- Implement equitable recruitment and onboarding practices that address systemic barriers to employment.
- Ensure effective support for culturally and linguistically diverse employees, including meaningful career pathways, mentoring programs, professional development and leadership opportunities.

Measures of success:

- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees who feel that they have equitable access to services and opportunities at TAFE NSW.
- Increase in the proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds employed at TAFE NSW at every level.
- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse candidates who report an inclusive recruitment experience and/or successful onboarding experience.
- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse employees who report that they can fully participate in career development opportunities.

Story share

I came to Australia with my children from Iraq in 2019 as a refugee. After surviving horrific terrorist attacks, I left behind everything I knew, hoping to start fresh and build a better life for myself and my children. Arriving without English language skills, my options were limited. I began searching for a program that could help me improve my English, gain work experience in Australia, and develop the qualifications and skills I needed to realise my dream of owning my own business.

The TAFE NSW Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Stepping Up Kitchen Operations Program was exactly what I was looking for. Today, I own my own hospitality business in Armidale—Baghdad’s Falafel—which brings homemade Ezidi cuisine to farmers markets, private parties, and local events.

Selling traditional Ezidi cuisine to the Armidale community has given me a strong sense of pride and connection to my culture. I’m very pleased I took part in the course. Although it was difficult in the beginning, I kept going, and everyone at TAFE NSW was incredibly supportive—kind teachers, faculty, and administration staff encouraged me every step of the way. It truly changed my life for the better.

After graduating at the end of 2024, I look forward to continuing my English language studies at TAFE NSW in the near future.

Fadya Alkhalaf (she/her),
former TAFE NSW student, living and
working on the lands of the Anaiwan people

*The AMEP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.



Everyone at TAFE NSW was incredibly supportive — kind teachers, faculty, and administration staff encouraged me every step of the way. It truly changed my life for the better.



Focus Area 2: Effective engagement and communication



By cultivating innovation, creativity and collaboration, and bringing together ideas and experiences, TAFE NSW demonstrates how it addresses the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse people and engages them in policy making, programs and services.

Goals:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees feel respected and represented in TAFE NSW activities and communications.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees participate in culturally significant events.



To achieve this, we will:

- Build and maintain effective partnerships with community organisations to engage and support students.
- Resource, support and promote multicultural events and meaningful opportunities that build relationships, education pathways for students, and community participation.
- Ensure TAFE NSW internal communications embed cultural authenticity to effectively promote events and opportunities.
- Ensure marketing touchpoints are inclusive and reflect the diversity of TAFE NSW students, employees and communities.



Measures of success:

- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees who feel that their experience is respected and represented in TAFE NSW activities and communications.
- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees who participate in culturally significant events.

Story share

After arriving in Australia, my wife and I enrolled in the Pathways to Employment Program (PEP) Business Administration course to build our confidence in English communication and tailor our resumés for the Australian job market. We learnt Australian workplace culture, interview techniques and computer skills to enhance productivity.

The PEP team connected us to work experience opportunities aligned to our interests and goals. I had a two-week work experience placement at the Junior Science Academy at Macquarie University and then I received two job offers. I accepted a role of Account Manager at OPPO Mobile Australia.

Our journey in Australia has been full of small yet impactful changes that have made a big difference to me and my family.

I'm incredibly grateful for the support and encouragement from TAFE NSW staff and teachers. The lifelong skills I've learnt have made way for new opportunities and make me excited for what lies ahead.

Zhijun (Sam) DENG (he/him),
former TAFE NSW student, living on Wangal land and working on the land of the Wallumattagal clan of the Dharug Nation.



“ I'm incredibly grateful for the support and encouragement from TAFE NSW staff and teachers. The lifelong skills I've learnt have made way for new opportunities and make me excited for what lies ahead. ”

Focus Area 3: Tailored planning



TAFE NSW policies, programs and services are tailored to people from different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. They provide access, and promote participation of education and employment. They cultivate a sense among individuals and communities, with the aim of creating equal opportunities for all and building a stronger and more vibrant society.

Goals:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse students feel that education programs are inclusive, flexible and meet their needs.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees have improved access to recognition of overseas skills, qualifications and experiences.



To achieve this, we will:

- Develop, resource and customise education programs for culturally and linguistically diverse students.
- Ensure policies and processes consider multicultural students and employees.
- Develop and embed a procedure and process to recognise the overseas skills and qualifications of students and employees.



Measures of success:

- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students who feel that education programs are inclusive, flexible and meet their needs.
- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees who have overseas skills and experience validated and recognised.

Story share

The Skilled Migrant Employment Program at TAFE Digital has been transformative in helping me reconnect with my professional background and establish a pathway to achieving my career goals in Australia. The validation of my bachelor and master’s degrees in science has been instrumental in aligning my qualifications with opportunities here. Additionally, the English course facilitated by the program has significantly improved my language skills, enabling me to communicate more effectively in professional settings.

The guidance on how to apply and communicate with companies in Australia, as well as the interview training, has been invaluable. These resources have not only enhanced my confidence but also equipped me with the tools needed to secure a suitable job.

This excellent training has truly changed my life by giving me the direction and opportunities I needed to pursue my goals. I am now on my way to achieving them.

**Dr Sheila Abreu Mourao (she/her),
former TAFE NSW student, living and
working on Dharawal Country.**

“ This excellent training has truly changed my life by giving me the direction and opportunities I needed to pursue my goals. I am now on my way to achieving them. ”



Focus Area 4: Accessible services



By actively developing inclusive programs and services, TAFE NSW is reducing barriers to people participating in vocational, education and training programs and support services. This allows people to use the unique skills and experience they bring to NSW, and to contribute to social, cultural and economic life in the state.

Goals:

- Culturally and linguistically diverse students access and participate in responsive and relevant community-based education programs with embedded supports.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse students and employees feel safe to provide feedback and make complaints, and feel that TAFE NSW has responded appropriately.



To achieve this, we will:

- Provide flexible, culturally inclusive and community-based education programs and support for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure equitable allocation of people, resources and support for multicultural students in regional and remote areas.
- Facilitate higher education and employment pathways for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure feedback and complaints processes are accessible and culturally safe for students and employees.



Measures of success:

- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students enrolling in TAFE NSW (foundational and vocational courses).
- Increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students enrolling in customised courses.
- Increase in the number of students and employees who feel safe to provide feedback and make complaints, and feel that TAFE NSW has responded appropriately.
- Increase in the number of multicultural positions across the state.

Measurement of progress and accountability

TAFE NSW is committed to ensuring that clear governance and accountability frameworks support the implementation of the Multicultural Plan. We will integrate the plan's outcomes and actions into business processes at every level, supported by an implementation guide that assigns responsibility for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Regular progress reports will be provided through the relevant Diversity and Inclusion implementation group to the Diversity and Inclusion Action Coordination Group and the People Enabler Steering Committee.

In accordance with obligations outlined in the Multicultural NSW Act, TAFE NSW will provide updates on progress towards the targets and strategies outlined in this Multicultural Plan. Progress will be reported yearly in the TAFE NSW annual report. An excerpt of this will be provided to Multicultural NSW to be included in its annual State of Community Relations in NSW report.

Success will be measured through a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics, including:

- completion of key actions from 2025–2028
- feedback from our community
- analysis of the NSW Public Service Commission's People Matter Employee Survey results
- feedback from students and employees through focus groups and surveys.



Our requirements and recognition of contribution

In developing the Multicultural Plan 2025–2028 the project team embedded a human-centred design approach.

We consulted and collaborated with students, employees and communities to ensure we accurately represented the diversity of perspectives and communities we serve.

We acknowledge the advice of the Social Outcomes Organisation, our Diversity and Inclusion team, the project team, multicultural students and employees, and internal and external stakeholders.

By conducting four focus groups we received rich input from over 220 people, and a focus group survey was extended to all TAFE NSW staff members.

We acknowledge the value of individual and collective contributions to help formulate the actions and activities included in this plan.

All public sector agencies, including TAFE NSW, have a responsibility to plan for and report annually to the NSW Parliament on initiatives to meet the needs of a culturally diverse society. This includes embedding the multiculturalism principles under the Multicultural NSW Act to ensure they are a part of core business.

Additionally, TAFE NSW is recognised by Multicultural NSW as a designated agency due to its function in the NSW community. Designated agencies have additional reporting requirements. Accordingly, TAFE NSW will report to Multicultural NSW on the agency's progress against the latest TAFE NSW Multicultural Plan.

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For more information:

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