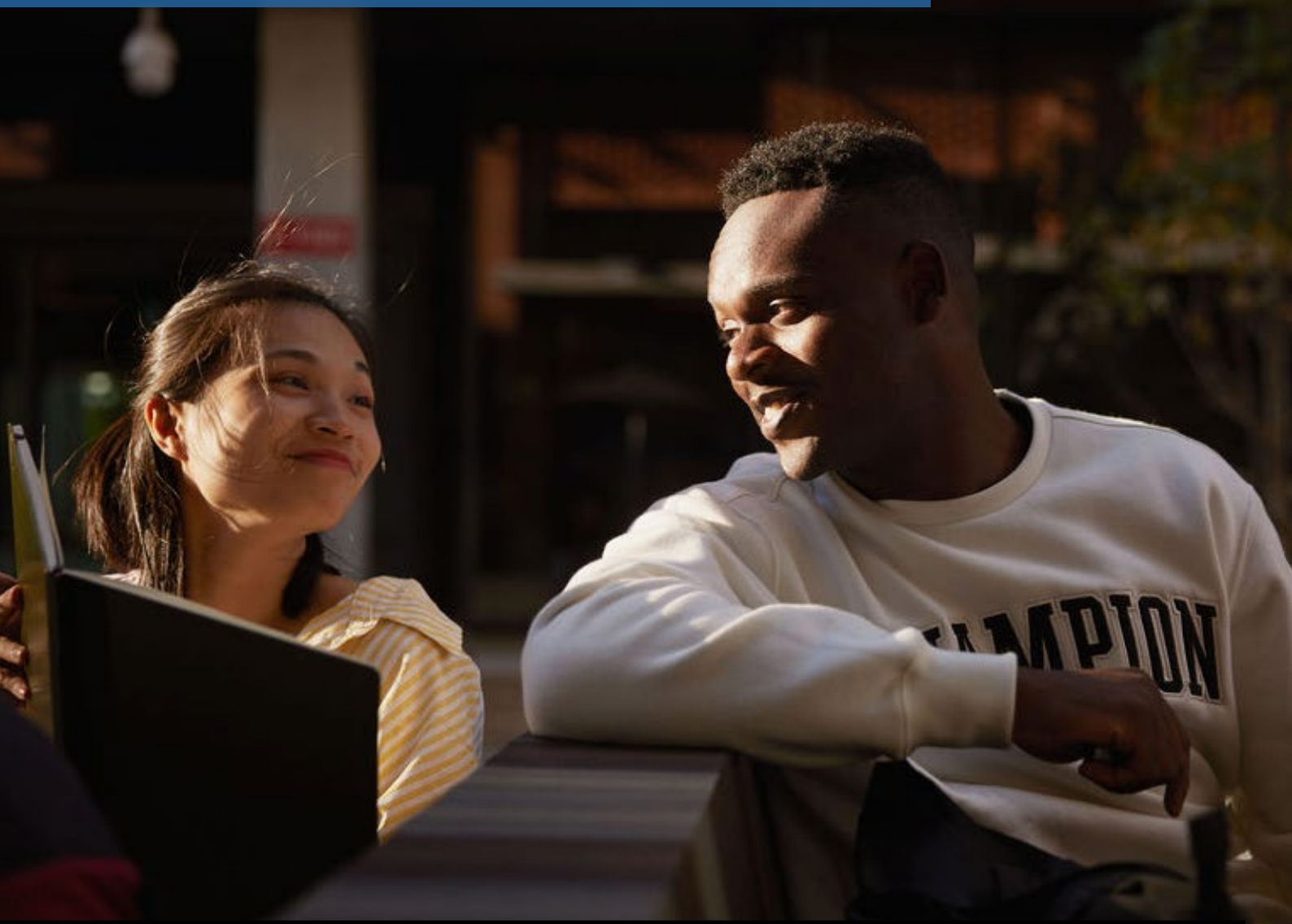
Curtin University

Inclusive Language Guide



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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge and recognise all First Nations of Australia and their continuing connection to Country and its waters, and care for Country, for over 60,000 years.

We are honoured and grateful to have the privilege to maintain campuses operating in Boorloo (Perth) and Karlkurla (Kalgoorlie) in Western Australia. We pay our respects to all Elders past and present, as Custodians and Owners of these lands. We recognise their deep knowledge and their cultural, spiritual and educational practices and we aspire to learn and teach in partnership.

We also acknowledge First Nations peoples connected to Curtin's global campuses. We are committed to working in partnership with Custodians and Owners to strengthen and embed First Nations' voices and perspectives in our decision-making, now and into the future.

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Inclusive Language at Curtin

"If you're not actively including people, chances are that you're accidentally excluding them."

— Dr. Heidi Grant, Chief Science Officer of the NeuroLeadership Institute

At Curtin, we celebrate and value our diverse global community and strive to foster an inclusive campus culture that respects individuality. Every member of the Curtin community plays a vital role in communicating with empathy, respect, and a willingness to learn, going beyond mere political correctness or avoiding offence.

Language has the power to shape our interactions and influence a person's sense of belonging. At Curtin, we recognise that language is dynamic and can either strengthen or weaken our community bonds. The Diversity Council of Australia's research highlights that frequent non-inclusive communication can have significant negative impacts.

Preferences for how terminology is used will vary across countries and within communities, and language evolves over time. What was once acceptable may become outdated or offensive. It's natural to make mistakes, but what matters is our commitment to acknowledging them, learning from them, and continuously educating ourselves.

Inclusive language is reinforced by inclusive practice. While this guide focuses on language, it also provides examples of inclusive practices. Both language and practice are evolving, so this document should be seen as a guide, not a rule book. We will review and update this guide regularly to reflect changes in language.

All staff, students and representatives of the University are expected to use inclusive language when conducting the business of the University, except where contrary to a local law or regulation in the relevant jurisdiction.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Focus on the person first

Most communities prefer focusing on the person rather than their attributes; for example, "person with disability". Recognise and treat people as more than their individual parts.

Use a strengths-based approach

Focus on what people can do and their strengths, rather than what they cannot do.

Follow the lead of the person

If talking about an individual, ask how they would like to be referred to or addressed. If talking about a group, research or consult with members of that group to determine the most inclusive way to reference them.

Context matters

People may refer to themselves or friends in certain ways, but this may not be appropriate between peers or colleagues.

Avoid assumptions

Refrain from stereotyping based on appearances or characteristics.

Relevance of personal characteristics

Mention personal characteristics only when relevant. For example, saying "female engineer" instead of "engineer" is only necessary where the context specifically requires the distinction.

Clear communication

Avoid idioms, jargon and acronyms that might exclude those without specialised knowledge or those from different cultural backgrounds.

UNDERSTANDING INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social factors such as race, age, gender, ethnicity and other aspects of identity. These factors can overlap and interact, creating unique experiences of disadvantage or discrimination. People's identities are multifaceted and complex, it is important to recognise that no one person or group fits neatly into a single category.

This guide acknowledges the multiplicity of factors that influence a person's life. While it addresses one social factor at a time, it is important to be aware that these factors do not exist in isolation but often intersect and overlap.

CONTENT ADVISORY

This guide contains historical language that has been used offensively, as well as references to sensitive topics like suicide and racism. Curtin University does not condone the use of offensive language. These items are included as examples to be avoided, with suggestions for more appropriate and inclusive alternatives.

We encourage readers to approach this document with care. If you find any language in this guide distressing, refer to the support services listed on the resource section at the end of this document.

Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Culture

Curtin recognises the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia. We are honoured and grateful to have the privilege to maintain campuses operating in Boorloo (Perth) and Karlkurla (Kalgoorlie) in Western Australia. We pay our respects to all Elders past and present, as Custodians and Owners of these lands.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are celebrated as the oldest continuing living culture on earth, with over 65,000 years of connection to Country and place. Using inclusive language in this context means showing respect for, and understanding of, the unique histories, knowledges and ways of being and doing.

With over 250 distinct cultural groups across Australia, there are over 170 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, 60 of which are spoken as the main language. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people speak traditional languages at home, where English is often an additional language. It is important to recognise that this guide cannot encompass all individuals, groups or communities.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Respectful Terminology

Use “Australian Aboriginal person” or “Torres Strait Islander person” when referring to individuals. Use “Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples” to refer to both groups collectively.

Appropriate Use of the Word “Indigenous”

While “Indigenous” is a general term, it does not distinguish between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and First Nations communities globally. “First Nations” and “First Peoples” are generic terms to indicate all peoples impacted by colonisation worldwide.

When using the term “Indigenous”, as a mark of respect a capital “I” is the accepted convention, much like the “A” would be capitalised in describing someone’s identity as “American”. The term “Indigenous Australians” is preferred.

Correct Use of the Word “Aboriginal”

“Aboriginal” refers to people of mainland Australia and many of its islands and should be used as an adjective. For example, “Sam is an Aboriginal person” rather than “Sam is Aboriginal”. Use “Aboriginal” only if referencing Aboriginal people or giving respect to Traditional Owners and Custodians. It is also not advisable to include “Torres Strait Islander” without a specific reason. For example, the phrase “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art” would be incorrect if this references Aboriginal art only.

Emerging Terminology

Terms like “First Australians”, “First Nations Australians”, and “First Peoples of Australia” (all capitalised) are becoming more common. Respect self-determined terminology preferred by the community or group you are engaging with.

Capitalisation

Capitalise words such as “Elder”, “Aunty”, “Uncle”, “Country”, “Traditional Owners”, “Custodians”, “Stolen Generations”, “Acknowledgment” and “Welcome” to show respect.

Respect for Identity

People are either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or they are not. It is not appropriate or respectful to ask if someone is “part-Aboriginal”.

Celebrating Diversity

Recognise and respect the distinct and diverse cultures of each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, community and language group. Celebrate this diversity in your interactions and language and avoid terms that have been historically used to diminish and degrade people, such as “Aborigines”, “natives”, “blacks”, “darkies” or “coloured”.

Recognising and respecting diversity also includes refraining from saying or presuming that “Indigenous Australian people all have dark skin”. Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may have fair skin.

Historical Accuracy

Use “colonisation” instead of “settlement”. For example, saying “Australia was first settled in 1788” does not reflect that Australia was not settled peacefully, so the arrival of the British should be described as an invasion, and the continuing occupation as colonisation.

Respectful Phrasing

Using possessive terms such as “our Aboriginal peoples”, “our nation’s First Peoples” or “Australia’s Indigenous Peoples” implies ownership and/or servitude, and should be avoided.

Respectful Representation

Always use the full term “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” rather than abbreviations like “ATSI”, as the full term is more respectful and representative.

Honouring Language

Respect names and words from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages by writing them in standard text without italics or quotation marks.

Diversity within Culture

There is enormous diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and communities. Each person, community and language group has distinct and diverse cultures, and recognising this diversity shows respect.

Valuing All Ages

In Western Australia, it is unlawful to discriminate based on age as outlined in the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA). At Curtin, we recognise the importance of valuing individuals of all ages and strive to create an inclusive environment for everyone.

Curtin attracts a diverse age range of students, making it unnecessary to refer to age in most contexts, particularly in job descriptions or course entry requirements. It is important to avoid assumptions about the age of Curtin's student cohort. For instance, mature age students at Curtin are defined as those aged 21 and above, and it is best practice to refer to them as "non-school leavers".

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Age References

Use the term "people" followed by an age range, such as "people aged 18-25" to provide clarity and neutrality.

Focus on Study Level

Refer to students by their level of study rather than age. For example, use terms like "first-year students", "early career applicants", "postgraduate students", or "non-school leavers".

Respectful Terms for Age Groups

Use terms like "older people" or "seniors" instead of "old people". Similarly, use "young people" or "youths" instead of "juniors".

Skills-based Job Descriptions

Emphasise skills and capabilities in job descriptions rather than the number of years of experience. For example, use "proven experience required" or "experienced team/person". Avoid specifying age in job requirements unless legally required.

Avoiding Age Stereotypes

Use inclusive language that avoids age-based assumptions. Refrain from phrases such as "end of career" or "ready to retire" and avoid implying that specific age groups will be naturally drawn to specific jobs, such as "young people are more likely to be into technology".

Promoting Inclusivity for People with Disability

Disability is any physical, sensory, neurological, intellectual, psychiatric, medical condition or learning impairment which, in interaction with various social barriers, may hinder a person's independent and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disability may be invisible and is not defined by others' perceptions. In Australia, it is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of disability as outlined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth).

There are approximately 4.4 million Australians with disability, and 15% of people globally living with disability. In Australia, person-first terminology is widely accepted, which means referring to the person first and their disability/impairment second – for example, "he has schizophrenia" or "she lives with a disability". Some individuals and communities may prefer identity-first language, such as Autistic people or the Deaf community, and this preference should be respected by using capital letters. Follow the lead of the person or group in using identity-first language, otherwise, use person-first language. Best practice is to use person-first language until you know the terminology someone uses for themselves.

Neurological differences are not always a disability. Neurodiversity refers to the idea that neurological differences, such as autism and ADHD, sit within the spectrum of human variation. People with neurodiversity are referred to as being neurodivergent, with "neurotypical" used to describe non-neurodivergent individuals. While the term "neurodiversity" was initially used for people on the autism spectrum, it now also includes conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, and ADHD.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Respectful Group References

Use "people with disability" or "people without disability" when referring to multiple individuals, acknowledging their personhood first.

Focusing on Accessibility

Emphasise the environment rather than the disability by using terms such as "accessible parking", "accessibility action plan", or "uses a wheelchair for mobility".

Empowering Terms

Use terms that highlight ability and mobility and avoid restrictive terms like "bed-bound" or "wheelchair-bound".

Direct Communication

Engage directly with the person with a disability, addressing them rather than their support worker or interpreter.

Respecting Autonomy

Always ask if someone wants assistance, and if they agree, inquire how best to assist them.

Neutral Language

Use neutral terms instead of emotion-based language, avoiding words like "sufferer" or "victim of a disease".

Descriptive Language

Describe someone accurately by saying, for example, "she has paraplegia" instead of defining them by their condition, such as "she is paraplegic". With support roles, refer to someone aiding a person with disability as a "support worker" or "carer".

Clear Communication

Use straightforward language, avoiding euphemisms like "special needs" or "differently abled", which can be patronising.

Respecting Privacy

Respect the privacy of individuals by not asking if or how someone is disabled. Recognise that not all disabilities are visible, but this does not mean it's something to be "found out".

Understanding Diverse Sex, Sexuality and Gender

Statistics from the Australian Human Rights Commission show that 11% of Australians are of Diverse Sex, Sexuality or Gender (DSSG).

Sex, sexuality, gender and gender expression are all separate and distinct characteristics that may sometimes align but are not inherently connected.

Common acronyms used to refer to this community are LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual or aromantic, and others) and SOGIESC (sexual orientation, gender identity, expression and sex characteristics).

Curtin prefers to use DSSG or “queer community”. Inclusive language for people of DSSG involves respecting individuals’ names, titles, gender identities and pronouns, and avoiding making assumptions based on these characteristics.

Understanding the diverse identities within our community creates a more inclusive and respectful environment for everyone at Curtin.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Respecting Privacy

Honour individuals' privacy by not asking about their sexual orientation, as it is typically not relevant to work or study situations.

Inclusive Terms for Relationships

Use inclusive terms like "partner" or "spouse" instead of "boyfriend", "girlfriend", "wife", or "husband", ensuring inclusivity for non-binary and gender-diverse individuals.

Avoiding Stereotyping

Foster an inclusive environment by avoiding stereotypes based on sexuality. For example, refrain from statements like "gay men love theatre" or "bisexuals are just on the fence".

Correct Terminology

Use accurate terms such as "sexual orientation" instead of "sexual preference" or "lifestyle choice", which are outdated terms that imply that sexuality is a choice.

PRONOUNS AND TITLES

Gender-Neutral Pronouns

Use "they/them/their" to refer to singular subjects when referring to someone whose pronouns you don't know. This is grammatically correct and respectful.

Inclusive Titles

Offer gender-neutral title options such as "Mx" (usually pronounced as "Mix"), in addition to "Ms", "Mrs", and "Mr".

Self-described Pronouns

Respect that some individuals may choose to withhold their pronouns for safety reasons or may feel uncomfortable using pronouns others expect them to use.

Consistent Language

Consistently use someone's pronouns once they have been shared with you. If you use incorrect pronouns or titles, apologise briefly and correct yourself.

DIVERSE GENDER

Breaking the Binary

Recognise and respect that some people identify outside the traditional binary of man or woman, and some may identify as multiple genders.

Gender Affirmation

Understand that gender affirmation is a continuous process that can involve social, medical, physical, and legal aspects. Respect individual choices regarding their transition and avoid asking for details.

Avoid Assumptions

Never assume someone's gender identity based on their name, appearance, or voice.

Preferred Names

Always use someone's preferred name if it differs from their legal name and do not use their previous name (this is known as deadnaming).

DIVERSE SEX

Beyond the Binary

Acknowledge that there are more than two sexes and that some individuals may have an intersex variation.

Standards for Forms

Refer to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Standard for Sex, Gender, and Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables when creating forms that ask for participants' sex.

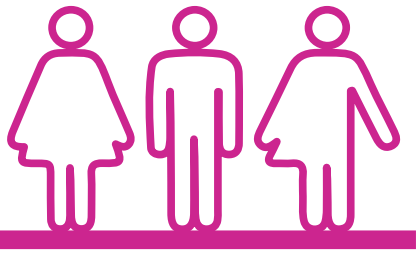
Recognise Intersex Presence

Understand that intersex individuals are part of the population, with an estimated 1.7% of Australians being intersex.

Respect Privacy

Respect individuals' privacy by not asking inappropriate questions about their physical, genetic, or hormonal biology in work or study situations. It is usually irrelevant and is deeply personal.

Challenging Gendered Language and Stereotypes



It is unlawful to discriminate based on sex and gender, as outlined in the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA) and Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth). Gender-based stereotypes can be harmful, creating an unwelcoming and potentially unsafe environment at Curtin. These stereotypes can limit opportunities and make individuals feel excluded. Addressing exclusive language works in tandem with addressing the gender gaps in many industries.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Consistency in Titles and References

Ensure consistency in how individuals are referred to. If addressing someone by their name, title, or profession, apply the same approach to everyone.

Gender-Neutral Greetings

Use gender-neutral language when addressing groups. For example, use greetings like “Hi folks” or “Welcome everyone” instead of “Ladies and gentlemen”. Avoid using “guys” to refer to multiple people; opt for “team”, “folks”, or “you all”.

Inclusive Family Terms

Use terms like “parents” or “guardians” instead of “mother and father” to be inclusive of non-binary individuals.

Plural Nouns

Use plural nouns when available to eliminate the need to refer to gender. For example, use “students” or “people”.

Default Pronouns

Use “they/them” as the default pronouns when referring to people generally, instead of “he/him” or “she/her”.

Avoiding Gender Stereotypes

Use job titles and roles that do not reinforce gender stereotypes. For example, use “flight attendant” instead of “air hostess”, “staff” instead of “office girls”, or “police officer” instead of “policeman”.

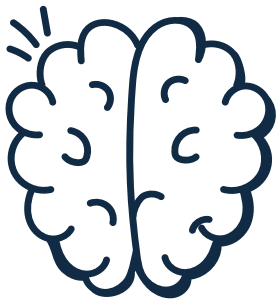
Gender-Neutral Terms

Use gender-neutral terms where possible. For example, use “mail worker”, “work hours”, or “humanity” instead of “mailman”, “man-hours”, or “mankind”.

Respectful Language

Use language that respects all genders. Avoid phrases that reinforce harmful stereotypes, such as “throw like a girl” or “men don’t cry”’.

Supporting Mental Health through Language



More than 2 in 5 Australians will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime, and anyone can be affected.

"Mental health problem/concern" is the most appropriate term to use, instead of "mental illness", which is a broad term, or "psychosocial disability", which is specific to some disabilities only.

Only discuss someone's mental health or behaviours with others if that person is at risk of harm to themselves or others, and only with a professional support person.

Mental health has significant intersections with other factors discussed in this document, as repeated exposure to exclusive language can harm mental health.

A person's age, gender or culture can influence how they approach mental health and how they may interact with others about it.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Appropriate Terminology

Use terms like "lived experience of a mental health problem" to acknowledge that the condition may or may not be permanent. Always use respectful language and avoid terms like "mental", "schizo", or "psycho".

Suicide Terminology

Use sensitive and accurate terminology such as "died by suicide", "suicided", "non-fatal attempt at suicide", or "attempt to end their life". Avoid using "committed suicide" to prevent stigma and connotations of criminality.

Contextual Appropriateness

Only discuss suicide within appropriate mental health contexts. Avoid casual or inappropriate references, such as "that was so awkward I might kill myself" or "political suicide".

Respectful Language

Use respectful language when discussing mental health issues. Avoid making jokes or satirical comments about mental health, such as "I was so depressed" or "you are making me feel psycho".

Confidentiality

Respect confidentiality by not discussing someone's mental health casually or using it as a conversational topic.

Cultural Sensitivity

Recognise and respect that a person's age, gender, or culture can influence their approach to mental health and how they interact with others about it.

If you or someone you know need crisis support, please get in touch with Lifeline Australia at 13 11 14 or chat to them online.

If outside of Australia, please contact your local crisis support organisation.

For non-urgent support, please use the resource section at the end of this document.

Recognising Race, Ethnicity and Culture

Curtin is a multicultural organisation with campuses across five countries. We value diversity and promote equity and inclusion.

It is estimated that during 2022-23, 1 in 5 people living in Australia were a target of racial discrimination. Over 70% of students experience racism, and 33% of people experience racism at work (All Together Now). Racist acts are never acceptable and are opposed to Curtin policies. They may also breach Australian legislation (Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)).

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Appropriate Terms

Use the term “underrepresented groups” instead of “minorities” to avoid implying inferiority and to promote inclusion.

Specific References

Be specific when referring to countries or cultures. For example, use “China” instead of “Asia” or “person from Saudi Arabia” instead of “Middle Eastern”. This acknowledges the significant differences between cultures and countries.

International Students

Refer to students who are not citizens of Australia or New Zealand as “international students”. Avoid assuming someone is an international student based on their appearance.

Avoiding Assumptions

Refrain from assuming someone’s national origin based on their appearance. Recognise that people can have multiple racial and ethnic identities that are not evident from their appearance.

Immigration Status

Avoid referring to someone’s immigration status or history unless it is directly relevant to the context.

Avoid Singling Out

Refrain from targeting or calling on students and employees to share their lived experiences as examples, as this can place an unnecessary burden on them.

Respecting Religion and Belief

Australia is a party to international human rights treaties stipulating freedom of religion and belief. In Australia, 61% of people identify as holding religious or spiritual beliefs. Curtin is a secular organisation which upholds protection for people's religion or belief. These protections also include non-belief or having no religious or spiritual affiliation.

"Religion", "spirituality" or "belief" is the most inclusive way to refer to this topic, as it encompasses more than organised faith. Many people choose not to identify with an organised religion but still have significant beliefs and spiritual practices. Those within an organised religious group may vary significantly in their practice and belief. For example, Islamic religious dress has significant cultural variations internationally and may not signify religious practice but instead cultural tradition or preference.

Assumptions about religion or belief should be avoided and reflected on. If an individual feels comfortable sharing their religion or belief, be mindful that this can be a very personal aspect of their life and is up to them how much information they share.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Descriptive Practice Terms

Use "people who practice..." when referring to individuals with a religion. For example, say "people who practice Islam" rather than "Islamic people".

Recognising the Difference Between Religion and Ethnicity

Recognise that religion can overlap with ethnicity but avoid assuming someone's religion based on their ethnicity or vice versa.

Holiday Inclusivity

Be inclusive in acknowledging various religious holidays. Be mindful that people may take time off for different holidays and use neutral greetings like "Happy Break" or "Happy Holidays".

Avoiding Stereotypes

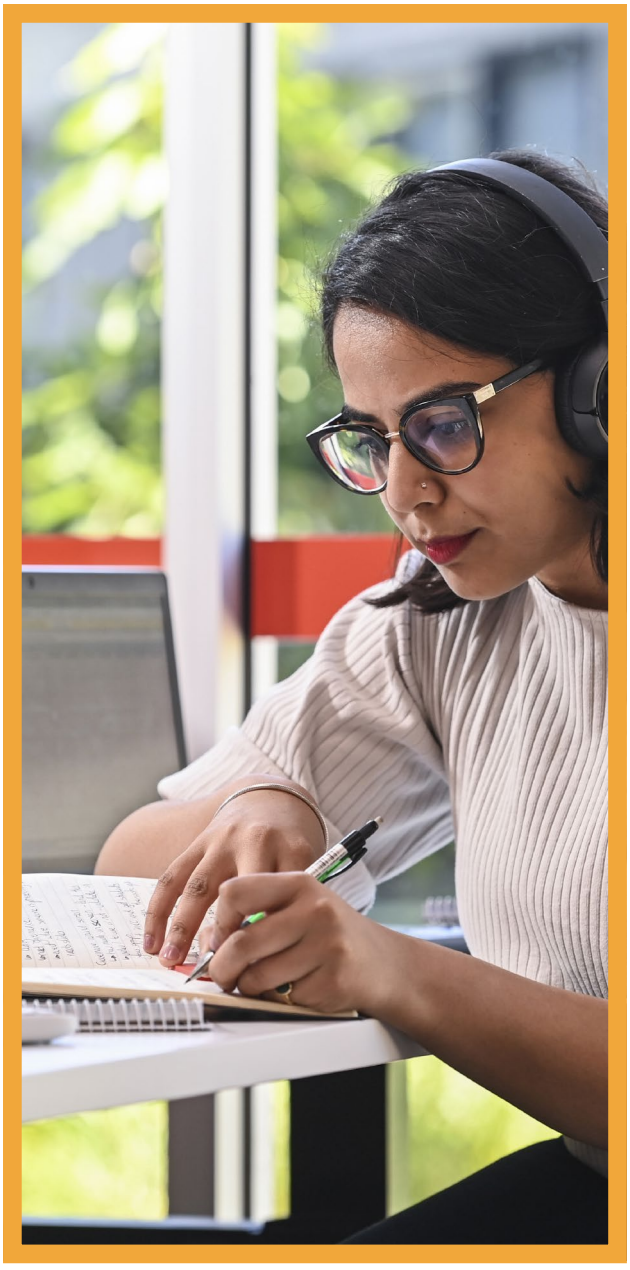
Use accurate and respectful terms for religious practices and attire. For example, avoid using "Hijab" to describe various forms of headscarves and facial coverings worn by both men and women.

Being Mindful of Religious Requirements

Be aware of and respect diverse religious requirements, including apparel and conduct. Engage in respectful discussions to balance health and safety regulations with religious practices. For instance, be considerate of the spiritual significance of facial hair, jewellery, or ceremonial items, such as a Sikh Kirpan, Kara, Kangan, or Kada.

Recognising Socioeconomic Diversity

Socioeconomic status (SES) encompasses not only income and wealth but also education completed, occupational prestige, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class. SES is traditionally used as a predictor of psychological and physical outcomes, as it reflects the opportunities available to individuals.



INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE LOOKS LIKE:

Preferred Terminology

Use “SES” (socioeconomic status) instead of terms like “class” to avoid language that can lead to classism and an “us versus them” mentality.

Respectful Descriptions

Use inclusive terms such as “people facing barriers”, “first in the family to attend university”, “low-income or no-income people”, or “people whose income is below the poverty line”. Avoid language that implies a hierarchy or deficit.

Avoiding Stereotypes

Refrain from making assumptions about someone’s SES based on their location, country, or suburb. Avoid perpetuating harmful biases with stereotypes about SES.

Positive Framing

Focus on the strengths and achievements of individuals without framing their SES as an obstacle. For example, highlight their accomplishments without using without using deficit language like “they did well despite their SES”.

Using Nonviolent Language

The language we use can minimise or normalise violent acts in society. The terms listed below are commonly used in Australia and may be challenging to change as part of adopting inclusive language. However, the alternatives provided below allow for more expressive and inclusive responses.

It is important to note that the exclusive language in this section primarily consists of cultural idioms, which may translate poorly for people who use English as an additional language.

EXCLUSIVE LANGUAGE MAY BE:	INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE ALTERNATIVES:
Leading the charge/the fight against xxx/ tackle xxx	The campaign against xxx, address xxx
Smashed it/killed it/slayed it	You did it/that was so impressive
That really bombed	That didn't go as planned
That was torture	I'm livid/frustrated/appalled
I almost died	I was in shock
That killed me	I was so angry/furious/beside myself

Planning Inclusive Events

Inclusive language also extends to events and planned activities on campus. Being inclusive in this area involves creating a safe space for presenters, facilitators and attendees. Below is a starter checklist you can use to ensure your event is as inclusive as possible – we encourage you to seek advice or research further for your specific event. Remember that inclusivity starts before the event, with communications to attendees and presenters. Adequate planning and check-ins and allowing for feedback from presenters and attendees are crucial aspects of hosting an inclusive event.

When planning events, please be mindful of significant holy days and festivals. It can be appropriate to celebrate religious or cultural festivals on campus as many have been adopted as cultural traditions; for example, Christmas, Chinese New Year and Holi. These may be celebrated by those who do not practise that faith or whose belief systems are from a different religion. Some may disclose their involvement in these events, while others prefer to keep this private.

Consideration should be made around planning events or work expectations during significant holy days. For example, during Ramadan, individuals may be fasting and unable to participate in a luncheon or morning tea. The multifaith officer collates a list of all religious and holy days each year, for more information please contact the Multi Faith team at multifaith@curtin.edu.au.

THE VENUE

When choosing a venue or facility, discuss accessibility and inclusion with the relevant venue hire or bookings team. At Curtin, the Room Bookings team can provide further information and advice via roombookings@curtin.edu.au.

Ensure the venue is physically accessible for guests and speakers:

- Are there lifts or ramps?
- Are tables, props and equipment accessible?
- Is there adequate signage and use of tactile ground surface indicators?
- Are access areas wide enough, are obstacles absent and are automatic doors functioning?
- Are all-gender and accessible toilets available?

If catering, consider inclusive food options. Several religions do not approve of the consumption of alcohol or attending venues that serve alcohol. Avoid venues with overt branding, posters or décor related to alcohol consumption, such as wineries, breweries, or pubs. Consider religious and cultural dietary needs such as Halal, Kosher, Jain, Hindu, or vegetarian options. The Room Bookings team can suggest a list of Curtin-approved caterers who can assist with a wider range of dietary requirements.

Additional Resources

Curtin Room Bookings

Curtin Sustainable Events Guide

THE EVENT

- Ensure diversity among presenters or facilitators.
- Confirm speakers' preferred names, titles, pronouns, and pronunciation for introductions.
- For larger events, use micorphones and speakers.
- Include captions on all videos and request an AUSLAN interpreter if needed.
- Ensure the timing and location of the event are accessible to all. Consider different time zones and other responsibilities people may have.
- Use inclusive greetings for the welcome, such as "Good morning, everyone" or "Welcome, distinguished guests".
- Include a Welcome to Country for external or high-profile formal events. Consult the Cultural Capability Team or the Centre for Aboriginal Studies for assistance.
- People speaking after the Elder or Senior Knowledge Holder should acknowledge and thank them for the Welcome to Country.
- Conduct an Acknowledgement of Country, recognising the specific Country you are on and the Elders.
- Include space for pronouns on name tags.
- Provide adequate breaks for longer events and ensure there are chairs available for people to use freely.

MARKETING MATERIALS

- Review language in marketing materials to ensure it is as inclusive as possible.
- Ensure promotional images represent the diversity of the Curtin community.
- Use accessible language.
- Provide alternative formats of materials, such as large print copies or text-to-speech options.
- Include ways to indicate individual accessibility requirements in the registration form.

Addressing Exclusive Language Constructively

Research shows that people call out exclusive language less than half the time. However, people using exclusive language are more likely to change their behaviour and not repeat their actions when confronted. While it can be difficult to call out certain people, there are ways to do this without being confrontational.

START WITH YOURSELF

Pay attention to your everyday language and the potential biases you bring to each situation. Remember that we all make mistakes, and sharing your experiences of changed behaviour and learnings can help others.

DIRECT APPROACH

Consider this method when one-on-one with someone using exclusive language. Keep it simple, focus on the behaviour, not the person and avoid using labels like racist or sexist.

INDIRECT APPROACH

If you don't feel comfortable approaching the person directly, you can address the situation indirectly in the moment.

Examples of an indirect approach may include: "that term can be hurtful", "that was rude", or "let's keep it professional".

DISTRACTION

This method involves diverting attention away from the situation. It can be playful or serious, depending on the context and your relationship with the individuals involved. For example, you might change the subject or introduce a new topic to shift the focus.

ENGAGING PROTOCOLS

Enlist others' help if needed. For staff, this may include talking to your line manager and People and Culture. For students, examples include accessing Student Wellbeing, Student Assist, or contacting the Student Guild. Everyone can contact Safer Communities or, if necessary, the police.

FURTHER RESOURCES

All Together Now
alltogethernow.org.au/racism/racism-in-australia/
info@alltogethernow.org.au

ALLY Program
curtin.edu.au/students/personal-support/lgbtqia/ally-program
LGBTIQ-Training@curtin.edu.au

Centre for Aboriginal Studies
karda.curtin.edu.au
C_Enquiries@curtin.edu.au

Counselling (Staff - EAP Assure)
staffportal.curtin.edu.au/inclusion-and-wellbeing/wellbeing/-i-need-support
1800 808 374 (book an appointment direct with Assure)

Cultural Capability Team
staffportal.curtin.edu.au/employment/our-culture/reconciliation/team
iccf@curtin.edu.au

Diversity Council of Australia's Words at Work
dca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/dca_wordsatwork_overall_guide.pdf

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at Curtin
staffportal.curtin.edu.au/inclusion-and-wellbeing/diversity-inclusion-and-belonging/
curtin.edu.au/about/values-vision-strategy/diversity-equity

Disability and Accessibility Support
curtin.edu.au/students/personal-support/disability
access.ability@curtin.edu.au

Employee Wellbeing at Curtin
staffportal.curtin.edu.au/inclusion-and-wellbeing/wellbeing
employee.wellbeing@curtin.edu.au

Health Services
staffportal.curtin.edu.au/wellbeing/health-services
healthservices@curtin.edu.au

International Human Rights
https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/freedom-thought-conscience-and-religion-or-belief

Multi-faith Team
curtin.edu.au/students/personal-support/faith
multifaith@curtin.edu.au

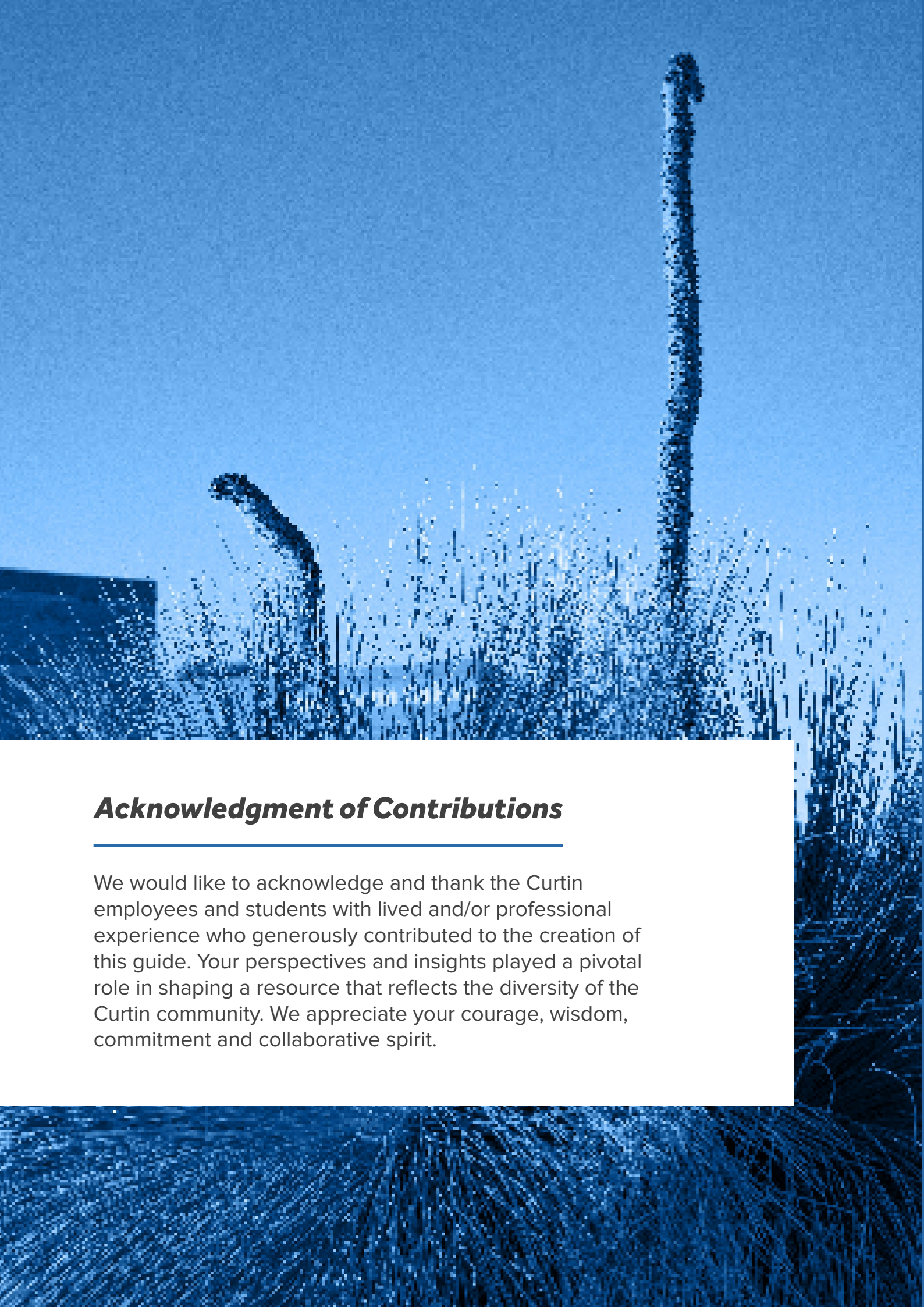
Psychological and Counselling Services (Students)
curtin.edu.au/students/personal-support/counselling-wellbeing/counselling
(08) 9266 7850

Safer Community Team
properties.curtin.edu.au/campus-safety/help-anytime
(08) 9266 4444

Curtin Student Guild
guild.curtin.edu.au
hello@guild.curtin.edu.au

Student Wellbeing Advisory Service
curtin.edu.au/students/personal-support/counselling-wellbeing/wellbeing
studentwellbeing@curtin.edu.au

For more information or to provide feedback on this guide please contact the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging team at staffdiversity@curtin.edu.au



Acknowledgment of Contributions

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