Australian National University

Indigenous Strategy Special Committee (ISSC)

Establishment

Established on 19 February 2026, as a Special Committee under the University Executive (UE) Committee, Terms of Reference clauses 31-33, as below.

31. The UE may also establish Special Committees to undertake specific, time-limited tasks or projects.

32. Special Committees are task-and-finish in nature and are chaired by a member of the University Executive. Examples include committees formed for development of new budget model, strategy co-design and institutional review.

33. The University Executive may establish no more than five Special Committees at any given time.

Approved by the Interim Vice-Chancellor and President

Effective from: 19 February 2026

Active until: 19 February 2027

ISSC Terms of Reference

Objective

1. The Committee is established as a task-and-finish body to provide focused, strategic advice to inform the University's approach to all matters relating to Indigenous peoples, cultures, knowledge, and engagement.
2. The purpose of the Committee is to inform and shape ANU strategic direction in relation to Indigenous matters across the whole of the University, and to play a central role in the development of the University's next strategic plan 2026-2030.
3. The Committee provides coordinated, evidence-based and culturally informed advice to the University Executive to ensure that:
    - 3.1. Indigenous matters are addressed coherently, consistently and ambitiously.
    - 3.2. First Nations perspectives and priorities are embedded in University strategy.
    - 3.3. The University's commitments translate into measurable outcomes and sustained institutional change.

Scope

4. The Committee's scope includes, but is not limited to, advising on Indigenous matters relating to the following.
    - Education and curriculum.
    - Research, innovation and Indigenous knowledges.
    - Workforce, leadership and capability.
    - Student experience and success.

- Cultural safety and institutional culture.
- Partnerships, engagement and reputation.
- Policy, governance and accountability frameworks.

5. The Committee operates at a strategic and institutional level, not at the level of day-to-day operations.

Functions and responsibilities

6. The Committee will advise the University Executive on the following matters:
   6.1. The development, refresh and implementation of ANU's Indigenous Strategy and related strategic commitments and ensure alignment between Indigenous priorities and the University's overall strategy, plans and performance frameworks.
   6.2. The gaps, duplication, and inconsistencies in Indigenous-related initiatives, policies and plans across Colleges and portfolios.
   6.3. The mechanisms to strengthen coordination, alignment and accountability across the University.
7. The Committee will advise on culturally appropriate engagement and decision-making approaches and ensure First Nations perspectives are meaningfully incorporated into strategic advice and support Indigenous self-determination within the University's strategic settings.
8. The Committee will identify strategic, cultural, regulatory and reputational risks associated with Indigenous matters and advise the UE on mitigation strategies and assurance mechanisms.
9. The Committee will provide advice on success measures, KPIs and reporting approaches for Indigenous strategy and recommend appropriate governance and reporting pathways following completion of the Committee's mandate.

Governance principles

10. All University Executive Standing and Special Committees operate in accordance with the ANU principles of good governance, including the following.
    - Integrity and ethical conduct.
    - Objectivity and evidence-based decision-making.
    - Accountability and transparency.
    - Respect, inclusion and care.
    - Compliance with University legislation, policy and regulatory obligations.

Authority

11. The Committee is advisory in nature. The Committee does not exercise executive authority or delegated decision-making powers unless explicitly authorised by the Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the University's delegation framework.
12. Advice and recommendations of the Committee are provided to the University Executive for consideration.

Reporting

13. The Committee reports to the University Executive.
14. Reports will clearly articulate advice and recommendations, risks and implications, and matters requiring UE consideration or endorsement.
15. Where appropriate, advice may be escalated to Council or Academic Board through the Interim Vice-Chancellor.

Membership

16. The Committee is co-chaired by Professor Peter Yu and Professor Steven Roberts, as appointed by the Interim Vice-Chancellor.
17. Membership will include:
    17.1. University Executive members, as appropriate
    17.2. senior staff with relevant expertise
    17.3. other members, including Indigenous staff or advisors, as determined by the Co-Chairs.
    17.4. Co-Chairs may invite members who are external to ANU.

18. Membership will be constituted to ensure appropriate First Nations representation, diversity of perspectives and management of conflicts of interest.
19. The Committee will seek input and participation from other ANU staff members, relevant to its agenda and role.
20. Quorum to hold meetings and decision making will consist of at least fifty per cent of the members (rounded up to the nearest whole number) and at least one of the Co-Chairs.

Meetings and procedures

21. The Committee will meet as required to fulfil its purpose, typically monthly or fortnightly.
22. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic means.
23. Papers will be prepared in accordance with University standards and focus on strategic advice and recommendations.
24. The Secretariat will prepare and maintain a formal record of each meeting. Actions will be tracked and reported to the subsequent meeting, until completion.
25. The Committee will advise on the regular communication of outcomes to the broader University community to promote transparency and alignment across the University.
26. Secretariat support will be provided by the First Nations Portfolio as determined by the Co-Chairs.

Conflicts of interest

27. Members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
28. Conflicts and management actions will be appropriately recorded.

Duration and review

29. The Committee is established for an initial period of up to 12 months.
30. Any extension must be endorsed by the University Executive.
31. The University Executive will disband the Special Committee once its purpose has been fulfilled and ongoing governance arrangements are established.