# Individual cultural safety reflection tool

## Purpose of the tool

The Individual Cultural Safety Reflection (CSR) Tool has been developed to support non-Indigenous staff to assist in ongoing reflective practice and stimulate internal discussions across the organisation to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, histories, and cultures.

The CSR tool was developed by People and Culture in collaboration with our Aboriginal Services Team and the First Nations Staff Network. The CSR tool is integrated into VLA & Me to ensure that cultural safety is everyone’s responsibility. Please note this tool will not be linked to an individual’s performance outcomes or eligibility for progression pay.

## Getting started

* Familiarise yourself with our [Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)](https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/sites/www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/files/vla-reconciliation-action-plan-july-2019-2021.pdf#:~:text=VLA%20established%20its%20first%20Reconciliation%20Action%20Plan%20%28RAP%29,of%20RAPs%3A%20Reflect%2C%20Innovate%2C%20Stretch%20and%20Elevate.%20) and [Cultural Learning Strategy](https://www.vla.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-organisation/how-we-are-improving-our-services/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-cultural-learning-strategy), including the cultural safety continuum and multi-tiered approach to learning
* Set aside at least 30-60 minutes so you can engage with the tool in a meaningful way
* This tool is not intended to be a test, it is a tool for continuous self-reflection
* You do not need to share your completed tool with anyone unless you choose to do so

## Who should complete this tool?

VLA recognises the importance of personal agency and provide all staff, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, with the option to opt-out of this activity. We strongly encourage all non-Indigenous staff to participate in this activity to contribute to reconciliation at VLA, however, we acknowledge that there may be various reasons why staff choose not to participate.

Please speak to your manager if you’d like to opt-out of this activity. While strongly encouraged, you may choose not to disclose to your manager why you’ve made the decision to opt-out.

## How to use this tool

* Read through the statements for the area that relates to your role (i.e., individual, client-first, managers, and senior leadership)
* Write examples in the box to demonstrate examples of the work you have done and how you will work on improving this
* Share a summary of your reflections and learnings from the tool with your manager/supervisor in your VLA and Me discussions
* It is important to respect each other’s feedback and ideas and to engage in active listening and safe sharing
* Use the outcomes from the reflection tool to develop an [action plan](#_Individual_Cultural_Safety) focused on your cultural learning needs for the year ahead
* Document cultural learning actions in the *My Development Objectives* section in the VLA and Me online system

We are open to continuous improvements of the CSR tool, so if you have any feedback or require support and guidance in using the tool, please reach out in the first instance to the [Learning and Organisational Development team](mailto:LandOD@vla.vic.gov.au).

## Individual Cultural Safety Reflection Tool

Cultural safety is an ongoing learning process. It is important to acknowledge some of our personal and collective challenges in reaching cultural safety competence. These acknowledgements are an integral part of the overall learning and growth process.

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Reviewed on:** Click or tap to enter a date.

### Individual (all staff regardless of role, function, or level)

| **Reflection statement** | **Reflection response**  *(i.e., How am I demonstrating this?)* |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. I am aware that there is great diversity of cultures, languages, kinship, beliefs, customs, and ways of life among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | *Example:* *I completed the ‘Aboriginal culture: Other ways of knowing’ e-learn module. It made me aware that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not one homogenous group, they are a diverse group with different languages, beliefs, and customs.* | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am aware of the assumptions I may hold about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I understand the importance of an Acknowledgement of Country and I include it at the beginning of all events and meetings | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am aware of the importance of Connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how connection to land, sea and water is instrumental in health and wellbeing | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am aware of the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how the impacts of colonisation have produced intergenerational trauma and ongoing disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I role model culturally safe and responsive behaviours by addressing stereotyping or judgements with others if and when they arise in communication and practice | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I participate in VLA and/or local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and celebrations, such as NAIDOC Week, the commemoration of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations and National Reconciliation Week | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am inclusive of First Nations staff and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors in the design and delivery of initiatives, programs and policies and I follow the appropriate process to do this | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I recognise and support the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership within VLA | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am committed to continuous learning and my actions ensure I am working towards cultural safety | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |

### Client-first (all staff who work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities)

| **Reflection statement** | **Reflection response**  *(ie How am I demonstrating this?)* | **Individual reflection** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. I provide a culturally safe and welcoming space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I understand the issues influencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I always comply with VLA’s requirements to ask all clients about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and have gained techniques to enquire about identity in a culturally sensitive manner | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I have established meaningful relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I have knowledge of the cultural protocols and practices of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community I work within | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |

### Managers and Senior leaders (all staff who have people leader responsibilities)

| **Reflection statement** | **Reflection response**  *(ie How am I demonstrating this?)* | **Individual reflection** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. I provide information to my team members about cultural protocols and encourage staff to attend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I am aware and sensitive of the caring responsibilities and cultural and/or community obligations that First Nations staff members have outside of the workplace | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I encourage and lead my team to build relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I challenge and question work practices that are not inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their culture, and communities | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I include discussions about diversity, inclusion, and cultural safety in my team members VLA & Me discussions | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. When developing and/or recruiting positions I consider requirements of the role and how employing First Nations staff can assist in creating a supportive environment and enhance service delivery access and effectiveness | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |
| 1. I engage in culturally safe practices when interviewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates (i.e., interview space is welcoming and safe, First Nations staff member on the panel) | Click or tap here to enter text. | I need to work on this  I am working on this  I am confident about this and will continually work to strengthen this |

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## My Cultural Safety Action Plan

Spend some time reflecting on the four steps of the cultural safety continuum:

1. **Cultural awareness** is the knowledge that cultural differences exist. It involves building awareness about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and becoming aware of our own cultural values, beliefs, and perceptions and how this differs
2. **Cultural sensitivity** involves being sensitive to these cultural differences. It involves a set of skills that allows us to learn and understand people whose cultural background is different to our own without making judgements
3. **Cultural competency** is a set of behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together to allow people to work effectively in cross-cultural situations
4. **Cultural safety** delivers outcomes where all people are treated in a culturally respectful manner.

Take some time to look at the patterns of your responses to these reflections. Consider what they mean and complete the following questions.

**Where do I think I am on the cultural safety continuum?** (Cultural safety is an ongoing journey and a person’s place on the continuum can shift back and forth depending on context) Click or tap here to enter text.

**What am I doing well?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**How can I build on my strengths?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**What can I improve?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**What steps will I take to strengthen my skills and by when?** (Have a look at the informal and formal cultural learning activities in tier 1 and tier 2 of our Cultural Learning Strategy) Click or tap here to enter text.

**What support and information do I need to continue building cultural safety?** Click or tap here to enter text.

[Note]