



## *Statement on anti-racism*

February 2021

The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) is located on Whadjuk Noongar Country and we acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

WAAPA at Edith Cowan University has chosen to publish this statement committing to Anti-Racism as a first step in dismantling the systems that discriminate against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Black peoples and People of Colour.

We reflect on the importance of our role, at the start of a practitioner's journey in training, in setting the standard for the behaviours and conduct expected in industry. We accept the important leadership role we can play in empowering young practitioners and that we must lead by example.

We apologise to those who may have endured racism, discrimination and marginalisation at any level on their journey with us in the past, and we make this public commitment to take immediate, overdue action to tackle racism within the performing arts industry including at WAAPA, by taking an Anti-Racism approach. This approach places the onus on everyone to speak out against racism and discrimination and to become informed about the current issues.

We understand that excellence cannot be achieved without equity and that the arts have an important role to play in provoking thought and action in ways that lead to a better society.

Therefore, we commit to:

- Meaningful engagement with Noongar people who are the traditional owners of the land upon which WAAPA at ECU stands.
- Ensuring that WAAPA recruits and retains more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Black peoples and People of Colour as students and staff.
- Creating a more inclusive learning and professional environment that recognises the intersectional nature of privilege within the performing arts industry.
- Developing equitable pathways and initiatives that recognise the structural barriers many under-represented students face in seeking a high-quality performing arts education.
- Reforming WAAPA's culture through professional development and institutional change, including within the curriculum to ensure that WAAPA is an inclusive space and reflects this in the way we perform, teach, research and lead.
- Shifting towards a culture that prioritises student and staff health and wellbeing to manage competitiveness and workloads.
- Clarified student and staff boundaries that highlight the importance of specialist support in addressing mental health concerns and discrimination.
- Working collaboratively with the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous) and the WAAPA Executive to ensure accountability on our commitments.

Encouraged by our students, our staff, our alumni and our creative partners, we are working towards a more inclusive WAAPA, as part of a more equitable performing arts industry, both here in Australia and internationally.

Issued by  
The WAAPA Executive