

OCHRE Opportunity Hub Guidelines

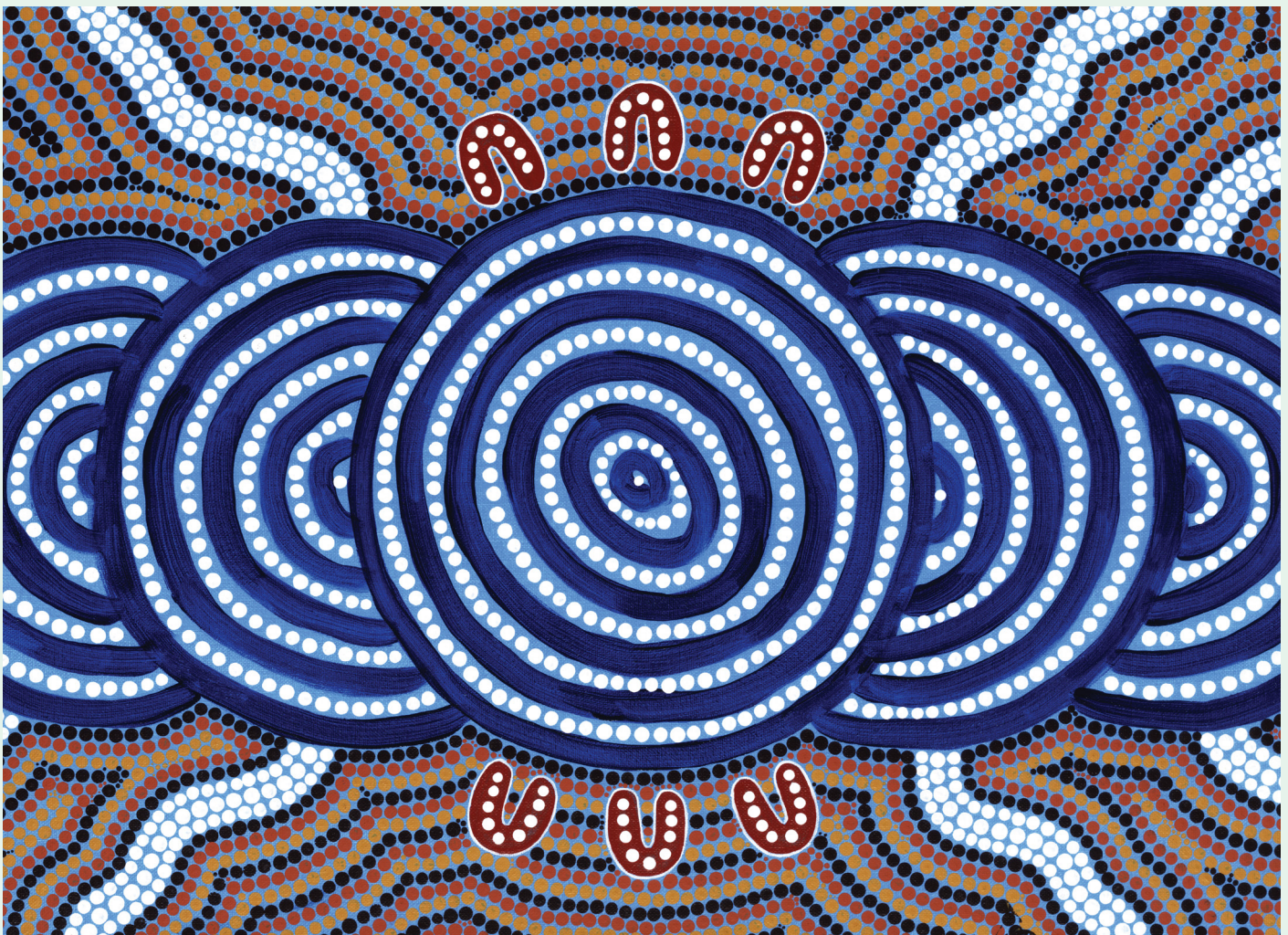


Skills & Workforce Programs

NSW Department of Education

Artwork by Craig Layer. Title: Ceremonies

education.nsw.gov.au



Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Department of Education recognises the Traditional Custodians whose customs have nurtured the lands and waterways where we work and live. We celebrate the First Peoples' unique spiritual relationship to Country and acknowledge the significance of Aboriginal cultures in Australia.

We pay our deepest respect to the Elders both past and present, who in the face of adversity, have maintained the knowledge of culture and paved the way for our youth to be the leaders of tomorrow.



OCHRE Plan

NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs Strategy

OCHRE is the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal Affairs. It stands for **Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment**, and is symbolic of Aboriginal communities' deep connection with Country.

The Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs (the Taskforce) was established by the NSW Government in late 2011 to inform a new plan – OCHRE – to improve education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW and to enhance service accountability to support these goals. Extensive consultations with Aboriginal communities, stakeholders and industry gave some 2,700 people the opportunity to contribute to the taskforce's work.

OCHRE aims to support strong Aboriginal communities in which Aboriginal people actively influence and participate fully in social, economic and cultural life. To achieve this, we need to:

- Teach more Aboriginal languages and culture to build people's pride and identity
- Support more Aboriginal students to stay at school
- Support more Aboriginal young people to get fulfilling and sustainable jobs
- Grow local Aboriginal leaders' and communities' capacity to drive their own solutions
- Focus on creating opportunities for economic empowerment
- Make both government and communities more accountable for the money they spend.

The plan is a Government commitment to developing a genuine partnership with the Aboriginal community through several initiatives including Connected Communities, Language and Culture Nests, Opportunity Hubs, Local Decision-Making models and an independent Aboriginal Council chaired by a Coordinator General.

Opportunity Hubs are administered by Skills and Workforce Directorate.





Program Background

Opportunity Hubs are a grassroots initiative within the broader Aboriginal Initiatives strategy. By supporting Aboriginal students from the age of 10, Opportunity Hubs foster long-term relationships that guide participants through their schooling years and into meaningful career pathways – helping to ensure a balanced and high-quality life for themselves, their families, and future generations.

Recent statistics show that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has left 1 in 3 students below the minimum standard in literacy and numeracy, particularly in regional areas. In response, the NSW Government is investing in 1:1 support and small group mentoring. Opportunity Hubs are uniquely positioned to deliver this targeted support to Aboriginal students, helping them reach their full academic and personal potential.

Opportunity Hubs provide classroom-based support at no cost to schools and offer a range of culturally responsive services including:

- Academic support and mentoring
- Cultural and well-being workshops, delivered on school sites
- Career Pathway Planning – fostering student aspirations and providing clear, structured pathways towards meaningful employment and/or further education and training, empowering them to reach their full potential

Through this work, Opportunity Hubs are actively contributing to the achievement of Closing the Gap targets 5, 6 and 7.

Target 5 Students achieve their full learning potential

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20-24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96%

Target 6 Students reach their full potential through further education pathways

By 2031. Increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-34 years who have completed a tertiary qualification (certificate III and above) to 70%.

Target 7 Youth are engaged in employment or education

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth (15-24 years) who are in employment, education or training to 67%.

Opportunity Hub Overview

The Opportunity Hub aims to empower young Aboriginal people with the knowledge, confidence, and support to transition successfully from secondary school into further education, training, or employment.

Starting from year 5, the Hub will collaborate with local services to build aspirations and provide tailored support throughout schooling and beyond. This includes personalised pathways into employment or further education that reflects each student's individualised goals and circumstances.

Operating as a central coordination point, the Hub will connect young people with relevant education, training, and employment opportunities within the community.

Target Cohorts and Participant Criteria:

- Aboriginal students in years 5 to 12
- Aboriginal school leavers within the contractual service area, including.
 - Early school leavers
 - Students who have completed year 12
 - Students who have left school within the past 12 months and were actively engaged in the program for a minimum of 6 months prior to leaving school

Service Area:

Defined by the Local Government Area (s) and/or specific stakeholders outlined in the funding deed, and any additional areas/schools approved by the Department.

Note: School data can be accessed via the My School website: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>



Activity Delivery Framework

The tables below outline a range of activities that may be delivered under the Opportunity Hub initiative. Not all service providers are expected to deliver every listed activity. The specific activities to be undertaken will be determined through negotiation between the Department of Education and each service provider, as part of the development of the service delivery model within the funding deed.

Each service provider is required to detail the activities they will deliver in an **Activity Schedule**, aligning with the agreed-upon scope. The Activity Schedule must be submitted to the Department for approval **prior to the commencement of each school term**.

Activity	Service description	Targeted age	Duration/Frequency
Breakfast Club	- Provide Primary and Secondary schools support with their breakfast Club - Assist with preparation and serving of the breakfast - Facilitate physical activities with the students	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	At a minimum, deliver this service over the duration of the school year to; 1 Primary School per week 1 Secondary School per week
Homework Centre	- Provide Primary and Secondary schools support within the homework centre - Assist students with assessments and homework - Provide additional support where needed	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	At a minimum, deliver this service over the duration of the school year to; 1 Primary School per week 1 Secondary School per week
Academic Support	- Provide academic support to Primary and Secondary students - In-Class one on one support with a strong focus on Numeracy and Literacy - In-Class group support - Providing a suitable environment for learning support	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	As per the needs of the school and their students

Activity	Service description	Targeted age	Duration/Frequency
Well-being Support	• Provide well-being support within a culturally safe and confidential environment. • Provide assistance and support to improve attendance rates of students. • Facilitate workshops delivering the impacts of anti-social behaviour, bullying, discrimination, racism, cyberbullying, emotional well-being, the effects of drugs, vaping and alcohol, healthy bodies, responsible gaming and healthy relationships. • Facilitate leadership skills workshops.	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	Workshops delivered weekly; 1 hour per session over the duration of a school term.
Cultural Workshops	• Delivered by a culturally competent Aboriginal educator • Cultural identity. • Pre-colonisation workshop – provide an understanding of the lifestyle eg; diet, ceremonies, lores, boundaries, kinship, traditions and protocols, of Aboriginal people. • Facilitate art workshops and the history of our storytelling. • What is cultural safety workshop. • Extend an invitation to local Aboriginal Elders to facilitate various workshops.	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	Workshops delivered weekly; 1 hour per session over the duration of a school term.
Career Planning	• Mentors develop a career plan for all students in years 9, 10, 11 and 12. • Mentors provide advice and support regarding career options. • Facilitate resume writing, job application and interview technique workshops. • Provide assistance with work experience program. • Provide additional support where required. • Develop post school support plan for year 12 students. • Develop exit plan for students leaving school.	Secondary Students Years 9 to 12	Career plans developed with students within a month following registration.

Activity	Service description	Targeted age	Duration/Frequency
Industry Visits	- Create a list of industries and organisations to facilitate visits. This should complement but not be limited to the student career plans. - Program Manager develop positive working partnerships with industries. - Organise and accompany students on regular industry visits. - Facilitate an introduction to industry to year 7 students.	Secondary Students Years 8 to 12 Introduction to industry workshop – Year 7	As per contractual agreement; eight industry visits per school year
Community Engagement	- Programs Managers liaise and engage with local Aboriginal community-controlled services and Local Decision Making Bodies. - Program staff develop and nurture partnerships with school communities within their service area. - Develop partnerships with Universities, TAFE NSW, local industries and Government bodies. - Attend local events hosted by key stakeholders. - Host parent BBQ's/morning tea to engage families of hub participants.	Hub Program Manager and Mentors	
Referral Pathways	- Provide students and their families with appropriate referrals. - Advise families of health checks.	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	
School Support	- Provide cultural advice and support to Principal, Executive staff and teachers. - Assist with NAIDOC celebrations, National Sorry events and Reconciliation week. - Provide advice and assistance with family engagement.	Primary Students Years 5 and 6 Secondary Students Years 7 to 12	
Life Skills	Provide life skill education and support eg; budgeting, tax file number, driver's license, bank account, birth certificate, Medicare card.	Secondary Students Year 10 to 12	

Success of Model Examples

Here are two examples of the impact this essential service provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Case study 1

A disengaged year 12 student who suffers from anxiety and is looking to leave school with no desire to complete year 12. Student commences intensive mentoring with the Opportunity Hub, completes a barista course, obtains her driver's license and completes year 12. Develops a resume, secures a traineeship in Childcare and secures full time employment.

Case study 2

A disengaged year 11 student with an attendance rate of 24% and has started the process of signing out of school with no career pathway or employment. Student commences intensive mentoring with the Opportunity Hub, in year 12 attendance rate improves to 97%, completes year 12. Student enrolls and completes the IProwd course at TAFE NSW, goes onto training in Goulburn to become a NSW police officer.

Steering Committee

A steering committee must be established within six months of the commencement of services. The committee should include Aboriginal representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- Skills & Workforce Directorate
- Local Community member
- Participating school communities –Primary and Secondary
- University sector
- TAFE NSW
- Local Community Elder

The steering committee must meet on a monthly basis to provide governance oversight and strategic advice to support the effective delivery of the Opportunity Hub initiative.

Staffing Requirements

Opportunity Hub service providers are required to employ the following Identified positions:

1. Program Manager

- A dedicated Program Manager with:
 - Extensive mentoring experience
 - Extensive experience working with Aboriginal communities
 - Demonstrated experience working with Aboriginal students in year 5 to 12
 - A valid driver's licence
 - A current Working with Children Check
 - A National Police Check

2. Mentors

- A dedicated Mentor with:
 - Experience working with Aboriginal students in years 5 to 12
 - Experience in developing employment, training and industry engagement opportunities for school leavers
 - Experience working with Aboriginal post-school leavers
 - A valid driver's licence
 - A current Working with Children Check
 - A national Police Check

Community Engagement

Opportunity Hub staff must demonstrate, or be able to develop, strong collaborative relationships with the local Aboriginal community within the designated service area.

Best practice Recommendation

It is recommended that a representative from Equity Programs is involved in the recruitment process to ensure culturally appropriate hiring practices and alignment with program objectives.

Consent Forms

It is the responsibility of the Opportunity Hub to use the **generic consent form** provided by the Department. This form must be distributed to all Aboriginal students within the identified cohort.

The consent form must collect the following information:

- Students Full Name
- Date of Birth
- Postcode
- School Enrolled
- Year level
- Emergency Contact details
- Consent for use of images and information for marketing purposes
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander –option Nation
- Parent/Carer consent and signature

Important:

Students may only participate in Opportunity Hub activities once a completed consent form, signed by their legal guardian, has been received by the service provider.

Service Results

The table below outlines the key outcomes typically expected of the Opportunity Hub service providers and the associated performance measures. These outcomes are designed to ensure that service delivery remains aligned with the goals of increasing school engagement, supporting successful transitions, and strengthen community collaboration.

All funded service providers are required to collect and report on the performance indicators relevant to their contracted service activities. These data points will be used to assess progress against agreed performance targets.

Outcomes	Key performance measure	Data set	Source
Provide Aboriginal young people with clear pathways and incentives to stay at school and transition to employment or tertiary education	• Number of Aboriginal young people participating with the Opportunity Hub • Number of Aboriginal young people who transition to employment and/or further education • Number of schools engaged with the Opportunity Hub	Number of students in years 5 to 12 who participated with the Opportunity Hub Years 5 & 6 = Years 7 to 12 = Number of students who transitioned into further education Number of students who have gained employment Number of schools engaged with the Opportunity Hub	Winangay

Outcomes	Key performance measure	Data set	Source
Coordinate local opportunities, mentoring programs and resources to identify secure job placements and match opportunities to Aboriginal students' career aspirations	- Number of stakeholders engaged with the Opportunity Hub - Number of industry visits per year	Number of stakeholders engaged with the Opportunity Hub Number of students in years 9 to 12 who participated with the Opportunity Hub Number of industry visits per year	Winangay
Support students through individualised career planning, mentoring and support services and the engagement of family and community members	- Number of careers plans developed - Number of students being provided one on one mentoring - Number of referrals made to support services - Number of events held with Aboriginal community members	Number of students in years 9 to 12 who have developed a career plan with the Opportunity Hub Number of career goals achieved Number of students in years 5 to 12 who have received one on one mentoring with the Opportunity Hub Number of referrals made to support services Number of events held with Aboriginal community members	Winangay
Monitor and track Aboriginal students and their transition pathways following the completion of secondary school	- Number of exit plans developed for school leavers - Number of interactions of post school leavers - Number of referrals made to Barranggirra Initiative - Number of Aboriginal students completing year 12	Number of exit plans developed for school leavers Number of interactions of post school leavers Number of referrals made to Barranggirra Initiative Number of Aboriginal students completed year 12	Winangay



Winangay

Data collection forms a crucial part of the Department's quality assurance measure to ensure that all KPI and service agreements are being met.

Data relates to the primary Close the Gap targets, NSW Skills Plan and the NSW OCHRE Plan which Opportunity Hub Initiative aligns with, and the data captured assists with the Minister's Reports to continue funding.

You must maintain records for all Aboriginal school students participating in the Opportunity Hub activities including.

- Full name
- School attended
- Grade of enrolment
- Date of Birth
- Identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Disability
- SBAT
- Postcode
- Year engaged
- Primary advisor
- Status
- Engagement Type
- Training Contract ID (if applicable)



Career plans must be created and reviewed for all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students from years 9 to 12 and school leavers each calendar year as required in the funding deed.

An exit plan is required for all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students who complete workshops/events and/or gain outcomes through the Opportunity Hub Initiative prior to being rolled over to completion.

Recording interactions and outcomes with each participant as a case note provides the Department with a true reflection of the participants journey with the Opportunity Hub.

Quick links

Aboriginal Affairs – OCHRE www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au

Department of Education www.education.nsw.gov.au

Closing the Gap www.closingthegap.gov.au

National Skills Plan <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/nsw-skills-plan-2024-2028--building-skills-and-shaping-success>

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and pay our respect to Country.

Say hello

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