Engage, empower, enact: Evaluating a cultural competence program

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National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Fialho, Malcolm - author.

Engage, empower, enact: Evaluating a cultural competence program at UWA / Malcolm Fialho.

ISBN: 978-0-9923586-0-0 (paperback)

Toleration--Western Australia.
Race discrimination--Western Australia.
Discrimination--Western Australia.
Western Australia--Social conditions.

University of Western Australia.
Equity and Diversity Office.

305.09941
Engage, empower, enact:

Evaluating a cultural competence program

‘Cultural Competence’ has been defined as:

...a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Operationally defined, cultural competence is:

...the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services, thereby producing better outcomes.

Centre for Cultural Competence, Australia

www.ccca.com.au
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Foreword – Statement by the Facilitator

The University of Western Australia (UWA) is situated on Noongar Land and acknowledges that the Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land and continue to practise their values, languages, beliefs and knowledge.

The achievements scoped in this publication represent so much more than the implementation of the innovative Couragous Conversations about Race (CCAR) program. The foundations were laid in the early 90s where I commenced delivering cross-cultural awareness workshops in the public sector under the auspices of the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. While acknowledging the importance of these workshops, I began to feel professionally unsettled around the lack of a power and privilege analysis, including the explicit unpacking of the ‘polite racism of the educated middle class’ (Aly, 2013).

I was then fortunate enough to situate my Race education work in the early 2000s at UWA within a privilege framework informed by Critical Race Theory. This work was cemented in 2006 when I became acquainted with the Courageous Conversations about Race program (Pacific Educational Group, USA) and realised the value of implementing it within an Australian higher education context. While the initial aspiration was around implementing the program within a broader cultural competence framework at UWA only, the work has flourished well beyond this institution and State.

Explicitly naming Race, acknowledging its pervasive systemic influence and working to dismantle it can be a daunting challenge. This evaluation unequivocally demonstrates that UWA met this challenge with fortitude and vigour. The document bears testimony to transformation at multiple levels through introspection, amended practice, professional development and systemic change at UWA and beyond.

I trust you will find this publication useful no matter what point you may be at on your journey towards achieving greater racial equity through enhanced consciousness and cultural competence.

Malcolm Fialho
Senior Diversity Officer
The University of Western Australia
November 2013
Acknowledgements

This achievement would not have been possible without the support of a diverse range of people across the globe.

Firstly, I would like to thank The University of Western Australia for providing the fertile soil that has allowed this work to grow and flourish. The institution has acted as a strong ALLY in ensuring the ‘conversation’ has been sustained and deepened. In particular, I would like to thank staff at the School of Indigenous Studies at UWA for their contribution to this ‘conversation’ through the innovative Indigenous Dialogues project. I would also like to acknowledge Beverley Hill (Associate Director, Equity and Diversity) and Robert Farrelly (Director, Human Resources) for their unwavering support for this work. I acknowledge past colleagues in the Equity and Diversity Office (Dr. Gillian Carter and Dr. Erica Lewin) and Fay Davidson and Dr. Ainslie Robinson in particular for their excellent contributions to this document. The Director, Winthrop Professor Denise Chalmers, and staff at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) have actively sought to promote the CCAR program through education development channels both at UWA and beyond. Winthrop Professor Dr. Cristina Gibson and Dr. Patrick Dunlop have been pivotal in undertaking this comprehensive evaluation.

It is fitting that I recognise the work of my colleagues in the higher education sector both in Australia and New Zealand who have meaningfully connected with this work. The fifteen participating institutions (Appendix 1) have translated passion into tangible practice and are now in various stages of implementing the program within their institutions. As this document goes to print, the New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs is finalising arrangements to implement the program to their internal and external stakeholders.

Finally, I would like to express my deep and sincere appreciation to Glenn Singleton, Director, Pacific Educational Group (California, USA) for his generosity in sharing expertise that has helped realise Courageous Conversations in Australia and New Zealand. I look forward to strengthening the partnership between our countries in continuing this important dialogue.
Overview

UWA has identified cultural competence, with a strong emphasis on Indigenous awareness, as a critical attribute for a global university striving for international excellence.

A University where 80 different languages are represented within the staff and student cohort – and where more than 20% of staff are from a culturally diverse backgrounds – is well down the track in preparing for the ‘Asian century’. In 2008, UWA supplemented its existing suite of cultural competence initiatives with the innovative culture change program Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR). The core element of this program is a highly interactive conversation that has constructively engaged the University community in a dialogue around Race and community harmony, encouraging staff and students to become both intellectually and emotionally comfortable with difference. The insights gained through a guided journey of self-reflection around how race impacts everyone’s life, have proved to be transformative at both personal and professional levels. This transformation acts as an impetus to organisational change for greater racial equity.

The Courageous Conversations About Race program is now a regular feature on the annual UWA staff development calendar. The material is also embedded within the curriculum and staff experience across all Faculties, thus building critical mass, and action, across the UWA community around the issues. The CCAR workshops have received overwhelmingly positive feedback across the sector and there have been numerous examples of both attitudinal and structural ‘shifts’.

That this initiative is now being emulated in fifteen other universities in Australia and New Zealand is testimony to its efficacy. It is therefore timely to formally assess the impact of participation in the CCAR program through multiple sources such as personal reflection, adjustments to professional practice and demonstrable shifts in attitude driving structural change. This report is informed by data collected through an independently conducted survey, Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) feedback results across four years (2009-2013) and specific examples of amended practice.
SECTION 1

The Race and cultural diversity story at UWA
1.1 The three phases of the UWA journey with Race and cultural diversity

1.1.1 Phase One: 1990 to 2005 - A tradition of valuing cultural diversity

The University of Western Australia has a tradition of valuing cultural diversity and inclusive practice within the context of its broad diversity agenda which, in the early 2000s, became more formally embedded in both the strategic planning and operational arms of the institution.

The University had established a strong policy framework in this area during the 1990s and there were nascent strategies implemented to practically embed cultural diversity within the fabric of university life e.g. celebration of Harmony Day, recognition of ceremonial and cultural leave in the UWA Enterprise Agreements, and a range of successful strategies in Aboriginal employment and education.

The early 2000s saw the appointment of an additional resource in the Equity and Diversity Office whose remit was specifically around expanding the diversity agenda at the University. This position, Senior Diversity Officer, (henceforth referred to as the Facilitator) provided an impetus to deepen both the conversation and practice in this space at the University.

In the early 2000s, the Facilitator began a process of interrogation that examined how the University’s structures, policies, practices and belief systems might have been imbued with unconscious racial bias, and worked to instil power and privilege perspectives in various facets of university activity. This conceptual shift involved implementing positive strategies to address inherent bias. An exemplar of good practice was the implementation of the UWA Workforce Diversity Strategy, 2002-2005 (WDS) which aimed to maximise opportunities for all Western Australians to actively participate in employment. The WDS was premised on the notion that achieving true workforce diversity represents a continuous process of cultural change and involves ‘widening the door, not lowering the bar’. This bold and courageous affirmative action strategy involved targeted entry-level recruitment within the professional staffing stream for those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Indigenous Australians. There were 37 CALD and 18 Indigenous staff recruited through the WDS between 2002 and 2005.

In addition to the ground breaking WDS, the Facilitator was involved in developing cultural awareness workshops that incorporated a power-sensitive analysis. This expanded the existing suite of staff development offerings in the area of cultural awareness and began to infuse the curriculum at UWA with more sophisticated perspectives around how racial and cultural diversity manifest both in contemporary Australian society and workplaces.

1.1.2 Phase Two: 2005 to 2007 - Taking stock; a targeted response to growing cultural diversity

During this period, there was an increasingly culturally diverse profile across the student body (both domestically and internationally), growing recognition of UWA’s advantageous strategic position on the Indian Ocean rim and increased mobilisation among the international student community.

The then Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson, was recognised as a strong diversity champion and provided enthusiastic support in this area for the efforts of both the Equity and Diversity Office and the School of Indigenous Studies. Although UWA was considered a supportive environment with senior leadership visibly championing various arms of the diversity agenda, the University’s efforts in the cultural diversity area benefitted from augmentation and greater focus. Several factors combined synergistically around the mid-2000s to provide a strong foundation for the future implementation of Phase 3 and the Citizens of the Globe project in 2006.

1.1.2.1 2006 - The Citizens of the Globe project

The Facilitator, who had been at the forefront of efforts in this area, delivered a paper at a national cultural diversity conference in Canberra in 2005 scoping the education and awareness raising
around power and privilege being undertaken at UWA. The University was invited by senior Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) staff present to apply for funding under the Federal Living in Harmony strategy to pilot a program that deepened the conversation beyond the usual ‘food, festivals and fashion’ which had been the key grant recipient areas of the program since its inception in the 1990s. After successfully obtaining both federal funding under this strategy (the only higher education institution in Australia to be recognised in this manner) and support from the UWA Executive, the Equity and Diversity Office (EDO) launched the Citizens of the Globe project in 2006.

The aim of the project was to encourage students “to identify, challenge and, where appropriate, change their own thinking about race and cultural diversity” (Citizens of the Globe Manual, 2006). The Citizens of the Globe project, along with the University’s extant commitments to support racial and cultural diversity, formed the backdrop to the 2008-2012 initiatives to develop and promote inclusive practice and cultural competence across campus, with a particular emphasis in three key areas, namely, the student experience, staff development and a culturally inclusive UWA campus culture.

1.1.2.2 2007 - Taking stock and identifying the challenges

The journey toward cultural competence is a dynamic and ongoing process – a marathon, not a sprint! The process needs to contain self-reflective exercises through which insights are gained, attitudes transformed and skills practised with the aim of achieving effective interaction across diverse cultural contexts.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004) argues that specific access and participation gaps exist for cultural minorities in all western liberal democracies. The gaps are reflected in various systems and institutions and play out in predictable ways such as;

- minority voices are often not heard within the mainstream narrative,
- systemic racism continues to manifest in subtle and covert ways,
- the majority world controls the flow and speed of change, thus serving to maintain the status quo.

Applying a CRT lens, the specific challenges facing UWA in 2007 included the need to further interrogate systems, policies and procedures traditionally informed by an unwitting Anglo-Christian bias to ensure that ‘race’, as something that is within us all and socially constructed, was not invisible across different facets of university life or explored superficially through outward manifestations e.g. multicultural lunches or brief ‘How to do Business with China’ sessions:

1. Embed meaningful cultural competence within the organisational fabric as a gradual and sensitive exercise.

2. Move beyond traditional approaches to demonstrate that enhanced racial consciousness links head, heart and hands together effectively to drive organisational transformation.

   • Cultural competence programs which either focus on assimilating culturally diverse staff into the dominant culture (as opposed to having a cultural conversation with all staff), or focussing on the equally problematic ‘trait-based’ approach to cultural difference (‘All Muslims are…’, ‘Asians learn like this…’), serve unwittingly to stereotype certain groups as the other by highlighting their difference from the perceived norm of Australia’s dominant cultural identity.

3. Respond proactively to the exponential growth in the preceding decade of new and emerging communities including refugee and humanitarian program entrants.
• These communities, often small and under-resourced, face complex and multiple settlement challenges which are not always recognised by large institutions.

4. Avoid complacency.

• Having implemented some cultural diversity initiatives and an Indigenous employment strategy, the University may have believed its goals had been reached.

5. Develop a foundational Race program to prepare staff and students to engage with the broader nuances, complexities and challenges of Aboriginality and cultural diversity in contemporary Australia, to prepare our graduates to be citizens of the globe.

• Indigenous staff offering Indigenous cross-cultural awareness sessions into the curriculum at times felt exposed and culturally unsafe, particularly when an audience was resistant or defensive. There was, therefore, a need for a program to serve as a complement to Indigenous cultural sensitivity.

6. Build a critical mass of racial consciousness across the institution that could drive transformation and cultural change.

1.1.3 Phase Three: 2008 to present - Building capacity, competence and consciousness

Racism becomes institutionalised when organisations remain unconscious and unaware of the multiple and complex ways in which race, power and privilege powerfully intersect and play out systemically. Racial consciousness, a key element of a culturally competent organisation, therefore involves developing a sophisticated understanding of race and cultural diversity in an Australian and global context. Expanded consciousness then drives the passion for addressing race and culturally-based inequities through systemic transformation.

1.1.3.1 Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR)

In late 2007 the Facilitator became aware of an anti-racist practice model, *Courageous Conversations About Race*, which had been successfully implemented in North America by Curtis Linton and Glenn Singleton (2006), to specifically address the racial achievement gap across secondary schools. The CCAR program, adapted from that model, was implemented in response to the challenges identified during the stock-taking phase. CCAR, grounded firmly in Critical Race Theory, neatly dovetailed with the existing educational offerings at UWA as the approach foregrounded a power-sensitive analysis. The CCAR program was designed to develop cultural competence generically and a key assumption is that the program is complementary, but separate to, Indigenous Cultural Competence.

**Background**

While there had been a range of initiatives implemented around cultural awareness and literacy, it was recognised that the impact of their success would have been intensified if there had been a parallel strategy to expand racial consciousness across a critical mass of UWA staff. Building on the existing ‘privilege-centred’ offerings being delivered since 2004 across the UWA community, the Facilitator drew on key elements of the CCAR model and developed a flexible staff development workshop to be offered to members of the UWA community in either a four hour or one-day format.

**Philosophical basis of CCAR – Critical Race Theory**

The CCAR program was derived from, and grounded within, Critical Race Theory (CRT) which emerged as a body of scholarship during the mid-1970s. CRT was developed as a powerful
theoretical and analytical tool to explore the various manifestations of race and racism in North America, particularly in the legal system. The key goal of CRT is to achieve greater racial equity through a thorough systemic analysis of how the architecture of an institution is imbued with whiteness and historical race-based privilege. While the theoretical and conceptual base has significantly expanded, it essentially involves five key tenets:

1. Counter-storytelling: Presenting alternative narratives and different perspectives around a life situation or phenomenon under examination e.g. the preponderance of young black males in the criminal justice system. These parallel stories then challenge the dominant (Anglo, white, Christian) discourse that shapes and drives the majority of systems in western liberal democracies.

2. The permanence of Racism: Accepting that racism is a factor of life and has been normalised to such an extent that its pervasive influence is almost invisible. The permanence of racism suggests that “racist hierarchical structures govern all political, economic and social domains”. (Bell, 1995)

3. Whiteness as property: Where the functions of property work synergistically to maintain, and perpetuate, the dominance of the racial majority in all spheres of life in contemporary Western liberal democracies. Whiteness as property “functions on three levels: the right of possession, the right to use, and the right to disposition. Furthermore, the right to transfer, the right of use and enjoyment, and the right of exclusion are essential attributes associated with property rights”. (Harris, 1995:28).

4. Interest convergence: Argues that racial equity gains, and social justice progress, should be interpreted cautiously. While it is undeniable that there have been significant gains made for people of racial diversity (non-dominant) in the second half of the twentieth century, the fact remains that people of racial diversity are sparsely represented in most spheres of political, economic and (popular) cultural life.

5. Critique of Liberalism: Encourages an examination of the underlying premises that organise the way of life across western liberal democracies, namely, the notion of colour blindness, neutrality of the law and incremental change. The reality is these laudable aspirations have failed to be effectively translated into the lived reality for people of racial diversity living in these countries. Further, the notion of colour-blindness entrenches racial inequity further as it “fails to take into consideration the persistence and permanence of racism” (DeCuir and Dixon, 29).

CRT provides a unique and powerful lens to explore the ways in which our institutions of higher education in Australia reflect historical white privilege. Courageous Conversations About Race, based on CRT tenets, is used specifically as an analytical tool to undertake a power-sensitive analysis of institutions across contemporary western liberal democracies. It allows staff to identify, challenge and, where appropriate, change their thinking and practice towards the aspiration of greater equity and participation of staff and students from racial, cultural and religious minorities.

Obtaining institutional support

The importance of highly visible leadership providing the much needed imprimatur on the CCAR program was recognised. Accordingly, the Equity and Diversity Office identified the challenges in this space (See 1.1.2.2, 2007 - Taking stock and identifying the challenges) and presented the model for endorsement by UWA’s then Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson, and senior management, in June 2008. The presentation was well received, and a powerful highlight was the insight gained by a senior manager who reported that an exercise conducted during the presentation had lifted the veil on his own unconsciousness. This ‘privilege insight’ was explained by the manager who indicated that there was a zero per cent impact of race in his life. The manager indicated that when the exercise was unpacked, he realised how his own white racial privilege had opened both professional and personal doors throughout his life as a privileged, white male living in a western liberal democracy.
The Vice-Chancellor, and his executive, endorsed the implementation of the CCAR program in July 2008. It was a bold and courageous institutional decision to explicitly name ‘Race’ (and racism) in this initiative, rather than the safer and more palatable language of cultural diversity, multiculturalism or cross-cultural management (terms which often dilute the issues by not applying a power-sensitive analysis).

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) at the time, Professor Jane Long, launched the strategy in September 2008 and the inaugural workshop was conducted with a mixture of 20 academic and professional staff.

Implementation of the CCAR program: The CCAR Workshop

The core component of the CCAR program is a transformative workshop that engages participants in an honest and constructive dialogue around the ways in which they must adapt in order to create a society where cultural and religious diversity is affirmed and celebrated. The workshop lends itself to flexible delivery, and is generally conducted in a four hour or one-day format.

Participants are first made aware of the need to lift the veil of silence and have the conversation about Race. They are introduced to the CCAR Protocol which comprises Four Commitments and Four Conditions and the Courageous Conversations Compass. Accordingly, participants are requested to make a commitment to creating a ‘cultural safety zone’ through observing the Four commitments:

1. Remain connected,
2. Speak your truth,
3. Discomfort is OK,
4. It’s a marathon, not a sprint.

These four ground rules or commitments serve as the walls within which a safe space for a courageous conversation can be conducted. Participants are then introduced to the Four Conditions which guide how the conversation is to be conducted:

1. Keep the spotlight on Race,
2. Connect through your story,
3. Make complexity your friend and
4. Talk about Whiteness (and privilege).

The key objectives for workshop participants are for them to:

- Develop a more proficient understanding of the language of Race and racism including the unique Australian story.
- Unpack their unique racial story, linking it to the local, national and global context.
- Gain knowledge around how race, power and privilege interact and play out in contemporary Australian institutions, reflecting the broader society.
- Explore how the combination of ‘whiteness’ and ‘privilege’ contributes directly to race-based inequity and power differentials.
- Utilise the above insights to drive social and cultural transformation. This final component, when conducted in faculties, is contextualised and discipline-specific e.g. assisting staff in the Faculty of Education to implement a culturally competent curriculum to close the racial achievement gap in schools.
These objectives are achieved through employing a range of facilitation strategies including experiential narrative, values-based exercises, critical analysis and guided self-reflection.

1.1.3.2 Indigenous Cultural Competence – a compatible twin

The early achievements of the CCAR program resulted in UWA being awarded, in 2010, one of three prestigious Universities Australia national grants to develop a comprehensive framework within which Indigenous cultural awareness could be enhanced across higher education. The *Indigenous Dialogues*\(^1\) \(^2\) \(^3\) model, developed by the School of Indigenous Studies and implemented across four sites at UWA in partnership with the Facilitator, has been recognised as good practice by Universities Australia, and comprises a reflective three stage approach;

- CCAR workshop,
- an Indigenous perspectives workshop, and
- a cultural immersion, on-country experience.

The model is based on the premise that students will be more receptive and open to receiving the Indigenous story after having gained a nuanced understanding of race, and their own racial identity, in contemporary Australia.

The collaboration will complement the new University courses structures and *UWA Education Futures Vision Statement*\(^4\) that explicitly articulate the importance of equipping our graduates with the development of meaningful Indigenous Cultural Competence.

1.1.3.3 Racial Equity: Growing CCAR and other programs at UWA and beyond

The CCAR workshops, conducted across all organisational units, have resulted in a range of positive awareness outcomes, most particularly a deep intellectual and emotional engagement with race within a conceptual framework of *privilege*. Participant feedback has been extremely positive. There have been in excess of 200 workshops conducted with more than 5000 staff and students since the inception of the program in 2008. Workshops have also been delivered externally across a range of organisations in the higher education, public and the community-based sectors in both Australia and New Zealand (*see Appendix 1* for a list of external institutions that have conducted at least one CCAR workshop).

At UWA expanded racial consciousness has been complemented by the following racial equity strategies:

Embedding cultural competence across the curriculum and UWA student experience

CCAR workshops are now conducted in eighteen under-graduate and two post-graduate courses across eight faculties, and within various student bodies and UWA residential colleges. The CCAR workshops are also conducted in local work areas on campus and offered through the staff development program.

**UWA Teaching and Learning Fellowship (2010)**

The Facilitator was awarded a Teaching and Learning Fellowship for demonstrating leadership and innovation in implementing a University-wide cultural competence program to engage, sustain and deepen an action-oriented conversation around Race and cultural diversity. The Fellowship recognised the Facilitators work in enhancing the capacity of staff to live and work effectively in a

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\(^1\) Milroy & Oxenham, 1-25.
diverse global environment. In addition to the CCAR initiative the fellow’s research included projects such as the production of applied resources (Race and Cultural Diversity Audit Tool), critical Race exercises around contemporary public policy issues (e.g. the Gillard government’s Malaysia Solution) and international cultural competence benchmarking exercises.

**Community engagement**

UWA was invited to participate on Western Australia’s government’s *Racism and Bullying in Secondary Schools Strategy*, and national committees, working towards building capacity around initiatives promoting meaningful engagement with Race.

In addition, the University was invited by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) to join the national ‘Say No to Racism’ campaign. The AHRC promoted both CCAR and the UWA webpage devoted to this campaign as examples of good practice.

**UWA Cultural Diversity Initiatives** (scoped in Appendix 5 – CALD Action Plan, 2013-15)

Other resources have been developed or adapted by UWA to support greater understanding of, and sensitivity towards, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity amongst our staff and students. An Inter-faith Calendar, the Cultural Diversity Inclusive Practice Toolkit, Language and Cultural Exchange (LACE) program and the UWA CALD Action Plan, 2013-2015 (Appendix 5) are all examples of initiatives designed to consolidate and extend the University’s efforts in the Race and Cultural Diversity space.

**1.1.3.4 Community of practice – influencing a wider ‘conversation’**

This program has now been emulated, in some manner, across fifteen universities in Australia and New Zealand, and UWA currently leads a national Community of CCAR Practice. This has led to a much deeper conversation about how various institutions address cultural competency challenges in a flexible and dynamic way that is aligned to their context. Having identified a similar need and based on the reputation of UWA’s efforts in this area, since 2009, several universities have invited the Facilitator to deliver CCAR workshops within their institutions. In turn, the workshops generated an appetite for cultural competence which UWA, in collaboration with a group of ten national partners, sought to codify and establish an informed community of practice. The ten university partner contributions served to fund a Project Officer, employed by UWA, to develop a *Conversations About Race* Manual. The manual, developed within an inter-institutional collaborative framework, served not only as an effective resource for cultural competence training for Australian Higher Education staff, but also to promote skilled facilitation in guiding a sophisticated conversation about Race across the institution with a focus on amended practice. The *Conversations about Race Manual* was launched by UWA’s Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bill Louden, in October 2010.

A powerful flow-on from the development of the Manual has been the expansion of Facilitator Development workshops across partner institutions in Australia to develop their capacity to deliver the CCAR program locally. From small beginnings, this group has now grown to fifteen partners in the higher education sector in both Australia and New Zealand. In addition, keen engagement has been experienced by partners outside the tertiary sector including community based agencies, the WA Equal Opportunity Commission and the New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs.

Finally, CCAR practice and findings in Australia have actively informed the wider body of international practice showcased annually in North America at the Pacific Educational Group (PEG) led *Courageous Conversations Summit*.

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6 University of Western Australia.(2014). *Interfaith calendar*. Retrieved from hr.uwa.edu.au/equity/diversity/interfaith

7 University of Western Australia. (2013). *Inclusive Campus Culture*. Retrieved from icc.hr.uwa.edu.au/cultural

UWA, through focussed anti-racist (as opposed to the more passive non-racist) leadership, has imbued this large and diverse organisation with the will and skill to achieve greater racial equity within personal and professional areas of responsibility across all facets of University life.

After 5 years, it was considered timely to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the CCAR program as a strategy for embedding cultural competence.
SECTION 2

Evaluating the impact of the CCAR program
2.1 Context

The *Courageous Conversations About Race* program has become widely recognised both within the University and across the higher education sector in Australia. The program is acknowledged as a game changer; a pivotal route toward deeper and more meaningful engagement with cultural issues beyond silence or existing cultural awareness *plateaus*.

The aim of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the CCAR program as a tool for embedding cultural competence and to document evidence-based practice around an internationally recognised program designed to embed cultural competence (both in the UWA context and the extended community of practice).

The research was conducted independently by Dr Patrick Dunlop, of the UWA Business School, under the supervision of Winthrop Professor Dr Cristina Gibson. Dr Gibson holds an ARC Future Fellowship and is internationally recognised for her academic contribution exploring the nexus between staff, workplaces and culture, with a particular emphasis on multicultural collaboration and communication, and the impact of culture on work behavior, (including international management and cross-cultural and technology-enabled communication).

2.2 Objectives of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Assess the impact of participation in the CCAR program - primarily the attitudinal and behavioural dimensions;
- Trace the trajectory of theory into practice outcomes;
- Investigate the success of the CCAR approach in developing cultural competence in the context of tertiary education.

2.2.1 Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected and analysed.

2.2.1.1 Quantitative data collection procedures and ethics

Data was collected from two sets of cohorts:

Academic and professional staff who participated in the programs at the University of Tasmania (UTAS), the University of Western Australia and Deakin University, completed a questionnaire administered before a one day session. Participants at UTAS and UWA also completed post workshop surveys.

Academic and Professional staff who participated in centralised CCAR workshops offered once a semester between 2009 and 2013 at UWA, completed a longitudinal post-test assessment. (Appendix 2: Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) Survey).

A variation to the research design, eliminating the provision of feedback to CCAR respondents, was approved by the UWA Ethics Review Board before testing commenced.

2.2.1.2 Qualitative Data

In October 2012, February 2013 and June 2013, staff members of the University of Tasmania, Deakin University, and the University of Western Australia participated in the *Courageous Conversations About Race* program. For two weeks before and after, participants were invited to complete two online self-assessments. The two anonymous online surveys have been used as the
primary source of data. The results presented in this section of the report are based on an analysis of these individuals’ psychometric assessments.

There have been a large number of participants voluntarily offering their enthusiastic feedback around insights gained. In some instances this transformation in situ while attending the workshop has led to their amended practice.

The results and findings of both sets of data form the next section of this report.

2.2.1.3 The sample: Three cohorts – University of Tasmania, Deakin University and University of Western Australia

Cohort 1: October, 2012 – University of Tasmania

A total of 35 participants from the University of Tasmania group completed the pre-workshop and post-workshop assessments. Of the 35 participants, two did not report their gender, 27 were female and 6 were male. A very broad age range was represented in this group, though the modal age categories were 41-45 years and 56-60 years. Not surprisingly, the participants were very well educated, reporting an average of 18 years of formal education (SD = 3.1 years). Participants had worked for University of Tasmania for an average of 7.1 years (SD = 7.0 years), and had worked full time for an average of 16.8 years (SD = 10.8 years).

Cohort 2: February, 2013 – Deakin University

A total of 21 participants from the Deakin University group completed the pre-workshop and post-workshop assessments. Three of the 21 participants did not report their gender, and of the remaining participants, 15 were female and 3 were male. A very broad age range was represented in this group, with participants aged from 26 to 65 years. The participants of this group were also very well educated, reporting an average of 17.5 years of formal education (SD = 4.4 years). Participants had worked for Deakin University for an average of 5.4 years (SD = 6.6 years), and had worked full time for an average of 14.8 years (SD = 14.0 years). Note that in contrast to the other two groups, this group was only able to complete one of the two online assessments and as such analyses were limited to the content of this one assessment.

Cohort 3: June, 2013 – University of Western Australia

A total of 16 participants from the University of Western Australia group completed the pre-workshop and post-workshop assessments. Fourteen of the 16 were female and 2 were male. The age range for this group was narrower than that of the others, but still broad, with participants being between less than 25 to 55 years of age. The participants of this group were also very well educated, reporting an average of 18.5 years of formal education (SD = 2.2 years). Participants had worked for UWA for an average of 3.7 years (SD = 3.8 years), and had worked full time for an average of 12.8 years (SD = 11.1 years).

2.2.1.4 Data collection: Psychometric assessments and SPOT ratings

Psychometric Assessments - Behavioural/Attitudinal constructs investigated

Participants completed their psychometric assessments online via two questionnaires hosted on UWA’s Qualtrics survey website (note that the Deakin University group only completed one of these questionnaires). The questionnaires were being used as part of a larger project being undertaken by Winthrop Professor Cristina Gibson from the UWA Business School. Consequently, the assessment battery contained several measures that were not directly relevant to the CCAR evaluation and only the scales that were relevant to the CCAR program were tested for evidence of change. For brevity, in the sections that follow, only the scales which yielded statistically significant results are presented. A critical value of $\alpha = .10$ was used in this case, due to small sample sizes. (Please refer to the limitations section for a brief discussion of the implications of this decision).

A description of the measures is provided in Appendix 3.
UWA Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) Ratings

This was a post-workshop feedback assessment only (Appendix 2). Feedback was collated across eight sessions in a four and a half year period (Second Semester 2009 – 2013) during the key implementation years of the CCAR strategy. A total of 150 staff (academic and professional) assessed the CCAR workshop upon completion.

2.2.2 Results and Interpretations

Paired samples t-tests were undertaken on the scales listed above, comparing scores collected after the CCAR workshops to scores collected prior to the workshop. The results are broken down by the three groups. Only results that were statistically significant at $\alpha = .10$ are presented here.

2.2.2.1 Results for Cohort 1: October, 2012 – University of Tasmania

The chart below provides a summary of the key findings for the University of Tasmania group.

![Comparison of Psychometric Scale Scores Prior to CCAR with Scores Following CCAR in University of Tasmania](image)

**Figure 1**

The analyses show that, following the workshop, participants were reporting a stronger tendency to consider complex explanations for the seemingly unusual behaviour of others. This may reflect an improvement in the understanding of the reasons that drive, and greater sensitivity towards, the behaviours of people who belong to ethnic groups/races other than their own.

In line with the above, a statistically significant increase was also noted in the general tendency of participants to view other people as being honest and competent. This may again reflect the teachings of the CCAR course in that the course may help participants appreciate that the actions of a person from different ethnic/cultural groups is not necessarily something to be inherently suspicious of.

Interestingly, a statistically significant *decrease* emerged in participants’ levels of inquisitiveness. This counterintuitive result is somewhat difficult to explain. One possible interpretation might be that people’s natural inquisitiveness was temporarily sated by the CCAR course since they will have learned a lot about people from other backgrounds during the course. In other words, following the course, when queried about their inquisitiveness in the post-course questionnaire, they may have felt that, for the time being, they had learned enough about the wider world. Perhaps this issue could be explored further during future CCAR courses.
Another surprising finding was an apparent decrease in participants’ perceived self-efficacy. On the surface, this appears to be a negative result. It is possible, however, that the reduction in perceived self-efficacy might have been due to the fact that the CCAR course introduces people to a whole new array of challenges that people from other ethnic/cultural groups face on a regular basis, but may have been quite novel to the participants. This could lead to individual participants questioning their own abilities to cope if they were in similar situations (i.e. something resembling a reality check), whereas prior to completing the course, they may have been generally confident in their ability to solve problems.

2.2.2.2 Results for Cohort 2: February, 2013 – Deakin University

The chart below provides a summary of the key findings for the Deakin University group.

![Comparison of Psychometric Scale Scores Prior to CCAR with Scores Following CCAR in Deakin University (n = 21)](image)

Figure 2

Compared to the University of Tasmanina group, this group exhibited significant changes on a smaller number of the scales following the CCAR workshop. It should be noted, however, that participants in this group completed only one of the two assessments that was used, therefore limiting the number of scales where change could potentially be observed. The results appear to suggest that, following the training, participants were more inclined to seek the perspectives of people from cultures different from their own. There also appeared to be an improvement in participants’ general wellbeing, though caution should be applied in interpreting this result as there can be many factors external to the training that could potentially affect wellbeing.

2.2.2.3 Results for Cohort 3: June, 2013 – The University of Western Australia

The chart (Figure 2) provides a summary of the key findings for the University of Western Australia group.

Significant changes were observed on three scales within the University of Western Australia group. It should be noted that the small sample size in this group ($n = 16$) makes it difficult to detect substantive changes with statistical tests of significance. If more participants complete the assessments, true substantive changes will start to emerge as the sample size increases (see recommendations at 2.3).

Following the workshop, the participants in this group reported stronger tendencies to seek the perspectives of people from different cultural backgrounds from their own as well as a greater willingness to avoid using their own cultural idioms, in favour of language that is familiar to people from other cultures. These results suggest that participants are developing an understanding of how members from their own ethnic group and others differ in their perspectives and their
communication styles. Interestingly, participants from this group also report a stronger desire to adopt an empowering approach to their leadership following the CCAR training.

![Comparison of Psychometric Scale Scores Prior to CCAR with Scores Following CCAR in the University of Western Australia (n = 16)](figure3)

**Figure 3**

### 2.2.3 Analysis and Summary

Whilst bearing the limitations of this evaluation in mind, these early analyses appear to suggest that the impact of CCAR on individuals’ dispositions towards people whose behaviour may come across as different is positive. Indeed, it appears that participants are more inclined to show trust in others and may instead think about complex explanations for people’s behaviour rather than jump to conclusions. The apparent reduction in self-efficacy that was observed in the University of Tasmania group may be something that is worth exploring further during the CCAR course. Nonetheless, there was evidence from both the Deakin University and University of Western Australia groups that participants were becoming more open to the language and perspectives of people from other cultures following the workshops.

![CCAR SPOT Ratings](figure4)

**Figure 4**
Please note that the SPOT Survey included slightly different questions in 2009-2010 to those used in 2012. As the Figure 3 shows, all mean scores were above 4.00 which indicates very high levels of effectiveness of the workshop in realising cultural competence outcomes as well as the skill of the facilitator in guiding the ‘conversation’.

2.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Evaluations

It should be noted that the interpretations provided above are being suggested following an exploratory analysis. Indeed, there were several other scales that were investigated in the assessment, but these are not reported here due to observed differences being statistically insignificant. As the number of scales increases, the probability of finding misleading statistically significant findings increases. Thus, caution should be used when interpreting the findings, especially as when a relatively liberal criterion ($\alpha = .10$) for statistical significance was used. Further, as the study samples were small and limited to university employees, the results observed here may fail to generalise to other types of organisations or groups. As such, it is recommended that more research of this nature be undertaken on a wider population of CCAR participants. Indeed, it is recommended that the pre-post assessment design described here continue as a means to evaluate future CCAR workshops. Further, the introduction of comparison groups of non-CCAR participants, and a longer-term follow up assessment to determine if changes resulting from CCAR are lasting would further improve the evaluation process. Finally, it is recommended that future evaluations include attitudinal measures regarding ethnicity and cultural diversity.

2.4 Qualitative Data (Feedback)

More than 2,000 staff have participated in the CCAR workshops. Analysis of the feedback provided by participants indicates that the program produces change responses in 9 key areas:

1. A broad and liberal education - core business.
2. Good corporate citizenry – good reputation.
4. Building staff capacity around a diversity-rich curriculum and student experience.
5. Deepening Indigenous cultural awareness.
6. A reciprocal relationship between academia and HR diversity practice.
7. Shared understanding of cultural competence.
8. Increasing the confidence of participants to have the courageous conversation.

Examples of feedback from participants around the nine key themes are discussed below:

2.4.1 A broad and liberal education - core business

The initiative aligns with the University’s vision of an encompassing education that fosters creativity, innovation and leadership. It has been argued that, in creating a space for true dialogue that values diversity of thinking, being and doing, both staff and students are encouraged to think outside the square:

**UWA Law School project (2009-2011)**

The Law School, as part of its final-year Law and Contemporary Social Issues unit, requested the Facilitator to conduct a series of CCAR workshops in 2009 with a view to enhancing the capacity of students to practice in complex multicultural and diverse religious settings. The workshops
resulted in a range of positive awareness outcomes – particularly a deep engagement with race within a privilege conceptual framework – which were clearly reflected in the racial autobiographies each student wrote. Each autobiography described a unique and deeply personal story concerning the various ways race and culture had an impact on their lives and how this insight may positively impact their future professional lives. A selection of these narratives, *We are Australian: Courageous Conversations About Race*, was published and launched on Harmony Day 2010. This publication has subsequently been utilised as a resource to advance race ‘consciousness’ across multiple settings. A participant in the above project then implemented mandatory diversity training, with a particular emphasis on Race, for all committee members of the UWA Blackstone Student Society and their considered feedback highlights the impact of the program:

> Our committee of around 24 people recently did a 3 hour Equity and Diversity Training workshop with Malcolm. The training covered courageous conversations about race, sexuality and gender. The training had a profound impact on our committee. Our committee felt comfortable sharing their personal narratives and Malcolm skilfully teased out many pre-conceived ideas we have had due to our privilege without putting any committee members off side. The knowledge our team acquired through the training has provoked robust debate on what white privilege looks like and the different policy approaches to supporting services for Aboriginal people in our society. We had a camp on the weekend and several members of the committee dealt very eloquently with a couple of issues with sexuality and racism that came up between younger students. We are very grateful to the university for providing the resources to enable us to come together with a skilled facilitator and have frank discussions on some important, systemic issues in society. (Equity and Social Justice Vice President, Blackstone Society, the Law Students’ Society of UWA, 2012)

Another powerful insight from a Singaporean-Australian student (2010) who completed the workshop:

> Informally polling my Singaporean friends suggested that friends from minority races were more acutely conscious of race while most Chinese friends were racially apathetic. I started questioning the notion of ‘merit’. I realised that even though the education system was accessible to all, some races do better than others because the values of the system are defined by the values of the dominant race. In this way, thought overt racism is scarce in Singapore, true merit is elusive. The dominant race becomes the dominant class, and a vicious cycle of systemic racism results.

It is anticipated that by having the ‘conversation’ at UWA, graduates will be heard and consequently bring energy, ideas and passion to the communities they serve in future. It has been argued that, in creating a space for true dialogue that values diversity of thinking, being and doing, students are encouraged to think creatively outside the ‘square’. In doing so, they are empowered to enhance all their relationships, including the most important one with themselves.

### 2.4.2 Good corporate citizenry – UWA reputation

The wide recognition of the initiative, locally and nationally, reflects well on UWA as a ‘good citizen’ and advocate of corporate social responsibility:

> I wish to thank you for your session on Courageous Conversations about Race. This was an informative and productive session and you provided staff with an opportunity to reflect and be truly inspired. I have received some extremely positive feedback from a number of staff. I look forward to continuing the ‘conversation’ further. (Principal, WA Primary School, Education Department, 2011)

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* University of Western Australia Law School & Equity and Diversity Office. (2009). *Courageous Conversations about Race: We are Australian*. Retrieved from hr.uwa.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/2231233/CCAR_-_We_are_Australian.pdf
Thank you so much for your wonderful contribution to the Council of International Schools Regional Conference. Your presentation and workshop was not only thought provoking but highly stimulating, entertaining and a little confronting. The feedback from conference delegates was exceptionally positive and I am certain that it not only provoked discussion and dialogue during the conference but that delegates will utilise your input to initiate similar dialogue, and hopefully subsequent actions, in their schools and communities both here and in S.E. Asia. 

(Director, Council of International Schools, Melbourne, 2013)

The CCAR program supports the University in meeting its responsibilities as a leading institution in Western Australia. Agencies such as UWA that actively contribute towards advancing social change accrue the benefits of enhanced reputation, relevance and client satisfaction. The program has made available the opportunity for tangible improvement to the lives of both staff and students. This effect has wider positive ramifications when these individuals promote the University within their own communities, thus opening up channels of communication where meaningful connections can be made with constituencies whose voices are often not heard e.g. new and emerging ethnic communities, Indigenous Australians.

2.4.3 Productive diversity benefits – Equality and Inclusion

A truly inclusive campus culture means staff will not be placed in a position that requires self-editing, or leaving aspects of their cultural, racial and religious identity in the university car park. The University reaps productive diversity benefits including increased attraction and retention rates, enhanced reputation, improved morale and the realisation of individual staff potential:

The workshop was invaluable in that it encouraged self-reflection about unconscious and conscious biases around race and culture. I also think it is pertinent to think about and move towards cultural competence as an individual, an organisation, and a society. It creates a ‘safe’ space for all staff where everyone can thrive.

(Participant, Professional staff, Monash University, 2011)

In a higher education context, recruitment on the basis of merit is generally regarded as being a decision-making process involving objective, rational and measurable criteria. Employment decisions based on this notion of merit implicitly believe that these criteria are largely neutral and constitute a key component in a ‘fair’, ‘just’ and reasonable recruitment process. There is also a view held that incorporating equity and diversity considerations in a discussion of merit may compromise the process, thereby adversely impacting the quality of staff recruited. These widely accepted truisms often ignore the fact that merit is not an objective concept and is largely determined by socio-historical factors that have shaped the organisation and its decision-makers over time.

The CCAR program explicitly unpacks the notion of unconscious racial bias and the influence it exerts with respect to the recruitment and retention of the best possible staff. With enhanced managerial cultural competence, the quality and unique contributions (e.g. language skills, cultural experience, Aboriginality, different perspectives and different employment histories) of CALD and Indigenous staff are likely to be more fully appreciated or valued.

Enhanced cultural competence increases the UWA’s capacity to attract, retain, support and develop an excellent workforce from across the world.

2.4.4 Building staff capacity around a diversity-rich curriculum and student experience

May I once again thank you for your Courageous Conversations Seminar? My Law and Contemporary Social Issues students not only enjoyed your presentation (they continue to tell me that) but have indicated in writing how much they gained through participation in your seminar. Today I handed back reflection papers a number of them chose to write on your seminar and related readings on racism. Without exception, they wrote insightfully on how the seminar had significantly altered their thinking on racism and caused them to reevaluate their own experiences. I have suggested that they email their reflection papers to you so
as to provide you with feedback and possibly with personal accounts which you may be able to use as illustrations in your seminars. (Senior Academic, UWA Law School, 2010)

I was at your workshop and got so much out of it. While I was aware of the imbalance of power between whites and those from other cultures, I had not given much thought to its extent and how much those with an accent or a darker colour are the 'other' in our society. Thank you also for being such a good speaker and making it so easy to keep engaged. I’m giving a presentation on your PD to the rest of the staff at a meeting Friday week. It could be particularly useful for critical thinking. (Senior Academic, Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University, 2011)

2.4.5 Deepening Indigenous Cultural Awareness

CCAR forms a companion piece to the unique UWA Indigenous Dialogues model. That model, funded by Universities Australia in 2010 and subsequently cited as good practice, comprises a reflective three stage approach: CCAR session, an Indigenous Perspective workshop and a cultural immersion on-country experience. The introductory CCAR session positions students to be more receptive and open to receiving the Indigenous story after gaining a nuanced understanding of Race in contemporary Australia. This model reduces the risk of exposing Indigenous staff to resistant and defensive audiences, thereby enhancing their cultural safety. The following comment underscores the efficacy of this twin approach:

New Courses are being rolled out at UWA in 2012 with aims to embed Indigenous content across a range of disciplines. ‘Indigenous Dialogues’, designed to foster self-reflection, is a step towards achieving those aims, through establishing a dialogue and providing resources. (Academic, School of Indigenous Studies, 2011).

Staff and students have been encouraged to unpack and critically examine the impact of culture, cultural identity, linguistic and religious background as it relates to Indigenous peoples:

I feel torn between two worlds in a way and my dilemma: Traditional/Aboriginality vs. Assimilation. To be successful and black there is a price as you must leave what you know or who you are, or at least hide it, and adopt the mainstream culture. Every day I must become a chameleon of sorts, changing the way I speak, my mannerisms, the way I express myself, so I can do and achieve what comes naturally to a white person. (Excerpt from We are Australian: Courageous Conversations about Race) Student, UWA Law School, 2010

2.4.6 A reciprocal relationship between academia and HR/diversity practice

CCAR represents a creative partnership between academics and equity and diversity practitioners, bridging the gap between theory and applied practice. UWA academics actively seek the assistance of the Equity and Diversity Office in embedding cultural competence within both Faculty and the student body, across all disciplines.

Exemplar of good practice – UWA Faculty of Education

A CCAR workshop was conducted with 20 staff (mainly academic) in the Faculty of Education in late 2010. There was active participation and robust discussion.

I found myself thinking about the content of the course long into last night – especially the issues of power, privilege and marginalization. Perhaps the most powerful document presented (i.e. to a privileged white audience) was the White Privilege questionnaire which unequivocally demonstrates the status of race relations in Australia today. I found the workshop stimulating and enlightening. (Academic, UWA Faculty of Education, 2011)

Following discussion at the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, it was agreed that students would be exposed at various points in their course to the core CCAR principles of power, privilege and unconscious bias. Accordingly, all new students – prospective teachers – are exposed to the
core principles at Faculty Orientation and this foundational exposure is built upon by a 2 hour workshop in other units during their course work. Additionally, a CCAR workshop is delivered early in the compulsory Aboriginal Education unit that students must undertake as part of their overall Education degree.

2.4.7 Shared understanding of cultural competence

As more staff participate in the CCAR workshops a critical mass, and action, is built around the issues. This research at hand, analysing of the impact of the CCAR workshops, reveals an increase in the various constructs that comprise cultural competency:

This is such a journey for me and I love how each time I participate in one of these sessions I feel more equipped to champion social inclusion. (UWA Academic staff member, 2010)

Prior to this workshop, I considered myself to be highly aware of equity issues and very conscious of cultural diversity. I was, however, totally oblivious to the fact that I could be "trained" in racial consciousness. As a professional woman in my forties I had worked in several institutions, all of which included employees from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. There were several "light bulb" moments during the training where I recognised the extent of my racial unconsciousness. (UWA Professional Staff member, 2013)

This notion of broadening the cultural competence and literacy base of the institution is again reflected in the observation below:

I now understand that it is OK to acknowledge whiteness and privilege and I am confident that I am equipped to effectively address the complex issues of race. Now that my "racial consciousness" door has been opened it will remain so and each day both professionally and in my day to day life I will continue to strive to practise my new found skills. (UWA Professional Staff member, 2012)

2.4.8 Increasing the confidence of participants to have the courageous conversation

Feedback received both during and after the workshops have revealed a growth in the confidence of participants to confront racism, prejudice and lack of cultural awareness/sensitivity when it presents in both a personal and professional sphere.

The following insight reveals the confidence gained by a staff member (CCAR workshop participant, Flinders University, 2010):

I arrived home and my father asked me what I’d been up to and I said I’d been at your session, that we’d discussed race and white privilege, etc. He started a conversation with me about Muslim women who wear the burqa. He talked about how in “our” (Australian/western/white) culture we base a lot of our communications, interpretations, understanding on being able to see a person’s face, that our language even indicates that (to ‘face up to’, to ‘put your best face forward’ etc.). Even beards are not common on men, that men with beards are often seen as untrustworthy. He then went on to say that if “our” culture puts so much emphasis on the face, why shouldn’t a Muslim woman in Australia have to show her face? He then went on to say that if I went to the Middle East, that I would be expected to cover my face, be expected not to drink alcohol, etc. and to take part in the cultural mores of that country. He asked me why, then, can’t we expect Muslim women in Australia to support the cultural mores of Australia? As he talked about all of this he was becoming demonstrably angry and frustrated – I didn’t actually think he would become so emotional!

So I asked him why he was so threatened by a woman wearing a burqa? And he stopped for a moment and said “Yes, I guess I am threatened”.

We talked some more, I said I didn’t think that a Muslim woman (or anyone else actually) should have to depart from their culture just because they choose to join
another culture. I guess he was coming from a point of expecting assimilation... and I wasn’t. But I found it difficult to find something comparable in my culture, something about me that I would not be prepared to let go of, to moderate, to eliminate, if I was to live in another country.

I don’t expect Indian women to stop wearing saris, nor do I expect Scotsmen to stop wearing kilts... so what is it about the burqa that polarises?

I think he and I will talk some more about this!

2.4.9 Enhanced confidence of Indigenous and CALD staff

CCAR has provided both Indigenous and CALD staff with a clear framework and focussed language to assist in advocating for systemic change and navigating dominant institutional pathways:

Thank you for the powerful experience that is Courageous Conversations about Race.

For about two weeks it has been heavy on my mind and I have found myself reassessing and poring over some of the poor experiences I have with white academics, and others involved in Academia and Aboriginal Affairs. WOW!

I have actually been able to use some information in a formal complaint that I have against a non-Indigenous Staff member where I have made claims such as cultural insensitivity. Further to this it has cleared my mind and helped me to respond in a much smarter way so as to make sure my point is heard...and only if the person wants to hear it, so THANK YOU.

(Indigenous Staff member, University in SE Australia, 2011)

Another staff member who had recently arrived in Australia from a new and emerging ethnic community from the Horn of Africa region made a similar observation:

As a woman of colour now residing in WA, I found your workshop Courageous Conversations about Race of particular interest for me and was shocked at my own level of racial unconsciousness and even bias. Of particular interest to me was the concept on white privilege and how this in reverse (black privilege) has also shaped my own personal views and added to the racial unconsciousness.

I started my new role with Community West today and I hope to use what I learnt in the training to be able to get more people to talk more openly about race and begin to make changes to their approach, policies and procedures when dealing with all people. (African-Australian participant, Community-based organisation, 2012)

2.5 Discussion

The data collected through the online surveys, SPOT feedback and spontaneous written feedback from participants provide much rich information that scopes the impact of the CCAR program and the development of cultural competence both at an individual and organisational level. Individual participants provide valuable feedback, insights and reflection around both the overall impact of the program together with the section that held a particular resonance for them. Both quantitative and qualitative data also reveal the important changes that have occurred at a wider organisational level and, in particular, the growing number of disciplines into which CCAR is being introduced thus delivering on UWA’s aspiration to produce graduates who are better equipped to become ‘citizens of the globe’.

The following broad themes emerge from this evaluation:
2.5.1 Capacity Building

The survey data shows clear and positive differences in participants’ levels of personal and interpersonal awareness of, and sensitivity towards, issues of Race and cultural diversity. This is further confirmed by the specific analyses conducted across the three cohorts in the first quantitative phase of the evaluation (see Section 2.2.1.2). Finally, the growing number of academics that are actively embedding Critical Race Theory perspectives into their curriculum bears testimony to both breadth and depth of capacity.

Practitioner question – Capacity building in a higher educational context can mean different things: inclusive campus culture (staff and student focus), inclusive curriculum and student experience (student focus), luncheon diversity dialogues in organisational units (campus focus) etc. What is the best mix of strategies/approaches to focus the efforts of your institution?

2.5.2 Institution as Ally

Staff from Indigenous and varied migrant backgrounds reported changes in their workplace and an increased sense of empowerment and cultural safety. Like the UWA Ally program, which focuses on diverse sexualities and gender identities, the growing number of staff that have participated in the CCAR program, acts “as an enabler by opening up a legitimate space for people to be advocates. The existence of a program in and of itself makes a strong statement to all in the University community.” (Skene, Hogan, de Vries and Goody, 2005). This cultural competence program is unique in an Australian context in that it explicitly utilises the term 'courageous' and ‘race’ in its promotion, thus setting a high bar for deeper, sustained and meaningful good practice.

Practitioner question – A key success factor has been highly visible championship of the CCAR program by senior staff at UWA. In addition, building an ‘army’ of supporters on the ground that commit to CCAR goals further strengthens this notion of institution as Ally, thus validating the program by placing it as a mainstream activity rather than on the margins. How can your institution best engage and sustain various institutional forces for cultural change?

2.5.3 Benchmarking Cultural Competence/anti-racism staff development practice

There is a paucity of cultural competence benchmarking data available across Australia as many organisations in all spheres have moved only incrementally beyond the mandatory legislative framework. Given that compliance still appears the most common response to cultural diversity, how does UWA and the participating higher education institutions benchmark towards ongoing good cultural competence practice?

Practitioner question: Pride in Diversity (PID) has developed a successful and targeted approach with respect to benchmarking LGBTI inclusivity. Other useful Race and cultural inclusivity stock-take models available are the Australian Human Rights Commission’s (AHRC) Cultural Diversity Health Check List and Pacific Educational Group’s (PEG) annual summit. It may be opportune for participation in this activity to become more formalised and streamlined as there are a growing number of institutions in the national community of CCAR practice.

2.5.4 The voluntary nature of CCAR staff development

Staff development and culture change practitioners and leaders experience an ongoing tension between mandating staff development versus voluntary attendance. A compromise option was rolling out the program at UWA where all heads of organisational units (Deans, Directors, the University Librarian etc.) were requested by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor to hold at least two CCAR workshops in their area (See Appendix 4). This provided a strong fillip for participation as the Equity and Diversity Office was able to leverage off this highly visible expression of racial equity leadership.

Practitioner question: The request by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor to hold at least two CCAR workshops in each area provided a strong fillip for the initial growth and bedding down of the
program. A network of champions was quickly mobilised leading to expansion and further engagement with the conversation. Can you envisage your institutional leaders taking a similar courageous decision despite a dominant staff development discourse favouring voluntary participation?

2.5.5 Embedding CCAR structurally across key academic disciplines at UWA

An unprecedented outcome of the program has been the expansion into the teaching and learning area across a range of disciplines at UWA. Currently, the workshop is conducted in some format (either a full workshop or a lecture) within six of the eight Faculties. This expansion has occurred in a largely ad hoc manner either through word of mouth or the relevant course coordinator having attended a CCAR workshop. It is now opportune, in the context of both the UWA Education Futures\textsuperscript{10} initiative and New Courses 2012 structure, that CCAR workshops and exposure be embedded in a coordinated manner across disciplines and the professional courses in particular.

Practitioner question: A key aspiration of higher education institutions involves developing graduates who are emotionally and intellectually comfortable with difference. While the CCAR program initially commenced as a staff development initiative, an important spin-off has been embedding the program within the curriculum and broader student experience. In what ways might your institution utilise the program towards realising cultural competence as a key graduate attribute?

2.5.6 Enhanced, and structured, linkages with the Indigenous Cultural Competence Agenda

Allied to the point above, it is now timely that CCAR activity is more formally linked with the University’s Indigenous cultural competence aspirations. UWA successfully piloted the Indigenous Dialogues model in 2010. The model involved a comprehensive three-stage approach to embedding Indigenous cultural competence: first, a CCAR workshop, then an Indigenous perspective session followed by a cultural immersion on-country experience. While this model is being currently implemented successfully in the Faculties of Education and Medicine & Dentistry, there would be significant benefit in extending this to other disciplines.

Practitioner question: Indigenous cultural competence as a graduate attribute is a key aspiration of higher education institutions in Australia. The Indigenous Dialogues model was successfully piloted at UWA and has been regarded nationally as good practice. In what ways can your institution harness the potential of the CCAR program to deepen Indigenous cultural competence?

2.5.7 Aligning practice with related emerging thinking and research

The Facilitator has refreshed the CCAR workshop during the life of the program in accordance with movement in the local and national Race and cultural diversity arenas e.g. incorporating former Race Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innes’ (2011) observations around Race in Australia\textsuperscript{11}, and embedding Trenerry and Paradies’ (2010) Cultural Diversity Health Audit\textsuperscript{12}. In addition, issues such as ‘unconscious bias’\textsuperscript{13} and the ‘Bamboo ceiling’\textsuperscript{14} have been incorporated into the workshop thus providing a sound research foundation when critically interrogating the notion of meritocracy within our institutions. To allow for adherence to the underlying Critical Race Theory tenets of the

\textsuperscript{10} UWA Education Futures Vision Statement, op.cit.
\textsuperscript{13} mbs.edu/facultyresearch/facultydirectory/Pages/RobertEWood.aspx
protocol, it is imperative to constantly monitor and adjust CCAR workshop content. This should be a dynamic, ongoing process with flexibility built into the CCAR workshop delivery.

Practitioner question: What is the best content and delivery mixt that balances relevancy, dynamic context and the philosophical essence of the CCAR program?

2.5.8 Making connections

One of the key achievements of the program has been the connections that have been established during its life. The strategy has linked or connected a growing number of academics who are keen, within the spirit of cultural competence as expressed in the UWA Education Futures Vision Statement\(^\text{15}\), to embed these perspectives in the curriculum. The Facilitator has served as a conduit between academics across various disciplines (e.g. Faculties of Education and Law) to enable them share good cultural literacy practice within the curriculum and the broader student experience.

2.5.8.1 Amended practice – the influence of ‘Allys’

The program has enabled committed staff from the dominant group to link head, heart and hands in a transformative manner by implementing new / modifying existing practices that create a more inclusive campus culture. The direct benefit from amended practice or the implementation of culturally inclusive practices is the enhanced safety for Indigenous and CALD staff and students, thereby increasing the ability for them to achieve their full potential. As one senior UWA Manager observed in 2012 after attending a CCAR workshop:

> I often wondered why my Asian-Australian staff always volunteered to take minutes and rarely contributed at fortnightly staff meetings. I assumed it was because they may not have had a great deal to contribute. Now that I have digested the piece in your workshop around the various manifestations of white privilege, it is possible that dominant ‘patterns’ envelop the meeting space. I will now make sure that, prior to closing the meeting, all staff are given an opportunity to contribute via a round robin standing agenda item.

2.5.8.2 Staff from CALD backgrounds

The strategy has been powerful in the CALD staff and student arena. Anecdotal feedback from both staff and students attest to both a higher degree of cultural ‘safety’ being experienced together with an enhanced sense of connectedness with their racial identity and cultural background. Many CALD staff, in particular, have reported a sense of ‘liberation’ around a higher visibility of Race in the workplace and an explicit conversation that highlights the complexity of the subject within a power and privilege framework. Second-generation CALD students (mostly Australian born from an Asian cultural heritage) also reported numerous insights gained and personal benefits: an increase in cultural pride, affirmation of their racial identity, enhanced capacity to address racism in its more subtle manifestations and a deeper understanding of the settlement issues experienced by the first-generation migrants, particularly those who are highly visible, or those with stronger accents.

2.5.8.3 CALD Action Plan (2013-2015) – Bold, courageous and highly visible institutional actions

It is important that the organisation recognises and explicitly acknowledges the fact that the CCAR program has been transformative in many respects. This recognition emboldens the institution to further shift practice. The UWA CALD Action Plan 2013-2015, the second in the higher education sector (Deakin University launched the first), provides a framework for innovation and leadership in the achievement of internationally recognised best practice in the area of cultural competence.

\(^{15}\) UWA Education Futures Vision Statement, op.cit.
2.5.8.4 The National Community of CCAR practice

There are now fifteen universities that have commenced their journey towards the implementation of the CCAR framework within their institutions as an avenue for progressing both the ‘conversation’ and practice in this area. UWA has been nationally recognised in 2013 by the Australian Human Resources Industry (AHRI) peak body as achieving a high standard in the cross-cultural management area. It is timely that the University extends its ‘reach’ in this area and continues to demonstrate leadership in the further growth of the nascent CCAR community of practice. Further exploration is required as to the varied mechanisms the University may wish to tap into, within the context of its community engagement and social responsibility agenda, to further progress the courageous conversation about Race and cultural diversity.

Practitioner questions:

1. In what manner can institutions utilise the CCAR program to establish and sustain connections across like-minded disciplines keen to embed cultural competence within education? How might these connections transcend institutional borders to progress this conversation as widely as possible?

2. In what ways can ALLYs for racial equity be supported, nurtured and empowered? PEG’s ‘Understanding Whiteness Deeper’ module within their advanced cultural competence program, Beyond Diversity 2, is an example of good practice as it encourages further transformation which provides the impetus for action.

3. What opportunities might be provided to assist staff and students from CALD (and Indigenous) backgrounds to explore their racial and cultural identity thus empowering them to express themselves freely and fully in the higher education environment? An example of good practice is the Racial Affinity Groups that meet in the Portland Public Schools system, Oregon, USA where staff of racial diversity meet to share stories/experiences, provide culturally appropriate support, seek guidance and assistance, and raise concerns.

4. Enhancing racial consciousness is the first, albeit crucial, step towards achieving greater racial equity. How can your institution build on consciousness to genuinely transform all facets of activity towards meaningful cultural competence? Both the UWA and Deakin CALD Action Plans are examples of good practice in this area.
SECTION 3

Evaluating the impact of the CCAR program
3.1 Conclusion

It would appear that many organisations in Australia have, for the most part, either ignored having a meaningful ‘conversation’ with staff or addressed Race through the more limited cultural awareness approach. UWA’s Courageous Conversations About Race program lifts the veil of silence around the concept of power and privilege which must be surfaced in order for genuine cultural change to flourish in our institutions of higher education. While drawing from the parent model developed in the USA, the UWA CCAR iteration has been specifically tailored to the Australian context.

The data clearly attests to the success of the CCAR program as an effective culture change strategy across UWA, the broader higher education sector and other organisational spheres in Australia. CCAR shifts practice beyond the all too common, and well-established, formula of compliance, legislation and a few ad hoc strategies designed to promote cultural awareness. Genuine inclusivity can only occur when transformation takes place. The analysis clearly reveals that the program engages participants at a deep level which then acts as an important lever for both personal enquiry and amended professional practice.

We’ve also adopted UWA’s thinking around crucial and courageous conversations which I think are more effective than compliance training, as people come out of genuine interest, become involved in discussions, see the opportunity to network cross faculty and division, and apply the learning in their environment. (University Equity Manager, Deakin University, 2012).

The qualitative feedback demonstrates a tangible ‘shift’ in the understanding of, and sensitivity towards, the myriad ways Race manifests in contemporary Australia for those from the majority groups as well as Indigenous and CALD Australians.

Highlights of the CCAR program include:

- Highly visible leadership and tangible support from executive and senior staff.
- A flexible, responsive and comprehensive training program.
- More than 5000 staff and students engaging with the issues.
- Moving practice beyond cultural awareness.
- Influencing a wider conversation about Race in the higher education sector across Australia via expanding, national community of CCAR practice.
- Consolidating and extending ‘linkages’ with Pacific Educational Group (PEG) in North America, thus benchmarking practice internationally.
- Putting Race on the diversity agenda in a grounded manner.

It is important that The University of Western Australia continues to build on the achievements in this space. UWA has achieved the laudable goal of ensuring a critical mass of staff now have a shared experience around racial consciousness and cultural competence. However, enhanced racial consciousness is not an ‘end’ in itself – it is the important foundation stone upon which further bold and courageous racial equity strategies can be implemented such as those scoped in the UWA CALD Action Plan 2013-2015.

The University must also continue to promote good Race and cultural diversity practice across the higher education sector and beyond. Ongoing racial equity leadership is crucial as organisational research indicates that wins in this area can be transient if sustained effort and authentic engagement are not maintained. The PEG-led Courageous Conversations Summit, where practitioners from across North America meet annually to exchange ideas, share good practice and support each other in this important work, is an excellent model to follow.
The Courageous Conversations About Race program has made a significant contribution towards aligning the culture at UWA with its articulated cultural competence aspirations both within education and employment. The UWA cultural competence aspiration has and is supported by staff who believe the University should continue to demonstrate leadership in this important area. It is important that in the future, the program enrols all staff (with a particular focus on senior management) and continues to further the conversation around Race, cultural diversity and organisational social responsibility. Deepening the dialogue will positively contribute to ensuring the University remains focussed on achieving real outcomes for all members of the diverse UWA community.
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University of Western Australia Law School & Equity and Diversity Office. (2009). *Courageous Conversations about Race: We are Australian*. Retrieved from hr.uwa.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/2231233/CCAR_-_We_are_Australian.pdf
Appendix 1: List of external institutions that have conducted CCAR workshops

Higher Education Sector

  Curtin University
  Deakin University
  Flinders University
  La Trobe University
  Macquarie University
  Melbourne University
  Monash University
  Murdoch University
  Queensland University of Technology
  Southern Cross University
  Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand
  University of Queensland
  University of Southern Queensland
  University of Sydney
  University of Tasmania
  University of Technology Sydney

In addition, staff from Victoria University, James Cook University and the University of Ballarat have attended a CCAR workshop and have expressed interest in exploring its implementation within their institutions.

Government, Independent and Community-Based

  Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWWR)
  Curriculum Council (WA Department of Education and Training)
  Department of Communities (WA Government)
  City of Stirling
  Apprentice Centre (WA Department of Education and Training)
  Beaconsfield Primary School
  Council of International Schools
  RUAH Community Services
  WA Equal Opportunity Commission
  Office of Ethnic Affairs (New Zealand)

Private Sector

  Amana Living Aged Care Centres
  Woodside Energy
  Terra Rosa Consulting Services
Appendix 2: Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) Survey

Please note that the SPOT Survey included slightly different questions in 2009-2010 than what was used in 2012. For details. For groups marked with *, Facilitator Effectiveness was assessed by taking the mean of the following questions:

- The facilitator was knowledgeable about the subject matter
- The facilitator was enthusiastic about the subject matter
- The facilitator communicated efficiently with participants

For groups marked with +, Facilitator Effectiveness was assessed by taking the mean of the following questions:

- The facilitator explained important concepts/ideas and answered questions in ways that I could understand
- The facilitator was enthusiastic about the topic
- Overall, the facilitator effectively supported my learning

For all groups, Workshop Effectiveness was assessed by taking the mean of the following questions:

- The content will be useful to me in the future. I would recommend this workshop to others

Please contact author for further information about SPOT surveys.
Appendix 3: Scales

Scores on all scales (except number 2 – see below) can range from 1-5.

The assessments for these scales were of the following nine constructs:

1. **Intercultural Knowledge Gathering** – The tendency to actively seek information from people of other cultures, so as to gain an insight into issues from a different cultural perspective. High scorers seek knowledge and insights from others, whereas low scorers tend to rely on their own knowledge or perspective (please note that this scale is still under development; Cronbach’s alpha = .74).

2. **Well-being** – Participants were asked to report on their general physical and psychological wellbeing over the few weeks leading up to their assessments (Cronbach’s alpha = .91; note that this scale normally ranges from 1-4, but in this report, so as to improve interpretability, all scores have been raised by one point, thus the range of this scale is 2-5).

3. **Non-judging** – The tendency to consider complex explanations for the unusual behaviour of others as opposed to the tendency to jump to conclusions about the individual. High scorers on this construct will think about situational factors that may lead people to act in a particular way, whereas low scorers will generally believe that people behave the way they do because of who they are. Low scorers therefore tend to be quick to judge people. (Cronbach’s alpha = .63)

4. **Generalised Trust** – The general tendency to expect people to be genuine in their dealings with others and competent. High scorers see the best in others and will assume that the people they are dealing with are upfront and competent. Low scorers tend to be suspicious of other people’s intentions and may doubt their true competence. (Cronbach’s alpha = .732)

5. **Inquisitiveness** – The tendency to seek information about, and experience with, the natural and human world. High scorers read widely and are interested in travel, whereas low scorers have little curiosity about the natural or social sciences. (Cronbach’s alpha = .72)

6. **Self-Efficacy** – The tendency to view one’s self as capable of meeting task demands in a broad array of contexts. High scorers generally feel confident in their own skills and their ability to achieve goals whereas low scorers may doubt their skills or ability to achieve their goals. (Cronbach’s alpha = .70)

7. **Intercultural Language Use** – The tendency to communicate with people from other cultures using language that is familiar to members of that culture. High scorers tend to recognise and avoid using their own cultural idioms when communicating with others from a different culture, whereas low scorers may tend to maintain their typical manner of speech or verbalisms when interacting with people from other cultures (please note that this scale is still under development; Cronbach’s alpha = .60)

8. **Empowering Leadership** – A preference for providing leadership that enables and empowers others. High scorers are keen to lead others in a manner which provides them with latitude to make their own decisions (hence, enabling them), whereas low scorers either have little desire to lead, or prefer to do so in a more directive manner (Cronbach’s alpha = .90).

9. **Sensitivity to the Expressive Behaviour of Others** – The tendency to being aware of others’ emotions and the expressions of these emotions. High scorers are sensitive to others’ emotions and can adjust their own behaviour accordingly. Low scorers can find it difficult to read others’ emotions and can therefore sometimes struggle to behave in a manner that is sensitive to the emotions of others (Cronbach’s alpha = .69).
Appendix 4: Communique from the SDVC, to Heads of Organisational units, UWA

Dear Colleagues

The University has identified cultural competence as a critical attribute for both our staff and graduates, and absolutely vital for a globalised university striving for international excellence. A culturally competent workforce will position us well to respond to the challenges ahead, particularly the anticipated increased engagement with Asia and the Middle East.

The University has recently implemented a mix of initiatives addressing this goal such as the Inter-faith Calendar, various UWA Working Parties, the Vice-Chancellor’s unequivocal Say No to Racism message following the recent attacks on Indian students and the Language and Cultural Exchange (LACE) program. Another innovative strategy, recommended in the UWA Operational Priorities Plan, 2009-2013, relates to the ‘Courageous Conversations about Race’ workshops.

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), Professor Jane Long, launched ‘Courageous Conversations about Race’ workshops in late 2008 with a view to further embedding cultural competence in a meaningful way. These interactive workshops deepen the dialogue by challenging members of the University community to think through the various ways race affects their life and professional practice. Specifically, the session will offer participants an opportunity to:

- Unpack their own unique racial story, linking it to the local, national and global context.
- Understand the concept of race privilege, and how to examine its influence.
- Utilise the insights gained to develop a more meaningful and targeted response around race and culture in a University context.

The positive feedback received from the ‘pilot’ workshops conducted in Semester One this year clearly attest to the fact that participants actively engaged with race both intellectually and emotionally. It is my aspiration that this initiative be implemented progressively across the University with a view to ensuring a critical mass of staff deepen their awareness around issues of race and cultural sensitivity. To this end, I strongly encourage you to hold at least two workshops in your area of responsibility over the course of 2009-2010.

Please contact Malcolm Fialho (malcolm.fialho@uwa.edu.au; ext. 2252) to arrange a workshop and discuss your needs and the context with him.

I trust you will enthusiastically support this initiative, thereby assisting the University community to deepen our engagement with the issues of cultural diversity, race and community harmony.

Yours sincerely

Professor Bill Louden

Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor

22 June 2009
Appendix 5: UWA Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) ACTION PLAN – 2013 - 2015

Executive Summary

As a premier West Australian and Group of 8 University, The University of Western Australia (UWA) reflects state and national diversity trends in both student enrolment and staff demographics. UWA acknowledges its social responsibility and obligations to staff, students and visitors and over the years, has deliberately sought to promote cultural competence, cultural awareness and inclusiveness across the university community.

Founded on contemporary paradigms and grounded in relevant theory, this commitment has been reflected over time in a range of initiatives for staff (including Courageous Conversations About Race and Inclusive Campus Culture), and students (ASPIRE and LACE). Though many of these strategies have evolved independently, a more systematic approach to monitoring, reviewing and developing the area will support the University’s strategic objectives. In short, it remains to unite these initiatives cohesively and comprehensively under one seamless framework.

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Action Plan specifically sets out to create a formal framework under which the various examples of UWA best practice in the area of cultural diversity can sit, to embed good practice structurally, and to support the employment aspirations of existing and prospective staff from Culturally and Linguistically Diversity (CALD) backgrounds. In addition, the Action Plan acknowledges that structural gaps are acted out in predictable ways, and that the system requires monitoring, reviewing and adjustment to promote continued growth and inclusivity. The current scope of the Action Plan is restricted to UWA staff of CALD backgrounds and offers a specific focus on first generation migrants, accents, visible minorities and religious diversity. It does not extend to Indigenous peoples.

Uniting the individual strategies under a single “cultural competence” banner will not only result in a more efficient use of resources, but also enhance cohesion, coherence and systemic “ownership” of the Cultural Competence model across the institution. As Critical Race Theory (CRT) and other evidence show, it is only by embedding cultural competence strategies systematically and systemically that lasting social change, cultural shifts and genuine racial equity can be achieved.

PART A – Context

1. Aim of a CALD Action Plan

The overarching aim is to develop a comprehensive Cultural Competence framework that proactively supports CALD staff at UWA in achieving their full potential. This in turn will assist the University to develop and sustain a culturally competent workforce, well positioned for the future. The Action Plan aims to unite the different elements of the cultural competence ‘conversation’ at UWA in a cohesive manner, and to infuse all areas of planning and practice with cultural awareness. Developed under the auspices of the Vice-Chancellor’s Equity and Diversity Committee and explicitly seeking to explore the impact of unconscious bias on aspects of employment and decision making, the Plan aims to embed good practice structurally, and support the employment aspirations of existing and prospective staff from CALD backgrounds.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Definition and scope

Broadly defined, individuals from a CALD background are those who identify as having specific cultural or linguistic affiliation by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry, ethnic origin, religion, preferred language, language(s) spoken at home, or because of their parents’ identification on a similar basis. The CALD category is broad and complex, including not only refugee and
humanitarian program entrants and new migrants, but also first and second generation migrants. While it is acknowledged that the above definition could apply generically to all Australians, for the purposes of this Plan, the focused effort of the University within the Equity agenda will be on:

- Staff from first generation migrant groups;
- Staff from visible minorities;
- Staff whose first language is other than English; and
- Religious diversity.

The Action Plan will recognise ‘intersections’ in these areas (e.g. religiously diverse migrants from the Commonwealth). The remit will not include Indigenous peoples as it is recognised that the two ‘communities’ are separate and are best served by stand-alone consideration.

1.2.2 UWA Diversity Aspirations

UWA has a diverse workforce. UWA employees come from many different backgrounds and currently provide a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience that contribute directly to excellence at this University. Within the context of its Strategic Plan and Operational Priorities Plan (2009-2013), UWA is committed to developing strategies that will maximise opportunities for all present and future staff to access and participate actively in employment.

The UWA Action Plan directly addresses Diversity aspirations in relation to:

The UWA Operational Priorities Plan (2009-2015) in relation to Priority PR 1.4 and ED 1.4, namely, Create an equitable and diverse work environment and Further equip staff to work with a diverse student population;

Australia’s National Human Rights Action Plan to celebrate Harmony Day annually (Priority 215);

and

Australia’s National Human Rights Commission’s Anti-Racism Strategy.

Flowing from these broader aspirations, other University-based aspirations include:

- Supporting international excellence in a competitive global environment through fostering the success of staff from diverse backgrounds, providing an international benchmark for facilities and standards in teaching and learning, and international engagement.
- Positioning UWA as an Employer of Choice with inclusive employment practices that enable CALD individuals to participate fully in the workplace.
- Tapping into the ‘talent’ pool of CALD employees, releasing the potential at UWA for creativity and innovation, and building on the foundations and achievements of the UWA Workforce Diversity Strategy (2002-2009).
- Enhancing esteem for the University by promoting an inclusive culture, that reduces claims of potential or systemic discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality or religious belief.

1.2.3 Cultural Competence Achievements at UWA to date

The Cultural Competence strategy for staff at UWA over the past decade has taken the approach of engaging (invite the conversation), sustaining (keep the conversation going), and deepening (extend the conversation to deeper levels of knowledge, understanding and action) [Appendix A]. There are also a number of initiatives and policies specifically targeted at students regarding cultural awareness, diversity and inclusiveness [Appendix B]. Overall, UWA has embraced the need to provide cultural competence training, and aspires to create a comprehensive framework for developing this attribute. The inception of local innovative workshop, training and awareness programs in addition to a national community of practice profile, has cemented the University’s
position as the flagship for cultural competence training in the sector and as a national leader in
the area.

1.2.4 Demographic Contexts (our state, the region & future trends)

The 2011 WA census\(^1\) confirms that WA is still “Australia’s most culturally, linguistically and
religiously diverse state”.\(^2\) Since the 2006 Census the proportion of WA people born overseas has
risen from 27.1% to 30.1%, and usual residents who speak a language other than English at home
increased from 11.6 to 14.5% of the WA population.\(^3\) While the overseas born demographic
continues to originate primarily from Commonwealth countries,\(^4\) there is a definite change in the
composition of the top five countries of origin with India replacing Italy in the top 4.\(^5\) Significantly,
there is also a reported change in religious affiliation with increases in Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu
affiliations, and an overall decline in Christianity.\(^6\)

The staff and student population at UWA broadly reflect the Census findings. As at March 2011,
more than 22% of staff reported being from culturally diverse backgrounds.\(^7\) UWA students are
similarly diverse with indigenous, overseas-born, and international students well-represented in
the general student population, reflecting a range of 80 different languages.\(^8\) Responding to this
diversity, and in line with its policies and procedures promoting inclusivity and cultural
consciousness, UWA has a number of specifically targeted CALD-focussed initiatives (see
Appendices A and B).

The Action Plan reflects the aspirations of the University going forward not just to reflect the
diversity of the WA community, but to prepare students and staff to engage with changing global
opportunities. Recent inquiries\(^9\) have emphasised the need to develop an ‘Asia Capable’
workforce,\(^10\) and to prepare for the so-called ‘Asian Century’.\(^11\) Thus the CALD Action Plan looks
not only to develop the University’s local capacity, but also to extend its capability to participate
globally in a changing economic, political and social environment.

1.2.5 Identifying the ‘Gap’

Research demonstrates that specific cultural (CALD) gaps exist in all Western liberal democracies,
reflected in various systems and institutions, and that they play out in relatively predictable ways.
Such gaps may be illuminated by applying analytical frameworks such as Critical Race Theory
(CRT).\(^12\) CRT has emerged as a “powerful theoretical and analytical framework”\(^13\) within the
education context over the last decade. It offers 5 tenets through which the educational context
can be viewed with regard to race\(^14\), thus providing a useful analytical lens through which systemic

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1. Available at www.omi.wa.gov.au
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. The top 5 countries of origin in the WA population are UK, New Zealand, South Africa, India and Malaysia (2011 Census).
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. UWA Commencing Staff Census, March 2011.
    www.theaustralian.com.au
13. Ibid., p. 27.
14. Race in the UWA context means the socially constructed meaning attached to a variety of attributes including but not limited to skin and
    eye colour, hair texture, bone structure and accent of people in Australia and elsewhere.
Appendix 5

racism\textsuperscript{15} can be identified, examined and “unpacked”. CRT is underpinned by a commitment to social justice and social change, which is why its use has proven so effective in educational settings. Making the consideration of cultural diversity a conscious and deliberate feature of all facets of University life assists in reducing systemic discrimination stemming from both conscious and unconscious bias based on race, ethnicity, accent/language competence, nationality or religious belief.

CRT may be translated within the university context as follows:

1. The language and dialogue of the institution may not offer sufficient opportunities for minority voices to be heard, perpetuating racial stereotypes;
2. “Racism” is accepted as a permanent feature that cannot be eradicated entirely and continues to be manifested in subtle and covert ways in the institution;
3. Access to and use of educational opportunities within the institution are more often afforded to those from the majority culture;
4. The majority culture in the institution controls the flow and speed of change to maintain the status quo and power ‘differential’; and
5. Some approaches preferred by the institution (e.g. “colour blindness” and incremental change) may not result in actual or lasting change.

If the gaps identified by CRT can be assumed to exist, then a systematic framework can be established to monitor good practice and to ensure that it continues.

1.3 Rationale

1.3.1 Unconscious Bias and Privilege

Unconscious bias in the workplace is characterised as making decisions in favour of one group, to the detriment of others, without realising one is doing so. Individuals are hard-wired to react in certain ways and everyone has subtle hidden barriers or ingrained stereotypes of which they are often unaware. Unconscious bias may inadvertently perpetuate the privilege of the majority (numerically and culturally/racially) group. This phenomenon has been explored in relation to barriers that have impeded people in the workplace based on subjective factors that are not actually related to individual performance or qualifications (e.g. the ‘Bamboo ceiling’).\textsuperscript{16} The literature suggests that these hidden barriers include language\textsuperscript{17}, accent, skin colour, lack of perceived ‘fit’ owing to cultural distance, and a low level of awareness of racial matters. They can have an impact on such workplace factors as decision-making, recruitment, access to professional development opportunities, and staff progression.

While the term “bamboo ceiling” was originally coined to describe and explore a lack of career progression among Asian-Americans, it can be extended to include other members of the Australian CALD community who may experience similar barriers to opportunity and advancement. Recent Australian studies demonstrate unequivocally that unconscious bias (as well as more conscious and overt forms of discrimination) can affect recruitment, employment and advancement of CALD staff. One such Australian study analyses the experience of racialised minority groups in the health profession.\textsuperscript{18} According to the authors, the study not only examines

\textsuperscript{15} Systemic Racism (aka Institutionalised racism) refers to institutional policies, practices and systems that result in the unjustified negative treatment (conscious or unconscious) of members of a racial or ethnic group.

\textsuperscript{16} The term “Bamboo ceiling” was coined in Jane Hyun’s book, Breaking the Bamboo Ceiling: Career Strategies for Asians (2005).

\textsuperscript{17} Note that to be eligible for admission to a UWA undergraduate or postgraduate-coursework program, every student must demonstrate satisfactory performance in a UWA-approved test of English. This is also the case when English is their first language. This English Language Competence (ELC) requirement is set out in the University Policy on English Language Competence at universitypolicies.uwa.edu.au. Staff are not required to prove or test for ELC in a like manner.

\textsuperscript{18} Mapedzahama, V., Rudge, T., West, S and Perron A. Nursing Inquiry 2012; 19: 153–164.
racism in a specific workplace context, but also ‘exposes the subtle, mundane nature of contemporary racism’.\(^\text{19}\) Another Australian study (based on three large-scale field experiments) revealed unconscious bias by exposing would-be employers and recruitment agencies to a range of every-day workplace choices.\(^\text{20}\) The study revealed that based on name and accent alone, CALD applicants would be required to apply for 50% more jobs than applicants from non-diverse backgrounds to achieve an interview.\(^\text{21}\) In terms of WA, a report on Refugees to WA found that institutional or systemic discrimination was a significant factor in skilled refugees experiencing "unemployment, loss of occupational status and secondary niche market placement in the employment market". Drawing on earlier studies (Rydgren 2004; Essed 1991; Shih 2002), the report concluded that recruitment practices that discriminate against minorities include not only expressed requirements such as English language proficiency, qualifications and assessment procedures, but also "soft skill" requirements such as having the right attitude, getting along well with co-workers, and having good communication with customers.\(^\text{22}\) Following from this latter finding, it has recently been mooted that contemporary recruitment criteria including "corporate fit" and "attitude" might represent a new form of "tacit" workplace discrimination, further tapping into unconscious bias.\(^\text{23}\)

The Australian research highlights the need to investigate the existence of potential barriers in the workplace, and to identify, name and ameliorate unconscious bias.

1.3.2 A culturally competent university aims to dismantle the twin barriers of Unconscious Bias and Privilege by proactively encouraging/supporting:

- the increased participation of visible and invisible minorities, valuing and affirming diverse ‘voices’ and ‘knowledge’;
- culturally responsive orientation/induction processes;
- a critical mass of staff with a high level of cultural ‘consciousness’
- a culturally responsive policy environment and the establishment of appropriate cultural protocols including opportunities to participate in decision-making;
- culturally diverse perspectives in teaching and learning; and
- meaningful community engagement with culturally diverse communities.

To support the aspiration of becoming a culturally competent University, an overarching plan has been developed, with strategic initiatives assembled under a formalised framework. A phase of "managed coherence" is proposed that draws together the suite of cultural competence offerings at the University under the key result areas of Employment, Inclusive Culture, Cultural Awareness and Leadership as detailed in Part B of this document.

\(^{19}\) Ibid. Synopsis.
\(^{21}\) Ibid.
CALD APPENDIX A

Cultural Competence Achievements at UWA to date (Staff)

The strategic and proactive steps taken in the CALD space at UWA to date include:

- (2001-2005) Local level “championing” of cultural awareness through the Workforce Diversity Strategy, and Equity and Diversity workshops;
- (2006) Introduction of a generic anti-racism program, *Citizens of the Globe – In Tune with Difference*, created by Equity and Diversity at UWA with the assistance of a Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) community grant;
- (2006) Development of *Citizens of the Globe* Race and Cultural Diversity Resource Manual (funded by a UWA Teaching Fellowship) to extend the critical cultural diversity model and provide a practical resource for raising key theoretical concepts in the UWA curriculum;
- (2008) Inception of *Courageous Conversations About Race* (CCAR) facilitated workshops for UWA staff;
- (2008-2009) Customisation and dissemination of the Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit (CDIP);
- (2009) Approval of University Policy on English Language Training Leave;
- (2009-2010) *Indigenous Dialogues* and roll out of *More Courageous Conversations About Race* (MCCAR);
- (2010-2011) Development of the CCAR Facilitator Development Manual and workshops on cultural competence facilitation within a national community of practice within the higher education sector;
- (2011) Launch of national *Conversations About Race Facilitator Development Manual*;
- English Language Support for Teachers Program;
- International Postgraduate Tutors Program.

CALD APPENDIX B

Cultural Competence Achievements at UWA to date (Students)

The strategic and proactive steps taken in the CALD space at UWA to date include:

- **ASPIRE**: a community partnership model that encourages students who would not normally consider university as an option to see the benefits and opportunities that university study offers. Many of the participating students are from CALD backgrounds;
- **FAIRWAY UWA**: offers an alternative pathway to UWA by supporting eligible students during Year 12. The program recognises that students who face financial hardship and other difficult circumstances are often prevented from achieving their true academic potential;
- **Language and Cultural Exchange (LACE) program** is open to postgraduate students and staff and provides opportunities for people from many different countries and cultures to meet up socially;
- **Cultural competence/Race training** embedded in UWA curriculum across 7 faculties and in 3 Post-Graduate Professional programmes;
- (2008-2009) Customisation and dissemination of the Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit (CDIP);
- (2009-2010) *Indigenous Dialogues*;
**PART B – IMPLEMENTATION**

The broad key areas for “Action” are Employment (Build), Inclusiveness (Promote), Cultural Competence (Create) and Leadership (Connect) [below].

**UWA CALD ACTION PLAN: 2013 - 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Result Areas (KRAs)</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Responsibility (*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Employment** (Build – Attraction, recruitment, retention, engagement) | • Devise means to capture and meaningfully analyse qualitative and quantitative data around CALD employment and workforce participation at UWA (Is there a ‘CALD’ ceiling? Are there pockets of under-representation? Is Affirmative Action required? If so, in what areas of activity).  
• Develop targeted recruitment, retention and development strategies reflective of diversity aspirations.  
• Induction processes reviewed to include CALD sensitivity.  
• Professional development /culturally specific support. | • Remove any structures and/or practices that may act as a barrier to recruitment, retention and career advancement of CALD staff e.g. selection-panel training and composition to include CALD representation where possible.  
• Develop CALD-inclusive processes for enhanced participation in decision-making e.g. committee membership  
• Recognise employee entitlement to “English Language Training Leave” (see UWA Policy) and English Language Support, and the benefit of its use in PDR/PAR discussions. | • Develop and publish a comprehensive UWA Cultural Diversity policy statement.  
• Consider amendments to Position descriptions / Job Advertisements where appropriate to stipulate competency in a language other than English and other typically CALD-specific skills that might value add. | Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
Director HR  
Heads of organisational units |
### Key Result Areas (KRAs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusive Culture</th>
<th>Build/Embed Cultural Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement initiatives to provide targeted support to staff from CALD backgrounds e.g. ‘culturally safe’ conversation space, CALD staff network.</td>
<td>• Implement (augment existing) initiatives to enhance cultural competence and racial ‘consciousness’ for all staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Augment existing ‘infrastructure’ to support an inclusive workplace environment.</td>
<td>• Provide information and clarification around CALD-specific terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote UWA’s public image and reputation as an inclusive organisation that supports and values cultural diversity.</td>
<td>• Scope new and emerging diversity phenomena and best practice models from a range of employment sectors to inform UWA best practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide/enhance facilities for CALD staff as required e.g. facilities for staff with compulsory religious observance requirements (39).</td>
<td>• Development of a Cultural Competence Facilitators Network to conduct <em>Courageous Conversations about Race / Diversity Dialogues</em> within Faculties/ organisational divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Policy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inclusion of explicit CALD expertise in complaint management policies, procedures and processes</td>
<td>• Embed cultural strategies (e.g. expressed capacity) in positions descriptions &amp; recruitment training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility (*)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responsibility (*)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, HR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Director, Equity and Diversity</td>
<td>Associate Director, Equity and Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heads of Organisational Units</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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(1) Religious observance requirements are said to be ‘compulsory’ if they are a requirement of an individual’s religious observation over which they cannot exercise personal choice in terms of when or where the observance takes place (e.g. Ramadan, Sabbath days, prayer requirements, religious dress requirements etc.)
### Key Result Areas (KRAs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership – UWA and beyond (Connect diversity aspirations with inclusive ‘best’ practice)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Embed responsive cross-cultural management and leadership strategies across the University and broader higher education sector.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Link existing, and new, CALD initiatives to the Leadership Framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Practice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• UWA executive and senior managers to support, oversee and be accountable for the management of CALD strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consolidate and extend the National Community of Practice around Race and Cultural Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Audit key UWA policies to ensure cultural competence aspirations are imbed within them e.g. Leadership Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility (*)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Deputy Vice – Chancellor</td>
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<td>Heads of organisational units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Diversity Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) Includes Deans, Heads of School, UWA Librarian, Senior Managers Group (Professional and Academic)