

QUICK OVERVIEW: GUIDE TO EMBEDDING ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES IN ENGINEERING EDUCATION

[TAILOR THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT]

After starting with the right motivation (mutual learning), identifying an educational focus, considering an Aboriginal perspective, and working with Community to ensure representation of this perspective, you will now be able to tailor the learning environment for students.

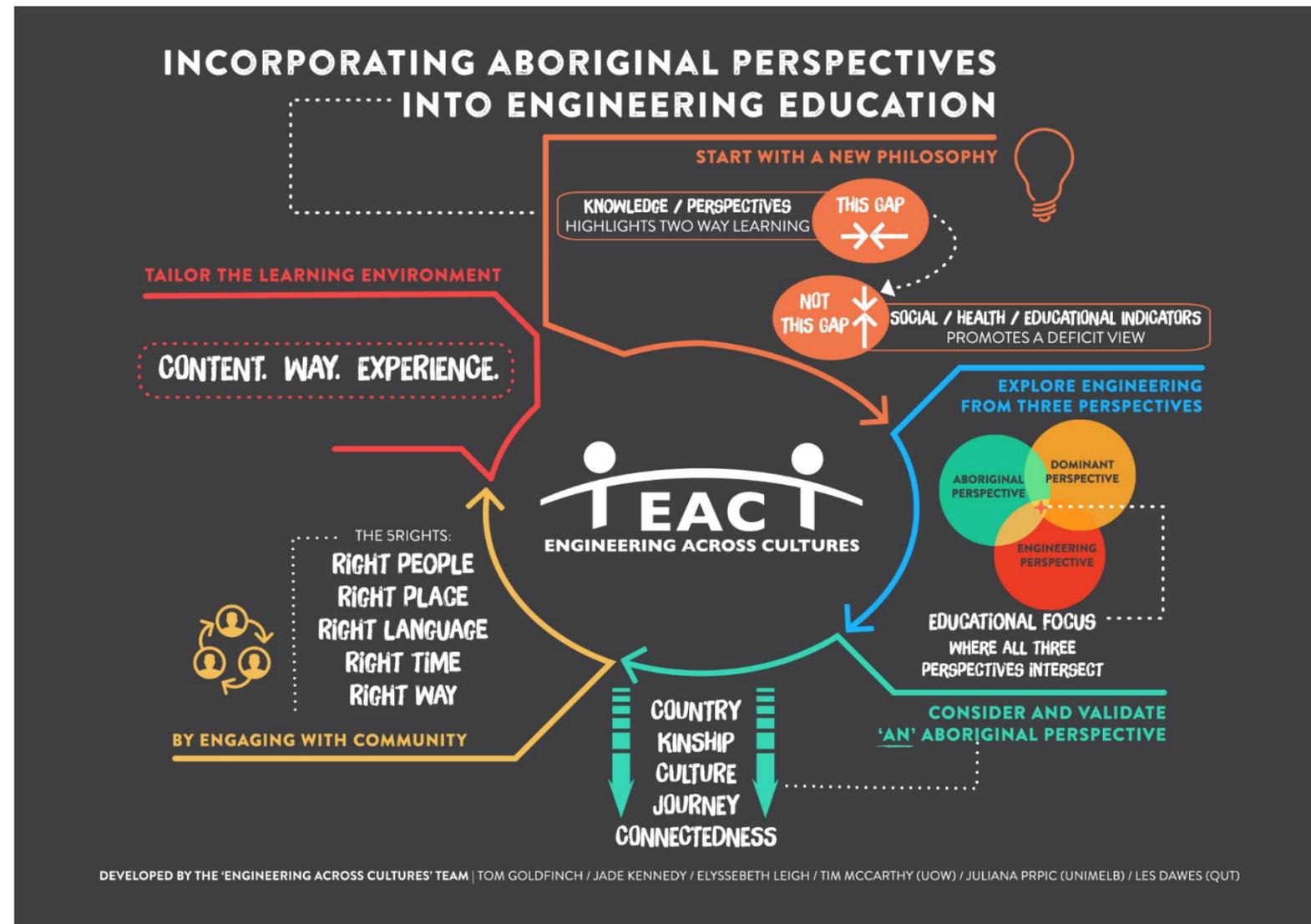
Content is what you provide: data, examples, project briefs, stories, histories, written information etc.

Way is what you facilitate: the involvement of Aboriginal people, the requirement for students to consider multiple perspectives, how you structure the learning experience.

Experience is the students' learning journey: the people they meet, the challenges they overcome, and the perspectives they consider.

[BY ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY]

Ensuring appropriate representation of an Aboriginal perspective requires careful consideration of multiple factors. The 5Rights is a simple model, almost a checklist, for ensuring that a respectful and effective Engineering education – Aboriginal community partnership can occur. For more detail see page 10 of the draft guidelines.



[START WITH A NEW PHILOSOPHY]

Initiatives in Indigenous inclusion often focus on statistics in social, health and educational indicators as motivating factors. This can promote a deficit view of Aboriginal people and result in actions designed to 'help' people. In this model we acknowledge the need for better understanding and communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and that this can only occur on a level playing field. The model overall is about furthering learning for all involved, not 'helping' Aboriginal people. For more detail see page 6 of the draft guidelines.

[EXPLORE ENGINEERING FROM THREE PERSPECTIVES]

To encourage all students to explore, consider and value Aboriginal perspectives, an educational focus must be identified where multiple perspectives have importance. For example, an Aboriginal community led development, where Community goals and ways of working take priority, but any engineered artefact must still comply with design/building/development codes developed and endorsed in the dominant (ie. Western) perspective. Any educational focus where competing perspectives and engineering activity is involved may be appropriate. For more detail see page 7 of the draft guidelines.

[CONSIDER AND VALIDATE AN ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVE]

There is no such thing as 'THE' Aboriginal perspective. While similarities exist across countries and communities, care must be taken to ensure that an appropriate Aboriginal perspective is represented in the learning context in an appropriate way. The perspective detailed here is an example, developed in consultation with Aboriginal elders in the Illawarra and South Coast regions of NSW. For more detail see page 8 of the draft guidelines.