



Australian Government

AHCASW501A Survey and report on Aboriginal cultural sites

Release 1

AHCASW501A Survey and report on Aboriginal cultural sites

Modification History

Release	TP Version	Comments
1	AHC10v5	Initial release

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the surveying and reporting of Aboriginal cultural sites.

Application of the Unit

This unit applies to those working in Aboriginal communities and on Country in cultural landscapes and with cultural sites and objects. The unit applies to working with lore/law men and women either as an autonomous Sites worker or under the supervision and cultural authority of Traditional Owner/s and/or Elder/s for specific Country and is also applicable to the work of repatriation workers and anthropologists. This unit applies to all Aboriginal-sites workers. Cultural beliefs and practices vary across locations and communities however and in some situations non-Aboriginal learners may not be able to access the cultural knowledge and/or materials required to achieve competency in this unit. This applies when restrictions are applied to non-Aboriginal people gaining access to cultural knowledge, material or sites. In these situations the Registered Training Organisation will have to make alternative arrangements for learners that are still consistent with the delivery and assessment requirements for this unit.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.

Pre-Requisites

AHCILM306A Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Identify, communicate and consult with key stakeholders	<p>1.1 The identification by <i>cultural authorities</i> of appropriate persons within communities who hold cultural knowledge relevant to determining the <i>cultural significance</i> of Aboriginal places and heritage is applied</p> <p>1.2 Communication and consultation methodologies that place <i>Aboriginal cultural protocols</i> and values at the forefront and accommodate stakeholder concerns and interests are developed and implemented</p> <p>1.3 Traditional ownership of <i>Aboriginal sites, cultural material, and objects</i> is confirmed</p> <p>1.4 Approval is obtained from relevant Traditional Owners and Cultural managers for work to be carried out and for access to the Aboriginal site for the specific persons who will conduct work</p> <p>1.5 Working relationships with <i>key stakeholders</i> that assist in the management of culturally significant places are developed</p> <p>1.6 Client needs for deliverables required in a formal Sites survey report are scoped and documented</p> <p>1.7 Research on the <i>Burra Charter process</i> and on other <i>existing industry guidelines</i> to ensure proper processes are planned for is undertaken and applied to assessment processes</p>
2. Collect initial site data	<p>2.1 Site plans and maps are sourced and verified including topographical maps</p> <p>2.2 Required resources are identified and acquired</p> <p>2.3 A base plan of the site is prepared</p> <p>2.4 Site orientation is undertaken and location, geographic and operational boundaries are defined and verified</p> <p>2.5 Current land use and environmental problems and threats are identified and recorded</p> <p>2.6 Covenants that could affect the site or report are identified and recorded</p> <p>2.7 Climate and weather conditions are ascertained from historical data</p>
3. Compile a site inventory	<p>3.1 <i>Site context</i>, location and <i>site information data</i> is categorised and recorded accurately</p> <p>3.2 <i>Features data</i> is categorised and recorded accurately</p> <p>3.3 Cultural material, objects, properties and relevant physical characteristics are identified and recorded on site inventory</p> <p>3.4 Relevant <i>field research</i> is undertaken</p> <p>3.5 Appropriate <i>techniques and tools</i> and relevant <i>archaeological</i></p>

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	<p><i>practices</i> and procedures are implemented</p> <p>3.6 Structural elements are located and existing services and facilities confirmed</p> <p>3.7 The presence, location and/or extent of other relevant site constraints are recorded</p> <p>3.8 Limits of acceptable change in the forms of deterioration and damage to the places of cultural significance are developed to legislative and enterprise requirements</p>
4. Review, assess and record the site data	<p>4.1 Engagement of <i>relevant expertise</i> and consultant services are obtained when required</p> <p>4.2 An assessment of cultural significance is conducted</p> <p>4.3 A statement of cultural significance is documented</p>
5. Determine the impact of threats to the site	<p>5.1 Threats to <i>culturally significant places</i>, both external and internal to the area under consideration, are identified</p> <p>5.2 A risk assessment of all threats to determine potential impact on sites and associated cultural landscape is undertaken</p> <p>5.3 Risk management strategies and protection/conservation measures to control risks are developed and implemented</p> <p>5.4 A risk management report that incorporates an impact analysis is developed and documented</p> <p>5.5 Policy changes required to address the threats are documented to enterprise requirements</p>
6. Document a site survey report	<p>6.1 Site information is documented into a site assessment report or site survey report</p> <p>6.2 Assessment report incorporates all relevant data from the site assessment in line with client needs and the requirements of relevant legislation and regulations</p> <p>6.3 Specific recommendations for remedial action of site conservation and mitigation of site problems are provided and recorded as appropriate</p> <p>6.4 Recommendations for appropriate risk controls of site hazards are formulated and documented</p> <p>6.5 Survey and assessment data are stored and maintained as part of professional practice</p> <p>6.6 Client-stakeholder is informed and advised of the content and implications of the report and a copy is presented</p>

Required Skills and Knowledge

Required skills include:

Ability to:

- respect cultural diversity and sensitivity to social, cultural and professional values and beliefs
- perform work operations to Aboriginal Community protocols
- use contemporary mainstream and Aboriginal site surveying and archaeological techniques as required
- develop risk management strategies for a specified area
- engage external expertise and consultants
- use literacy skills to fulfil job roles as required by the organisation. The level of skill may range from reading, interpreting following organisational policies and procedures, developing sequenced written instructions, recording information collected accurately and legibly
- use technology for accessing, interpreting and developing a wide range of visual and written information sources to complete written documentation
- co-ordinate and work within teams in Community environments
- use oral communication skills/language competence to fulfil the job role as specified by the organisation including questioning, active listening, enabling clarification, negotiating and refining solutions and responding to a range of complex views
- use numeracy skills to estimate, calculate and record complex workplace measures
- use interpersonal skills to work with others and relate to people from diverse cultural, social and religious backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- exercise discretion and confidentiality

Required knowledge includes:

Knowledge of:

- Aboriginal history, cultural values and interpersonal and Community protocols
- authentic and authoritative sources for Aboriginal cultural information, material and expression able to be accessed and shared
- site survey techniques, procedures and processes
- a range of archaeological and scientific concepts
- monitoring including fabric deterioration, damage and likely causes of deterioration and damage
- general understanding of impacts of natural resources, such as geological settings, ecological processes, and interaction between natural and cultural processes
- policies applying across all levels of government and within the specific region
- international treaties, agreements and charters
- Australian Natural Heritage Charter and the Burra Charter and Guidelines
- design, methodology and implementation of consultation processes
- policy analysis and impact statements

- the range of conservation strategies for cultural areas
- data submission systems and report documentation
- Cultural and Heritage Legislation or relevant NPWS legislation
- sustainable environmental practices
- workplace health and safety requirements

Evidence Guide

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Overview of assessment

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

The delivery and assessment of this unit must comply with Community protocols and be carried out in consultation with and in participation with Traditional Owners and/or Elders and custodians of that specific Country.

In accordance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, cultural knowledge copyright considerations and Aboriginal lore/law restrictions, it is essential that this requirement be respected and implemented in the delivery and assessment of *Cultural Units* to guarantee cultural authenticity and quality control around the delivery of training and assessment for Aboriginal Sites workers.

Candidates must demonstrate evidence of the ability to:

- identify appropriate Aboriginal cultural authorities for a Community, place or Site
- identify key stakeholders to be consulted in relation to owners/custodians of cultural and Community knowledge, information and/or material and cultural significance
- survey and assess Aboriginal cultural sites
- use appropriate techniques, tools and relevant archaeological practices
- incorporate the cultural significance, heritage values and conservation issues of an Aboriginal cultural site into report documentation
- identify threats and develop controls to mitigate and manage the risk of deterioration, damaging incidents or loss of cultural integrity
- develop a risk management report on Aboriginal cultural sites that incorporates an impact analysis
- document a Site survey report on Aboriginal cultural sites including submissions to be completed
- observe Aboriginal cultural protocols in dealing with stakeholders and land managers
- describe natural resources and how they relate to

	<p>cultural protocol, spirituality, art, environment, values, beliefs and lore/law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the cultural rights and responsibilities when using Community knowledge, information and material
Context of and specific resources for assessment	<p>Assessment events must be contextualised to meet the needs of the particular group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on Country, a Community, educational or workplace setting including Aboriginal cultural keeping places involvement of people approved by cultural authorities and/or Traditional Owners of the relevant local Community candidates who have gained relevant knowledge and skills through their life experience <p>Resources which may be useful in assessment for this unit include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burra Charter Draft Guidelines for the Protection, Management and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Places
Method of assessment	<p>A range of assessment methods should be used to assess competency in the surveying and reporting of Aboriginal sites. The following examples are appropriate for this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> observation of the candidate on Country and/or in Aboriginal cultural keeping places protecting cultural sites and/or cultural material and objects direct questioning combined with third-party workplace reports of on-the-job performance verbal or written questioning observation of participation in Ceremony and/or Sites work related to the knowledge and skills outlined in this unit <p>Assessment methods should closely reflect workplace demands and the needs of particular client groups (consider the requirements of different age groups, clients with English as a second language, clients with disabilities, remote library users, etc.).</p>
Guidance information for assessment	<p>Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended.</p>

	<p>AHCASW312A Maintain an Aboriginal cultural site</p> <p>AHCASW302A Relate Aboriginal culture to sites work</p> <p>AHCILM306A Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols</p> <p>AHCASW303A Identify and record Aboriginal sites, objects and cultural landscapes</p> <p>AHCASW305A Work with Aboriginal ceremonial secret sacred materials</p> <p>AHCASW308A Apply cultural significance to Aboriginal sites and Landscapes</p> <p>Assessment for this unit should comprise a combination of theory and practical application. Both aspects of assessment are best conducted on Country for this unit.</p>
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Range Statement

<p>The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.</p>	
<p><i>Cultural authorities</i> may include</p>	<p>Cultural authority refers to the most appropriate senior person/s that is able to speak for particular Country, cultural objects, ceremony and/or materials in a specific place. A cultural authority could be a Traditional Owner, a Native Title Claimant, Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Body, Elder, Aboriginal Land Council, etc.</p> <p>A ceremonial/cultural manager in terms of Aboriginal customary law means someone who does the work either under the direct supervision of the Aboriginal Owner or does the work that is authorised by the Owner. In a ceremony for example, the ceremonial manager(s) may provide the food and do the performance (work). Traditional roles and responsibilities swap over depending on a person's status in any given situation – ie – whose land / estate one is on for business.</p>
<p><i>Cultural significance</i> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations • significance embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects
<p><i>Aboriginal cultural protocols</i> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender roles in relation to knowledge and cultural practices • information sensitivity and access • appropriate information transfer • negotiations with local Aboriginal Community about information transfer • cultural diversity • natural resources and their importance for economy, religion, spirituality, art, environment, values, beliefs and lore/law • rights and responsibilities associated with cultural knowledge, story, song, Site, and ceremony • interpersonal ways of relating • the talking of Community politics • repatriation of artefacts • issues of ownership (clans/nations) • ownership of intellectual property • acknowledging participation and ownership • communicating about cultural material

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displaying cultural material • handling cultural material • identifying appropriate people to be consulted • occasions when consultation is required • ways in which consultations should be conducted
<i>Aboriginal sites</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shelters with deposits • open camp site • midden • shelter with midden • shelter with art • isolated find • undefined sites • axe grinding grooves • bora/ceremonial ring • burial site • rock engraving • scarred tree • carved tree • natural mythological site • restricted site • quarry • ochre quarry • fish trap • stone arrangement • mound (oven) • mia mia • waterhole (well) • contact/mission • abraded grooves • Aboriginal Place (declared under NPW Act) • Aboriginal Area (declared under NPW Act) • protected archaeological site • Conservation agreement • massacre • reserve
<i>Aboriginal objects</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical objects such as stone tools, Aboriginal-built fences and stockyards, scarred trees, the remains of fringe camps • material deposited on the land, such as middens • the ancestral remains of Aboriginal people • stones and stone tools • art and artworks • shells

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-human bones and organic materials
Key stakeholders may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Land Councils • Indigenous Ranger groups • Traditional Owners and Cultural managers • Aboriginal communities and Clans • museums • Culture and Heritage government departments and representatives • National Parks personnel • sites workers • archaeologists • anthropologists
Burra Charter process includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the cultural significance of a place and other issues affecting its future are best understood by a sequence of collecting and analysing information before making decisions. Understanding cultural significance comes first, then development of policy and finally management of the place in accordance with the policy • the policy for managing a place must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance • policy development should also include consideration of other factors affecting the future of a place such as the owner's needs, resources, external constraints and its physical condition
Existing industry guidelines may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Draft Guidelines for the Protection, Management and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Places
Site context may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • landform • landform unit • vegetation • land use • proximity to water • open • closed
Site information data may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general information • datum • zone • date recorded • site context • Aboriginal features • site dimensions • site plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • story • ceremony • site Aboriginal Community interpretation • site Aboriginal Community recommendations • site assessment • cultural analysis • scientific analysis • management recommendations • endorsement by cultural authority
Features data may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • type • material • description • dimensions • context • condition • site name • environment • plan • importance • recommended action
Field research may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • field observations and manual recording • identification of features • assessing condition • taking, preserving and examining samples • taking photographic records • obtaining geographic/longitudinal data • mapping of cycles of seasons and species • planning information collection to cover specific seasonal impacts • recording species, populations, densities and health of the species • establishing databases and loading records
Techniques and tools may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • traditional Aboriginal knowledge and processes • hand tools and power tools • excavation and construction equipment • surveying and sampling tools • recording and reporting technological equipment • location and geographic equipment • archaeological techniques and equipment
Archaeological practices may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of existing knowledge • survey

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • landscape context • Aboriginal land use • site definition • site recording • location information • geographic reporting • survey analysis • test excavation • artifact/object recording • attribute recording • archaeological reporting
<i>Relevant expertise</i> may include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • archaeologists • Traditional Owners and/or Elders • surveyors • anthropologists • environmental scientists • historians • researchers
<i>Culturally significant places</i> may include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas of non-Aboriginal activity • Aboriginal sites • landscapes • buildings and other structures • natural areas of Aboriginal cultural significance • historical events and monuments • areas of Aboriginal activity such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • burial • occupation and contact sites • engravings • grinding grooves • rock pictures • fish traps • middens • mounds

Unit Sector(s)

Aboriginal-sites work