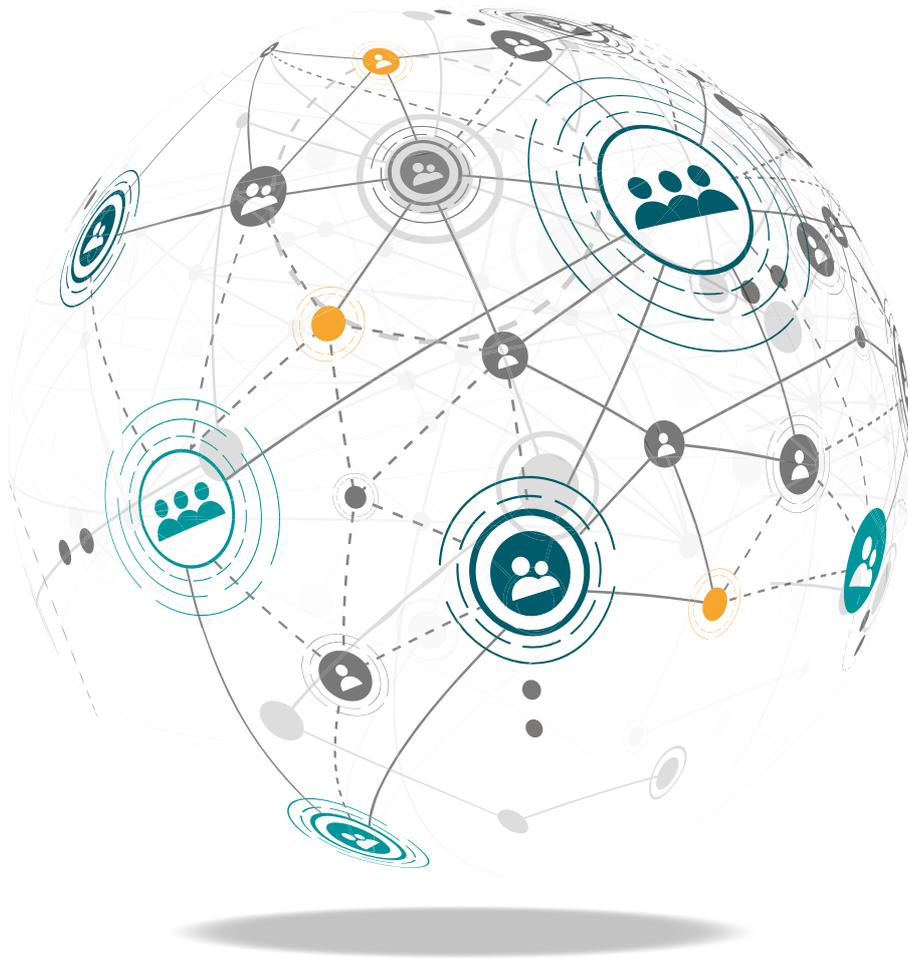


Multicultural Queensland Charter guide

A guide to understanding the
Multicultural Queensland Charter and
how to apply it in everyday life.



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What is the Multicultural Queensland Charter?

A charter is ‘a formal document describing the rights, aims, or principles of an organisation or group of people’.

The Multicultural Queensland Charter (the Charter) is enshrined in the *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016*. It sets out Queensland’s vision of being an inclusive, harmonious and united state.

The Charter begins with a preamble that honours Queensland’s first peoples, and acknowledges Queensland’s long history of migration.

The Charter has eight principles which speak of: democracy and laws; working together; freedom of expression; equality and equity; mutual respect and fair treatment; participation; communication and understanding; and belonging and resilience.

All Queenslanders can bring these principles to life in their community, workplace or school.

Preamble

The Parliament

- honours the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and their ancient and enduring cultures
- acknowledges the achievements of our forebears, coming from many backgrounds, and that a bringing together of the cultures of people from many backgrounds forms an integral part of Queensland's identity
- recognises that diversity deepens and enriches our community and provides an invaluable asset for Queensland's future.

Plain English

We all honour Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We have a strong history of migration, and cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and traditions
<https://www.qld.gov.au/about/about-queensland/history/aboriginal>
- Arrange for a Welcome to Country (where appropriate) or ensure there is an Acknowledgement of Country at events and meetings
<https://www.qld.gov.au/atsi/cultural-awareness-heritage-arts/welcome-to-country>

- Learn about the different cultures, religions and languages spoken in Queensland today
<https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/multicultural-communities/search-diversity-queensland.html>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Observe days of significance including National Close the Gap Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

<https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-rights/for-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people/significant-dates>

For example, think about ways you can celebrate NAIDOC week in your workplace, school or community.

Ways you can do this include:

- Display the National NAIDOC Poster or other Indigenous posters around your classroom or workplace.
- Start your own hall of fame featuring Indigenous role models.
- Listen to Indigenous musicians or watch a movie about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.
- Make your own Indigenous trivia quiz.
- Study a famous Indigenous Australian.
- Research the traditional Indigenous owners of your area.
- Study Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and crafts.
- Research Indigenous history online or visit your library to find books about Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples.
- Visit local Indigenous sites of significance or interest.
- Learn the meanings of local or national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander place names and words.
- Invite local Indigenous Elders to speak or give a Welcome to Country at your school or workplace.
- Invite an Indigenous sportsperson or artist to visit you.
- Invite Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander dancers to perform.
- Host a community BBQ or luncheon.
- Hold a flag raising ceremony.
- Organise a smoking ceremony.

Visit www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/plan-your-event to get involved.

Principle 1

A shared commitment to Queensland and Australia, and a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law, fosters a strong and unified community.

Plain English

We all are committed to democracy and Australian laws so our community is strong and unified.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Understand your legal rights in Queensland <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights>
- Learn about your responsibilities as an Australian citizen <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/citizenship-subsite/Pages/Learn-about-being-an-Australian.aspx>
- Participate in Queensland Day celebrations <https://www.qld.gov.au/about/events-awards-honours/events/queensland-day>
- Learn about the democratic process in Australia <https://www.moadoph.gov.au/democracy/australian-democracy/>
- Be an informed voter <https://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How to Vote/>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Learn about how you can be involved in the democratic process.

There are many ways you can be involved, including:

- Contacting your elected representative to let them know what you think, get advice or help, or pass on a suggestion or good idea.
- Joining a political party to be involved in selecting candidates (or becoming one) and developing policies.
- Sending a submission to a parliamentary committee on an issue that matters to you.
- Attending your local council meetings.
- Being an informed voter and voting for the candidates who you believe will represent you well.

Source: <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/get-involved/how-do-i-get-involved>

If you have recently settled in Australia, you might still be getting used to the democratic system. You may like to check out SBS's Settlement Guide, which has some information on having your say in Australia as part of the democratic process.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/radio/audiotrack/having-say-australia-part-democratic-process-o>

Principle 2

The people of Queensland come from many diverse backgrounds and have worked, and continue to work, together to build a prosperous, fair and harmonious Queensland.

Plain English

We all work together to make Queensland a prosperous state.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Learn about Queensland's multicultural history <http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au>
- Read about practical ways to maximise the value of cultural diversity in your workplace <http://fecca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/factsheet-8-maximising-the-value-of-cultural-diversity1.pdf>
- Encourage your workplace to participate in A Taste of Harmony to celebrate the cultural diversity of staff <https://www.tasteofharmony.org.au/>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Recognise and celebrate diversity in your workplace by holding an event during Harmony Week.

Harmony Week celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Have a look at the Harmony Week website for event planning kits and online promotion kits. These kits have been tailored for workplaces as well as schools, communities, sporting clubs and associations and government. They include event ideas, tips, templates and graphics to help you promote and celebrate Harmony Week.

Some ways you can celebrate Harmony Week at your workplace are:

- employees bringing in a dish or dessert from their country of origin
- a bake sale raising money for refugee support
- wearing orange (the colour of Harmony Week)
- creating a piece of group art
- displaying a world map and asking staff to put a sticker on the country they or their family originated from
- listening and learning about other cultures through a guest speaker
- asking staff to contribute recipes to a Harmony Week recipe booklet.

<https://www.harmony.gov.au/>

Principle 3

The people of Queensland should be able to express and celebrate, in a lawful way, their cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

Plain English

We all respect, embrace, celebrate and are free to express our culture, language and religion.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Participate in Multicultural Queensland Month www.qld.gov.au/multiculturalmonth
- Attend a cultural event in your local community – whether that be an event to celebrate your own ancestry, or a celebration of a different culture <https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/events/multicultural-event-calendar.html>
- Encourage your workplace to host a cultural event <https://www.harmony.gov.au/get-involved/workplaces/>
- Become familiar with cultural and religious days of significance, and join in with celebrations (where appropriate) <https://www.harmony.gov.au/events/calendar/>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Share a meal with someone who has recently arrived in Australia, or someone who has been living here for some time, to learn about their background.

The Welcome Dinner Project is a great way to do this. You can register to attend a Welcome Dinner in your area, or you can volunteer to host a Welcome Dinner.

The average dinner will have around sixteen guests – eight established Australians and eight people who are newly arrived to Australia. Two trained facilitators will assist each of the parties to organise the dinner and support them on the night. Everyone brings a dish to share which gives everyone the opportunity to contribute something from their culture.

Whether attending or hosting, this is a great way to develop your cultural understanding and learn about the cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds of fellow dinner guests.

<https://welcomedinnerproject.org/the-welcome-dinner-project/join-a-dinner>

Principle 4

Equal rights and responsibilities under the law and equitable access to the services provided or funded by the government for all people of Queensland helps build a fair community.

Plain English

We all have equal rights and responsibilities, and everyone can access government services when needed.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- We all have the right to feel safe. Download and use the Unite Against Racism - Call to Action toolkit to help reinforce the message that racism is unacceptable and Queensland is a diverse, harmonious and inclusive place to live <https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/about-us/our-department/unite-against-racism.html>
- Help new arrivals in your neighbourhood find services they need <https://www.oneplace.org.au/>
- Understand your rights and freedoms in Australia <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/rights-and-freedoms-right-right-o>
- Check out some translating and interpreting services the Queensland Government uses to ensure their services are accessible to all Queenslanders <https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/find-translator-or-interpreter>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In Queensland, there are two main pieces of legislation which help protect your rights. They are the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, and the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* protects people in Queensland from discrimination based on 16 attributes including race and religious belief or religious activity.

The *Human Rights Act 2019* protects twenty-three human rights for every person in Queensland including:

- Your right to recognition and equality before the law (section 15)
- Your right to life (section 16)
- Your right to protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (section 17)
- Your right to freedom from forced work (section 18)
- Your right to freedom of movement (section 19)
- Your right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief (section 20)
- Your right to freedom of expression (section 21)
- Your right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association (section 22)
- Your right to taking part in public life (section 23)
- Property rights (section 24)
- Your right to privacy and reputation (section 25)
- Your right to protection of families and children (section 26)
- Cultural rights – generally (section 27)
- Cultural rights – Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples (section 28)
- Your right to liberty and security of person (section 29)
- Your right to humane treatment when deprived of liberty (section 30)
- Your right to a fair hearing (section 31)
- Rights in criminal proceedings (section 32)
- Rights of children in the criminal process (section 33)
- Right not to be tried or punished more than once (section 34)
- Retrospective criminal laws (section 35)
- Right to education (section 36)
- Right to health services (section 37)

Complaints about matters under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* and *Human Rights Act 2019* can be made to the Queensland Human Rights Commission. This process is free, and you don't need a lawyer to make a complaint.

Principle 5

A shared commitment, among members of the Queensland community, to mutual respect, fair treatment and valuing the diversity of peoples in the community fosters a caring, safe and inclusive community.

Plain English

We are all committed to mutual respect and fair treatment so Queensland is a caring, safe and inclusive place to live.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Learn about cultural diversity and why it is valuable https://www.ted.com/playlists/411/bridging_cultural_differences
- Join the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign <https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au>
- Demonstrate your commitment to inclusion by promoting positive messages about multiculturalism on your social media – you could consider sharing posts by Multicultural Affairs, the Australian Human Rights Commission and Diversity Council Australia <https://www.facebook.com/multiculturalqld/> <https://www.facebook.com/aushumanrights/> <https://www.facebook.com/divcouncilaus/>
- Have a conversation with your family about mutual respect <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/all-about-respect>

RESPOND TO RACISM

We all agree that racism is unacceptable in Queensland and we all have the right to feel respected and safe. But sometimes it can be difficult to confront a friend or family member when they are being racist. Here's a few tips on how you can respectfully respond to racism.

- 1. Use "I" statements**
Rather than saying 'You're a racist', talk about how those comments are impacting you and how you are feeling about it.
- 2. Clarify their stance**
One of the swiftest ways to an argument is mishearing or misunderstanding somebody's point. So if you've been shocked by what you perceive as a racist outburst, it could be worth getting them to articulate their perspective.
- 3. Talk to them quietly**
As tempting as it might be to call a racist out in front of a group, sometimes you'll have a greater persuasive effect if you take them aside quietly later and highlight your concerns.
- 4. Let them walk in others' shoes**
Rather than spouting off facts and figures to back up your point, ask them to imagine what things are like for certain groups could allow them to feel more empathy with others' plight. "Ask them, 'If this was happening to you, what would you do? Would you do whatever you could to make sure your children were safe?'"
- 5. Be careful you're not being aggressive**
As passionate as you might be about your beliefs, if you develop a reputation for lecturing everybody in your circle in an aggressive way, then your persuasive powers are probably not going to be very effective.
- 6. Listen to their perspective**
As abhorrent as their views might seem, if you don't give people the respect of listening to their views, then there is little chance that they'll do the same for you.
- 7. Be careful online**
When people are hiding behind their screens, they're often willing to argue harder and nastier than in real life. For that reason, think carefully before calling out a racist online. Deleting or blocking someone who is being racist is one obvious solution; otherwise you could try sharing a link that explains the holes in their views – taking a similar approach to the tips above for real-life conversations.

(Source: adapted from Amnesty International's web page, 'How to tell someone you love they're being racist' <https://www.amnesty.org.au/tell-someone-love-theyre-racist/>, accessed 14 Feb 2020).

Principle 6

The creation of opportunities that encourage the full participation of people from diverse backgrounds in the cultural, economic, political and social life of Queensland helps build a prosperous state.

Plain English

We all ensure everybody gets a chance to contribute and participate.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Build relationships with your local community through a Community Hub
<http://www.communityhubs.org.au/>
- Find out how to become a local councillor to make a positive difference in your community
<https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/so-you-want-to-be-a-councillor.html>
- Keep an eye out for events to participate in your local community
<https://www.queensland.com/en-au/events>
- Be part of your children's school through the Parents and Citizenship Association, tuckshop and homework clubs
<https://pandcsqld.com.au/>
- Check out other volunteering opportunities
<https://volunteeringqld.org.au/>

JOIN IN, PLAY ON AND BELONG

A great way to participate in your local community is by joining a local sporting club. You don't have to be a player on the field - there are plenty of other roles such as coach, team manager, canteen support, car park marshall, social media officer, and many more!

Welcome Sports is a not-for-profit sporting hub in Brisbane that aims to build active, connected and welcoming communities through sports.

Their motto is:

JOIN IN - if you have never played before

PLAY ON - and connect with friends through community sport

BELONG - to a club that welcomes diversity and inclusion

So whether you're keen to play, coach a team or lend a hand in the canteen, head over to the Welcome Sports website to find more information on how you can get involved:

<https://www.welcomesports.com.au/>

If you're outside of Brisbane, check out how you can join a local sporting club by heading here: <https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/joining-club>

Principle 7

Sustained, respectful and inclusive engagements between all individuals, groups and the government are a basis for mutual understanding.

Plain English

We all communicate respectfully and build mutual understanding of the views, stories and issues of importance to all Queenslanders.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Have your say on Queensland Government activities so they are more inclusive of the needs and views of everyone <https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au>
- Learn how you can get to know someone from a different cultural or religious background <https://au.reachout.com/articles/understanding-a-different-culture>
- Learn about cross-cultural communication so you can communicate more effectively with people from diverse backgrounds <https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/CrossculturalFactSheet.pdf>
- Make an effort to always use inclusive, non-discriminatory language <https://imb.uq.edu.au/files/20283/using-inclusive-language-guide.pdf>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Make an effort to learn about other cultures by checking out SBS's Cultural Atlas

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/>

The Cultural Atlas is an educational resource providing comprehensive cultural information on the countries that Australia's biggest migrant populations have originated from. It aims to inform and educate the public in cross-cultural attitudes, practices, norms, behaviours and communications.

Just by selecting a country you can learn about their greetings; religion; family; naming; date of significance; etiquette, including what you can and cannot do; communication and business culture.

Here are some interesting points from the Atlas:

- Canada was originally settled by both Britain and France, and English and French are both official languages.
- To shake one's head as if saying 'no' in Western culture means 'please explain, I don't understand' in Turkey.
- In Russia, an 'a' is added to the end of almost all female surnames.
- Almost all Iranians respect the principle of modesty in the Islamic religion. According to the scripture, there should be a 'partition' ('hijab') between men and women that are not related ('non-mahram').
- In the Spanish language, questions are written with an inverted (or upside-down) question mark at the beginning of the sentence. For example: ¿Cuántos años tienes?
- In Japanese business culture, colleagues may applaud when you are introduced to greet you and show approval. If so, it is appropriate to applaud back.
- In Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the traditional custodians of the land, having inhabited it for an estimated 80,000 years before it was colonised.

Principle 8

A unified and harmonious community promotes a sense of belonging among its people and builds community confidence and resilience.

Plain English

We all make sure everyone feels like they belong, and look after each other in times of need.

Practical ways to bring this principle to life

- Become more actively connected to your local community
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/idea/connect-your-community/>
- Celebrate Neighbour Day to connect with the people who live around you
<http://neighbourday.org/>
- Sign up as an emergency volunteer to help make your community disaster or pandemic ready and lend a hand in times of need
<https://www.emergencyvolunteering.com.au/qld>
- Volunteer with organisations that support new arrivals or provide English language classes
<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/helping-refugees/get-involved/volunteer>

IN-DEPTH EXAMPLE

Be more 'neighbourly'

Having good relationships with your neighbours can help create more unified and supportive communities who can pull together in times of need.

Some ways you can foster positive relationships with your neighbours include:

- Smile, wave and say hello to people in your neighbourhood, including children and teenagers. Perhaps even stop for a chat.
- Offer to help with school runs if your children are at school together.
- Set up a cricket, soccer or football game in the local park and invite the neighbours.
- Start a street library – more info here: <https://streetlibrary.org.au/>
- Offer to look after your neighbour's pets while they are away.
- Invite your neighbour's dog for a play with your dog.
- Organise a 'cuppa by the kerb' where you invite your neighbours to bring a cuppa and have a chat in the street together at a set time.
- Take in your neighbour's garbage bin.
- Invite the neighbours in to watch a footy game, the cycling or any other sport you enjoy.
- Drop a Christmas card in their letterbox.
- Start a neighbourhood walking group.

Source: <http://neighbourday.org/get-involved/50-tips-to-be-more-neighbourly/>



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