

ACKNOWLEDGING COUNTRY

Difference Between A Welcome and an Acknowledgement

It is important to conduct a Welcome to Country and/or an Acknowledgment of Country as it brings awareness to Indigenous peoples being the custodians of the land now known as Australia. It also highlights the ongoing connection to the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and shows respect for Traditional Owners.

Welcome to Country

- This is when Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners welcome others to the Country of their ancestors. This means it can only be done by the Indigenous people of this specific Country, not just any Indigenous person.

Acknowledgement of Country

- This is when an Indigenous person or a non-Indigenous person shows their respect for the Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Indigenous people to Country.

- An Acknowledgement of Country is done when a Traditional Owner is not available to do a Welcome to Country.

How To Acknowledge Country

If you are unsure about how to start acknowledging country, you can start with giving a short acknowledgement, like the one below. However, there is also a more in depth example and tips on how to personalise your acknowledgement provided further down.

Short Example

"I would like to show my respect and Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of Elders past and present, on which we are gathered today."

Detailed Example

"I wish to acknowledge the Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nations, on whose land we are gathered today. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and I would like to extend that respect to any other Indigenous Australians present. I acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded."

How To Personalise Your Acknowledgement

To make your Acknowledgement more meaningful, you can personalise it by adding some culturally relevant details. Below are a few ideas of how you can personalise your Acknowledgement.

For example:

- "Wominjeka" in Woiwurrung means "to come with purpose". What is your purpose today?
- What is your connection to the Country you are currently on?
- What significant event has occurred on this Country?
- What country are you from?

Developed by Katy McVicar - MUWFC Player & Advisory Committee Member, 2022/23