

Communicating Clearly with Aboriginal and other Clients

A guide for HACC Assessment Services— Assessment Officers

- Don't assume anything
- Be honest and sincere
- Use simple clear, plain and appropriate language
- Jargon or technical language should be explained
- Ask how the person would like to be identified, e.g. nickname
- Don't mimic individual ways of speaking, i.e. words, slang, speech or accent
- Be open minded
- Remember it is about the person, "it's about them not us"
- Don't be too direct as this can be taken as confrontational and/or rude
- Direct eye contact may also be considered confrontational and/or rude in some areas
- Give explanation of why you are there and what for. Wear identification, e.g. Lanyard and tag
- Don't ask "what if" questions, keep your questions clear and answerable in the here and now
- Deal in practical real issues not theoretical ideas
- Remember, don't use acronyms such as HACC without ensuring that the individual understands what they mean

Endorsed by the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative HACC Program—phone number 5331 5344



Adapted from the HACC Wimmera Partnership Project and Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative (2013) tool, with reference to: 'Protocols for Consultation and Negotiation with Aboriginal People, by Huggins, Jackie, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development, Brisbane, QLD, 1999. Developed August 2013.