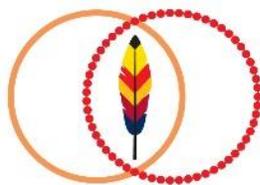




Indigenous Cultural Services Handbook

Protocol and Guidelines

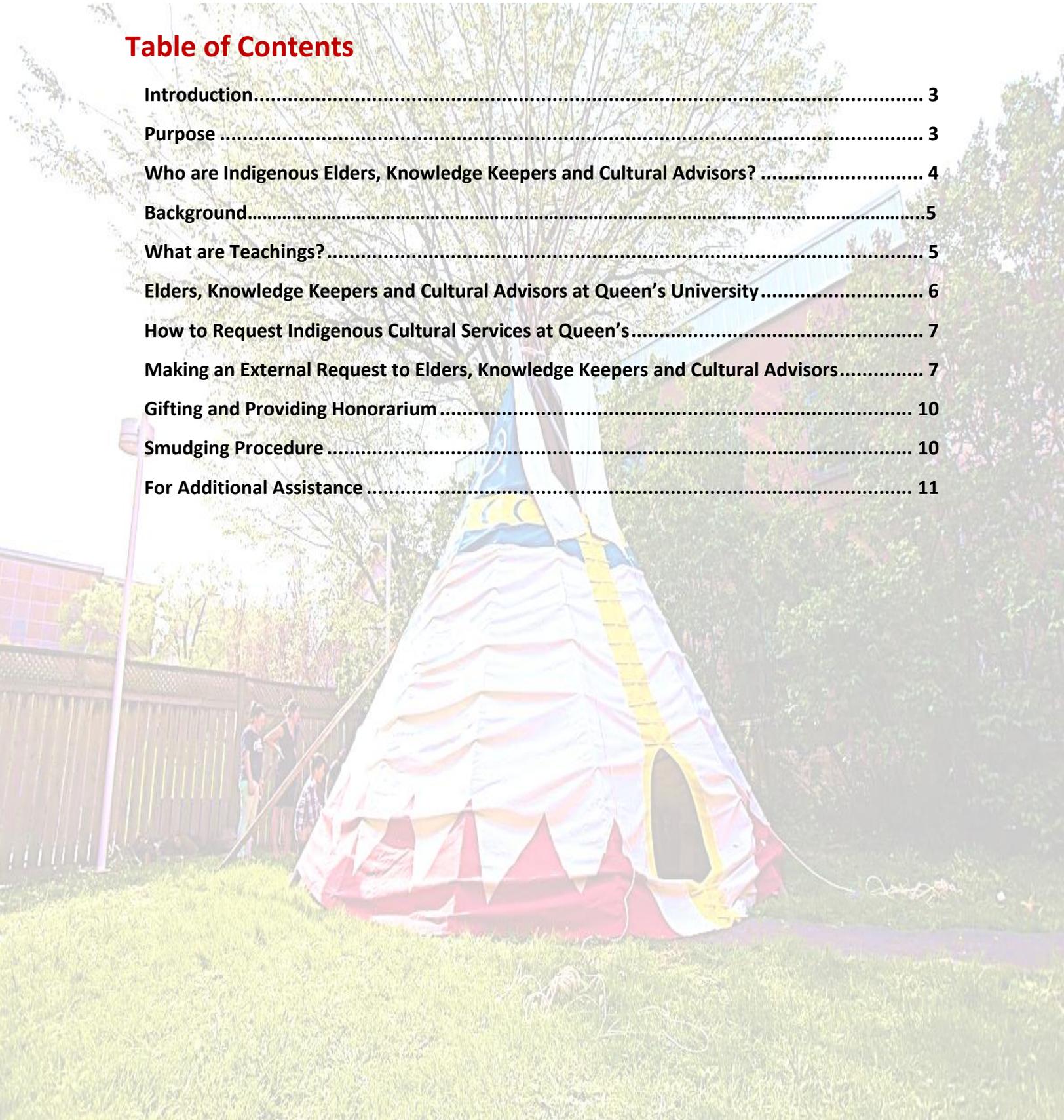


OFFICE OF
INDIGENOUS INITIATIVES

Updated February 2019

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Introduction

At Queen's University, we aim to ensure that all students, staff and faculty are supported and provided with adequate tools and resources to ensure a holistic learning experience. With the work of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, along with the [Queen's Truth and Reconciliation Task Force](#), recommendations have been made to increase the accessibility of Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors at Queen's. These roles are instrumental in assisting with the integration of Indigenous knowledge, histories, traditions and ceremonies at Queen's.

There is a growing interest for the continued development of positive and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations; we have heard from students, staff and faculty stating that they would appreciate the participation and guidance of those working within Indigenous Cultural Services. At Queen's, we value the work of Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors; and in the fall of 2018 two positions were created within the Office of Indigenous Initiatives to assist in supporting the integration of Indigenous cultures and traditions. The Office of Indigenous Initiatives is happy to assist with and support any requests or questions related to Indigenous Cultural Services.

This handbook will help to develop an understanding of how to request services in a respectful manner. We ask that anyone requesting Indigenous Cultural Services familiarize themselves with this handbook prior to submitting a request. There is a formal process in place via the Office of Indigenous Initiatives for submitting requests internally for Indigenous Cultural Services. Additionally, we have included guidelines on how to submit a request for Indigenous Cultural Services to anyone external to Queen's.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to assist students, staff and faculty at Queen's University in understanding the cultural protocols involved when requesting Indigenous Cultural Services. Indigenous Cultural Services can include the request of an Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisor to attend or participate in on campus discussions, events, lectures and other activities.

Who are Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors?

Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors play a central role in Indigenous communities; they are teachers within and beyond their communities. When requesting Indigenous cultural services at Queen's, it is important to understand who is designated as a reputable Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisor and how to respectfully request their time.

Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors are not self-taught individuals. They have been gifted with their respective teachings by other Elders or Knowledge Keepers typically over years of mentorship and teaching. These teachings are held as sacred knowledge and vary from each respective knowledge source. Ideally, permission has been given for individuals to share what they learned and acquired knowledge permits. Once the Keepers are felt to have learned and understood the knowledge and have made it a part of their own lives it is accepted that they can now deliver these learnings and teachings to others. We must be respectful of the fact that it is up to each individual to share the knowledge and teachings that they feel comfortable sharing.

- The term **Elder** is bestowed to an individual, by their community because of the spiritual and cultural knowledge that they hold. The term does not refer to one's age, but rather the level of cultural and traditional knowledge they hold.
- The term **Knowledge Keeper** or **Traditional Knowledge Keeper** refers to someone who has been taught by an Elder or a senior Knowledge Keeper within their community. This person holds traditional knowledge and teachings, they have been taught how to care for these teachings and when it is and is not appropriate to share this knowledge with others.
- A **Cultural Advisor** is another form of a 'teacher'. They hold cultural knowledge that has been shared with them by more experienced teachers (Elders or Knowledge Keepers).

Background

Kingston sits on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe and as such Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors from these two distinct cultural groups are often those invited to provide Indigenous Cultural Services at Queen's.

- The **Haudenosaunee** consist of individuals from one of the following 6 nations: Mohawk, Seneca, Oneida, Onondaga and Cayuga and Tuscarora.
- The **Anishnaabe** consist of individuals from one of the following 8 nations: Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomi, Mississauga, Nipissing, Oji-Cree, Algonquin and Saulteaux.

We also recognize the knowledge that Métis and Inuit Knowledge Keepers can provide. Knowledge, lived experience (along with traditional teachings), and life skills are common gifts of many Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors. Specific teachings may vary depending on one's teachings, location and Nation, but many commonalities exist across these teachings.

What are Teachings?

Teachings can vary from Nation to Nation as well as from one keeper to the next (depending on teachings, teacher, and location). Teachings can be understood as the base for understanding values, traditions and ways of living. Types of teachings and topics can include but are not limited to:

- Wellness teachings
- Knowledge of traditional plants and medicines
- Value systems
- Languages
- Indigenous arts, crafts and songs
- Ceremonial knowledge and protocols
- Clan teachings
- Creation/Origin stories
- Governance structures

Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors at Queen's University

Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors play a central role in increasing awareness around Indigenous knowledge, histories, languages, and ways of knowing at Queen's.

They can provide informal and formal teachings to raise awareness of Indigenous histories, worldviews and to help both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff and faculty increase their own cultural competencies and awareness. Elders, Knowledge Keepers or Cultural Advisors can complement course content by providing cultural context and Indigenous knowledge.

Examples of requests that can be made internally to the Indigenous Cultural Services team members include but are not limited to:

- One on one meetings (for students, staff or faculty)
- Opening address or prayer
- Presentations (speaking requests, workshop facilitation, etc.)
- Invitation to attend an event as a guest
- Participation in a lecture, class or seminar
- Participation in convocation
- Facilitation or participation in a traditional ceremony
- Input, advice or guidance on course curriculum
- Input, advice or guidance to committees
- Smudging ceremony



How to Request Indigenous Cultural Services at Queen's

We ask that those looking for the services of an Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisor who is **internal** to Queen's; please review the information provided below and submit your completed Indigenous Cultural Services request form to the Office of Indigenous Initiatives via [email](#).

Please ensure that all required components of the form are completed prior to submission. Once the Office of Indigenous Initiatives has received your completed request form, the Office will advise you on whether your request has been accepted or if further information or clarification is required.

The Cultural Services Request form can be found online at:

[Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre](#)

[Inclusive Queen's](#)



Making an External¹ Request to Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors

If you would like to invite an Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisor who is **external** to Queen's follow these steps² when making your request.

1. Offering an Invitation

- We recommend making a request in person when possible, however; when that is not feasible, it is acceptable to make a request by telephone or email.
- If making the request in person, you would first offer tobacco as this is following traditional protocol. If the request was made by telephone or email, tobacco can be offered at the first meeting.



The customary protocol of offering tobacco:

The traditional tobacco should be wrapped and tied in a small bundle (piece of fabric). When offering tobacco, use your left hand to place the tobacco in front of them and state your request. The Elder will indicate acceptance of your request by picking up or taking the tobacco from your hand.

Traditional tobacco is available at the Office of Indigenous Initiatives and Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre.

¹ If you would like a list of Traditional Knowledge Keepers in the surrounding community, contact the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

² These steps should also be applied to **internal** requests once approved by the Office of Indigenous Initiatives

2. Planning for the Visit

- Ask the guest if they have any accommodations to be aware of, or if there is anything that you can offer to make their visit to campus more comfortable.
- Discuss the intent of the request, the audience involved and ask the guest if they are comfortable with what is being proposed.
- Ask the guest if they have a preference for room setup – i.e. should the room be setup in a circle format? Facilitating sessions in a circle creates a safe and open environment where everyone is equal around the circle.
- If the guest will be driving to campus, provide them with a campus map as well as, arrange for parking if possible. If the guest requires transportation to be arranged, make the necessary arrangements as needed.
- Provide the guest with a main contact for their visit – this person will host the guest throughout the day. Additionally, we recommend providing the guest with the contact person's phone number in the event that they need assistance on their way to campus.
- Prepare to gift the guest at the end of their visit and/or submit a claim to process an honorarium payment and reimbursement of travel or accommodation (for guests external to Queen's).

3. Hosting (Day of Event)

- Offer the guest water, snacks and meals as appropriate throughout the day.
- Be sure to thank the guest at the end of their visit, offer them the gift that you have prepared and relay any information regarding reimbursement of their travel or accommodations as well as receipt of an honorarium.

Gifting and Providing an Honorarium³

The Indigenous Cultural Services staff members and Knowledge Keepers within the Office of Indigenous Initiatives are paid by Queen's University and therefore are unable to accept honorarium payments; however we do encourage those requesting cultural services to follow traditional protocol by offering tobacco to show your gratitude and appreciation for their time when making your request.

After the service has been provided, it is customary to provide an honorarium plus coverage of travel or accommodation costs to show your appreciation for this person's time and the teachings that were shared.

Gifts for Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors were traditionally a means of support that would be used to feed, clothe and provide shelter for ones-self. While historically gifts of food or other essentials were provided for their help, today an honorarium is acceptable. A small gift of appreciation may be given rather than an honorarium dependent on the type of request and time commitment that has been fulfilled.

For information on paying/gifting Elders, please visit "*Payments to Indigenous Elders/Participants*" on the Financial Services [website](#).

Smudging Procedure

- Please follow the [Indigenous Use of Traditional Medicines SOP](#).
- It is recommended that the person responsible for the smudge has had previous experience conducting a smudging ceremony.

³ There is no set amount that you should provide, the current hourly rate provided by Queen's University is \$75.00/hr plus coverage of travel and accommodation costs (if applicable). We encourage giving only what people or groups can afford. We ask you to recognize that Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors are acknowledged at the same level as visiting scholars and academics, therefore their honoraria should be the same. It is also important to determine if the visiting Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisor has an expectation regarding the amount of honourarium and if so to honour that as their customary fee.

For Additional Assistance

If you require additional assistance or guidance please feel free to contact the Office of Indigenous Initiatives.



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