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### Defining graduate teacher “expertise” in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) knowledges in the HPE curriculum

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#### **Abstract**

Recognising and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ knowledges has a long history of local advocacy and international support, and the role and place of such knowledges is clearly acknowledged in the emerging Australian Curriculum. This paper problematizes some of the complexities of requiring all teachers to demonstrate capacity to embed Indigenous knowledges in their teaching practice in Health and Physical Education (HPE), which is timely as the Australian curriculum HPE takes shape. Newly developed Australian professional standards (AITSL, 2011) require teachers at the graduate level to be knowledgeable and appreciative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges (IK). As these teachers become more proficient according to these standards, their ability to embed IK into curriculum and pedagogy should be exemplary. This represents an important and contentious shift in the way of thinking about IK – from “knowledge held by Indigenous peoples”, to a knowledge or skill set that can be acquired by non-Indigenous peoples through sustained engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspectives and knowledges. Drawing on a project, funded by the Australian Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT), we examined the ways in which Indigenous pre-service teachers negotiated the task of embedding IK on HPE teaching practicum to provide evidence of their proficiency against Australian Professional Standards for Graduate Teachers. Through a blending of frameworks around cultural interfaces, restorative pedagogical justice and critical race theory in education, we interpreted the experiences of these pre-service teachers and their supervisors of negotiating where IK “belonged” in HPE. From this interpretation, we provide some suggestions about what Indigenous knowledges in the space of compulsory HPE curricula and extra-curricula activities may ‘look like’, contributing to ongoing ‘decolonisation’ of the Australian Curriculum.

**Keywords:** Australian Curriculum: HPE, embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives, curricular reform, decolonising.

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