

Looking to the past, to inform the future

Australia's diverse and rich cultural heritage is being carefully assessed, recorded and managed by a dedicated team from The University of Queensland.

Cultural Services

Preserving and placing value on the cultural heritage of a place, region, sacred site or wilderness area is a very detailed and precise science. Carrying out this work requires a depth of understanding and knowledge that can only be gained through many years of experience in this highly skilled specialised field.

The experienced team at The University of Queensland's Culture and Heritage Unit (UQCHU), all of whom have PhD's in this field, has been internationally recognised for its work in this area - including its expertise in archaeology, native title, Indigenous community engagement, and built heritage. As a result, the Unit's consulting services are in high demand by governments, Indigenous communities, mining companies and organisations throughout Australia and Southeast Asia, including Myanmar.

Cultural Heritage Consultancy Business

UQCHU delivers consulting services which bring together UQ's specialist skills, technologies and facilities, to provide unique insights into our cultural heritage. The UQCHU team, led by Dr Richard Martin, is a dedicated group of archaeologists and anthropologists, all of whom have considerable qualifications in their field. Previously known as the UQ Archaeological Services Unit, the UQCHU has been operating for 30 years.

The UQCHU team is engaged by all sectors of the community. Their important work is primarily based on assessing places for management purposes, a key process in conserving the nation's cultural heritage for future generations. Their work can be as varied as the assessment of Aboriginal archaeological sites or the recent excavation of Brisbane City Hall, which uncovered Victorian-era artefacts.



Aboriginal Archaeology and Survey

One of the many heritage locations assessed and recorded for management purposes by UQCHU is Queensland's Bunya Mountains National Park. This spectacular wilderness range - home to the world's largest forest of bunya pines, rare grasses and over 121 species of birds - has traditionally been used by Aboriginal people from New South Wales and Queensland as a meeting place. The Unit successfully worked with the local Aboriginal community to develop a management strategy for this National Park, which draws on the stories and management recommendations of the local traditional owners.

In situations such as this, UQCHU's experts work alongside Indigenous communities to describe and map dreaming places (the traditional stories embedded in the landscape), record family histories (work and life histories), and document culturally significant flora and fauna and/or archaeological evidence of Aboriginal activities such as stone artefact scatters, quarries and rock engravings.

Conservation and Extraction

Finding a balance between developing Australia's mining resources and conserving cultural heritage, is another area where UQCHU adds value. UQCHU has carried out cultural heritage assessments of current and proposed mining sites for some of the largest mining companies in Australia. These assessments help organisations define the value of a place to the community or cultural group, and typically involves collaborations between the Unit's researchers (archaeologists and anthropologists), relevant Aboriginal parties and private enterprise (miners and developers).

Native Title

UQCHU has worked with native title applicants in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia to prepare the evidentiary materials necessary for a successful native title claim. The extensive fieldwork carried out by the Unit's anthropologists has been used in the native title legal arena, and members of the UQCHU expert team have appeared in the Federal Court as witnesses on behalf of the native title applicants and the State.

The UQ Culture & Heritage Unit

UQCHU was trading as a UniQuest business since 2009 and has since moved to Consulting and Research Expertise at The University of Queensland. They lead a core team of anthropologists and archaeologists who are also researchers and academic members of staff at the University.

UQCHU works with Indigenous communities, the resources sector, developers, and all levels of government to deliver professional heritage outcomes in a timely manner. Whilst the Unit is Queensland-based, the team works throughout Australia and takes on international projects where specialist expertise is required.

UQCHU's mission is to provide practical management solutions for its clients' heritage needs.

THE UQCHU JOURNEY SO FAR

The UQCHU has been operating for 30 years, initially as the UQ Archaeological Services Unit.

UQCHU comprises specialists in archaeology, native title, Indigenous community engagement and built heritage.

UQCHU makes it easy for industry to gain access to UQ's specialist skills, technologies and facilities in cultural heritage, delivering practical management solutions for its clients' heritage needs.

UQCHU works with Indigenous communities, the resources sector, developers, and all levels of government to deliver professional heritage outcomes in a timely manner.



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