



University of
South Australia

Centre for Islamic
Thought & Education

مركز الفكر والتعليم الاسلامي



Artist:
Rikurani

Acknowledgement of Country

UniSA respects the Kaurna, Boandik and Barngala peoples' spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal peoples, past and present.

Find out more about the University's commitment to reconciliation at unisa.edu.au/RAP

WELCOME

Universities the world over are places for extending the depth and breadth of human understanding and it is important that the University of South Australia plays an active role in building awareness of Islam and empowering the community through research, education and engagement.

The Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) will be a global knowledge hub with a clear focus on genuine and meaningful engagement between the Muslim and wider communities to develop valuable two-way conversations and insights.

Professor David Lloyd
Vice Chancellor and President

Our communities are exposed to an abundance of misinformation regarding the Islamic faith. This is why UniSA's Centre for Islamic Thought and Education research centre has a philosophy – to be at the epicentre for factual, empirically obtained information that is dispersed to the wider population.

This centre's focus aligns with the University's vision for research that is inspired by challenges and opportunities, partnered with end-users and communities and underpinned by excellence.

The centre's research addresses important issues currently facing the Muslim community, from living harmoniously, interconnected with the West to blanket societal issues such as domestic violence and the empowerment of women to combat this serious problem.

The UniSA Research Themes create opportunities for interdisciplinary research activity at UniSA in particular areas of global, societal and local need. They enhance and facilitate broad capacity and creativity across the enterprise, and foster a culture of impact and relevance to industry and the community. This research undertaken by CITE has great relevance to the Transforming Societies theme, where researchers examine the complex inter-relationships between social, environmental, cultural and political changes, to revolutionise sustainable, citizen-led social innovation. I foresee the generation of many interdisciplinary collaborations from CITE, enabling us to successfully meet the needs of our partners, end-users and the community.

Professor Tanya Monro
Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Innovation

Joining the School of Education the new Centre will bring together researchers specialising in Islamic education, ethics, leadership and management, finance, psychology and sociology. The Centre will foster knowledge, dialogue, and community engagement based on rigorous academic research and a deep understanding of Islam and the Australian Muslim communities.

Professor Denise Meredyth
Pro Vice Chancellor: Education, Arts and Social Sciences



FROM THE DIRECTOR

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The establishment of the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education speaks volumes about the University's vision of agility and adaptability in building and maintaining productive partnerships with the community, and contribution to the prosperity and well-being of the nation.

I believe strongly in utilising empirical research to inform genuine and grounded community empowerment and engagement. This is vital for the well-being of the nation. I envisage CITE to revive Islamic thought for empowerment through research, education and engagement. Equally, I envisage it to be a powerful vehicle that will help contextualise the understanding of Islam.

I am honoured to be part of a visionary university and to lead this new centre and welcome you all to this new and exciting initiative and hope to work collaboratively to achieve CITE's vision, aims and philosophy.

Professor Mohamad Abdalla

Director, Centre for Islamic Thought and Education



INTRODUCTION

Muslims have had a lengthy history in Australia, starting in the 1600s, predating European presence in Australia, the earliest relationship was with the Aboriginal peoples of Northern Australia and fishermen from Makassar, southern Sulawesi in Indonesia.

Between the 1860s and 1920s, 'Afghan' cameleers arrived in Australia to open the interior of Australia and participate in the historic Burke and Wills expedition from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria in June 1860. The majority of these cameleers were of Muslim background. The cameleers pioneered a network of trails and tracks that later became today's roads, linking towns, stations, and mines all across the outback. They also operated supply and equipment trains during the development of the rail link between Port Augusta and Alice Springs, which became known as the Afghan Express, and later the Ghan.

Among the many legacies of the Afghans is the Adelaide Mosque, the oldest surviving mosque in Australia, built in 1888-89 to serve the religious and spiritual needs of the Muslim cameleers.

The long standing historical presence and contributions of the Makassar and cameleer Muslims, and subsequent Muslim migration, speaks volumes about interconnectedness and positive engagement in the Australian context.

In fact, Islamic civilisation's contributions to fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine to scholasticism and humanism are evidence of a wider and deeper interconnectedness with the West.

We hope to revive this interconnectedness through research, teaching, learning and genuine community engagement.



OUR CENTRE

We envisage a revival in Islamic thought for empowerment of communities through research, education and engagement.

Our philosophy is to promote empirical research informed by Islamic methodologies, philosophies and pedagogies, cognisant of the unique Australian context.

It is our deep conviction that academic research and teaching must positively impact on engagement with community, media, government and non-government organisations. It must empower vulnerable and disempowered communities. This is at the heart of our philosophy.

Bringing together researchers specialising in Islamic civilisation, psychology, ethics, leadership, management, finance and education, our staff has extensive academic experience in Islamic studies, and importantly, substantial understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Australian Muslim communities. They have actively participated in the affairs of the community for the last two decades and are well placed to explore issues that affect them, and engage with them in a holistic and grounded way.

Our approach is strength based and does not examine the Muslim community as a 'subject' of inquiry that is inscribed by 'otherness.'

Our centre will engage with academics, journalists, politicians, and the wider community in order to inform, educate, and build bridges of understanding, and to promote a spirit of interconnectedness.

OUR FOCUS

Academic Research

Our research topics include:

- Interconnectedness of civilisations: Islam and the West
- Islamic schools renewal, including:
 - Pedagogy studies (Islamic pedagogy, prophetic pedagogy, responsive pedagogies for classrooms with Muslim students);
 - Curriculum renewal (Islamic studies renewal, curriculum integration);
- Management and leadership in Islamic organisation; a combination of contemporary and Islamic focus
- Family relationships and combating domestic violence
- Islam in Australia (Islam, culture and identity)
- Islamic banking and finance, and financial literacy



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Teaching

CITE is developing a cohort of exciting programs including:

- (1) Minor in Islamic Studies
- (2) Graduate Certificate in Islamic Education
- (3) Graduate Diploma in Islamic Education
- (4) Master of Teaching (Islamic Education)

The CITE team has extensive experience in cultural and religious capability training for organisations and schools working with Muslims.

External engagement

We are a voice of expertise, enriched by a deep understanding of Islam and Muslim peoples within an Australian context. Our engagement aims to empower Australian Muslim communities to meet the many challenges they face with strength, dignity and wisdom.

We actively engage with government, non-government organisations, and media to enrich the dialogue about Islam and Muslims grounded on a balanced and empirical underpinnings.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

APPLIED ISLAM:

a national Islamic studies program for Australian Muslim youth ages 14-20 years. We are developing a national syllabus to be used in Australian Islamic schools.

DIGNIFIED WAY:

a whole community approach to behaviour management and character education and a Prophetic Pedagogical framework for quality teaching and learning.

Domestic Violence Prevention & Recovery Projects: *suite of evidence-based programs to respond to domestic violence in the Australian Muslim community.*

Islamic School Renewal

Leadership Processes in Islamic Organisations

Ethical Finance and Financial Literacy



OUR PEOPLE

Professor Mohamad Abdalla is one of Australia's most prominent and respected Muslim leaders, combining the roles of an academic scholar, public intellectual, community leader and commentator. Over the last 15 years, Prof Abdalla played a leading role in establishing Islamic Studies (Research and Teaching) as an academic area of study in Australia. In 2005, he established the Griffith University Islamic Research Unit (GIRU) and in 2008 played a key role in the establishment of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies (NCEIS), a dynamic collaboration between the University of Melbourne, Griffith University and the University of Western Sydney. Prof Abdalla has successfully supervised more than 20 PhD, Masters and Honours students. His first two PhD graduates achieved the Griffith Award for Academic Excellence, and one achieved the Chancellor's Medal for exceptional performance. Prof Abdalla's research has been published in multiple peer-reviewed journals such as *Griffith Law Review*, and book publishers such as the University of Melbourne Press, Routledge; Palgrave Macmillan and Edward Elgar. He has published 1 monograph; 1 co-edited book, and over 25 Journal articles and book chapters. He has two forthcoming edited books: *Islamic schooling in the West: Pathways to Renewal* (Palgrave MacMillan), and *Leadership in Islam: Processes and Solutions in Australian Organizations* (Palgrave MacMillan). Professor Abdalla participated in numerous high-profile invitations to conferences, speaker events (20 keynote addresses), summits (Prime Minister Kevin Rudd 2020 Summit) and high-profile public lectures and diplomatic visit. Prof Abdalla is recognised as a leader whose work has had positive social impact as demonstrated in his leadership role after 9/11, where he led a reconciliation strategy to build bridges of understanding between the Australian Muslim and wider communities. He was also involved in high-profile media engagements (appeared twice on the ABC Q&A Program), and attained numerous civic awards, including: The Lord Mayor Australia Day Achievement Award; Community Leadership Award; Ambassador for Peace Award; and Pride of Australia Medal (Finalist).



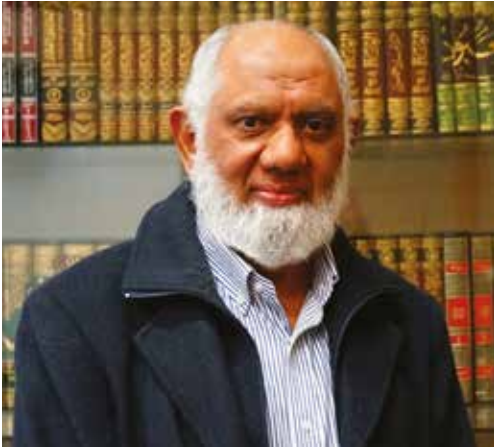
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Dr Nada Ibrahim is an expert in Domestic and Family Violence in the Australian Muslim community. She holds a PhD in Criminology from Griffith University's Griffith Islamic Research Unit. She is currently in the process of establishing some strength-based community-related projects that address psychological/ social/religious needs of victims, abusers, children, men and women to build healthy family relationships whilst empowering the Muslim community. Her research interests include intimate partner violence, family relationships, community development, Islamic psychology, mental health, Islamic family law, disadvantaged Muslim women's issues, and broader Islamic issues.



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Dr Nezar Faris is a scholar in Leadership and Management with a focus on the context of Muslim organisations in the West. He holds a PhD in (Leadership) from Griffith University's National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies (NCEIS). Dr Faris' work has appeared in *The Leadership Quarterly*. He has a forthcoming Co-authored book: *Leadership in Islam: Thoughts, Processes and Solutions in Australian Organizations* (Palgrave MacMillan). He won the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Best paper Award in the Leadership stream for his peer reviewed paper titled; Contextualisation and Conceptualisation in a multifarious context: Mixed models of leadership. Perth, Australia, 4-7 December 2012. His research interests include Leadership processes, power procedures and transitions, ethical leadership, responsible leadership, sense making, cultural complexity, Leadership metaphors in organisational contexts, Research methodologies on leadership.



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Dr Mahmood Nathie is a scholar and practitioner of Islamic Finance. He holds a PhD in Islamic Finance (with academic excellence) from Griffith University's Islamic Research Unit. As a qualified CPA in Australia as well as a former chartered accountant, he also holds degrees in finance, economics and business. He has lectured and written extensively on Islamic finance, presented papers at international conferences and continues to add new knowledge to this rapidly expanding field of ethical finance. He is presently conducting research into Islamic Financial Literacy in Australia and is collaborating with institutions to extend the research to Indonesia, Malaysia and other participating Islamic Countries. His other interest include financial modelling, statistical methods, corporate finance, community-based SEMs and microfinance.



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Dylan Chown is a Research Fellow and the Program Director for Islamic Education. Dylan has twenty years' experience in education combining roles of teacher, principal, consultant, researcher and lecturer. He is a passionate advocate for Islamic schools and Islamic education in Australia. Dylan is also a member of an International network of educators on the Islamic Teacher Education Program (ITEP), a project of Razi Education (Canada, UAE). He completed a Master of Education (Leadership) through the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies (NCEIS), Griffith University, examining education leadership and school vision. His research interests include Islamic pedagogy, character education and teacher training. Dylan's PhD research focuses on Islamic pedagogy in Australian Islamic schools and aims to further efforts towards renewal and inform teaching training. He is a co-editor of *Islamic schooling in the West: Pathways to renewal* (Palgrave MacMillan, forthcoming).

PhD SCHOLARS



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Nadia Selim is an Arabic teacher with a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics (University of Queensland), a Vocational graduate certificate in TESOL and English Language development (SBIT in Queensland). Nadia turned her attention to Arabic and focuses on methods that improve the effectiveness, relevance and retention rates of Arabic programs. Nadia is interested in Computer Assisted Language Learning; rhythm for memory and the rediscovery of Islamic thought on Arabic teaching. Nadia continues to work on the development of an Arabic program for non-native speakers, an Arabic website, Mobile App, Social networking sites and open source content. Nadia taught at the Institute of Modern Languages (University of Queensland) from 2012-2016 and is currently working on a PhD thesis at the University of South Australia (CITE) that examines Arabic language learning at Islamic Schools in Australia.



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Hafsa Khan is an Australian Muslim born to parents from the Pashtun tribal north of Pakistan. She is a Lawyer by qualification from the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and is currently undertaking a PhD as a member of the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) at the University of South Australia. Her PhD thesis focuses on the cultural and traditional norms relating to marriage practices in the Pashtun Muslim majority province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) in North Pakistan. At a broader level, her research aims to investigate the interplay between culture and Islamic law (*shari'a*) in order to determine the role culture plays in upholding practices that may contradict Islamic legal principles. Her research also seeks to ascertain the attitudes of Pashtun Muslims with the aim of effecting legal reform in order to work towards realising the legal rights of women in Muslim cultural societies, both within the scope of Islamic and international human rights law.



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Muhammad Abdullah has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies. From 1985 to 1990 he worked with the Department of Defence Navy until he returned to university in 1990 to complete a Diploma of Education in secondary mathematics. He began teaching in 1992 at Cleveland Street a Government High School in Alexandria NSW. In 2001 he completed a Graduate Diploma of Education (English Literacy) at the University of Sydney. He later became a teacher of senior Aboriginal Studies. In 2005 he was appointed Chief Examiner of Aboriginal Studies and a senior marker in 2007. He was appointed Supervisor of Marking in 2015. Additionally, Abdullah has extensive knowledge of, and experience with, the Australian Muslim communities. For over 30 years he has volunteered his time for the empowerment of the Australian Muslim communities, giving valuable support to many of its members and organisations. Abdullah's PhD focuses on a ground breaking project titled 'The Formulation of a Pedagogical Framework for Islamic Schools in Australia.' In 2016 his early findings were published in the peer reviewed journal *Islam and Civilisational Renewal*. He is a co-author of a forthcoming book titled *Islamic Schooling in the West: Pathways to Renewal* (Palgrave).



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Carolyn McCosh has completed a Bachelor of Education and a Masters of Professional Education and Training at Deakin University. She has extensive experience working in education and training in the Middle East, Asia and Australia where she has lived teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). Through working with people from different cultural backgrounds including Arabic, Chinese and other nationalities she has gained a strong understanding of the different customs and religious practices of each culture.

Carolyn's PhD research focuses on the education reform in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates where she spent two years working as an Advisor for an education consultancy in a local school improving the English Language levels of the Principal and Arabic Teacher's as well as assisting to plan professional development to enhance the pedagogical skills of the Arabic Teachers. Her research aims to understand the barriers to education reform in Abu Dhabi including the cross-cultural challenges of changing pedagogical practices in the classroom.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF



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Ramila Chanisheff has worked in both public and private universities, and previously in the corporate sector. She is responsible for developing and implementing the Centre's strategic plan and planning activities, ensuring it integrates and aligns with the strategic business development plans of the Division and the University.



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Jen Manning has been working at UniSA since 2008. Her roles have been wide and varied. Jen is Personal Assistant to the Centre Director and provides key assistance for the Centre's staff and research administration activities.





OUR PARTNERS

*School of Education, University
of South Australia*

*National Islamic University, UIN
Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta*

Islamic Schools Association of Australia

Islamic Society of South Australia

*Islamic Arabic Centre & Al-Khalil
Mosque, South Australia*

*Violence Research and Prevention
Program, Griffith University*

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