

## Statement in relation to the Voice to Parliament

We, the Board and Executive Leadership team of Bendigo Kangan Institute, acknowledge the history of systemic disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart which reflects the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for constitutional recognition and a constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament.

Later in 2023, the Federal Government will be taking a referendum to the people where we as Australians will be asked whether we approve a change to the Australian Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

Victoria is the first jurisdiction in Australia to action all elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and the Victorian Government supports the Federal Government's position on establishing an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

We are committed to implementing the range of Government plans and policies designed to enhance outcomes for Aboriginal students, staff, and community. We believe in the power of education to foster understanding, respect, and reconciliation. By actively engaging with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, we create an environment that celebrates diversity, promotes equitable opportunities, and cultivates cultural understanding among our staff and students, and our customers and clients.

Bendigo Kangan Institute is proud of its long standing and ongoing engagement and partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, students, and staff. We recognise the importance of community collaboration and input into the development and implementation of our Wurreker Planning, and our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

We recognise the importance of involving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in establishing a culturally safe and supportive educational environment that not only promotes empowerment, respect, and academic achievement, but also creates meaningful employment pathways and opportunities for students to thrive and contribute to their communities and the broader society.

We encourage all members of the Bendigo Kangan Institute community to actively participate in the upcoming referendum. This includes ensuring you are registered to vote on the electoral roll, staying informed about the issues at hand, and engaging in respectful and meaningful dialogue with others. We believe that by participating in this democratic process, we can demonstrate our commitment to justice, equality, and reconciliation.

Irrespective of the referendum outcome, consistent with our organisational commitments, Bendigo Kangan remains committed to continue to participate in and support the recognition and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

About the Voice:

Refer to the following resources for more information:

<https://voice.gov.au/>

<https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement/the-dialogues/>

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/support-a-voice-to-parliament/>