

BENDIGO KANGAN INSTITUTE

DISABILITY ACCESS & INCLUSION PLAN



Acknowledgement of Country

Bendigo Kangan Institute respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our campuses and centres are located. We recognise the ancestral lands of the:

- Djaara people of the Dja Dja Wurrung Nation
- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nations
- Gunaikurnai people
- Yorta Yorta Nations

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and acknowledge their enduring connection to land, waters, culture, and community. We honour the strength, resilience, and continuing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Victoria and beyond.

As we walk together on Country, we commit to listening deeply, learning respectfully, and acting with integrity. This acknowledgement is not only a gesture, it reflects our shared responsibility to reconciliation, equity, and justice in all that we do.



Dorothy Lovett, Gunditjmara. Honeybees artwork paying tribute to Wurundjeri people and Country.



A message from Laura Macpherson, CEO of Bendigo Kangan Institute

Bendigo Kangan Institute offers diverse services, courses and expertise to students and customers with diverse experiences. Our students, staff and community thrive on respect and equity. The Disability Accessibility and Inclusion Plan will ensure we provide the environment and support to enable it.

Embedding a plan like this is the right thing to do and is also a strategic imperative in our commitment to foster growth and drive impact through our 2030 Strategic Plan. As a key component of our Social Justice Framework, this Plan will help reduce barriers for students, staff and community, recognise their unique strengths and contributions and bring deep alignment to our organisation's purpose:

Changing lives through the power of education and skills.

To take positive action on disability accessibility and inclusion, we must improve across multiple areas and ensure meaningful, sustainable change. This includes ensuring we have accessible systems and infrastructure, and that they meet accessibility compliance standards. For an enriched student experience, we need to embed Universal Design for Learning, have the right support services available at the right time, and flexibility to make reasonable adjustments for students.

Our workplace culture must ensure inclusive practices, accessible recruitment, and wellbeing spaces are available. Our community and industry engagement must include disability experts in advocacy organisations, and inclusive procurement opportunities. The senior leaders in the organisation must champion workforce development and training, and the strategic importance of this plan throughout the organisation.

We recognise the Australian Disability Network for its partnership and expertise, as well as the students and staff who shared their experiences and put forward ideas to help shape our plan for action. Our vision is a community where diversity is embraced and every individual feels welcome, safe, and valued.

Together we can make Bendigo Kangan Institute a better place to study, work and grow for everyone.



Laura Macpherson

Chief Executive Officer
Bendigo Kangan Institute

A message from the CEO of Australian Disability Network

I am delighted to congratulate Bendigo Kangan Institute on the launch of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. This plan represents a significant step forward in creating environments where people with disability can participate fully and thrive.

As a proud member of Australian Disability Network since 2024, BKI has demonstrated a strong commitment to embedding accessibility and inclusion across its campuses, workplaces and learning environments. The development of this plan reflects meaningful consultation with staff, students, and external partners, ensuring that lived experience is central to its design.

The plan outlines clear and practical actions across five key pillars: systems and accountability, student experience and outcomes, workplace culture and employee experience, community and industry engagement, and leadership and workforce development. These actions are aligned with best practice standards and respond to national and state frameworks, including the Disability Discrimination Act and the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission. By prioritising universal design, reducing systemic barriers, and fostering disability pride, BKI is setting a benchmark for the education sector. This approach goes beyond compliance and demonstrates a genuine commitment to equity, belonging and empowerment.

Australian Disability Network commends BKI for its leadership and dedication to creating inclusive pathways for students, staff, and the wider community. We are proud to have partnered in shaping this plan and look forward to continuing our collaboration to ensure its success.

Amy Whalley

Chief Executive Officer
Australian Disability Network



Vision Statement

The Disability Access & Inclusion Plan will shape a diverse, inclusive, and accessible BKI where universal design is embedded in our campuses, workplaces, and learning environments to provide equitable access and participation in every aspect of our community. We strive to build a culture of access where disability pride is visible and celebrated, shaping a future where accessibility, belonging, and empowerment are realities for all at BKI.

Purpose

This Plan puts the BKI Social Justice Framework and 2030 Strategic Plan into action. It sets out clear, practical steps to remove barriers, improve access, and embed a culture of access and empowerment. By centring lived experience and driving systemic change, we aim to increase participation and success for people with disability as staff, students, and community members. Key actions include embedding Universal Design for Learning in all aspects of the learning environment, removing barriers in systems and infrastructure, and improving support processes for both staff and students, all aligned with our strategic priorities for inclusive growth and workforce development.

Language and Models

We recognise that there are many ways to understand disability, and many ways to talk about disability. In this plan, we use language and models of disability that align with disability advocacy organisations as well as the language preferred by staff and students with lived experience of disability.

Social model of disability

At BKI, we adopt the social model of disability and recognise that environmental and systemic barriers create disability and limit participation. We actively work to identify and remove these barriers so all employees and students can contribute, connect, and thrive.

Person-First Language

In this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, we use person-first language such as 'person with disability' to emphasise the individual, rather than the impairment. We recognise that some individuals and communities prefer identity-first language, such as 'disabled person', to affirm disability as a core part of their identity. While our organisational practice is to use person-first language consistently, we remain committed to respecting individual preferences in direct communication and engagement.

We recognise that many people who experience barriers do not identify with the word 'disability'. We know that many individuals within the Deaf community do not identify as having a disability but instead identify as part of a distinct cultural and linguistic group. We also know that many neurodivergent people do not identify as having a disability but rather as having a different way of thinking and interacting with the world. In this plan, while we use the term 'people with disability', we are working to remove barriers to access for neurodivergent people, Deaf people, and people who have a mental health condition, ongoing medical condition, or disability.

Legislative and Policy Context

This Plan is guided by key national and state frameworks, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic). It also draws on recommendations from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of People with Disability, which called for major reforms to improve inclusive education, and from the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Access to TAFE for Learners with Disability, which identified challenges in enrolment, support services, staff training, and infrastructure in Victorian TAFEs. The Plan also aligns with the Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022–2026, which sets out goals for building inclusive communities, improving access to services, and creating equal opportunities for all Victorians.

Development and Consultation

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan was shaped through a collaborative process that actively engaged staff, students, and external partners. This inclusive approach ensured that diverse perspectives and lived experiences informed the plan's direction. A dedicated working group of 29 staff members played a central role in identifying challenges and priority areas for action. The plan draws on multiple data sources, including a student survey with a focus on the experiences of students with disability; focus groups for students with disability facilitated by the Australian Disability Network, and staff experience data from the People Matter Survey. These insights were complemented by consultation with the Australian Disability Network who provided direction and feedback on the plan, and Voices for Change who provided the perspective of students with disability in correctional environments.

Guiding Principles

- Lived Experience Voices: People with disability actively shape our plan to access and inclusion
- Universal Design for Learning & Accessibility: Learning environments are designed for everyone, using best practice standards
- Equity and Inclusion: Fairness, respect, and dignity for all, inclusive of disability
- Intersectionality: Recognition and response to overlapping barriers such as racism, poverty, or gender inequality
- Systemic Change & Continuous Improvement: Commitment to addressing root causes of exclusion and ongoing review
- Empowerment & Strengths-Based Approach: Valuing the expertise and contributions of people with disability
- Collaboration & Partnerships: Working with staff, students, external organisations, and the wider community
- Accountability & Transparency: Measuring and reporting progress openly, with clear responsibilities

Scope

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan applies to all aspects of BKI's operations, staff, students, visitors, and contractors. It addresses accessibility and inclusion across physical, digital, and sensory environments, as well as learning, teaching, assessment, workplace culture, recruitment, and community engagement. The plan sets out actions and responsibilities for making BKI's systems, campuses, and services accessible, ensuring that people with disability are considered in the design, delivery, and evaluation of all programs and activities.

Structure

The Plan is organised around five pillars

1. Systems and Accountability: Accessible systems, platforms, and infrastructure, including a roadmap to WCAG 2.2 AA compliance.
2. Student Experience and Outcomes: Universal Design for Learning, disability support services, and reasonable adjustments.
3. Workplace Culture and Employee Experience: Inclusive practices, accessible recruitment, and wellbeing spaces.
4. Community and Industry Engagement: Partnerships with advocacy organisations, industry partnerships and inclusive procurement.
5. Leadership and Workforce Development: Senior leadership, targeted training, and Disability Pride in leadership.

Governance and Reporting

Progress will be monitored through measurable indicators, including staff and student support data, satisfaction scores, and accessibility benchmarks and reported annually in alignment with the Disability Act 2006 (Victoria). The Diversity & Inclusion team will provide quarterly updates to governance committees, ensuring transparency and accountability.



Disability Pride Month event with guest Oliver Hunter

Systems and Accountability

Goal	Action	Succes Indicators	Responsibility	Timeframe
BKI systems are accessible and designed with the expectation that users will include staff, students, visitors, and external contractors with disability	Develop a roadmap for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA compliance in BKI systems and platforms including Learning Management Systems, Student Management Systems, Student Portal, Human Resources Information System & external websites.	Increased enrolments of students with disability; Increased student satisfaction in student experience survey; accessibility is embedded into the adoption of Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies.	Chief Information Officer	Dec-28
Assistive equipment is available and usable	Create a comprehensive register of assets, including ownership and responsibility for upkeep, including portable items as well as installed assets	Baseline data on equipment condition and use is established	Head of Campus Operations, Procurement, and Assets	Dec-27
BKI meets all requirements of the 2025 National Registered Training Organisation Standards	Review BKI's support model for students with disability to ensure compliance with national standards	Increase in referrals to Disability Services; Increase in Learning Access Plans; Improved satisfaction and wellbeing of students with disability in Student Experience Survey	Head of Student Support and Success	Jan-26
BKI campuses provide accessible environments that proactively address both sensory needs and physical accessibility, ensuring comfort, safety, and inclusion for everyone.	Conduct an annual review of physical environment accessibility priorities including signage and wayfinding	Continued improvement is made to uplift the accessibility of the built environment; People with disability can better access and navigate the buildings	Head of Campus Operations, Procurement, and Assets	Ongoing
	Conduct environmental audits to identify barriers and implement changes that reduce cognitive load (e.g., lighting, noise, layout).	A process is established to improve the sensory environment on campus	Head of Campus Operations, Procurement, and Assets	Ongoing
	Establish a student sensory space on every campus	Increase in satisfaction and wellbeing of students with disability in student survey data	Head of Student Support and Success	Dec-28
	Develop a plan to establish employee wellbeing spaces on every campus	Increase in satisfaction of employees with disability in the People Matter Survey; Increase in reports of access barriers as hazards in Safety Factors.	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Dec-28
	Ensure that all employees with disability, injury or illness receive Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)	Increase in number of PEEPs	Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing	Dec-26

Student Experience and Outcomes

Goal	Action	Success Indicators	Responsibility	Timeframe
Universal Design for Learning is embedded in BKI learning design, education delivery, and assessment	Increase staff awareness and capability in embedding Universal Design for Learning into learning environments and materials	Increased participation in Universal Design for Learning training	Teacher Capability Team Leader	Dec-26
		Information and resources on Universal Design for Learning are available to teaching and education design staff		
		A Universal Design for Learning Community of Practice support ongoing collaboration and skills development		
		Increased satisfaction of students with disability in regard to course quality, teaching quality, and learning materials		
	Embed flexibility and accessibility in assessment design and validation processes	Greater awareness of UDL in assessment; reduced need for Reasonable Adjustments in assessment	Head of Education Design & Operations	Dec-27
Students who experience barriers to learning are aware of available Disability Support services and a referred to the Disability Support team during enrolment	Embed consistent disability awareness messaging, screening questions, and referral pathways into enrolment and onboarding processes to support early engagement with the Disability Support team.	Increase in the number of students disclosing disability support needs during enrolment and Pre-Training Review.	Head of Student Support and Success	Jun-26
	Use student stories to share information on student support offerings, including Reasonable Adjustments for students who may not identify as disabled	Increase in the number of referrals made to the Disability Support team within the first 4 weeks of enrolment.	Head of Student Support and Success	Jun-26
		Student feedback indicating improved awareness of support options Data captured in CMS (student wellbeing and support case management system) showing earlier uptake of Learning Access Plans (LAPs).		

Student who experience barriers to learning receive reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to education and training	Increase education staff awareness and capability in implementing student reasonable adjustments in alignment with our Student Reasonable Adjustment Procedure	Increased participation in internal Reasonable Adjustment training; Increase in satisfaction and wellbeing of students with disability in student survey data	Teacher Capability Team Leader	Dec-26
	Review the Student Reasonable Adjustment Procedure every 3 years	Student Reasonable Adjustment Procedure aligns with best practice and is supported by student feedback data	Head of Student Support and Success	Aug-26
	Offer workshops for students to learn how to request workplace adjustments as employees, placement students, and apprentices	Increased satisfaction of students with disability in Student Experience Survey in relation to wellbeing and workplace placements	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Dec-26
BKI builds a culture where disability pride is visible and celebrated, and the contributions of people with disability are recognised and valued	Deliver an annual Disability Pride Month event with the voices of people with disability centered	Annual student event delivered	Student Experience Manager	Ongoing
Students with disability and neurodivergent students are equipped with the knowledge, support, and confidence needed to successfully begin their studies	Design accessible and inclusive onboarding experiences including welcome packs, digital orientation modules, easy read documents, and multiple touch points for support services.	Increase in student satisfaction with onboarding in the Student Experience Survey	Head of Education Design & Operations	Dec-27
		Increase in students accessing disability services before study begins		

Workplace Culture and Employee Experience

Goal	Action	Success Indicators	Responsibility	Timeframe
BKI workplaces have a culture of accessibility, where employees with disability feel welcomed and empowered	Promote the Workplace Adjustment Passport internally	Increase in Workplace Adjustment Passport requests	Executive Disability Access Champion	Dec-26
	Review the Workplace Adjustment Procedure every 3 years to ensure compliance and best practice	Workplace Adjustment users report positive experiences of the program	Head of People & Culture	Sep-28
	Deliver professional development in accessibility and inclusion, including general accessibility training available to all staff, as well as tailored training programs for key teams	Standard meeting protocols include asking for and implementing access requirements	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Dec-27
		People leaders recognise and support diverse ways of working, thinking, and communicating within their teams		
		Increase in satisfaction of employees with disability in the People Matter Survey		
	Deliver a pilot neuroinclusion program to support neurodivergent employees and their managers	Increase in satisfaction of employees with disability in the People Matter Survey; increase in neuroinclusive adjustments implemented	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Dec-26
Disability pride is visible and celebrated at BKI	Deliver an annual staff-facing celebration of International Day of Persons with Disability with the voices of people with disability centred	Annual staff event delivered	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Ongoing
	Establish a Disability Employee Network Group and a Neurodivergent Employee Network Group	Groups established through an appropriate online platform, and calls for membership advertised through internal communications	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Jan-26

Community and Industry Engagement

Goal	Action	Success Indicators	Responsibility	Timeframe
BKI is a leader in our sphere of influence and encourages other organisations and businesses to take proactive action towards inclusion	Embed disability inclusion in BKI's Social Procurement Framework	Baseline data on social procurement impact for disability inclusion established, opportunities for Victorians with disability created	Head of Campus Operations, Procurement and Assets	Dec-26
Students with disability undertaking placement have adjustments implemented by host organisations, with support from BKI	Investigate opportunities to support placement teams in engaging with host organisations on workplace adjustments	Increased satisfaction of students with disability in Student Experience Survey in relation to wellbeing and workplace placements	Manager Education Operations Hub	Dec-28
BKI works collaboratively with industry partners to support apprentices with disability	Investigate opportunities to support apprentices with disability and their employers throughout the apprenticeship, including workplace adjustments	Baseline data on apprentices with disability established	Manager Apprentice and Trainee Hub	Dec-28
BKI engages in partnerships and memberships that support our social justice goals	Continue to engage with disability advocacy organisations such as Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education & Training, Australian Disability Network, and the Gordon Disability Centre of Excellence	Membership hours are utilised; Joint initiatives are delivered	Diversity and Inclusion Manager	Ongoing

Leadership and Workforce Development

Goal	Action	Success Indicators	Responsibility	Timeframe
BKI Senior Leadership Team, Board, and Executive champion accessibility and lead in demonstrating accessible workplace practices	Identify an Executive Champion of Disability Access	Accessibility is frequently discussed at a senior level; senior leaders are responsible for setting a culture of accessibility	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Jan-26
	Deliver targeted training for leaders in accessibility and neuroinclusion	Increase in satisfaction of neurodivergent employee wellbeing in Flourish DX data	Diversity & Inclusion Manager	Jun-27
BKI has a reputation as an accessible and inclusive employer	Review the Recruitment Procedure with regards to best practice in accessible recruitment, and with reference to the Workplace Adjustment Passport	Hiring managers implement best practice in accessible recruitment	Head of People and Culture	Ongoing
	Investigate options for including accessibility information in talent attraction strategy	Increase in applications from candidates with disability; Increase in employment of people with disability	Talent Acquisition and Operations Manager	Dec-28



Artwork by Bendigo TAFE Work Education students: Hands for helping, supporting, guiding, sharing, and holding

Contact us

Call 13 TAFE (8233)

Visit

bendigotafe.edu.au

kangan.edu.au

vetassess.com.au

eworks.edu.au

ABN 74 802 942 886
T/A Bendigo TAFE and T/A Kangan Institute
RTO 3077
CRICOS provider 01218G

T/A VETASSESS
RTO 21097

T/A eWorks

