



Statement on Reconciliation

The University of Ballarat shares the vision of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, which aspires to "...a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equality for all". These ideals underpin the University's Statement on Reconciliation.

The University recognises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the Indigenous people of this land, and as such addresses them in this Statement.

1. The University appreciates that enrichment of Australian society occurs through respect for, and involvement with, the heritage and cultural practices of both Indigenous and Non-indigenous peoples. It is nevertheless acknowledged that:

- (a) Non-indigenous occupation and settlement of Australia was made possible through the super-imposition of a system of law upon the land occupied by the Indigenous people, and that the effect of this imposition was the corresponding dispossession of Indigenous peoples;
- (b) The consequences of this dispossession have included disruption, and sometimes devastation, to the lives, laws, languages, culture, customs and traditions of the Indigenous people; and
- (c) Today many Indigenous people continue to experience racism, racial discrimination, injustice and oppression in their daily lives.

2. The University, in recognition of these historical events and their effects, makes these pledges to the Indigenous people of the region, and of Australia generally, as a formal act towards reconciliation.

- (a) The University, always acting in consultation with its local Indigenous communities, will make its best efforts, by education, scholarship and such other means as it has at its disposal, to ensure that its members and members of the regional community;
 - o Recognise and understand the historical basis of its possession of the land on which it stands, and the historical consequences of dispossession experienced by the Indigenous inhabitants of the region; and
 - o Acknowledge and respect the aspirations and traditions which continue to invigorate Indigenous people, their knowledge, their communities and their culture.

Furthermore,

- (b) The University will make its best efforts to ensure that the Indigenous people, especially those who are members of the University and its community, are assisted;
 - o To overcome such injustices and oppression as they may suffer on the basis of their race or culture or status as Indigenous people, and
 - o To achieve their reasonable aspirations for themselves and their communities, both as Australia's Indigenous inhabitants and as citizens of Australia.

The University of Ballarat Council, May 1999
Academic Board, April 1999
Board of Technical Studies, April 1999