

WODONGA INSTITUTE OF TAFE

REFLECT – RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)



SEPTEMBER 2020 – DECEMBER 2021





‘Wodonga’ Dragonfly Dreaming

During the creation of this world at the time of the Dreamtime, there were ancient spirits; these spirits moved through the soft darkness of this world and created shapes; these shapes became mountains, valleys, plains and foothills. Then out of conflict between the ancient spirits came the moon, which gave light and shadows; then came the sun, which gave warmth and life. Now the spirits became weary and began to sleep; and they slept in the earth and in the shapes they created. After eons of time they work and found they had changed from spirits into mortal bodies of the animals, birds, fish, reptiles and even insects

Some of the spirits found they had become grubs, buried in the soft mud under the water, so they began to dig upwards and into the water, where they then learned to swim. As they swam about in the swamp they found the bulrushes and then began to climb upwards again, into the air and sunlight. As they clung to the bulrushes and were learning to breathe, the gentle sunlight dried and warmed their bodies, and their skin split open, and their true inner spirit came out with beautiful coloured wings, and they began to fly above the bulrushes.

These multi-coloured spirits, who learned to dig in the darkness, then swim, then climb and breathe, then eventually fly; they flew out into the world and found places to land; and the colours of their wings and bodies painted the landscape and completed the beauty of the shapes created by the ancient spirits of the Dreamtime.



Artwork and story by Eddie ‘Kookaburra’ Kneebone
Pangarang of the Goulburn Valley, Victoria
August 2003

Photo used with permission of Eddie's family.



A REFLECTION

TRACEY HOLLEY, WODONGA TAFE STAFF MEMBER

I remember as a teacher, each year at induction we would do campus tours, and during the tour Eddie - being our Artist in Residence - would talk about his artworks and tell the stories associated with each piece.

When we would come to Dragonfly Dreaming, he used to say to the students...

“See these little grubs down here... that’s you, coming in with no knowledge but a determination to do something with your life... You’re like that grub learning to swim and climb the bulrushes. The teachers will help you. Listen and take in all their knowledge. Take every opportunity and at the end you will be the beautiful dragonfly that bursts from the bulrushes and flies away to start your work life”

This painting always had so much meaning and had a profound effect on me because of that story.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which Wodonga TAFE operates.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, who give us strength, inspiration and guidance to deliver great training outcomes for our communities.



MESSAGE FROM WODONGA TAFE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, PHIL PATERSON, AND WODONGA TAFE BOARD CHAIR, ALISON JENVEY

It's with great pride that we, on behalf of the Board and the Wodonga TAFE community, present our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Wodonga TAFE is proud of its history and achievements in working with our community, businesses, industry and government, to deliver a high-quality education and training experiences to build success through learning.

Our accomplishments in delivering opportunities to our students, from apprenticeship training and vocational outcomes, to diplomas leading to degrees, ensures we are working with our students today to become tomorrow's leaders of our regional economy and beyond.

However, we acknowledge that there is more we can do. By launching our Reflect - Reconciliation Action Plan, we are committed to our Reconciliation journey and providing opportunities and outcomes for our community.

We encourage all members of Wodonga TAFE's community to actively engage with the initiatives and activities in our Reflect - Reconciliation Action Plan, as we work together to improve engagement, respect for, and collaboration with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, KAREN MUNDINE

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome Wodonga Institute of TAFE to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, Wodonga Institute of TAFE joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides Wodonga Institute of TAFE a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey. Through implementing a Reflect RAP, Wodonga Institute of TAFE will lay the foundations for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

We wish Wodonga Institute of TAFE well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report: "Reconciliation is hard work—it's a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality."

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Wodonga Institute of TAFE on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

OUR BUSINESS

Established in 1986 by the Victorian State Government, Wodonga TAFE delivers leading vocational education programs to industry and individual learners across all states of Australia. Wodonga TAFE's vision is to be a strong and vibrant institute, building success through learning. As the educational provider of choice servicing Victoria's Hume region, Wodonga TAFE plays a critical role in supporting the region's continued growth. With employment opportunities increasing across many traditional and up-and-coming industries, Wodonga TAFE's educational programs not only give individuals the skills they require to gain employment, but provide businesses with the workforce they need to continue to prosper and grow.

The main campus is located in Wodonga with satellite campus at Barnawartha, Shepparton, Puckapunyal and Bandiana. These campus provide educational programs to the Australian Defence Force for trade and medical training and for the transport and logistics industry. Wodonga TAFE was named Victorian Large Training Provider of the Year in 2015 and 2018. Recognised for the outstanding work being done with students, the community and industry, this achievement was further validated when the institute was named as the Australian Large Training Provider of the Year for 2018.

Whilst our focus is very much on our region we also deliver highly regarded programs throughout Australia.

- In the 2019 Performance Accountability Framework from the Victoria TAFE network, Wodonga TAFE was ranked # 1 for Employer satisfaction at 89.2%, ranked # 2 for student satisfaction at 82.7% and ranked # 5 for staff satisfaction at 71%. With customised training programs, the institute delivers operational and leadership-focused programs to some of the region's largest employers.
- Wodonga TAFE employs a workforce of over 600 staff with a gender balance of 48% male to 52% female, of those 4 identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. It has successfully implemented strategies to foster a workplace cultures that supports staff health, wellbeing and capability, and which boosts the institute's reputation as a preferred employer. Wodonga Institute of TAFE acknowledges that we work and live on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Land, the land of the First Australians. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and future. We'd also like to further extend our respect to the histories, cultures, diversity and values of all First Nations peoples.

** For the purposes of this document, use of the term 'Aboriginal' is inclusive of Torres Strait Islander peoples

OUR RAP

Why we started our RAP journey?

Wodonga TAFE is just starting out on their reconciliation journey. In conjunction with The Wurreker Program, a partnership agreement between the Victorian Government, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan, to improve education and training delivery for Koorie students. The RAP will become the foundation stone for developing Community Engagement in learning and development, creating a positive climate for learning and development, build a culture of professional leadership and promote opportunities for higher education and skills for the Koorie community.

Wodonga TAFE will publicly launch the registered RAP, this will include the implementation and milestone plans. As an organisation, we will take the opportunity to raise the awareness and support of our RAP within our community to develop a solid RAP governance model and build the business case for future commitments to cultural learning, and practicing cultural protocols considering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for employment.

What we have done so far?

Maintaining links between the Institute, VAEAI, the local Wurreker Broker, local Aboriginal Organisations and groups (e.g. LAECG), and local community groups and schools. This includes supporting local Aboriginal communities and schools in the identification of vocational education and training needs and pathway options.

Develop specific needs-based training programs in conjunction with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations - Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation and Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Services.

Participate and represent Wodonga Institute of TAFE in Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples forums, committees and develop calendar of events including events during Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks, offering scholarship opportunities, internal cultural awareness programs.

Develop and build strength and knowledge within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Educational Advisory Group.

Who are our RAP Champions?

Wodonga TAFE will have champions who will be responsible for the promotion and implementation of the RAP. We acknowledge the work that has been done and will continue throughout this journey by our Board of Directors, Executive Management Team, and our RAP Working Group - Koorie Liaison Officer, Koorie Student Representatives, Wodonga TAFE Staff Representatives, Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement, Manager Support & Experience, People & Development Partner and Education Representatives, operating under the advice from local Elders.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Advisory Group
- Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECG)
- Local Elders
- TAFE Koorie Liaison Officer Network
- Wodonga Aboriginal Network
- Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Services
- Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation
- Burraja Aboriginal Cultural and Environmental Discovery Centre
- Customised training programs
- Cultural Greetings Festival
- Burraja Garden Project
- Back to Work programs
- NAIDOC Week / Reconciliation Week Events
- Eddie Kneebone Art Gallery
- Eddie Kneebone Indigenous Student of the Year Award
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Scholarship Program

The following pages outline the four pillars that underpin Wodonga TAFE's Reflect RAP.

These pillars are:

Relationships

Respect

Opportunities

Governance



RELATIONSHIPS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	➤ Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	October 2020	Koorie Liaison Officer
	➤ Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.		Koorie Liaison Officer Manager Support & Experience
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	➤ Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	1 May 2021	Koorie Liaison Officer
	➤ RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2021	Manager People & Development
	➤ Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 2021	Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	➤ Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	September 2020	Chief Executive Officer
	➤ Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	September 2020	Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement
	➤ Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. Include Kids on Campus and their RAP	October – November 2020	Brand and Corporate Communications Lead
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	➤ Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination – see VAEAI Protocol documents.	October 2020 – February 2021	Manager People & Development
	➤ Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	October 2020 – February 2021	Manager Support & Experience
	➤ Ensure Student Committee and Student policies and procedures and events are included		
Raise awareness of our RAP	➤ Launch the RAP to internal and external providers	September 2020 – November 2020	Chief Executive Officer
	➤ Promote RAP commitment through all campus communities and outreach centres. Incorporate Kids on Campus RAP	November 2020 – September 2021	Manager Support & Experience
	➤ Celebrate milestone achievements with communities through the “Reflect” journey		Marketing and Digital Media Lead



RESPECT

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	➤ Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	September 2020 – December 2020	Manager People & Development
	➤ Introduce Cultural Awareness Training Program with specific inclusion of First Nation People's histories		
	➤ Introduce story telling session for staff and students twice a year		
	➤ Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	February 2021	Manager Support & Experience Koorie Liaison Officer
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	➤ Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	September 2020 – September 2021	Koorie Liaison Officer
	➤ Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country with meeting and events protocols. Include appropriate protocols for meetings	September 2020 – December 2020	Manager People and Development
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	➤ Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	5 - 12 July 2021	Koorie Liaison Officer
	➤ Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.		Marketing and Digital Media Lead
	➤ RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.		Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement



OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	➤ Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identified roles for future recruitment ○ Education position – teacher / tutor ○ Employment pathways (traineeship / cadetship) 	September 2020 – September 2021	Manager People & Development
	➤ Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	September 2020 – October 2020	Koorie Liaison Officer
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	➤ Develop a business case evaluation for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	September 2020 – December 2021	Manager Finance
	➤ Investigate Supply Nation.	October 2020	Procurement Officer
Explore opportunities to improve programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	➤ Support scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	September 2020 – December 2021	Manager Support & Experience
	➤ Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership.		Koorie Liaison Officer
	➤ Provide a culturally welcoming TAFE environment to further engagement the Indigenous community in education. Including flag protocol, acknowledge statement at front and back Wodonga TAFE campuses entrances and culturally welcoming design showcasing Eddie Kneebone Art Collection throughout the Institute.	January 2021 – August 2021	General Manager Operations
	➤ Develop specific Koorie marketing and course promotional material to promote opportunity to local Aboriginal community.	September 2020 – November 2020	Marketing and Digital Media Lead
	➤ Investigate Indigenous labour market demands within each department's delivery and develop Indigenous specific courses to meet those demands.	November 2020 – March 2021	Manager Community & Industry Engagement



GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation ➤ Draft a terms of Reference for the RWG ➤ Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island representation on the RWG 	September 2020 September 2020 September 2020	Manager Support & Experience
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define resources needs for RAP implementation ➤ Engage senior leaders in delivery of RAP commitments ➤ Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments 	September 2020 September 2020 September 2020 – October 2020	Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement Manager Support & Experience
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 October 2021	Executive Director Community & Industry Engagement RAP Working Group
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	July 2021	Manager Support & Experience



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