

# QTU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and training policy 2017 – 2019

(as adopted by State Conference 2017 and November Council 2017)

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## **APOLOGY**

The QTU formally acknowledges and apologises to Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities for the role that educators and schools played in the removal of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and communities and their subsequent mistreatment.

The QTU recommits itself to striving for the full recognition of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights, especially those relating to land, waterway and sea rights.

## **1. General principles**

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Nations peoples of Australia, and as such, have a distinct and inalienable set of rights.

Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures are among the oldest living cultures in the world. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to maintain a connection to their lands, waterways and surrounding waters.

The education system played a crucial role in the oppression of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, through the denial of opportunities, the reinforcement of racial stereotypes, the lowering of expectations and quality, the exclusion of participation, and the reinforcement of cultural and political values which are ultimately alien to the original inhabitants of this land.

The QTU acknowledges the important role the education system as a whole, schools and teachers have in achieving reconciliation. The QTU acknowledges the positive contributions made by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australian society and the economy.

The QTU:

- is committed to ensuring that all Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to high quality education throughout their lives;
- values the diversity of the cultures and forms of social organisation of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and commits its members to the educational development of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- is dedicated to ensuring that all Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have local access to a free, publicly funded education system, which affirms cultural identity and enables Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to contribute to and participate in their own and broader society;
- supports the principles of self-determination and self-management for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- believes that proper health care is essential to the learning process and recognises that there is a disproportionately high incident of poor health amongst Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- emphasises the important role of co-operation and partnerships between Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Aboriginal Australians and non-Torres Strait Islander Australians. The QTU endorses the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation and the National Strategies to Advance Reconciliation, along with the priorities identified in the QTU's Reconciliation Action Plan, recommits itself to striving for the full recognition of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights, especially those relating to land, waterway and sea rights.

## **2. Community sustainability**

The QTU acknowledges the inalienable right of the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination, and their inherent right as major shareholders to participate in all decision-making.

The QTU endorses the view that education is an integral community asset, and as such plays a significant role in building community sustainability.

## **3. Schooling and curriculum**

A majority of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children attend schools in which non-Aboriginal and non-Torres Strait Islander values and ideals dominate the curriculum, school structure and philosophies of education. To meet the needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in this system, measures should be implemented which will enhance the self-esteem of the children, recognise cultural autonomy and provide appropriate learning experiences.

### **3.1 Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in curriculum**

The QTU understands that schools play a significant role in the redefinition of the myths and stereotypes of disadvantage and racism, and believes that all Australian students have the right to learn about the true history of Australia in a way that promotes the secular, democratic and non-discriminatory principles and values of the public education system.

The QTU will:

- advocate for an inclusive curricula, developed in collaboration with relevant Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or groups, which presents all aspects of Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures from times prior to the invasion to the present, across all curriculum areas;
- work to ensure that materials are an accurate reflection of the true histories of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and free of racist and stereotypical connotations and representations;
- promote to members the use of acceptable criterion for the development and use of such curricula;
- lobby to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are implemented as core curriculum components, and that these studies have equal status with other curriculum areas.

### **3.2 Assessment**

Assessment frameworks and tasks must be developed in a socially and culturally appropriate framework and be based on integrated, culturally inclusive and relevant curriculum. Data collection, collation and utilisation (e.g. benchmarking) must be done sensitively, in ways that recognise and cater for cultural difference and support the teaching and learning process.

### **3.3 Early childhood education**

The education of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children takes place in many settings other than schools. Therefore the transition from home to prep year to primary schooling must be an ongoing experience which recognises the variety of cultural backgrounds, different learning styles and home environments of children.

There must be a recognition and affirmation of the cultural knowledge, language and values that young Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children and their families bring to mainstream education.

Schools have a responsibility to promote the intellectual, social and emotional development of young Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children to the same degree as non-Indigenous children.

It is necessary:

- that all Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children of pre-primary school age have access to pre-school and prep services comparable to those available to other children of the same age;
- that, in addition to access to prep year, the pre-prep year is maintained and appropriately funded in Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- that Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children are provided with adequate preparation for the schooling years ahead through pre-school education;
- that programs to support the introduction and continued use of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages be part of the curriculum for all Australian students;
- that all Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Aboriginal children and non-Torres Strait Islander children have the opportunity to develop an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

### **3.4 Secondary education**

All Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students must be guaranteed access to an inclusive secondary education within the Queensland public education system. Comprehensive structures should be put in place to establish and maintain support services, such as homework centres, learning support centres, cultural centres, access to identified success models, community links and counselling for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.

### **3.5 Behaviour management**

Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students are significantly over-represented among the students suspended or excluded from Queensland state schools. The QTU recommends that the following steps be taken to address the alienation of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students from schooling:

- comprehensive professional development for all teachers in establishing culturally and contextually appropriate safe and supportive learning environments practices and pedagogy....
- support (including professional development and resources) for the development of cross-cultural pedagogies and behaviour management
- increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers and Torres Strait Islander teachers in schools

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- specific acknowledgement of and measures to proactively deal with the alienation of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students from schooling in school behaviour management plans
- alternative education programs that allow flexibility in providing for the needs of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students
- greater co-ordination of services to alienated students across government departments and local communities
- involvement of local Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities in the development and implementation of student behaviour management policies.

### 4. Aboriginal educators and Torres Strait Islander educators

The QTU will support measures:

- to increase significantly the employment of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all levels in public education;
- to increase significantly the number of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational management and consultative roles in schools, regional and central office levels;
- to retain Aboriginal teachers and Torres Strait Islander teachers within the department;
- to ensure that Aboriginal workers and Torres Strait Islander education workers (AIEWs) are employed under award structures that provide a career path, professional development opportunities and employment security, and that AIEWs are paid appropriately for the specific sets of skills and knowledge that they bring to the educational setting;
- to accurately identify all Aboriginal teachers and Torres Strait Islander teachers for support and resourcing purposes.

(Note: in this policy, AIEWs refers to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people working in non-teaching educational and support roles, such as teacher-aides, community education counsellors, community liaison officers, etc. The use of this acronym is consistent with other AEU branches and general industrial use Australia wide.)

The QTU will:

- work in cooperation with other relevant unions to ensure that AIEWs receive adequate, appropriate and recognised training to enable them to achieve:
  - job competence
  - personal growth and development, including standard Australian English literacy skills
  - opportunities to obtain qualifications which will enable AIEWs to enter and successfully handle professional training
- continue to lobby for and support effective implementation of Aboriginal employment strategies and Torres Strait Islander employment strategies in the Department of Education and Training. These should include recruitment, retention, professional and career development measures;
- Continue to support the RATEP program.

### 5. Non-Aboriginal educators and Non-Torres Strait Islander educators

The QTU will:

- work to ensure that all principals, teachers and other education workers (particularly those who teach large numbers of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students) have undertaken cross-cultural awareness training focusing on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, pedagogies and epistemologies;
- work to ensure that all teachers, particularly those in school communities with a high population of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students, will continue to embed Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives;
- work to ensure that all teachers employed in community schools are supported adequately (with professional development, pay, housing and other issues as per QTU policy) during their employment, and following their departure from these schools;
- work with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the state government and the Department of Education and Training to further develop appropriate recruitment and selection processes for teachers working

with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and in Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities;

- Lobby universities and the federal government to develop and implement Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies in all undergraduate teaching programs.

## 6. Professional development

Teacher education should be seen as a continuum involving three stages: pre-service, induction and in-service education. At all stages, Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities should be involved in the planning of professional development programs in Aboriginal education and Torres Strait Islander education, including:

- the materials to be taught;
- who is to do the teaching;
- the organisation of the program.

The QTU believes that Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies should be a substantial, compulsory curriculum component for ALL pre-service student teachers. Continuing in-service programs on Aboriginal education and Torres Strait Islander education should be provided to all teachers, and all new teachers to schools where there are Aboriginal enrolments and Torres Strait Islander enrolments must be provided with an induction program.

A diverse approach to the education of Aboriginal teachers and Torres Strait Islander teachers is needed. Programs should be developed in cooperation with Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The QTU commits to:

- promoting cross-cultural awareness training;
- promoting cross cultural capabilities training;
- monitoring the public education system to ensure that it provides high quality, relevant, up-to-date, and appropriate professional development for Aboriginal staff and Torres Strait Islander staff, and other staff working with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- monitoring the public education system to ensure that access to this professional development is available to all;
- monitoring the public education system to ensure that professional development is provided by appropriately qualified people (including people recognised by their communities as such) who are paid appropriately for their time and knowledge.

The QTU is committed to ensuring that professional development which embeds Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives is delivered by Aboriginal peoples and communities and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

The QTU will:

- continue to provide training/professional development, such as trade union training courses, for Aboriginal union members and Torres Strait Islander union members;
- endorse the inclusion of QTU Aboriginal activists and Torres Strait Island activists in RAIS conferences;
- encourage the Department of Education and Training to include in RAIS conference programs a councillor or mayor from communities in which the teachers will be employed;
- continue to highlight areas pertinent to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in training/professional development provided to non-Aboriginal members and non-Torres Strait Islander members;
- work with the state and Commonwealth governments to ensure that professional development is provided in an high quality, relevant, up-to-date, and appropriate way;
- continue to support the RATEP program. The QTU will participate in ongoing support and review processes to ensure that RATEP is a rigorous program that meets the needs of students and the schools in which they train and subsequently teach.

## **7. Qualifications**

The QTU commits to:

- the principle of articulated and accredited pathways for Aboriginal education workers and Torres Strait Islander education workers, to help them seek further relevant qualifications, and improve their career development opportunities;
- the principle of scholarships for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples working in the public education system, with the aim of achieving social parity in Aboriginal employment numbers and Torres Strait Islander employment numbers across education systems throughout Australia.

The QTU will work with the relevant bodies and agencies in the development and implementation of programs which achieve an increase in the numbers of qualified, capable Aboriginal education workers and Torres Strait Islander education workers, including teachers, AIEWs, principals, and other educational staff.

The QTU supports the assertion by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples that Aboriginal higher education students and Torres Strait Islander higher education students should be exempt from paying HECS fees and VET fees as a part of social justice and the reconciliation process.

The QTU supports the granting of study leave to Aboriginal teachers and Torres Strait Islander teachers, to enable them to upgrade their academic qualifications.

## **8. Aboriginal cultures and languages and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages**

### **8.1 Cultural awareness**

The QTU commits to:

- the teaching and learning of cross-cultural pedagogy becoming a compulsory component of pre-service teacher training and an ongoing process among school staff;
- the right of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access an education that recognises and affirms the cultural knowledge, values and languages of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and that also enriches mainstream education.

### **8.2 Aboriginal languages and literacy and Torres Strait Islander languages and literacy**

The QTU commits to:

- with the assistance and guidance of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, providing programs to help Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students with study, literacy and numeracy skills;
- working in partnership with government departments to provide Aboriginal adults and Torres Strait Islander adults with adult literacy and numeracy courses;
- the creation of bilingual and bicultural programs, provided they are adequately resourced.

#### ***Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander languages***

The QTU recognises:

- the right of all Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to maintain their cultural knowledge and values and to speak traditional languages;
- that any Aboriginal language and Torres Strait Island language strategies should only be implemented after thorough consultation with the relevant communities.

The QTU calls on the Queensland and federal governments to provide resources so that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples can have their languages written and their histories recorded by people who are accepted by the Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities.

#### ***Languages other than English (LOTE)***

The QTU Supports:

- Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages being included in the LOTE curriculum;
- The allocation of appropriate funds to support the teaching of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages;
- The development of a curriculum which incorporates aspects of EAL/D in English programs. Teachers specifically trained in EAL/D should be provided for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students

whose first language is an Aboriginal language/Torres Strait Islander language, Torres Strait Islander Creole or Aboriginal English.

### **8.3 Aboriginal languages and Creole**

The QTU recognises that Aboriginal Creole/Home language could be the first, second, third or fourth language or dialect of many Aboriginal people. It should be noted that the forms of Aboriginal Creole/Home language vary, for example, across geographical locations.

It is recommended that teachers deal with students who are speakers of Aboriginal Creole in the same way as they deal with other English as an additional language/dialect situations.

### **8.4 Torres Strait Islander languages and Creole**

The QTU recognises that Torres Strait Islander languages could be the first, second, third or fourth languages or dialect of many Torres Strait Islander people. Torres Strait Islander languages vary according to geographical locations. It is recommended that teachers deal with students who are speakers of Torres Strait Islander languages in the same way as they deal with other English as an additional language/dialect situations.

The QTU therefore insists that Aboriginal schools and Torres Strait Islander schools be recognised as EAL/D schools, with an appropriate allocation of EAL/D teachers funded from state resources.

## **9. Standard Australian English**

The QTU will:

- commit to the principle that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to participate in broader Australian society, and understands that the acquisition and use of Standard Australian English (SAE) is essential to this right;
- work with peak bodies and agencies on the development and implementation of programs increasing the proficiency of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the use of SAE.

## **10. Students with additional educational needs**

The QTU commits to:

- the principle that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples with additional educational needs have the right to participate in a full educational program;
- lobbying the Department of Education and Training to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students with additional needs, including, but not restricted to, access to specialised services, professional support staff, professional development, and appropriate industrial support.

The QTU will work with peak bodies and agencies on the development and implementation of programs that will ensure that the requirements of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples with additional educational needs are met.

## **11. Information technology**

The QTU endorses the principle that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the same right to access and use information technology (IT) as all other Australians.

The QTU will:

- advocate for improved access to IT for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- ensure that this advocacy is aligned with protocols and access needs, as defined by Aboriginal peoples and communities and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

## **12. Resourcing and funding**

The QTU:

- asserts that additional educational funding provision should be made to redress the serious disadvantage faced by Aboriginal peoples and communities and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities;
- opposes the use of this funding as a substitute for general funding measures and arrangements;
- supports the involvement of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decisions about the development of funding models and the allocation of resources within their communities;

- notes that funding alone will not address Aboriginal disadvantage and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, and urges that the building of community capacity be the basis of all government programs delivered to Aboriginal peoples and communities and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

### **13. Aboriginal unionism and Torres Strait Islander unionism**

At all QTU meetings, the traditional ownership of the lands on which these meetings take place will be acknowledged.

At QTU Conference, QTU Women's Conference and other QTU conferences and seminars of state or national significance, an invitation will be made to an appropriate, recognised elder/representative of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to welcome conference participants to the country.

The QTU recognises the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships and communication links with various Aboriginal bodies and Torres Strait Islander bodies, and with organisations and units involved in Aboriginal education and social policy and Torres Strait Islander education and social policy.

The QTU will maintain a QTU standing committee on Aboriginal education and Torres Strait Torres Strait Islander education (Gandu Jarjum) with terms of reference as set out in the QTU structures, procedures and services policy.

The QTU will promote the active involvement of Aboriginal members and Torres Strait Islander members in Union affairs at all levels.

The QTU will support the attendance of Aboriginal members and Torres Strait Islander members as QTU delegates to appropriate forums;

The QTU will seek continued support for the development of Aboriginal education and training and Torres Strait Islander education and training from:

- the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training Advisory Committee (QATSJETAC);
- other trade unions including the Australian Education Union (AEU);
- the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU);
- the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Association (QCPCA);
- other relevant organisations.

The QTU supports the provision of appropriate cross-cultural awareness courses for its own members and for trade union members generally.

### **14. Industrial issues**

In addition to its core role of protecting and improving the salaries and conditions of its members, the QTU commits to:

- supporting the maintenance and improvement of award wages and conditions for Aboriginal education workers and Torres Strait Islander education workers;
- support affirmative action measures for and by Aboriginal members and Torres Strait Islander members and other Aboriginal workers and Torres Strait Islander workers;
- working to ensure that the rights of Aboriginal members and Torres Strait Islander members and Aboriginal workers and Torres Strait Islander workers are recognised and protected, and will work with other unions, where appropriate, to secure these rights.

### **15. Alcohol management plans (AMPs)**

The QTU recognises the impact that alcohol has on educational outcomes within Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities, and notes the legislated introduction of AMPs in these communities.

The QTU supports the right of each community to determine its own alcohol management plan, and the need for diversity in each plan and their implementation across communities. AMPs should be transparent, practical and enforceable.

The QTU notes that the Department of Education and Training, in partnership with the community, is responsible for the recruitment and staffing of schools in AMP areas.

The Department of Education and Training is responsible for ensuring that teachers are aware of their rights and responsibilities in communities with an AMP in place. Teachers appointed or transferred into these areas should be fully informed of the plans, and the possibility of future changes, before recruitment and during induction programs.

Teachers' rights and responsibilities in relation to AMPs should be clearly articulated by the Department of Education and Training. Teachers should be supported with appropriate professional development and training, to enable them to work in these areas. The Department of Education and Training should provide principals at these schools with appropriate training and development in relation to their local alcohol management plan and their accountabilities. The Department of Education and Training should have appropriate and transparent procedures in place in relation to the staffing and ongoing support for teachers in these communities.

The QTU believes that any alleged breaches of AMPs should be dealt with on a case by case basis, the same way that other alleged disciplinary matters are dealt with. Therefore, the QTU does not support the proposition that all alleged breaches of the AMP should necessarily mean disciplinary action or removal of the teachers from the community. Where necessary, the Department of Education and Training should have appropriate exit strategies for teachers prepared, should breaches occur.

## **16. Aboriginal health and Torres Strait Islander health**

The QTU recognises that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples tend to have more health issues than other Australians, which may impact on their educational success. These health issues result from the socio-economic deprivation experienced by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are three broad categories:

- non-communicable diseases, for example, circulatory disease, respiratory disease, cancer, diabetes etc.;
- communicable diseases, for example, HIV/AIDS, STIs, diarrhoea, hepatitis etc.;
- other conditions, such as ear conditions, dental health, substance use etc.

The provision of appropriate pre-service and ongoing in-service training for teachers will increase awareness of:

- symptoms of undetected health problems presented by students, therefore impacting on their learning;
- all available preventative, corrective and promotive healthcare services;
- the need for early detection and treatment of these health conditions, to ensure additional learning difficulties do not develop;
- substance abuse issues that impact on student behaviour and performance;
- mental health issues, including those related to suicide and the impact on communities.

The QTU notes the high rate of youth suicide in Aboriginal communities and undertakes to work with the Department of Education and Training to develop re-engagement programs. These will support at-risk students through a whole-of-government approach, in response to community initiatives.

### **16.1 Otitis media**

The QTU recognises that:

- a high percentage of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to be affected by the medical condition otitis media, more commonly known as glue ear
- otitis media detection and prevention is a priority on the Aboriginal education and training agenda and Torres Strait Islander education and training agenda
- research into otitis media and the development of classroom strategies should be supported, to improve Aboriginal students' and Torres Strait Islander students' learning
- otitis media prevention strategies need to be implemented for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students Australia-wide
- The Department of Education and Training needs to provide the funding schools need to apply for sound amplification systems and produce training DVD's for both teachers and students on how to manage otitis media – particularly through the blow-breathe-cough technique.

### **16.2 Foetal alcohol syndrome**

The QTU recognises that some Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities are affected by substance abuse, and that alcohol management programs are a small part of the solution.

The QTU insists that the Department of Education and Training and Department of Health actively liaise to promote realistic and appropriate strategies to reduce alcohol abuse in pregnant Aboriginal women and Torres Strait Islander women.

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The Department of Education and Training should provide appropriate funding and resources for students in communities affected by foetal alcohol syndrome. There also needs to be appropriate pre-service and in-service training to make teachers aware of the problems surrounding this issue.

### 17. Social justice for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The QTU:

- calls on governments at all levels to fund programs that increase equity and opportunity in line with the recommendations of the Gonski panel recommendations;
- supports the protection of the rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as native title holders and custodians of country;
- will follow appropriate Aboriginal protocols and Torres Strait Islander protocols in all dealings with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and will offer the appropriate acknowledgement of traditional owners at all gatherings, meetings and conferences;
- supports the principle of reconciliation;
- supports a change of date to Australia Day so that it can become an inclusive day that all Australians can celebrate;
- calls for the implementation of a process of treaty discussions and forums;
- supports the protection of Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property rights and Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property rights, and appropriate payment for their use;
- supports the preservation of, and respect for, Aboriginal cultural protocols and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols; will work to ensure that Aboriginal prisoners and Torres Strait Islander prisoners have access to a high quality education;
- will pursue the implementation of the appropriate recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody;
- endorses the recommendations from the “Bringing Them Home Report” that have specific relevance to education and calls upon its members in schools to support and, where appropriate, help implement them;
- believes that teachers, in their roles as educators and unionists, must work towards the elimination of racism in schools and will support measures to eliminate and address the effects of racism;
- calls on governments to exercise care in developing and implementing measures designed to address disadvantage of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and to ensure transparent and appropriate consultation processes are observed when making decisions, and to protect the rights of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people.

The QTU asserts that, it is inappropriate for proposed education programs to be funded through the involuntary redirection of wages owed to Aboriginal workers and Torres Strait Islander workers.

The QTU will continue to campaign for a just settlement for Aboriginal workers and Torres Strait Islander workers.

### 18. VET

The QTU:

- supports the assertion by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples that Aboriginal higher education students and Torres Strait Islander higher education students should be exempt from paying VET fees as a part of social justice and the reconciliation process.
- will continue a formal consultation process, with its Aboriginal members and Torres Strait Islander members as its primary source of community advice on the education and training of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- will form alliances and partnerships with relevant stakeholders to improve vocational education and training of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students;
- will advocate for the establishment of targeted funding that addresses the needs of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.