

28th National Schools Constitutional Convention

Tuesday 21 - Thursday 23 March 2023

Canberra, ACT



The Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House

NATIONAL SCHOOLS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Constitutional Reform

With the upcoming referendum in relation to Indigenous voice, much will be discussed about the difficulty in altering the Constitution.

At this Convention, students are asked to examine Section 128 in the Australian Constitution and discuss if the requirements for alteration are still appropriate. They are to consider Australia's historical journey through past referendums. Are the majority of voters and the majority of states just too hard to achieve, or is this a necessary requirement to change such an important document?

The issue of the territories could also be explored in this topic as ACT and NT are not given the same status as the States in terms of voting at a referendum.

TOPIC:

Is section 128 still a necessary requirement to change such an important document as the Australian Constitution?

Program

DAY 1 - Tuesday 21 March 2023	
	BREAKFAST AT MANTRA MACARTHUR HOTEL
10:10am	<i>Bus departs for National Archives of Australia (WA & NT Only)</i>
10:30am – 11:30am	Tour at National Archives of Australia (WA & NT Only)
11:35am	<i>Bus departs for Mantra MacArthur Hotel (WA & NT Only)</i>
11:45am – 12:20pm	LUNCH AT MANTRA MACARTHUR HOTEL
12:30pm	<i>Bus departs for Parliament House</i>
12:45pm – 3:15pm <i>Parliament House</i>	Clear security, tour, attend House of Representatives Question Time
3:15pm – 3:30pm	Moving time
3:30pm – 5:00pm <i>Theatrette, Parliament House</i>	Prime Minister's Welcome Reception The Hon Patrick Gorman MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister
5:15pm	<i>Bus departs for Mantra MacArthur Hotel</i>
5:30pm – 6:30pm	Briefing of Students and Supervisors Introduction to Working Groups
7:00pm – 8:00pm	DINNER AT MANTRA MACARTHUR HOTEL
8.00pm	<i>Student accommodation at Mantra MacArthur Hotel</i>

DAY 2 – Wednesday 22 March 2023	
	BREAKFAST
7:45am	<i>Bus departs for Museum of Australia Democracy (MoAD) Old Parliament House</i>
8:15 – 8:45am	Photography session – Front Steps of Old Parliament House
8:50 – 9:00am <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Welcome – Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Australian National University (ANU) Welcome to Country – Tina Brown, Ngunnawal Elder
9:00 – 9:20am <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Official opening Senator the Hon. Anthony Chisholm, Assistant Minister for Education
9:20 – 10:30am <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Keynote 1: Australia’s Constitutional Referendum Law and the history of Australia’s referendums. Professor Kim Rubenstein, University of Canberra
10:30am – 11:00am	MORNING TEA
11:00am – 11:45am <i>Breakout rooms, MoAD</i>	Working Groups Session 1 <i>[Supervisors Session with The National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP)]</i>
11:45am-11:50am	Break – prepare for reporting back
11:50am – 12:20pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Working Groups Session 1 - report back Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
12:20pm – 1:00pm	LUNCH
1:00pm – 1:25pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Keynote 2 - Section 128 in current practice. Is this still fair for all? Fr Frank Brennan (AO), Adjunct Professor, Newman College, University of Melbourne
1:25pm – 1:45pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Keynote 3 - What do First Nations People think of s.128 and referendums generally? Professor Peter Anderson, Walpiri and Murinpatha nations Northern Territory, Queensland University of Technology
1:45pm – 2:30pm <i>Breakout rooms, MoAD</i>	Working Groups Session 2 <i>[Supervisors Session with Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) for Teacher Supervisors]</i>
2:30pm-2:35pm	Break – prepare for reporting back
2:35pm – 3:05pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Working Groups Session 2 - report back Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
3:05pm – 3:35pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Soap box session Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
3:45pm	<i>Bus departs for Government House</i>
4:30pm – 5:30pm	Official Reception at Government House Hosted by His Excellency General the Hon. David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley
5:30pm	<i>Bus departs for High Court of Australia</i>
6:00pm	Arrival at High Court of Australia and Tour
6:30pm – 8:45pm	OFFICIAL DINNER – High Court of Australia Guest Speaker: Mr Sean Dondas, ACT State Recipient Young Australian of the Year 2022
9:00pm	<i>Bus departs for Mantra MacArthur Hotel</i>

DAY 3 – Thursday 23 March 2023	
	BREAKFAST
8:00am	<i>Bus departs for The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House</i>
8:30am - 8:40am	Welcome back and recap Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
8:40am – 9:25am <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Keynote 4 – How have other countries used and conducted referendums? Specifically New Zealand, Canada and the USA Dr Andrew Banfield, Parliamentary Library, Canberra
9:25am – 10:10am <i>Breakout rooms, MoAD</i>	Working Groups Session 3
10:10am – 10:40am	MORNING TEA
10:40am – 11:10am <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Presentation by Deputy President of the Senate Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC, Deputy President of the Senate
11:10am – 11:40am	Working Group Session 3 – Reporting back Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
11:40am – 12:10pm	Soapbox Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
12:10pm – 12:30pm	Introduction of the referendum and the referenda process Rae Joyce & Hayley Munro, National Electoral Education Centre, Australian Electoral Commission
12:30pm – 12:40pm	Vote - Rae Joyce & Hayley Munro, National Electoral Education Centre, Australian Electoral Commission
12:40pm – 1:30pm	LUNCH
1:30pm – 1:35pm	Results of Referendum Rae Joyce & Hayley Munro, National Electoral Education Centre, Australian Electoral Commission
1:35pm – 2:00pm	Finalising the Communique incorporating referendum results Convention Reflections Led by Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Convention Facilitator
2:00pm – 2:50pm	Tour of the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
2:50pm – 3:00pm <i>Members Dining Room, MoAD</i>	Closing, thank you and farewell Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO, Australian National University (ANU)
3:00pm	<i>Convention Close & Departure</i>

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