

Policy Title

Equity and Diversity Policy

Preamble

The Equity and Diversity policy was approved by the Senior Management Group on 23 March, 2018. It replaces the Access, Equity and Equal Educational Opportunity Policy (2009).

This Policy is consistent with the following Commonwealth and State Legislation

- Age Discrimination Act (Commonwealth, 2004)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act (Commonwealth, 1986)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (Victoria, 2006) amended July 2014
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act (Commonwealth, 2000)
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (Victoria, 2001)
- Racial Discrimination Act (Commonwealth, 1975)
- Sex Discrimination Act (Commonwealth, 1984)
- Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency Threshold Standards (2015): 2.2 Equity and Diversity; and 2.3 Well-being and Safety
- Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency Act (Commonwealth, 2011)
- Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency Amendment Act (Commonwealth, 2014)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (Victoria, 2010)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the ways in which Deakin College promotes equal opportunity, promotes the participation of under represented and disadvantaged groups, accommodates diversity and creates equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of students' backgrounds.

Scope

This policy applies to all Deakin College students, staff, committees, and boards.

Policy

1. Principles

Deakin College will uphold principles of equity for all staff and students and will create opportunities for diverse student groups to access and succeed in their higher education studies.

The Deakin College Equity and Diversity Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- 1.1.** All members of the Deakin College community have the right to be treated fairly and equitably.
- 1.2.** There is equitable access to education for students and equitable access to conditions and benefits of employment for all staff.
- 1.3.** All members of Deakin College are entitled to a work and study environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying or other adverse and inappropriate behaviours;
- 1.4.** Diversity is respected and appreciated as contributing to the richness of the learning and teaching environment;
- 1.5.** An inclusive and flexible environment, including the implementation of reasonable adjustments when required, provides the best outcomes for the varied needs of the diverse Deakin College staff and student community;
- 1.6.** In order to ensure equal opportunity, reasonable adjustment(s) may be needed to improve employment and educational opportunities for people from groups including: women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- 1.7.** Staff and students have the right to raise complaints in good faith under the relevant Deakin College complaints policy without fear of retaliation or victimisation.

2. Implementation

Deakin College will endeavour to ensure that:

- 2.1.** all staff and students are aware of both their rights and responsibilities to promote equal opportunity and avoid discrimination;
- 2.2.** the working and learning environment is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment vilification, victimisation, or other adverse and inappropriate behaviours;
- 2.3.** inclusive policies and practices are implemented in all activities and services to take account of the needs of the diverse College community;
- 2.4.** all prospective students are aware of and can access information about inherent course requirements and criteria for successful course completion;
- 2.5.** all information provided to students and used in marketing and promotion is provided in an inclusive manner;
- 2.6.** learning and teaching practices are designed to accommodate diversity, redress disadvantage of identified groups and create opportunities for universal academic success;
- 2.7.** academic and student support services take into account students identified as requiring additional academic support and reinforce available study support and the range of pertinent resources available to the student;
- 2.8.** reasonable adjustments are made to enhance opportunities for access, participation, retention and success of all students and staff including those from under represented equity target groups;
- 2.9.** feedback and review processes inform the annual and triennial course reviews and Institutional quality improvement plans on an ongoing basis;
- 2.10.** student support services are regularly assessed on their capacity to provide adequate support for students and mitigate student risk; and

- 2.11. participation of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and other under represented student groups is monitored and, where possible, increased.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. Deakin College has a legal and a moral obligation to provide equal opportunity in employment and a workplace free from discrimination and harassment. The success of the College's equal opportunity and diversity approach depends on the cooperation of the whole Deakin College community.
- 3.2. All staff and students are accountable for ensuring that their own behaviours comply with commitments and relevant Federal and State legislation.
- 3.3. The Deakin College Director and Principal and all senior managers and supervisory staff have accountabilities for the implementation of equal opportunity, gender equity and diversity within Deakin College.

4. Complaints

- 4.1. Deakin College students who experience discrimination or harassment may lodge a complaint under the provisions of the Deakin College Complaints Policy.

Deakin College staff members who experience discrimination or harassment may lodge a complaint under the provisions of the Navitas Grievance Management Policy.

Related Policies

Wellness, Health and Safety Policy

Student Support Policy

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Complaints Policy

Navitas Diversity Policy

Navitas Wellness Health and Safety (Staff) Policy

Navitas Anti-Discrimination and the Prevention of Harassment, Vilification and Bullying Policy

Navitas Recruitment and Selection Policy

Procedure

Definitions

| Key Term or Acronym | Definition |
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| Discrimination | Discrimination is treating, or proposing to treat, someone unfavourably or bullying them because of a personal characteristic. Personal characteristics protected by equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation include: Gender (Sex); Relationship status; Pregnancy; Age; Race; Disability; Gender identity; Sexuality; Family responsibilities; Breastfeeding; Religious belief or |

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| | religious activity; Parental status; Political belief or activity; Trade union activity; Lawful sexual activity; and Physical features. |
| Diversity | Diversity describes the ways in which people and groups of people are both alike and different (National Education Association [2015] Diversity Toolkit Introduction). Student diversity may be characterised by: gender; race; ethnicity; socio-economic status; place of origin; language; culture; religion; sexual orientation; gender identity; and physical and mental abilities |
| Equal opportunity | Equal opportunity means the opportunity for every person to participate freely and equally in areas of public life such as in the workplace, in education, or in accessing goods and services. |
| Reasonable adjustment | Reasonable adjustment means an act or intervention which Deakin College can take to provide equal opportunity, including removing barriers to participation and progression in employment and education, so that all staff and students have the opportunity to fully contribute to the Deakin College work and study environments. Any reasonable adjustment must not cause Deakin College unjustifiable hardship as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth). |
| Under represented groups in higher education | Despite increases in student numbers overall, under represented and often disadvantaged groups in higher education include: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; women in non-traditional areas; people from non-English speaking backgrounds; people with disability, those living in regional and remote areas of Australia; people from low socioeconomic backgrounds; early school leavers; and people with no family tradition of higher education. |
| Unlawful behaviour | Unlawful behaviour refers to unlawful discrimination, unlawful harassment, victimisation, vilification and unlawful adverse action. |
| Unlawful discrimination | Unlawful discrimination occurs when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group on the basis of characteristics as determined by relevant Federal and State legislation (as detailed in above under Discrimination definition). Unlawful discrimination can be direct or indirect. |
| Unlawful harassment | Unlawful harassment occurs when a person is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because on the basis of certain characteristics as determined by any relevant Federal, State and Territory legislation (as detailed in above under Discrimination definition). |
| Vilification | Vilification refers to a public act that could incite others to hate, have serious contempt for, or severely ridicule a person or a group of people because on the basis of certain characteristics as determined by legislation. |

Status and Details

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| Status | Current |
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| Domain | Wellness, Health and Safety |
| Effective date | 22/03/2018 |
| Review date | 30/04/2021 |
| Approval Authority | Senior Management Group |
| Implementation Officer | College Director and Principal |
| Enquiries Contact | Robert Close |