

Access and Equity Policy

1. Purpose

Sunraysia Institute of TAFE adheres to the principles of access and equity and the Australian democratic principles to ensure that its practices are as inclusive as possible and will not unreasonably prevent anyone from accessing its services or participating in learning. The Institute is committed to the principles of merit and fairness and to ensuring that unlawful discrimination does not take place.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all current and prospective Institute staff, students, contractors and community members.

3. Policy

The access and equity principles are presented in terms of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), the Australian democratic principles, the disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Commonwealth Government's, 'Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society'.

3.1. Sunraysia Institute of TAFE has an unreserved commitment to the principle of access and equity and the Australian democratic principles in its delivery of training and assessment services that gives practical expression to the documents referred to in clause 5 ensuring that its services are responsive to the individual needs of students. In keeping with this commitment the Institute will ensure that programs and services are relevant, accessible, fair, and inclusive by:

- 3.1.1.** Promoting programs in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse client base and ensures that all prospective students are well informed on the options available to meet their individual training needs.
- 3.1.2.** Increasing the skills base of the community.
- 3.1.3.** Providing an effective range of vocational preparation programs.
- 3.1.4.** Ensuring that those groups traditionally under-represented in vocational education and employment have the opportunity to participate and achieve the same outcomes as others.
- 3.1.5.** Identifying any special needs students may have, such as for disability support or for foundation skills training, or due to cultural or gender diversity to assist the student to meet the requirement of their nominated course.
- 3.1.6.** Undertaking to eliminate policies, practices, structures, assumptions and behaviours that may contribute to the disadvantages suffered by under - represented groups.
- 3.1.7.** Collecting data on customer satisfaction with service quality.
- 3.1.8.** Consulting with students, staff and the community to ensure that a wide range of views are available for consideration in planning and decision making; and

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Authorised by: Board

Original Issue: 18/06/2002

Endorsed by: Governance Committee **Maintained by:** General Manager, Corporate Services

Last review Date: 31/08/2021

Next review date: 31/08/2024

Policy number: Current

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3.1.9. Offering services that support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- 3.1.9.1. Elected Government
- 3.1.9.2. The rule of law
- 3.1.9.3. Equal rights for all before the law
- 3.1.9.4. Freedom of religion
- 3.1.9.5. Freedom of speech and association
- 3.1.9.6. The values of openness and tolerance.

3.1.10. Directing any person identifying the need to raise a complaint in relation to an issue of perceived unfair treatment, harassment, bullying or discrimination, to the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

4. Definitions

| Acronym/Term | Definition |
|------------------------------|---|
| Access and Equity | Access and Equity within the terms of this policy is based on the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing and maintaining training services that reflect fair and reasonable opportunity, and consideration for all students and staff• Equity for all people through the fair and appropriate allocation of resources and involvement in training.• Equality of education outcome for all people, without discrimination.• Access for all people to appropriate quality training and assessment services.• Increased opportunity for people to participate in vocational education and training and in relevant decision making processes within the vocational education and training system. |
| Bullying | Bullying is an act of repeated unreasonable behavior in order to intentionally hurt another person/s, physically or mentally. |
| Direct Discrimination | When a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person with a protected personal characteristic unfavourably, because of that personal characteristic. e.g. Making unfair assumptions about what people with certain personal characteristics can and cannot do. |
| Discrimination | Unfavourable treatment of a person in an area of public life due to one of their personal characteristics such as race, , age, religion, physical impairment or features, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, political opinion or parental status. |
| Harassment | Any form of behaviour that is not wanted, not asked for and is not returned, that is likely to create a hostile or uncomfortable workplace/ education/training environment by humiliating, intimidating or offending a person because of an attribute protected by the law. |

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Authorised by: Board

Original Issue: 18/06/2002

Endorsed by: Governance Committee Maintained by: General Manager, Corporate Services Last review Date: 31/08/2021

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| Indirect Discrimination | Situations where treating everyone the same is unfair. This occurs when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practise that purports to treat everyone the same ends up either actually or potentially, disadvantaging someone with a personal characteristic protected by the law. |
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5. Legislative Context

- Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Safe Standards – Commission for Children and Young People (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) – Section 327
- Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014 (Vic)
- Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Regulations – Schedule 7, Item 4 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Protected Disclosure Act 2012. (Vic)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth)
- The Charter of Public Service in a culturally diverse society (Cth)

6. Associated documents

6.1. Associated Policies

- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Employment & Recruitment Policy
- Protected Disclosure Policy
- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy

6.2. Associated Procedures

- Staff Complaints and Appeals Procedure

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- Student Reviews and Appeals Procedure

6.3. Associated Forms

- Reviews and Appeals Request Form
- Review panel report

6.4. Other associated documents

- Sunraysia Institute of TAFE Disability Action Plan
- The Commonwealth Government's Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society
- Guide for non-school senior secondary education providers – Minimum standards for registration to provide an accredited senior secondary qualification.

7. Responsibility

The General Manager, Corporate Services is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and its associated procedures and systems.

8. Review Frequency

This policy is to be reviewed every three (3) years, and remains in force as amended from time to time, until rescinded.

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