

Access and Equity Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

This policy outlines a set of principles for providing all staff and students with equal opportunities, and maintaining a learning environment which:

- is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, violence and maliciousness;
- accommodates student diversity including under-represented and disadvantaged groups; and
- creates equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of the background of the student.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the Bullying, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy and Procedure.

Where necessary, special consideration will be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in relation to recruitment, admission, participation and completion in conjunction with the EIA's Acknowledgement of and protocols for recognition and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture and country.

The following procedure describes the guidance in planning and implementing access and equity principles at EIA.

2. Responsibility

The Executive Manager of Operations is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure.

3. Definitions

Access and equity: EIA is responsive to the individual needs of people, whose age, gender, cultural, religious or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, academic and intellectual level, employment status or location may deter their access and participation in the activities of their study at EIA and achievement of expected outcomes.

Under-represented and disadvantaged groups: include but not limited to the following

- People with disability
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- People from the non-English speaking background
- People located in rural and remote areas
- People who are long-term unemployed
- Mature-aged students

Discrimination: According to the EIA Bullying, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy and Procedure, discrimination takes place when a person is vilified or treated less favourably than others due to their race, circumstances, religious beliefs, characteristics or industrial activities.

- a. Direct Discrimination occurs when a person, organisation or group of persons treat, or propose to treat another person, organisation or group of persons unfavourably because they have a certain attribute.
- b. Indirect Discrimination includes rules, procedures, practices, requirements or policies which seem to be non-discriminatory and equally applicable, nevertheless are operated in such a way that has, or is likely to have disadvantaging effects on a person, organisation or certain groups of people, without a just cause.

Workplace Harassment: Harassment is any belittling behaviour which offends, humiliates, threatens or intimidates an individual or a group of persons and causes an unfriendly or unpleasant workplace. When a person is a subject of harassment, their ability to perform their duties is affected as they are stressed and suffer from consequential health problems. Harassment is not limited to intentional behaviours only but may result from behaviours which are not intended to cause any harm, such as jokes or unsolicited attention, which does not require a genuine harmful intention to constitute harassment.

Verbal Harassment: Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Sexual advances
- b. Jokes or innuendos, implicit or explicit
- c. Racist remarks or jokes
- d. Gossiping and spreading rumours
- e. Comments or ridicule about an individual's disability, marital status, sexuality, age, race or religion
- f. Repeated and unwanted personal questions
- g. Demeaning or belittling someone's performance at work or job contribution in public, such as a team meeting
- h. Threats, insults or other types of language abuse
- i. Offensive, abusive, and obscene language
- j. Obscene and uninvited phone calls, unsolicited emails, letters, faxes and all sorts of correspondence or communication.

4. Requirements

4.1 EIA is committed to providing an environment that is safe and equitable for all students, staff and clients and is in compliance with State and Federal legislation.

4.2 EIA will abide by access and equity principles including:

- Fair and reasonable allocation of resources
- Equal opportunity for all without discrimination
- Access for all to high-quality teaching services, as appropriate
- Increased opportunity for people to participate in teaching

4.3 EIA will ensure:

- all policies and procedures are open, fair and transparent and incorporated with access and equity principles;
- all students shall have equal access to various learning opportunities, resources, facilities, equipment, support services, information, teaching and assessment personnel, materials, and assessment opportunities;
- all nominations and enrolments will be conducted at all times in a fair, responsible and transparent manner;

- all people are treated with respect in an environment free of discrimination and harassment;
- all decisions will be fair, reasonable, non-discriminatory;
- all individuals or groups are treated fairly;
- all communication is free of bias, prejudice and discriminatory language

4.4 EIA will not discriminate against or favour disadvantaged groups in either enrolling or teaching unless prescribed by funding contracts.

4.5 According to the Student Code of Conduct, all students, staff, and clients are expected to:

- prevent direct or indirect harassment,
- act to avoid victimization against a party who raises a complaint.
- respect the cultural and social differences and diversity of staff, clients, students, visitors and contractors;
- treat people in a fair manner without discrimination, regardless of the intention;
- respect people's rights to privacy and confidentiality and other legal rights;
- refuse to join in with discrimination behaviours;
- support the person in saying no to these behaviours;
- act as a witness if one person being harassed decides to complain;
- observe strictly site rules or code of conducts set by EIA;
- behave in a proper manner that does not cause any interference with the learning of other students.

5 Procedures

5.1 Special needs

- 5.1.1 Students intending to enrol in EIA are recommended to advise the Welfare Support Officer before enrolment if they have any disability, physical or other impairment which may adversely affect their ability to study.
- 5.1.2 Students are encouraged to discuss with the Student Support Officer any special needs and reasonable adjustments to their study environment, and both parties shall reach an agreement to implement the adjustments which they consider are necessary or would assist the students in their studies.
- 5.1.3 All students are required to have the underlying ability to fulfil the core requirements stated in the units of study to complete the course, including those with physical or intellectual disabilities. However, it is acknowledged that reasonable adjustments may be made to accommodate the students' needs.

5.2 Language, literacy and numeracy

- 5.2.1 Each Course sets a minimum requirement in language, literacy and numeracy skills of learners, with which EIA must abide.
- 5.2.2 All students are expected to meet the minimum requirements when enrolled in their study in order to maintain the mandatory requirements of the integrity, equity and fairness of the course and the assessments.
- 5.2.3 Where a student is deemed to possess a lower level of language, literacy or numeracy than is the minimum course requirement, EIA will provide appropriate advice and support to the student regarding further learning options. This may include requiring the student to attend mandatory training in areas that required improvements.

5.3 Harassment, bullying, violence and vilification

- 5.3.1 In the case of harassment, respective disciplinary actions will be taken against any student or staff involved in such behaviour. This may include termination of employment and enrolment from the course.
- 5.3.2 Severe cases of harassment may lead to a criminal offence.
- 5.3.3 EIA recognises bullying and violence infringes the rights of individuals and groups, damaging the work and learning environment.
- 5.3.4 EIA will not tolerate harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, violent (including sexual assault) and vilification behaviour and expects all people to treat each other with dignity and respect.

5.4 Reporting

- 5.4.1 Concerns regarding equal opportunity, harassment, discrimination or other inappropriate conduct should be reported immediately. Any actual or suspected harmful situation or breaches of this policy are to be reported immediately to the Managing Director. Please refer to the Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Academic Matters, Student Grievance, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Non-Academic Matters or Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure for more information.
- 5.4.2 Any complaints will be investigated in an equitable, fair, confidential and timely manner and action will be taken to ensure that the inappropriate behaviour stops.
- 5.4.3 People who are responsible for handling a complaint must follow the natural justice and comply with procedural fairness. Both parties, including the respondent and the complainant, must be offered an opportunity to present their cases and informed of the complaint outcome.
- 5.4.4 All documentation regarding complaints concerning Access and Equity matters will be maintained by Record Management Policy and Procedure.

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