



# ACCESS EQUITY AND FAIR TREATMENT POLICY

## Access Equity and Fair Treatment Policy

Effective Date: **draft 05/07/2016**

Policy #: **00**

Revised:

### Purpose:

To define and explain the nature of access, equity and fair treatment to ensure it is practiced within Quest College.

### Additional Authority:

CEO and Senior Management

### Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, students and stakeholders of Quest College

### Responsible Designation:

Chief of Operations

### Related documents/publications/policies:

- Compliance with Commonwealth, State / Territory and Regulatory Requirements
- Higher Education Support Act - VET Guidelines 2015
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 (Standards 1,4,5 & 8)
- Commonwealth Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Commonwealth Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Commonwealth Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999
- Commonwealth Anti-Discrimination Act 2004

*Note: All of the above legislation is available on the website [www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au) (Information for Employers).*

*Each of these Acts has specific grounds for complaint including age, race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability, sexual preference, age and trade union activity.*

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE FRAMEWORK**

This policy and procedure document consists of the following sections:

- 1.1 Policy Statement
- 1.2 Access and equity principles
- 1.3 Fair treatment
- 1.4 Glossary of some terms
- 1.5 Process for complaints

### **1.1 Policy Statement**

Quest College management and staff provide assistance to all students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes. Our college is committed to providing training and assessment services to all students regardless of race, religion, sex, socio-economic status, disability, language, literacy or numeracy.

- The access and equity policy of Quest College is provided during staff induction.
- Individual client needs will be identified through initial contact with reception staff, receipt of application materials, and orientation events prior to the commencement of training and or assessment. Client needs are explored during the enrolment and registration process and are at the forefront to all Trainer/Assessor communications throughout a participants course.
- All Quest College staff in following Quest College access and equity procedures must follow the principles of fairness and flexibility in workplace assessment.
- Where a conflict between other policies is recognised in applying Quest College access and equity policy, the staff member will report the conflict to the National Quality Assurance Manager.

Access and Equity training and assessment adjustments must be reported.

Discrimination occurs if a person treats someone differently on the basis of an attribute or characteristic. Quest College strives to meet the needs of each participant through incorporating access and equity principles and practices which acknowledge the right of all participants to equality of opportunity without discrimination.

Quest College access and equity practices and principles are based on the acknowledgment that:

- Discrimination or harassment in the provision of education or employment is unlawful;
- It is unlawful to discriminate against anyone on grounds of gender, sexuality, race, pregnancy, physical or intellectual impairment or age;
- It is lawful to establish special processes and schemes for the benefit of participants from targeted groups in order to redress disadvantages; and

- All participants must be provided with a safe and healthy working environment.

## **1.2 Access and equity principles/practices**

Specific access/equity principles/practices of Quest College, together with related strategies are outlined below:

### 1.2.1. The fair allocation of resources to delivery and assessment of VET

Given that Quest College has chosen to be a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), it gives a commitment that it will adequately resource the provision of VET with appropriate equipment and resources and will provide Quest College staff with the level of professional development that ensures maintenance of the human resource requirements as an RTO, thus assisting to facilitate quality outcomes for all participants.

### 1.2.2 Training and assessment methods which are inclusive, meet learner needs, and meet industry and community needs (thus enhancing the value of the outcomes for participants)

- A sample of assessment items will be validated by industry to ensure relevance, thus enhancing the quality and acceptance of participant outcomes by industry and by participants themselves.
- Training and assessment methods will be inclusive and will cater for the different learning styles of participants.
- The principle of 'reasonable adjustment'\* will be applied to assessment, as required.

### 1.2.3 Fostering a learning environment which acknowledges and celebrates diversity

Quest College VET staff/trainers will adopt strategies which ensure inclusiveness of all participants and which openly value participant diversity and differences, including cultural, ethnic and other differences.

### 1.2.4 Promoting VET programs in ways that include and are meaningful to participants from target groups

Any Quest College promotional materials will be written in such a way that they are meaningful to all groups, drawing on and promoting, where possible, the successes of past participants/mentors from target groups in such material

### 1.2.5 Undertaking to eliminate practices, structures and behaviours which contribute to the disadvantages suffered by target groups

Quest College undertakes to promote and provide a VET program aimed at meeting the needs of ALL participants, irrespective of their backgrounds,

intellectual skills, ethnicity, etc. Diversity and difference will be openly celebrated, as indicated in principles 1-5 above.

Notes:

\* Reasonable adjustment – The nature and range of adjustment to an assessment method which will ensure valid and reliable assessment decisions but also meet the characteristics of the person(s) being assessed. Adapted from Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training.

### **1.3 Fair Treatment**

Quest College ensures all students are treated fairly by:

- Ensuring college processes encourage fair access for members of underrepresented groups and that all college processes are non-discriminatory.
- Consideration of the circumstances of the individual and applying an individual approach.
- Ensuring decisions regarding students' entry to, progression through and completion of courses are made on a case-by-case basis. The College does not exclude eligible applicants or appellants from having their application or appeal considered.

### **1.4 Defining some terms**

#### *Aboriginality*

Quest College considers an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to be any person who identifies with, and is accepted by, the indigenous community with which he or she is associated.

#### *Racial prejudice/harassment*

Racial harassment is the expression of attitudes or behaviour based on false assumptions or social myths of superiority of one race or culture over another. Examples of racial prejudice or harassment may include name calling, racist graffiti, demeaning jokes concerning a person's racial or ethnic background and, in extreme cases, physical assault. .

#### *Racial discrimination*

Racial discrimination is behaviour which disadvantages people on the basis of real or supposed membership of a particular racial or ethnic group including structural or institutional disadvantage (this includes policies and procedures which at first glance appear fair but which on reflection actually disadvantage people from a particular race).

### *Sexual harassment*

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature in the working or learning environment. Sexual harassment is not confined to a particular gender or sexuality and may include but is not limited to the following behaviours:

- requests for sexual favours, either directly or by implication
- deliberate physical contact such as kissing, touching or fondling, embracing, patting, pinching and brushing against another person
- wolf whistles, catcalls, leering or offensive staring and gesturing
- persistent social invitations or obscene or unsolicited communications by other participants either at work or at home
- persistent questioning about a person's private life
- suggestive comments about a person's physical appearance or sexuality
- displays of erotic or sexually graphic material (posters, photographs, etc).

### *Physical harassment/bullying*

- threatening others
- physical contact of hurtful nature, for example, touching, hitting or grabbing;
- destroying or damaging another's property

### *Psychological harassment/bullying*

- disparaging comments about ability or achievement
- verbally and/or non-verbally denigrating or insulting others
- telling jokes deliberately intended to offend another
- stalking and abusive phone calls.

### *Inclusion*

Inclusion is defined as:

- the process whereby enrolled participants with identified special needs, or needs arising from their membership of target groups, can have equal access to the total school environment;
- providing the most appropriate education for each enrolled participant in the least restrictive environment;
- maintaining and enhancing the participation of all enrolled participants in appropriate regular school programs, including VET programs;
- requiring the negotiation of an appropriate program which is flexible and supportive;
- ensuring an appropriate and acceptable learning/training environment for all enrolled participants.

## **1.5 Process for complaints**

Should any stakeholder of the college believe that their rights under this policy have been breached please refer to the Complaints Process for further action.