

Access, Equity & Fairness Policy

Responsible Officer:	Registrar
Document Location:	QMS
Document Name:	Access, Equity & Fairness Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Open Colleges provides equal opportunity and promotes inclusive practices and processes for all students and prospective students within the current capacity of the business.

Open Colleges understands that it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of irrelevant personal characteristics and this policy provides guidance on creating a learning environment that is free from direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification.

Scope

This policy relates to all students and prospective students and all courses offered by Open Colleges and applies to all educational services including pre and post enrolment services.

Definitions

Access	The freedom or ability to obtain or make use of information and services (training and support).
Equity	Justice according to natural law or right. Freedom from bias, favouritism or discrimination.
Direct Discrimination	The exclusion from an enrolment opportunity of a person or group based solely on age, race, marital status, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, disability, religious belief and/or political conviction.
Indirect Discrimination	The development and application of rules, work practices, policies and related decisions that appear generic and in accordance with access and equity principles but in fact exclude or reduce the potential of an individual or group in obtaining an educational opportunity.
Irrelevant Characteristics	Those characteristics for which it is unlawful to discriminate against. Characteristics include: gender, age, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, lawful sexual activity, marital status, parent carer status, pregnancy, breast feeding,



family responsibilities, physical features, impairment, employment activity, industrial activity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, criminal record.

Responsibilities

Registrar	Ensures effective communication and implementation of this policy
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Quality and Continuous Improvement

The Access, Equity & Fairness Policy is subject to systematic review, evaluation and improvement. Review mechanisms include the Quality and Continuous Improvement Committee and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Policy Provisions

Open Colleges is committed to the fair treatment of its students and prospective students.

As an equal opportunity employer Open Colleges does not condone any form of unlawful direct or indirect discrimination and expects all staff to know and to adhere to policies and procedures that support and endorse access and equity.

Open Colleges undertakes on a regular basis to collate and analyse enrolment statistics for patterns which may impact on equal opportunity for students.

As a Registered Training Organisation

Open Colleges complies with the VET Quality Framework requirement to adhere to principles of access and equity in order to maximise outcomes for clients by:

- Establishing the needs of students and delivering courses, assessment and support services that meet these needs
- Ensuring students receive training, assessment and support services that meet their needs
- Collecting analysing and implementing programs to continuously improve courses, assessment and support services
- Adequately informing prospective students regarding courses, assessment and support services and their rights and obligations prior to enrolment
- Ensuring trainers and assessors are actively engaged in development, delivery and monitoring of courses, assessment and support services
- Providing all students with timely and accurate access to their participation and progress relating to their course and assessment



- Having appropriate mechanisms and services for complaints and appeals to be addressed efficiently and effectively.

Plain English Guideline

Open Colleges is committed to providing materials and services to all students that are accessible, fair and equitable by applying the following key principles:

- Providing adequate and appropriate information to prospective students regarding our courses and employment opportunities
- Ensuring courses, assessment tasks and support services are accessible to all students who meet the entry requirements
- Ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to progress through their course and graduate
- Establishing and maintaining courses, assessment tasks and support services that address the requirements of the learning community and that follow antidiscrimination laws
- Encouraging inclusive practices and using inclusive language to avoid discriminating, devaluing or demeaning people of any age, gender, race or culture or minority group in our society
- Ensuring the student environment is free of harassment and bullying and encouraging fair treatment of all individuals
- Having policies and procedures in place that address and resolve student complaints relating to unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Related Documents

Student Guide

Code of Student Conduct

Grievance and Complaint Policy

Related Legislation/Guidelines

Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986
Disability Discrimination Act 1992



Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999
Anti-Discrimination Act (NSW) 1977
Age Discrimination Act 2004
Privacy Act 1988
Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations
Disability Standards for Education 2005

Revision & Authorisation History

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes
1	Education Management Team	20110912	20111004	