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| APPROVAL BY: | SWTAFE Board |
| RESPONSIBLE MANAGER: | CEO |
| CATEGORY: | Governance |
| APPROVED DATE: | 25 October 2023 |
| DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: | October 2025 |
| RELATED DOCUMENTS: | Legislation: Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth) Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) The Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwlth) Working with children Act 2005 (Vic) Fair Work Act 2009 (Cwlth) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth) Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cwlth) Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order No 1359 (Vic) Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic) |

Documents:

SWTAFE Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2025
PPP008 Occupational Health and Safety Policy
PPP012 Child Safe Guidelines
PPP036 Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy
PPP098 Equality and Fairness in the Workplace Guidelines
PPP105 Recruitment and Selection Guidelines
PPP236 Gender Impact Assessment Guidelines
PPP252 Educational Access and Equity Strategy 2023-2025

1. Purpose

South West TAFE (SWTAFE or the Organisation) aspires to be an employer of choice. This Policy establishes principles to guide our actions and behaviours to achieve our commitment to an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity and where everyone is treated with respect and feels valued.

We understand that each person is different and that our collective diversity shapes our capability. Research shows a more inclusive and diverse workforce will increase organisational effectiveness, will lift employee satisfaction, motivation and commitment, will enhance productivity and will help achieve corporate objectives.

We acknowledge that our services and business are enhanced when we reflect the diversity of the community. We aim to create an inclusive learning environment for our students, as well as our workforce to ensure that our learning spaces and workplaces are safe and inclusive for all. Considering SWTAFE's unique relationships with our students, local industry and employers, our Organisation has the potential to have a significant impact on leading the promotion of inclusion and diversity in the wider community.

2. Scope

SWTAFE Executive, Managers and employees are expected to model respectful and inclusive behaviours at all times. This Policy applies to all students and employees and provides guidance to managers. It is expected and intended that implementation of this Policy will positively influence SWTAFE's learning environment. The Policy should also have a positive impact on contractors, suppliers and partners.

Respect and Human Rights are a part of South West TAFE's values and we will demonstrate trust, understanding and embrace diversity. These values form the foundation for equal employment opportunity at SWTAFE, guide employee behaviours in the workplace and in their service provision to students and the broader community.

3. Definition

Diversity in this Policy refers to the unique personal, social and professional identities of each of our employees, and the recognition that these identities can change over time.

At SWTAFE inclusion and diversity is reflected in the level of diversity within our employee and student populations and in the cultural behaviours that support inclusion. We acknowledge the Diversity Council of Australia definition which defines diversity as the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability, gender, Indigenous background, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background (social identity) and their profession, education, work experiences, and organisational role (professional identity). We also acknowledge intersectionality and neurodiversity within the organisation.

4. Principles

The following principles will guide our actions and behaviours to achieve an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity:

1. We will acknowledge and value the differences each person brings to the Organisation.
2. We will purposefully create an inclusive culture where students and employees can be themselves and everyone is encouraged and supported to bring their authentic selves to work. We will actively work towards a student and employee diversity profile that reflects the community we serve.
3. We will empower and support all students and employees to understand each other, including those that may need extra assistance to achieve equitable outcomes.
4. We will ensure appropriate resourcing is provided to meet our diversity and inclusion goals and ensure training and education is provided to managers and employees to enhance understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion.
5. We recognise that to focus on fairness and inclusion, we need to ensure that merit, competence and potential are the basis for all decisions about recruitment and development, remaining alert to the influence of conscious and unconscious biases.
6. We recognise that if we are genuine, we will expand our influence beyond our walls and influence how our community, contractors, suppliers and partners think about and approach inclusion and diversity.
7. We will be authentic and are committed to making our inclusion and diversity approach sustainable in the long term.

5. Implementation

SWTAFE will continue to operate in accordance with diversity legislation and broad principles of inclusion.

We will take a systematic approach to implement this policy to ensure that our inclusion and diversity objectives are embedded within our culture, systems and processes.

We will:

1. Behave and act consistently with the principles in this Policy;
2. We will actively work toward increasing our diversity profile amongst our employees and student populations.
3. We will undertake Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) on all new policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public, as well as those up for review, to enable better consideration of the needs and experiences of all Victorians.
4. Understand and regularly report our progress toward inclusion and diversity.

6. Responsibility

The Board of SWTAFE will regularly review, evaluate and improve this Policy to ensure its commitment for an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes diversity is being achieved.

Overall management responsibility for implementing this Policy resides with the Chief Executive Officer with the support of the Executive Management Team.

7. Measures of Success

To measure if this policy is being implemented successfully, SWTAFE will have regard to the following:

| Measure of Success | Indicator |
|---|--|
| SWTAFE will have a structured approach to Diversity | The Gender Equality Action Plan is developed and implemented |
| SWTAFE will be an inclusion and diversity leader in the Victorian TAFE Sector | SWTAFE benchmarks its performance via the People Matters Survey SWTAFE conducts gender impact assessments as outlined (above) |

8. Legislative Context

Inclusion and diversity management is underpinned by Commonwealth and State law including:

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth) – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age.

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth) – provides an avenue of redress for those alleging discrimination and provides for the rights of these people.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) – makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability.

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 – These Standards are the Disability Standards for Education 2005. The standards specify how education and training are to be made accessible to students with disabilities. They cover the following areas: enrolment; participation; curriculum development, accreditation and delivery; student support services and elimination of harassment and victimization. The Act seeks to eliminate as far as possible, discrimination against people with disabilities. Under section 22 of the Act, it is unlawful for an educational authority to discriminate against a person on the ground of the person’s disability or disability of any associates of that person.

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cwlth) – provides a safety net of minimum terms and conditions of Employment and prohibits discrimination.

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth) – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin.

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth) – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of a person’s sex, marital status, pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation or to sexually harass another person. The Act requires organisations to take proactive and meaningful action to prevent such unlawful conduct from occurring in the workplace.

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic) – sets out the safety requirements for employers in respect of their employees (including in relation to bullying).

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) - sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves.

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) - prohibits behaviour that incites or encourages hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule against another person or group of people because of their race and/or religion.

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Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) - encourages the identification and elimination of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation and their causes, and to promote and facilitate the progressive realisation of equality.

State and Territory Anti-Discrimination Laws – make it unlawful to discriminate in employment on a range of grounds.

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 - replaced the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999. The legislation aims to promote and improve gender equality in Australian workplaces.

Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order No 870 - Children have the right to be safe and protected. These Standards set out the actions that education providers must take to meet the Child Safe Standards, and mandate arrangements to mitigate the risk of child abuse and implementation of a zero tolerance. The Ministerial Order places accountability for managing the risk of child abuse with education providers governing authorities.

Gender Equality Act 2020 - requires the public sector, Councils and universities to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and to promote gender equality in their policies, programs and services.

9. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

SWTAFE is committed to making diversity, equity and inclusion part of everything we do, including in the implementation of this policy/procedure/guideline. For more information, please visit the 'Our Values' page on our [website](#) [external] or the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Homepage on ECHO [internal]. [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\)](#)

10. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

South West TAFE is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a Child Safe Program designed to keep children safe within our organisation. For Child Safe key documents, resources, contact officer details please go to: [Child Safe Commitment](#)