



Equity and Diversity Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to guide practices that result in equitable access to employment opportunities as well as learning outcomes throughout Victorian School of Commerce (VSC). The Equity and Diversity Policy promotes and ensures that all students and staff of VSC will be treated and supported with equal opportunity, academic freedom and fairness and non-discrimination as well as given equal access to opportunities for academic success and a healthy work environment.

Scope

The policy applies to all students prospective or current studying at VSC and all staff (permanent and casual), including Board Members and Committee members within VSC. It also includes visitors, contractors, consultants and external agents working on behalf of VSC.

Definitions

Discrimination – refers to behaviour that may disadvantage a person or group while advancing another person or group due to factors such as race or ethnicity, sexual or gender orientation, culture, religious orientation, physical and mental abilities or other social category.

Diversity – the similarities and difference among persons and groups.

Equal Opportunity – the creation of equal opportunities for all students and staff within VSC and specifically for student group who may be disadvantaged, for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Policy

VSC values the diversity of its community and the unique qualities each student and staff member bring. VSC respects those students have diverse needs and require different levels of support and assistance and will do all in its power to ensure each student achieves academic success in their chosen field (*Student Wellbeing and Support Policy and Student Wellbeing and Support Procedure*).

Staff will also receive support and an environment that honors and respects equity and diversity will be encouraged. All staff must respect the rights of others and treat individuals fairly.

VSC ensures that all individuals have the right to enrol in its higher education courses without any prejudice. VSC is committed to ensuring provision of a safe, fair and supportive learning environment for all its students regardless of their different backgrounds, orientations and culture. VSC will carefully plan all its operations to embrace student diversity and to show that this is valued and supported.

VSC develops and maintains curricula that recognise, utilise and demonstrate diverse knowledge and experiences. These qualities reflect and will advance diverse knowledge and experiences, resulting in inclusive practices, services and facilities. VSC continuously seeks to broaden its student profile to be more diverse and for that reason specific consideration is given to students or groups of students who are identified as under-represented or who are discriminated against in wider society and includes but is not limited to:

- Students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (*See Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Policy*)



- Students whose race or ethnicity is under-represented at VSC
- Students who identify under a diverse sexual orientation
- Students unduly affected by their socio-economic situation
- Students with a disability

In these cases, all reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate and support these students. In order to do so, VSC applies specific consideration in the recruitment, admission, learning participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. VSC is committed to accessibility and equity for students and staff with a disability. The goal is to enable them to participate to the greatest possible extent and independently, in the academic and operational aspects of VSC.

If a Staff member has special needs, VSC will also do everything that is reasonable to accommodate and support them in their work. The diverse needs of VSC staff and associates are best addressed by inclusive practices and where required provision of reasonable adjustment.

The Academic Board (AB) and Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) will ensure that all its strategies for teaching, pedagogy, learning environment and support strategies for learning will promote equity for all students and encourage the highest level of engagement and achievement. All courses at VSC are inclusive of a range student needs including access to credit transfer, recognition of prior learning (See *Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure*).

VSC is committed to successful transition and progression of study by applying programs or processes that recognise student cohort needs. For example, orientation (See *Student Orientation Policy*) or support programs (See *Student Wellbeing and Support Policy*).

VSC ensures to the best of capability that all publications and official documents use inclusive and non-discriminatory language. Course designs and curriculum will be flexible to include a range of student needs and will avoid any non-inclusive or discriminatory language and examples. VSC applies zero tolerance towards discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Complaints of such matters are responded through a range of avenues such as formal investigation, conciliation or informal resolution underpinned by principles of natural justice (See *Bullying Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy*).

Where needed and possible adaptive technology will be investigated and used. VSC ensures that learning and teaching are designed to accommodate student diversity, and to generate equal opportunities for all students, regardless of backgrounds (See *Teaching and Learning Policy*).

Breaches of this policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the *Code of Conduct*. If any member of Staff or the Student Body experience discrimination they may lodge a complaint under the *Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy* and/or *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

The related policies listed below must be read in conjunction with this *Equity and Diversity Policy* as they support the principles within this policy.



Related policy instruments

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Policy
Academic Progression and At-Risk Policy
Academic Progression and At-Risk Procedure
Admissions Policy
Admissions Procedure
Assessment and Moderation Policy
Assessment and Moderation Procedure
Bullying Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
Code of Conduct
Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure
Marketing and Student Recruitment Policy
Professional Development Policy
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Staff Complaints and Appeals Policy
Staff Complaints and Appeals Procedure
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure
Student Orientation Policy
Student Orientation Procedure
Student Wellbeing and Support Policy
Student Wellbeing and Support Procedure
Teaching and Learning Policy

Related documents and legislation

Age Discrimination Act 2004
Anti-Discrimination Act
Australian Human Rights Commission 1986
Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Equal Opportunity Act (Vic) 2010
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, Part A: Standard 2.2 (Diversity and Equity)
National Code 2018, Standard 2 and 3
Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006



Sex Discrimination Act 1984 <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2014C00002>

Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) 2011

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012

Administration

Revision History

Version	Approval date	Approval body	Review date
0.1	15/04/2019	Board of Directors	
0.2	12/05/2020	Board of Directors	
0.3	09/06/2020	Board of Directors	
1.0	18/06/2021	Board of Directors	30/06/2022