

POLICY S7.4

STUDENT DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Context

The Australasian College of Health & Wellness (ACHW) is committed to providing supportive pathways for new and existing students with diverse backgrounds and disabilities. Removing barriers and providing tailored support mechanisms will ensure that all students are offered the opportunity to succeed in their chosen course of study.

Purpose

This policy articulates the commitment and the principles under which ACHW provides new and existing students with fair and equitable access and ongoing support for all aspects of its programs. ACHW does this by offering targeted support to students with diverse backgrounds so that it may identify and remove inequitable barriers to study and promote equal educational opportunities. Further to this, all new ACHW courses and courses under review are assessed to ensure inclusive learning environments.

Scope

This policy applies to all prospective and existing students of ACHW and its third-party partners irrespective of location, activity, premises, or mode of study.

This policy also applies to academic and professional staff in terms of the actions required to support students with differing needs and from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

Scope Exceptions

None.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All non-academic and academic staff of ACHW, including staff of third-party partners, are required to uphold the principles outlined in this policy.
2. All prospective and current students who are seeking to have their disability recognised by ACHW are expected to provide reasonable evidence which supports the application of elements of this policy to their particular circumstances.

3.0 POLICY

Principles

1. ACHW is committed to meeting the needs of students with disabilities and does so by upholding the principles of access, equity, fairness, and support for those that come to ACHW from disadvantaged backgrounds.
2. A commitment to the principles of social justice, including but not limited to meeting the requirements of the [*Disability Standards for Education 2005*](#) are addressed in all aspects of its operations. These operational areas include the implementation of policies and procedures, marketing, curriculum development, enrolment, teaching and learning, assessment, student support services, and include the elimination of harassment and victimisation from all aspects of college life.
3. ACHW is committed to removing barriers that prevent students from participating in ACHW courses and ensures it provides opportunities for students to seek reasonable adjustments, so they are provided with fair and equitable treatment without regard to political affiliation, race, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, disability, or socio-economic background.
4. ACHW is committed to ensure student recruitment and admissions processes are free from bias and discrimination. Admissions are merit-based, and determined on the basis of the applicant meeting published entry requirements and the availability of places in their course of study.
5. ACHW respects the traditional cultural, ceremonial (including spiritual and community obligations) and Sorry Business practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) peoples in accordance with Fair Work Australia guidelines. ACHW has developed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Framework which ensures accessibility and opportunity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from pre-enrolment (recruitment) to graduation.
6. ACHW aims to achieve equal educational outcomes for all students and improve the position of particular groups in society. Such groups include but are not limited to:
 - Women
 - LGBTQI
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - People of non-English speaking backgrounds
 - People with physical or intellectual disabilities.
 - The long-term unemployed.
 - Those who reside in remote/ rural areas.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **ATSI** - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- **Access** - The principle of fair and equitable provision of all services provided by ACHW that are free of any form of discrimination irrespective of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race, or religion.
- **Equity** - The principle of the provision of services by ACHW that are developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of all students who are eligible to receive them, irrespective of background.
- **Disability** - as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, meaning:
 - a. total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
 - b. total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
 - c. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
 - d. the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
 - e. the malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
 - f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
 - g. a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- h. presently exists; or
- i. previously existed but no longer exists; or
- j. may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
- k. is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a **disability** that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

- **Reasonable adjustment** - A measure or action taken by ACHW to assist a student with a disability to participate in a course of study on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it takes into account the student's learning needs and balances the interests of all parties affected, including the student, the provider, the required academic integrity and standards of the course, staff and other students.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Domestic Selection and Admissions Policy
- Student Progression and Support Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination & Bullying Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Framework
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwlth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director/ Head of School ACHW
Status	Reviewed on November 2022
Approval Authority	ACHW Corporate Board
Date of Approval	15 December 2022
Effective Date	12 January 2023
Implementation Owner	Executive Director/ Head of School ACHW
Maintenance Owner	Head of Compliance
Review Due	January 2025
Content Enquiries	Candice Heskey - Executive Director/ Head of School ACHW Email: cheskey@achw.edu.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S7.0	10 July 2017	Head of Compliance / Director ACHW	Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE
S7.1	10 March 2020	Academic Board	
S7.2	18 January 2021	Academic Board	Further details added on support to be provided to students from ATSI background
S7.3	27 July 2021	Academic Board	Change of Policy name to Student Diversity and Equity Policy & Procedure from Access, Equity, Support, Disability and Special Needs. Separation of Policy and Procedure.
S7.4	15 December 2022	Academic Board	Updated Principles to include student recruitment and admissions processes, implementation of policies and procedures, and age, gender, and sexual orientation.