

Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To provide an environment at RMIT Group that promotes diversity and inclusion, equal opportunity and prevents discrimination. To ensure that all staff members and students are educated to recognise and prevent institutional or systemic issues that lead to discriminatory practices and/or behaviours that may constitute discrimination (including sexual harassment, victimisation, vilification, and bullying).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) All staff, consultants, visiting researchers, contractors, third party suppliers, honorary appointments, visiting appointments, volunteers, students when they are engaged in the activities of the RMIT Group.

Section 3 - Policy

Commitments

(3) Consistent with its commitment to inclusion in its Strategic Plan, RMIT recognises the benefits for the recruitment, retention, innovation, wellbeing and productivity of staff and students in an environment that celebrates and welcomes diversity and inclusion.

(4) RMIT acknowledges Indigenous Australians as the original and continuing Australians and ongoing custodians of Country. RMIT is committed to the unique relationship that exists with Indigenous people through Indigenous community engagement, employment and broader education strategies.

- a. RMIT acknowledges that this policy is a step in the evolution of new approaches that step out Indigenous Australians from a Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity framework towards development of a unique and independent framework.

(5) Equal opportunity is an integral part of the employment life cycle applicable to recruitment, retention, performance management, promotion, talent identification, succession planning, remuneration, professional development and end of employment.

(6) Equal opportunity is an integral part of the student experience and life cycle applicable to facilities and services, applications, enrolment, learning and assessment, involvement in the University community and graduation.

(7) RMIT is committed to promoting and applying equal opportunity, and all members of the RMIT community covered by the scope of this Policy are expected to contribute to an inclusive working, learning and social environment:

- a. in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are equally respected;
- b. free from all forms of unacceptable unlawful discriminatory behaviour including, sexual harassment, bullying, victimisation, threat or violence and racial/religious vilification.

(8) RMIT is committed to continually improving and fully integrating equal opportunity and inclusion principles into all aspects of its activities throughout its Policy framework, decision-making and planning processes and outcomes.

(9) RMIT commits to employing targeted strategies, actions and measures ('special measures') as appropriate to improve opportunities for people from under represented or disadvantaged groups, and will make 'reasonable adjustments' to policies, practices and requirements where necessary to provide equal opportunity for individuals.

(10) Application of this policy in RMIT global partnership arrangements takes account of international and local regulatory contexts, the independence of partner organisations and commercial imperatives. These contextual considerations are managed through Contract management and partner management processes.

Diversity and Inclusion Framework

(11) RMIT's Diversity and Inclusion Framework (PDF 609KB 1p), and related Action Plans support implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion principles and objectives. RMIT's priorities and objectives to build a more diverse and inclusive student and staff community include:

Staff Gender Equality

(12) RMIT will take every opportunity to support and improve gender equality outcomes addressing any gender imbalances, including gender pay gaps, senior gender representation and career progression. Promotion of flexible ways of working for all genders are important to support caring and parental responsibilities.

Staff and students Diverse Genders Sexes and Sexualities

(13) RMIT aims to be a place where people of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities are recognised and welcomed, are free to be themselves and can bring their whole selves to work and study, and where all can benefit from the diversity of our community.

Staff and students with disabilities

(14) RMIT commits to undertake actions to enhance inclusion for staff, students and visitors with disabilities including promoting visible leadership, awareness and participation; ensuring that our physical and digital environments are accessible, inclusive, and safe; and providing an equitable, flexible and inclusive experience for all students and staff with disability.

Staff and students Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

(15) Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) is a broad concept that encompasses differences between people such as language, birthplace, ancestry, ethnicity, cultural traditions, societal structures, and religion. RMIT aims to ensure policies, practices and behaviour support inclusion and equality, and do not perpetuate systemic discrimination or exclusion due to unconscious bias, stereotypes, or other inappropriate assumptions.

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds

(16) RMIT aims to, where possible, facilitate access to education and employment so that people of diverse circumstances and backgrounds can contribute to the intellectual, economic, social, cultural and civic life of their communities, and that all staff and students should experience an inclusive and supportive environment.

(17) Each RMIT controlled entity will create their own Diversity and Inclusion Framework Action Plans.

(18) The Global Development Portfolio is responsible for ensuring that offshore partner contracts and partnership management processes respond appropriately to the RMIT Diversity & Inclusion Framework.

Monitoring and reviews

(19) RMIT will undertake regular reviews of the staff employment life cycle to ensure systemic issues impacting equal opportunity and inclusion are addressed. These reviews will include analysis of policies, processes, culture, experience and outcomes to ensure inclusive practices enable all staff members to fully participate. The reviews may include consultation.

(20) RMIT will undertake regular reviews of the staff and student life cycle to ensure systemic issues impacting equal opportunity and inclusion are addressed. These reviews will include analysis of policies, processes, culture, experience and outcomes to ensure inclusive practices enable full participation. The reviews may include consultation.

Support

(21) RMIT offers support to members of the RMIT community who believe they have experienced discrimination as defined by this policy. Support options include:

- a. For students at an RMIT University campus or partner:
 - i. their School or College representatives;
 - ii. RMIT Connect, Equitable Learning Services or Wellbeing advisors
 - iii. raise a complaint through the relevant complaints process
- b. For students at RMIT Training:
 - i. Student Services
 - ii. raise a complaint through the relevant complaints process
- a. For staff:
 - i. People team
 - ii. raise a complaint through the relevant complaints process

Breaches

(22) A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action under the Student conduct policy or the Staff code of conduct. Depending on the nature and impact of the breach, other action may be instigated, including legal action.

Section 4 - Resources

(23) Refer to the following documents which are established in accordance with this Policy:

- a. [Commitment Statement on Program Inherent Requirements](#)
- b. [Digital Accessibility Framework](#)
- c. [Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Action Plans](#)
- d. [Reconciliation Action Plan](#)

Section 5 - Definitions

Bullying	Repeated unreasonable/unacceptable behaviour directed toward any person(s) engaging in RMIT Group activities that creates a risk to health and safety.
Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction with a decision, action or lack of these by RMIT, or the behaviour of a student or staff member where a formal response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Discrimination	<p>Discrimination occurs when a person is unlawfully disadvantaged or treated less favourably than someone else because of an attribute.</p> <p>Direct discrimination is when a person treats, or proposes to treat, someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law. Direct discrimination often happens because people make unfair assumptions about what people with certain personal characteristics can and cannot do.</p> <p>Indirect discrimination occurs when an unreasonable condition is imposed that disadvantages a person with a personal characteristic protect by law. Indirect discrimination happens when a workplace policy, practice or behaviour seems to treat all workers the same way, but it actually unfairly disadvantages someone because of a personal characteristic protected by law.</p>
Diversity & Inclusion Framework	Diversity and Inclusion Framework is a high level strategic statement of RMIT Group's aspirations. Contained in the Framework are Action Plans which specifically identify strategies for the next five years to improve staff and student experience of diversity of inclusion relating to Gender Equality, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students (Reconciliation), Accessibility, Diverse Genders Sexes and Sexualities, Students from low socio-economic backgrounds and Culture.
Equal Opportunity	Equal opportunity means that every person can participate freely and equally in areas of public life such as in the workplace, in education, or in accessing goods and services without disadvantage or less favourable treatment due to their attributes. OTOT OTOT Reasonable adjustments may be needed to policies, processes, facilities etc to provide equal opportunity,
Inclusive Practices	Practices that anticipate and accommodate the needs of a diversity of people, minimising the need for adjustments to respond to individual needs, while maintaining quality and other standards.
Protected Attributes	<p>The characteristics of a person on the basis of which discrimination is prohibited as outlined in state and federal anti-discrimination legislation. These attributes include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Age 2. Breast feeding 3. Gender identity and expression 4. Impairment/disability/mental health condition 5. Indigeneity 6. Industrial activity 7. Employment activity 8. Lawful sexual activity 9. Marital and relationship status 10. Parental status or status as a carer (family responsibilities) 11. Physical features Political belief or activity 12. Pregnancy 13. Race 14. Religious belief or activity 15. Sex 16. Intersex 17. Sexual orientation 18. Personal association with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes <p>Further guidance and definitions relating to Protected Attributes can be found at http://www.humanrights.gov.au/</p>
Reasonable adjustments	<p>A reasonable change to a process, practice, procedure or environment to facilitate equal opportunity. The changes may be temporary or permanent depending upon the circumstances. For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. changes to premises, working hours or arrangements, facilities, software or equipment 2. adjustments to teaching, learning or assessment 3. change to work process, practice or procedure
Sexual Harassment	Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where a reasonable person would anticipate that reaction in the circumstances
Special measures	<p>Special measures are positive actions to assist or protect disadvantaged groups and aim to foster equality of opportunity. For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment programs to improve the recruitment, retention and progression of disadvantaged groups 2. Equity admissions schemes that recognise and compensate for educational disadvantage 3. Student services and support programs

Vilification (Racial and Religious)	Behaviour that incites or encourages hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule against another person, or group of people, because of their race or religion. An act of racial or religious vilification is a public act which is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate and which is done because of the race, colour or national or ethnic origin of the person.
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Status and Details

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Policy Owner	Teresa Finlayson Chief Operating Officer
Policy Author	Bridgid Connors Chief People Officer
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