



2.2.1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

1.0 Rationale

Acknowledge Education / Stott's College and ICHM) (hereafter referred to as 'the Colleges')) are committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable and accessible learning environment across all educational sectors, including Higher Education, Vocational Education and Training (VET), ELICOS and Schools.

This policy establishes a framework to:

- Promote access, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and standards, including obligations to support students with disability
- Support the participation, progress and success of all students, with particular consideration for students with disability and other identified equity groups
- Remove barriers to education and ensure equitable access to learning, services and facilities
- Ensure that equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in both policy and practice across all programs

The Colleges are committed to embedding inclusive practices across the entire student lifecycle - from admission through to completion - ensuring that students with disability are supported to participate on an equitable basis.

The Colleges pay particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and are committed to providing and promoting a culturally safe and inclusive environment.

The Colleges are committed to ensuring that students with disability are able to access, participate in and succeed in education on the same basis as other students, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

The Colleges will:

- Provide reasonable adjustments to enable equitable participation in learning, assessment and campus life
- Ensure that students with disability are not subject to discrimination, harassment or disadvantage
- Promote inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practices
- Ensure access to appropriate support services, facilities and technologies
- Encourage safe and voluntary disclosure to enable appropriate support



- Consult with students with a disability and their families when determining reasonable adjustments

This commitment is embedded across all programs, services and operations of the Colleges.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all relevant stakeholders, including students, prospective students, staff, contractors and partners, across all programs and operations delivered by Acknowledge Education / Stott's College and ICHM.

3.0 Regulatory Context

3.1 National Standards

- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF), particularly Sections 1.3, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3 and 7.2
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2025
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Disability Standards for Education 2005

3.2 Child Safety Requirements

- Child Safe Standards (Victoria) – Ministerial Order 1359

3.3 Commonwealth Legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

3.4 State and Territory Legislation

- Victoria – Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- New South Wales – Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Queensland – Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Australian Capital Territory – Discrimination Act 1991
- Western Australia & South Australia – Equal Opportunity Act 1984

4.0 Policy Statement



The Colleges are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, accessible and child-safe educational environment where all individuals are treated with dignity, fairness and respect, and are supported to achieve their full potential.

5.0 Principles

5.1 Non-Discrimination

The Colleges do not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of:

- Age
- Race, ethnicity or cultural background
- Sex, gender identity or sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Marital or family status

5.2 Equity and Inclusion

- All students have equitable access to opportunities and support
- Diversity is valued and embedded into teaching and institutional practices
- Barriers to participation are proactively identified and addressed

5.3 Accessibility

The Colleges ensure that:

- Physical and digital environments are accessible
- Learning materials are inclusive and adaptable
- Students with disability are able to participate on an equitable basis

5.4 Child Safety and Wellbeing

The Colleges prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- Maintaining zero tolerance for child abuse
- Creating culturally safe environments, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Supporting the inclusion and safety of children with disability
- Ensuring children's voices are heard and respected



- Implementing appropriate recruitment, training and supervision of staff

5.5 Safe and Respectful Environment

All staff and students have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and fairness
- Learn and work in a safe, inclusive and child-safe environment
- Be free from discrimination, harassment and intimidation

5.6 Complaints and Appeals

- Stakeholders may raise complaints without fear of victimisation
- Processes are fair, transparent and accessible
- Complaints are managed in accordance with the Colleges' *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures*

6.0 Equity Groups

The Colleges recognise that some groups may experience systemic barriers. These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Students with disability
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Students from regional, rural or remote areas
- First-in-family students
- Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Women in under-represented fields
- LGBTQI+ students

7.0 Policy

7.1 Discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, or victimisation

The Colleges have zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, or victimisation in any form. This includes conduct based on attributes such as race, religion, gender, disability, and other characteristics, and explicitly includes antisemitism and all forms of hate-based behaviour.

Refer to the *Student Code of Conduct* which outlines the expectations of student behaviour and principles of conduct at the Colleges.



All concerns will be addressed promptly, fairly, and in line with College policies and procedures and legislative and regulatory requirements.

7.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Students

The Colleges are committed to equitable access and successful outcomes in higher education for ATSI students.

To achieve this, the Colleges will:

- **Promote Student Success and Completion**
Develop tailored success strategies in partnership with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students to support progression and completion of tertiary awards.
- **Provide Targeted and Culturally Appropriate Support**
Deliver evidence-informed supports that enhance participation and outcomes, including access to dedicated advisory services, academic assistance, and appropriate flexibility for cultural obligations (e.g. cultural leave and special consideration).
- **Ensure Access to Specialist Advice and Planning**
Enable students to engage with an Indigenous Advisor to undertake an initial consultation and develop an individualised Action Plan aligned to their goals and needs.
- **Foster Partnerships and Continuous Improvement**
Collaborate with external Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations and service providers to strengthen support services and continuously improve student outcomes.
- **Create a Culturally Safe and Inclusive Environment**
Provide a learning and social environment that recognises, respects, and reflects ATSI knowledges, cultures, and practices.
- **Support Engagement and Belonging**
Facilitate meaningful participation in academic activities through proactive support programs, and promote social inclusion by encouraging involvement in College events and community activities.

7.3 Students with Disability

7.3.1 Rights and Obligations

The Colleges will not:

- refuse admission to a prospective student on the basis of disability
- limit or deny access to educational opportunities, services, or benefits based on disability
- subject a student to any form of disadvantage, discrimination, or less favourable treatment due to disability



Students are responsible for engaging with available support services where required and for participating in the reasonable adjustment process.

The Colleges will ensure that course materials, assessments, and learning environments are developed with consideration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, enabling diverse learners to access, participate in, and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes on an equitable basis.

7.3.2 Disclosure

- Disclosure of disability is voluntary at all stages of the student lifecycle.
- Disclosure may occur at admission or at any time during enrolment.
- Any information disclosed will be handled in accordance with privacy legislation and treated confidentially.
- Students are encouraged to disclose their disability to enable appropriate support; however, disclosure is required in order to access formal support services and reasonable adjustments.
- Disclosure should be supported by appropriate documentation, where required, to inform the assessment of support needs.
- Failure to disclose may limit the Colleges' ability to provide appropriate supports or reasonable adjustments.

7.3.3 Support for Students with Disability

7.3.3.1 Reasonable Adjustments

The Colleges will:

- provide reasonable adjustments to enable students with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students
- ensure that students are able to demonstrate the required learning outcomes on an equitable basis
- maintain the academic standards and integrity of all courses and programs when implementing adjustments
- assess requests for reasonable adjustments on an individual basis, taking into account the student's needs and the inherent requirements of the course

7.3.3.2 Additional Supports

The Colleges provide a range of support services to assist students with disability, including:

- access to a dedicated Disability Advisor within the Student Support Department



- development of an Individual Support Plan (ISP) outlining agreed adjustments and supports
- study skills and learning strategy support
- assistance with understanding and navigating academic expectations
- referral to internal and external specialist services, where appropriate

7.3.3.3 Access to Support and Registration

- Disclosure alone does not result in automatic provision of support services or reasonable adjustments.
- Students seeking support are required to engage with the Colleges' designated support services (e.g. Disability Advisor) and provide relevant information.
- Students may seek support services at any time during their studies.
- The Colleges will provide guidance on available supports and the process for accessing them.

7.3.3.4 Documentation and Evidence

- The Colleges may request appropriate documentation to verify a student's disability and/or mental health condition and to assess the impact on learning.
- Documentation must be provided by a qualified health or medical professional.
- Additional information may be requested where necessary to determine appropriate reasonable adjustments.
- Requests for information will be reasonable, proportionate, and for the purpose of enabling equitable participation and academic success.

7.3.3.5 Student Responsibilities and Engagement

- Students seeking reasonable adjustments are responsible for engaging in a timely and collaborative process with the Colleges to determine appropriate supports.
- Students are encouraged to provide reasonable notice of their support needs to enable effective implementation of adjustments.
- The Colleges are not obligated to provide adjustments where a student has not disclosed a disability and/or mental health condition or has not engaged in the required processes.
- The Colleges will make reasonable efforts to support students; however, the effectiveness of support may be limited where disclosure and engagement do not occur.



7.4 Facilities and Digital Accessibility

7.4.1 Physical Environment

The Colleges are committed to providing a safe, accessible, and inclusive physical environment that supports the participation of students with disability on the same basis as other students, including students with physical, sensory, neurological, cognitive, learning, mental health, chronic health, and other disabilities.

To achieve this, the Colleges will:

- **Ensure Accessible Facilities**
Provide and maintain buildings, learning spaces, and facilities that are accessible and compliant with relevant legislation, standards, and building codes, including access to classrooms, libraries, amenities, common areas, and spaces that support the needs of students with sensory sensitivities, chronic health conditions, mental health conditions, and other accessibility requirements.
- **Promote Inclusive Design**
Incorporate principles of universal and inclusive design in the planning, development, and refurbishment of physical spaces to minimise barriers and enhance usability for all students, including those who are neurodivergent, have learning differences, sensory disabilities, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, or other forms of disability.
- **Provide Reasonable Adjustments to the Physical Environment**
Where required, implement reasonable adjustments to physical spaces or access arrangements to enable students with disability to participate fully in academic and campus activities.
- **Ensure Accessible Emergency Management**
Maintain emergency management procedures that are inclusive of students with disability, including evacuation planning, communication of emergency information in accessible formats, and provision of appropriate support where required. Procedures will take into account the needs of students with physical, sensory, cognitive, mental health, and chronic health conditions.
- **Communicate Access Information**
Provide clear and accessible information to students regarding campus accessibility, including available facilities, access routes, and support processes.

7.4.2 Digital Environment

The Colleges are committed to providing an accessible and inclusive digital environment that enables students with disability to access information, participate in learning, and engage with online systems on an equitable basis, including students who are neurodivergent, have learning differences, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, sensory disabilities, or other forms of disability.

To achieve this, the Colleges will:



- **Ensure Accessibility of Digital Systems**
Design, procure, and maintain digital platforms, systems, and online content in accordance with recognised accessibility standards (e.g. WCAG) to support equitable access for all students, including those with sensory, cognitive, neurological, learning, mental health, and physical disabilities.
- **Support Inclusive Learning Platforms**
Ensure that Learning Management Systems (LMS) and other educational technologies are configured and used in ways that promote inclusive access, navigation, and engagement.
- **Enable Compatibility with Assistive Technologies**
Support the use of commonly used assistive technologies by ensuring compatibility with institutional systems and providing guidance on their use where appropriate. This includes technologies used by students with sensory disabilities, learning differences, neurodivergence, physical disabilities, and other accessibility requirements.
- **Provide Accessible Learning Materials**
Promote the development and delivery of learning materials in accessible formats, including the use of captions, transcripts, alternative text, and readable document structures.
- **Facilitate Reasonable Adjustments in Digital Contexts**
Implement reasonable adjustments in digital learning and assessment environments where required to support student participation and achievement. Adjustments may address disability-related barriers associated with learning differences, neurodivergence, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, sensory disabilities, physical disabilities, and other accessibility needs.
- **Promote Good Practice in Digital Accessibility**
Provide guidance and support to staff to embed accessible design practices in digital content and online teaching, including practices that support students with neurodivergent profiles, learning differences, mental health conditions, sensory disabilities, chronic health conditions, and other forms of disability through flexible, inclusive, and accessible learning experiences.

7.5 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The Colleges will systematically monitor the participation, progression, retention, and completion outcomes of identified equity groups, and analyse trend data to identify areas for improvement. Regular reports will be provided to the Academic Board and relevant committees to inform oversight, decision-making, and continuous improvement initiatives.

The Colleges will also capture and consider student feedback, including feedback from equity group students, to evaluate the effectiveness of support services and inform the ongoing enhancement of policies, practices, and support provisions.



8.0 Responsibilities

All Staff of the Colleges

- Upholding and implementing this policy and associated procedures across all areas of their work
- Promoting inclusive, equitable, accessible and culturally safe practices in teaching, learning and engagement
- Supporting the participation and success of students from identified equity groups, including students with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Completing relevant professional development in access, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and child safety, including:
 - Cultural competence
 - Unconscious bias
 - Inclusive communication strategies
 - Disability awareness and reasonable adjustments
 - Child Safe Standards and mandatory reporting obligations
- Contributing to a safe, respectful and child-safe environment, including identifying and responding appropriately to risks to student wellbeing
- Embedding inclusive and accessible practices in learning materials and interactions, including consideration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles
- Supporting accessible digital practices and use of inclusive technologies where relevant to their role

Head of Admissions

- Ensuring fair, transparent and non-discriminatory admissions processes
- Identifying students from equity groups during admissions, in accordance with privacy and disclosure requirements
- Ensuring prospective and commencing students are informed of available support services
- Supporting equitable access through alternative entry pathways where appropriate
- Ensuring culturally appropriate and inclusive practices are applied in recruitment and admissions, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Ensuring applicants are informed of inherent course requirements and the availability of reasonable adjustments

Student Support Manager



- Overseeing systems for monitoring the participation, progress and retention of students from equity groups
- Ensuring timely identification of students at risk and the implementation of appropriate intervention strategies
- Ensuring delivery of accessible and inclusive student support services, including disability support and wellbeing services
- Maintaining appropriate records and reporting data on student outcomes for equity groups
- Providing regular reports and insights to the Dean (or equivalent) to inform decision-making
- Supporting compliance with child safety obligations in student-facing services
- Overseeing the implementation and effectiveness of disability support services, including Individual Support Plans and reasonable adjustments
- Ensuring student feedback is collected and used to inform continuous improvement of support services

Director of Teaching and Learning

- Ensuring the implementation of this policy across academic programs and teaching practices
- Ensuring inclusive curriculum design and delivery, including application of Universal Design for Learning principles
- Ensuring appropriate consideration of equity groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disability, across the student lifecycle
- Reviewing and reporting on participation, progress and outcomes periodically for equity groups
- Reporting findings to Academic Board and relevant committees, including recommendations for improvement
- Ensuring alignment of academic practices with legislative, regulatory and child safety requirements
- Ensuring learning materials and assessments are designed to be accessible and inclusive, including alignment with digital accessibility standards
- Promoting continuous improvement in inclusive teaching practices based on student outcomes and feedback

Academic Board

- Providing oversight of access, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and student success outcomes
- Reviewing reports on equity group participation, progress and completion



- Ensuring that findings inform continuous improvement in:
 - Admissions practices
 - Teaching and learning strategies
 - Student support services
- Monitoring institutional compliance with relevant regulatory frameworks, including equity and child safety obligations
- Requesting further analysis or reporting from the Dean where required
- Monitoring trend data and outcomes for equity groups to ensure accountability and continuous improvement

Teaching and Learning Committee

- Reviewing data and insights relating to student outcomes for equity groups
- Recommending improvements to teaching, learning and assessment practices to support diverse learners
- Promoting inclusive curriculum design and delivery approaches
- Ensuring accessibility considerations are embedded in learning resources and delivery
- Monitoring the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and inclusive digital practices across programs

All Stakeholders

All stakeholders (including students, staff, contractors and partners) share responsibility for:

- Contributing to a respectful, inclusive and safe environment
- Engaging with support services where appropriate
- Upholding the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and child safety

9.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
Access and Equity	The principle of ensuring fair access to education and support, recognising that some students may require additional assistance to participate on an equal basis.
Assistive Technology	Software or equipment used to support students with disability to access learning and services (e.g. screen readers, speech-to-text tools).
Disability	As defined under the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> , including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, and learning disabilities, as well as temporary or chronic conditions.



Disclosure	The voluntary provision of information by a student regarding a disability or condition that may impact their study.
Equity Groups	Student cohorts identified as experiencing systemic barriers to participation and success in education, as outlined in this policy.
Inclusive Education	An approach to teaching and learning that seeks to remove barriers and enable all students to participate fully and equitably.
Individual Support Plan (ISP)	A documented plan outlining agreed reasonable adjustments and support strategies for a student with disability.
Reasonable Adjustment	A measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education on the same basis as others, without causing unjustifiable hardship to the provider.
Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	A framework for designing curriculum, materials, and learning environments that are accessible and effective for all learners by providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.
Accessibility (Digital and Physical)	The design of environments, systems, and materials to ensure they can be used by people with diverse abilities.

14.0 Related Documents

Document Name

1.1.1 Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedures
1.3.3 Course Progression Policy
1.3.4 Course Progress Procedure
1.4.1 Student Assessment and Grade Management Policy
1.4.3 Course Development, Review and Approval Policy and Procedure
2.2.2 Student Support Policy
2.3.1 Student Code of Conduct
2.3.4 Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy
2.3.5 Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Policy
2.3.6 Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Procedure
2.4.1 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
3.2.3 Teaching Staff Engagement and Assessment Procedure
5.1.1 Course Development, Review and Approval Policy
5.1.2 Course Development, Review and Approval Procedure
6.1.1 Acknowledge Education Governance Framework
6.1.1 ICHM Governance Framework
6.2.3 Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
VCE-POL-01 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
VCE-POL-02 Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
VCE-POL-15 Student Support Policy



15.0 Policy Information

Policy Name	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
Document Number	2.2.1
Purpose	Committed to the principles of access, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility
Audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public
Category	Learning Environment
Subcategory	Diversity and Equity
Approval Date	28/05/2026
Effective Date	28/05/2026
Last date of review	01/06/2026
Next Review Date	01/06/2028
Policy Advisor	Head of Operations
Approving Authority	Board of Directors

16.0 Change Log

Date	Version	By	Notes
23/04/2026	1.0	HQR	<p>Consolidated the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.2.1 Diversity Access and Equity Policy and Procedures 2.3.3 Inclusive Education and Accessibility Policy ICHM Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy <p>For detailed change logs, refer to archived versions of individual policy documents.</p> <p>This policy has been comprehensively revised and strengthened, enhancing support provisions for students with disability, aligning more explicitly with relevant legislation and standards (including the Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359), and reinforcing the Colleges' commitment to equity groups, with particular emphasis on culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.</p> <p>Policy Advisor changed from Dean to Head of Operations.</p> <p>Approving Authority changed from Academic Board to Board of Directors (Necessary for the relevance to compliance with Child Safe Standards).</p>



			Policy name changed from Access, Equity and Inclusive Education Policy to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.
01/06/2026	1.0	HQR	Following Governing Board feedback: Expanded the policy to explicitly recognise and support the needs of students who are neurodivergent, have learning differences, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, sensory disabilities, and other forms of disability.
