



**Cairnmillar**  
INSTITUTE

Treatment | Education | Research

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

<b>Policy Name</b>	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
<b>Policy number</b>	HRP020
<b>Date approved</b>	11 July 2023
<b>Approving body</b>	Council
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Chief Executive Officer and Provost
<b>Implementation officer(s)</b>	General Manager/Dean
<b>Next review date</b>	Bi-annually (or when the corresponding policy concerning Clinical Service Delivery is finalised/released/updated)
<b>Linked policies</b>	All Faculty and CMI related policies (and procedures)
<b>Linked forms and documents</b>	<a href="https://www.cairnmillar.org.au/about/policies/">https://www.cairnmillar.org.au/about/policies/</a>

## 1. Purpose of this policy

The Cairnmillar Institute (the Institute) aims to provide and maintain a diverse<sup>1</sup>, inclusive<sup>2</sup>, and equitable<sup>3</sup> learning and/or workplace culture for all staff, students, and contractors.

A diverse and inclusive community built upon the foundation of equity ensures that the Institute reflects the broader community that it serves, and also offers greater impact on a national and global level in regards to its educational and research endeavours. The Institute is therefore committed to identifying and removing any barriers or limitations to equitable access, full participation, and inclusion in education and research. As such, all institutional policies, practices and approaches to the workplace, teaching, learning, and research are to be designed to create and/or maintain equivalent opportunities for academic success and workforce participation.

## 2. Scope

Diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns *all* members of the Institute (staff and students) as well as contractors engaged in services for or on behalf of the Institute (e.g., guest lecturers, external supervisors). Areas of particular focus include (but are not restricted to) the following:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- People diverse in gender, kinship, sex, and sexuality;
- People with a physical disability and/or are neurodiverse and/or have mental health conditions;
- People from varying religious, cultural/ethnic/racial, and/or linguistic backgrounds;
- People from any other marginalised group
- First in family participants in higher education; and
- People from low SES regions

The Institute will utilise an intersectional lens<sup>4</sup> to address the complex impact of multiple overlapping

- intersecting forms of discrimination (e.g., racism combined with sexism) to promote diversity and inclusion at the Institute.

The Institute acknowledges that the first four categories mentioned above have historically been subjected to acute levels of discrimination, and as such are acknowledged in detail below.

---

<sup>1</sup> Diversity is about what makes each of us unique and includes our backgrounds, personality, life experiences and beliefs, including an infinite range of individual unique characteristics and experiences that make us who we are.

<sup>2</sup> Inclusion occurs when people feel, and are, valued and respected. Regardless of their personal characteristic or circumstance

<sup>3</sup> 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 unique attributes

<sup>4</sup> Intersectionality refers to a way of seeing people's experiences as shaped by (but not limited to) their race, socio-economic background, sex, gender, and sexuality all at the same time. This overlap or combination of differences makes up a person's unique identity.

Victorian Government Website, [www.vic.gov.au/dpc-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/what-do-we-mean-diversity-and-inclusion](https://www.vic.gov.au/dpc-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2019-2021/what-do-we-mean-diversity-and-inclusion). Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023

### 3. Principles

All members of the Institute are expected to uphold and exemplify the following general principles, which are in accordance with State and Federal legislation, and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

1. All people have inherent dignity and the right to be treated equitably
2. All people have the right to a work and learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination
3. Diversity is acknowledged, respected, and valued
4. The range of needs of staff, students, and contractors are best met by:
  - i. monitoring, identifying, and removing any systemic and structural barriers;
  - ii. the use of inclusive practices, language, and/or knowledge (i.e., ensuring that inclusivity, equity, and diversity is appropriately incorporated into admission pathways, as well as all of the Institute's curriculums and assessment practices);
  - iii. the provision of additional appropriate support services and adjustments where required

The Institute will not tolerate any exceptions to these principles. For guidance about possible violations relating to these principles, see policies and procedures for Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (TLP004), Discrimination, Bullying, and Harassment (FSP002), Critical Incident, Accident, and Injury (HRP011), Student Grievances (SSP007), Staff Grievance (HRP008), and Discipline policy for employee conduct (HRP012). To reduce the likelihood of such violations, training relating to diversity, inclusivity, and equity will be provided to students and/or staff on a regular basis (with staff being workloaded accordingly).

### 4. Diversity and Admissions

In addition to the Institute's broader policies and procedures regarding Student Selection and Admissions (see SSP001), the Institute will actively develop, monitor, and improve processes and procedures which aim to facilitate the recruitment, admission, participation, completion, and transition from those (and other) groups stated in Section 2. The findings are to be used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for these groups.

### 5. Inclusivity and Interpersonal Behaviour

#### 5.1 Respectful Interactions

Students must adhere to relevant ethical guidelines and codes of conduct for their future professions (e.g., the Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics, 2007; the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018; the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia Code of Ethics, 2017), whilst staff should be already adhering to these guidelines/codes as well as Institute's internal policies around staff conduct. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of prejudice/discrimination will not be tolerated. Students and staff are therefore expected to show professionalism in their interactions with other members of the Institute and/or when offering services on behalf of the Institute. Students and staff can expect and

should contribute to a professional and welcoming environment (including the use of inclusive language) which acknowledges and supports a diversity of opinions, backgrounds, and experiences.

## 5.2. Classroom Content

The Institute will strive to ensure all the material (including language used) within curriculums and/or service delivery is appropriate, updated, and reflects positively upon diverse populations. Where it is reasonably possible, information relating to diverse populations should be obtained from (or done in consultation with) people who are representatives of these diverse populations.

## 6. Reasonable Adjustments

On the basis of equity, reasonable adjustments are measures and/or actions which can be reasonably implemented on a case-by-case basis to enable staff or students with a diverse background and/or disability to undertake the inherent requirements of a task to participate within the workplace and/or to fulfill the academic standards of their program/course of study. Reasonable adjustments for students do not lower academic standards, nor provide students with an advantage. Reasonable adjustments are designed to enable students to achieve their maximum potential within a framework of academic standards, based on the guidance provided by The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) ([www.adcet.edu.au](http://www.adcet.edu.au)). Students may apply for reasonable adjustments through the Special Consideration process.

The Institute aims to approve and provide workplace or educational reasonable adjustments where possible within the resources and requirements of the workplace, or program/course of study. Precedent and national benchmarks, as well consultation with relevant advocates (e.g., Indigenous Elders for Indigenous students, or Disability supports), may be taken into account when deciding whether adjustments are recommended or approved. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), in some circumstances, education providers are not required to comply with the Standards when there is a legal exception; these include - unjustifiable hardship, protection of public health, other legal acts or provisions and actions to benefit students with disability ([www.nccd.edu.au](http://www.nccd.edu.au)).

## 7. First Nations People and Acknowledgement of Country

The Institute formally acknowledges the Australian Psychological Society's (APS) Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in 2016. The Institute will strive to adopt the APS' commitment towards Indigenous peoples to be:

- Listening more and talking less
- Following more and steering less
- Advocating more and complying less
- Including more and ignoring less and
- Collaborating more and commanding less.

As such the Institute will strive to form and maintain relationships with local Indigenous Australian communities to facilitate consultative processes on matters relating to Indigenous Australian

students and staff. The Institute is committed to reconciliation with local Aboriginal communities by showing value and respect for our country's past, present and future owners and recognizing the Aboriginal communities who continue to be the cultural custodians and holders of knowledge for the land on which our events are held, and our campus is built. An acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians of the land should be said with respect and sincerity when appropriate (e.g., at the beginning of meetings, events, and the first class of each semester).

Acknowledging the APS Apology, specific consideration is to be given to the recruitment, admission, participation, completion, and transition of Indigenous peoples (see Student Selection, Admission, and Enrolment policy and procedures; SSP001). The Institute will strive to utilize Indigenous peoples' based knowledge into all curriculums (i.e., acknowledging past Eurocentric ideologies, and the destructive effects of colonization within the classroom).

## 8. Religious, Cultural/Ethnic/Racial, and/or Linguistic (RCERL) Diversity

The Institute acknowledges the negative impacts of racism and other forms of related prejudices towards people on the basis of their religion, ethnicity/culture/race, and/or language. As such, consistent with the Equal Opportunity Act (2010) and Race Discrimination Act (1992), the Institute will strive to ensure that staff and students feel welcome and valued irrespective of their RCERL background (e.g., having a quiet 'prayer room' on campus). The Institute will strive to formally advocate for and to partake in recognized programs to abolish these prejudices (e.g., The Australian Human Rights Commission's [National Anti-racism Framework](#)). When appropriate, the Institute will also strive to form and maintain relationships with local communities to facilitate consultative processes (e.g., staff and student training) on matters relating to such diversity. The Institute will strive to utilize RCERL peoples' knowledge into all curriculums (e.g., acknowledging past impacts of negative stereotypes involving RCERL peoples, and the past pathologisation of mental health on the basis of RCERL diversity).

## 9. People of Diverse Gender, Kinship, Sex and Sexualities

The Institute formally acknowledges past harms done to LGBTQIA+ peoples through diagnostic and therapeutic pathologisation and endorses the APS and PACFA's position on LGBTQIA+ peoples. The Institute therefore aspires to provide a learning environment where all students diverse in gender, kinship, sex, and sexuality are acknowledged, supported, and welcomed.

The Institute is committed to actively promoting an environment of inclusion and respect for all LGBTQIA+ students, through ongoing staff professional development, school and clinic communications, training, events, and leadership actions. This includes but is not limited to:

- i. providing appropriate, inclusive, sensitive, and responsive teaching and training materials, services and facilities;
- ii. forming and maintaining relationships with local specialist LGBTQIA+ community organizations including [Pride in Diversity](#), to facilitate consultation on best practice and identify areas for improvement;
- iii. responsively adapt the institute's systems and processes to enhance the experience of transgender, non-binary, and intersex students

## 10. Physical Disability, Neurodiversity, and Mental Health

The Institute is committed to actively developing and maintaining services and support for members of the Cairnmillar community who have a physical disability, are neurodiverse, and/or have mental health issues in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), 1992.

Under this Act, disability is defined as a physical, mental, or medical condition or circumstance that requires ongoing support or study adjustments. This includes conditions that exist, previously existed, or may exist in the future.

Disability, about a person, can mean:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- Total or partial loss of a part of the body
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness
- The malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- A disorder, illness, or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour.

Inclusive practices will anticipate and accommodate the needs of such people, incorporating principles of Universal Design ([www.adcet.edu.au](http://www.adcet.edu.au)) at the Institute, thus minimizing the need for adjustments to respond to individual needs, while maintaining quality and other standards. Physical infrastructure, resources, systems, websites, workplace design, and educational products are to be developed and maintained by the Institute to be as accessible as reasonably possible for staff and students.

Disability Liaison Officers can provide various services, such as those listed below:

- Thoroughly consider how a reasonable adjustment might be made
- Accessible and multiple formats of materials
- Ensure staff are trained to provide information in a non-discriminatory way and communicate effectively and respectfully with people with disability
- Accessible premises

Consistent with policies involving Learning Environment and Student Wellbeing (SSP010), Staff Wellbeing (HRP015), and the Cairnmillar Mental Health Implementation Strategy, the Institute aims to improve and maintain student and staff awareness of self-care and mental wellness and to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. The Institute will therefore actively promote positive and proactive mental health and wellbeing by providing access to and promoting relevant activities, concepts, and resources. The Institute will specifically provide accessible mental health support and resources for all students/staff/contractors in an equitable manner, in a format that is suitable to their situation including options for both online or in person support.

### 10.1 Personal Data

Consistent with our Privacy Policy (FSP006) and the Health Records and Privacy Acts, all information relating to a person's identity (i.e., physical disability, neurodiversity, and/or mental



health) are regarded as sensitive, personal data and all staff/contractors and students of the Institute who are party to such information are bound by a duty of confidentiality. If a member of staff or a student feels it necessary to disclose personal information about a student, then that student's informed consent should be obtained in the first instance. In cases where consent is given, information should be shared only for the purposes of providing support, care, or protection for the student or for fellow students or staff and only on a 'need to know' basis. Where information is recorded or shared, the terminology must be agreed with the student and reflect needs as opposed to them being treated as a member of a 'category' (e.g., not as a diagnosis). In cases where consent is not given, the wishes of the student should be respected. However, the needs of the wider academic community must also be considered and, therefore, the following exceptions have been identified as circumstances that would warrant disclosure in the absence of consent:

- i. where the Institute or a member of staff would be liable to civil or criminal prosecution if the information were not disclosed (e.g., where the law requires disclosure) further detailed in section 10.2;
- ii. where a student is putting their self or others at risk;
- iii. where there is a direct or imminent threat to the safety of any student, staff member, client, or other stakeholder.

## 10.2 Required Health or Disability Disclosures

With the exception of what is required by AHPRA, PACFA or other professional bodies, there is no legal obligation for staff or students to disclose their disability/status when employed with the Institute or when enrolling into their courses/programs (as per the Disability Education Standards, 2005). However, staff or students have several opportunities to disclose their disability during their employment or their study, if they choose to, such as to disability support staff, counselling service staff, and teaching staff:

Students may choose to disclose their disability at any time during their studies because:

- their circumstances may change, such as a student acquiring a disability or medical condition
- a student's disability may progress, and its impact on daily living may also increase
- a student may feel more confident that disclosing at this time will not lead to discrimination
- a student may have identified specific supports that will enable them to participate in their course, on an equal basis with other students.

Certain courses and programs require students to be provisionally registered with AHPRA or lead to a profession which will have specific expectations regarding 'fitness to practice'. AHPRA, PACFA or other professional bodies may identify additional criteria with regard to 'exceptions to maintaining confidentiality' or required disclosure of mental health or disability status. Students enrolled in postgraduate psychology or counselling programs at the Institute are therefore required to disclose to the Institute any mental illness or any other condition which may impact their ability to practice or obtain professional registration. Disclosure may also be required, by either the student or the Institute, to placement providers and/or to AHPRA or other professional bodies where duty of care extends to a student's eventual client group and to placement providers during training. Students with mental health difficulties must be given honest information about the possible impact that their mental health difficulties may have on their chosen course of study due to any additional regulatory requirements.



## Resources and References

Legislative and compliance framework relevant to the development of this policy:

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's ([TEQSA](#)) '[Guidance Note on Diversity and Equity](#)'

The [University Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

[The wicked problem of university student mental health \(by Ben Veness\)](#)

[Australians Together Educational Resources](#)

[The Australian Psychological Society's Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People](#)

[The Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia and the College of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Practices 'Indigenous Healing Practice Training Standards'](#)

[Reconciliation Australia 'Acknowledgement of Country'](#)

[The Australian Human Rights Commission 'National Ant-racism Framework'](#)

[The Equal Opportunity Act, 2010](#)

[The American Psychological Association's 'Inclusive Language Guide'](#)

ACON's [Pride in Diversity](#) Program

The Victorian Government's '[Inclusive Language Guide \(LGBTIQ+\)](#)'

The [Australian Institute of Family Studies 'Inclusive Language Guide'](#)

[How to be Disability Inclusive](#)

[The Disability Discrimination Act, 1992](#)

[The Disability Education Standards, 2005](#)

[The Health Records Act](#)

[The Privacy Act, 1988](#)

[The Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency \(AHPRA\) and National Boards 'Mandatory Reporting Guide'](#)

[The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training \(ADCET\)](#)

[The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability \(NCCD\)](#)

[Department of Premier & Cabinet, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021](#)

Discipline policy for Employee Performance & conduct (HRP012)

Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedure (HRP019)