

Equity and Diversity Policy

Version 1.1

1. Purpose

Nexus Institute of Higher Education is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse community that values and respects the contributions of all its members. This policy aims to promote equity and diversity and create an environment where every individual can thrive and reach their full potential.

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- Admission Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Course Development and Review Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information and Records Management Policy
- Progress and Intervention Policy
- Student Support Policy

2. Scope

The policy applies to all prospective and enrolled students and all members of staff.

3. Definitions

None.

4. Policy statement

Nexus Institute aims to provide equal opportunities and fair treatment for all members of its community. The Institute strives to foster an inclusive environment that welcomes and respects diverse cultures, experiences and backgrounds, and to eliminate discrimination.

The approach to increasing the access, retention and success rates of under-represented students includes:

- reaching prospective students with potential
- helping them to connect with higher education
- assisting the learning experiences and providing the support once the students commence
- evaluating the effectiveness of equity programs in achieving their goals.

Nexus Institute will provide reasonable accommodation and support for students and staff with special needs, as well as resources that promote awareness, understanding and respect for diversity and equity. Nexus Institute staff (contact details provided on the Nexus Institute website) are trained to respond directly to requests for information about Nexus Institute, its courses and operations and to meet the requirements of enquirers with special needs.

Admission and assessment requirements for students will be monitored to ensure that they encourage access, participation and progress in learning.

Nexus Institute expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect, dignity and consideration. Discrimination, harassment and any form of unfair treatment based on gender, ethnicity, language, cultural background, age, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and/or family responsibilities will not be tolerated.

5. Procedures

Identified equity groups

Nexus Institute acknowledges that certain groups within the community may face unique challenges and barriers to participation and progression in higher education. Nexus Institute recognises the special needs of the following groups who may be disadvantaged or under-represented:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people
- People with a disability.

Students with disabilities

Nexus Institute will ensure that students with disabilities are provided with appropriate and reasonable adjustments to enable access to written material and participation in all educational classes on the same basis as other students.

Nexus Institute acknowledges that information that is provided about a person's disability or health status is personal and private and will respect the confidentiality of all such information in accordance with the Privacy Policy.

To assist in the planning, provision of services and timing of implementation of adjustments, prospective or current students with disabilities are encouraged to identify any alternative requirements as soon as practicable. Students are not required to disclose their disability unless the disability or chronic health condition is likely to affect their capacity to meet the inherent requirements of the course. However, failure to declare specific requirements at the earliest opportunity may lead to a disruption of a student's study program, or a delay providing suitable support.

Support and advice for students with a disability are available through the Student Services or Counselling staff.

Cultural competency

Nexus Institute has an international community and its graduates will work internationally. Cultural competency is an important graduate attribute. In particular, the curriculum is sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives.

Nexus Institute aims to engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, recognising that partnerships are essential in providing a supportive and enriching educational experience for Indigenous students.

Admission

Nexus Institute is committed to ensuring that admission processes are fair and transparent and consider the unique circumstances and experiences of individuals from equity groups.

Nexus Institute recognises alternative pathways for students from designated equity groups to demonstrate the potential to succeed in higher education. Admission criteria will recognise accomplishments in community engagement, leadership roles and personal achievements.

Nexus Institute will establish scholarships to support students from designated equity groups.

Orientation for new students will include the support available to assist students to transition successfully to higher education.

Assessment

To ensure a fair and inclusive learning environment, Nexus Institute offers alternative forms of assessment, taking into account the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students from designated equity groups. This may include oral presentations, practical demonstrations, project-based assessments, or extra time or assistive technology in examinations.

Nexus Institute will provide resources and guidelines for staff to develop culturally inclusive assessments which do not disadvantage students from culturally diverse backgrounds. Nexus Institute provides learning resources to help students navigate assessment requirements and develop the necessary skills for success.

Support

Students can seek support when they require extra help or feel disadvantaged. Nexus Institute offers learning support and counselling.

Any member of the Nexus Institute community who believes they have experienced discrimination or harassment should report the incident to their teacher or supervisor or another member of staff. Discrimination, bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

Monitoring and review

The Course Development and Review Policy sets out the procedures for interim monitoring, internal course reviews and comprehensive external course reviews. The reviews are designed to monitor participation, progress and completion by identified student subgroups, including equity groups and students-at-risk, and to ensure that the findings are used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those subgroups.

6. Roles and responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for implementing and maintaining this policy.

Supervisors and managers are responsible for championing equity and diversity and ensuring that equity and diversity principles are integrated into the practices of Nexus Institute.

All staff are expected to foster an inclusive and diverse environment in their work.

Students are expected to respect the principles of equity and diversity, treating their peers and staff with respect and consideration.

The Executive Dean will provide an annual report to Academic Board on access, participation and progress of students in the designated equity groups.

7. Related information

- TEQSA guidance note: Diversity and equity
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission, 2023, "Guidelines for Complying with the Positive Duty under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), August 2023.
[https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidelines%20for%20Complying%20with%20the%20Positive%20Duty%20\(2023\).pdf](https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-08/Guidelines%20for%20Complying%20with%20the%20Positive%20Duty%20(2023).pdf)

8. Document control

Category	Operational
HESF Standard	2.2, 7.2.2d
Policy name	Equity and Diversity Policy
Policy owner	CEO
Policy approver	Board of Directors
Date of approval	
Date of next review	1 November 2026
Change log	Version 0. Original version created on 17 October 2023.
	Version 1. Feedback from Board of Directors incorporated on 20 Nov 23.
	Version 1.1 (11 May 2025). Linked to the Course Development and Review Policy to monitor student outcomes for equity groups.