Policy: Student Access and Equity

Purpose

SRTAFE is committed to providing all students with equal benefits and opportunities to pursue their training and development. This policy is to be used by SRTAFE to integrate access and equity principles and to treat equally and fairly all VET students and all individuals seeking to enrol into the VET courses and all training and assessment activities it conducts.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees with direct or indirect interaction with future and current students.

Policy

Access and equity

1. The aim of the policy is to remove barriers and to open up developmental opportunities for all students by creating a workplace and training environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bigotry, prejudice, racism and offensive behaviour.
2. All students will receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of training without regard to political affiliation, race, colour, religion, national origin, sex, marital status or physical disability.
3. A person with disability may be excluded under this policy if the disability could cause occupational health and safety risks to the person and/or other students.
4. All trainers / assessors are responsible to observe and be advocates for the policy.
5. This policy will be widely disseminated in the organisation.
6. SRTAFE's policies and procedures will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that they recognise and incorporate the rights of individuals.
7. Any breach of access and equity policy and procedure must be reported to the Training Manager or follow the complaints and appeals procedure.

Fair treatment and equal benefits and opportunities

1. SRTAFE has open, fair and transparent procedures that, in our reasonable view, are based on merit for making decisions about the selection of persons who seek to enrol with the VET provider and the treatment of VET students undertaking a VET course of study.
2. People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and people with diverse academic, work and life experiences are encouraged to apply.
3. SRTAFE ensures that all relevant information for students to make informed decisions is available on the website, in the student handbook and the course brochures.
4. SRTAFE has the following policies and procedures in place in order to treat all current and prospective students in a fair and equitable manner with all academic and non-academic matters and provide equal benefits and opportunities.

Relevant documents

Enrolment Policy and Procedure
Complaints Policy and Procedure
Academic Appeals Policy, Work Instruction and Application Form
DTWD Fees and Charges Policy
Withdrawal/Refund Management Work Instruction; Application for Withdrawal from Class/Refund Form
Privacy Policy and procedure

Relevant legislation

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Sex and Age Discrimination legislation Amendment Act 2011

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Disability Discrimination Amendment (Education Standards) Act 2005

Disabilities Services Act 1986

The Disability Services Amendment Act (2016)

Equal Opportunity Act (1984)

The Equal Opportunity Amendment Act (1988)

 Racial Discrimination Act 1975

The Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Higher Education Support ACT 2003 (Schedule 1A, Clause 18)

Higher Education Support VET Guideline 2015 (Part 5, Section 41)

VET Student Loan ACT 2016 (Part 5, Division 1, Section 48)

VET Student Loan Rules 2016 (Part 7, Division 1, Subdivision C, Section 84)

Definitions

Access and Equity means policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability or sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment t, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.

Discrimination

- **Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination is any action which specifically excludes a person or group of people from a benefit or opportunity, or significantly reduces their chances of obtaining it, because their status or personal characteristics, irrelevant to the situation (e.g., sex, ethnic origin) are applied as a barrier. Direct discrimination has as a focus assumed differences between people.

- **Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination is the outcome of rules, practices and a decision which treats people equally and therefore appear to be neutral; but which, in fact, perpetuate an initially unequal situation and therefore significantly reduce a person's chances of obtaining or retaining a benefit or opportunity. Rules, practices and decisions are applied to all groups alike but it is the very assumption of a likeness that constitutes the discrimination.

- **Systemic discrimination**

A system of discrimination perpetuated by rules, practices and decisions which are realised in actions that are discriminatory and disadvantage a group of people because of their status or characteristics and serve to

advantage others of different status or characteristics. Direct and indirect discrimination contribute to systemic discrimination.

Equity focuses on outcomes. Equity is not concerned with treating people in the same way; it is concerned with ensuring that all groups of people participate and benefit to the same level.

Sexual harassment is defined by the Commonwealth Sexual Discrimination Act 1984 as when a person:
- makes an unwelcome sexual advance or an unwelcome request for sexual favours;
- engages in unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, and a reasonable person would have anticipated that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Adaptive Technology is an umbrella terms that includes assistive, adaptive and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities. It promotes greater independence by enabling people to perform tasks that they were formerly unable to accomplish, or had great difficulty accomplishing, by providing enhancements to, or changing methods of interacting with, the technology needed to accomplish such tasks.

Training and Assessment strategies and practices are the approach of, and method, adopted by the RTO, with respect to training and assessment designed to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package and accredited course.

Version control

Custodian of document	Version	Date of next review
Director Training Services	2	3 years from date of issue