

Equity and Diversity Policy

Document

Document Name	Equity and Diversity Policy
Brief Description	The Equity and Diversity Policy promotes fairness, equity and respect and encourages achievement by maximising access to and participation in education and training. This Policy also acknowledges the diversity of the staff and students including prospective students.
Responsibility	Senior Management Team
Initial Issue Date	5 February 2016
Date for Next Review:	12 October 2025

Version Control

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
05/02/2016	1	New Policy developed and implemented – Replaces the relevant sections of the Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy.	Senior Management Team
13/01/2017	2	Incorporates specific reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, as required under the revised TEQSA Threshold Standards	Senior Management Team
12/10/2023	3	Transferred to the new template. Definitions of 'Equity' and 'Diversity' added. Policy statements strengthened. Disadvantaged or underrepresented populations updated. Sections on active proportion of equity and diversity to staff and students added.	Senior Management Team

Related Documents

Name	Location
Critical Incident Policy	SIBT Website
Student Code of Conduct	SIBT Website
Staff Code of Conduct	SIBT Website
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	SIBT Website
Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying Policy	SIBT Website
Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website

Name	Location
Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy	SIBT Website
First Peoples Education Policy	SIBT Website
Racial Discrimination Act 1975	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/
Racial Hatred Act 1995	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Sex Discrimination Act 1984	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Age Discrimination Act 2004	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Disability Standards for Education 2005	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Fair Work Act 2009	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Anti-Discrimination Act (NSW) 1977	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/
Work Health & Safety Act 2011	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Support Act 2003	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	https://www.legislation.gov.au/



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1. Purpose

- a) The purpose of the Equity and Diversity Policy is to articulate the objective of the organisation in promoting and encouraging fairness, equity, and respect.

2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Diversity	Understanding, accepting, and respecting one's uniqueness and individual differences.
Equity	Ensuring that access, provisions, resources, and opportunities are provided for everyone to succeed and develop, particularly for individuals who are underrepresented, and have been historically disadvantaged and marginalised.

3. Application

- a) The Equity and Diversity Policy applies to all SIBT students, staff, contractors, partners, and visitors.

4. Policy Statement

- a) This policy aims to provide a study and work environment for staff and students that fosters fairness, equity, and respect for social and cultural diversity, and that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying.
- b) SIBT endeavours to eliminate discrimination, bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct, striving to create a culture where students and staff are encouraged to study and work on a basis of mutual respect and valuable collaborations.
- c) SIBT has a responsibility to satisfy State and Commonwealth equity legislation requirements. As such this policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation.
- d) SIBT is committed to diversity in the learning and teaching environment and recognises its value to all within the community. In fulfilling its commitment to equity and diversity of SIBT, with the cooperation of all members of the teaching and learning environment, will:
 - i. Foster a culture that values and responds to the rich diversity of its staff and students;
 - ii. Overcome past disadvantage for members of staff and student equity groups;
 - iii. Engender trust between managers and supervisors, staff and students;
 - iv. Provide socially, culturally and gender inclusive education;
 - v. Remove barriers to participation and progression in employment and education;
 - vi. Increase flexibility through exposure to new ideas and different ways of working;
 - vii. Enhance skills through interdependent learning relationships;
 - viii. Enhance the quality and accessibility of education and employment with increasing links to cultural diversity.
- e) To achieve these outcomes, SIBT depends on the continued co-operation of all members of the teaching and learning environment.

5. Diversity

- a) SIBT consists of a socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse community, which enriches teaching and learning capabilities and helps to create a culture that is tolerant, flexible and relevant to the global academic environment. SIBT values these differences as an essential characteristic in the success of its academic activities and is committed to providing an inclusive learning and teaching environment.
- b) Diversity accounts for the many factors that influence the ability of people to participate and succeed in education and training and employment, including:
 - i. Prior educational experiences;
 - ii. Cultural identity;
 - iii. Language;
 - iv. Racial identity;
 - v. Learning styles and neurodivergence;
 - vi. Goals and expectations;
 - vii. Motivation;
 - viii. Work and social experiences;
 - ix. Gender and gender identity;
 - x. Marital or relationship status;
 - xi. Pregnancy;
 - xii. Lawful sexual activity;
 - xiii. Values and beliefs;
 - xiv. Disability or impairment;
 - xv. Sexual orientation;
 - xvi. Intersex status;
 - xvii. Religion;
 - xviii. Income or socioeconomic status;
 - xix. Family responsibilities;
 - xx. Trade union affiliation;
 - xxi. Political activity;
 - xxii. Geographic location; and
 - xxiii. Age.
- c) SIBT aims to meet its commitment to diversity, through practices which encourage, support and provide opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to access participate and achieve outcomes in the teaching and learning environment.

6. Equity

- a) SIBT is committed to providing a teaching and learning environment in which employees and students feel that they are valued, treated fairly and are provided with equal access to resources and services available to participate and achieve outcomes in the learning and teaching environment. SIBT also aims to provide a harassment-free environment that fosters good working relationships between all members of learning and teaching environment.
- b) SIBT recognises historically disadvantaged or underrepresented student populations in Higher Education including but not limited to:
 - i. First Nation (Aboriginal) and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
 - ii. People from lower socio-economic backgrounds;

- iii. People with disability;
 - iv. People from remote, rural, or isolated areas;
 - v. People who are the first in their family to attend a university or other higher educational institution;
 - vi. People from non-English speaking backgrounds; and
 - vii. People in areas of study where they have been under-represented.
- c) SIBT aims to meet its commitment to equity, through practices which are free from bias and discrimination, and through pro-active initiatives which provide individuals with the opportunity to access, participate in, and achieve outcomes from education and training.

7. Staff

- a) SIBT is committed to ensuring that all employees, or potential employees, enjoy Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). To provide equal employment opportunity SIBT undertakes to:
- i. Promote and support equal employment opportunity in all its activities;
 - ii. Eliminate discrimination on the grounds outlined in the Discrimination, Harassment, Victimization and Bullying Policy;
 - iii. Create an environment characterised by respect where staff are able to work free from discrimination or harassment;
 - iv. Use non-discriminatory, inclusive language in all official documents and encourage its use throughout SIBT;
 - v. Ensure the application of the merit principle in recruitment, selection and reclassification;
 - vi. Ensure that employees, or potential employees, are treated fairly and equally when employment decisions are made;
 - vii. Provide equitable career development opportunities for all staff;
 - viii. Ensure equitable access to decision-making and resources;
 - ix. Ensure effective consultation with staff members in the development and implementation of equal employment opportunity;
 - x. Ensure the accountability of managers for the implementation of SIBT's equal employment opportunity policies and practices.
- b) SIBT will provide equity advice and support to staff who feel they have been disadvantaged in their employment by practices and procedures within SIBT.
- c) SIBT will proactively undertake initiative that seek to educate staff and students regarding equity and diversity, understanding of equal employment opportunity (EEO) as well as promote these principles to staff.

8. Students

- a) SIBT is committed to ensuring that all students, or potential students, enjoy equity in education. It also commits to providing a teaching and learning environment where all students are encouraged to work towards their maximum potential.
- b) To provide equity in education the Institute undertakes to:
- i. Provide flexible academic services that are accessible to its students;
 - ii. Account for requirements of individual students in strategic and operational planning processes;

- iii. Provide opportunities for students to be involved in the planning and decision making processes on matters that affect them;
 - iv. Provide a broad, relevant and balanced range of high-quality academic programs and support services that account for the diversity and the needs of all students and potential students, including those under-represented or historically disadvantaged in education and training;
 - v. Provide training and support in the delivery of its academic programs to enable staff to monitor course content, teaching methods, assessment procedures, course and audiovisual material to ensure that they are not discriminatory or offensive and that they encourage and facilitate full participation in the learning and teaching environment by the full diversity of people;
 - vi. Members of equity groups to successfully participate;
 - vii. Provide opportunities for students to achieve outcomes that meet their personal goals; and
 - viii. Provide academic programs and support services in an environment free from unfair disadvantage.
- c) SIBT will provide equity advice and support to students who feel that they have been disadvantaged in their education by practices and procedures within SIBT.
 - d) SIBT proactively promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion within the student body through regular, workshops, resources, and events for students.

9. Awareness

- a) As part of its commitment to equity and diversity, SIBT aims to increase the awareness of all members of the teaching and learning environment of equity and diversity practices and responsibilities, by providing information in the following areas:
 - i. Preventing discrimination and harassment;
 - ii. Reporting and dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment in a trauma informed way;
 - iii. Managing cross cultural issues for staff and students.
 - iv. Proactively promoting equity, diversity and inclusion to staff and students through regular training, workshops, resources, and events.