EQUITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

Lincoln Education Australia (LEA) recognises the importance of fostering a learning environment in which diversity is actively encouraged and supported through all aspects of course delivery. LEA shall demonstrate a commitment to diversity through admissions, teaching and learning, marketing, and workforce management processes, in addition to ensuring that measures are in place to provide all students with equivalent opportunities to succeed.

The *Equity and Diversity Policy and Procedures* articulates LEA's commitment to accommodating student diversity, with particular attention on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It outlines a framework of policies and procedures that are in place at LEA to support students from under-represented and/or disadvantaged groups during their studies. In addition, it establishes a set of guidelines for expected conduct by anyone at LEA, designed to ensure that the learning and teaching space at LEA remains inclusive and welcoming to all.

POLICY

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, and stakeholders, including anyone who is on LEA premises, attending a LEA event, or representing LEA in any way, including through work-integrated learning or online activities.

Principles

LEA is dedicated to implementing policies, practices and approaches to the provision of higher education course offerings that are designed to accommodate student diversity and facilitate students to achieve equivalent academic outcomes regardless of their backgrounds.

LEA shall facilitate access to all processes including admissions, teaching and learning, and student support, with a focus on ensuring that those from underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups have full access, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Students who are part or full-time carers
- Students with disabilities
- Students experiencing mental or physical health concerns
- Mature-age students
- Students who are single parents
- International students
- Students for whom English is a second language

- Students who identify as LGBTI

LEA acknowledges its legal obligations under the following Australian legislation and regulatory frameworks:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2015*
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth [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)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)

LEA takes a zero-tolerance approach to harassment or discrimination against any person. This includes online behaviour.

The accessibility, integrity, and comprehensiveness of information provided to current and potential students is integral to ensuring that diversity is supported and encouraged.

PROCEDURES

Admissions Process

LEA shall accommodate student diversity in the admissions process by:

- Providing alternative entry pathways
- Providing comprehensive information about LEA courses to all prospective students, including information regarding:
  - Course requirements
  - LEA Facilities
  - Teaching and learning resources
  - Support services
  - Accessibility arrangements
- Supporting the recruitment and admission of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

LEA shall ensure that all applicants have the capacity to fulfil the requirements of the course.

See *Admissions Policy and Procedures* and *Information to Students Policy and Procedures* for more information.

Teaching and Learning

LEA shall accommodate student diversity through learning and teaching practices including:

- Establishing transition support measures for commencing students, with a focus on supporting under-represented and disadvantaged groups within the student cohort
- Taking student diversity into account while determining course requirements.
- Engaging in ongoing development of learning materials and support services to ensure that the diverse needs of the student cohort are addressed
- Establishing an ongoing academic skills support program for all students
- Ensuring that student progress is monitored and support is provided where necessary
- Engaging a diverse range of industry experts and academics for academic matters
- Integrating knowledge and case studies from outside Australia into the course
- Ensuring that learning and teaching materials align with LEA standards of inclusivity and respect for diversity
- Ensuring that where offensive material is to be used, academic staff discuss with students the offensive aspects of the material
- Ensuring that teaching and learning materials and methods are sensitive towards and show respect for the cultures and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

See the *Academic Progress Policy and Procedures* for more information.

Accessibility

LEA shall implement measures to ensure that all students have full and comprehensive access to all aspects of course delivery and associated activities at LEA, including online activities.

LEA shall design all aspects of course delivery and associated activities with accessibility as a priority. Reasonable adjustments shall be granted to students as required.

Accessibility is embedded in various policies, including the *Disability Support Policy, IT Resources and Online Conduct Policy and Procedure, Library and Information Resources Policy and Procedures, and Information for Students Policy and Procedures.*

Student Support

LEA shall accommodate student diversity through the following student support measures:

- Transition support programs including orientation
- Academic support services, including academic intervention programs and consultation hours with academic staff
- Non-academic support services, including counselling
- Registry staff available to provide referrals and support during business hours.

Student Information and Participation

LEA shall accommodate student diversity by providing a range of opportunities for students to participate in decision-making and understand their own rights to be respected. LEA shall ensure that:

- All students have full access to LEA policies and procedures
- All students have full access to the student Code of Conduct
- All students are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities
- All students are fully informed of, and have full access to, the student complaints and appeals mechanism
- Students are given opportunities to participate in and contribute to LEA decision-making.

See the *Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures, Students at Risk and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy and Procedures, Student Support, Wellbeing & Safety Policy, Information for Students Policy and Procedures, Student Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures,* and *Student Feedback Policy.*

Workforce Considerations

LEA shall accommodate and encourage diversity in the workplace by:

- Implementing merit-based and unbiased hiring practices
- Establishing flexible work arrangements
- Implementing a comprehensive workplace anti-bullying policy
- Ensuring that all staff undergo periodic professional development activities that cover sensitivity and required behaviour.

Inclusive Language

LEA written documents shall use inclusive language. This includes any kind of correspondence such as marketing materials, course and subject materials, and updates to students and stakeholders. In addition, staff are expected to use inclusive language in their speech while they are representing LEA.

The LEA guide for inclusive language, which staff shall be trained to implement at all times, is detailed below. "Audience" in this context refers to a group of people or an individual who is listening to or reading content from LEA or a LEA representative.

In all cases, LEA and representatives of provider shall refrain from making assumptions about the audience or making unnecessary reference to perceived differences.

See below for more specific guidelines that may be applied in general areas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Do:
- When referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, use the terms "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders," "Aboriginal people(s)," and/or "Indigenous Australians" as appropriate.
- Use the name of the specific group and nation where relevant.
- Always capitalise the words "Aboriginal" and "Indigenous."

- In the case that an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander individual requests the use of specific terms that differ from this guide, respect their request.

Do not:
- Do not refer to an individual person as "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander." Torres Strait Islander peoples are culturally and linguistically distinct to Aboriginal peoples.
- Do not make assumptions about where a person lives or what they are interested in based on their identity as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

Culture, Race, and Ethnicity

Do:
- Be specific when referring to other countries and nationalities. E.g. do not refer to "Asia," instead refer specifically to the relevant countries and nations within Asia.

Do not:
- Do not assume the culture, race, and/or ethnicity of the audience

Disability

Do:
- Use phrases that centre the individual, not the disability. E.g. "person with…" or "person who…"
- When referring to disabilities, use accurate language, avoiding euphemisms.
- Refer to accessibility measures as "the accessible [ramp / parking lot / bathroom]."
- In the case that an individual with a disability requests the use of specific terms that differ from this guide, respect their request.

Do not:
- Do not use phrases that equate a person with a disability.
- Do not refer to accessibility measures as "disabled [ramp / parking lot / bathroom]." These measures benefit everyone such as people who may be temporarily injured, not only people with disabilities.
- Do not refer to people with disabilities as suffering victims, or heroes or inspirations for carrying out daily tasks

Gender and Sexuality

Do:
- Use the pronouns "they" and "them" instead of "she/he" and "her/him"
- Use "partner" instead of gender-specific terms like "boyfriend /girlfriend/wife/husband"
- Use gender neutral word where possible. e.g. police officer instead of policeman, Chair instead of Chairman.

Do not:

- Do not describe adult women as "girls" or "ladies"
- Do not assume the gender or sexuality of the audience
- Do not assume the relationship or marital status of the audience.

Socio-Economic Circumstances

Do:

- Remain aware that socio-economic circumstances can restrict the options available to people.

Do not:

- Do not use derogatory terms that are based on socio-economic circumstances.

Data Collection

LEA collects data to monitor the participation, progress, and completion rates of students from under-represent and/or disadvantaged groups, with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

This data enables LEA to respond to specific needs of priority groups as they arise. Further, it highlights areas in which improvements should be made that shall benefit the whole student cohort. This may include implementing improvements to teaching and learning and support strategies.

Data shall be collected with the permission of students on enrolment. Students shall be informed of their rights to privacy and how their data may be used.

Compliance

All staff members and students at LEA, stakeholders and anyone visiting LEA premises and representing LEA in any way are required to comply with this policy and its procedures, and with related policies and respective procedures. Non-compliance may result in a disciplinary action.

File Number	LEA-GEN-COR-70031-D
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer	Academic Dean
Legislative Compliance	*Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)* *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)* *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)* *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)* *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth [Cth])* *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)* *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*

	• *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)*
Supporting Documents	
Related Documents	• *Governance Framework* • *Student Learning Support Policy and Procedures* • *Admissions Policy and Procedures* • *Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures* • *Benchmarking Policy and Procedures* • *Disability Support Policy* • *Information for Students Policy and Procedures* • *IT Resources and Online Conduct Policy and Procedures* • *Academic Progress Policy and Procedures* • *Student Support, Wellbeing & Safety Policy* • *Staff Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedures*
Superseded Documents	
Effective Date	1 January 2022
Next Review	3 years from the effective date

Definitions

Corporate Governance Board: Governing body responsible for oversight of all higher education operations, including the ongoing viability of LEA and the quality of its higher education delivery. The Corporate Governance Board guides the Management and delegates responsibility for academic matters to the Academic Board.

Discrimination: Negative treatment of an individual or group on the basis of race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or other factors.

Diversity: Differences and similarities among individuals and groups of people.

Equity: Creation of opportunities for equal access and success among all students, including those from under-represented and/or disadvantaged groups.

Review Schedule

This policy shall be reviewed by the Corporate Governance Board every three years.

Version History			
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval Date:	Revision Notes:
1.0	Corporate Governance Board	17/12/2020	New policy