

# Access and Equity

## Version Information

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## Purpose

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning recognises the importance of providing quality facilities and services to assist people from all sections of the Australian community to achieve their employment and training goals. To ensure that Goodstart Institute of Early Learning provides the level of service expected from its clients, particularly those with special needs, this Access and Equity Policy has been developed.

Not only does this document clearly set out the Access and Equity position of Goodstart Institute of Early Learning, it ensures that these principles are incorporated into future planning processes regarding facilities, services and policies.

## Scope

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning is committed to access and equity principles and processes in the delivery of its services and working environment in accordance with all relevant legislations.

## Policy

Access and equity covers three broad areas: Discrimination, Harassment and Affirmative Action. Each of these areas is supported by legislation at the State or Federal level; this includes but is not limited to the following:

### Federal Legislation:

- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth);
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth);
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth);
- Work Place Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth); and
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

# Access and Equity

State Legislation:

- Australian Capital Territory Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 (NT)
- Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
- South Australia Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Tasmania Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (TAS)
- Victoria Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (VIC) and
- Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA).

## Definitions

The following words and expressions have the following specific meaning, as in the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

### Access and equity

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

### Reasonable Adjustment

An action to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students e.g. providing resources and assessment instruments in large print for visually impaired students, modifying equipment for students.

### Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others due to the person's circumstances, characteristics or beliefs.

### Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination takes place when a person, organisation or group of persons is treated less fairly than others on the basis of stereotyped beliefs or views.

### Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination includes rules, practices or policies which appear to be non-discriminatory and equally applicable, but operate in such a way that certain groups of people are excluded without just cause.

### Workplace Harassment

Harassment is any behaviour which is unwelcome, offends, humiliates or intimidates a person and causes the work environment to become unpleasant. If a person is being harassed then their ability to do their work is affected as they often become stressed and suffer health problems.

# Access and Equity

Harassment may result from behaviour which is not intended to offend or harm, such as jokes or unwanted attention however, this does not mean that it is lawful.

## Sexual Harassment

The most common form of harassment is sexual harassment. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted touching
- Sexual innuendo propositions
- Nude pin-ups and posters
- Obscene telephone calls
- Wolf whistles

Sexual harassment can occur among peers or co-workers, and in subordinate-supervisor, supervisor-subordinate or staff-student, student-staff, student-student situations.

## Verbal Harassment

Examples of verbal harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual comments, advances or propositions
- Lewd jokes or innuendos
- Racist comments or jokes
- Spreading rumours
- Comments or jokes about a person's disability, pregnancy, sexuality, age or religion
- Repeated questions about one's personal life
- Belittling someone's work or contribution in a meeting
- Threats, insults or abuse
- Offensive obscene language
- Obscene telephone calls, unsolicited letters, faxes and emails.

## Non-Verbal Harassment

Examples of non-verbal harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Leering (e.g. staring at a woman's breasts)
- Putting offensive material on notice boards, computer screen savers and emails
- Wolf whistling
- Nude or pornographic posters
- Displaying sexist or racist cartoons or literature
- Demoting, failing to promote, or transferring someone because they refuse requests for sexual favours

## Access and Equity

- Following someone home from work
- Standing very close to someone or unnecessarily leaning over them
- Mimicking someone with a disability
- Practical jokes that are unwelcome
- Ignoring someone, or being cold and distant to them
- Crude hand or body gestures.

### Physical Harassment

Examples of physical harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome physical contact such as kissing, hugging, pinching, patting, touching, or brushing up against a person
- Indecent or sexual assault or attempted assault
- Hitting, pushing, shoving, spitting, or throwing objects at a person
- Unfastening a person's attire.

### Access and Equity Principles

1. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning ensures that access to programs is available to all persons regardless of age, gender, disability, social or ethnic backgrounds.
2. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning does not discriminate against applicants on the basis of age, gender, disability, social or ethnic backgrounds or employer.
3. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning closely monitors all advertising and promotions relating to its services to ensure that they are free of discrimination against any person.
4. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning ensures that all members of its staff are fully aware of their responsibility for adhering to, and implementing the Goodstart Institute of Early Learning's Access and Equity Principles.

In the event of a situation that is considered by either staff or student to be in violation of Goodstart Institute of Early Learning's Access and Equity Policy, staff and students are required to report the situation to Institute management. Customer complaints, appeals and appeal forms can be submitted in writing by post or email to

National Manager, Goodstart Institute of Early Learning  
43 Metroplex Avenue  
Murarrie Qld 4172

Emailed to: [goodstart@goodstart.edu.au](mailto:goodstart@goodstart.edu.au)

Programs are designed and wherever possible workplace facilities set up to enhance flexibility of delivery to maximise the opportunity for access and participation by students with special needs.

# Access and Equity

## Our Commitment

Goodstart Early Learning is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to developing policies and practices that eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace and also its education, training and development programs, and in the provision of its services. Goodstart Early Learning has a legal responsibility to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent discrimination and harassment from occurring in the workplace and training environment.

Goodstart Early Learning is committed to providing a fair and equitable learning and working environment for all students and RTO staff. In offering training program(s) we aim to provide learning programs and pathways where program design, course content, training facilities and all aspects of the training and assessment process are available in a way that allows equality of educational opportunity to all.

The following principles are applied by Goodstart Early Learning in the development and implementation of all Training and Assessment documentation.

To ensure that the recruitment and admission process is bias-free and non-discriminatory, through:

- Using the same recruitment and admission process for all applicants
- Helping students identify personal needs or circumstances that may exist and for which they may require additional support
- Providing adequate information and support to enable them to select the most suitable program for their needs.

To ensure that the learning environment is free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation:

- Specifying standards of behaviour expected from students and staff
- Creating a learning environment where all students are respected and can develop their full potential
- Have relevant policies and procedures in place.

Goodstart Early Learning provides an assessment process that is fair, valid, reliable and consistent through:

- Recognition of previously acquired skills and knowledge
- Adequate information on course and assessment, prior to enrolment in the course
- Adapting assessment to meet student needs while still maintaining a high quality, valid and consistent process
- Giving students the right to appeal an assessment or recognition decision
- Giving all students an equal opportunity to demonstrate competence.

## Legislative Requirements

Goodstart Institute of Early Learning is required to comply with a range of legislative requirements and the relevant current legislation.

# Access and Equity

## Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that all students can complete tasks within the appropriate environment. To be reasonable, adjustments must be appropriate for that person/s, must not create undue hardship and must be allowable within rules defined by the packaging rules.

Reasonable adjustment activities can include:

- Adjusting the sequence of units
- Providing customisation of learning outcomes
- Extending the program duration
- Providing mixed mode of delivery
- Student support
- Ensuring information is accessible both prior to enrolment and during the program
- Monitoring the adjustments to ensure students' needs continue to be met.

## Complaints and Appeals

- Complaints and appeals are addressed in a fair and equitable manner. Individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly are encouraged to use the complaints procedure. Goodstart Institute of Early Learning will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints and appeals in accordance with stated procedures.
- Special consideration may be granted if through misadventure (e.g. illness, bereavement or personal trauma) a student is prevented from completing an assessment; or believes that their performance in an assessment event has been affected by the incident.
- Students also have the right to appeal against any decisions as set out in the complaints and appeals procedure.

## Assessment

Training and assessment is conducted by trainers and assessors who:

- Have the relevant vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered or assessed
- Can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken
- Continue to develop their Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and trainer and assessor competence
- Assessment will be carried out in accordance with the ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations and within endorsed Training Package or accredited curriculum guidelines
- Assessment practices will be inclusive and support equity principles. Reasonable adjustments may be made to assessment processes, to minimise disadvantage to individuals or groups, however, these adjustments will not compromise the integrity of the competency standard.

## Access and Equity

- Validation is the quality review of the assessment process. Validation involves checking that assessment tools produce valid, sufficient, current and authentic evidence to enable reasonable judgements to be made as to whether the requirements of the training package or VET accredited courses are met. It includes reviewing a statistically valid sample of completed assessments (e.g. for each cohort a high, medium and low sample) and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes and acting upon such recommendations.

## Relevant Documentation

- Student Guide
- Induction Materials
- Policies and Procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Student Support Policy