



## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy**

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## 2.5 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

### Policy Content

Elements	Details
Registration Manager	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Conditions of Registration	VET Quality Framework (VQF)
Standards Referenced	Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs 2025 - Standard 2.5
Legislation / Other Requirements	

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the RTO provides a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environment that acknowledges and embraces the diversity of its VET student cohort. The RTO recognises the importance of equity and inclusion in education and is committed to removing barriers to participation and achievement, especially for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations communities, students with disability, and other underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.

This policy supports compliance with Outcome Standard 2.5 of the Standards for RTOs 2025, ensuring that the learning environment both supports diversity and promotes the wellbeing and success of all learners.

### Scope

This policy applies to all VET students enrolled with the RTO and all staff members involved in training, assessment, student support, administration, and management. It covers all training products within the RTO's scope of registration and applies across all delivery modes and locations, including where third parties are engaged in delivering services on behalf of the RTO.

### Policy Statement

The RTO is committed to:

- Fostering an inclusive learning environment where all VET students feel respected, valued, and safe regardless of their background, identity, or circumstance.
- Promoting equitable access to training and assessment opportunities by identifying and addressing systemic or individual barriers to participation.
- Actively supporting a culturally safe learning environment for First Nations students by recognising and respecting their histories, cultures, and knowledge systems.

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- Ensuring that all staff members are aware of and apply inclusive education practices in accordance with current legislation and the Standards for RTOs 2025.
- Identifying the wellbeing and diversity needs of its student cohort and implementing appropriate support strategies to meet those needs.

## General Principles

### 1. Inclusive Education Framework

The RTO embeds inclusive education practices throughout its training and assessment strategies. This includes recognition of diverse learning needs, inclusive language and materials, and flexibility in training delivery where appropriate.

### 2. Recognition and Respect for Diversity

The RTO acknowledges the wide range of personal, cultural, linguistic, religious, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds that VET students may come from. Staff are trained to promote respect and responsiveness to this diversity in all aspects of the student experience.

- **Culturally Safe Learning for First Nations Students**

The RTO commits to fostering a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners by:

1. Respecting cultural identities, protocols, and practices.
2. Incorporating Indigenous perspectives where appropriate in training delivery.
3. Consulting with community representatives or First Nations support organisations, as needed.

- **Equity in Access and Participation**

All students are provided with equitable opportunities to engage in and complete their chosen training product. Where barriers to participation are identified (e.g. disability, language barriers, trauma backgrounds), support strategies and reasonable adjustments are applied in accordance with the RTO's support and access policies.

- **Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment**

The RTO has zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or bullying. All reported incidents are investigated and addressed promptly in line with the RTO's complaints and misconduct policies.

- **Identification of Student Wellbeing Needs**

The RTO identifies student cohort needs at enrolment and throughout training delivery by:

1. Conducting pre-training reviews and LLND assessments.

2. Monitoring student engagement and participation.

3. Gathering feedback from students and trainers.

- **Availability of Wellbeing Support Services**

Information about internal and external wellbeing support services is provided at enrolment, in the student handbook, and throughout the course. Staff assist students in accessing these services as required.

- **Staff Training and Awareness**

All staff receive induction and ongoing training on inclusive education principles, cultural competency, and anti-discrimination obligations as part of the RTO’s professional development program.

**Procedures:**

**2.5.1 Promoting and Supporting the Diversity of VET Students**

To ensure that the RTO fosters a learning environment that actively promotes and supports the diversity of its student cohort, including but not limited to:

young people, mature-aged learners, First Nations people, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people with disability, neurodivergent learners, LGBTIQ+ students, and those from disadvantaged socio-economic or educational backgrounds.

The RTO recognises and values the lived experiences, identities, and learning needs of all students, and is committed to providing inclusive training design, flexible delivery, culturally responsive practices, and equitable access to support services and learning opportunities.

**A. Identification of Diversity within the Student Cohort:**

During pre-enrolment, the RTO collects relevant information from prospective students (via enrolment forms, pre-training reviews, and LLND assessments) to understand their individual backgrounds, cultural identities, previous education, languages spoken, and any declared support needs.

**B. Integration of Diversity into Training Design:**

Training and assessment strategies (TAS) are developed with flexibility to accommodate learners' diversity, such as offering multiple modes of delivery, inclusive learning resources, and varied assessment formats. Trainers are guided to adapt delivery methods to suit learners' cultural and learning preferences where possible.

**C. Trainer and Assessor Awareness and Development:**

The RTO provides regular professional development to staff on inclusive education, unconscious bias, accessibility, and cultural responsiveness. This ensures all staff are equipped to recognise and support diverse learner needs respectfully and effectively.

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**D. Support Services for Diverse Learners:**

Students who identify a need for additional support are offered access to relevant internal and external support services. This may include language interpreters, counselling, learning support officers, or referrals to community organisations.

**E. Student Consultation and Feedback:**

The RTO implements mechanisms (surveys, check-ins, forums) to gather feedback from students of diverse backgrounds on their experience of inclusion, safety, and equity. This input informs continuous improvement in support practices and service delivery.

**F. Cultural Recognition in Learning Materials and Environment:**

The RTO ensures learning content and examples reflect the cultural diversity of the student body. It also ensures that the physical and digital learning spaces include inclusive signage, culturally representative imagery, and respect for diverse customs.

**G. Equitable Access to Learning Opportunities:**

No student is disadvantaged based on personal background. The RTO ensures policies and procedures prevent discrimination in access to facilities, learning resources, support services, or progression opportunities

**2.5.2 Fostering a Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment for VET Students**

To ensure all VET students experience a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where they can fully participate and thrive without fear of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or exclusion.

**A. Implementation of Inclusive Policies:**

The RTO enforces a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, and discrimination. This is documented in the Student Code of Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Policy, and Critical Incident Policy. These documents are communicated clearly to students at induction and available via the student portal and website.

**B. Orientation and Student Induction:**

During orientation, all students are informed of their rights and responsibilities in maintaining a safe and inclusive learning environment. They are also shown how to report concerns and are introduced to the Student Support Officer as a confidential point of contact.

**C. Staff Training and Conduct Expectations:**

Trainers, assessors, and administrative staff undergo regular training on maintaining inclusive learning practices, managing diverse classrooms, and responding to student safety or wellbeing concerns. Staff are expected to always model respectful behaviour and inclusive language.

**D. Confidential Reporting Mechanisms:**

Students can report any safety or inclusion concern through confidential channels, including email, in-person appointments, or a secure form on the student portal. Reports are handled promptly and in accordance with the RTO's Complaints and Appeals Policy.

**E. Learning Environment Accessibility:**

The RTO ensures all learning spaces physical and virtual are accessible, inclusive, and free of barriers. This includes ensuring safe physical access and providing support technologies or learning alternatives when needed.

**F. Monitoring and Response to Student Wellbeing Risks:**

Trainers and support staff monitor student engagement and wellbeing indicators throughout the course. If signs of disengagement, distress, or exclusion are observed, the student is contacted and offered personalised support or referral to internal or external wellbeing services.

**G. Inclusive Learning Design and Delivery:**

All course delivery plans are developed to reflect inclusive educational principles, including:

- The use of neutral and inclusive language
- Respect for diverse perspectives
- Avoidance of stereotypes
- Encouragement of collaborative, respectful classroom interaction

**H. Review and Continuous Improvement:**

Student feedback is routinely collected through surveys and focus groups to evaluate the inclusiveness and safety of the learning environment. Identified issues lead to documented actions through the RTO's Continuous Improvement Register.

**2.5.3 Fostering a Culturally Safe Learning Environment for First Nations People**

To ensure the RTO provides a culturally respectful, safe, and empowering environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (First Nations) students, supporting their participation, retention, and success in training.

**A. Recognition and Respect of First Nations Cultures:**

The RTO formally acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land in all major meetings, student orientations, and public-facing materials. Cultural protocols and practices are respected in all training environments and communications.

**B. Staff Cultural Awareness Training:**

All trainers, assessors, and relevant staff participate in periodic cultural awareness training facilitated by recognised First Nations educators or community organisations. The training focuses on understanding cultural identities, systemic barriers, intergenerational trauma, and culturally responsive teaching.

**C. Consultation with First Nations Communities and Organisations:**

The RTO actively engages with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives and organisations to inform the design and delivery of training programs. This includes guidance on cultural safety, curriculum relevance, and the identification of appropriate student support mechanisms.

**D. Inclusive Curriculum and Materials:**

Where appropriate and aligned with training package requirements, training materials incorporate First Nations perspectives, contributions, and historical contexts. Materials are reviewed for cultural sensitivity and stereotyping.

**E. Support Structures for First Nations Students:**

First Nations students are offered individualised support through the Student Support Officer. This includes assistance with navigating the training system, accessing culturally safe counselling, and connecting with Indigenous mentors or peer networks if available.

**F. Safe Spaces and Cultural Recognition on Campus:**

Where possible, the RTO designates a quiet, culturally safe space for First Nations students to reflect, study, or engage with support staff. Cultural events and significant dates are acknowledged and celebrated on campus.

**G. Confidential Disclosure and Self-Identification:**

First Nations students are encouraged but not required to disclose their cultural identity during enrolment or support planning. Any disclosed information is handled confidentially and used solely for enabling culturally appropriate support services.

**H. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:**

Feedback is collected from First Nations students and stakeholders through surveys, consultations, and completion data analysis. Outcomes are used to improve training access, inclusiveness, and student success. Cultural safety practices are documented in the Continuous Improvement Register and reviewed annually.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Role	Responsibility
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<b>Chief Executive Officer / RTO Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the implementation and promotion of inclusive practices across the organisation.</li> <li>• Ensure policies, procedures, and practices reflect principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).</li> <li>• Allocate resources and support training to build staff capacity in inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance with legislative and regulatory obligations relating to discrimination, harassment, and equal opportunity.</li> </ul>
<b>Trainers and Assessors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply inclusive teaching strategies and materials that reflect and respect diverse learner backgrounds and needs.</li> <li>• Make reasonable adjustments where required to ensure equitable access and participation.</li> <li>• Encourage inclusive classroom dialogue and safe learning environments.</li> <li>• Report discriminatory behaviours or barriers to participation to management.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Support and Administration Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide culturally appropriate and accessible information, support, and services to all students.</li> <li>• Ensure enrolment, orientation, and communication materials cater to diverse learner groups.</li> <li>• Maintain confidentiality and respect in handling disclosures related to equity or inclusion concerns.</li> </ul>
<b>Compliance and Quality Assurance Personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure DEI principles are embedded in all policies, processes, and student service systems.</li> <li>• Monitor student data to identify access or participation gaps for underrepresented groups.</li> <li>• Support audits and continuous improvement initiatives related to inclusive practices.</li> </ul>

<b>All Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat students and colleagues with respect and dignity, regardless of background.</li> <li>• Undertake DEI training as required and apply learning in day-to-day interactions. Promote an inclusive culture and challenge discriminatory behaviours.</li> <li>• Recognise and respond to barriers that impact access, engagement, or completion.</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage respectfully with peers and staff from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>• Report any instances of discrimination or exclusion to appropriate staff.</li> <li>• Participate in feedback opportunities to inform DEI improvements.</li> </ul>

### Continuous Improvement

The RTO is committed to continuously improving its diversity, equity, and inclusion practices to ensure the learning environment evolves with the needs of its diverse VET student cohort. To support this:

- Feedback from students, including First Nations students and students from diverse backgrounds, is collected through surveys, interviews, and feedback forms at key points throughout the training lifecycle.
- Reports of discrimination, exclusion, or cultural insensitivity are investigated and reviewed as part of the RTO’s incident management and complaints procedures.
- Internal audits and reviews assess the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion practices, including staff training participation, culturally responsive curriculum design, and student access to wellbeing services.
- Outcomes of reviews and consultations are documented in the Continuous Improvement Register and used to update policies, training plans, staff development sessions, and support services.

### Publication

This policy is:

- Made available to all staff and VET students via the RTO’s official website and student portal.

- Incorporated into orientation materials and the Student Handbook to ensure visibility and access from the point of enrolment.
- Discussed during staff induction and professional development activities to embed awareness and commitment to inclusive practice across all levels of the RTO.

### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

- All personal information collected under this policy, including disclosure of cultural identity, disability status, or support needs, is handled in accordance with the RTO’s Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- The RTO ensures that students’ rights to privacy and dignity are always upheld when accessing support services or participating in equity-related initiatives.
- Staff are trained to manage sensitive disclosures with discretion and to escalate concerns only with the student's consent, or in accordance with legal or safeguarding obligations.

### **Retention of Records**

- Records relating to diversity and inclusion strategies, cultural consultations, and staff training are retained in accordance with the RTO’s Records Management Policy.
- Student support records, cultural disclosure forms, or participation in inclusive initiatives are stored securely in individual student files and maintained for audit and compliance purposes for a minimum of five years.
- Records are reviewed annually to ensure relevance, accuracy, and compliance with the National VET Data Policy and applicable privacy laws.