

Diversity and Equity Policy

Fact box

- **Policy owner:** Vice President Operations
- **Policy category:** Management: HR
- **Policy status:** Approved
- **Approval body:** Executive
- **Endorsement body:** Executive
- **Related policies:**
 - [Accessibility and Disability Policy](#)
 - [Support for Students Policy](#)
- **Last amended:** 20th Dec. 2022
- **Relevant HESF:**

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a statement of commitment to the principles of diversity and equity in learning, research and employment, as well as freedom from discrimination on the basis of attributes unrelated to the confessional nature of Alphacrucis University College (AC). Equal opportunity is incorporated into the full life cycle of staff, students and Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates.

Scope

Whole of AC

Policy

AC is committed to providing an environment for staff and students/candidates that is free from discrimination based on income, age, disability, social and ethnic background, location or gender. Employment at AC is based on merit, defined as a combination of demonstrated academic or administrative ability in a specified area, demonstrated sympathy with the aims and objectives of AC, and 'fit' with regard to the demands of AC's teams and projects.

This policy is conducted within the context of the confessional nature of AC. AC is an institution owned and run by Australian Christian Churches in Australia, and bound by its Constitution to hold those doctrines established in Article 5 of the United Constitution. The following excerpts from the Anti-Discrimination Act apply:

Single sex, religion, etc. education institution

1. An education authority that operates, or proposes to operate, an educational institution wholly or mainly for students/candidates of a particular sex or religion, or who have a general or specific impairment may exclude:

- (a) applicants who are not of the particular sex or religion; or
- (b) applicants who do not have a general, or the specific, impairment.

2. The Act does not apply in relation to:

- (a) the ordination or appointment of priests, ministers of religion or members of a religious order; or

- (b) the training or education of people seeking ordination or appointment as priests, ministers of religion or members of a religious order; or
- (c) the selection or appointment of people to perform the functions in relation to, or otherwise participate in, any religious observance or practice; or
- (d) unless section 29 (Educational or health related institution with religious purposes) or section 90 (Accommodation with religious purposes) applies – an act by a body established for religious purposes if the act is:
 - (i) in accordance with the doctrine of the religion concerned; and
 - (ii) necessary to avoid offending the religious sensitivities of people of the religion.

Definition

Within this policy, identified people from historically disadvantaged and/or under-represented subgroups, include: women; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; people with a disability; people from lower socio-economic backgrounds; people from remote, rural or isolated areas; people who are the first in their family to attend a higher educational institution; and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Principles of Diversity and Equity

AC's principles of diversity and equity include:

- safe and pleasant for staff and students/candidates, free from discrimination and inequity in which all people are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect;
- culturally diverse and inclusive of peoples from all parts of the world;
- engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- supportive of those who have been educationally disadvantaged;
- committed to gender equality and leadership opportunities;
- accessible to all people, including those with a disability, in need of mobility assistance or other learning needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and students/candidates are accountable for ensuring their own behaviours comply with the AC Code of Conduct, AC Diversity and Equity Framework and relevant state and federal legislation. AC expects the cooperation of all staff and students/candidates to encourage awareness of diversity and equity principles in their behaviour, language and decision-making.

AC monitors the participation, progression and completion of identified subgroup student cohorts. AC strives to ensure that the nature and extent of its academic and support strategies are informed by this information and by the needs of such groups.

All senior leaders, directors and heads of department are responsible for ensuring that members of the AC community are aware of, and comply with, AC's commitment to and promotion of diversity and equity. Staff induction, as well as student/candidate orientation programs, are to include matters related to diversity and equity.

Responsible for implementation

Vice President Operations

Key stakeholders

All staff, students and HDR candidates

Related legislation

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (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)
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Procedures

Diversity and Equity Procedures

AC encourages diversity and equity by:

- developing and implementing programs and measures to improve access, participation, retention and success of students/candidates from under represented and disadvantaged groups;
- developing and implementing programs and measures to improve access and outcomes for staff from under-represented groups;
- periodic monitoring and reviewing of diversity and equity performance;
- implementing induction and orientation strategies to ensure all staff and students/candidates know their rights and responsibilities.

Reporting

Academic Board periodically reviews policies related to the student/candidate life cycle to ensure equal opportunity and inclusion are being appropriately maintained.

Executive periodically reviews policies related to the staff employment life cycle to ensure systemic issues impacting equal opportunity and inclusion are addressed.
