

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Version number	3
Approved by	Corporate Governance Board
Date of approval	26/03/2021

Purpose

Sydney Institute of Higher Education (SI) considers safety and inclusivity to be central features of a supportive learning and teaching environment in which student health and wellbeing is prioritised. Safety and inclusivity is undermined by discriminatory behaviour, and thus SI must eliminate all forms of discrimination from across all aspects of higher education delivered.

This *Anti-Discrimination Policy* establishes SI's responsibilities under Australian law. It outlines the measures SI will implement in order to foster an environment in which diversity is valued and discrimination not tolerated. The policy also outlines the avenues through which students can report discrimination and the response that SI will take to these reports.

Scope

All members of the SI community are expected to abide by the *Anti-Discrimination Policy* in all dealings with or on behalf of SI, including staff, students, visitors, and third-party contractors or work-integrated learning partners.

Principles

This policy is designed to ensure SI compliance with the following Australian legal requirements:

- *Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- *Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Commonwealth Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013*
- *Commonwealth Age Discrimination Act 2004.*

No form of discrimination will be tolerated. Forms of discrimination may include but are not limited to discrimination based on:

- Race, nationality, ethnicity, or descent
- Sex, intersex identity, gender and transgender identity, or sexual orientation

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- Marital status, breastfeeding and pregnancy, parent or caretaker status
 - Religious or political beliefs
 - Employment or industrial activities
 - Age or physical traits
 - Irrelevant criminal activity
 - Disability or medical or mental health issues
 - Association with individuals with the attributes listed.

SI values diversity and will ensure to the best of its ability that all students are treated fairly and equally during their time at SI.

All students have the right to learn in a safe environment free from harassment or discrimination.

All members of the SI community are expected to uphold these values and principles in all activities undertaken at or associated with SI. Discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated and may warrant disciplinary action as outlined in this policy. In serious cases, it may be referred to the police.

SI acknowledges that discrimination can occur in myriad ways, and seeks to eliminate discrimination in all forms, with a focus on the following:

- Any behaviour that contravenes the legislation listed above
- Actions that generate a negative or threatening environment for any members of the SI community
- Actions that may negatively affect the progress and performance of any members of the SI community
- Bias against applicants in hiring, promotion, and admissions processes that obstruct the principle of managing staff and admitting students based on merit.

Procedures

Prevention

SI will focus on three key aspects in order to promote an inclusive and respectful culture in which it is known that disrespect and discrimination will not be tolerated:

- Embedding inclusivity and respect for diversity into all operations at SI, including learning and teaching activities, workforce planning, and admissions processes
- Establishing clear codes of behaviour to ensure that all members of the SI community understand the behaviour expected of them
- Establishing a transparent system for handling instances of discrimination and ensuring that members of the SI community are aware of it.

Specifically, SI will implement the measures below.

General practices

SI will ensure that:

- All SI policies and procedures align with all Australian anti-discrimination laws and regulations.
- All students have access to the complaints and appeals mechanism as outlined in the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.
- All anti-discrimination measures are audited periodically to ensure effectiveness and compliance and identify areas for improvement.

Informed students and staff

SI will ensure that:

- Clear information regarding access to SI support services and assistance in resolution of grievances is readily available to students at all times, including prior to acceptance of an offer of enrolment.
- The *Anti-Discrimination Policy* and all other policies relating to equity and diversity are available to all students and staff, and students and staff are informed of how to access these.
- Students are provided with timely, accurate information about personal support services that will be available to them during their study, including legal advice and advocacy.
- Students are provided with a copy of the *Student Code of Conduct* on enrolment, and orientation sessions cover behaviour expected of students.
- All information is accessible to all students, including those with specific accessibility requirements.

Learning, teaching and support

SI will ensure that:

- Program content is tailored where appropriate to the diversity of the student cohort, specifically where that diversity concerns gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation.
- Cross-cultural content is utilised wherever possible.
- Projects and research involving cross-cultural activities are incorporated wherever possible and appropriate in the program learning materials.
- Student support services are adequately equipped to meet the diversity of each specific cohort.
- SI promotes participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and remains sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures.
- Specific attention is given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the areas of recruitment, admission, participation in, and completion of study.

Workforce

SI will ensure that:

- An inclusive and equitable hiring processes and workplace culture is developed, including initiatives where appropriate that will assist those members of the workforce from non-English speaking backgrounds, those who identify as having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
- Staff professional development activities raise awareness and teach strategies to manage unconscious bias and discrimination.
- Staff professional development activities train staff to be sensitive to discrimination issues and to be open to constructive feedback on their own behaviour.

- Work arrangements are agreeable with the different backgrounds of SI's staff, including flexible arrangements such as time off for religious practices, paid parental leave, and paid domestic violence leave.

Reporting discrimination

Any individual is encouraged to report harassment or discrimination that they are targeted by or observe. They should include as much detail as possible in the report.

Student support staff, in particular, the Student Counselling and Wellbeing Officer, are available to provide support and advice at any point in the process.

Formal complaint process

Students should submit formal complaints to SI's student services either in person or through email, and staff should submit formal complaints to their managers.

For information regarding the formal complaint process, please refer to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

The respondent will be notified that there has been a formal discrimination complaint lodged against them. Matters will be investigated and determined in accordance with the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*

Disciplinary Measures

Staff and students found to have committed some form of discrimination may be subjected to disciplinary measures such as:

- Written warning.
- Probationary period.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.
- Termination of contract.

Appeals

If either the complainant or respondent is unsatisfied with the decision reached by the committee, they are each entitled to appeal. For information regarding the formal appeal process, please refer to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*. If either party is unsatisfied with the verdict, they may choose to take external action. For further information regarding this procedure, refer to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The *Corporate Governance Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Dean.

The *Corporate Governance Board* will actively monitor reports and seeks advice from relevant

committees and staff members, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*.

Additionally, the *Corporate Governance Board* will review all relevant student complaint and appeal reports, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Based on these monitoring activities, the *Corporate Governance Board* must ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes, directing action to correct processes or policies that are producing sub-optimal outcomes.

Definitions

Academic Board: the SI governing body responsible for academic oversight, including SI learning and teaching environment and practices, program development and approval, workforce planning, research and scholarship, and academic policies and procedures. The *Academic Board* advises the *Corporate Governance Board* on academic matters.

Corporate Governance Board: The SI governing body responsible for the oversight of all SI operations, including the direction-setting, quality assurance, monitoring, and improvement of academic and non-academic operations. It delegates responsibility for academic matters to the *Academic Board*.

Discrimination: Unjust or negative treatment of an individual or group on the basis of their inherent differences, such as race, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

SI Community: Consists of staff, students and other stakeholders of SI.

Review Schedule

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

Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:
1	Corporate Governance Board	4/09/2017	Adopted	
2	Corporate Governance Board	16/10/2017	Updated	16/10/2020
3	Corporate Governance Board	26/03/2021	No change. Periodic Review.	26/03/2024

End of document: "Anti-Discrimination Policy"

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Related Documents		
		Anti-Discrimination Policy
		Compliance Framework Policy
		Information For Students Policy
		Student Complaints and Appeals Policy
		Student Welfare Policy
		Student Code of Conduct
		Dean
		Student Counselling and Wellbeing Officer
		Corporate Governance Board - Terms of Reference