

Access and Equity Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a frame of reference in providing and maintaining training services that reflect fair and reasonable opportunity for all Students, regardless of their diversity; allowing everyone to freely participate in the learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification.

Skillinvest is committed to providing quality training and assessment products and services in compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework. Skillinvest promotes, encourages and values equity and diversity with regard to Students. Skillinvest will ensure services offered are provided in a fair and equitable manner to all Students, free from bias.

Policy

Skillinvest is committed to providing a learning environment which promotes and supports the diversity of students with flexible learning and assessment options, allowing Students alternatives which recognise the diversity of their individual needs and circumstances aiding them in their learning goals.

Skillinvest will ensure:

- It fosters a safe and inclusive learning environment for Students
- It fosters a culturally safe learning environment for First Nations people
- All training and assessment policies and procedures incorporate access and equity principles
- All Students have equitable access to the benefits of training and assessment irrespective of their gender, age, race, religion, culture, linguistic background, marital status, geographic location, socio-economic background, disability, sexual preference, family responsibility or political conviction
- All nominations and enrolments into training programs will be conducted at all times in an ethical and responsible manner, ensuring fairness and compliance with Equal Opportunity legislation
- All Students have equitable access to training resources, facilities, equipment, support services, information, training and assessment personnel, materials, assessment opportunities and training opportunities

Discrimination

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

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 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.

Skillinvest will not accept any form of discrimination, and we will apply the Access and Equity principles as outlined below.

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. 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.

The following constitute as types of harassment:

- Sexual Harassment
- Verbal Harassment
- Non-Verbal Harassment
- Physical Harassment

Harassment will not be tolerated at Skillinvest. If harassment occurs, the person responsible will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Disciplinary action will be taken against any Staff or Students involved in such behaviour. This may include termination of employment or removal of the Student from the Training Program. Serious cases of harassment may constitute a criminal offence.

Skillinvest will not tolerate behaviour which is considered to be sexual harassment and expects all Staff, Contractors, and Students to treat each other with dignity and respect.

Access and Equity Principles

Skillinvest abides by access and equity principles. Skillinvest will respect a Student's right to privacy, confidentiality and be sensitive to Student needs.

Skillinvest provides equal opportunity for all Students and is responsive to the individual needs of Students whose gender, pregnancy, race, marital status, sexuality, age, family/carer responsibilities, disability, transgender, political conviction, cultural or ethnic background, linguistic background, religious belief, geographic location, socio-economic background, employment/unemployment, imprisonment may present a barrier to access, participation and achievement of suitable outcomes.

At enrolment, Students will be asked to identify personal needs or circumstances that may exist and for which they may require additional support.

Skillinvest seeks to create a learning environment where all Students are respected and can develop their full potential. All Students are given fair and reasonable opportunity to attend and complete training.

All Staff are given fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in relevant decision-making processes and the allocation of resources and services as required to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. Deficiencies will be investigated to determine whether a breach or policy

deficiency exists. Should discrepancy be proven, the impact of that breach or deficiency will be identified along with how the policy should be amended to eliminate the breach or deficiency in the future.

Skillinvest will demonstrate its commitment by:

- Selecting Students according to a fair and non-discriminatory process
- Ensuring training is relevant for a diverse Student population
- Providing suitable access to facilities and resources
- Providing appropriate support services
- Providing appropriate complaints and appeals procedures
- Consulting with relevant industry groups
- Raising Staff, Contractor and Student awareness of equity issues

Equal Opportunity

Skillinvest is an equal opportunity organisation and does not discriminate against or favour target groups in either recruitment or training, unless prescribed by State Funding Contracts.

Target Groups are defined as:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- People with a disability
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) speaking backgrounds
- People in transition and other special groups (i.e. people re-entering the workforce, long-term unemployed, sole parents, people with literacy problems, and those who have been institutionalised)
- Women
- People from regionally isolated communities

Special Needs/Considerations

Prospective Students intending to enroll for training with Skillinvest are informed prior to enrolment to advise Skillinvest if they have any type of disability, medical condition or other impairment which may adversely affect their ability to successfully undertake training and assessment.

Students are supported to disclose their disability to Skillinvest, if the student wishes to do so; reasonable adjustments are made for Students with a disability where appropriate; and where reasonable adjustments are not appropriate or possible, the reasons why are communicated to the Student as soon as reasonably practicable.

Reasonable adjustments are made to support Students with a disability to access and participate in training and assessment on an equal basis.

Skillinvest, in collaboration with the Student, will assess the potential for the Student to successfully complete the training which may include flexible delivery options to optimise the ease and benefit of the Students' learning. However, Skillinvest ensures that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised against assessment competency.

Students with a disability are required to have the ability to fulfil the core requirements of the units of Competency to attain the relevant award. However, it is recognised that flexibility in arrangements may need to be implemented.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy

Each Training Package sets a minimum requirement in language, literacy, and numeracy skills of Students, with which Skillinvest must comply with.

Skillinvest makes appropriate concessions for language, literacy, and numeracy issues of Students where these concessions do not compromise the requirements of the relevant Training Package and the integrity, equity, and fairness of assessment.

Where a Student is deemed, either prior to enrolment or throughout the training program, to possess a lower level of language, literacy or numeracy than is the minimum requirement for the requirements of the Training Package, Skillinvest will provide appropriate advice and support to the Student regarding further learning options. At times, further language or literacy development or remedial assistance may be required to be completed prior to the commencement, continuation or completion of the Student's Training Program as outlined in the Student Support Policy.

Bullying and Violence

Skillinvest will not tolerate bullying or violent behaviour and expects all Staff, Contractors, and Students to treat each other with dignity and respect. Skillinvest recognises bullying and violence demeans and infringes the rights of individuals and groups, damaging the work and learning environment.

Vilification

Skillinvest will not tolerate behaviour which vilifies another person and expects all Staff, Contractors and Students to treat each other with dignity and respect.

Complaints

Skillinvest encourages informal resolutions of discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and violence, victimisation, and vilification grievances in the first instance, as close to the source as possible, with the option of conciliation or investigation of the complaint if necessary.

Skillinvest informs all Students of the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure during the enrolment process and ensures this information is easily accessible on our website.

Skillinvest Responsibilities

Skillinvest has a legal and moral obligation to provide equal opportunity in an environment free from discrimination for Staff, Contractors, and Students to ensure that discrimination/harassment does not occur in the workplace.

Skillinvest will:

- Maintain policies and procedures for equal opportunities for all Staff, Contractors, and Students
- Disseminate policies and procedures to Staff, Contractors and Students

- Examine all policies and practices, as they affect Staff, Contractors, and Students to ensure the elimination of discrimination and harassment
- Ensure that there is no discrimination against any individual Student or group of Students or Staff, in access to facilities, products and services
- Educate Staff and Contractors on the general goals and philosophy of equal opportunity together with the rationale for policies and practices which are adopted
- Eliminate sexist and other discriminatory language from all publications and discourage the use of such language in all printed material and in the speech of its Staff, Contractors, and Students
- Establish and maintain mechanisms to deal with complaints

Legislation

This policy reflects our commitment to the following legislation:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (NVR Act) – (Commonwealth)
- Vocational Education and Training Act 2012 (Commonwealth)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Victoria)
- Training and Skills Development Act 2008 (South Australia)
- Training and Workforce Development Act 2013 (Tasmania)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)
- Discrimination Act 1991 (Australian Capital Territory)
- Disability Services Act 1991 (Australian Capital Territory)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (New South Wales)
- Anti-Discrimination Act (Northern Territory)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Queensland)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1994 (South Australia)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1994 (Tasmania)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tasmania)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Victoria)
- Disability Act 2006 (Victoria)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (Western Australia)

Skillinvest is committed to access and equity in the provision of training and related services and accordingly to improving prospective Student's chances of getting into and succeeding in

vocational education, training and employment.

Skillinvest accepts the challenge of ensuring that training and related opportunities extend to all members of our diverse community and do not unreasonably prevent any Students from accessing its services. Staff are aware and committed to the principles of access and equity. Access and equity issues are addressed during Staff induction and during Staff meetings and professional development activities.

Inclusivity procedure

Skillinvest will identify a thorough understanding of individual Student's needs by:

- Reviewing research reports or studies within your industry area
- Conducting meetings with workplace supervisors and management
- Preparing questionnaires to be used before commencement of programs
- Reviewing all Pre-enrolment materials

It is the intent of Skillinvest to assist Students who have been identified as requiring assistance. Skillinvest will accommodate Students where possible to achieve a successful outcome of their Training Program. Any individual Student needs brought to our attention will be documented on the Individual Learning Plan. Considerations for inclusivity may include:

- Learning and assessment programs customised to the workplace
- Learning materials in alternative formats, for example, in large print
- Study support and study skills programs
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) programs or referrals to these programs
- Equipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for Students with disabilities
- Flexible scheduling and delivery of training and assessment
- Counselling services or referrals to these services
- Information technology (IT) support

References

Outcome Standards for NVR RTOs 2025

Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy

Diversity Inclusion Policy

RTO Student Code of Conduct Policy

RTO Student Selection and Enrolment Policy & Procedure

RTO Complaints, Feedback and Appeals Policy