

AVTES ACCESS & EQUITY POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

AVTES is committed to the goals of equal opportunity and affirmative action in education and employment. We aim to provide a study and work environment for students and staff that fosters fairness, equity and respect for social and cultural diversity that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and vilification as determined by legislation and AVTES' policy.

2. PURPOSE

In fulfilling this commitment, AVTES will:

- foster a training culture that values and responds to the rich diversity of all students and staff.
- provide equal opportunity by removing barriers to participation and progression in employment and education so that all students and staff have the opportunity to fully contribute to training.
- promote clear and accountable educational and management policies and practices to engender trust between students and trainers.
- enhance the quality of students' learning through the provision of culturally, socially and gender inclusive education in areas such as curriculum, training methods, assessment and review provisions, written and audiovisual material and support services; and
- ensure that all staff and students are aware of their rights and their responsibilities under current Access & Equity legislation.

3. SCOPE

All AVTES employees are responsible for compliance with all relevant legislation.

This policy applies to the following areas.

- Student equity
- Student admission
- Equal opportunity in education
- Disadvantaged students
- Course curriculum

4. OBJECTIVE

AVTES aims to ensure equal opportunity and affirmative action in education and employment is practiced. This policy aims to ensure we provide a study and work environment for students and staff that fosters fairness, equity and respect for social and cultural diversity that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and vilification as determined by legislation and AVTES' policy.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **CEO of AVTES** is responsible for this policy.

The **Senior Administration Officer** is responsible for the day-to-day management of this policy and the maintenance and update of this policy.

AVTES Staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

6. POLICY PRINCIPLES

Student Equity

Student Equity Groups generally consist of:

- students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- students from a non-English speaking background.
- students with disabilities.
- students from rural and/or isolated areas.
- Students with gender and sexual diversity
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and
- women in non-traditional fields of study.

The specific needs of such groups will be taken into account in the development of curriculum and teaching and assessment strategies.

What is Equity?

AVTES' students enjoy a safe and non-discriminatory environment and will have the same opportunities to benefit from education as other people. This does not mean that everyone is treated in the same way but rather in a fair and flexible way because AVTES understands that:

- we all have different needs; and
- some people belong to groups that have experienced disadvantage which has impeded their progress in education or employment.

Education Equity means that education practices, academic support and the curriculum are such that all students can enrol with AVTES on merit and have equal opportunities for success.

It also recognises that merit can be measured in ways other than traditional academic achievement, for example, through the recognition of prior learning and through interviews to evaluate the potential for success.

AVTES' Commitment to Equal Opportunity in Education

As well as recognising its statutory obligations as listed, AVTES is committed to providing our students with the opportunity to study free from harassment or discrimination and to providing a learning environment in which every student is encouraged to work towards her/his maximum potential.

Special Admission Schemes

AVTES encourages the enrolment of students who belong to disadvantaged groups in all of our programs.

Support of Disadvantaged Students

AVTES will provide support to assist the successful completion of studies by disadvantaged group members and will work with/in conjunction with support agencies and adult education agencies on a case-by-case scenario.

Course Content, Curriculum Design, Teaching & Assessment and Printed Material

AVTES will monitor course content (including titles), teaching methods, assessment procedures, written material (including learner guides and handbooks) and audiovisual material to ensure that they are not discriminatory or offensive and that they encourage and facilitate full participation in education by disadvantaged people.

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The following activities are used to monitor, evaluate and review AVTES practices and efforts.

- Students are surveyed at various stages of the program and survey results are collated and reported at scheduled meetings for review. These results identify issues and experiences of individuals undertaking training.
- AVTES staff meeting includes an on-going item for the *Good the Bad and the Ugly* to discuss student feedback from all AVTES staff and identify issues and improved practices.
- An annual review against all AVTES policies, procedures and instructions is conducted to review and where necessary update policies and procedures.

8. DEFINITIONS OF “STUDENT EQUITY GROUPS”

- **Students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds**

Students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are defined as those whose home address postcodes fall within the lowest quartile for the population of a given catchment region.

- **Students from a non-English speaking background**

Students who were born overseas and arrived in Australia less than 10 years ago and who speak a language other than English at home

- **Students with disabilities**

Students who answer “YES” to the following question at Enrolment – *Do you consider yourself to have a disability, impairment or long-term condition?*

- **Students from rural and/or isolated areas**

Geographical status is determined by the postcode of a student's home address. Three groups have been identified: **urban**, **rural** and **remote**. The classification of postcodes has been derived from the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics census data and is used to group postcodes into these three categories.

- **Students with gender or sexual diversity**

Student who select status to Gender question at Enrolment – Male, Female or Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified. This includes groups such as: Women, LGBTQIA+ individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual+)

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are defined through self-identification by a positive response to the following question on the Enrolment Form – *Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?*

- **Women in non-traditional fields of study**

A non-traditional area of study is defined as a field of study or type of course or trade study in which the percentage of women enrolled are low. Currently these fields of study are advised by the State training authorities and Apprentice Connect Providers (ACPs).

9. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Student Support Needs Policy (TA-P01)

Staff Handbook (HR-P02)

10. REFERENCES

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

Anti-Discrimination and equal opportunity legislation

Disability Act 2006

Worker Screening Act 2020