



## Inclusion and Diversity Policy



Help for non-English speakers. If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9719 1200

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Whittlesea Secondary College's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. Whittlesea Secondary College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. For staff, this policy should be read alongside the Department of Education and Training's [Respectful Workplaces](#) policies (including [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Equal opportunity and human rights](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#)) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Whittlesea Secondary College.

### POLICY

#### Definitions

*Personal attribute:* a personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

*Direct discrimination:* unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

*Indirect discrimination:* imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

*Sexual harassment:* unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

*Disability harassment:* humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability.

*Vilification*: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

*Victimisation*: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).

## Inclusion and diversity

Whittlesea Secondary College is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Whittlesea Secondary College acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Whittlesea Secondary college we value the human rights of every student and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

Whittlesea Secondary College will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, graduation nights, school production, awards nights, information nights, camps, excursions) on the same basis as their peers
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Whittlesea Secondary college promotes inclusion and diversity by conducting a Rainbow alliance lunchtime club, Harmony Day, NAIDOC week, Reconciliation week programs and celebrations.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Whittlesea Secondary College. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying* policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Students that are involved in bullying or harassing others on the basis of their personal attributes will be supported to understand the impact of their behaviour.

## **Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities**

Whittlesea Secondary College also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact Helen Heaney eg Disabilities & integration Co-Ordinator for further information.

## **COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

Relevant links can be found on our website to:

*Student Wellbeing and Engagement,*

*Statement of Values* and

*Bullying Prevention* policies

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#) [Equal Opportunity and human rights](#) which apply to all staff working at our school.

## REVIEW PERIOD

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	Principal and Assistant Principal
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2025