

## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY**

<b>Policy owner</b>	Executive Management Committee
<b>Policy category</b>	Operational
<b>Policy status</b>	Approved
<b>Approval body</b>	MIECAT Council
<b>Last amended</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

### **PURPOSE:**

This policy provides a statement of the commitment of MIECAT to create a work and study environment which values the rich diversity of its students. MIECAT seeks to promote equal opportunity in employment, education and service delivery in accordance with universal principles of equity, fairness and social justice. MIECAT encourages all members of its community to take personal responsibility for working to eliminate discriminatory practices. This policy provides the basis for an inclusive and accessible learning environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

### **SCOPE:**

This policy covers all staff, students and visitors at MIECAT and applies to all the activities of MIECAT.

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### 1. Principles

1.1 MIECAT recognises that honesty, fairness, mutual respect and the responsible exercise of power are fundamental to achieving equity for all.

- 1.2 MIECAT strives to eliminate discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification in all aspects of its operations and to create an environment where all members of the MIECAT community can work and study within a culture based on mutual respect.
- 1.3 Equity, diversity and inclusion requires deliberate action and intent. All members of the MIECAT community are responsible for contributing to a positive and inclusive culture. Such a culture encourages the use of inclusive language and respectful interpersonal interactions.

## 2. Actions

- 2.1 MIECAT is committed to meeting its legal obligations to provide equitable, inclusive, and accessible learning and work environments, including virtual and physical environments.
- 2.2 MIECAT will take all reasonable steps to actively promote an environment in which the diversity of its staff, students and wider community members is valued, and where people can aspire to reach their full potential without fear of being discriminated against or bullied or harassed, either on the basis of an attribute protected under anti-discrimination legislation or some other attribute irrelevant to their role within the MIECAT community.
- 2.3 MIECAT will design institutional policies, procedures, processes, practices, and approaches that seek to be equitable, inclusive, and meet diverse needs.
- 2.4 MIECAT will provide reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the MIECAT community with a disability so that they have the opportunity to meet work and study requirements.
- 2.5 MIECAT is committed to improving educational access, participation, and success for underrepresented or disadvantaged student groups via widening participation initiatives.
- 2.6 MIECAT will seek to ensure that curricula and teaching approaches and practices represent diverse knowledge and experiences.
- 2.7 MIECAT will seek to ensure that research methodologies and practices are inclusive and consider diversity impacts and outcomes.
- 2.8 MIECAT will take a preventative and responsive approach to addressing bullying, harassment, or discrimination; any instances of bullying, harassment, or discrimination will be addressed promptly and comprehensively with tangible and documented actions.

2.9 MIECAT will systematically review its policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure they are consistent with and reflect the principles of equity and social justice and are compatible with human rights. The aim is to remove barriers to full participation in employment or education, making reasonable adjustments as necessary, and to undertake consultation with those most affected.

2.10 MIECAT recognises the distinct cultural rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia as a human right and will give specific consideration to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2.11 The pedagogical principles of universal design will be considered and incorporated as appropriate in order to enhance the quality of the student experience by catering for the diversity of students and the range of learning styles, and by ensuring the teaching and learning experience is inclusive of cultural, social and gender diversity.

### 3. Definitions

**Bullying:** Repeated, threatening, unreasonable behaviour directed toward a person or group that creates a risk to the health, wellbeing or safety of that person or group.

**Disability:** An umbrella term for any or all of the following components:

- a) impairments: problems in body function or structure;
- b) activity limitations: difficulties in executing activities, and / or
- c) participation restrictions: problems an individual may experience in involvement in day-to-day living.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination means treating someone unfairly because of one of the listed characteristics identified under anti-discrimination law.

**Gender identity:** A person's self-identification as male or female or both or neither.

**Harassment:** Harassment is unwelcome conduct that might reasonably cause a person to be offended, humiliated or intimidated. It can occur as a single incident or a series of incidents.

**Inclusion:** An organisational practice and goal in which individuals are culturally and socially accepted, and welcomed and treated equally, regardless of disability, origin, race and ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity or other difference.

**Reasonable adjustment:** The necessary and appropriate modifications to physical structures and learning activities to ensure as far as possible equal participation by students with disability, while not disadvantaging other students or imposing undue financial or resourcing burden upon the provider.

**Vilification:** Vilification is any form of conduct that incites hatred against, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of another person or class of person on the grounds of their race or religion.

**Victimisation:** Victimisation is any detriment suffered because a person has made or been involved in raising a concern or making a complaint about discrimination, harassment or vilification.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

MIECAT Council, Executive Management Committee, all MIECAT staff

## **KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

All staff and students at MIECAT; MIECAT Council

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Commonwealth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Commonwealth)

Fair Work Act 2009 (Commonwealth)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Victoria)

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Victoria)

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Victoria)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

MIECAT Complaints Register

MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy

MIECAT Student Academic Misconduct Policy

MIECAT Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy

## VERSION HISTORY

<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>
10/04/2014	0.1	Jan Allen	Reviewed by Academic Board. Original title 'Equal Opportunity Policy'
10/04/2014	0.2	Jan Allen	Amended with recommendations by Academic Board
05/06/2014	1.0	Jan Allen	Reviewed and approved by MIECAT Council
09/10/2018	1.1	Lilian Tann	Reviewed and updated by EMC, included staff in objectives and removed Workplace Relations Act 1996 which has been repealed.
13/06/2023	2.0	J. Mitchell	Reviewed and updated

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