



Respect for Diversity Policy

Employment Equity and Diversity Unit

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Approved by	Administrative Committee				
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Responsible Faculty/Division & Unit	Employment Equity and Diversity Unit				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy					
References & Legislation	Grievance Policy Grievance Investigation Procedures Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement Legislation listed in 4.1 of this policy Recruitment and Selection Policy				
Audience	Internet – public access				
Expiry date of Policy					

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1. Purpose of Policy

1.1 The *Respect for Diversity Policy* provides an outline of the aims and strategies of the University of Wollongong to provide an environment where the diversity of its members is respected. The University seeks to equip all students and staff with the understanding necessary to effectively function in a work and study environment which is free from all manifestations of unlawful discrimination and which values and supports diversity.

1.2 The policy supports the:
University's **Vision** of promoting equity and diversity through shared principles of:



- mutual respect and collegiality;
 - honesty and tolerance;
 - receptiveness to the diversity of cultures, ideas and peoples; and
 - appreciation of and support for Indigenous perspectives and reconciliation.
- and

Graduate Attributes, which are embedded within the curricula:

- **All graduates** - An appreciation and valuing of cultural and intellectual diversity and the ability to function in a multicultural or global environment
- **Research graduates** - Ability to work collaboratively with individuals and groups across diverse levels and cultures

2. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Cultural diversity	means cultural differences based on race, colour, gender, political or religious conviction, language and national or ethnic origin. The term embraces both Indigenous Australian and multicultural perspectives
Direct Discrimination	means someone is treated unfairly compared to someone else in the same or similar circumstances, and this is because of their sex, pregnancy, race, age, marital status, homosexuality, disability, transgender status or carers' responsibilities. For example, if an employer won't hire someone just because they are a woman this is likely to be direct sex discrimination.
Discrimination	means someone is treated unfairly or unequally because they happen to belong to a particular group of people or have a particular characteristic.
Diversity	refers to the broad spectrum of backgrounds, beliefs, attitudes, social, sexual orientation, economic, age, cultural, political and religious backgrounds of a community
Equity	means fairness for all. Treating people equitably does not mean treating all people the same.
Indigenous Australian People	refers to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people
Indirect Discrimination	means a requirement (or rule) that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unequal and unreasonable having regard to the circumstances. For example, an employer who says that they need a person over 180 cm tall to do a certain job could be indirectly discriminating against women and some ethnic groups, who are less likely to be this height than men or people from other ethnic groups. Where there is a genuine occupational requirement, discrimination does not apply.
International staff	means, in this context, staff who are recruited from another country
Vilification	means any public act that could incite hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule of a person, or group of people, because of their difference.



3. Background & Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions

Background

- 3.1 The University of Wollongong attracts students and staff from over 70 countries and from diverse geographical, social and economic backgrounds. Respect for diversity is therefore critical to maintaining a harmonious environment within all work, teaching and learning, research and social activities of the University.

The *Respect for Cultural Diversity Policy* was first approved by Council in 1998. The diversity of the University community now stretches well beyond cultural diversity and this is reflected in the changed title of this Policy.

Scope

- 3.2 This policy applies to all University of Wollongong students and staff. Visitors to UOW facilities can expect to be treated with the principles of respect outlined in this policy.

4. Legislative Requirements

- 4.1 The following legislative requirements should be considered in conjunction with this policy:

- 4.1.1 The *Anti Discrimination Act NSW 1977* makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex, pregnancy, race, age, marital status, homosexuality, disability, transgender, carer's responsibility, associations, harassment and sexual harassment and various vilifications (race, homosexuality, transgender, HIV/AIDS).
- 4.1.2 *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act (2000)*. There is a legislative requirement for the CEO of each public authority to implement the principles of multiculturalism. The University of Wollongong *Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement* provides a framework for implementing the Principles of Multiculturalism, against which the University will be measured.
- 4.1.3 The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) (RDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate because of race, colour, nationality ethnic or ethno-religious background.
- 4.1.4 The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* makes it unlawful to discriminate because you are a man or because you are a women. The Act gives effect to Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and parts of International Labour Organisation Convention 156.
- 4.1.5 The Federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.
- 4.1.6 The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* prohibits less favourable treatment not only because of age, but also because of characteristics generally pertaining to age and characteristics generally imputed to people of that age.



5. Policy Principles

Guiding principles

5.1 The policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- 5.1.1 individuals have the right to express their ideas, theories and opinions while respecting the rights of others without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- 5.1.2 *all* discriminatory behaviour which is unlawful or offensive is unacceptable and contrary the University's objective of creating an environment which allows all students and staff to achieve their full potential; and
- 5.1.3 discrimination, in many of its manifestations, is unlawful under State and Federal legislation. The University takes seriously its obligations under the NSW State and Federal legislation (see section 4.1).

6. Policy Statement

Educational strategies

- 6.1 The University aims to achieve its goals of developing and maintaining an inclusive environment through educational and developmental strategies. These include:
- a. Establishing inclusive teaching, learning and research activities where diversity and different learning styles are valued;
 - b. Considering the principles which support diversity, anti-racism and non-discrimination when reviewing the content of subjects and courses;
 - c. Providing effective induction and development programs for staff to improve their ability to work effectively in an environment that reflects the diversity of the Australian community;
 - d. Encouraging student and staff involvement in celebrating diversity through campus wide activities including: *International Week, Diversity Week, NAIDOC Week*;
 - e. Celebrating and capitalising on the diverse experiences and talents of students and staff;
 - f. Expanding its links with the Illawarra community to promote values of cultural inclusiveness; and
 - g. Educating all students and staff to understand their responsibilities under this policy, and appreciate the consequences of non-compliance with University Policy and relevant state and federal laws.

Staff recruitment and retention strategies

- 6.2 The University aims to achieve its goals with respect to the creation of an inclusive environment through staff recruitment and retention strategies. These include:



- a. Attracting and retaining staff from equal employment target groups to achieve an enriched diverse workforce;
- b. Facilitating the employment of Indigenous Australian People at the University;
- c. Sponsoring international staff for temporary or permanent residency where appropriate;
- d. Providing induction, education and training to staff in workgroups requiring particular support in the area of cultural understanding; and
- e. Requiring managers and supervisors to undertake training to enhance their understanding of and sensitivity to equity and diversity issues in the workplace.

Lack of respect for diversity

- 6.3 If students or staff members experience or observe discrimination or racist behaviour or practices on campus, they are encouraged to address the matter at the local level before it escalates and/or report the matter to the appropriate person. The Grievance Policy and Grievance Investigation Procedures outline the process for reporting and managing inappropriate or unlawful behaviour.

7. Review and Change History

Version Control	Date the Review occurred	Date Effective	Approved By	Change Details
Version 1.0	1998	December 1998	Council	Implementation of version 1.0 <i>Respect for Cultural Diversity Policy</i>
Version 2.0	March 2007	March 2007	Administration Committee	Replaces version 1.0 <i>Respect for Cultural Diversity Policy</i>