



Employment Equity and Diversity Unit

## RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY POLICY

<b>Date approved:</b>	11 December 1998	<b>Date Policy will take effect:</b>	On approval	<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	December 2010
<b>Approved by</b>	Administrative Committee				
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<b>Responsible Faculty/Division &amp; Unit</b>	Employment Equity and Diversity Unit				
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy</b>					
<b>References &amp; Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Anti Discrimination Act, 1977 (NSW)</a> <a href="#">Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act, 2000 (NSW)</a> <a href="#">Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 (Commonwealth)</a> <a href="#">Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 (Commonwealth)</a> <a href="#">Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 (Commonwealth)</a> <a href="#">Age Discrimination Act, 2004 (Commonwealth)</a> <a href="#">Grievance Policy</a> <a href="#">Procedures for Investigating Grievances</a> <a href="#">Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy</a> <a href="#">Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement</a> <a href="#">Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy</a>				
<b>Audience</b>	Public – accessible to anyone				
<b>Expiry date of Policy</b>	Not applicable				

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## 1 Purpose of Policy

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.
2. The policy supports the:
  - a. University's Vision of promoting equity and diversity through shared principles of:
    - i. mutual respect and collegiality;
    - ii. honesty and tolerance;
    - iii. receptiveness to the diversity of cultures, ideas and peoples; and
    - iv. appreciation of and support for Indigenous perspectives and reconciliation, and
  - b. Graduate Qualities, which are embedded within the curricula:
    - i. appreciate and respect diversity;
    - ii. act with integrity as part of local, national, global and professional communities;
    - iii. work collaboratively and engage with people in different settings; and
    - iv. recognise how culture can shape communication.

## 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



Word/Term	Definition
	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 Application & Scope

#### Background

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.
2. 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. 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

1. The following legislative requirements should be considered in conjunction with this policy:
  - 1.1. The Anti Discrimination Act, 1977 (NSW) 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).
  - 1.2. Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act, 2000 (NSW), 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.
  - 1.3. The Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 (Commonwealth) makes it unlawful to discriminate because of race, colour, nationality ethnic or ethno-religious background.
  - 1.4. The Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 makes it unlawful to discriminate because you are a man or because you are a woman. 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.
  - 1.5. The Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 (Commonwealth) provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability.
  - 1.6. The Age Discrimination Act, 2004 (Commonwealth) 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

1. The policy is based on the following guiding principles:



- a. individuals have the right to express their ideas, theories and opinions while respecting the rights of others without fear of discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- b. 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
- c. 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 clause 4.1).

## 6 Policy Statement

### Educational strategies

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

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

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 Roles & Responsibilities

Not Available.

## 8 Review and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	11 December 1998	University Council	First Version - Respect for Cultural Diversity Policy
2	6 March 2007	Administrative Committee	Replacement of Version 1 - Respect for Cultural Diversity Policy
3	6 May 2009	Vice-Principal (Administration)	Migrated to UOW Policy Template as per Policy Directory Refresh
4	9 March 2010	Vice-Principal (Administration)	Future review date identified in accordance with Standard on UOW Policy