

1. Purpose:

Skills Training Australasia (STA) is committed to fostering an environment of fairness, equity, and respect for diversity for all students and staff. This policy ensures equitable access to training and employment opportunities, promotes inclusion, and prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in compliance with applicable legislation, funding requirements, and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in effect.

2. Policy Statement:

- 2.1 STA actively commits to creating and maintaining an environment of fairness, respect, and inclusion for all students and staff. This commitment includes ensuring equal opportunities in access, enrolment, employment, participation, and support, while preventing discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in any form.
- 2.2 STA is committed to enabling all individuals to reach their full potential by ensuring that vocational education and training is responsive to the diverse needs of learners. We recognise that factors such as age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language, literacy and numeracy levels, employment status, or geographic location may present barriers to accessing training and achieving course outcomes. However, this commitment does not mean STA will accept students who do not meet the specific selection criteria for a qualification.
- 2.3 STA is committed to equal opportunity and actively welcomes applications from individuals of diverse backgrounds. We encourage and support applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as part of our dedication to fostering an inclusive and culturally respectful environment for both students and staff.

3. Scope:

This policy applies to:

- All prospective and current students (domestic and international).
- All current and prospective STA staff members including full-time, part-time, casual, and contractors.
- All STA training programs, government-funded programs (VSL, Skills First), and workplace operations.

4. Definitions:

Discrimination	The unfair or unfavourable treatment of a person because of a personal characteristic or attribute, real or imputed, including the setting of a requirement, condition or practice that is unreasonable and that people with a particular characteristic cannot meet. References: <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)</i>, <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i>, <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i>, <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i>, <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i>.
Diversity	Differences between individuals or groups of people in age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family responsibilities, gender,

	language, marital status, religious belief and sexual orientation; including other ways in which people are different, such as learning, life experience, work experience and socio-economic background.
Equal Opportunity	Equal access to and participation in, aspects of public life, including learning and employment.
Equity	The fair treatment of people on the basis of respect and merit, the recognition of disadvantage and the absence of discrimination.
Inclusive Practices	Practices that anticipate and accommodate the needs of a diversity of people, minimising the need for adjustments to respond to individual needs, while maintaining quality and other standards.
Reasonable Adjustment	An adjustment that balances the interests of all parties affected and does not cause STA unjustifiable hardship (<i>as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i>)
Victimisation	Any form of detriment directed at a person for alleging, making or participating in, supporting or resolving a complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment; or a person associated with a person who alleges, makes or participates in, supports or resolves a complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment.

5. Principles:

5.1 Right to a Safe, Respectful, and Inclusive Environment

All individuals will be treated with respect and dignity, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. To uphold this, STA:

- asserts that staff and students have the right to work, study, and interact in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- applies zero tolerance towards discrimination, harassment, or victimisation. Complaints are addressed through formal investigation, conciliation, or informal resolution, all underpinned by principles of natural justice.
- ensures its publications and official documents use inclusive and non-discriminatory language to foster respect and inclusion.

5.2 Equal Opportunity and Access to Education and Employment

Decisions regarding recruitment, enrolment, training, assessment, promotion, and employment are made without discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, cultural background, marital status, or socio-economic status. To support this STA:

- seeks to ensure all students have access to educational opportunities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- continuously aims to broaden its student profile to be more diverse and provides support to under-represented or disadvantaged groups to facilitate academic success
- ensures clarity and transparency in student admission and staff recruitment processes to prevent discrimination, particularly for people with disabilities

5.3 Recognition and Utilisation of Diversity

STA values the diverse cultural, social, and professional backgrounds of its staff and students and is committed to integrating this diversity into its educational and organisational practices.

- STA develops and maintains curricula that recognise, utilise, and demonstrate diverse knowledge and experiences.
- STA promotes inclusive practices, services, and facilities that reflect and advance cultural and experiential diversity among staff and students.

5.4 Inclusive Practices and Reasonable Adjustments

STA will provide reasonable adjustments to support staff and students with disabilities or special needs in participation, employment, and assessment. To give effect to this commitment:

- STA recognises the diverse needs of its staff and students and addresses these through inclusive practices and, where appropriate, reasonable adjustments.
- STA is committed to accessibility and equity for students and staff with disabilities, aiming to enable their full and independent participation.
- Resources will be provided at appropriate levels, within budget constraints, to reasonably accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered when a student discloses special needs during admissions.
- Adjustments to policies, procedures, employment arrangements, or education arrangements will be made where practicable and reasonable.
- STA is not obliged to make adjustments that cause unjustifiable hardship; decisions on significant costs rest with the Board of Directors, considering benefits for all.

5.5 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

STA is committed to evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement of its access and equity practices through ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

- STA collects and analyses student participation, progression, and completion data as outlined in the Quality and Auditing Policy.
- The data informs admissions, support services, and teaching-learning policies to continually improve equity and access outcomes.

6. General Guidelines:

6.1 Gender Equality Strategy

In line with STA's access and equity policy, the College aims to provide a working and learning environment conducive to active participation by women.

In particular, STA has:

- women who hold senior positions as leaders in the college and on the college management team. They provide strong models for women students and staff;
- a strict anti-harassment policy, and by education and information, a friendly working and learning environment which is harassment and discrimination free;
- provided a flexible timetable which allows women with other commitments to access education; and
- required trainers not to use examples which portray women in a caricatured, disadvantaged or less powerful position or occupation.

6.2 Disabilities Strategy

STA complies with the regulations covering physical access. Wheelchair access is available to the College.

6.3 Training and Assessment

STA applies easily defined and tangible rules in support of access and equity, namely:

- All students are given fair and reasonable opportunity to attend and complete their training within expected and agreed timeframes.

- Direct or indirect discrimination is not tolerated and will lead to disciplinary action of the offender if proven.

STA believes that opportunities to participate in education and training ought to be available to all people on an equitable basis. The potential for education and training to improve a person's life chances, and to give them security and satisfaction both in work and in life has positive consequences for society as well as for the individual.

STA is committed to the creation of a working and learning environment which caters for the culturally diverse society in which we live. STA supports laws and policies which eliminate discrimination and harassment and promote fair treatment for all. This policy is in line with best practice management and is cost effective since it aims to ensure that the community's entire pool of talent is drawn upon to create and provide services more representative of, and better suited to, community needs.

STA recognises the need to:

- identify and remove structural barriers to access and equity in education and training; and
- encourage the customization of training delivery which suits the needs of all students and is sensitive to cultural differences.

To achieve this, STA will:

- include Equity and Access Policies in staff and student handbooks and provide training to staff on these policies;
- take these policies into account when recruiting, developing, and promoting staff;
- require staff to be aware of and enforce these policies;
- encourage staff to take these policies into account in delivering training and assessment; and
- continue their policies and procedures such as Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (including assessing overseas qualifications and courses) and flexible timetabling which allow greater participation by minorities and disadvantaged groups.

6.4 Students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds

A substantial proportion of STA's students come from a non-English speaking background. STA tries to recruit trainers with experience in teaching these students.

6.5 Equal Opportunity Legislation

STA abides by the Equal Opportunity Legislation that protects those involved in the training system. This legislation makes discrimination and harassment in the provision of education, employment and the provision of goods and services unlawful.

6.6 Equality in Student Selection

STA is committed in ensuring that student selection processes are fair and equitable and, are consistent with competency level and Training Package requirements. STA ensures that applicants who do not meet entry requirements are advised of pre-entry training they may take to meet eligibility criteria.

Selection into STA's courses is based upon the applicant student:

- Meeting required entry requirements including minimum level of English language proficiency, educational qualifications or work experience.
- Meeting required industry age requirements that may be in place for a particular course.

- Has or can access particular requirements pertaining to their mode of study.

6.7 Equality in Student Enrolment

STA is committed to the enrolment of students when there is a capacity to deliver the course for which the student is enrolling and where the student has:

- Applied in the prescribed manner.
- Met the selection requirements for the relevant course.
- Supplied accurate personal and previous qualification information.
- Agreed to abide by the College's policies, procedures and code of conduct.
- Paid the prescribed fees.

7. Associated Policies

- 7.1 Assessment Policy and Procedures
- 7.2 Code of Conduct
- 7.3 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- 7.4 Employee Handbook
- 7.5 Student Handbook
- 7.6 Staff Recruitment Policy
- 7.7 Student Selection and Admission Policy and Procedure
- 7.8 Student Support Policy
- 7.9 Pre-training Review Policy and Procedure

8. Approval Authority:

This policy and procedure is approved by the Chief Executive Officer as indicated.

9. References:

- 9.1 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- 9.2 Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- 9.3 Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- 9.4 Equal Employment Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- 9.5 Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- 9.6 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- 9.7 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- 9.8 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- 9.9 Fair Work Act 2009
- 9.10 ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations
- 9.11 National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students
- 9.12 VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- 9.13 VET Student Loans Act 2016

Revision History:

Revision	Description of Change	Author	Effective Date
1.5	Added Revision History and General Guidelines sections. Updated the Policy Outline section.	CEO	21 October 2021
2	Added Policy Statement section and refined Purpose for clarity.	CEO	27 June 2025

	Principles section restructured and aligned with the previous version's policy details. Improved structure for readability and consistency across sections.		
--	--	--	--