

# Equal Opportunity Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines Charles Sturt University's commitment to equal opportunity in education and employment.

## Section 2 - Principles

(2) The principles of justice, fairness and equity, the pursuit of excellence and the application of the merit principle underpin Charles Sturt University's Equal Opportunity Policy.

### Scope

(3) This Policy applies to any person associated with Charles Sturt University (the University), including:

- a. staff and prospective staff;
- b. students and prospective students; and
- c. visitors and community stakeholders.

## Section 3 - Glossary

(4) Equal opportunity - refers to the application of fair policies and processes that prevent unjustifiable discrimination and facilitate equitable outcomes.

(5) (Unlawful) Discrimination - refers to any action or treatment that has the purpose or effect of disadvantaging people on grounds covered by legislation, including but not limited to:

- a. sex;
- b. sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status;
- c. marital, relationship or domestic status;
- d. pregnancy or potential pregnancy;
- e. breastfeeding;
- f. family or carer responsibilities;
- g. race, colour, nationality, descent, national or ethno religious origin;
- h. disability (including physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric, neurological and learning disability, physical disfigurement, the presence in the body of an organism capable of causing disease, and current, past, future or imputed disability);
- i. age;
- j. religious or political affiliation, views or beliefs;
- k. actual or imputed characteristics of any of the attributes listed above; or association with a person identified by reference to any of the attributes listed above.

(6) Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person in comparable circumstances because of any one of the attributes listed above.

(7) Indirect discrimination occurs when the application of a requirement, rule, policy or practice, which appears to be neutral and fair, unreasonably and disproportionately disadvantages a person or group on the basis of any of the attributes listed above.

(8) Harassment refers to unwelcome behaviour that makes a person feel belittled, intimidated, offended or apprehensive and that, taking into account all the circumstances, could reasonably have been anticipated to have this effect.

## **Section 4 - Responsibilities**

(9) Charles Sturt University expects all staff and students to observe their obligations under relevant state and federal laws, to respect the rights and differences of others and to ensure that their own conduct contributes to a work and study environment free of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

(10) Managers are responsible for implementing this Policy, managing staff fairly, taking action to prevent discrimination, harassment or bullying and furthering the objectives of the University's employment and education equity plans in their operational areas.

## **Section 5 - Statement of Commitment**

(11) Charles Sturt University is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in employment and education, seeking to create a work and study environment that is responsive to, and inclusive of, the social and cultural diversity of the communities the University serves.

(12) To fulfil this commitment, the University will:

- a. take action to prevent unlawful discrimination against staff or students and identify and address any systemic barriers to equitable access and participation;
- b. provide a place of employment and learning that is free of harassment and that supports the dignity and self-esteem of every student and staff member;
- c. foster an organisational culture that values and is responsive to the diversity of the University's staff and students;
- d. implement fair and inclusive management and administrative practices that enable a broader and more diverse level of participation in employment and education;
- e. enhance the quality of student learning through the provision of culturally and socially inclusive curricula and teaching methods; and
- f. develop programmes, in keeping with the principle of advancement by merit, that actively address the effects of past discrimination or disadvantage in the community and increase the participation and success of designated under-represented groups.

## **Section 6 - Equal Opportunity Programmes**

### **Equal Opportunity in Employment**

(13) In accordance with its commitment to equal opportunity in employment and in order to comply with state and federal legislation, the University will continue to implement programmes aimed at achieving:

- a. a diverse and skilled workforce;
- b. a workplace culture based on fair practices and behaviour; and
- c. improved employment access and participation for groups targeted under legislation, which include: people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island descent; people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; people with disability; and women (in senior positions).

(14) The University's Employment Equity Plan , [Indigenous Australian Employment Strategy](#) and Disability Action Plan outline the key priorities, strategies, performance indicators and responsibilities for advancing equal employment opportunity through each University planning cycle.

### **Equal Opportunity in Education**

(15) The University supports national goals to improve education opportunities, participation and outcomes for groups under-represented in higher education in Australia, including Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, people from rural and isolated areas, people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, men and women studying in non-traditional courses and women undertaking postgraduate study.

(16) The University's Equity Plan , Indigenous Education Strategy and Disability Action Plan outline the priorities, goals and strategies for furthering equity in education at the University.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
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