

Diversity and Inclusivity Policy

Effective Date: 1 July 2025

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy ensures FIT College fosters a safe, equitable, and inclusive learning environment for all Learners, staff, and Third Parties, promoting cultural safety, particularly for First Nations people and international students, and prohibiting discrimination, harassment, vilification, or victimisation.
 - 1.2 It supports accessible, inclusive training products and services, ensuring compliance with the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth) (Act)*, *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards) Instrument 2025 (Outcome Standards)* Standards 2.3-2.5, 4.4, *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Compliance Standards) Instrument 2025 (Compliance Standards)*, *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS Act)*, *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth) (National Code)*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (DDA)*, *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*, *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*, *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) (ADA Qld)*, *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, and Australian Skills Quality Authority, Practice Guide: Diversity and Inclusion (2025) (**Practice Guide**).
 - 1.3 FIT College actively works with all Learners, including those with disabilities, to provide reasonable adjustments in the first instance to ensure access and participation, collaborating with Learners and their medical professionals, and only considers withdrawal or refund under exceptional circumstances, such as permanent total disability or illness preventing studies for over 2 years, supported by specialist medical evidence.
-

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Learners (domestic and international), prospective Learners, staff, Third Parties, contractors, and visitors to FIT College premises or online environments.
 - 2.2 It covers diversity and inclusivity in:
 - (a) Marketing, recruitment, and enrolment.
 - (b) Training delivery, assessments, and learning environments.
 - (c) Facilities, resources, equipment, and support services.
 - (d) Interactions and conduct.
 - (e) Feedback, complaints, and appeals processes.
 - 2.3 Exclusions:
 - (a) Disability-specific adjustments, managed per the Training Support Policy.
 - (b) General feedback, managed per the Learner Handbook.
 - (c) Frivolous or Vexatious complaints, per the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
-

3 Principles

Inclusivity

- 3.1 Support diversity across sexes, genders, ages, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, intersex statuses, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Cultural Safety

- 3.2 Ensure respect and safety for First Nations people and international students, free from bias or racism.

Equity

- 3.3 Promote equitable access for under-represented groups, prioritising reasonable adjustments for Learners with disabilities.

Non-Discrimination

- 3.4 Prohibit discrimination, harassment, vilification, or victimisation, ensuring compliance with anti-discrimination legislation.

Support

- 3.5 Provide tailored services, collaborating with Learners and medical professionals to meet diverse needs, including disabilities.

Respect

- 3.6 Ensure dignity for all Learners, staff, and Third Parties.

Continuous Improvement

- 3.7 Enhance inclusivity via feedback and monitoring.

4 Definitions

Cultural Safety: An environment where First Nations people feel respected and free from identity denial.

Disability: As defined by the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* s 4, includes:

- (a) Total or partial loss of bodily or mental functions.
- (b) Total or partial loss of a body part.
- (c) Presence of disease-causing organisms.
- (d) Malformation or disfigurement.
- (e) Disorders affecting learning, thought processes, or behaviour.
- (f) Disabilities that presently exist, previously existed, may exist in the future, or are imputed.

Discrimination: Unfair or unfavourable treatment based on protected characteristics, such as sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital status, pregnancy, breastfeeding, race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability, including:

- (a) **Direct Discrimination:** Treating a person less favourably due to their characteristics (e.g., denying enrolment based on disability).
- (b) **Indirect Discrimination:** Applying rules or practices that appear neutral but disadvantage certain groups without just cause (e.g., requiring physical attendance despite accessibility issues).

First Nations People: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

Frivolous: Lacking seriousness or proper purpose.

Gender Identity: A person's gender-related identity or appearance.

Governing Persons: Individuals overseeing FIT College operations.

Harassment: Includes:

- (a) **General Harassment:** Actions that humiliate or offend based on protected characteristics.
- (b) **Racial Harassment:** Conduct based on race that offends or intimidates.
- (c) **Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual conduct that offends.

Inclusive Learning Environment: A safe, discrimination-free environment.

International Student: A Learner enrolled under FIT College's CRICOS registration, holding a student visa under the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth).

Intersex Status: Physical features neither wholly female nor male.

Learner: A person enrolled in a FIT College training product.

Learner Action Request (LAR): A form on the Learner Portal for submitting complaints or appeals.

Learner Handbook: A document detailing FIT College policies and Learner rights.

Learner Portal: FIT College's online platform for Learner services.

Reasonable Adjustments: Modifications to support Learners with disabilities to participate on an equal basis, consistent with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* s 3.

Sexual Orientation: Orientation towards same, different, or both sexes.

Standards: National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards) Instrument 2025.

Third Party: An entity delivering services for FIT College, excluding employees.

Training Experience: A Learner's educational journey, including support services and facilities.

Vexatious: Intentionally annoying or harassing.

Vilification: Conduct inciting hatred based on race or attributes.

Wellbeing Support Services: Services supporting Learners' physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

5 Policy and Procedure

5.1 Promoting an Inclusive Environment

- (a) FIT College ensures an Inclusive Learning Environment by:
 - (i) Using inclusive marketing, enrolment processes, training materials, and assessments, accommodating diverse sexes, genders, and cultures.

- (ii) Offering flexible delivery (e.g., online, part-time) for cultural, personal, or disability-related needs, including international student obligations.
- (b) Staff and Third Parties complete annual diversity, anti-discrimination, and cultural awareness training, per the VET Workforce Management Policy, mitigating bias risks.

5.2 Ensuring Cultural Safety

- (a) FIT College fosters Cultural Safety for First Nations people and international students by:
 - (i) Engaging First Nations communities and international student representatives to support training needs.
 - (ii) Using trauma-aware materials reviewed by relevant stakeholders.
 - (iii) Training staff in cultural competence and anti-racism.
- (b) Cultural safety is monitored via Learner feedback and community input, addressing insensitivity risks.

5.3 Increasing Participation

- (a) FIT College encourages participation from under-represented groups (e.g., First Nations people, people with disabilities, international students) through:
 - (i) Targeted outreach and inclusive marketing.
 - (ii) Partnerships with community organisations.
- (b) Enrolment is accessible and dependent on individual needs, reducing access barriers.

5.4 Supporting Learners with Disabilities

- (a) FIT College has a demonstrated history of successfully supporting Learners with disabilities, actively collaborating with Learners and their medical professionals to implement Reasonable Adjustments in the first instance to ensure access and participation, per the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.
- (b) Disclosure:

Learners are encouraged to disclose disabilities during enrolment via the Learner Portal or StudentServices@fitcollege.edu.au. Disclosure is voluntary, handled per the *Privacy Act 1988*, and informs adjustments.
- (c) Consultation and Assessment:

FIT College consults with Learners, trainers, assessors, and, where necessary, medical professionals or specialists to assess needs and identify adjustments. Independent evaluations may be used to ensure adjustments align with capabilities and training requirements.
- (d) Reasonable Adjustments:

Examples include flexible assessment formats (e.g., oral instead of written), additional time, assistive technology, accessible environments, or substitute activities, without compromising training product integrity.
- (e) Limitations and Contractual Obligations:

- (i) If Reasonable Adjustments cannot be made without compromising training integrity or industry standards, or if a specialist provides written evidence of a permanent total disability or illness preventing participation for over 2 years, FIT College may apply the Refund Policy or Withdrawal Policy after documenting reasons and exploring alternatives.
 - (ii) Learners must demonstrate extenuating circumstances and provide specialist medical advice to be released from contractual obligations.
 - (iii) Failure to engage in adjustment processes or provide evidence precludes refunds or withdrawal.
- (f) Record Keeping:
- Disclosure, consultation, adjustment, and refund/withdrawal records are maintained in the Learner Portal, per the Records Management Policy.

5.5 Preventing Discrimination and Harassment

- (a) FIT College prohibits discrimination, harassment, vilification, or victimisation, enforcing penalties (e.g., expulsion without refund, termination) per the Student Code of Conduct.
- (b) Violations are reported via LAR within 7 calendar days, per the Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- (c) Verbal reports are accepted if followed by a written LAR or email within 2 business days.
- (d) Investigations are confidential, completed within 14 calendar days, with outcomes (e.g., sanctions, mediation) communicated in writing.
- (e) Frivolous or Vexatious reports are rejected, with potential disciplinary action.
- (f) International students receive culturally sensitive complaint handling, with translation support if needed.

5.6 Supporting International Students

- (a) FIT College ensures inclusivity for international students by:
 - (i) Providing referral to culturally appropriate support services (e.g., interpreters).
 - (ii) Addressing visa-related needs, with PRISMS notifications if required.
 - (iii) Offering complaint processes in plain English, with external review via the Overseas Students Ombudsman (1300 362 072).

5.7 Continuous Improvement

- (a) Inclusivity is monitored via Learner, staff, and industry feedback through Learner Portal surveys and LARs.
- (b) Data informs improvements, per the Continuous Improvement Policy.
- (c) This policy is reviewed annually, incorporating feedback.

6 Responsibilities

Governing Persons: Oversee inclusivity, cultural safety, and policy compliance.

Operations Manager: Manages complaints, ensures staff compliance, and maintains confidentiality.

Student Services Manager: Supports enrolment, reporting, and adjustment requests, including collaboration with medical professionals.

Staff and Third Parties: Complete diversity training, implement adjustments, report violations, and foster inclusivity.

Learners: Disclose needs, collaborate on adjustments, respect diversity, report issues via LAR, and provide written records for verbal complaints.

7 FAQs

7.1 Q: How does FIT College ensure inclusivity?

A: Through inclusive materials, flexible delivery, and staff training on diversity.

7.2 Q: What is Cultural Safety?

A: A respectful environment for First Nations people and international students, supported by community engagement and trauma-aware materials

7.3 Q: How are Learners with disabilities supported?

A: FIT College collaborates with Learners and medical professionals to provide Reasonable Adjustments (e.g., extra time, assistive technology). Refunds or withdrawal require specialist evidence of permanent disability lasting over 2 years.

7.4 Q: What if I face discrimination or harassment?

A: Report via LAR within 7 days, with evidence. Verbal reports require a written record within 2 business days. Outcomes may include sanctions or mediation.

7.5 Q: How do international students access support?

A: Contact StudentServices@fitcollege.edu.au for interpreters, visa advice, or complaints, with Ombudsman review available.

8 Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant FIT College policies and documents, including but not limited to:

- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Data and Records Management Policy
- Enrolment Contract
- Enrolment Policy
- Fees and Refunds Policy

- International Student Handbook
- Learner Handbook
- Records Management Policy
- Refund Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Support and Wellbeing Policy
- Third Party Arrangements Policy
- Training Support Policy
- VET Workforce Management Policy
- Withdrawal Policy

9 Document Control

Version	Date	Change Description	Author
1.0	01/07/2025	Policy Generated for 2025 Standards and CRICOS	Compliance Manager