

# Access and Equity Policy

## 1. Purpose

Access and Equity is defined by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as ‘policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote locations may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes’.

This policy provides a framework for ensuring that the training services provided by NDA are delivered equitably to all clients, regardless of diversity, in an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all learners and prospective learners, as well as to NDA staff members.

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1 – Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person is disadvantaged based on that person’s characteristics, circumstance or beliefs.

Direct discrimination takes place when a person or group of persons is treated less favourably than others due to another’s beliefs or views concerning that person’s characteristics, beliefs or circumstance.

Indirect discrimination takes place when a policy, requirement or rule that applies to everyone has the effect of disadvantaging specific persons or groups of persons.

### 3.2 – Harassment

Harassment can occur in many different forms, and it is not always black and white what constitutes harassment. Harassment is any behaviour which is unwelcome, offends, humiliates or intimidates a person and causes the work environment to become unpleasant. Harassment may result from behaviour which is not intended to offend or harm, such as jokes or unwanted attention however, this does not mean that it is lawful. Harassment can be physical, sexual, verbal, non-verbal and can include but is not limited to:

- Unwanted touching
- Sexual innuendo
- Wolf whistling
- Racist comments or jokes
- Spreading rumours
- Comments or jokes about a person’s disability, sexuality, age, religion, pregnancy or identity
- Offensive language

- Belittling someone's work
- Unsolicited phone calls, emails or letters
- Crude hand gestures
- Offensive obscene language
- Leering
- Unwelcome physical contact
- Standing unnecessarily close to someone
- Demoting or failing to promote someone based on their receptiveness to sexual advances
- Mimicking someone

## 4. Policy Principles

NDA is committed to providing quality training and assessment products and services in compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.

NDA promotes, encourages and values equity and diversity in students. NDA will ensure services offered are provided in a fair and equitable manner to all students, free from bias. The aim of this policy is to remove barriers and open opportunities to all students, regardless of diversity. NDA will not accept any form of discrimination or harassment and will apply the following measures in order to support the principles of access and equity:

- Admission is to be based on the requisites for the course and will not be impacted by the learner's personal characteristics or beliefs that have no relevance to the course requisites (see Prerequisites and Requirements in Training and Assessment Strategies).
- At enrolment, learners will be asked to identify personal needs or circumstances that may exist and for which they may require additional support (see Induction Procedure and Enrolment Form).
- All learners who meet the course requirements are given fair and reasonable opportunity to attend and complete training, in all modes of delivery.
- Opportunity is available for reasonable adjustments to be made to accommodate diverse needs without compromising the integrity of the training and assessment.
- Academic and learning support is available where required (See LLN Procedure and Learner Support Policy).
- Teaching and learning documents are inclusive, non-discriminatory and relevant to a diverse learner population.
- Alternative assessment methods are available when required, so long as they do not compromise the integrity of the training and assessment.
- NDA's courses are designed to include multiple entry and exit points and pathways, including recognition of prior learning and credit transfer.
- The concept of equity is promoted among staff members – recognising that fair treatment requires consideration of circumstances, rather than just treating all individuals the same.
- All learners will be provided with relevant policies and procedures on enrolment (see Student Handbook).
- NDA's complaints procedure is available to all learners and any individual raising concerns, complaints or grievances will be treated with respect and without discrimination (see Complaints Policy and Complaints Form).
- NDA's premises are accessible for those with physical disability.



- Disciplinary action will be taken against any staff member or learner who engages in discriminatory behaviour or engages in behaviour considered to be harassment.
- All perceived deficiencies in this access and equity policy will be documented and reviewed to determine whether the policy needs to be amended.

NDA is committed to providing flexible learning and assessment options in a safe and inclusive environment, allowing students alternatives which recognize the diversity of their individual needs and circumstances to aid them in their learning goals.

## 5. Relevant Legislation and Standards

This policy recognizes NDA's legal obligations in relation to access and equity under relevant legislation. Australian federal and state legislation makes it unlawful for organisations to discriminate based on age, gender, marital status, sexuality, race, disability, pregnancy, cultural or ethnic background, location, imprisonment or language, literacy or numeracy level.

The relevant legislation includes:

- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 2009 (Commonwealth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1994 (Tasmania)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tasmania)
- Training and Workforce Development Act 2013 (Tasmania)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010

In addition to legal obligations NDA also has regulatory obligations that are recognised in this policy. This policy and the resulting practices recognise the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2015, specifically clauses 1.7, 5.1.

## 6. Relevant Documents

- Complaints Form
- Complaints Policy
- Enrolment Form
- Induction Procedure
- Training and Assessment Strategies
- Student Handbook
- LLN Procedure
- Learner Support Policy

