

# Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy (POL-51)

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## 1. Purpose

SIBT is committed to providing a learning and teaching environment that promotes fairness, equity and respect and encourages achievement by maximising access to and participation in education and training. The policy also acknowledges the diversity of staff, students and the prospective students of SIBT.

## 2. Regulatory Framework

SIBT has a responsibility to satisfy State and Commonwealth equal opportunity legislation requirements. As such this policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation.

## 3. Principles and Objectives

SIBT is committed to the goals of equal opportunity in education and employment. It aims to provide a study and work environment for staff and students that fosters fairness, equity, and respect for social and cultural diversity, and that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.

SIBT is also committed to diversity in the learning and teaching environment and recognises its value to all within SIBT. In fulfilling its commitment to equity and diversity of SIBT, with the cooperation of all members of the teaching and learning environment, will:

- Foster a culture that values and responds to the rich diversity of its staff and students;
- Overcome past disadvantage for members of staff and student equity groups;
- Engender trust between managers and supervisors, staff and students;
- Provide socially, culturally and gender inclusive education;
- Remove barriers to participation and progression in employment and education;
- Increase flexibility through exposure to new ideas and different ways of working;
- Enhance skills through interdependent learning relationships;
- Enhance the quality and accessibility of education and employment with increasing links to cultural diversity.

To achieve these outcomes, the SIBT depends on the continued co-operation of all members of the teaching and learning environment.

## 4. Diversity

SIBT consists of a socially, culturally and linguistically diverse community, which enriches teaching and learning capabilities and helps to create a culture that is tolerant, flexible and relevant to the global academic environment. SIBT values these differences as an essential characteristic in the success of its academic activities and is committed to providing an inclusive learning and teaching environment.

Diversity accounts for the many factors that influence the ability of people to participate and succeed in education and training and employment, including:

- prior educational experiences;
- cultural identity;
- language;
- learning styles;
- goals and expectations;

- motivation;
- work and social experiences;
- gender;
- gender identity;
- marital or relationship status;
- pregnancy;
- lawful sexual activity;
- values and beliefs;
- disability or impairment;
- sexual orientation;
- intersex status;
- religion;
- income;
- family responsibilities;
- trade union affiliation;
- political activity;
- geographic location; and
- age

SIBT aims to meet its commitment to diversity, through practices which encourage, support and provide opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to access participate and achieve outcomes in the teaching and learning environment.

## 5. Equal Opportunity

SIBT is committed to providing a teaching and learning environment in which employees and students feel that they are valued, treated fairly and are provided with equal access to resources and services available to participate and achieve outcomes in the learning and teaching environment. SIBT also aims to provide a harassment-free environment that fosters good working relationships between all members of learning and teaching environment.

SIBT also recognises the following specific equity groups who may have experienced disadvantage in education and employment in the past:

- women;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- People with a disability; and
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;

SIBT aims to meet its commitment to equal opportunity, through practices which are free from bias and discrimination, and which provide individuals with the opportunity to access, participate in, and achieve outcomes from education and training.

## 6. Staff

SIBT is committed to ensuring that all employees, or potential employees, enjoy equal employment opportunity (EEO). To provide equal employment opportunity SIBT undertakes to:

- promote and support equal employment opportunity in all its activities
- eliminate discrimination on the grounds outlined in the Discrimination, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying policy;
- create an environment characterised by respect where staff are able to work free from discrimination or harassment;
- use non-discriminatory, inclusive language in all official documents and encourage its use throughout SIBT;

- ensure the application of the merit principle in recruitment, selection and reclassification;
- ensure that employees, or potential employees, are treated fairly and equally when employment decisions are made;
- provide equitable career development opportunities for all staff;
- ensure equitable access to decision-making and resources;
- ensure effective consultation with staff members in the development and implementation of equal employment opportunity;
- ensure the accountability of managers for the implementation of SIBT's equal employment opportunity policies and practices.

SIBT will provide equal opportunity advice and support to staff who feel they have been disadvantaged in their employment by practices and procedures within SIBT.

## 7. Students

SIBT is committed to ensuring that all students, or potential students, enjoy equal opportunity in education. It also commits to providing a teaching and learning environment where all students are encouraged to work towards their maximum potential. To provide equal opportunity in education the Institute undertakes to:

- provide flexible academic services that are accessible to its students;
- account for requirements of individual students in strategic and operational planning processes;
- provide opportunities for students to be involved in the planning and decision making processes on matters that affect them;
- provide a broad, relevant and balanced range of high quality academic programs and support services that account for the diversity and the needs of all students and potential students, including those under-represented in education and training;
- provide training and support in the delivery of its academic programs to enable staff to monitor course content, teaching methods, assessment procedures, course and audiovisual material to ensure that they are not discriminatory or offensive and that they encourage and facilitate full participation in the learning and teaching environment by disadvantaged people;
- members of equity groups to successfully participate;
- provide opportunities for students to achieve outcomes that meet their personal goals; and
- provide academic programs and support services in an environment free from unfair disadvantage.

SIBT will provide equal opportunity advice and support to students who feel that they have been disadvantaged in their education by practices and procedures within SIBT.

## 8. Awareness

As part of its commitment to equal opportunity and diversity, SIBT aims to increase the awareness of all members of the teaching and learning environment of equal opportunity and diversity practices and responsibilities, by providing information in the following areas:

- Preventing discrimination and harassment;
- Reporting and dealing with complaints of discrimination and harassment;
- Cross cultural issues for staff and students.

## 9. Related Policy

Student Code of Conduct  
 Staff Code of Conduct  
 Discrimination, Harassment, Victimization and Bullying  
 Student Complaints and Appeals Policy

### Amendment History

<b>Department:</b>	Academic Director	
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	SMT	
<b>Approval Date:</b>	13/01/2017	
<b>Date for Next Review:</b>	13/01/2020	
<b>Revision Date</b>		
<b>Version</b>		
<b>Summary of changes</b>		
05/02/2016	1	New Policy developed and implemented – Replaces the relevant sections of the Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy.
13/01/2017	2	Incorporates specific reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, as required under the revised TEQSA Threshold Standards