

Access & Equity Policy and Associated Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the commitment of the **Institute of International Studies (IOIS)** to ensure that all individuals have fair and equitable access to its education and training programs, services, and facilities.

This policy seeks to eliminate barriers that may restrict participation and ensure that every learner, regardless of personal, cultural, or social background, can achieve successful outcomes.

IOIS promotes diversity, inclusion, and social justice through equitable access to learning opportunities. The policy aligns with the **Standards for RTOs 2025**—specifically **Standards 2.1, 2.3, and 3.1**, which require RTOs to support the diverse needs of learners, ensure staff capability, and maintain systems that promote fairness and integrity across all operations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All IOIS students (prospective, current, and past).
- All IOIS staff, trainers, assessors, contractors, and third-party representatives.
- All IOIS campuses and online learning environments (including offshore learners where applicable).
- All services, including enrolment, delivery, assessment, support, and administration.

3. Policy Statement

IOIS is committed to providing a **learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, and exclusion**.

All individuals—irrespective of their gender, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, cultural background, marital status, political affiliation, or socio-economic background—will be treated fairly, respectfully, and equitably.

Access and equity principles are integrated into all aspects of IOIS's operations, including marketing, enrolment, teaching, assessment, and student support.

IOIS strives to:

- Ensure equality of opportunity for all learners.
- Provide flexible learning and assessment options.
- Identify and remove barriers that hinder participation or achievement.
- Promote inclusive and respectful behaviours among staff and students.
- Uphold compliance with relevant Australian laws and the Standards for RTOs 2025.

4. Principles

1. **Equitable Access:** All applicants and students are provided with equal opportunity to participate in training and assessment services.
IOIS will not impose conditions that are discriminatory or create unnecessary barriers to access.
2. **Fair Treatment:** Every student will be treated with fairness, courtesy, and dignity. Complaints and appeals relating to unfair treatment will be addressed promptly and transparently.
3. **Inclusive Practices:** IOIS adopts inclusive teaching and assessment methods that accommodate diverse learning needs, including those related to disability, language, literacy, numeracy, or cultural background.
4. **Reasonable Adjustment:** IOIS provides reasonable adjustments to support students with special needs, provided such adjustments do not compromise the integrity of the qualification or required competency outcomes.
5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** IOIS acknowledges and respects Australia's cultural diversity and encourages cultural awareness and sensitivity in all aspects of training delivery.
6. **Continuous Improvement:** Feedback from students and staff is actively sought to improve access and equity strategies, ensuring ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
CEO	Ensures organisation-wide compliance with anti-discrimination and equity legislation; reviews and approves access and equity initiatives.
Academic / RTO Manager	Oversees policy implementation, monitors compliance, and ensures that staff uphold inclusive practices.
Trainers and Assessors	Apply inclusive delivery and assessment methods; identify and support learners requiring adjustments.
Student Support Officers	Facilitate reasonable adjustments, provide support, and coordinate referrals for counselling or special services.
Students	Participate respectfully, communicate needs early, and adhere to the Code of Conduct promoting inclusivity and respect.

6. Procedures

6.1 Recruitment and Enrolment

- Marketing materials must be free from bias and reflect IOIS's commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Enrolment procedures are transparent, with clear entry requirements based solely on the competencies required for the qualification.
- IOIS will not discriminate based on gender, ethnicity, age, or disability during enrolment.

- All applicants are provided with pre-enrolment information explaining support services, LLND assessment requirements, and reasonable adjustment processes.

6.2 LLND Assessment and Support

- During enrolment, each student completes a **Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital (LLND)** assessment.
- LLND results are used to identify any support requirements, not to exclude applicants.
- Support strategies may include:
 - Additional tutoring or one-on-one assistance.
 - Modified or simplified learning materials.
 - Digital literacy workshops.
 - Additional time for assessment completion.
- LLND data is securely stored in the Student Management System (SMS).

6.3 Reasonable Adjustment Process

1. The student voluntarily discloses a condition, disability, or need for adjustment during or after enrolment.
2. The trainer, assessor, or Student Support Officer discusses options confidentially with the student.
3. A **Reasonable Adjustment Plan** is developed, outlining the agreed modifications (e.g. extra time, assistive technology, flexible delivery).
4. The plan is signed by both the student and the trainer/assessor and stored in the student's file.
5. Adjustments are reviewed regularly to ensure ongoing suitability.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include:

- Providing course materials in larger font or alternative format (e.g. audio, electronic).
- Allowing oral assessment in place of written assessment.
- Using assistive technologies such as screen readers.
- Allowing additional breaks for students with health conditions.

6.4 Preventing Discrimination and Harassment

- IOIS enforces a **zero-tolerance** policy towards any form of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Staff and students are expected to behave respectfully at all times in accordance with the **Code of Conduct**.
- Complaints of discrimination or harassment are managed under the **IOIS Complaints and Appeals Policy**.
- Disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal, may be taken for breaches of this policy.

6.5 Learning and Assessment Practices

- Trainers and assessors must design and deliver learning and assessment materials that accommodate a range of learning styles and cultural contexts.
- Assessment methods should allow flexibility (e.g. oral questioning, practical demonstrations, written responses).
- Feedback to students should be constructive, respectful, and culturally appropriate.
- Learning materials should avoid stereotypes or culturally insensitive content.

6.6 Access to Facilities and Technology

- IOIS ensures that all students have access to appropriate learning environments and technology, including:
 - Computer access with internet connectivity for online learning.
 - Accessible LMS (Learning Management System) with user-friendly interface and support.
 - Digital accessibility tools
- Students facing technological barriers will be supported through orientation and digital literacy sessions.

6.7 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- The RTO Manager conducts **annual reviews** of equity practices as part of IOIS's **Self-Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework**.
- Data collected through student feedback, LLND outcomes, and complaints informs improvements to access and equity processes.
- Actions and findings are recorded in the **Continuous Improvement Register (CIR)**.

7. Complaints and Appeals

- Any individual who believes they have been treated unfairly or discriminated against has the right to lodge a complaint.
- Complaints are handled under the **IOIS Complaints and Appeals Policy**, ensuring confidentiality and non-retaliation.
- Students dissatisfied with an outcome may request a review or appeal as outlined in the same policy.

8. Related Documents

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

- Student Support Policy
- LLND Assessment Procedure
- Reasonable Adjustment Plan and Record Form
- Continuous Improvement Register
- Staffing Policy and Associated Procedures

9. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy complies with the following legislation and standards:

- Standards for RTOs 2025
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

Document Version Control

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