



ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

PREAMBLE

Australian Law requires education providers to ensure that all working and teaching practices are fair, equitable and non-discriminatory. This Policy acknowledges and aims to implement those laws that make discrimination in employment, the provision of education and the provision of goods and services unlawful. In addition, this Policy also aims to adhere to the State and Federal Anti-Discrimination and Disability Discrimination Acts under which it is unlawful for anyone to be treated unfairly or discriminated against on the grounds of sex, sexuality, race, physical, intellectual impairment, age or disability.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

“College” means Australian Pacific College, English Unlimited and APC Design School.

“Policy” means this Access and Equity Policy.

1. AUTHORITY, RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1.1 The authority for this Policy is the Executive Committee.
- 1.2 The responsibility for administering this Policy and ensuring compliance with its requirements lies with the Campus Services Unit.
- 1.3 The following units are accountable for the implementation of this Policy:
 - a) Campus services are accountable for ensuring the College’s campuses are compliant with this Policy and that students' needs are taken care of in relation to this Policy while they are studying at the College;
 - b) PEAU is accountable for ensuring that this Policy is applied to the working environment for all operational staff, and that the Policy’s enrolment requirements are satisfied; and
 - c) LIU is accountable for ensuring that all course design is compatible with this Policy.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 The College is committed to promoting a working and learning environment free from discrimination for all staff and students. The College aims to ensure that it is responsive to the individual needs of its staff and students.

- 2.2 The College supports the principles of equal and fair access to educational opportunities and strives to provide students with the opportunity to achieve their potential.
- 2.3 The College has a strong commitment to the promotion of equity and diversity in regard to its staff and students. While the student body of the College consists predominantly of full-fee paying overseas students, it also has a significant cohort of domestic students from all over Australia. The College also consists of staff from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds. Notwithstanding this, the College is committed to increasing access for people from other groups such as:
- a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
 - b) South Sea Islanders; and
 - c) people with disabilities.
- 2.4 The College endeavours to ensure that:
- a) an environment of support and care for staff and students is provided;
 - b) cultural understanding and sensitivity inform the teaching and support of the staff and students;
 - c) access and equity needs are considered in all stages of the education process including course design, enrolment, during study, acute moments when students are faced with difficulties and on completion;
 - d) there is early identification of students at risk of discrimination and support is provided for such students;
 - e) practices are non-discriminatory and address the needs of all groups;
 - f) all education processes are inclusive and value students from a diverse background;
 - g) all policies and procedures are non-discriminatory and inclusive; and
 - h) staff and students are provided with information about access and equity issues and this Policy.
- 2.5 The College invites new students to indicate prior to, and at enrolment if they are in need of specific assistance with regard to either a physical disability or a learning impairment. At enrolment there is also an opportunity for students to seek assistance with regard to language, literacy and numeracy so that specific learning support may be provided (refer to the Language Literacy and Numeracy Policy). The College's academic staff endeavour to apply alternative learning and assessment strategies to assist students with special needs. The College endeavours to meet students' physical needs where possible. Students with specific physical or academic needs are invited to contact the College before applying.
- 2.6 Course requirements are set out on the College's websites and staff are well trained to assist student enquiries about successfully studying at the College if they have physical or academic needs.



- 2.7 The College has open, fair and transparent procedures that allow:
- a) for equal and fair treatment of all students seeking to enrol in its courses; and
 - b) it to make merit based decisions on the selection of students seeking to enrol in its courses and the treatment of such students.

- 2.8 The College promotes the development of a diverse and non-discriminatory work environment and requires that employees treat students, other employees and visitors to the College with respect and courtesy, and conduct themselves in a manner commensurate with this Policy.

3. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

- 3.1 At enrolment, all application forms invite the student to identify whether they have a physical disability or a learning impairment that they would like assistance with.

- 3.2 All admissions staff are trained to be responsive to the needs of prospective students who may need educational or support services and to:

- a) treat such information without discrimination; and
- b) confidently advise students of the support services the College offers.

- 3.3 If a student identifies a need for educational or support services at enrolment, then the College will consider what reasonable adjustments may be needed to successfully assist the student on the same basis as a student without a disability to either:

- a) complete the enrolment process;
- b) complete the course itself; and/or
- c) access the facilities or services of the College.

The College may engage the services of a third party to assess the needs of the student and to assist in formulating what would be the reasonable adjustments necessary.

- 3.4 If a third party is not engaged to assess the needs of the student, the academic management staff is responsible for acting upon the information obtained in the application form. Academic or campus staff will refer to the examples of reasonable adjustments found in Appendix 1 of this Policy when drafting the adjusted training and assessment plans.

- 3.5 An adjustment is reasonable if it balances the interests of both the student and the College. Consideration will be given to things such as:

- a) the student's disability;
- b) the choice of course;



- c) the effect of the adjustment on the student's ability to achieve learning outcomes and to participate fully in the course;
 - d) the effect of the adjustment on others including the College, staff and other students; and
 - e) the cost and benefits of making the adjustment.
- 3.6 Before an adjustment is finalised the College will consult the student about:
- a) whether the proposed adjustment is reasonable to them;
 - b) the extent to which the adjustment would achieve the student's aims for their study; and
 - c) if the student does not agree with the proposed adjustment, whether there is any other reasonable adjustment that may be made.
- 3.7 At all times, the College is entitled to maintain the academic requirements of the course and training package any other requirements/components inherent to the nature of the course. The College may exclude a student who cannot meet the inherent requirements of the course, even with adjustments and is also entitled to consider excluding a student if any adjustment would impose unjustifiable hardship on its operations.
- 3.8 The College's decision will be provided to the student in writing as soon as practicable together with a copy of the training and assessment plan and any costs payable by the student. If the College chooses not to offer an adjustment, it will inform the student in writing of the decision and its reason. In the event the College does not offer the student an adjustment or place in the course, it will also inform the student of the College's complaints and appeals process that the student may wish to access.
- 3.9 Where reasonable adjustments are implemented, the detailed training and assessment plan including timetables, notes regarding the required adjustments and any related communications regarding the adjustments will be distributed to the campus staff, student care, student's trainer/teacher (including any substitute staff) and a copy will be maintained on the student's file.
- 3.10 The training and assessment plan will be reviewed by the trainer/teacher and the campus manager/Assistant Academic Manager to ensure its efficacy. Any changes made to the plan must be communicated to the student and a copy retained on the student's file.
- 3.11 The College endeavours to obtain information on a student's needs before course commencement but this may not always occur. Where needs arise during a course this Policy will apply and the College will attempt to adjust the student's learning requirements accordingly.

4. FACILITIES, RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 The College aims to provide facilities, resources and equipment that are accessible and safe for its students and staff. Refer to the Facilities, Technology and Learning Resources Policy for more information.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they understand and implement this Policy and behave in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner when dealing with other staff, students and visitors to the College.
- 5.2 Similarly all students are required to behave in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner when dealing with staff, other students and visitors.
- 5.3 All staff are informed and provided with access to a copy of this Policy as a part of the staff orientation process. Students are informed of this Policy during the enrolment process and as a part of their orientation process. Copies of this Policy are available on the staff intranet and the College website.

POLICY REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed as part of the College's three year review cycle.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

This document references the following legislation, regulations, codes and standards:

RELEVANT LEGISLATION/CODES/STANDARDS	
Commonwealth	Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
New South Wales	Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Queensland	Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
Victoria	Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)



South Australia	Equal Opportunities Act 1984 (SA)
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RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This document references the following College policies and/or procedures:

Related Policies and Procedures	
Policies	Language, Literacy, Numeracy Policy Student Complaints and Appeals Policy Harassment, Victimization and Bullying Policy Facilities, Technology and Learning Resources Policy Course Design Policy Policy for Evaluation and Review of Courses Student Enrolment Policy Student Care Policy

KEYWORDS

Keywords	Access and Equity, Discrimination, Unfair Treatment, safe, healthy, fair, diversity, wheelchair accessibility, disability
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POLICY OWNER

Policy Owner	Campus Services
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POLICY/PROCEDURE HISTORY

Policy History			
Current version	Current version release date	Author	Description of changes
Access and Equity Policy v2.6	4 September 2015	Sharon Luhr and Alex Lee	Original Document
Access and Equity Policy v2.7R	December 2017	Sara Gaudry	Full update in accordance with the Policy and Procedure Template v1.0 and Guidelines for Drafting Policies and Procedures v1.0



Access and Equity Policy v2.8R(APC/EU/APCDS)	29 April 2019	Ron Newman	Applied for use by Virtu Design Institute Pty Ltd trading as APC Design School for Australian domestic students.
Access and Equity Policy v2.9R(APC/EU/APCDS)	August 2020	Sara Gaudry	Update to include disability/learning needs contingency plan for students.
Access and Equity Policy v2.10R(APC/EU/APCDS)	October 2021	Sara Gaudry Ron Newman	Addition of clause 1.6
Access and Equity Policy v3.0R(APC/EU/APCDS)	February 2024	Sara Gaudry	Cyclic review of the policy. Changes to clauses 2.4, 2.6 and new clauses 1 and 4 added.

APPENDIX ONE REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT EXAMPLES

Examples of reasonable adjustments include:

Type of Disability	Example of Reasonable Adjustment
Hearing Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● provision of workbooks prior to each study period ● facing the learner and speaking clearly (if a learner lip-reads) producing all relevant information in writing ● assistive technology / equipment ● provision for a note taker ● additional time
Intellectual Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● additional time ● split sessions ● break assessments into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately ● rest breaks in lengthy sessions ● separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise ● a variety of assessment methods
Physical Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● a personal assistant provided by the learner ● alternative methods of competence demonstration ● additional time ● entry to campus assistance
Learning Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● additional time ● an interpreter ● a reader ● split sessions ● break assessments into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately ● rest breaks in lengthy sessions ● separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a variety of assessment methods
Mental Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● additional time ● rest breaks ● separate examination venue ● online assessment or other assessment methods ● split sessions ● break assessments into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately ● rest breaks in lengthy sessions ● separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise ● a variety of assessment methods
Acquired Brain Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● split sessions ● break assessments into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately ● rest breaks in lengthy sessions ● separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise ● additional time ● a variety of assessment methods
Vision Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● audio files or text-to-speech technology ● large print materials or magnification aids ● screen readers ● oral assessment or recorded questions ● a reader ● additional time ● models, graphics or practical examples to illustrate questions ● heavy lined paper ● entry to campus assistance.
Multiple Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one-on-one support ● study skills and tutorial sessions ● a personal assistant provided by the learner ● alternative methods of competence demonstration ● additional time ● an interpreter ● a reader ● split sessions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● break assessments into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately● rest breaks in lengthy sessions● separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise● a variety of assessment methods● entry to campus assistance.
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