



# **QUANTUM INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Equity and Diversity Policy**

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# **Equity and Diversity Policy**

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## **Purpose**

Quantum Institute of Higher Education (the ‘institute’ or ‘QIHE’) strongly supports the working principle of equity and diversity for all. QIHE is committed to providing a safe and supportive work environment for all staff, students, members of various committees and other stakeholders of QIHE. QIHE Equity and Diversity Policy (‘the Policy’) outlines the procedures and expected behaviours to ensure a positive and inclusive culture within QIHE.

## **Scope**

This Policy applies to all staff, students, members of various committees and other stakeholders of QIHE.

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## **I. Key Principles**

In regard to equity and diversity, QIHE upholds the following principles:

- i. **Inclusive and Positive Culture.** QIHE aspires to build an inclusive and positive culture for everyone to be empowered and reach their potential;
- ii. **Upholding Rights.** All students and staff will be supported to exercise their rights and responsibilities in their academic and professional endeavours;
- iii. **Removal of Barriers for Progression.** QIHE will remove any barriers to involvement and progression of staff within the Institute in academic or employment matters;
- iv. **Expanding Access for Success.** QIHE is dedicated to providing access and opportunities for under-represented student groups;
- v. **Respecting Diversity.** QIHE respects and values the various perspectives presented by individuals of diverse backgrounds.

## **2. Procedures**

### **2.1 General Procedures**

- i. To help achieve equity and diversity, QIHE will strive to ensure that all students have their rights and obligations respected and facilitated through:
  - a. Encouraging awareness of their rights and obligations under relevant policies and applicable Commonwealth and State laws;
  - b. Setting in place an inclusive environment while enhancing the quality of learning experience and support for all students from various backgrounds;

- c. Ensuring that all relevant information that is required in regard to equity and diversity is accessible and publicly available;
  - d. Ensuring appropriate monitoring and feedback systems are in place to make timely necessary improvements in QIHE's efforts to improve equity and diversity.
- ii. QIHE encourages and is dedicated to supporting underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups, which may include:
- a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
  - b. People with disabilities;
  - c. People from lower socio-economic backgrounds;
  - d. People from remote, rural and isolated areas.
- iii. QIHE celebrates cultural and ethnic diversity and will ensure that it nurtures a culture of respect and inclusivity for all, particularly staff and students who are underrepresented and/or disadvantaged, through:
- a. Ensuring equal access to people from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds especially regarding admission to QIHE;
  - b. Promoting a positive culture throughout QIHE which respects equity and diversity;
  - c. Developing clearly written policies and codes of conduct that are appropriate for all students and staff;
  - d. Encouraging training for managers and staff in equity and diversity and how to avoid non-discriminatory behaviours at workplace.
- iv. QIHE will ensure that the necessary guidance and support facilities, programs and resources relevant to equity and diversity are accessible to all students and staff.

## **2.2 Acknowledgment of Country and Indigenous Participation**

- i. QIHE acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- ii. As outlined in the *Admissions Policy and Procedure*, QIHE recognises the challenges faced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. QIHE is committed to providing opportunities to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their academic and professional development. QIHE is putting in place alternative admission arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Islander backgrounds, where applicants may undergo special admission test and interview. The Dean will make the decision of admission with the approval of the Academic Board.

- iii. QIHE will take the necessary measures to ensure that students of Indigenous background are supported to engage fully in their studies.
- iv. The participation and completion rates of students of Indigenous background will be monitored and analysed in order to make appropriate improvements and adjustments, where necessary, to further support the participation of students of Indigenous background.

### **2.3 Inclusion of People with Disability**

- i. QIHE takes necessary measures to accommodate and support students with disabilities including but not limited to:
  - a. Providing the appropriate assistance to support the admission and enrolment process, including during orientation;
  - b. Facilitating reasonable adjustments to assist students with disabilities to enable them to participate fully and effectively in their studies and academic activities;
  - c. Ensuring that appropriate resources and facilities are made accessible to students with disabilities;
  - d. Encouraging awareness to ensure that students with disabilities are respected and have equal rights and opportunities as other students.
- ii. Students with disabilities may contact Student Support Services for reasonable adjustments prior to the commencement of their program. Different students may require different adjustments based on their situation. The Dean or delegate will have a formal discussion with each student who applied for reasonable adjustment in order to ensure that they are granted reasonable adjustments in accordance with their needs.
- iii. Granting of reasonable adjustments will be on a case-by-case basis and QIHE will ensure that needs are being met without compromising academic integrity.
- iv. The reasonable adjustments that are granted will be carefully monitored and documented by the Student Support Staff.

### **2.4 Inclusivity in Teaching and Learning**

- i. The design of the programs and courses, and assessment tasks will take into consideration the various student needs and learning styles.
- ii. QIHE will ensure that all learning and teaching materials are properly selected and monitored to prevent any offensive materials from being used.
- iii. All required learning and teaching materials, activities, resources and facilities will also be made accessible for all students.
- iv. QIHE have the necessary student support system and programs to accommodate different student needs.

## **2.5 Discrimination and Bullying**

- i. QIHE does not tolerate any form of discrimination or bullying behaviour which could take place in the form of verbal, physical or written actions. Examples may include but are not limited to:
  - a. Aggression and intimidation;
  - b. Humiliation;
  - c. Subjection to jokes, particularly ones that are potentially offensive;
  - d. Unjustified and unreasonable criticism;
  - e. Abuse, insult, and use of offensive language and comments;
  - f. Isolation.
- ii. Students who face discrimination or bullying because of their background or beliefs should report the matter to the Student Counsellor, after which appropriate measures will be taken.
- iii. The perpetrator of discrimination or bullying behaviour, if proven to be at fault, will face consequences according to the appropriate regulations and/or suspension.

## **2.6 Well-being and Mental Health Support**

- i. QIHE regards very seriously the importance of mental health well-being and understands that students who come from underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups may require mental health support. QIHE will cultivate a culture of trust and support to help nurture the psychological safety of everyone within QIHE.
- ii. Well-being and mental health support and resources will be available for all students to help achieve a positive learning experience for all, in accordance with the *Student Support and Consultation Policy*.

## **2.7 Inclusivity in Workforce**

- i. QIHE ensures that there are equal opportunities for every individual in employment, which includes the implementation of merit-based hiring practices that prevent bias towards any individual or group.
- ii. All staff will be treated equally and QIHE will not tolerate any discriminatory or bullying behaviours.
- iii. Staff are expected to uphold the principles of equity and diversity in their work practices.
- iv. Details regarding hiring practices and staff management are outlined in the *Workforce Plan and Staff Code of Conduct*.

### **3. Standards of Behaviour**

- i. QIHE expects that no student or staff member shall not engage in discriminatory behaviour towards a person based on their characteristics. These include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Cultural background including race, colour, descent, nationality, ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin;
  - b. Personal traits including age, sex, gender, sexual orientation or preference, marital or relationship status, family;
  - c. Disability or impairment;
  - d. Political or religious beliefs.
- ii. QIHE expects all students and staff to act according to the expected standards of behaviour, which are outlined in the *Students Code of Conduct* and *Staff Code of Conduct*.

### **4. Responsibilities**

- i. **The Governing Council** is responsible for approving this Policy and ensuring that the principles of equity and diversity are embedded in QIHE's activities and operations.
- ii. **The Academic Board** is responsible for ensuring that the academic activities and academic policies in QIHE uphold the principles of equity and diversity for all students.
- iii. **The Executive Management Team** is responsible for implementing and monitoring the provisions in this Policy towards QIHE's operations and academic activities. The Dean is responsible for reporting matters regarding equity and diversity to the Governing Council.
- iv. **Student Support Services** is responsible for helping address the needs of QIHE's students.
- v. **Student Counsellor** is responsible for providing counselling support for students in regard to equity and diversity matters. The Student Counsellor is the first point of contact should there be any support required for students.
- vi. **All students and staff** are responsible for upholding the principles of equity and diversity in their activities and familiarising themselves with the provisions of this Policy as well as the laws and regulations that are in place.

### **5. Privacy and Records Management**

QIHE upholds the importance of everyone's privacy. All records and information regarding applicants, students and staff will remain confidential within QIHE's database. All records will be kept in accordance with the *Records Retention Policy*.

# Glossary

**Assessment** refers to a process used to determine a student's achievement of expected learning outcomes (AQF 2013 p.92).

**AQF** refers to the Australian Qualifications Framework, the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training.

**Course** refers to QIHE's units of study or subjects.

**Disability** refers to persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006)

**Equity and diversity** refer to the creation of equivalent opportunities for access and success in Australian higher education for historically disadvantaged or underrepresented student population (TEQSA Guidance Note, 2017)

**Governing Body** refers to all the governing bodies of QIHE.

**Members of the Committee** refers to all members of QIHE's Governing Body, including members of the Governing Council, Academic Board, Course and Industry Advisory Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Risk Committee, and Executive Management Team.

**Program** refers to the Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Information Technology degree of QIHE.

**Reasonable adjustments** refer to the changes made to facilitate equal opportunity. Changes may include changes to the procedure or process, adjustments to teaching methods or materials, and adjustments to the process of assessment should it be required by the student applying for reasonable adjustments.

**TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency)** refers to the independent national regulator for the higher education sector in Australia.

# Version Control

Version	1.0
Last Review	9 February 2024
Policy Category	Governing Council
Related Documents	<i>Admission Policy and Procedure</i> <i>English Language Policy</i> <i>Records Retention Policy</i> <i>Staff Code of Conduct</i> <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> <i>Student Support and Consultation Policy</i>
Legislation References	TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability Standards for Education 2005 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 Age Discrimination Act 2004 Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 Fair Work Act 2009
References	Holmes Institute Kaplan Business School Sydney Institute of Higher Education University of New South Wales University of Technology Sydney University of Newcastle Macquarie University Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Western Sydney University