

Access and Equity Policy

Collaboration, courage, innovation, integrity and respect are AGA values and underpin the work that we do. They drive our commitment to our employees, customers and the businesses we work with, and help to achieve the goals we set. As a Group Training Organisation we have embedded these values into providing quality apprentices and trainees to host businesses, ensuring there is a seamless and low risk solution to hiring and by providing the best quality trainee or apprentice, ensuring that they live these values in the job they do each and every day.

Purpose

AGA values, and is committed to, providing and maintaining quality employment opportunities to all people regardless of their background; allowing all students, both current and prospective, the opportunity to participate in a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification.

The intent of this policy is to ensure all people have ease of access and equity to apprenticeships and traineeships and being provided in a way that meet individual needs regardless of their diversity and background.

Scope

This policy applies to all AGA staff, including those acting on behalf of AGA in third party arrangements, and all current and prospective apprentices and trainees. Access and equity is about how a person can receive services based on the service they seek, their eligibility for that service, available resources and the programs capacity to respond.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy and relevant procedure, the following definitions have been adopted:

Access and equity* means 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 location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.

Third party* means any party that provides services on behalf of the business, not including a contract of employment between our business and its employee.

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others due to their circumstances, characteristics or beliefs.

Direct Discrimination takes place when a person, organisation or group of persons is treated less fairly than others on the basis of stereotyped beliefs or views.

Indirect Discrimination includes rules, practices or policies which appear to be non-discriminatory and equally applicable, but operate in such a way that certain groups of people are excluded without cause.

Harassment is any behaviour which is unwelcome, that offends, humiliates or intimidates a person.

Sexual Harassment includes, but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace or learning environment.

Verbal harassment includes but is not limited to racist jokes or comments, belittlement, threats, insults or abuse, offensive/obscene language and spreading rumours.

Physical Harassment includes, but is not limited to unwelcome physical contact such as hitting, pushing, shoving or throwing objects at a person, and unfastening a person's attire.

Standards means the National Standards for Group Training Organisations 2017.

Host employer means an organisation that hosts, under a written host employer agreement, an apprentice or trainee employed at that time by AGA, provides supervision and on-the-job training and pays AGA for the apprentice/trainee services.

Policy Principles

AGA will not accept any form of discrimination and will apply the following principles in support of access and equity:

- AGA abides by access and equity principles as detailed in this policy.
- An environment where information, services and facilities are readily accessible to all people and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against individuals regardless of personal circumstance is created and actively promoted;
- Information and communication is provided in a manner appropriate to individual communication and cultural needs;
- The recruitment process is bias-free and non-discriminatory;
- Apprentices and Trainees with identified needs are provided with appropriate supports provided through the employment process;
- Employment placements take account of the apprentice/trainee needs, with modifications made where necessary and possible;
- AGA respects the individual's right to privacy, confidentiality and is sensitive to individual needs; and
- AGA will ensure all staff, including those employed in Host Employer arrangements, have access to the information and support needed to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and violence, victimisation and vilification or to deal with it appropriately if it occurs.

AGA will demonstrate its commitment by:

- Selecting employees according to a fair and non-discriminatory process;
- Providing suitable access to facilities and resources;
- Providing appropriate support services;
- Providing a culture that supports apprentices/trainees to raise a complaint where necessary;
- Consulting relevant industry groups; and
- Raising staff equity issues.

References and Relevant Legislation

- National Standards for Group Training Organisations 2017
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Commonwealth)
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights (2008)

- AGA Complaints Policy and Procedure