

# Student Access and Equity Policy

## 1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The Student Access and Equity Policy provides a statement of AIAT's commitment to providing access to and creating a learning environment which values the rich diversity of its students. It also informs students and staff of the AIAT policies and procedures that outline how AIAT ensures student access and equity are supported in learning and teaching, student services and engagement.
- 1.2 AIAT is required to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth).
- 1.3 This policy applies to all
  - 1.3.1 prospective and current students; and
  - 1.3.2 non-academic and academic staff of AIAT whether full-time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term, or casual (known as staff in this document).

## 2. Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms*.

## 3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 AIAT recognises it operates in a diverse local, national and global community, and values the diversity of its student population.
- 3.2 AIAT takes all necessary steps to create a safe, fair, equitable and inclusive learning environment. AIAT also takes a positive role in informing and educating students and staff of their rights and responsibilities in fostering a learning community that values equality. It does not tolerate any discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form.
- 3.3 AIAT is committed to overcoming barriers, improving access and wider participation into education so that individuals can reach their full potential. AIAT aims to facilitate equitable access and full participation for those students from disadvantaged backgrounds or who are under-represented in educational settings.
- 3.4 In particular, AIAT recognises that there is much to be done to assist the process of reconciliation and that it is necessary for all Australians to work together towards a united Australia that respects our land and heritage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and provides justice and equity for all.

## 4. Policy Principles

- 4.1 AIAT will take a proactive approach to equal opportunity by establishing activities to:

- 4.1.1 provide access to under-represented equity target groups to improve representation with regard to education;
  - 4.1.2 provide a learning environment in which teaching materials, learning activities, learning spaces and assessments are accessible for all students; and
  - 4.1.3 monitor and report our equity performance against legislative requirements.
- 4.2 Admission, Progression and Completion
- 4.2.1 AIAT is committed to equal educational opportunities for all students via clear and transparent selection, progression, and assessment processes. These processes are guided by the Admissions, Assessment and Academic Progress policies and procedures.
  - 4.2.2 Specific consideration will be given to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
  - 4.2.3 Participation, progress, and completion by identified student subgroups will be monitored and the findings used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those subgroups.
- 4.3 Learning and Assessment
- 4.3.1 The development of learning and assessment materials will be designed to accommodate student diversity, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of the students' backgrounds. These processes are guided by the Learning and Teaching Plan, Learning and Teaching Policy and Assessment Policy and Procedure.
- 4.4 Learning Support
- 4.4.1 Identification and support of student academic needs are addressed in the Student Support and Welfare Policy and Procedure.
- 4.5 Orientation
- 4.5.1 The Student Orientation program will be designed to accommodate student diversity.
- 4.6 Sexual Harassment
- 4.6.1 Reporting and support for sexual assault and harassment are managed through the Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- 4.7 Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment
- 4.7.1 Reporting and support for discrimination, bullying and other harassment are managed through the Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- 4.8 Disability needs

- 4.8.1 Courses and subjects designed by AIAT are designed such that they require minimum modification to meet the individual needs of students who have a disability.
- 4.8.2 AIAT will take all reasonable steps to enable students with a disability to apply for and participate in a course on the same basis as other students and make reasonable adjustments to assist the student with a disability to enrol, participate in a course and to be able to use facilities and services on the same basis as a student without a disability.
- In making decisions AIAT will take into consideration:
- Additional staffing requirements.
  - Provision of special resources.
  - Modifications to curriculum.
  - Impact on the learning environment, including the benefits and adverse impact on learning and social outcomes from the student's participation for the student, other students and staff.
  - Potential financial impact.
  - The health and wellbeing of the student and others.
- 4.8.3 AIAT will not provide reasonable adjustment to eligible students if, after all considerations under item 4.8.2 are taken into consideration, the adjustments would impose unjustifiable hardship on AIAT.
- 4.8.4 The Supporting Students with a Disability Procedure outlines the process for organising reasonable adjustments for students and the development of a Student Access Support Plan.
- 4.8.5 AIAT recognises that people with disabilities are best placed to understand their needs, and therefore students with disabilities will be provided with the opportunity to share the responsibility for working with AIAT in identifying and implementing appropriate solutions.
- 4.8.6 Reasonable adjustments should be negotiated with Lecturers in advance of the assessment due date or at the beginning of the trimester. Reasonable adjustments will not be provided if the student does not provide a copy of their individual Student Access Support Plan.
- 4.8.7 Information provided to create a Student Access Support Plan regarding the nature of a student's disability will not be disclosed unless
- a. AIAT has reasonable grounds for concern about the health or safety of the student or other persons; or
  - b. the student gives express consent; or
  - c. disclosure of the information is required by law; or
  - d. it is necessary for AIAT to obtain legal advice.
- 4.8.8 Students with disabilities who are preparing to undertake industry placements must meet the requirements specified subject outline.
- 4.8.9 The CEO will provide annual reports to the Board of Directors on the implementation and effectiveness of Student Access Support Plans.

- 4.9 Complaints about any breaches of this policy may be made in accordance with the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and related procedures.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The Academic Board is responsible for:
- 5.1.1 exhibiting a high level of commitment to the student access and equity;
  - 5.1.2 ensuring that all academic policies and procedures incorporate support for students with access issues;
  - 5.1.3 ensuring that educational materials, including but not limited to, subject specific materials, assessments and academic support, are inclusive and consider student equity issues.
- 5.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible for
- 5.2.1 ensuring that educational materials, including but not limited to, subject specific materials, assessments and academic support, are inclusive and address student equity issues.
- 5.3 The CEO is responsible for
- 5.3.1 annually reporting to the Board of Directors on the implementation and effectiveness of Student Access Support Plans; and
  - 5.3.2 reporting equity performance against legislative requirements.
- 5.4 The Admissions Officer is responsible for assisting prospective students with a disability or from equity groups during the admissions process.
- 5.5 The Director: Learning and Teaching and Course Director are responsible for:
- 5.5.1 developing Student Access Support Plans; managing requests for reasonable adjustments by students with a disability and providing information about agreed reasonable adjustments to relevant staff members; and
  - 5.5.2 investigating complaints raised by students related to reasonable adjustments.
- 5.6 Current students are required to
- 5.6.1 be familiar with and comply with the terms of this Policy;
  - 5.6.2 comply with any relevant legislative, administrative requirements; and
  - 5.6.3 seek clarification from Student Support Services if they have any questions regarding this Policy.
- 5.7 All staff are
- 5.7.1 expected to be familiar with this policy;
  - 5.7.2 responsible for supporting the needs of student equity and diverse learners without undermining the academic integrity of courses and subjects;
  - 5.7.3 responsible for exhibiting a high level of commitment to the access and equity issues.; and
  - 5.7.4 responsible for complying with any relevant legislative, industrial or administrative requirements.

## 6. Policy Details

Institution	Australian Institute of Advanced Technologies (AIAT)
Policy name	Student Access and Equity Policy
Policy Reference No.	POL – 30
Policy Approval	Board of Directors in consultation with Academic Board regarding academic matters
Policy Authority	Executive Management Group
Responsible Officer	CEO
Governance Reference Threshold Standards	HESF 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3
Related Documents	<p>Academic Progression Policy</p> <p>Academic Progression Procedure</p> <p>Admissions Policy</p> <p>Admissions Procedure</p> <p>Assessment Policy</p> <p>Assessment Procedure</p> <p>Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy</p> <p>Learning and Teaching Plan</p> <p>Learning and Teaching Policy</p> <p>Responding to Sexual Assault Policy</p> <p>Responding to Sexual Assault Procedure</p> <p>Student Handbook</p> <p>Student Support and Welfare Policy</p> <p>Student Support and Welfare Procedure</p> <p>Supporting Students with a Disability Procedure</p>
Related Legislation	<p>Commonwealth Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)</p> <p>Commonwealth Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS)</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF)</p> <p>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018</p> <p>South Australia Equal Opportunity Act 1984</p>
References	<p>AIAT has referred and benchmarked with the following institutions and policies during the creation of this policy:</p> <p>Australian Institute of Management (unknown) <i>Access and Equity</i>, retrieved 16 Nov 2021</p> <p>Canberra Institute of Technology (2017) <i>Equity Policy</i></p>

	<p>Central Queensland University (2017) <i>Equity Policy</i></p> <p>Flinders University (2019) <i>Disability Policy</i></p> <p>G8 Education (2018) <i>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion</i></p> <p>Kaplan Australia (2019) <i>Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Policy</i></p> <p>Sunraysia Institute of TAFE (2021) <i>Access and Equity Policy</i></p> <p>University of Adelaide (2019) <i>Reasonable Adjustments to Learning, Teaching and Assessment for Students with a Disability Policy</i></p> <p>University of Queensland (2018) <i>Equity and Diversity – Policy</i></p> <p>University of South Australia (2020) <i>Students with disabilities</i></p> <p>University of Technology Sydney (2021) <i>Equity, Inclusion and Respect Policy</i></p> <p>University of the Sunshine Coast (2020) <i>Equity and Diversity - Governing Policy</i></p> <p>RMIT (unknown) <i>Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Policy, retrieved 16 Nov 2021</i></p>
Date of approval	31 March 2022
Review date	December 2024
Policy Category	Academic

## 6. Document Version Control

Document No	POL - 66	Last Modify Date	Summary of Changes
Version No	1.0	NA	Initial version approved by Board of Directors
	1.01	31/3/2022	Updated legislation and policy number
Created Date	Feb 2022		