

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Introduction

At Aspect we are passionate about people, about being positive and about what is possible. Our purpose is a different brilliant; understanding, engaging and celebrating the strengths, interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum. The value we place on individual differences extends to our workforce and powers our drive to create and maintain a vibrant workplace culture that is inclusive, respectful and equitable, recognising that diversity is a strength to celebrate, and supporting individual needs to the best of our ability.

Aspect respects and promotes diversity of life experiences and values the diversity of thought that a diverse workforce and community can bring to our organisation. Providing equitable and inclusive environments and practices is key to fostering this diversity and a sense of belonging for all.

Aspect's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Vision Statement

To create a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone, that celebrates and embraces Autistic people and the valuable diversity of experience of all those in Aspect's community. We value and respect each individual, and their unique identity and abilities. We want to provide an environment where people feel safe to be themselves and harness their strengths. We believe everyone should be given equitable opportunities for growth, success, and meaningful contribution.

What is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?

Aspect embraces individuality and the differences that make us all unique. These differences include actual or perceived differences, including neurodivergence, disability, cognitive ability, race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, language, religious beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and bodily diversity. Diversity can also include personal characteristics such as marital or family status, parenting or carer responsibilities, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, education background, medical condition, life experience, work experience, social origin, socio-economic background, perspectives, and other areas of potential difference.

Acknowledging and respecting diversity and the intersection of identities (intersectionality) which can at times amplify disadvantage, enables differences to be recognised and valued in the workplace and service provision. Lived experience of these diverse characteristics, particularly where they reflect those of our students, participants and families, is especially valuable in Aspect's workplace and the programs with which we serve the Autistic community.

With this policy, Aspect demonstrates a commitment to facilitating equity of opportunity and inclusion of all people across the organisation; from our Board, Executive team, leadership and staff, right through to our students, participants,

families, stakeholders and the communities in which we work.

Aspect's approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

It is important for Aspect to ensure compliance and provide a safe and supportive environment for our staff, students and participants. In order to do this, we maintain privacy and confidentiality, encourage inclusive language use and sensitivity in communications, display visual representations and signs of welcome, and provide opportunity for feedback and complaints regarding matters related to discrimination, harassment, bullying and other unlawful behaviour.

Beyond compliance, Aspect is committed to realising its DEI vision by evolving and maturing our approach. In the context of the needs of Aspect, our workforce and community, and external developments in the DEI space, Aspect will endeavour to:

- Clearly define roles, responsibilities and governance for promoting a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace culture.
- Align and prioritise specific actions that recognise the primacy of supporting Autistic people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other identified groups.
- Leverage co-design principles to guide working in partnership with those who have lived experience (see Working in Partnership policy and charter).
- Utilising accessible information formats (translated materials, Easy English and visual information), interpreters, augmented and alternative communication systems, advisory groups and advocates to facilitate effective communication or to overcome communication difficulties.
- Provide programs, tools, resources and learning opportunities to support the development of DEI capability and cultural competence across the workforce.
- Monitor and evaluate performance via appropriate data and reporting

External Framework

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy demonstrates how Aspect upholds the United Nations:

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948](#);
- [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006](#);
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#).

This policy also illustrates Aspect's compliance and commitment to the:

- NDIS Practice Standards (2018) and NDIS Code of Conduct, specifically within the NDIS Practice Standards & Quality Indicators:
 - Core Module: 1. Rights and Responsibilities, under all Outcomes;



- Core Module: 2. Provider Governance and Operational Management, under the relevant Outcomes;
- Core Module: 3. Provision of Supports, under the relevant Outcomes;
- Core Module: 4. Support Provision Environment, under the relevant Outcomes;
- Supplementary Module: 3. Early Childhood Supports, under the relevant Outcomes;
- Supplementary Module: 4. Specialist Support Coordination, under the relevant outcomes.
- Disability Standards for Education (2005), specifically:
 - Part 3: Making Reasonable Adjustments;
 - Part 4: Standards for Enrolment;
 - Part 5: Standards for Participation;
 - Part 6: Standards for Curriculum Development, Accreditation and Delivery;
 - Part 7: Standards for Student Support Services; and
 - Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimisation.
- NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW Manual), specifically:
 - 3. Requirements for Registered Non-government Schools, under requirements for Curriculum; and Safe and Supportive Environments.
- Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia, specifically the relevant quality related criteria for:
 - Standard 2 Student Learning and Assessment;
 - Standard 3 Student Safety, Health and Welfare.

Australian Human Rights Commission's National Principles for Child Safe Organisations specifically:

- 1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture;
- 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- 5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- 6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
- 7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- 8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while



- minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- 9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
 - 10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Critical Definitions

Cultural competence – describes individuals and organisations with a set of behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, skills, practices and processes which enable effective work in cross-cultural settings. It is more than cultural awareness. It means that individuals and organisations are proactive, rather than responsive, regarding cultural diversity to ensure effective and relevant service delivery or supports.

Diversity - encompasses the differences or perceived differences among individuals or groups of people arising from neurodivergence, disability, mental ability, race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, language, religious beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and bodily diversity. Diversity can also include personal characteristics such as marital or family status, parenting or carer responsibilities, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, education background, medical conditions, life experience, work experience, social origin, socio-economic background, perspectives, and other areas of potential difference.

Equity – equal access to and participation in the workplace and services.

Inclusion – planning for and accommodating for the needs of a diversity of people and groups of people. To embrace and value all people while providing equity and opportunities and not permitting discrimination or intolerance.

Intersectionality – Used when understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage can compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood. Lived experience of these intersecting identities brings the best understanding of the unique experience and challenges people may face.

Legislation References

International

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

National

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)



Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Disability Standards for Education Act, 2005 (Cth)
National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Privacy Amendment Act (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth)
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

New South Wales

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
Education Act 1990 (NSW)
Mental Health Commission Act 2012 (NSW)
Multicultural NSW Act 2000 (NSW)
NSW Carers Recognition Act 2010 (NSW)
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
Status of Children Act 1996 (NSW)

Victoria

Carers Recognition Act 2012 (Vic)
Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)

South Australia

Carers Recognition Act 2005 (SA)
Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)
Education Act 1972 (SA)
Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (SA)
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
Racial Vilification Act 1996 (SA)

Australian Capital Territory

Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)
Freedom of Information Act 1989 (ACT)



Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)
Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)

Queensland

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 (Qld)
Disability Services Act 2006 (Qld)
Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)

Northern Territory

Anti-Discrimination Act 1992 (NT)
Carers Recognition Act 2006 (NT)
Disability Services Act 1993 (NT)
Information Act 2002 (NT)

Tasmania

Disability Services Act 2011 (Tas)
Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tas)

