

**Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc.
Policy and Procedure**

Policy name	Access and Equity Policy and Procedure
Responsible person	CEO
Staff involved	Board of Governance, staff and volunteers
Review dates	2019
Related documents	<p>Legislation: Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic), Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Regulations 2007 (Vic), Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic), Health Records Act 2001 (Vic), Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic), Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Com), Disability Services Standards (FaCSIA) 2007 (Com), Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Com), Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Com), Privacy Act 1988 (Com), Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Com), Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Com).</p> <p>Policies: Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure, Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure, OH&S Policy and Procedure, Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying Policy & Procedure, Cyber Bullying Policy & Procedure, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy & Procedure, Privacy Policy & Procedure</p> <p>Other: Rules of Association, Wyndham Community and Education Centre Strategic Plan 2017-2021, 2017 Skills First VET Funding Contract, Client Service Charter (DSS), Wyndham CEC Codes of Conduct, Disability Action Plan (DAP).</p>

Policy Context

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc. (Wyndham CEC) actively promotes principles of access and equity through the programs and services it offers to all eligible members of the Wyndham community and local surrounds. Wyndham CEC is committed to promoting principles of social inclusion and social cohesion through these programs and services and to being responsive to the needs of its local community with a strong emphasis on the disadvantaged, ‘at risk’ youth, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and new and emerging communities.

Wyndham CEC’s vision, mission, values and statement of purpose outline its commitment to providing education and community services based on principles of access and equity.

Due to the diversity of staff, students, clients, Board of Governance and volunteers, Wyndham CEC is guided by the following set of values:

- Respect – being aware of and valuing other beliefs, cultures and opinions

This document was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Governance of the Wyndham Community Centre Inc. on 24/3/17 and supersedes all previous versions.

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- Integrity – being honest, ethical and accountable
- Commitment – consistently achieving our goals, values and purpose
- Inclusion – working together, connecting communities, celebrating diversity
- Responsiveness – consistently responding and adapting to meet community needs

Wyndham CEC promotes these values through:

- Providing access and equity to all members of the community
- Implementation of its policies and procedures
- Supporting and promoting the principles and practice of Australian democracy

Policy

Wyndham CEC acknowledges its legal and ethical responsibilities cover the areas of:

- access in the provision of services offered by Wyndham CEC
- access in employment by Wyndham CEC
- access in the provision of information offered by Wyndham CEC
- access to education and training offered by Wyndham CEC
- access to events hosted or organised by Wyndham CEC
- providing an environment free from discrimination, harassment or racism.

This policy and any related policies above are designed to ensure that programs and services at Wyndham CEC:

- are accessible to all eligible community members free of discrimination on the basis of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race, religion, political affiliation, age, gender, ability or disability or sexual orientation
- are responsive to community needs and individual circumstances and use public resources efficiently
- deliver outcomes which are fair and equitable to those eligible to receive them
- are effective and meet the needs of clients and students from all backgrounds
- are accountable to Wyndham CEC's stakeholders
- actively promote equitable opportunities by creating an environment that is inclusive and equitable regardless of country of birth, language, culture, race, religion, political affiliation, gender, age, ability or disability or sexual orientation.

This policy relates to:

- students pursuing training and development opportunities at Wyndham CEC
- clients accessing settlement and community services at Wyndham CEC
- staff and volunteers engaged by Wyndham CEC

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All Staff, Board members and volunteers are responsible for observing and advocating for this policy and its procedures which will be widely disseminated throughout the organisation.

The CEO has responsibility for ensuring that the intent of this policy and the requirements of the following procedures are complied with. This policy and these procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to comply with relevant state or federal legislation and/or regulations.

Procedure

In order to achieve the intent of this policy, Board members, staff and volunteers (as relevant) at Wyndham CEC will ensure that:

- They work respectfully with all, based on mutual understanding and awareness of cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity
- Effective communication and engagement strategies are used with all clients and students, especially with those for whom language, ability or participation are barriers
- Ensure all clients and students are treated equitably, while acknowledging some community members will need greater levels of responsiveness to their particular circumstances
- All clients and students are encouraged to meet their full potential regardless of ability and social, economic and educational participation
- Settlement prospects of refugees, and CALD communities are strengthened
- Educational programs provide equitable outcomes and lives are strengthened through educational participation

Wyndham CEC management and senior staff will ensure that:

- Programs and services are equitably developed and delivered based on need and fairness
- Wyndham CEC staff will wherever feasible have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to all
- This policy is reviewed annually and implemented across all service units
- Services are monitored for responsiveness and feedback mechanisms are provided
- Wyndham CEC's complaints and appeals mechanisms enable people (regardless of background) to address issues and raise concerns about Wyndham CEC's performance if they believe they have been adversely affected
- Issues are responded to as in a timely way, as they occur
- Cultural competency of staff is developed and promoted through training opportunities and professional development

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- People from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply for staff and Board positions to improve the effectiveness of the organisation
- The community is broadly and regularly consulted
- Responses are improved by working collaboratively with all levels of government, service providers and community organisations and through continued leadership of the Wyndham Humanitarian Network and the Wyndham Interfaith Network
- Access to Wyndham CEC facilities and services includes fair and appropriate allocation of resources, opportunities and quality services
- The needs of clients from CALD backgrounds are considered through the use of interpreters as required
- Clients and students have the opportunity to participate in relevant decision making processes regarding programs and services offered
- Where feasible, any new services or programs have a communication strategy developed which informs people from relevant CALD backgrounds of any changes
- Relevant materials and information made publicly available are accessible and where necessary, communicated appropriately to people from a range of CALD backgrounds
- Consultation with other service providers and government agencies occurs when appropriate, to ensure co-ordination of services appropriate to individual needs.

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