

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

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Policy name	<b>Access and Equity Policy and Procedure</b>
Responsible person	CEO
Staff involved	Board of Governance, all staff and volunteers
Review dates	2024
Related documents	<p><b>Legislation:</b> 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), Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic), Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic), Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic), Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012 (Vic), Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) (VIC) Act 2014</p> <p><b>Policies:</b> Complaints and Appeals Policy &amp; Procedure, Grievance Policy &amp; Procedure, Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Policy &amp; Procedure, OH&amp;S Policy &amp; Procedure, Harassment, Victimization and Bullying Policy &amp; Procedure, Cyber Bullying Policy &amp; Procedure, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy &amp; Procedure, Privacy Policy &amp; Procedure, Whistle-blower Policy &amp; Procedure, Gender Equity Policy &amp; Procedure, Response to disclosure of Family Violence Policy &amp; Procedure, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy &amp; Procedure, VCAL Discipline Policy &amp; Procedure</p> <p><b>Other:</b> Rules of Association, Wyndham Community and Education Centre Strategic Plan 2022-2026, Skills First VET Funding Contract, Wyndham CEC Codes of Conduct, Disability Action Plan (DAP), Reportable Conduct Scheme (Whistle-blower related), Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct, Code of Conduct for Staff, Code of Ethics, Student Code of Conduct, Child Safe Standards</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 inclusion through these programs and services, to reducing barriers for vulnerable community members and to being responsive to the needs of its local community with a strong emphasis on:

- The disadvantaged;
- ‘At risk’ youth;

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This document was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Governance of the Wyndham Community Centre Inc. on 28/4/2023 and supersedes all previous versions.

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- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD);
- Religious/faith groups;
- New and emerging communities;
- First nations people;
- LGBTIQ+; and
- Those with special needs
- Children 15 – 18 in Wyndham CEC programs/services

Wyndham CEC's vision, mission, values, and statement of purpose all outline its commitment to providing education and community services based on principles of access and equity, ensuring such principles are respected in policy and practice.

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
- 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 members of the community
- Implementation of its policies and procedures
- Supporting and promoting the principles and practice of Australian democracy
- Understanding the diverse circumstances of children

In this policy, the term *access* is taken to mean the right or opportunity to use a service or facility irrespective of age, race, culture, disability, religion, or gender. The term *equity* means fairness and impartiality towards all concerned, based on the principle of even-handed dealing for those eligible to receive services, taking into account the diverse circumstances of some children, clients, students and staff.

### **Policy**

As a service provider, Wyndham CEC will make services available to everyone who is entitled to them, free from any form of discrimination on the basis of the person's country of birth, culture, race, sender or religion.

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 or volunteering by Wyndham CEC
- access in the provision of information offered by Wyndham CEC

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- 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
- promoting gender equity principles.
- providing a child safe and culturally safe environment.

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

- are accessible to 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 understanding diverse circumstances of many, 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 supports or responds to the needs of vulnerable students such as First Nations, CALD, LGBTIQ+, those with a disability.

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
- children in senior secondary programs.

All Staff, Board members and volunteers are responsible for observing and advocating for this policy and its procedures which will be disseminated throughout the organisation and available on SharePoint, Wyndham CEC's information management platform.

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 they continue 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 at Wyndham CEC will ensure that:

- In its role as an employer, staff have equal access to advertised positions, interviews, equipment, office accommodation, training and promotion.

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- Staff work respectfully with all, based on mutual understanding and awareness of cultural diversity, religious diversity and cultural sensitivity
- Staff use effective communication and engagement strategies with clients and students, especially with those for whom language, ability or participation are barriers
- They treat clients and students equitably, while acknowledging some community members will need greater levels of responsiveness to their particular circumstances and may need tailored design to provide equal access for all users
- Specific information is requested at enrolment (students) about special needs to facilitate full participation
- They encourage clients and students to meet their full potential regardless of ability, social, economic or educational participation
- They strengthen Settlement prospects of refugees, and CALD communities
- They provide Educational programs that deliver equitable outcomes and strengthen lives through educational participation, ensuring programs are designed to provide equal access
- They apply a gender lens when reviewing or creating policies and procedures
- They have a zero-tolerance approach to child safety is maintained at all times.

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, where feasible, have adequate support and training to provide services and information accessible to communities
- 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 to address issues and raise concerns about Wyndham CEC's performance if they believe they have been adversely affected
- Issues are responded to in a timely way
- Cultural competency of staff is developed and promoted through training opportunities and professional development
- People from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply for staff and Board positions to improve the effectiveness of the organisation
- The community is consulted for feedback about services and progress
- Responses are improved by working collaboratively with stakeholders
- 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 or bicultural workers

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- 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.
- Families and communities are involved in efforts to keep children and young people safe
- There is a focus on cultural safety for any First Nations students or clients
- Strong governance systems and processes work to keep children and young people safe and empowered.