

## Access and Equity Policy

### Organisational Environment

Our vision - "AgForce is committed to providing a safe working environment and excellence in training service. Our customers and their needs are our prime focus. We strive to achieve a highly competent, skilled and flexible worker in an extremely changing environment"

AgForce Training is a privately owned Registered Training Organisation that provides vocational education and training so as to service the vocational and further education needs of industry, commerce and the general community.

AgForce Training offers nationally recognised qualifications as per our scope of registration. Our highly successful training programs are not only orientated towards current industry and workplace needs. But, also provide the right skills at the right time so each person, receiving our training and services, can successfully achieve their own personal goals or specific objectives.

Our organisation is committed to government legislation and best practice guidelines. We have current human resource practices, which include: equal employment opportunity, anti-discrimination, quality assurance, workplace health and safety and risk management.

### Policy

As a Registered training Organisation, AgForce Training will meet the needs of individuals, and the community as a whole through the integration of access and equity guidelines. We will ensure that equity principles for all people are implemented through the fair allocation of resources and the right to equality of opportunity without discrimination. We will increase opportunities for people to participate in the vocational education and training system, and in associated decisions which their lives. We will implement customer oriented conservation programs and target the specific needs of market segments in enhancing the economic development of the organisation.

### Procedure

- Ensure the establishment of non-discriminatory student selection procedures which encourage fair access for members of under-represented groups.
- Ensure access and equity issues are considered during course design, training materials development, resource allocation and implementation of Training Packages.
- Provide access to staff development to assist trainers/assessors who deliver training and assessment to under-represented groups.

## Principles

Access and equity at AgForce Training is based on the application of the following principles:

- Equity for all people through the fair and appropriate allocation of resources and involvement in our vocational education and training system.
- Equality of outcome within AgForce Training's vocational education and training for all people, without discrimination.
- Access for all people to appropriate, quality vocational education and training programs and services.
- Increased opportunity for people to participate in our vocational education and training and in relevant decision making processes within our vocational education and training system.

Access and equity, as a best practice strategy, underpins all other policies and programs within AgForce.

Best practice in our vocational education and training involves the establishment of social justice and an adherence to the principles of access and equity. It involves benchmarking for people who face barriers to successful participation in mainstream vocational education and training to achieve improvements for them.

Our best practice programs acknowledge the complexity within the specific groups and the multiple barriers to educational participation experienced by some people.

## What is EEO?

Broadly defined, EEO is the principle which ensures that all employees and clients of an organisation are treated equitably and fairly, regardless of their race, sex or disability. Everyone has an equal chance when applying for jobs or promotions, training opportunities, and in their working conditions. EEO is the cornerstone of all sound human resources management.

EEO benefits everyone, and in particular it addresses the needs of groups within the workforce and the community who have been disadvantaged in the past - Aboriginal people, people from non-English speaking background, people with disabilities, and women. AgForce Training has developed its policy in access and equity to introduce a program that identifies and removes discriminatory practices and barriers. This will assist target groups faced with seeking employment or training opportunities.

## Terms and Definitions

- **Affirmative Action** is an umbrella term for a wide range of programs designed to achieve equal opportunity for women, based on merit.
- **Best Practice Requirements** - *The Best Practice Requirements for Recognised Training in Queensland* is a series of booklets on registration, accreditation, industry involvement and quality arrangements under the Australian Recognition Framework.

- **Cultural Diversity** acknowledges the many differences within society based on cultural backgrounds and experiences (rather than just looking at differences between individuals).
- **Discrimination** There are two types of discrimination - direct and indirect.

**Direct Discrimination** occurs when a person is treated unfairly because of their sex, sexuality, race, age or because they have a disability.

**Indirect Discrimination** is more difficult to identify and often occurs unintentionally. Indirect discrimination often happens when there is a requirement (a rule, a policy or a system):

- \* which appears fair
- \* but has an unfavourable effect on one group compared with another
- \* and in the circumstances, the requirement is not reasonable.

If the impact of the requirement is proportionally worse on one particular group (eg. one culture over another; women as opposed to men) then indirect discrimination is probably occurring.

- **Equity** focuses on outcomes. Equity is not concerned with treating people 'the same', it is concerned with ensuring that all groups of people participate and benefit to the same level.
- **Inclusive:** an 'inclusive environment, classroom or curriculum is one that acknowledges and values the differences between people and cultures. It 'includes' rather than excludes.

### Getting Advice and assistance

Trainers and assessors undertake ongoing opportunities for their professional development to assist them to respond to the needs of all students.

#### Some useful contacts are:

Language Australia - 1800 247 352

Reading and Writing Hotline - 1300 655 506

Translating and Interpreter Service - 131 450

Training.gov.au – training.gov.au

ATSIC - 1800 804 754

Blind & Low Vision (Royal Blind Foundation of QLD Inc) - 1800 622 954

Information on Disabilities Equipment Access and Services (IDEAS) - 1800 029 904