

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

- (1) This Procedure is made in relation to the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Rule.
- (2) The University of New England Strategic Plan ([UNE Strategic Plan](#)) and associated Operational and Action Plans are the key documents in the University's cycle of planning and accountability in regards to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- (3) This Procedure applies to all UNE staff and students.
- (4) This Procedure and associated Guidelines, such as the [Acknowledgement of Country Guideline](#) (Annexure 1) and the UNE [Inclusive Language Guideline](#) (Annexure 2), provide guidance to ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion form the basis of all operations and interactions between everyone in the UNE community, including UNE staff and students.

Section 2 - Procedure

Part A - Representation and Voice in the University Community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

- (5) UNE is committed to embedding the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our decision making, to create an environment in which everyone thrives.
- (6) UNE is dedicated to obtaining equitable employment, education and career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and has clear goals and programs in place to achieve a real increase in the number of staff and students. This is embodied through the [UNE Aboriginal Employment](#) and [Education](#) Strategies as well as the Vice-Chancellor's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy Oversight Committee](#).
- (7) UNE's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategies set ambitious targets and provide frameworks in employment, education and research that ensure that we provide a culturally safe environment that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students to be their authentic selves.
- (8) The UNE Oorala Aboriginal Centre provides services, programs and facilities of a nationally recognised standard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The centre is a facility of nationally recognised excellence offering teaching, learning and student-centred activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UNE. The Oorala Aboriginal Centre will maintain a continued commitment to community and culture through strong connections.

Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country

- (9) The University is committed to incorporating Welcome to and/or Acknowledgement of Country protocols into meetings and events. This action recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and custodians of Australia and promotes awareness of the past and the ongoing connection to place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The [Acknowledgement of Country Guideline](#) is at Annexure 1.

People with a Disability

(10) While complying with the definitions of disability in the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) and [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#), UNE recognises the social model of disability, which views disability as the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

(11) This Procedure also applies to carers of people with a disability as well as people with temporary disabilities, including injuries and severe illnesses, as per the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#).

(12) UNE recognises and values the contributions and potential of our staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders with a disability. UNE is working on eliminating institutional, systemic and other barriers within UNE to develop a culture of inclusivity, belonging and equitable engagement that ensures all members of the UNE community thrive and flourish.

(13) People with a disability and their carers, support workers, delegates or nominees shall have equitable access and practical support to participate fully in all aspects of university life, including:

- a. access to services and events;
- b. access to buildings and facilities;
- c. information in accessible formats;
- d. receiving a high quality service;
- e. opportunities to make complaints;
- f. opportunities to participate in public consultation; and
- g. study and employment at UNE.

(14) UNE is committed to promoting access and inclusion in accordance with Universal Design for Learning principles into online learning content, as per the Course Design Framework in the [Course and Unit Policy](#). UNE is working towards integrating these principles into all aspects of the University's operations.

(15) Potential and existing UNE staff and students have no obligation to disclose a disability unless it is likely to affect their ability to undertake the inherent requirements of their position or their degree/studies.

Reasonable Adjustments

(16) All personal and sensitive information provided by UNE staff and students, about reasonable adjustments that may be required for their study or workplace, is managed in compliance with the [Health Records and Information Privacy Act](#) (HRIP ACT) and the [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#) (PIPP ACT) as detailed in the [UNE Privacy Management Rule](#).

(17) Reasonable adjustments are a reasonable change to a process, practice, procedure or environment to assist the person to participate on the same basis as persons without a disability and who are not carers of a person with a disability. Reasonable adjustments must not compromise the inherent requirements of the position and/or the academic integrity and inherent requirements of the degree of study that the person is employed in and/or studying, impose unjustifiable hardship on the business area or compromise the health and welfare of UNE staff and/or students.

UNE Staff

(18) UNE operationalises its commitment to UNE staff requiring reasonable workplace adjustments through:

- a. taking reasonable steps to ensure that UNE staff with a disability, UNE staff who are carers for a person with a disability and other UNE staff requiring workplace adjustments, are able to access support without

discrimination and without undue delay;

- b. providing services and support for UNE staff to assist their participation and engagement in employment; and
- c. adopting a case management approach regarding the provision of reasonable adjustments, return to work and other support, for UNE staff.

(19) UNE staff may request a reasonable adjustment from their line manager initially and should provide supporting medical or other documentation with their request. The line manager and/or employee may consult the Health and Wellbeing Team in People and Culture.

(20) The University may require UNE staff, who are carers of a person with a disability and who are requesting reasonable adjustment, to provide evidence of their carer status.

(21) The Health and Wellbeing Team and the line manager may require additional health professional documentation or other information to verify the functional outcomes of the disability, health condition, caring status or other situation. If the disability and functional outcomes are evident, discretion may be used when requesting documentation.

(22) If required, the Director People and Culture will make a final decision on whether health practitioner or other documentation is acceptable and when updated documentation is required.

(23) Where a UNE staff member is awaiting assessment by a health practitioner, line managers may apply imputation of disability where there is clear evidence of impact on function in the workplace.

(24) The line manager, on receiving a request for reasonable adjustments from a UNE staff member, assesses the request to determine what adjustments may be reasonable for the business area to accommodate directly or with support through external funding, such as the [Funding for Workplace Changes](#) (EAF). The line manager will then develop a work plan together with the UNE staff member to meet their requirements. The line manager may seek guidance from the Health and Wellbeing Team. The Health and Wellbeing Team may assess any request received and may provide recommendations to the line manager for reasonable adjustments to be incorporated into a work plan. The line manager must have regard to any recommendation made by the Health and Wellbeing Team.

(25) Line managers may, in consultation with the UNE staff member, provide reasonable adjustments to allow equitable access for UNE staff to perform duties, taking into account supporting medical or other documentation provided.

(26) The line manager or business area will provide the adjustment within a reasonable time frame of receiving the request or following funding approval from the EAF.

(27) It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure reasonable adjustments remain suitable for the UNE staff member to perform their duties.

(28) It is the UNE staff member's responsibility to inform their line manager and/or Health and Wellbeing Team should they require an amendment to their adjustments or should they no longer require reasonable adjustments as part of their duties.

(29) The UNE staff member's work unit is responsible for funding workplace adjustments. Most adjustments require little or no expenditure or can be funded externally, such as through the EAF.

(30) Where an adjustment has been requested and determined not to be reasonable by the line manager, UNE staff may appeal the decision as per the relevant UNE policies and procedures.

Students

(31) UNE operationalises its commitment to students requiring reasonable study adjustments through:

- a. taking reasonable steps to ensure that all students are able to access support services without discrimination.
- b. the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office provides reasonable adjustments to students facing a range of barriers to higher education, in addition to students with a disability and carers of a person with a disability (as per the Disability Standards for Education 2005). These include, but are not limited to, students who volunteer for or are employed with the Australian Defence Force (ADF), Emergency Services and other relevant organisations and Government departments, elite athletes, survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence, incarcerated students, students on permanent humanitarian visas and students facing other barriers.

(32) A student may request a reasonable adjustment from either the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office; or their Unit Coordinator/ Supervisor within the school or faculty and should provide supporting medical or other documentation with their request. If the disability and functional outcomes are evident, discretion may be used when requesting documentation.

(33) The Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office, in consultation with the student, and following receipt of relevant health professional documentation and/ or other supporting evidence, develops a Study Access Plan (SAP) that relates to all aspects of study, including coursework, research, fieldwork and assessment. A SAP is valid for a defined period and will be reviewed and/ or updated, as required between the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office and the student.

(34) Students are responsible for distributing their SAP to Unit Coordinator and relevant academic and professional staff in a timely manner to ensure adjustments are actioned appropriately, as per UNE [Assessment Policy](#).

(35) Adjustments cannot be applied retrospectively and once deemed as reasonable by the Unit Coordinator or Course Coordinator, are provided by the University within a reasonable timeframe of receiving the request.

(36) Where an adjustment has been requested and determined not to be reasonable, the requesting student may appeal the decision in accordance with the relevant policy.

(37) On receiving a request for reasonable adjustment from a student, a Unit Coordinator may:

- a. Refer the request to the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office for their assessment and to determine a Study Access Plan (SAP); and/or
- b. implement any reasonable adjustments for students in the absence of a SAP, where appropriate; and/or
- c. assess the SAP from the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office to determine whether the adjustment is appropriate and reasonable for participation in the course or program.

(38) Unit Coordinators are responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments for students, other than those implemented by the Exams and eAssessment Team or the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office.

(39) The Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office and/or the school or faculty may require documentation or additional information to determine reasonable adjustments to support the student's ability to meet the inherent requirements of the course.

(40) The Unit Coordinator may consult with the Student Accessibility and Wellbeing Office to assist in decisions as to whether the unit or course can accommodate the request for reasonable adjustments, considering the unit/course inherent requirements and assessments and respond to the student.

People of Diverse Sexualities and Genders

(41) UNE is committed to the inclusion and support of UNE staff and students of diverse sexualities and gender identities through relevant action plans, the UNE [Inclusive Language Guideline](#) (in Annexure 2), the UNE Ally Network and student queer bodies. UNE values the contribution of allies in the promotion for inclusion of all who face barriers to participation. Through the provision of awareness training and resources, UNE aims to foster positive, informed, and inclusive attitudes and behaviours towards all staff and students.

People from Culturally and Religiously Marginalised Backgrounds

(42) UNE values the perspectives and contributions of UNE staff and students from culturally and religiously marginalised backgrounds (CARM) and strives to reduce the barriers faced by UNE staff and students from these backgrounds. UNE seeks to reflect the diversity of the communities that we serve in the composition of our own community and curriculum, as well as in our approach to teaching and learning, research and engagement.

(43) UNE works towards embedding the focus areas of service delivery, planning, leadership and engagement of the NSW Multicultural Policies and Services Program (MPSP) into core business activities (as per the [Multicultural NSW Act 2000](#)).

Gender Equity

(44) UNE takes a proactive approach in meeting and exceeding its gender equality targets for the six gender equality indicators (GEI's) under the [Workforce Gender Equality Act 2012](#) (WGE Act). These are reflected in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Rule, promoted through training and awareness raising campaigns and in active recruitment to identified positions under the [Anti-Discrimination Act 1977](#).

(45) UNE promotes the participation of people from diverse backgrounds in decision making and advisory committees through the implementation of the [Gender Representation on Decision Making and Advisory Committees Policy](#).

(46) We acknowledge and understand that not everyone identifies with the gender binary, therefore a focus on gender equality needs to benefit all genders.

Mature Age Staff and Students

(47) UNE does not tolerate ageism and recognises the unique disadvantages in higher education faced by UNE staff and students who are mature age. UNE seeks to actively leverage the vast range of knowledge capital of our mature age cohorts while ensuring that the University's learning and working environments are accessible to all.

Children and Young People

(48) UNE acknowledges Australia's role as a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and holds as its standard the rights and obligations outlined under this convention. For more information on UNE's commitment to child safety and supporting the rights of the child please refer to UNE's [Child Protection Policy](#) and [Procedure](#).

Breach of this Procedure

UNE Students

(49) Complaints and grievances in relation to the application of these procedures are to be managed according to the [Student \(Related\) Grievance Handling Policy](#) and Procedures.

UNE Staff

(50) Where either the [UNE Academic and English Language Teaching Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024-2026](#), or [UNE](#)

[Professional Staff Enterprise Agreement 2023 - 2026](#) applies, the complaint process in the enterprise agreement will be followed in relation to the application of this Procedure.

(51) Where the [Complaints Policy – UNE Representatives not covered by Enterprise Agreements](#) applies, the process in that policy will be followed in relation to the application of this Procedure.

Section 3 - Authority and Compliance

(52) The Director People and Culture, in accordance with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Rule, makes this procedure.

(53) UNE staff and students must observe the procedure in relation to University matters.

(54) The Director People and Culture is authorised to develop guidelines and associated documentation for the operation of these Procedures that are staff related. The guidelines and associated documentation must be compatible with the provisions of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Rule.

(55) The Executive Principal Student Journey is authorised to develop guidelines and associated documentation for the operation of these Procedures that are student related. The guidelines and associated documentation must be compatible with the provisions of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Rule.

(56) This Procedure operates as and from the Effective Date.

(57) Previous procedures on equity and diversity and related documents are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Procedure.

Section 4 - Quality Assurance

(58) The Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Director People and Culture will regularly monitor and report to the VC&CEO on the operation and effectiveness of this Procedure.

Section 5 - Definitions Specific to this Procedure

(59) Intersectionality – refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person’s identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation.

(60) Culturally and Racially Marginalised Backgrounds (CARM) – ‘Culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds (CARM)’ – The terms ‘multicultural communities’ and ‘culturally and linguistically diverse’ (CALD) imply that there is a ‘norm’ of Anglo-white and all other Australians are ‘others’. There is ample evidence that this categorisation continues to lead to racist acts and policies. This group includes people who are black, brown, Asian, or any other non-white group, who face marginalisation due to their race. The term ‘culturally’ is added because it recognised that people may also face discrimination due to their culture or background.

(61) Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reservist or Employee – A student who is a member of the ADF Reserves or employed by the ADF who is required to undertake Service, attend compulsory camps of continuous training in a year and occasionally a non-compulsory camp or course, other intensive training or is called into continuous full-time service.

(62) Emergency Service Volunteer or Employee – a Student who is registered as a member of any formally endorsed state, territory or federal emergency services or humanitarian organisation or other competent authority under a State Disaster Plan.

(63) Elite Athlete – is a Student who is identified and recognised by one of the following organisations as an Elite Athlete representing Australia, or a State or Territory of Australia:

- a. Australia Institute of Sport
- b. State Institutes or Academies of Sport
- c. Australian Cricketers' Association
- d. AFL Players' Association
- e. Rugby Union Players' Association
- f. Rugby League Professionals' Association
- g. Australian Professional Footballers' Association
- h. alternatively, they must be a national squad member from Australian Sports Commission funded sports

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	9th September 2024
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Approval Authority	Chief Operating Officer
Approval Date	6th August 2024
Expiry Date	Not applicable
Unit Head	Anthea White Director People and Culture
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Assessment" - Is the process whereby evaluative judgements are made in relation to a student's achievements against the learning outcomes of a unit of study.

"Student" - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

"Research" - Is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative (defined by the Australian Research Council).

"Course" - Course means a syllabus, a curriculum, a training package, units of study, or structured workplace learning, the successful completion of which leads to the conferral of an award on the student by the University (including but not limited to a regulated qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework).

"Unit" - Is a part of a course with a code, title and credit point value for which a result is recorded on a student's academic record.

"School" - Is an organisational unit comprising academic staff in related fields of study who are responsible for teaching and research in those academic fields together with support staff.

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" - Is a person who is of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and is accepted and known as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person by the community in which they have lived.

"Faculty" - An organisational unit consisting of a group of related Schools, which is responsible for coordinating the management and quality of the teaching and research conducted by those Schools.