

Staff Equity, Diversity and Fair Treatment Policy

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Review date
01	Board of Directors	August 2024	September 2025

Administrators Responsible	President, Registrar, HR Coordinator
Purpose	The Staff Equity, Diversity and Fair Treatment Policy underscores ISGL's unwavering commitment to nurturing an environment that emphatically values and promotes equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusivity. This commitment is anchored in the universal principles of equity, fairness, and social justice. The policy ensures ISGL's adherence to its legal obligations under pertinent legislation, aiming to create a workplace where every staff member feels valued, respected and empowered.
Scope	This comprehensive policy is applicable to all ISGL employees, agents, and contractors—including temporary personnel. It transcends the conventional bounds of the workplace or standard working hours, extending to all work-related functions such as work lunches, events, conferences, religious celebrations and client functions. This policy reaffirms our commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles across all facets of employment and service provision. It does not, however, constitute part of any employment contract or service agreement.

1. Policy Principles:

ISGL's dedication to fostering an inclusive culture that celebrates diversity and ensures fair treatment is evident in our active commitment to equal opportunity. We are focused on enabling our staff to reach their fullest potential within a supportive, equitable, and diverse setting. Key initiatives include:

- Enhancing Representation:** Actively working to increase the representation of under-represented groups through targeted strategies and supportive programs, acknowledging and addressing their unique needs to facilitate a harmonious balance between personal responsibilities and professional duties.
- Preventing Workplace Negativity:** Vigorously combating discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation and vilification, taking all reasonable measures to ensure every employee is treated with respect and dignity.
- Adherence to Legislation:** Complying with the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992), the Disability Standards for Education (2005) and the Higher Education Standards Framework (2021), reflecting our deep-seated commitment to equity and diversity.

2. Operational Measures:

- Cultivating an Inclusive Culture:** Promoting a workplace environment that values the diversity of its community and ensures an inclusive, flexible working space for all employees.
- Awareness and Training:** Ensuring all staff are informed of their rights and responsibilities, providing training and professional development opportunities focused on equal opportunity, equity and social justice.
- Systematic Management:** Developing and endorsing processes for the systematic implementation, monitoring, and management of equal opportunity, alongside effective mechanisms for resolving complaints related to discrimination, bullying, harassment, and vilification.
- Support for Affected Employees:** Establishing a supportive culture for employees impacted by domestic and family violence and providing necessary assistance.

3. Rights and Responsibilities:

All employees are required to:

- Comprehend and adhere to this policy.
- Refrain from engaging in any form of unlawful conduct.
- Report any witnessed unlawful conduct.
- Participate in the complaint procedure confidentially and responsibly.

4. Breach of Policy:

Violations of this policy will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment for staff or termination of contracts for contractors and agents.

5. Complaint Handling Procedure:

Individuals experiencing or witnessing unlawful conduct are encouraged to report these incidents through the channels outlined in the Staff Grievance Policy and Procedures, with specific procedures for handling Sexual Harassment or Sexual Assault detailed in the relevant policy.

6. Further Assistance:

For queries or uncertainties regarding this policy, employees should consult the HR Coordinator or the HR Department.

7. Legislation and Compliance:

This policy is informed by and complies with relevant Australian legislation, including the Age Discrimination Act 2004, Disability Discrimination Act 1992, and the Fair Work Act 2009, ensuring ISGL maintains the highest standards of equity, diversity and fairness.

8. Definitions and Terms:

These definitions are provided to ensure all staff at ISGL have a clear understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behavior, aligning with the principles of equity, diversity, and fair treatment outlined in this policy. Compliance with these definitions is expected to foster a respectful, inclusive, and safe working environment for everyone at ISGL.

- a. **Bullying:** Bullying occurs when an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves in a way that is unreasonable and that creates a risk to health and safety. This includes both direct (such as verbal abuse or physical aggression) and indirect behaviors (such as isolating someone from group activities or spreading malicious rumors). It does not include reasonable management actions conducted in a fair manner.
- b. **Discrimination:** Discrimination happens when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favorably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. Australian law defines these characteristics to include age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity, and sexual orientation among others. Discrimination can occur directly, where a person is openly disadvantaged, or indirectly, where an unreasonable requirement or condition is set that disadvantages a person or group of people.
- c. **Harassment:** Harassment involves any unwelcome conduct that intimidates, offends, humiliates, or undermines an individual or group. In the workplace, it can take various forms, including but not limited to, jokes, offensive language, intimidation, or unwanted sexual advances. It is important to note that harassment can be a single incident or a pattern of behavior.
- d. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is a form of harassment involving unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature where a reasonable person would anticipate that the person harassed would feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. It encompasses a range of behaviors, from seemingly benign comments to serious sexual assault.
- e. **Victimisation:** Victimisation occurs when a person is treated detrimentally because they have made, or intended to make, a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or have supported someone else in making a complaint. Protecting individuals from victimisation is an important part of ensuring that people feel safe to raise concerns.
- f. **Vilification:** Vilification refers to public acts that incite hatred, serious contempt, or severe ridicule towards a person or group of people, based on race, religion, sexuality, or gender identity. Acts of vilification can include speeches, statements, or representations made publicly that could incite hatred, contempt, or ridicule.
- g. **Disability Discrimination:** Disability discrimination occurs when a person with a disability is treated less favorably than a person without a disability in the same or similar circumstances. It also includes situations where a blanket rule or policy has a less favorable effect on people with a disability compared to people without a disability and that rule or policy is not reasonable.

Related Documents

- a. Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- b. Staff Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedures