MOUNT ELIZA
SECONDARY COLLEGE

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY POLICY

"Mount Eliza Secondary College is committed to safe and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be our primary focus of our care and decision making."

The purpose of this policy is to explain Mount Eliza Secondary College's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. This policy should be read alongside the following Department of Education and Training Policies:

- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights – Students.
- For staff, the Respectful Workplaces policies (including Equal Opportunity and Anti - Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Mount Eliza Secondary College.

POLICY

Definitions

Personal attribute: A personal characteristic that is protected by the State Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

Direct discrimination: unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination: imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or patience that disadvantages a person or group of people with protected attribute.

Sexual harassment: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

Disability harassment: an action taken in relation to the person's disability that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person.

Vilification: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law)

Inclusion and Diversity

Mount Eliza Secondary College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

Mount Eliza Secondary College is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Mount Eliza Secondary College acknowledges and celebrates the diversity backgrounds and experiences within our school community, and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Mount Eliza Secondary College, we value the human rights of every students, and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

Mount Eliza Secondary College will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- Ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and there necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (e.g. school sports, concerts, instrumental music, production etc) on the same basis as their peers.
- Acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- Encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- Challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- Contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- Respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be

tolerated and Mount Eliza Secondary College. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with out *Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying Prevention* policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Our College utilises a Restorative Practices approach and has established a partnership with Real Schools. This approach promotes social responsibility and encourages students to understand the impact their behaviour has had on others. This approach is based on a constructive, mutual and empathetic approach to resolving differences. The benefit is that students better appreciate the consequences of their actions and are less likely to repeat that behaviour. Students benefit from the opportunity to engage directly with staff in mutually respectful way to find positive solutions.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Mount Eliza Secondary College also understands that is has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist the students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents / carers, their teachers if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability please email Matthew Sires, Disability and Inclusion Learning Specialist – msires@mesc.vic.edu.au

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard Copy available from school administration upon request

For staff, please see the Department's Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying which apply to all staff working at our school.

Other relevant Department Policies and resources on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- Students with Disability
- Koorie Education

- Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture
- Safe Schools
- Supports and Services
- Program for Students with Disabilities

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2027