



Terms of Reference Policy Subcommittee

Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee

1.0 Purpose and Principles

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy Subcommittee ('the Subcommittee') is a subcommittee of the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The Subcommittee will monitor and recommend the creation, amendment or rescission of policies concerning Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) identified for that calendar year.

The Subcommittee aims to ensure EDI policies are appropriate, up-to-date, and reflective of the University's commitment to EDI.

1.1. The Subcommittee will ensure:

- EDI policies are sufficient, relevant, current, and succinct.
- Gaps in EDI policy are identified and updated to reflect best-practice equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Students and staff have access to up-to-date EDI policies.
- EDI policies are aligned with the University EDI Strategic Plan.
- EDI policies are appropriately paralleled with legislative requirements (such as AHRC anti-discrimination laws).
- A diversity of voices and experiences of students and staff from equity cohorts (defined in the EDI strategic plan) are sought and represented in the committee.
- Equity cohort feedback is encouraged, consistently sought, effective, and safe.

1.2. The Subcommittee observes the following principles:

- EDI policies will reflect the University's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion relevant to its strategic objectives and the diverse concerns, capacities, contributions and needs of staff and students.
- The Subcommittee will analyse, identify, and report on equity, diversity, and inclusion gaps within EDI policy.

- Include the opinion of equity cohorts when consulting regarding EDI policy changes.
- All new or updated EDI policies will be transparent and openly communicated.

2.0 Functions and Scope

- 2.1 The Subcommittee will review policies that relate to EDI at designated review dates or when the need for change arises as indicated by the EDI Unit.
- 2.2 The Subcommittee will follow the University of Newcastle Policy Framework procedure for policy creation, review, or amendment: [Policy Framework / Document / UON Policy Library / The University of Newcastle, Australia](#)
- 2.3 When significant changes or a new policy is required, or a current policy needs to be rescinded, the drafting of such changes will be undertaken by the Subcommittee and will be informed by appropriate consultation.
- 2.5 The Subcommittee will request approval of policy changes and new policies in accordance with the University's delegations of authority.
- 2.4 The Subcommittee may establish working groups as required to assist in informing and progressing new policies or significant changes in existing policies.
- 2.5 The Subcommittee will identify policies and policy priorities at the beginning of each calendar year to focus on.
- 2.6 New policy development may occur when recommended by EDI committee to EC.
- 2.7 The development of new policies can be created after the EDI Unit recommends to the Executive Committee and endorsement has been granted. A new Diversity & Inclusion policy reflecting the principles of the EDI Strategy will be a focus for the Subcommittee in addition to the review of existing policies.

3.0 Membership

- 3.1 The membership of the Subcommittee will have the skills and experience to ensure EDI policies uphold principles of equity, diversity and inclusion of all staff and students.
- 3.2 Membership will comprise of:
 - Chair (EDI representative)
 - Assistant Dean EDI representative
 - Governance and Assurance Services representative
 - One Student and one staff representative from an equity cohort.

- 3.3 At all times, it must be ensured that:
- At least 50% of members must be from an equity cohort.
 - The membership should be comprised of a minimum of six members.
 - There is no more than 60% representation of one gender.
- 3.4 Members remain on the Subcommittee for a term of 2 years. At the end of the 2-year term, committee membership will be reviewed and if appropriate new members will be appointed.
- 3.5 When a member leaves the Subcommittee, their position must be replaced within four weeks if their position is required to fulfil requirements under 3.2.
- 3.6 By discretion of the Chair, the Subcommittee may form working groups or seek advice and expertise from outside its membership, to assist with new or emerging policy.
- 3.7 The roles and responsibilities of the Chair include:
- Coordinating, Chairing, and circulating minutes of meetings and communicating with the subcommittee.
 - In consultation with the University Lead EDI, leading the subcommittee through relevant processes.
 - Ensuring proper consultative processes are undertaken.
 - Reporting to the EDI Committee.
 - Liaising with subject matter experts (SME) and Policy Owner (Responsible Executive) in relevant policy discussion if not within the committee.
- 3.8 At all times, all members must act in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct. It is expected that all members will communicate about the University respectfully and constructively at meetings.
- 3.9 Members must recognise that minutes, communications, and documents created during the subcommittee's work are confidential.

4.0 Meetings, Attendance and Communication

- 4.1 The Subcommittee will meet a minimum of every eight weeks or on a needs basis. When the Subcommittee needs to progress a particular activity, the subcommittee may agree to meet more frequently.
- 4.2 It is expected that each Subcommittee member will attend regularly and provide an apology if unable to attend.
- 4.3 Members are expected to commit to the subcommittee approximately two hours a month. Specific actions will be determined at meetings.

- 4.4 Members are expected to engage in constructive and timely communication between meetings, whether to agree on a course of action, review documents or indicate availability.
- 4.6 Any substantial consultation with students outside the committee attracts remuneration as a payment at the appropriate casual rate.

5.0 Reporting and Approval

- 5.1a The University EDI Lead approves relevant policy changes and reports changes to the next EDI committee meeting.
- 5.1b For a policy that EDI is directly responsible for, the subcommittee prepares recommendations and sends them to Responsible Executive for approval.
- 5.1c The Subcommittee sends changes to an existing policy or new policy to be reviewed by Governance and Assurance Services.
- 5.1d Governance and Assurance Services and/or subcommittee submits draft for consultation with students and staff.
- 5.1e Once a final draft is agreed upon, the Subcommittee seeks approval from the appropriate delegated authority per the University’s delegations of authority policy.
- 5.2a For a policy that EDI is not directly responsible for, the Subcommittee will make recommendations to send to the Policy’s Responsible Executive.
- 5.3 Updates on all EDI policies will be shared with the University community.

Document History

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