

# Access, Equity and Cultural Diversity Policy

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## Purpose:

Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. aims to ensure that individuals have equal opportunities to participate effectively in programs and services whatever their age, gender, indigenous culture, ethnic origin, (dis)ability, economic circumstance, religious or political affiliation, and whatever their literacy or numeracy skills.

By providing accessible, equitable and equal opportunity programs, training and services to the community we aim to enhance life and work opportunities for people in our local community.

## Broad Guidelines:

- This policy is in keeping with our undertaking as an organisation to deliver the highest quality services and products – a policy declaring our position on cultural diversity and accessibility.
- Staff is encouraged to be pro-active in improving all aspects and quality of the service provision.
- Services to the disabled have been implemented over past years with the view to possible expansion, as needs are perceived.
- Diversity in our community is reflected in the management and service provision of the organisation;
- Inclusiveness is the key focus to managing diversity in program and service provision, and where necessary, affirmative strategies are implemented to increase participation of individuals and specific communities;
- Quality education programs and services which increase the capacity of individuals to participate in work, community life, further education and/or community activities will be delivered by the organisation for the community.
- Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. will develop and implement a range of strategies in its management and delivery of educational services, support services and child and family services to diverse groups in the community.

## Implementation process - *examples in Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. may be:*

To develop and sustain programs, practices and services that are responsive to the needs of diverse and evolving community by:

- Valuing and responding to the diversity of the local community;
- Providing accessible and flexible programs and services;
- Offering choice to participants;
- Responding to members of the local community with special needs;
- Ensuring that policies and procedures within Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. are open to public scrutiny and demonstrate a clear commitment to equity and access for all groups within our community;
- Identifying and breaking down potential barriers to participation.
- Promoting the recognition and understanding of the difference between and within
- In providing information in English, ensure that only plain English is used;
- New Residents' Kits to include information in major community languages;
- How to access translation and interpreting services;
- Ensure the Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. is accessible & provides specific services to people with disabilities;
- Actively pursue funding available to provide these services;
- Educating staff and volunteers to help people access translation and interpreting services;
- Providing an effective range of programs and services to meet community needs and expectations;

## Practices and procedures

- To facilitate maximum participation for all individuals,
- Enrolment in class is dependent on resources, class size, availability of appropriate support, and ability to meet class pre-requisites.
- Where the participant requires the assistance of a support person, the role of the support person will be to maximise the individual's ability to participate in the class. **This may include:**
  1. Simplifying / explaining tasks instructions where necessary
  2. Allowing the individual to complete as many tasks and make as many decisions as are realistic.
  3. Participating in activities with the group
  4. Regularly liaising with tutor and Manager on how adequately the particular program is meeting the needs of the individual.
  5. Consulting with the Manager and class tutor about any changes.

## Legislative Obligations

Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. also acknowledges the organisations legal obligations under State and Federal legislation and regulatory requirements, equal opportunity law, the and the Occupational, Health, Safety and Welfare Act, to ensure that our working and teaching practices are fair and equitable, and our working and learning environment non-discriminatory.

## Strategies

To effectively recognise, value and enrich the diversity of our local community, Park Orchards Learning Centre Inc. will:

- Know its local community and the make-up of demographics;
- Provide affordable flexible programs accessible to all;
- Participate in planning and professional development that enables us to better understand the needs of our local community and deliver accessible services;
- Develop managing and delivery strategies which address managing diversity principles;
- Actively promote the learning needs of diverse communities in this locality through development of information sharing and innovative approaches;
- Be aware of legislative requirements and government policy;
- Develop resourcing strategies to enable us to meet the needs of our diverse community

## Managing Diversity Implementation Plan

### General

- Whole- organisational inclusiveness approach through small groups, flexible time tabling, flexible approaches to program and service delivery, low cost fees for programs, support services, participant involvement in planning and management of organisational activities, services and programs;
- Working towards representation on committee of management that reflects the diversity of our local community;
- Continuing to work with and include across all program areas, isolated and socially disadvantaged member of our program;
- Source applicable training for all staff in managing diversity particularly in working with people psychiatric disabilities;
- Provision of a physical environment that is accessible to all;
- Rewriting policies in plain English particularly those that demonstrate our commitment to equity and access.

## Further Education Program

- Provision of quality affordable childcare to maximise participation of adults with young children;
- Timetabling of classes to fit in with childcare needs of adults;
- Providing low cost accessible further education classes targeting older adults, and those with language and literacy needs;
- Provide accredited and non-accredited courses
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#### **General Adult Education Program**

- Provision of wide range of choice in general and leisure programs.