

Diversity and Inclusion (Staff) Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe University is committed to providing a diverse, inclusive and respectful working environment for all staff. This policy specifically covers the key objectives and focus areas relating to staff diversity and inclusion to ensure that La Trobe is able to provide quality ongoing education and research services to the community. This includes the measures the University takes to promote gender equity and to support staff who identify with a gender other than that assigned to them at birth.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) Applies to:

- a. All campuses; and
- b. All staff, contractors, agents, official visitors and other individuals performing services/work for and on behalf of La Trobe (collectively referred to as staff throughout this Policy).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

Diversity and Inclusion

(3) La Trobe welcomes differences in background, education, gender, ethnicity, nationality, generation, age, working and thinking styles, religious background and faith, sexual orientation and ability. We recognise that a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace enhances the University's performance overall.

(4) All staff have a right to be treated equally.

(5) Our key focus areas are:

- a. Indigenous diversity;
- b. Gender equality;
- c. Cultural diversity;
- d. Sexuality and gender identity diversity;
- e. People with disability;
- f. People with a mental illness; and
- g. Age diversity.

(6) La Trobe's key diversity and inclusion objectives are to:

- a. Build a workforce of people from a diverse range of backgrounds to encourage and foster a high performing

workforce (Workforce Diversity);

- b. Enhance workplace inclusiveness by cultivating a respectful workplace culture that offers engagement, collaboration, flexibility and innovation to ensure our employees can perform to their full potential and to maximise the benefits of diversity (Workplace Inclusion); and
- c. Develop organisational structures and plans that will enable leaders to embed and manage diversity and inclusion, and ensure leaders are accountable for outcomes, including collecting data and reporting on the progress in implementing relevant plans (Sustainability).

(7) As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, La Trobe aims to practise and abide by the following in our everyday activities:

- a. Respect the rights and interests of the communities in which we operate and individuals with whom we interact. Treat all staff (and external colleagues and partners) with respect and dignity;
- b. Promote and encourage equal opportunity for under-represented or disadvantaged groups. Employ special measures as appropriate to improve opportunities for people from these groups;
- c. Work towards eliminating bias through analysis of systems and processes to ensure all staff are able to fully participate in the workforce and develop their careers;
- d. Engage in appropriate, effective and flexible practices at all stages of the employment lifecycle (from recruitment through to resignation) to increase the numbers of qualified staff from diverse backgrounds being hired and promoted;
- e. Consider staff inclusion and equity matters in the development/review of policy and procedure;
- f. Provide gender neutral toilets and affirm that staff are entitled to use toilets and other facilities that are appropriate to their affirmed gender; and
- g. Provide a workplace that is free from unacceptable conduct such as bullying, harassment, vilification, victimisation, violence and discrimination. La Trobe will not tolerate discrimination and harassment under any circumstances. For further information refer to La Trobe's [Workplace Behaviours Policy](#).

Grievance Resolution

(8) Staff who believe they have experienced or witnessed inappropriate workplace behaviour should take appropriate action. Refer to the [Grievance Resolution \(Staff\) Procedure](#) for further information. Staff who do not feel safe or confident to take such action may seek assistance from the [ALLY Network](#) for advice and support or action on their behalf.

Compliance, Measurable Objectives, Data Collection and Analysis

(9) The University will:

- a. Meet legal compliance obligations;
- b. Meet regulatory reporting requirements such as reporting to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency;
- c. Address and rectify compliance breaches, as required; and
- d. Establish measurable diversity and inclusion objectives and indicators and report progress internally to inform management decision-making.

(10) Under the [Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#), La Trobe has a positive duty to support and improve gender equity outcomes at the University.

(11) It is against the law to discriminate against someone based on their gender identity. Under the [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#), a person's gender identity and their lawful right to live free from discrimination on the basis of that identity extends to their self-identification with a gender other than that ascribed to them in the past. It may (or may not)

include their adoption of gender characteristics or lifestyle culturally ascribed to another group, including personal presentation. It may (or may not) include interventions to alter physical characteristics.

Flexible Work Options

(12) The University will provide flexible work options to assist staff to balance their work and personal lives which can enable us to attract and retain a diverse workforce. Refer to our [Flexible Working Policy](#) for more information.

Reasonable Workplace Adjustments

(13) the University will make reasonable workplace adjustments (temporary or permanent) to the workplace to ensure that staff with a disability (temporary or permanent) have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Expectations of Staff

(14) Staff are entitled to a workplace free from unacceptable behaviour including discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation, violence and other forms of unacceptable behaviour as deemed by La Trobe and as detailed in the [Workplace Behaviours Policy](#).

(15) The University expects all staff to:

- a. Behave professionally at all times and with respect and consideration for others;
- b. Abide by La Trobe's [Code of Conduct](#);
- c. Familiarise themselves with and abide by the [Workplace Behaviours Policy](#) and [Grievance Procedure](#);
- d. Take action in accordance with the [Workplace Behaviours Policy](#) and/or [Grievance Procedure](#) if they experience or witness unacceptable workplace behaviour including discrimination on the basis of any of the protected attributes, harassment (general, sexual or racial), bullying, victimisation, violence and racial or religious vilification;
- e. Undertake diversity and inclusion training on induction and then again every two years; and
- f. Participate in specialised diversity and inclusion training as required.

(16) The University expects all managers to:

- a. Model and promote professional workplace behaviours, mutual respect and consideration of others and positively value and encourage diversity;
- b. Take action in a timely manner to instances of unacceptable behaviour;
- c. Respond in a timely and sensitive manner to complaints about or reports of unacceptable behaviour;
- d. Ensure they and their staff undertake diversity and inclusion training on induction and then every two years; and
- e. Participate in specialised diversity and inclusion training as required and ensure appropriate staff participate as required.

(17) Examples of discrimination based on gender identity may include (but are not limited to):

- a. Deliberately using incorrect names or pronouns (such as 'he' instead of 'she');
- b. Denying someone training and promotion opportunities because of their gender identity or changing the nature of someone's job, such as taking someone off customer service duties, because of their gender identity; and
- c. Ridiculing or ignoring someone because of their gender identity.

Section 4 - Procedures

Transgender Workplace Transition Plan

(18) In the event of a staff member transitioning from one gender to another, La Trobe will develop a workplace transition plan in consultation with transitioning staff if the staff member wishes to do so. The content of the plan will be determined through discussions between the manager and the transitioning staff member and any other support people the transitioning staff member would like to include.

(19) Transition plans will include information relating to when the change will occur and what the transition involves (for example name change and the use of toilets/facilities).

(20) A transgender (trans) person is permitted to dress consistently with their affirmed gender identity. It is expected that staff in transition will continue to comply with University rules for wearing of uniforms and protective gear.

(21) The aim of a transition plan is to ensure transitioning staff are treated with respect and dignity, that any concerns from staff are addressed, and that the workplace remains free from inappropriate workplace behaviours such as discrimination.

(22) Trans staff who elect to disclose information to their colleagues should discuss their options and wishes with their manager.

(23) Some trans people prefer only a few people know they are about to begin their transition and wish to quietly blend in as members of their new gender after their transition. Others are committed to educating the people about transitioning and may be eager to answer questions and talk openly about being transgender long after their transition.

(24) Staff must respect privacy and confidentiality in relation to trans people. For more information see the [Privacy - Personal Information Policy](#).

(25) Any individual who believes their privacy has been breached can lodge a grievance with La Trobe's Privacy Officer.

Name and Pronoun

(26) It is important that trans people be treated with respect and therefore be addressed according to their preferred names and pronouns. If a trans staff member has changed their legal name, University records can be changed while the person is an employee of the University. A trans staff member may change their preferred name at any time during their employment.

(27) In everyday written and oral communication, the new name and pronoun should be used by all staff members when the individual is ready.

(28) La Trobe has begun using the new gender marker of 'Mx' as a non-gender specific marker for those who do not wish to identify with a particular gender. Mx can be used by any individual regardless of gender or marital status.

Section 5 - Definitions

(29) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Affirmed gender is the gender that an individual has identified with that is different to their ascribed gender group at birth.

- b. Gender refers to the social attributes and differences associated with being female, male or transgendered and does not replace the term 'sex' which refers exclusively to biological differences. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men.
- c. Sex refers to standard biological ascriptions of male, female, intersex or other.
- d. Transgender (Trans) refers to a person whose gender identity is different from that ascribed to them in the past, typically at birth.
- e. Transitioning refers to the process where a transgender person commences living permanently as a member of another gender group.

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