

Diversity and Equity Policy		
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VERSION HISTORY

Version	Updated by	Approval Date	Details
0.1	QAO	26/02/18	Document creation
1.0	QAO	06/03/18	Approved by the EMG

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The aim of this policy is:

- Outline the Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine's (SITCM) commitment to diversity and equity towards all students and prospective students.
- Provide a framework to ensure SITCM is guided by the principles of diversity, non-discrimination, equivalent opportunity.
- Outline how SITCM will monitor the participation, progress and completion of disadvantaged groups.

This policy applies to all prospective students and students at SITCM.

1 OVERVIEW

The Sydney Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SITCM) is committed to the principals of equity and diversity and these will be integrated and applied throughout the school via policies, procedures and general operations.

This policy has been informed by *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* particularly Section 2.2 Diversity and Equity, and relevant state and Commonwealth legislation.

2 POLICY

2.1.1 NON-DISCRIMINATION

SITCM welcomes diversity when recruiting students and in the implementation of policies and procedures, and does not discriminate based on (but not limited to):

- 1) Age.
- 2) Race, Colour, Descent, Culture, Ancestry, National origin.
- 3) Religion.
- 4) Gender.
- 5) Sexual orientation or preference.
- 6) Marital status.

- 7) Physical and/or Intellectual disability.

2.1.2 EQUIVALENT OPPORTUNITY

SITCM is committed to ensuring equivalent opportunities for student academic success and promoting a culture that welcomes diversity. To ensure that all students, including under-represented and disadvantaged groups, have equal opportunities SITCM will:

- 1) Develop policies and procedures that accommodate student diversity.
- 2) Develop an approach to teaching and learning that accommodates student diversity.

SITCM's commitment to equivalent opportunities does not:

- 1) Contravene SITCM's obligation to support free intellectual inquiry and freedom of expression.
- 2) Guarantee equivalent outcomes.

Note: Equivalent opportunity does not mean treating everyone in the same way. SITCM acknowledges that special measures may be needed to address disadvantages and improve educational opportunities for these groups.

2.1.3 GRIEVANCE

SITCM is committed to providing a grievance and complaints process that is fair and equitable to all stakeholders.

- 1) All students, staff at SITCM and applicants to SITCM can make a complaint about SITCM without fear of retaliation or victimisation.
- 2) Complaints and appeals will be handled in a fair and equitable manner.
- 3) Complaints and appeals will be handled in accordance with SITCM grievance policies:
 - a. *Academic Grievance Policy.*
 - b. *Non-academic Grievance Policy.*
 - c. *Staff Grievance Policy.*

2.1.4 MONITORING

As part of the commitment to equivalent opportunities and diversity, SITCM will:

- 1) Monitor the participation, progress and completion of identified student underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.
- 2) Use the findings from the monitoring to improve admission policy, procedures and practices for underrepresented groups.
- 3) Use the findings from the monitoring to improve teaching, learning and support strategies for underrepresented groups.

2.2 DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

SITCM is committed, where possible, to mitigate the underrepresentation of disadvantaged groups. Underrepresented/disadvantaged groups can include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2) People from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those covered under the Higher Education Partnership Programme.
- 3) People with disabilities.
- 4) People from remote, rural or isolated areas.
- 5) People who are the first in their family to attend a university or other higher educational institution.
- 6) People from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- 7) Women, especially in areas of study where they have been under-represented.

- 8) SITCM will consider any other groups that are disadvantaged.

When assessing disadvantaged groups SITCM will take guidance from the Educational Access Scheme.

2.2.1 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS (INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS)

SITCM acknowledges that indigenous Australians are historically among the most disadvantaged groups in Australia. When dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples SITCM will give special consideration to their:

- 1) Recruitment.
- 2) Admission.
- 3) Participation and progression.
- 4) Completion.

2.2.2 DISABILITY

SITCM acknowledges that physical and intellectually disabled groups are a disadvantaged group. Under Section 22 of the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* education providers must not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against a person on the grounds of a disability by:

- 1) Refusing or failing to accept the person's application for admission as a student.
- 2) Denying the student access, or limiting the student's access, to any benefit provided by the educational authority.
- 3) Expelling the student.
- 4) Subjecting the student to any other detriment.
- 5) Developing curricula or training courses having content that will exclude the person from participation.

Furthermore, SITCM will, in accordance with the *Disability Standards in Education*:

- 1) Take 'reasonable steps' to enable students with disability to apply for and participate in a program on the same basis as other students.
- 2) Make 'reasonable adjustments' to assist a student with a disability to apply for admission or enrolment; to participate in the course or program and to use facilities or services on the same basis as a student without a disability.

Students with a disability or medical condition that impacts their studies are eligible to be on a Student Support Plan. The Student Support Plan is an agreement between the student and SITCM that outlines support available to the student and the steps that SITCM will take to provide that support. More information about the Student Support Plan can be found in the *Student Support Services Policy and Procedure*.

2.3 IMPROVING ACCESS AND SUPPORT

SITCM may undertake strategies to improve access and provide ongoing support for disadvantaged groups. Examples of these strategies include:

- 1) Provision of alternative admission criteria for disadvantaged groups.
- 2) Engagement with schools and communities with disadvantaged groups.
- 3) Provision of student support and peer advisors.

3 PROCEDURE

The *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* require that providers develop and implement systems to monitor and use data on the:

- 1) Participation of identified student subgroups.
- 2) Progress of identified student subgroups.

- 3) Completion of identified student subgroups.

3.1 MONITORING DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

- 1) SITCM will identify students from disadvantaged groups during the admissions process.
- 2) SITCM will contact students from disadvantaged groups to provide them with information about what support is available and offer them support.
 - a. Student Support Officer.
 - b. Student Support Plan.
 - c. Other relative support information.
- 3) The Student Support Officer will monitor the progress of disadvantaged groups:
 - a. after their first completed assessment.
 - b. At mid semester break or after their second completed assessment (whichever is first).
 - c. Before exams.
- 4) The Student Support Officer will provide information about students from Disadvantaged Groups to the Dean and Associate Dean.
- 5) If needed, intervention strategies will be implemented when students from disadvantaged groups are in danger of failing.
- 6) At the end of each semester the Registrar will provide a Disadvantaged Groups Report within the *Course Progress Report* to management and relative governance bodies.

4 LEGISLATION AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION

SITCM's commitment to equity and diversity is informed by and complies with Australian Commonwealth and State legislation and other relevant government documentation. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*.
- 2) *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*.
- 3) *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*.
- 4) *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*.
- 5) *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*.
- 6) *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)*.
- 7) *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*.
- 8) Disability Standards for Education (2005).
- 9) Students with Disabilities: Code of Practice for Australian Tertiary Institutions (1998).
- 10) National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities (2011).

5 RELATED POLICY AND OTHER DOCUMENTATION

- 1) A1.03 Credit for Prior Learning Policy and Procedure.
- 2) A1.14 Academic Grievance Policy.
- 3) E2.02 Student Support Services Policy and Procedure
- 4) E2.07 Non-academic Grievance Policy.
- 5) E2.11 Staff Grievance Policy.
- 6) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015