

Name of the Policy	PP25 Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunity Policy and Procedure
Distribution:	All Staff and Students
Entity relating to	Stirling Institute of Australia Pty Ltd trading as Academy of Hypnotic Science Stirling Institute of Counselling Stirling Institute Stirling Institute of Hypnotherapy Stirling Institute of Business Stirling Institute of Children's Services
Reference to HESG	2014-16 VET Funding Contract Clause 1.1 (c) and 3.2 (b)
Related Documents	Access and Equity Policy and Procedure Student Handbook- VTG and VFH Staff Handbook Students Complaint and Appeal Policy and Procedure Student Complaint and Appeal Form
Statutory References	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015:8.5 Higher Education Support Act 2003 Education and Training Reform Act 2006 VET FEE-HELP guidelines
Legislative Context	Commonwealth Age Discrimination Act 2004 Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Commonwealth Equal Employment Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 Commonwealth Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Commonwealth Racial Hatred Act 1995 Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Commonwealth Workplace Relations Act 1996 Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995 Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Victorian Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001

Table of Contents

1. Policy	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Definitions	3
5. Requirements, Process & Procedures.....	4
5.1. Fair Treatment	4
5.2. Equal Benefits and Opportunities.....	5
5.3. Application of Merit	5
5.4. No income test	5
5.5. Educational disadvantage	5
5.6. Student and admission process	5
5.6.1. Applications for Admissions	5
5.6.2. Pre-enrolment	5
5.6.3. Selection of Students	6
5.6.4. Enrolment of students	6
5.6.5. Recognition	7
5.6.6. Induction/Orientation	7
5.7. Student Grievance Procedures	7
5.7.1. Academic Matters.....	7
5.7.2. Non-academic matters	7
5.7.3. Complaints Process	7
5.8. Publication	8
6. Appeal.....	8
7. Responsibility.....	8
8. Review Date	8
9. Major Version History.....	8
10. Flow Chart	9

1. Policy

This policy outlines Stirling Institute's commitment to providing a safe and healthy learning environment free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

2. Purpose

Stirling Institute of Australia supports the concept of equal opportunity and is committed to providing all staff, students and potential students with a working and learning environment which values diversity, respects differences and provides an environment that is safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination

3. Scope

This policy applies to all the current staff members and students of Stirling Institute; and any person engaged under a contract for services.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

The Act refers to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 and Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

Student/s refers to all persons enrolled in a unit of study who are, or would be entitled to

- VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act;
- Victorian Training Guarantee;
- Full Fee or Fee for Service;

Potential Students refers to all persons seeking to enroll in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under

- sub clause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.
- 2014-16 VET Funding Contract Victorian Training Guarantee Program
- Full Fee or Fee for Service

Access The right to obtain or make use of services and products.

Discrimination The treatment of a person unfairly compared to others based on the actual or presumed difference of physical or social characteristics.

Equity The state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.

Fair treatment Ensuring that all individuals are able to make choices and achieve their potential based on responsive and appropriate advice.

Fee for service A place in a course which is not a Commonwealth supported place (not subsidised by the Australian Government and not subsidised by a state or territory government) and for which students are required to pay tuition fees.

Foundation Skills Foundation skills are the underpinning communication skills required for participation in the workplace, the community and in adult education and training. 'Foundation skills' is the term that Australian Government agencies have started to use to cover the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)'s five core skills (learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy), plus the employability skills, or the Core Skills for Work framework.

VET course of study A structured program of education consisting of one or more VET units of study leading to the award of VET Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate or Vocational Graduate Diploma.

VET FEE-HELP A Commonwealth Government loan scheme which assists eligible students to pay their tuition fees, and can cover all or part of the student's tuition fees for VET units of study which form part of a

VET course of study undertaken with a Registered Training Organisation that is approved as a VET Provider under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) and 2014-16 VET Funding Contract Victorian Training Guarantee Program.

Victorian Training Guarantee Program The Victorian Training Guarantee Program is the vehicle through which registered education and training organisations such as the RTO will be contracted to deliver government subsidised Training Services to eligible individuals.

5. Requirements, Process & Procedures

5.1. Fair Treatment

- a. Stirling Institute of Australia will treat fairly all Students and Potential Students. Stirling Institute has a fair treatment belief and this policy which outlines how those who interact (prospective learners, learners, staff and visitors) with the Institute are treated.
- b. Specific information is detailed in, yet not limited to, the following Stirling Institute's Policy and Procedures:
 - Access and Equity
 - Learner Code of Conduct
 - Code of Practice
 - Information Prior to Enrolment
 - Privacy and Personal information
 - Learner Selection
- c. All policy and procedures are available in the on the website www.sia.edu.au and at the Institute.
- d. Potential Learners seeking to enroll in a VET FEE-HELP, VTG or FFS unit(s) of study with Stirling Institute, regardless of their background, circumstances or eligibility for funding will be assessed for entry to study through the same published entry requirements and through the same process as for all learners. VET FEE-HELP is available to eligible and suitable learners for all of our Diploma courses.
- e. Entry requirements are detailed on our course outline and described during our information sessions.

5.2. Equal Benefits and Opportunities

As a VET Provider Stirling Institute of Australia will have open, fair and transparent procedures that are based on merit for making decisions about:

- a. the selection, from among persons who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance, government subsidised course, a full fee and who seek to enroll with Stirling Institute of Australia in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements; and
- b. the treatment of students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance, a government subsidised course or a full fee paying student undertaking a VET course of study.

5.3. Application of Merit

The application of merit in decision-making processes involves Stirling Institute considering each application on a case by case basis and not applying inflexible policies that preclude eligible applicants from having their application considered.

5.4. No income test

Stirling Institute of Australia does not apply an income test when making decisions about which students are eligible for enrolment or for VET-FEE-HELP assistance.

Stirling Institute of Australia also protects student fees paid in advance and is a financial member of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) and is a member of the ACPET Australian Student Tuition Assurance Scheme (ACPET ASTAS) to meet VET tuition assurance requirements.

5.5. Educational disadvantage

When making decisions about the selection of students, Stirling Institute of Australia takes educational disadvantages that a particular student has experienced into account. Stirling Institute of Australia does not use 'proxy indicators' of educational disadvantage in the absence of clear evidence that all students in such a group necessarily suffered educational disadvantage. Such proxy indicators are not used because they assume that all people who satisfy the proxy condition (e.g. being from a low income group or being from a rural area) have necessarily experienced educational disadvantage. Stirling Institute of Australia considers a particular student's specific circumstances before making a decision about whether the student has actually suffered educational disadvantage.

5.6. Student and admission process

5.6.1. Applications for admissions:

Potential Students seeking to enroll in a Qualification with Stirling Institute of Australia, regardless of their background, circumstances or eligibility for funding, will be assessed for entry to study through the same published entry requirements and through the same process.

5.6.2. Pre-enrolment

- a. All potential students are provided with information, including a course brochure that details the accredited course, code, VET subject of study and vocational outcomes. Brochures are

accompanied by general course information (or details of access through the SIA's website) providing:

- Selection processes
 - course content and outcomes
 - fees, charges and refund policy
 - fair treatment, equal benefits and opportunities processes
 - provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance
 - learning support arrangements
 - learning strategies and methods
 - welfare and guidance services
 - complaints and appeals processes
 - Stirling Institute's approach to access and equity
 - Skills recognition processes
 - privacy requirements
- b. Prospective student enquiries are directed to the administration staff that has the appropriate course knowledge. Prospective students are encouraged to attend Information Sessions or to discuss with the administration staff, details specific to their course

5.6.3. Selection of Students

- a. Student selection shall be principally based upon merit and fairness consistent with specified published and transparent entry requirements as detailed in course accreditation or training package documentation.
- b. Stirling Institute of Australia will ensure that throughout the process of selection and admission, applicants are treated fairly, courteously and expeditiously.
- c. Entry criteria and application procedures are published in the RTO's marketing material and on the Stirling Institute's website for the information of students and persons seeking to enroll with the Institute.

The above paragraph does not prevent Stirling Institute of Australia taking into account, in making decisions mentioned above, educational disadvantages that a particular Student or Potential Student has experienced or the fact that the student or Potential Student may be enrolled via a VET restricted access arrangement.

5.6.4. Enrolment of students

- a. Stirling Institute of Australia has open, fair and transparent procedures, based on merit for making decisions about:
 - i. the selection, from among Potential Students; and
 - ii. The treatment of students.
- b. Applicant completes and signs Enrolment Form and returns to Stirling Institute. Student's enrolment is formalised and entered in the Student Management System.
- c. The opportunities and benefits of Commonwealth assistance will be made equally available to all eligible students upon enrolment.

5.6.5. Recognition

Stirling Institute of Australia has mutual recognition processes for credit transfer where students have completed equivalent studies with other RTOs. It also has processes for recognising work and life experiences which are relevant to competencies to be undertaken in a VET course of study. Any queries concerning selection procedures, prerequisites, recognition, policies and procedures should be directed to the student services at info@sia.edu.au

5.6.6. Induction/Orientation

All enrolled students are offered an orientation program. This is to confirm responsibilities and to provide further information regarding student services, facilities, vocational services, policies and procedures and Stirling Institute of Australia resources.

Students have access to a current Student Handbook summarising Stirling Institute of Australia policies and procedures, course information, and student responsibilities. Any queries concerning selection procedures and prerequisites should be directed to the student support services at info@sia.edu.au

5.7. Student Grievance Procedures

Stirling Institute of Australia has student grievance procedures for dealing with complaints about academic and nonacademic matters by students and persons who seek to enroll with the school. Stirling Institute of Australia addresses complaints and appeals efficiently and effectively. Its student grievance procedures are available in the Student Handbook available at, ww.sia.edu.au. There are grievance procedures addressing both Academic and Non-Academic matters.

5.7.1. Academic Matters

Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course. Please refer to Students Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure.

5.7.2. Non-academic matters

Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that Stirling Institute holds in relation to a student.

Non-academic grievances can arise from events occurring or from decisions made by Stirling Institute of Australia and cover issues such as financial matters, fines and payments, application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities, harassment, vilification, discrimination, and the use or misuse of personal information. Please refer to Students Complaints and Appeal Policy and Procedure.

5.7.3. Complaints Process

Stirling Institute of Australia has arrangements for handling complaints that:

- are easily accessible to students
- are provided at no cost, or at a reasonable cost and which encourage timely resolution of complaints
- include provision for independent internal investigation of complaints which remain unresolved
- include provision for external review of decisions made following any internal investigation and a mechanism for considering any recommendations arising from external review
- are complete, unambiguous and are agreed to and ratified by Stirling Institute

- do not discriminate or victimise
- are communicated to staff who are trained in their application
- specify reasonable timelines for responses
- allow third party representation
- if requested, provide reasons and a full explanation in writing of decisions and actions taken and require confidential accurate
- records of all grievances to be kept for at least 5 years.
- Students or those persons seeking to enrol with Stirling Institute are entitled to access the student grievance procedures, regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

5.8. Publication

This *Fair Treatment Policy and Procedure* will be made available to Students enrolled with Stirling Institute of Australia through publication on the website (<http://www.sia.edu.au>) and in the student handbook.

The *Fair Treatment Policy and Procedure* was agreed to and ratified by Stirling institute of Australia Board of Directors.

6. Appeal

Students have the right to appeal any decision made by Stirling Institute's administration under this policy. Students must lodge their appeal within 14 days in writing of the decision being made. The affected parties will have access to Stirling Institute's Complaints and Appeals processes if they think that the decisions made by appropriate authorities are not just and fair in their opinion.

7. Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementation and administration of this policy.

All Stirling Institute of Australia students have access to observe this policy. Any complaints or breaches in relation to this policy should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer in person or by email to: info@sia.edu.au

8. Review Date

12 months from the date of this version, or as required.

9. Major Version History

Date	Reason for change	Prepared By	Approved By
19 th Sep 2016	New template, Mapping to SRTOs 2015 and to reflect the students under VET FEE-HELP, VTG and FFS.	Quality & Compliance Manager (JS)	CEO (AW)

10. Flow Chart