



Access & Equity Policy

Australian Paramedical College





Access & Equity Policy

Policy Statement

Industry Pathways Pty Ltd (IPW), ABN 65 153 814 192 operating as Australian Paramedical College (APC) acknowledges that to achieve best practice in vocational education and training, non-discriminatory access to services and comparable educational outcomes for all groups in society is required.

APC seeks to be an organisation that demonstrates and supports diversity and the social values of the community in which we exist. We are committed to providing a stimulating environment free of discrimination and harassment in which staff and students have equal opportunity of access, participation and advancement in employment and education.

Purpose

APC recognises that particular groups of people in society have experienced and continue to experience, institutional disadvantage and unequal educational outcomes. This policy aims to assist APC to achieve best practice by promoting the establishment of strategies and processes which effectively address past disadvantage and improve the position of all groups in society.

This policy also provides a framework for the development of policies and strategies which are aimed at achieving equal educational and vocational outcomes for target groups.

Our decision making seeks to be fair, equitable, transparent, and open to critique and review. While respecting an individual's privacy, all decisions we make and actions we take will support and encourage both an inclusive and diverse workforce and student body.

Scope

Access and Equity applies to all procedures, selection criteria and entry requirements as well as conducting assessment.

All students prior to commencement receive a copy of this information via the website and the student enrolment form. Students are encouraged to contact APC should they wish to obtain further information or seek clarification about this Equity and Access Policy.

APC staff are made aware of this Access and Equity Policy during their induction, ongoing operational procedures and periodic refresher training.

In our dealings with all individuals, APC applies the following fundamental equity and fairness principles.

These principles are used as both objective and subjective measures for assessing how we have either made a decision or dealt with a situation.

(a) Merit-based decision making

While APC has internal procedures to provide administrative guidance to decision making, each decision we make takes into account the individual situation and associated issues known or provided to us at the time.

By adopting a case-by-case approach, we aim to assess the relative merits of each situation to ensure that an equitable and fair outcome is consistently and transparently achieved.

When making decisions, we confirm we have met our objectives by addressing the below:

- Was the decision applied inclusive of equity and fairness principles?
- Would an independent party agree with the decision?

(b) Inclusivity and Human Rights

APC aims to remove any barriers that would prevent our students and organisation from experiencing inclusivity and rights. APC believes that the same basic human rights apply to all people.

These rights include:

- Receiving genuine respect for human worth and dignity as individuals,
- Having the opportunity to realise personal capacities for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development,
- Receiving services that support attaining a reasonable quality of life in a way that supports an individual's family situation and full participation in society,
- Being informed about and able to participate actively in the decisions that affect an individual's life,
- Receiving information and services in a way that results in the minimum restriction of an individual's rights and opportunities, and
- Being able (and supported) to pursue a grievance without fear of recrimination or disadvantage.

All decisions made and actions taken by APC will uphold these human rights principles.

(c) Recognition of disadvantage

In dealing with staff and students, APC recognises that some groups face particular disadvantages that may reduce their access to, or participation in, employment or study opportunities.

These groups include:

- Indigenous Australians,
- People with disabilities,
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
- People from rural and geographically isolated areas of Australia,
- People from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and
- Women in non-traditional areas of work or study.

APC will not make assumptions about whether an individual has faced, or will face, a disadvantage. We will assess each individual or situation on a case-by-case basis to consider the particular circumstances before making a decision about whether any disadvantage exists and how it should be addressed.

Where APC believes sees a potential disadvantage, we will make all reasonable adjustments to remove or compensate for the disadvantage in the decisions we make and actions we take regarding the individual.

(d) Right of Review

APC decision making incorporates transparency and accountability. We support the right of an individual to have any of our decisions or assessments affecting them reviewed by an independent party.

Our decisions or assessments will be made and recorded in such a manner as to allow effective review, should this be requested, in accordance with our Complaints and Appeals Policy.

(e) Right of Complaint

APC accepts the right of an individual to make a formal complaint if they feel aggrieved about any decision, process, activity or outcome. We believe that lodging a complaint or grievance should be a straight-forward process at no cost to the individual.

We undertake to promptly investigate grievances without prejudice and respond to them in a timely manner in accordance with our Complaints and Appeals Policy.

(f) Selection and Student Intake

APC apply our equity and fairness principles to all individuals applying to undertake a VET course or unit of competency. This applied when assessing applications and making decisions that align with the following:

- A suitably qualified staff member will assess each application separately, considering each application on a case-by-case basis.
- Each application will be assessed on merit, seeking to ascertain the extent to which the applicant is likely to achieve the stated competency standards and outcomes of the course, unit of study, or VET unit of study, based on the applicant's qualifications, skills and proficiencies.
- Each application will be assessed to determine if it seems likely that the applicant has faced, or is likely to face, educational disadvantage/s because of their specific circumstances. Where it is believed that disadvantage/s may exist, APC will consider any reasonable adjustment to remove or compensate for the disadvantage/s when assessing the application.
- Staff will seek to obtain additional information or clarify any part of the application to ensure all aspects of the applicant's specific circumstances (necessary to make an equitable and fair decision) have been obtained.
- In making a decision about any student undertaking, or an individual applying to undertake a VET or unit of competency, APC will not apply an income test or similar financial assessment.

Should an applicant be dissatisfied with the outcome of their application assessment, they may submit a request for the decision to be reviewed, in accordance with our Complaints & Appeals Policy.

(g) Training and Assessment

APC recognises the importance of access and equity during the development and delivery of the training and assessment.

All VET courses and units of competency materials are planned, designed, developed and presented in accordance with our equity and access principles.

Each training product material undergoes a validation process that includes reviewing the language and structure of the assessment to ensure that it can be readily understood by all students.

Should a student be dissatisfied with any aspect of the curriculum or assessment, they may lodge their concerns or request a review in accordance with our Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Related Legislation

In formulating our Equity and Access Policy, Australian Paramedical College has made reference to the following legislation.

Commonwealth

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Act 2009
- Equal Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 2012
- Age Discrimination Act 2004

Queensland State

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Public Sector Ethics Act 1994
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Related Documents

Policies

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Access and Equity Policy

Procedures

Complaints and Appeals Procedure

Forms

Complaints & Appeals Form