

Equal and Fair Treatment of Students Seeking to Enrol Policy

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 Melbourne College of hairdressing and beauty (MCOHB) is committed to the principles of access and equity. We promote a fair and equitable environment for students, prospective students, and other learners with a learning environment which values:
 - diversity,
 - respects differences,
 - provides an environment that is safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- 1.2 MCOHB seeks to create a learning environment where all students are respected and can develop their full potential. All students are given fair and reasonable opportunity to attend and complete training. Our aim is to set up students for success.
- 1.3 MCOHB treats all prospective students equally and fairly. MCOHB has implemented open, fair and transparent procedures that are based on merit for making decisions about:
- 1.4 The selection of individuals who seek to enrol; and the treatment of individuals undertaking courses.
- 1.5 MCOHB undertakes to identify and, where possible, remove barriers that prevent individuals from accessing and participating in its services.
- 1.6 This policy specifically deals with entry to MCOHB courses and general principals of access and equity.

2.0 Definitions

Access and equity: Services should be available to everyone who is entitled to them and should be free of any form of discrimination irrespective of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race, religion.

Services are developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of clients who are eligible to receive them.

3.0 Access and Equity principles include:

- Equity for all people through the fair and appropriate allocation of resources.
- Equality of opportunity for all people without discrimination Access for all people to appropriate quality training and assessment services.
- Increased opportunity for people to participate in training.

Disadvantaged groups: Includes groups who traditionally have been under-represented in Vocational Education and Training such as:

- People with a disability
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- Women
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds
- People in rural and remote areas
- Long term unemployed
- Recent migrants and refugees
- Asylum Seekers
- Other groups that may be considered vulnerable

Prospective students: Refers to persons enquiring, expressing interest in, or wishing to enrol into an MCOHB course.

Students: Refers to students who are currently enrolled in a *MCOHB* course.

Clients: Refers to non-students which may include: Employers, Schools, Other stakeholders that have paid for costs of training on behalf of students.

4.0 Student selection

- 4.1 MCOHB is an equal opportunity organisation and does not discriminate against or favour groups that may be considered vulnerable or as having special needs when recruiting prospective students.

Gender

- 4.2 MCOHB recognises that our courses develop skills and knowledge for vocations that are traditionally female dominated.
- 4.3 MCOHB is required to collect gender information under government reporting requirements.
- 4.4 MCOHB does not discriminate on basis of gender as part of the selection process and encourages all genders including gender X, intersex, and transgender students to apply for courses.

Minimum entry requirements

- 4.5 Each course has an entry selection requirement which is listed on our website. Entry selection requirements will vary from course to course and may include:
- Minimum age,
 - Pre-requisite unit or qualification,
 - Language, literacy and numeracy level (in line with the Australian Core Skills Framework levels),
 - Physical requirements,
 - health requirements,
 - Current employment status,
 - Employment history.

5.0 Disability, health and medical condition

- 5.1 If you have a disability, health or medical condition, we encourage you to apply for our courses.
- 5.2 Some of our courses have a physical health requirement. If you think that you may not meet the requirement for a specific course that you are interested in, we encourage you to contact us.
- 5.3 We may be able to make a reasonable adjustment so that we can accommodate your learning needs.
- 5.4 Reasonable Adjustments can include but are not limited to the physical environment, teaching delivery and format and utilisation of assistance equipment.
- 5.5 Where students are unable, due to physical or mental disabilities, ill health or family emergency, to undergo assessment as outlined in each training block alternative forms and times of assessment may be negotiated with a trainer prior to the assessment date.
- 5.6 MCOHB will take all reasonable measures to ensure that their staffs is aware of the students' specific learning needs and make reasonable adjustments to training and assessment practices to cater for such needs.
- 5.7 Please note that if you cannot meet the inherent requirements of the course, even with adjustments, then you will not be able to successfully complete the course. Where this is the case, MCOHB will advise you as soon as practical and may recommend alternatives. These alternatives may include recommending another course or qualification (which may or may not be provided by MCOHB).

6.0 Language, Literacy and Numeracy

- 6.1 Each qualification has a minimum recommended entry level against the following five core skills:
 - Learning
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Oral Communication
 - Numeracy
- 6.2 All student applicants **MUST** undertake a language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) evaluation prior to an enrolment being accepted.

- 6.3 Where the results from the LLN assessment confirm that the applicant **has not achieved** competence at Exit Level 3 ACSF then a VET Student Loan cannot be offered to the applicant until such competence is achieved.
- 6.4 In such circumstances the applicant will be offered supplemental questions, further LLN testing to address the identified gaps.
- 6.5 If you feel that you would need extra support, please let the Intake officer know.

Age

- 6.6 All of our courses have a minimum age requirement. MCOHB does not enrol applicants under the age of 18 years of age.

Race, culture, religion

- 6.7 Persons of different race, cultures and religion are welcome to apply. We do not discriminate against students based on these factors.
- 6.8 We do not discriminate against persons with indigenous backgrounds. If you are of Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander background, we encourage you to apply.

7.0 After enrolment and commencement

Unreasonable Behaviour

- 7.1 Refers to behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to humiliate, intimidate, undermine or threaten. In this context, the hypothetical reasonable person does not require total knowledge of every aspect of the situation – rather this person knows as much as the alleged bully could reasonably be expected to know.

Cultural or religious requirements

- 7.2 If you have religious or cultural requirements such as required prayer times or attending festivals or celebrations, please make your trainer or our student admin team aware so that we may accommodate your needs.

8.0 What is Harassment?

- 8.1 Harassment is any verbal, written or physical behaviour or conduct that is of an offensive, threatening, intimidating, abusive or belittling nature and that is unwelcome, unreciprocated, uninvited and usually, but not always, repeated.
- 8.2 It can also be based on race, disability, age, pregnancy, marital status, homosexuality, transgender, or HIV/AIDS status.
- 8.3 Workplace harassment usually consists of a pattern of unwelcome behaviour. However, it can consist of just one act where this is of a serious nature. Also, there is no requirement that the harasser intended to offend or harm in order for it to be unlawful. All that is required, under the law, is that a reasonable person would consider that the person being harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the behaviour in question.
- 8.4 Harassment in the workplace can create an unpleasant or even hostile environment. Harassment makes work difficult for everyone: the person being harassed, as well as personnel witnessing the harassment. The harasser is not concentrating on their work when they engage in this type of behaviour.

9.0 What isn't Workplace Harassment and Bullying?

- 9.1 It is important for personnel to be aware that workplace harassment and bullying does not include the legitimate exercise of authority by an employer or manager/supervisor to direct and control how personnel perform their duties whilst at work, to monitor work flow or to provide feedback to personnel about their performance. This also includes:
 - a. Reasonable action taken in a reasonable manner by an employer to transfer, demote, discipline, counsel, retrench or dismiss personnel;
 - b. A decision by an employer, based on reasonable grounds and consistent with MCOHB Policy, not to award or provide a promotion, transfer, or benefit in connection with personnel employment;
 - c. Reasonable administrative action taken in a reasonable manner by an employer in connection with personnel employment;
 - d. Reasonable action taken in a reasonable manner under an Act affecting personnel.
- 9.2 MCOHB recognises that workplace harassment and bullying may involve comments and behaviours that offend some people and not others. MCOHB management acknowledges that individuals may react differently to comments and behaviour and therefore expects its personnel to maintain a standard of behaviour that is respectful of everyone at all times.
- 9.3 For the purposes of this policy, the following applies:

10.0 What is bullying?

- 10.1 Bullying as defined by the *Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986* is behaviour that is directed towards a person or a group of persons, that is repeated and systematic, and that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine or threaten personnel to whom the behaviour is directed, creating a risk to health or safety.
- 10.2 Bullying has many similarities to harassment, but the reasons for bullying behaviour do not have to be based upon an unlawful or discriminatory ground.

11.0 What is vilification?

- 11.1 'Vilification' is publicly encouraging or inciting hatred, ill-feeling or severe contempt for someone or a group of people on the basis of race and certain other personal characteristics.

12.0 What is Sexual Harassment?

- 12.1 'Sexual harassment' is defined as:

as "any unwelcome sexual advance, or unwelcome request for sexual favours to a person, or engagement in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to that person, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the person complaining would be offended, humiliated or intimidated."

- 12.2 MCOHB advises that incidents of sexual harassment may, in fact, constitute a criminal offence, and therefore MCOHB may report any such instances to the appropriate authorities.

13.0 What is aggression?

- 13.1 'Aggression' includes: verbal abuse; physical violence against an individual in the form of hitting, slapping, spitting, scratching, pinching, kicking; threats of violence; and physical violence against objects, such as kicking or throwing property.

14.0 What is occupational violence?

Occupational violence: is defined as any incident where personnel is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace.

14.1 MCOHB identifies that incidents of occupational violence may, in fact, constitute criminal assault, and therefore MCOHB may report any such instances to the appropriate authorities.

14.2 Within the above definitions, it is generally accepted that:

“repeated” refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour, not the specific form of the behaviour. For example, the harassment or bullying may involve a variety of unreasonable and inappropriate behaviours such as verbal abuse, persistent and unwarranted criticism and open or implied threats of being demoted or terminated;

“systematic” means having, showing or involving a method or plan; and

“risk to health or safety” includes the risk to the physical or emotional health of personnel concerned.

15.0 Illegal behaviour

15.1 Illegal behaviour of any kind is not tolerated.

15.2 Where potentially unlawful conduct has occurred, MCOHB will alert the appropriate authorities. Those people who are involved in the complaint (including the complainant, witnesses etc.) are also under a duty to maintain confidentiality and display a commitment to uphold the integrity of the investigation process. If the complainant chooses to bring a support person with them to any meetings, they too are bound by confidentiality.

For further information about Bullying, and harassment refer to the MCOHB Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure on our website.

16.0 Medical or health issues that arise after you commence

16.1 If you develop a short term or long term medical or health issue after you commence that may affect your ability to participate in training, please let your trainer know.

16.2 We will see if we can accommodate your needs. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a. Adjusting your training plan
- b. Altering assessment due dates
- c. Having a study break
- d. Your trainer may involve Welfare Student Services to see if other strategies may benefit you.

17.0 Confidentiality

- 17.1 We respect and acknowledge that matters relating to access and equity may be of a sensitive nature.
- 17.2 As such, we apply strict confidentiality to your information and only relevant staff are privy to this information.
- 17.3 Please refer to our Privacy Policy which is located on our website.

18.0 Complaints

- 18.1 Please refer to our Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure published on our website.

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