Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') respects, values and celebrates the diversity of our community.

(2) The University acknowledges First Nations peoples of the lands on which its campuses are located and the Communities we live, work and study in.

(3) We are committed to driving change to achieve equitable outcomes for all members of our community in education, research and employment.

(4) Our vision is for a safe, accessible and inclusive University where every person is respected, valued and treated with dignity.

(5) To nurture and sustain an environment where everyone can succeed, we will:

a. Eliminate discrimination and harassment;
b. Adapt and align our behaviours;
c. Meet Commonwealth and Territory/State anti-discrimination legislative obligations; and
d. Lead through our equity, diversity and inclusion practices, making positive impacts on key outcomes.

Section 2 - Purpose

(6) This policy defines the principles and legislative framework that underpin the University's approach to drive innovation, improvements and systemic changes by providing learning, work and social environments that enable full and equitable participation.

Section 3 - Scope

(7) This policy applies to all employees and students of the University in any area and at any time they are undertaking work, research, study or social related activities, including during field work, placements and external events.

(8) This policy also applies to other members of the University community, including volunteers, contractors and visitors and those attending University activities or events.

Section 4 - Policy

Principles

(9) CDU is committed to principles of:

a. Access

b. Equity
c. Fairness
d. Social justice; and
e. Inclusion.

(10) The University will:

a. Provide opportunities for genuine participation in decision-making
b. Promote a learning, research and work environment that is socially inclusive and values diversity
c. Support students and employees to realise their full potential without fear of discrimination or harassment.

University Commitments

(11) The University commits to developing leading practice in equity, diversity and inclusion and integrating these principles into and throughout policies, decisions and operations.

(12) The University commits to addressing structural and systemic disadvantage and embedding priority measures to achieve long-term, sustainable improvements in access and inclusion for all.

(13) The University commits to recruiting inclusive leaders and providing support for all current leaders to champion diverse teams, maintain currency of knowledge and committing to accountability.

(14) The University will work with students and employees in recognised equity groups, learning from their experiences and co-designing improvements to remove any access or inclusion barriers, including but not limited to:

a. Monitoring and improving recruitment and admission processes, supporting employees to identify and redress bias in hiring and promoting employees and admitting and grading students;
b. Providing access to flexible work and study arrangements;
c. Initiating social inclusion activities in partnership with the community and undertaking proactive programs for designated employee and student equity groups; and
d. Responding appropriately to issues of unlawful discrimination, harassment and behaviours that do not align with CDU expectations.

(15) The University will employ effective strategies and equity measures to improve opportunities for people from under-represented or disadvantaged groups, including:

a. Adjusting policies, practices and requirements where necessary to provide equity for individuals; and
b. Targeting particular cohorts for recruitment, retention, performance management, promotion, remuneration, workforce planning (including succession planning and talent identification), training and professional development.

Discrimination and Harassment

(16) The University commits to the elimination of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, vilification, and antisemitism in all aspects of its operations.

(17) The University does not tolerate discrimination based on any of the attributes protected by any State, Territory or federal legislation, including but not limited to:

a. Race, ethnicity, nationality, cultural identity or country of origin;
b. Sex, gender identity, gender expression or sexuality;

c. Age, physical appearance, health or medical status (including irrelevant medical record) or ability;
d. Marital or family status, pregnancy, parenthood, breastfeeding, carer or family responsibilities;
e. Trade union or employer association activity or political opinion, affiliation or activity;
f. Religious or spiritual belief or activity;
g. Irrelevant criminal record or identification under section 66M of the Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Act 2001 (NT); and
h. Association with a person who has, or is believed to have, any of these attributes.

(18) The University will use appropriate language to foster inclusion of employees and students from diverse backgrounds and will be informed in language choices by the expressed preferences of communities and individuals, including the use of individuals' specified gender pronouns.

Promotion

(19) Information and educational resources regarding this policy will be included in employee induction and reinforced in ongoing programs of professional development and workplace conversations.

(20) Signposting to this policy will be included in handbooks, course guides and student diaries, in the Library and Student Central, and on the University's website. Promotion of the policy to students will be available in a range of languages.

Roles and Responsibilities

(21) The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring that the University operates in compliance with legislation and the terms of this policy.

(22) Senior Executives and Managers have the responsibility and authority to implement this policy within their work areas, creating a socially inclusive learning, research and work environment where:

a. The history and culture of First Nations people is respected and valued,
b. Students and employees can realise their full potential without fear of discrimination or harassment,
c. A diverse range of people have genuine participation in decision-making,
d. People are encouraged and protected to speak up against all forms of discrimination and harassment; and
e. Priority measures are implemented to redress past or current disadvantage experienced by some groups.

(23) Senior Executives and Managers will be required to report annually on the measures taken to achieve outcomes committed to within the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Enabling Plan.

(24) People and Culture and Student Engagement will raise awareness of this policy and achieve targets set out in the Enabling Plans and the Student Experience and Success Core Plan.

(25) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership will take the lead in raising awareness of this policy and developing, monitoring and evaluating associated programs and plans as they relate to First Nations students and employees.

(26) All members of the University must behave in a respectful, fair and equitable way and must not discriminate, harass, sexually harass, victimise or vilify others or request, instruct, induce, encourage, authorise or assist any other person to discriminate, harass, sexually harass, victimise or vilify others.

(27) Complaints regarding conduct that contravenes the principles of this policy will be dealt with under the Code of Conduct - Staff or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable.

Section 5 - Definitions

(28) Definitions of key terms can be found in the CDU Glossary.

Section 6 - Non-Compliance

(29) Non-compliance with governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(30) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(31) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	16th February 2026
Review Date	1st December 2026
Approval Authority	Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Approval Date	13th February 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Fiona Coulson Vice-Chancellor
Implementation Officer	Lynette Pathy Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant
Enquiries Contact	Lynette Pathy Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant People and Culture

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Discrimination" - Where a person or group of people are treated unfairly on the grounds of an attribute. This includes but is not limited to: race; language, including signed language; sex; gender identity; sexual orientation; sex characteristics; age; relationship status; accommodation status; employment status; employment in sex work or engaging in sex work including past employment in sex work or engagement in sex work; pregnancy; carer responsibilities; breastfeeding; disability; HIV/Hepatitis status; subjected to domestic violence; trade union or employer association activity; religious or spiritual belief or activity; political opinion, affiliation or activity; irrelevant medical record; irrelevant criminal record; physical appearance, health or medical status or ability; the person's details being published under section 66M of the Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Act 2001 (NT); and Association with a person who has, or is believed to have, any of these attributes.

"Senior Executive" - An employee of the University holding the position of Vice-Chancellor and President, Vice-President, Assistant Vice- Chancellor, Provost, University Secretary, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer or equivalent.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called 'governance documents' and are often referred to as 'policy' or 'University policy'.

"Antisemitism" - Antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice, harassment, exclusion, vilification, intimidation or violence that impedes Jews' ability to participate as equals in educational, political, religious, cultural, economic or social life. It can manifest in a range of ways including negative, dehumanising, or stereotypical narratives about Jews. Further, it includes hate speech, epithets, caricatures, stereotypes, tropes, Holocaust denial, and antisemitic symbols. Targeting Jews based on their Jewish identities alone is discriminatory and antisemitic. Criticism of the policies and practices of the Israeli government or state is not in and of itself antisemitic. However, criticism of Israel can be antisemitic when it is grounded in harmful tropes, stereotypes or assumptions and when it calls for the elimination of the State of Israel or all Jews or when it holds Jewish individuals or communities responsible for Israel's actions. It can be antisemitic to make assumptions about what Jewish individuals think based only on the fact that they are Jewish.

All peoples, including Jews, have the right to self-determination. For most, but not all Jewish Australians, Zionism is a core part of their Jewish identity. Substituting the word “Zionist’’ for ‘’Jew’’ does not eliminate the possibility of speech being antisemitic.