Access and Equity Policy

PURPOSE

This policy promotes access and equity in all aspects of Trainwest's operations and upholds the rights and dignity of every individual involved in our training and assessment services.

Trainwest believes that every person has the right to access quality education and training opportunities, regardless of their background, gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability or any other characteristic. Discrimination and barriers to access will not be tolerated within our organisation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Trainwest employees, students and third-party partners operating under a third-party arrangement. Access and equity are supported by legislation, including, but not limited to:

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986.

RESPONSIBILITIES

General Managers	Develop policies and practices that eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace and promote a culture of inclusion and diversity across our operations. Provide support and resources to employees and students to facilitate access and equity in training and assessment.
Employees	Uphold the principles of access and equity in all interactions with students and colleagues. Ensure all training and assessment materials are inclusive and accessible to diverse learner groups.
Third-Party Partners	Adhere to this policy and ensure practices align with the principles of access and equity. Collaborate with Trainwest to address any access and equity issues that arise within their operations.
Students	Disclose any support needs or requirements related to your training and assessment services. Communicate any concerns or issues regarding access and equity to Trainwest promptly.

Policy Statement

Trainwest is committed to fostering an environment that promotes access and equity for all individuals involved in our training and assessment services.

Trainwest will provide fair and equitable access and opportunity to our students and employees' regardless of their diversity; allowing everyone to freely participate in the learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification.

Trainwest will prohibit discrimination based on protected attributes, including, but not limited to:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Intersex status
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

- Religion
- Political or other option
- National or social origin
- Birth
- Nationality
- Marital status
- Parental status.

Trainwest will apply access and equity principles to all potential and current students by providing timely and appropriate information, advice and support to assist them to achieve their desired outcomes.

Trainwest will work to identify the needs of individuals and groups who might be otherwise disadvantaged. This includes providing fair allocation of resources and equal opportunity to access training and assessment services.

Our Students

To ensure that recruitment, enrolment and training and assessment services are bias-free and non-discriminatory, Trainwest will apply the same process for all students:

- Base course enrolment solely on availability of places and students satisfying course entry requirements
- Provide students with adequate information and support to enable them to select the most suitable course for their needs
- Identify special needs during enrolment and prior to course commencement
- Ensure individuals who raise concerns, complaints or grievances are treated with respect and not discriminated against
- Provide students with a fair and equitable Complaints and Appeals Policy through our website and upon request
- Provide students with relevant policies, procedures and course information prior to enrolment, through our website and publicly available Student Handbook and Third-Party Student Handbook.

Our Employees

Trainwest will ensure that all employees are provided with appropriate information, training and resources to support the principles of access and equity in the form of:

- Recruitment, selection and induction processes that are fair and free from discrimination
- Guidance materials, including our Code of Conduct and Employee Handbook
- Access to organisational policies and procedures
- Ongoing professional development opportunities and activities.

Our Support

Trainwest will work to ensure all students have the right resources and support available to them that allows successful completion of their course requirements.

Reasonable adjustment will be provided to those with a disability or special need according to individual circumstances. This will involve providing the appropriate services and/or facilities for learning and assessment.

Reasonable adjustment may include, but is not limited to:

- The use of adaptive/assistive technology
- Educational support
- Alternative assessment methods
- Extra time to complete a course or assessment.

Where Trainwest cannot provide support to a student with specific needs, this will be identified and communicated prior to enrolment.

Refer to our Support Services Policy for more information.

Quality Management

In our commitment to uphold the highest standards of quality across all our operations, our Quality Management System (QMS) integrates measures for quality control, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

This procedure undergoes a systematic review during our annual internal audit, as per our Internal Audit Procedure, reinforcing its role in achieving quality objectives and compliance standards. Ongoing review activities are documented as per our Quality Assurance Procedure.

Identified issues and improvements in this process, along with related practices and systems, are recorded in the CI Register, as per our Continuous Improvement Procedure. Employees are encouraged to contribute to continual improvement by submitting a CI Request if they identify any issues or improvement opportunities.

DEFINITIONS

Access and Equity	Policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.
Assessment	The process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved, to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified in a training package or VET accredited course.
Direct Discrimination	Any action which specifically excludes a person or group of people from a benefit or opportunity, or significantly reduces their chances of obtaining it, because their status or personal characteristics, irrelevant to the situation (e.g., sex, ethnic origin) are applied as a barrier. Direct discrimination has as a focus assumed differences between people.
Discrimination	In Australia, it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of a number of protected attributes including age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and sexual orientation in certain areas of public life, including education and employment.
Equity	Refers to fairness and justice and focuses on outcomes. Equity means recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.
Harassment	Involves a pattern of behaviour or a course of conduct pursued by an individual with the intention of intimidating and distressing another person. Harassment often involves intruding into someone's private space and affairs, and perhaps misusing their personal information.
Indirect Discrimination	The outcome of rules, practices and a decision which treats people equally and therefore appear to be neutral; but which, in fact, perpetuate an initially unequal situation and therefore significantly reduce a person's chances of obtaining or retaining a benefit or opportunity. Rules, practices and decisions are applied to all groups alike but it is the very assumption of a likeness that constitutes the discrimination.
Learner	A person being trained and/or assessed by the RTO for the purpose of issuing AQF certification documentation. Refer to Student.
Reasonable Adjustment	Term used in the education, employment and VET sectors to refer to any modification made to the learning environment, certification requirements, training delivery or assessment method to help learners with disability access and participate in education and training on the same basis as those without disability.
Registered Training Organisation (RTO)	An organisation, registered with ASQA in accordance with the requirements of the VET Quality Framework, to provide specific vocational education and training and/or assessment services.
Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015	Also referred to as the Standards, they form part of the VET Quality Framework, a system which ensures the integrity of nationally recognised qualifications. The Standards are enabled by the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (NVR Act)*. RTOs are required to comply with these Standards in order to be an RTO in Australia.
Student	Person receiving training and/or assessment services provided by Trainwest, or by a third party on our behalf. This includes learners, participants, candidates and trainees.

Third-Party	Any party that provides services on behalf of the RTO but does not include a contract of employment between an RTO and its employee.
Training and Assessment Strategies and Practices	The approach of, and method, adopted by the RTO, with respect to training and assessment designed to enable learners to meet the requirements of the training package and accredited course.
Vocational Education and Training (VET)	Learning that directly relates to getting a job. The VET system delivers education and training services for individuals at every stage of their work life, whether you're a student, a job seeker or already employed.

Refer to our Glossary for a list of all Trainwest terms and definitions.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Internal

Policies	Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy Complaints and Appeals Policy Enrolment Policy Governance Policy Privacy Policy Professional Development Policy Support Services Policy
Procedures	Assessment Procedure Assessment System Procedure Complaints and Appeals Procedure Continuous Improvement Procedure Employee Induction Procedure Enrolment Procedure Professional Development Procedure Recruitment and Selection Procedure Support Needs Identification Procedure Training and Assessment Strategy Procedure
Guides	Code of Conduct Employee Handbook Student Handbook Third-Party Student Handbook

External

Legislation	Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Clauses 1.3, 1.7 and 8.5 Age Discrimination Act 2004 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 Fair Work Act 2009 Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA) Disability Standards for Education 2005
Resources	Australian Human Rights Commission – Access and equity: human rights in practice Australian Human Rights Commission – Quick guide to Australian discrimination law (Download here) Attorney-General's Department, Australian Government – Australia's anti-discrimination law