

Wodonga Senior Secondary College Policy Manual	500 PERSONNEL 512 Managing Diversity Policy (Equal Opportunity)	Page: 1 of 1 Issue No: 1.0 Date: Nov 2005
SoF Reference Guide: _____		
Associated Processes:		Associated Documents:

MANAGING DIVERSITY

In keeping with the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995. Wodonga Senior Secondary College aims to:

- promote recognition of everyone’s right to equality of opportunity
- eliminate discrimination on the basis of identified attributes
- provide procedures to deal with instances of perceived discrimination

GUIDELINES

At Wodonga Senior Secondary College it is unacceptable to directly or indirectly discriminate against anyone on the basis of:

- Age
- Industrial Activity
- Disability
- Lawful sexual activity/sexual orientation
- Marital, parental or carer status
- Physical features
- Political beliefs or activity
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Sex
- Religious beliefs

Personal Association with a person who is identified by reference to any of these aforementioned attributes

Including

Dealings between college personnel typically covering areas such as:	Dealings between college personnel/college council and students typically covering areas such as:	Dealings between students typically covering such areas as:	Dealings between the college and the general community typically covering areas such as:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments and promotion • Access to professional development • Provision of an harassment-free environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to resources • Access to college programs • Curriculum delivery • Provision of an harassment-free environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of an harassment-free environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Advertising • Provision of goods and services

General Implementation Strategies:

- Include a copy of this policy in the staff handbook
- Include a copy of this policy in student/parent information material
- Awareness raising programs for students and the college community
- Regular training for all personnel and College Council in the Equal Opportunity Act
- Appointment of an Equal Opportunity Co-ordinator, as a stand alone role or in conjunction with another appointment
- Development and implementation of a Sexual Harassment Policy
- Policy reflected where appropriate in College Charter and Performance Management process

Evaluation:

- Report on progress of implementation in the College Annual report and evaluation within the triennial review process

Responsibility:

- College Council
- Designated member of the college leadership team
- Principal

Grievance Procedures:

1. The Principal will aim to resolve grievances at the local level but will also ensure complainant have access to information about the range of avenues of redress
2. Grievances will be taken seriously, given prompt attention and accorded confidentiality
3. The college will appoint a contact person who will:
 - receive training in the Equal Opportunity Act
 - liaise as appropriate with the Department of Education's investigations officer (EEO) and/or the Principal or Head Teacher
 - have a visible and publicised role
 - provide support and information to staff and individuals
4. The role and responsibility of the contact person is limited to the provision of information and support to the complainant and does not extend to investigation, conciliation or other intervention

ELIMINATION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

In keeping with the college's responsibilities under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995 and the belief that our college should provide a safe and supportive learning environment Wodonga Senior Secondary College aims to:

- promote the right of every student to a college environment that is free from sexual harassment
- promote the right of all staff to a workplace that is free from sexual harassment
- provide appropriate procedures to deal with complaints of sexual harassment

GUIDELINES:

Sexual harassment is:

- an unwelcome sexual advance
- an unwelcome request for sexual favours, or
- any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature,

in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal or written. It can include words, statements or graphics which are transmitted by telephone, fax, video or e-mail.

It is against the law for:

- principals to sexually harass staff or students
- staff to sexually harass other staff
- staff to sexually harass students
- students to sexually harass other students

Sexual harassment creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment which undermines self-esteem and educational opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION

- appointment of a sexual harassment contact person who will also take a proactive role in prevention
- development of appropriate procedures to deal with complaints of sexual harassment of staff
- development of appropriate procedures to deal with complaints or reported incidents of sexual harassment of students
- awareness raising programs for staff, students, college council and parents
- curriculum development
- policy reflected where appropriate in the College Charter and Performance Management process
- policy included in the staff handbook and student information booklet
- policy to be incorporated in staff induction and student transition programs

EVALUATION

- Report on progress with implementation included in the college's Annual Report and evaluation within the triennial review process.

RESPONSIBILITY

- College Council
- Principal
- Sexual Harassment Contact Person

Grievance Procedures for complaints of sexual harassment by the principal or staff members against other staff (Taken largely from and to be followed in conjunction with the Department of Education "Policy for eliminating sexual harassment in colleges and workplaces," Education News supplement 7 October 1993 and the updated policy when available in 1997)

Note: All reported incidents of sexual harassment of a student by a teacher, should be referred immediately to the principal in charge of personnel (then to the Principal). Reported incidents of sexual harassment of a teacher by a student should also be directed to relevant Assistant Principal who will take steps to ensure the harassment immediately ceases, follow these guidelines as appropriate and ensure normal student disciplinary procedures follow

1. All complaints of sexual harassment will be regarded as serious and will be accorded complete confidentiality
2. The Assistant Principal/Principal will ensure that any harassing behaviour ceases immediately
3. The complainant will be informed of the Department of Education's policies and procedures and will be provided with personal support where appropriate
4. All complaints and procedures will be dealt with in a timely manner
5. The college will provide a sexual harassment contact person who will have access to appropriate training. This contact person will:
 - have a visible and publicised role in the college
 - be well versed in the nature of sexual harassment and its negative effects, particularly with respect to the effect that a complaint is likely to have on others
 - be available as a first point of contact for a person considering making a complaint or seeking advice about sexual harassment
 - be empathetic but non-judgemental listener
 - provide complainants with support, information about the various avenues for advice, procedures for complaint resolution and the range of options available
 - treat all disclosures of sexual harassment (against staff) with utmost confidentiality, including beyond the resolution of a particular case
 - liaise as necessary with the Principal and the Department of Education investigations officer (EEO)

The role and responsibility of the workplace contact person is limited to the provision of information and support to the complainant and does not extend to investigation, conciliation or other intervention.

6. When a complaint is brought to the Principal he/she will decide if the allegation can be handled at the local level or if advice should be sought from the Department of Education's investigations Officer. Where possible the complaint will be dealt with at the local level in an impartial and unbiased manner with a view to resolving the dispute in a low-key and conciliatory way. Confidentiality must be ensured.

Generally however advice will be sought from the Department of Education's investigations officer when:

- the allegation has the potential to damage the person's standing in the workplace or community
- the complainant is seeking a remedy which includes a significant component of compensation, or substantial penalty for the alleged harasser
- the behaviour alleged is causing distress which has a detrimental effect on a person's health or professional performance and/or the morale of the workplace

7. While there will be an emphasis on solving disputes at the local level the complainant maintains the right to seek advice from or lodge a complaint with any of the following:

- Workplace contact person
- Principal
- General Manager (when the complaint involved the conduct of the Principal or Head Teacher)
- Department of Education’s investigations officer (EEO)
- Commissioner of Equal Opportunity
and/or
- Victoria Police (when the alleged sexual harassment constitutes criminal action)

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Students will be encouraged to bring sexual harassment incidents to the attention of any teacher. However the Year Level Co-ordinator or Assistant Principal Co-ordinator will be a suggested avenue for students.

