

Inclusive and Non-discriminatory Language Policy

Designated Officer:	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Council Approval:	C03/27, 22 April 2003
Last Amended:	
Related Policies:	Equal Opportunity Policy Discrimination and Harassment Policy University Code of Conduct Student Grievance Procedure Student Conduct and Discipline Policy Electronic Mail Policy Acceptable use of IT Resources Policy

Overview

The University is committed to creating a work and study environment in which people's diverse backgrounds and attributes are valued and discriminatory practices are eliminated. Such an environment may be referred to as an inclusive environment. Language is a powerful tool for creating and conveying ideas and meaning, establishing norms and influencing behaviour and as such, use of language in written and verbal forms and as visual imagery can have an effect on the creation of an inclusive environment.

Language that omits reference to, fails to acknowledge the experience of, or specifically excludes groups of students or staff can have the effect of making these groups feel they are not a legitimate or valued part of the University community. Such exclusion can have a detrimental effect on the quality of education experienced by groups of students or the quality of working life and employment opportunities for groups of University staff.

Language that stereotypes, denigrates, demeans and consequently offends groups of students or staff is discriminatory and could become the subject of a complaint under the Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures or a complaint to the State or Federal equal opportunity commissions.

Universities are places where challenging discourse is encouraged and it is not intended that this policy should place limits on the language of academic discourse or the contesting of ideas, meaning, and norms of behaviour.

1. Policy

- 1.1 The University will actively seek to adopt inclusive and non-discriminatory language in all academic programs, including written and spoken communication and in visual images.
- 1.2 The University administration will ensure that written and spoken language and visual images used in administrative communications to students, staff and the community are inclusive and non-discriminatory.
- 1.3 The University will educate its community in the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **'Language'**, for the purposes of this policy, means communication and the making of meaning through written symbols, spoken word and visual imagery.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 The Learning and Teaching Plan is the vehicle by which this Inclusive and Non-Discriminatory Language Policy will be implemented in relation to academic programs. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Deans of Faculty will be responsible for implementation of the relevant policy objectives.
- 3.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Board will have oversight of progress in achieving the policy objective of inclusive language in academic programs.
- 3.3 Deans and Cost Centre Managers will be responsible for ensuring that their areas remove non-inclusive or discriminatory language from written communications with students and staff.
- 3.4 Deans and Cost Centre Managers will be responsible for encouraging the use of non-discriminatory and inclusive spoken language, by their staff in communication with students and staff.
- 3.5 Deans and Cost Centre Managers will be responsible for encouraging the use of non-discriminatory and inclusive visual imagery.
- 3.6 Staff development opportunities covering the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language will be organised by Human Resources where a need is identified.
- 3.7 Guidelines on use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language will be published on the internet for use by staff and students.