

ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

Purpose

Energy Skills Solutions (ESS) is committed to providing equal opportunity and promoting inclusive practices and processes and integrating the principles of access and equity for its services.

This policy states how ESS will provide inclusive services and a learning environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

Scope

This policy relates to the provision of all services to clients. In addition, all staff and contractors employed or engaged by ESS are required to comply with this policy.

This policy is not to be considered in isolation. It is to be read in conjunction with all related policies, procedures, and other documents, including, but not limited to, those specifically listed in the body of the policy document.

Outcomes

The intended outcomes of this policy are to provide information to:

- ensure ESS complies with the relevant legislation, policies, and standards.
- ensure consistent application of the policy.
- provide transparency in relation to ESS's approach to access and equity.

Definitions

Client – means the employer of the student or the student.

ESS staff – means all staff of ESS, including full-time, part-time, casual staff and contractors.

Legislation

The following requirements are used as the basis for the policy.

[Equal Opportunity Act 1984 \(WA\)](#).

Policy

This policy is underpinned by the following principles, which aim to be fair and responsive to clients and allows them to exercise relevant choices in the services they receive. The principles are:

Access to and participation in a course or assessment

- the same process is used for all enrolments to ensure that the enrolment process is bias-free and non-discriminatory.
- enrolment in a course is based solely on availability of places and the applicant satisfying entry requirements.
- applicants are provided with adequate information and support to enable them to select the most suitable course for their needs.
- services are moderated to meet the needs of the client.
- introductory sessions are conducted for clients at commencement of the course that covers all relevant information.
- on-going information, advice and support is provided to assist clients to obtain maximum benefit from their course and achieve their learning goals.

Assessment

ESS provides an assessment process that is fair, valid, reliable, and consistent through:

- recognition of previously acquired skills and knowledge.
- adequate information on course assessment, prior to enrolment in the course
- adapting assessment to meet client needs while still maintaining a high quality, valid and consistent process (see reasonable adjustment below)
- giving clients the right to appeal an assessment or recognition decision.
- giving all clients an equal opportunity to demonstrate competence.

Reasonable adjustment

Reasonable adjustment is provided to those with a disability or special need according to individual circumstances.

Reasonable adjustment may include but is not restricted to:

- learning support.
- alternative assessment methods.
- learning and assessment aids such as papers in large print or the use of scribes or interpreters.
- extra time to complete the course or assessment.

Special consideration may be granted if through illness, bereavement, or personal trauma a client is prevented from completing an assessment or sitting an assessment; or believes that their performance in an assessment event has been affected by the incident.

Valuing diversity

ESS recognises, responds to, and affirms the diversity of persons applying for and participating in a course or assessment.

ESS provides a learning environment for the client that will complement their learning needs and enable greater opportunity for a successful outcome for the client.

To ensure that the learning environment is free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation ESS has standards of behaviour expected from students and staff specified in its Pre-Course Information, ESS-MG005 Student Information Guide and ESS-MG010 Employee and Contractor Handbook.

Support services

To engage in courses provided by ESS, the client is required to use language, literacy and numeracy skills as evidence of their competence and understanding.

The requirement for language, literacy and numeracy is communicated to clients as part of the enrolment process.

During the course, the client or the trainer may identify the need for support to successfully meet the learning outcomes and assessment requirements.

Learning support is facilitated for those with basic literacy, numeracy or English language difficulties or other identified areas of learning difficulty.

Course development

To ensure that courses developed by ESS is inclusive of a range of client needs, ESS:

- considers issues relating to access and equity when specifying course entry requirements and prerequisites.
- offers flexible course design that provides multiple entry and exit points or pathways through the course, including credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.
- provides inclusive and non-discriminatory learning materials in the case of vocational training, language, literacy, and numeracy requirements that are consistent with the vocational level of the qualification.

Facilities

ESS premises provide appropriate access to those with a physical disability. Where ESS provides services at other venues, ESS will ensure to the best of its ability that venues are accessible to people with a disability.

Complaints and appeals

Complaints and appeals are addressed in a fair and equitable manner.

Individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly are encouraged to use the ESS Complaints and Appeals procedure. ESS will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints and appeals in accordance with the stated procedure.

Clients also have the right to appeal against any decisions as set out in the Client Complaints and Appeals procedure.

Managing diversity as an overall responsibility

ESS has an overall responsibility to create and develop strategies and outcomes that are responsive to the needs of their diverse student base. All systems and processes established by ESS will reflect the intentions of the policy.

All new staff will be briefed on the contents of this policy and requested to adhere to its principles in the completion of their duties.

ESS will review practices, policies, systems, workplace behavior that may contribute to the discrimination or disadvantage of clients.

Responsibilities

ESS management is responsible for:

- implementing the policy
- monitoring compliance with the policy
- addressing any non-compliance to the policy
- reviewing the policy and changes to the policy
- complying with the policy

ESS staff are responsible for:

- identifying changes to the policy
- complying with the policy

All inquiries and issues related to the policy are to be directed to ESS.

Document Management

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Document version history

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2.0	10/11/2014	Modified reference to legislation.
3.0	01/04/24	General review and update

Related/referenced documents

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APPROVED BY:



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(Signature of approving officer)

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