

 <p><b>Wingate Avenue</b> Community Centre</p> <p>TOID: 6419</p>	Title:	
	<b>ACCESS, EQUITY &amp; CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY</b>	
	Version: 2	Approved: Committee of Management March 2017
	Administered: Manager	Next Review: March 2020

## Background

Wingate Avenue Community Centre (WACC) aims to ensure that individuals have equal opportunities to participate effectively in programs and services whatever their age, gender, indigenous culture, ethnic origin, (dis)ability, economic circumstance, religious or political affiliation, and whatever their literacy or numeracy skills.

A culturally diverse community is one made up of people from a wide range of backgrounds with a variety of beliefs, values and practices. Such a community offers the people living in it a larger variety of cultural possibilities, for example, different life styles, cultural activities and living arrangements. In order to maintain harmony, diverse communities rely on mutual respect, respect for the cultural perspectives and allegiances of the individuals, families and groups who make up the community.

Wingate Avenue Community Centre recognises, respects, promotes and celebrates the value of access, equity and diversity and wherever possible will provide culturally appropriate services. The community centre acknowledges however that funding for community organisations is limited. Within this context we are committed to providing practical and equitable outcomes for all participants.

## Responsibilities

Wingate Avenue Community Centre is required by Commonwealth and State legislation to ensure that it does not discriminate in the provision of services. The legislation relevant to these policies is:

## Relevant Legislation

- [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)
- [Age Discrimination Act 2004](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)
- [Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Act 2006](#)

## Principles

The principles are guided by WACC's values as outlined in the following statements -

- **Access:** As a service provider, WACC ensures fair and equal access to its services for all individuals.
- **Equity:** WACC ensures all people are treated with fairness and impartiality.
- **Inclusiveness:** Affirmative strategies are implemented to increase participation of individuals and specific communities.
- **Communication:** WACC will use all necessary strategies to inform eligible individuals of the services available, their entitlements and how they can obtain them.

- **Responsiveness:** WACC will be sensitive to the needs and requirements of all house users and employees and be responsive as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.
- **Quality:** Delivery of programs and services which increase the capacity of individuals to participate in work, community life, further education and other activities.

WACC acknowledges its legal obligations under State and Federal legislation and has a strong commitment to making sure that Neighbourhood Houses are for everyone. WACC will provide accessible, equitable and equal opportunity programs, services, volunteering and employment opportunities to the community and will aim to do the following:

1. WACC acknowledges its legal obligations under State and Federal Equal Opportunity law and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, to ensure that our working and teaching practices are fair and equitable, and our working and learning environment non-discriminatory.
2. We aim to enhance life and work opportunities for people in our local community by providing accessible, equitable and equal opportunity programs, training and services to the community.
3. We will improve client services by regularly collecting data through student surveys, needs assessment, focus groups and regular client contact.
4. WACC is committed to system improvements and implementation from regular data collection.
5. Clients will receive a pre training assessment prior to enrolment and students are provided with a handbook and information regarding support services.
6. To effectively recognise value and enrich the diversity of our local community, Wingate Avenue Community Centre will know its local community and the make-up of demographics.
7. Services and programs provided will be accessible to people from any cultural, linguistic and religious background.
8. Participants from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds should not experience barriers to access and participation.
9. Staff and management will recognise and respond to specific issues of ethnicity, gender, disability, financial disadvantage, sexual preference, social, cultural and geographic isolation.
10. Service provision will reflect sensitivity, relevance and awareness to different cultural and religious practices.
11. All participants will have the right to contribute to decision-making processes and to express their views without suffering any prejudice.

## Guidelines

- This policy is in keeping with our undertaking as an organisation to deliver the highest quality services and products – a policy declaring our position on access, equity and cultural diversity.
- Staff are encouraged to be pro-active in improving all aspects and quality of the service provision.
- Diversity in our community is reflected in the management and service provision of the organisation.
- Quality education and community development programs which increase the capacity of individuals to participate in work, community life, further education and/or community activities will be delivered by the organisation for the community.
- Wingate Avenue Community Centre will develop and implement a range of strategies in its management and delivery of educational services, support services and child and family services to diverse groups in the community.
- Subject to funding the Centre will provide appropriate and effective language services, utilising Community Leaders and Translators.
- The needs of the cultural, age, sex, religion and background of community centre participants will be taken into account in the design and delivery of relevant information.
- The centre will provide a diverse, flexible and creative learning environment which encourages the enhancement of skills and knowledge.
- Appropriate data collection methods will be utilised to enable the community centre to target, plan, develop and evaluate all programs and services in a way that is relevant, equitable and accessible.
- Providing appropriate training for staff, volunteers and management where and when possible.

## **Implementation process**

These are the specific processes that this Community Centre will put in place to make these guidelines a reality.

### Information Provision

The Community Centre will endeavour to have relevant information in relation to the organisation and the services it provides made available in ways that may be understood by people attending the centre.

This may include:

- Use of translators for community consultations and information sessions
- The use of pictures for presentation of information eg. posters
- Provide information to members of the community utilising Community Leaders for assistance with translation of information
- Offering choice to participants
- Identifying and breaking down potential barriers to participation
- Instilling the values of the organisation to both staff and client groups
- Networks to be established with ethno specific groups in the community to pinpoint service needs
- Promoting programs and services to the community in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse client population to ensure that all prospective participants are well informed on the options available to meet their individual needs.

### Learning Environment

The Community Centre will:

- Provide additional support, where practical, to learners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Create a learning environment that embraces diversity by displaying culturally diverse posters and information
- Provide space for prayer
- Value and respond to the diversity of the local community
- Provide accessible and affordable programs and services
- Respond to members of the local community with special needs
- Promote the recognition and understanding of the difference between and within cultural groups, all staff and volunteers will be provided with cross-cultural training
- Ensure the information that is provided is of a level that low level literacy clients can understand.

### Data Collection

The Community Centre will:

- Collect data on the people attending the Community Centre
- Evaluate the data collected and develop strategies to address any problems identified
- Collect and analyse data on who lives in our community. Census data is available from Local Council
- Check the information the Community Centre is providing is reaching the right people and being used and understood. This may be achieved through participant feedback.

## **Relevant Documents**

- Strategic Plan
- Needs Assessments
- Education Analysis
- Disability Action Plan

Adopted by Committee of Management on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Signed by Chairperson: Raoul Wainwright



