

**AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION  
ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE**

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# **Workplace Diversity Program**

# Document information

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Two years from review.

# Contents

<b>Document information</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Version history	2
Ownership	2
Document location	2
Date for next review	2
<b>Acronyms and abbreviations</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Scope	4
Purpose	4
Resources	4
<b>Valuing Diversity</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Alignment with the Australian Public Service</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>The Commission’s Workplace Diversity Program</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Objective one: ensuring all individuals of all genders are treated fairly and improving gender balance	6
Objective two: improving workforce recognition of, and participation by, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	7
Objective three: fostering workforce participation by workers with a disability	8
Objective four: fostering workforce participation and inclusion of all-staff	9
<b>Responsibilities</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Workplace harassment and discrimination	11
<b>Further information</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Attachment A: Acknowledgement to traditional custodians</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Meeting at the Commission’s offices	12
Meeting offsite	12
Teleconferences	12
About acknowledging traditional custodians	12
<b>Attachment B: Reasonable adjustment</b> .....	<b>13</b>
What is reasonable adjustment?	13
When should reasonable adjustment occur?	13
How is reasonable adjustment determined?	14
Who is responsible for reasonable adjustment?	14
All staff have a responsibility for reasonable adjustment	14
Who pays for reasonable adjustment?	14
<b>Attachment C: Disability definition</b> .....	<b>15</b>

# Acronyms and abbreviations

APS	Australian Public Service.
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
Commission	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.
Employee	Means an employee engaged under section 22 of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .
HR	Human Resources.
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse people
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.
NATSISN	Department of Health's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network
Staff	Commission Employees and contractors

## Introduction

A diverse and inclusive workforce builds organisational capability by promoting equity and bringing diversity of approach to the way we work. This leads to greater creativity, improved productivity and better outcomes. This Workplace Diversity Program (the program) supports the Commission's ongoing commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace that strongly values the skills, expertise and perspectives of all people.

## Scope

This program applies to all Commission staff including contractors.

## Purpose

The purpose of this program is to outline the Commission's plan to foster diversity and inclusion in our workforce, and through a variety of initiatives, achieve a positive, respectful and equitable workplace environment and culture.

## Resources

This program links with:

- [Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020-25](#)
- [Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26](#)
- [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024](#)
- Employee Assistance Policy (TRIM #D14-1764)
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy (TRIM #D15-4434)
- Handy Stuff: Accessibility step-by-step guide (TRIM #D17-11070)
- Home Based Work Policy (TRIM #D14-1714)
- The Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions 2022
- The Commission's Acknowledgement to traditional custodians (TRIM #D16-35533)

- The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- The *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- The *Public Service Act 1999*
- The *Racial Discrimination Act 1984*
- The *Sex Discrimination Act 1992*
- Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Policy (TRIM #59959)

## Valuing Diversity

As a concept, diversity recognises that everyone has certain unique traits and characteristics which set them apart from others. Diversity can take on many forms and may include (but is not limited to) traits like your gender and gender expression, age, race, sexual orientation, disability, or religious beliefs.

The Commission recognises that fostering workplace diversity has many benefits, including:

- Increased innovation and performance
- Improved representation of people in the workforce which is reflective of the Australian community
- Improved staff engagement and wellbeing
- Improved understanding of, and service to, clients and colleagues
- Better attraction of talent from the widest possible pool of candidates
- Improved work/life balance
- Improved opportunities for workforce participation and career progression for all staff.

Through this program, the Commission seeks to establish a framework that values diversity and supports staff to be respectful of everyone's backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, lifestyle and social behaviours and to see these differences as equal.

## Alignment with the Australian Public Service

Workplace Diversity maintains the basic principles of fairness, equity and respect which are integral to the Australian Public Service (APS) values, APS employment principles and APS Code of Conduct.

Section 18 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act) requires the Commission to establish a workplace diversity program to assist in giving effect to the APS employment principles. Section 10A of the PS Act outlines the APS employment principles including that the APS is a career-based public service that recognises the diversity of the Australian community and fosters diversity in the workplace.

This program is also informed by whole of government diversity strategies including:

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024](#)
- [Disability Employment Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- [Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026](#).

## The Commission's Workplace Diversity Program

This program aims to increase workplace representation of underrepresented groups, retain and support emerging talent, and educate staff to facilitate an inclusive work environment. The program focuses on gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people

with a disability, as well as recognising the need to support a mentally healthy workplace that fosters workforce participation and inclusion of all staff including culturally and linguistically diverse people, LGBTIQA+ people, mature age people. The program's objectives are outlined below.

## Objective one: ensuring all individuals of all genders are treated fairly and improving gender balance

The following actions, delivery dates and performance measures have been developed to achieve objective one:

	Action	Delivery	Measures
Recruit	<p>Ensure all merit recruitment selection panels are gender balanced</p> <p>Ensure staff have access to resources on how to make assessment decisions that are inclusive of all applicants and free from bias</p> <p>Ensure all job advertisements welcome applicants from key diversity groups and explain why we value diversity and inclusion at the Commission</p> <p>Ensure all applicants are asked whether they require any reasonable adjustments to selection methods</p>	2022/23	<p>Composition of merit recruitment selection panels</p> <p>Availability of resources for recruitment panels</p> <p>Commission's job advertisement templates and Recruitment Procedures updated</p>
Retain	<p>Leaders and visible role models at all levels demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion through their actions and words</p> <p>Encourage staff to identify and record their gender information (female, male, non-binary) in SAP ESS to create a more inclusive workplace</p> <p>Promote and celebrate days of significance including International Women's Day</p>	Ongoing	<p>Census results on organisation performance around diversity</p> <p>Workforce composition by gender types at the agency level and by classification types</p> <p>Number of events held by the Commission to recognise and celebrate gender diversity</p>
	Track data on gender composition and gender pay gap across all classifications	Annually	Annual analysis of gender pay gap through agency remuneration report
Support	<p>Flexible working arrangements are accessible to all staff and policies are reviewed to ensure they are gender neutral</p> <p>Develop a family and domestic violence policy that sets out supports available to staff</p>	2022/23	<p>Uptake of flexible work arrangements by gender</p> <p>Family and domestic violence policy developed</p>
	<p>Managers support staff to manage their family and caring responsibilities including elder and disability care and partners are encouraged to access parental leave</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate career development and learning opportunities for all genders</p>	Ongoing	<p>Uptake of relevant leave provisions accessed by gender</p> <p>Uptake of training and study support accessed by gender</p> <p>Participation in staff training on the Commission's Workplace Bullying,</p>

	Encourage a workplace free from discrimination and harassment		Harassment and Discrimination policy (biannual)
<b>Educate</b>	Undertake training to enhance manager capability in leading flexible teams	2022/23	Participation in manager training

## Objective two: improving workforce recognition of, and participation by, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The following actions, delivery dates and measures have been developed to achieve objective two:

	Action	Delivery	Performance measures
<b>Recruit</b>	<p>Ensure staff have access to resources on how to make assessment decisions that are inclusive of all applicants and free from bias</p> <p>Create and maintain identified positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in accordance with Affirmative Measures</p> <p>Ensure all job advertisements welcome applicants from key diversity groups and explain why we value diversity and inclusion at the Commission</p> <p>Ensure all applicants are asked whether they require any reasonable adjustments to selection methods</p>	2022/23	<p>Availability of resources for recruitment panels</p> <p>Positions identified for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples</p> <p>Commission's job advertisement templates and Recruitment Procedures updated</p>
	Participate in the APS Indigenous Pathways Graduate Program annually	Annually	Engagement of APS Indigenous Pathways Graduates
<b>Retain</b>	Develop and implement Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan	2022/23	Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan Initiatives being implemented
	<p>Leaders and visible role models at all levels demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion through their actions and words</p> <p>Encourage staff to identify and record their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status in SAP ESS to create a more inclusive workplace</p> <p>Promote and celebrate days/weeks of significance such as NAIDOC week and National Reconciliation Week</p> <p>Respect cultural practices and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including commencing meetings with an acknowledgement to the traditional custodians (Attachment A)</p>	Ongoing	<p>Census results on organisation performance around diversity</p> <p>Workforce composition by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status</p> <p>Number of events held by the Commission to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples</p> <p>Meeting agendas include acknowledgement of country</p>

	Provide the opportunity for staff to nominate to participate in the Jawun Secondment Program	Annually	Staff nominations received for the Jawun program annually
<b>Support</b>	<p>Promote the Department of Health's staff networks that Commission staff are able to join: <a href="#">NATSISN</a> for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and <a href="#">Friends of NATSISN</a> for non-Indigenous staff</p> <p>Provide access to leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in accordance with the enterprise agreement</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate career development and learning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, including having access to appropriate professional mentors</p> <p>Encourage a workplace free from discrimination and harassment</p>	Ongoing	<p>Uptake of relevant leave provisions accessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff</p> <p>Uptake of training and study support accessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff</p> <p>Participation in staff training on the Commission's Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy (biannual)</p>
<b>Educate</b>	Incorporate the SBS Inclusion Program's, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training module as mandatory for all new Commission staff	2021/22	New staff training completions
	Increase staff awareness, understanding and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural training conducted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainers	2022/23	Number of cultural awareness training sessions conducted and staff participation rates

### Objective three: fostering workforce participation by workers with a disability

The following actions, delivery dates and performance measures have been developed to achieve objective three:

	Action	Delivery	Performance measures
<b>Recruit</b>	<p>Ensure staff have access to resources on how to make assessment decisions that are inclusive of all applicants and free from bias</p> <p>All vacancies advertised via APS Jobs allow candidates to apply through the APS <i>Recruitability</i> scheme</p> <p>Ensure all job advertisements welcome applicants from key diversity groups and explain why we value diversity and inclusion at the Commission</p> <p>Ensure all applicants are asked whether they require any reasonable adjustments to selection methods</p>	2022/23	<p>Availability of resources for recruitment panels</p> <p>All vacancies advertised via APS Jobs are under the APS <i>Recruitability</i> scheme</p> <p>Engagement of staff via the APS <i>Recruitability</i> scheme</p> <p>Commission's job advertisement templates and Recruitment Procedures updated</p>



Retain	<p>Leaders and visible role models at all levels demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion through their actions and words</p> <p>Encourage staff to identify and record their disability information in SAP ESS to create a more inclusive workplace</p> <p>Seek feedback from staff with a disability on their experiences working at the Commission and identify areas for improvement</p>	Ongoing	<p>Census results on organisation performance around diversity</p> <p>Workforce composition by disability status</p> <p>Feedback on work experiences from Commission staff with a disability</p>
	<p>Ensure current procedures are up to date with accessibility requirements for online access and publishing</p>	2022/23	<p>Procedures are compliant with accessibility requirements for online access and publishing</p>
Support	<p>Provide ergonomic workstation assessments as required to ensure that staff are able to perform their duties safely and effectively</p> <p>Provide workplace adjustments, including access to assistive technologies, to staff in a respectful and timely manner</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate career development and learning opportunities for people with a disability</p> <p>Encourage a workplace free from discrimination and harassment</p>	Ongoing	<p>Workstation assessments undertaken for all staff</p> <p>Uptake of reasonable adjustments made for staff with a disability in accordance with <a href="#">Attachment B</a></p> <p>Uptake of training and study support accessed by staff with a disability</p> <p>Participation in staff training on the Commission's Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy (biannual)</p>
Educate	<p>Identify and provide disability awareness training for staff and managers</p>	2022/23	<p>Staff participation and completion rates of relevant training</p>
	<p>Participate in relevant government initiatives such as the APS Disability Champions Network and provide feedback on these initiatives to staff</p>	Ongoing	<p>Participation in relevant government initiatives such as the Disability Champion's Network</p>

## Objective four: fostering workforce participation and inclusion of all-staff

The following actions, delivery dates and performance measures have been developed to achieve objective four:

	Action	Delivery	Performance Measures
Recruit	<p>Ensure staff have access to resources on how to make assessment decisions that are inclusive of all applicants and free from bias</p> <p>Ensure all job advertisements welcome applicants from key diversity groups and explain why we value diversity and inclusion at the Commission</p> <p>Ensure all applicants are asked whether they require any reasonable adjustments to selection methods</p>	2022/23	<p>Availability of resources for recruitment panels</p> <p>Commission's job advertisement templates and Recruitment Procedures updated</p>

<b>Retain</b>	<p>Leaders and visible role models at all levels demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion through their actions and words</p> <p>Encourage staff to self-identify and record their diversity information in SAP ESS to create a more inclusive workplace</p> <p>Acknowledge and celebrate our diversity regularly including celebrating days of significance such as Harmony day and Pride Month</p>	Ongoing	<p>Census results on organisation performance around diversity</p> <p>Workforce composition by diversity categories</p> <p>Number of events held by the Commission to recognise and celebrate gender diversity</p>
	<p>Review and update the Commission's Orientation to include relevant diversity information and support details</p>	2022/23	<p>Orientation information updated to include relevant diversity information and support details</p>
<b>Support</b>	<p>Become a member of the Diversity Council Australia, and draw on and make available its resources to support all staff</p> <p>Create a HR intranet page to provide staff with access to a range of diversity resources</p> <p>Encourage the use of pronouns in signature blocks to assist staff understand how to address or refer to an individual</p>	2022/23	<p>Diversity Council Australia membership obtained and resources made available to staff</p> <p>Diversity intranet page developed</p> <p>Staff uptake of including pronouns in signature blocks</p>
	<p>Promote the Department of Health's staff networks that Commission staff are able to join: the <a href="#">CALD Network</a> and the <a href="#">Health Pride Network</a></p> <p>Continue membership of ACON Pride in Diversity Health and Wellbeing to provide staff access to resources, networking opportunities, expertise and support for staff</p> <p>Promote awareness of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available to all staff (employees and contractors)</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate career development and learning opportunities for all staff</p> <p>Encourage a workplace free from discrimination and harassment</p>	Ongoing	<p>Maintain ACON Pride in Diversity Health and Wellbeing membership</p> <p>Uptake of training and study support accessed by all staff</p> <p>Participation in staff training on the Commission's Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination policy (biannual)</p>
<b>Educate</b>	<p>Identify and provide cultural awareness training to staff</p> <p>Identify and provide Mental Health awareness training to staff</p> <p>Make resources available to staff on superannuation and preparing for retirement</p> <p>Encourage staff to undertake ACON Pride training including the <i>LGBTQ Introductory Learning</i> module</p>	2022/23	<p>Staff participation and completion rates of relevant training</p> <p>Superannuation resources and information made available on the HR intranet</p>

## Responsibilities

Each staff member in the Commission is responsible for upholding the principles of workplace diversity and contributing to this program.

All staff must:

- Treat their co-workers and clients with respect and courtesy
- Carry out their work without harassment and discrimination of others and
- Behave, at all times, in a way that upholds the APS values and the integrity and good reputation of the APS and encourage others to do the same.

## Workplace harassment and discrimination

For more information about workplace harassment and discrimination, please refer to the Commission's Workplace Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy (TRIM #59959) or contact a Workplace Harassment Contact Officer (WHCO). The Commission's WHCOs are available on the Commission's phone list and intranet.

## Further information

HR can assist with any more information on diversity or matters outlined in this program. HR can be contacted by emailing [ACSQHCHR@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:ACSQHCHR@safetyandquality.gov.au).

# Attachment A: Acknowledgement to traditional custodians

The Commission is committed to ensuring that the workplace is culturally safe and supportive for all, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Accordingly, staff are required to acknowledge traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodianship of the land at the start of significant meetings and events, as follows:

## Meeting at the Commission's offices

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## Meeting offsite

If people and Nation known:

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land (*insert name of people and Nation*) and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

If neither people and/or Nation known:

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## Teleconferences

*At the discretion of the Chair given those attending the teleconference are across the lands, and some lands are disputed.*

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land (*insert name of people and Nation if known*) and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## About acknowledging traditional custodians

A *Welcome to Country* can only be delivered by an Elder or other appropriate representative from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

An *Acknowledgement of Country* is where other people acknowledge and show respect for the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the event is taking place if an appropriate representative from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is not available.

This acknowledgement should be made before all official events at and for the Commission.

The announcement shows a mark of respect to the traditional custodians of the land and sea, an integral part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Recognition of traditional land ownership plays an essential role in the Reconciliation process. The Commission is committed to improving the safety and quality of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## Attachment B: Reasonable adjustment

The Commission will apply the principle of reasonable adjustment to remove barriers to employment for staff with a disability. The definition of 'disability' is intended to be broad and guidance on what constitutes a disability is at Attachment C.

### What is reasonable adjustment?

Reasonable adjustment refers to any form of assistance or adjustment to working arrangements, work methods, equipment or the work environment that is necessary, possible and reasonable to reduce or eliminate the effects of disability. Reasonable adjustment enables staff with a disability to perform efficiently and effectively in the workplace and to compete for recruitment and career advancement opportunities.

Not all staff with a disability require reasonable adjustment. However, some staff may require workplace adjustments which may include modifications to:

- Recruitment and interview arrangements
- Access to buildings and the work area
- Parking and travel arrangements
- Job redesign
- Equipment such as workstation and software requirements and
- Staff development and training.

Any adjustments or alterations which enable a person with a disability to do their job must be made unless it imposes unjustifiable hardship to the organisation. In determining an unjustifiable hardship, circumstances which must be considered include:

- The nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue to, or to be suffered by, any person concerned
- The effect of the disability of any person concerned
- The financial circumstances, and the estimated amount of expenditure required to be made, by the first person
- The availability of financial and other assistance to the first person.

The application of reasonable adjustment does not preclude the principles of merit, equity and cost effectiveness, nor does it imply any lowering of essential standards of performance.

### When should reasonable adjustment occur?

The principle of reasonable adjustment should be taken into account:

- In recruitment processes including selection decisions
- In the on-boarding of a new staff member with a disability or the movement of an existing staff member with a disability
- In circumstances where a person with a disability is required to perform new or higher level duties which may have different inherent requirements to their previous role and
- In circumstances of technological and organisational change.

It is important that reasonable adjustment requirements are addressed as promptly as possible. For example, in the case of a person with a disability commencing in the Commission or in a new area of the Commission, it is important to ensure that all those who are responsible for implementing reasonable adjustment are aware of the agreed requirements and timeframes.

## How is reasonable adjustment determined?

Reasonable adjustment is to be agreed between the staff member with a disability and their manager, with the input of HR. All share responsibility for determining and implementing reasonable adjustments.

It is essential to have input from the staff member with a disability to ascertain how reasonable adjustment should be applied to their particular circumstances. It is not discriminatory to ask a person about their disability if the information is to be used to implement reasonable adjustments for their use or benefit.

Implementing reasonable adjustments may be simple and inexpensive or complex and require the purchase of equipment. Each case needs to be assessed individually to determine the extent of the disability and the type of assistance required to enable the staff member to perform their required duties. The assessment may include the provision of advice from an organisation which has expert knowledge of the particular type of disability.

## Who is responsible for reasonable adjustment?

Generally, reasonable adjustment can be seen in the context of a joint responsibility between the staff member with the disability and the Commission. The Commission expects that staff with a disability, managers and all other Commission staff should attempt to be aware of, lessen and overcome any barriers in relation to the employment of people with a disability.

### All staff have a responsibility for reasonable adjustment

More often than not, reasonable adjustment simply means changing the attitudes of managers and staff. This is often the most critical, and least expensive, adjustment of all. If managers and staff have negative or inappropriate attitudes relating to people with a disability then the provision of high-tech equipment alone will not ensure a successful placement.

## Who pays for reasonable adjustment?

The costs associated with reasonable adjustment are met from corporate funds. HR will arrange provision of equipment required to facilitate reasonable adjustment. Staff should contact HR by emailing [ACSQHCHR@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:ACSQHCHR@safetyandquality.gov.au) for assistance.

## Attachment C: Disability definition

Section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* defines disability in relation to a person to mean:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- Total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that:
  - Presently exists; or
  - Previously existed but no longer exists; or
  - May exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
  - Is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.