Diversity and inclusion

Policy Number: G2 (QH-POL-132)

Publication date: July 2020

Purpose: To promote the understanding and achievement of diversity and inclusion within Queensland Health.

Application: This policy applies to employees working for Queensland Health. This policy does not apply to employees of Queensland Ambulance Service. Instead, Queensland Ambulance Service employees are to refer to the Queensland Ambulance Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Delegation: The ‘delegate’ is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Service Human Resource (HR) delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- Disability Services Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 2019
- Industrial Relations Act 2016
- Multicultural Recognition Act 2016
- Public Sector Ethics Act 1994
- Public Service Act 2008
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Health Practitioners and Dental Officers (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 2) 2016
- Medical Officers’ (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.5) 2018 (MOCA 5)
- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health and Department of Education) Certified Agreement (EB10) 2018
- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 9) 2016

Related policy or documents:
- Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 (QH-POL-242)
- Guideline – Flexible working arrangements (QH-GDL-242)
- Special Leave HR Policy C7 (QH-POL-231)
- Parental Leave HR Policy C26 (QH-POL-187)
- Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence HR Policy C73 (QH-POL-391)
- Anti-discrimination and vilification HR Policy E2 (QH-POL-101)
- Sexual harassment HR Policy E5 (QH-POL-228)
- Workplace bullying HR Policy E13 (QH-POL-266)
- Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3 (QH-POL-210)
- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service
- Department of Health Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2018-2019
- Moving Ahead: A strategic approach to increasing the participation of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland’s economy 2016-2022
- Queensland Disability Plan 2014-2019
- Queensland Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework
Diversity and Inclusion in Queensland Health

The focus for diversity is on all employees. Built on the principles of Equality of Employment Opportunity (EEO) which primarily directed efforts to removing disadvantage, diversity has a broader meaning that encompasses the wide range of differences across the workforce and community. It includes inherent characteristics such as age/generational differences, ethnicity, intellectual and/or physical ability, cultural background, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Diversity also refers to less visible aspects such as education, socioeconomic background, faith, marital status, job level, family responsibilities, experience, and thinking and work styles.

Inclusion refers to the way our organisational culture, values and behaviours make a person feel valued, included and welcome. It relates to a work environment where all people are treated fairly and respectfully, with equal access to opportunities and resources.

Queensland Health is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in its workforce and in its management practices by implementing policies and strategies that:

- are sensitive to and informed by the needs of employees from diverse backgrounds and responsive to the particular circumstances of individuals
- allow equitable access by all employees to information regarding their entitlements and how to obtain them

Queensland Health expects that all employees will:

- be treated with respect and fairness
- work in a place free from all forms of harassment and unlawful discrimination
- have access to, and compete equitably for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer opportunities
- choose and pursue their own career path
- have access to relevant training and development opportunities
- have all employee complaints/workplace grievances addressed appropriately in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.
1.1 **Equality of Employment Opportunity (EEO)**

EEO focuses on ensuring equality of opportunity for specific target groups (refer Definitions). Queensland Health will promote employment equality through:

- the application of practices to enable target group members to pursue careers and compete for recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer, in accordance with the merit principle, as effectively as people who are not members of those groups
- the elimination of unlawful discrimination in the area of employment.

Queensland Health will develop, implement and report against an EEO Management Plan. The plan will include the requirement for the development and implementation of measurable EEO initiatives within operational and strategic plans.

**Definitions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Understanding that employees differ not just on attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, lifestyle or other ideologies but also recognising the individual differences.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment matters</td>
<td>Section 30 of the <em>Public Service Act 2008</em> defines employment matters as: (a) recruitment procedure, and selection criteria, for appointment or engagement of people as employees or (b) promotion, transfer or redeployment of employees or (c) training and staff development for employees or (d) terms and conditions of service and separation of employees or (e) any other matter relating to the employment of employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality of employment opportunity (EEO)</td>
<td>Treating people in the target groups listed in section 30 of the <em>Public Service Act 2008</em> on their merits at every stage of the employment relationship.</td>
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<td>Merit principle</td>
<td>The general principle that decisions regarding recruitment, selection, promotion or transfer opportunities must be made on the basis of each applicant’s relative merits. In deciding the relative merits of applicants, the following matters must be taken into consideration: the extent to which each applicant’s abilities, aptitude, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience and personal qualities are relevant to carrying out the duties in question the extent to which each applicant has potential for development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target groups</td>
<td>Section 30 of the <em>Public Service Act 2008</em> defines EEO target groups as: people of the Aboriginal race of Australia or people who are descendants of the indigenous inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands; people who have migrated to Australia and whose first language is a language other than English, and the children of those people; people with a physical, sensory, intellectual or psychiatric disability, whether the disability presently exists or previously existed but no longer exists; women, irrespective of age; a group of people prescribed under a regulation.</td>
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### History:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<td>July 2020</td>
<td>- Policy:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- formatted as part of the HR Policy review</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- amended to update references and naming conventions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- amended to reflect <em>Human Rights Act 2019</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- application amended as a result of changes outlined in the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019.</td>
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<td>November 2016</td>
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<td>- amended to update references and naming conventions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- amended to reflect inclusion and diversity terminology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- application amended to Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>- Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Policy amended to:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- update the title from ‘Equal Employment Opportunity’ to ‘Equity and Diversity’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- include content from the former Diversity HR Policy G1</td>
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<td>- remove text on the benefits of diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2008</td>
<td>- Amended to reflect <em>Public Service Act 2008</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>- Developed as a result of the HR Policy Consolidation Project.</td>
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<td>Previous</td>
<td>- Diversity HR Policy G1</td>
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<td>- IRM 3.15-2 Equal Employment Opportunity</td>
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<td>- IRM 3.15-1 Diversity</td>
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Attachment One – Roles and responsibilities

The following information is provided as the minimum mandatory standard practice, procedure or process to enable satisfactory compliance with this Queensland Health HR policy.

Local guidelines/procedures may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. Any local guidelines/procedures must be consistent with this policy and standard practice and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

Roles and responsibilities for diversity and inclusion in Queensland Health

1 Human Resources

Human resource units will undertake the role of expert consultant in diversity and inclusion matters and provide assistance to employees at all levels. Other specific responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- taking a lead role in the implementation of diversity, inclusion and EEO initiatives and, in particular, developing and promoting employee awareness strategies
- supporting line managers and employees in the successful application of initiatives such as those outlined in the Flexible working arrangements HR Policy C5 and guideline
- developing and implementing diversity and inclusion plans (including EEO plans)
- developing diversity and inclusion annual reports
- preparing regular status reports on diversity and inclusion issues as required for senior management and relevant consultative forums and implementation groups
- preparing informal reports on diversity and inclusion issues as required for senior management and relevant consultative forums.

2 Managers and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors are responsible for the promotion and ongoing effective management of diversity and inclusion across the Department of Health/ Hospital and Health Service. This is to be achieved through personal leadership and demonstrating commitment to diversity, inclusion and EEO principles and goals. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- being familiar with and promoting relevant HR policies including the Anti-discrimination and vilification HR Policy E2, Sexual harassment HR Policy E5, Workplace bullying HR Policy E13, and Reasonable adjustment HR Policy G3
- ensuring that all employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to EEO and anti-discrimination
- ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and equitably in all aspects of their employment within Queensland Health
- modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour in relation to diversity and inclusion principles and practices in all aspects of their employment
- ensuring work areas are free from harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment
- encouraging and assisting employees, including target group members to take up developmental and career opportunities
- promoting cultural awareness and cultural respect
- consulting with all employees as part of decision-making processes
- implementing work practices, policies and strategies to eliminate discriminatory behaviour
- taking prompt action to resolve issues relating to EEO or unlawful discrimination
- developing, supporting and promoting the workplace equity and harassment officers – refer to Workplace equity and harassment officers HR Policy E8.
3 Employees

All employees must ensure that they:

- contribute to the creation of an inclusive environment that values and utilises the input of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives
- treat other employees with respect and fairness
- share responsibility for maintaining a workplace that is free from discriminatory behaviours and practices
- ensure that they do not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other employees
- accept that others have a right to different perspectives and opinions.