

Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Council Policy Number 164

Date adopted

Scheduled for review June 2027



1. Preamble

Campaspe Shire Council (Council) is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace and promoting a culture of respect and equity among all workplace participants.

All workplace participants have the right to be treated equally, fairly and respectfully regardless of their background or identity. Council acknowledges intersectionality and diverse experiences of disadvantage and is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that recognises the complexities of diversity and addresses inequalities. Through designing and implementing policies, programs and initiatives, Council is committed to identifying and removing barriers and promoting equal opportunity and inclusion for all.

Furthermore, Council must act in accordance with legislation that outlines the role of local government in creating equal and inclusive communities, including the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*, *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* and *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

As such, Council will:

- promote gender equity, diversity, inclusion, equal opportunity, and identifying, addressing any inequality that exists within the workplace.
- ensure individuals of all genders have equal opportunities, are treated fairly and respectfully, and are not subject to bias and discrimination.
- foster an environment that is inclusive, respectful and safe. An environment which is free of discrimination, sexual harm, and gender-based violence.
- Apply an access, equity and inclusion lens over all Council services, facilities and amenities to inform Council decision making.

2. Purpose

This policy provides the framework by which Council actively manages and encourages diversity, equity and inclusion.

The policy aims to create meaningful change and ensure that access, equity and inclusion is embedded into everything we do, including Council's commitment to equitable and inclusive practice across all council activities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to everyone who works at Council including employees (whether employed on a full-time, part-time, temporary or casual basis), agency staff, Councillors, contractors, consultants, agents, as well as clients, volunteers and visitors to Council. Visitors to Council include work experience students, customers and members of the public in workplaces.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Bystander Action	Action taken by a person, or persons not directly involved in an incident to identify, speak out about or seek to engage others in responding to specific incidents or behaviours, attitudes, practices, or policies that are sexist, discriminatory, and violent or reinforce unhelpful gender stereotypes.

Diversity	Refers to the visible and invisible differences that exist between people, including (but not limited to) race or ethnicity, physical features, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, lawful sexual activity, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, breast feeding, carer responsibilities, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, industrial activity, or trade union membership. It also refers to diverse ways of thinking and ways of working.
Equity	Acknowledges that people do not start with the same level of advantage or barriers. Refers to the concept of fairness and justice in how all prospective employees or current workplace participants are treated and rewarded, regardless of their background, characteristics, or personal circumstances.
Equality	The state of affairs that prevails when all individuals and/or groups of people are given equal treatment, regardless of need or outcome.
Gender Equality	Focuses on ensuring that individuals of all genders are treated equally and have the same rights, opportunities, and access to resources. Gender equality emphasises the removal of discrimination and biases that may favour one gender over others.
Gender Equity	Recognises that different genders may start from different positions due to historical disadvantages and societal biases and aims to address and rectify these existing inequalities by providing individuals with what they need to achieve equal outcomes. Gender equity is concerned with fairness and justice and may involve policies and measures that are tailored to the specific needs of different genders.
Gender Identity	Refers to one's concept of self as a man, a woman, a blend of both or neither and is based on how individuals perceive and describe themselves.
Gender Norms	A set of beliefs and rules of conduct which are considered the types of behaviours, interests and attitudes expected from boys and girls, men and women.
Inclusion	Refers to ensuring that current, future and potential employees have equality of opportunity in the organisation without any barriers or obstacles as a result of their race or ethnicity, physical features, sex, sexual identity, gender identity, lawful sexual activity, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, breast feeding, carer responsibilities, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, industrial activity or trade union membership.
Intersectionality	Describes how systems and structures interact on multiple and intersecting levels to create overlapping barriers and discrimination based on characteristics. Customised responses are required in order for everyone to achieve a fair outcome appropriate with their rights and needs. Different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation.
LGBTIQA+	The acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning, Asexual, and the + sign is generally used to represent genders and sexualities outside of the letters LGBTIQA, including people who are questioning their gender or sexuality.
Sex	Sex refers to a person's biological sex characteristics. This has historically been understood as either female or male. However, we now know that some people are born with natural variations to sex characteristics.
Sexual Harm	Refers to any act or behaviour that causes physical, psychological, or emotional harm to an individual through sexual means. Sexual harm

	encompasses a wide range of actions, from sexual harassment and non-consensual sexual contact to sexual assault.
Workplace	Place of employment, where a person attends and is required to carry out the roles and responsibilities outlined at the commencement of their working relationship with Council or as altered during their working life at Council. It also includes any work-related context when a person is representing or doing work on behalf of or for Council, whether on Council premises or off-site, including conferences, work functions, team lunches, Christmas parties or business trips.
Workplace participant	For the purpose of this policy, workplace participant includes Council employee (whether employed on a full-time, part-time, temporary or casual basis), agency staff, Councillors, contractors, consultants, agents, customers, clients, volunteers and visitors to Council. Visitors to Council include work experience student and members of the public in workplaces.

5. Policy Statement

Council values the importance of understanding and improving diversity, equity and inclusion.

Council will actively manage diversity, equity and inclusion, seeking ways to foster an environment where all workplace participants feel welcome, respected, and valued and is committed to celebrating the diversity of all workers and promoting their participation.

Council acknowledges that gender inequality can impact people of all genders, ages, and backgrounds and that people can experience gender inequality in different ways.

This means that we will:

- actively and flexibly seek to understand the unique needs of all workplace participants.
- commit to ensuring that all workplace participants are treated with respect, dignity, and consistency.
- seek to ensure that our practices, policies, and procedures are fair and equitable.

5.1 Intersectionality

Council recognises people may face biases and disadvantages and that gender, diversity and inclusion inequality is often compounded by other forms of disadvantage that a person may experience, due to other characteristics of their identity.

Council aims to address this disparity and rectify existing inequalities by providing policies and a range of strategies, actions, and measures that are tailored to the specific needs of different genders.

5.2 Our commitment

Council is committed to a workplace culture and community that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds and values their unique perspectives, experiences, and talents.

Council will support all workplace participants and leaders in the achievement of a diverse and inclusive workplace, by:

- Celebrating the diversity in our workplace and community and actively work to reduce inequalities.
- Championing equity, participation and inclusion as we work to eliminate systemic barriers and reduce discrimination.
- Taking positive action to create an equitable, respectful and enabling environment for all workplace participants.
- Designing and delivering services that meet the diverse and future needs of our community and addressing barriers to access and inclusion.
- Advocating and delivering social responsibility by ensuring access, equity and inclusion is at the

forefront of all decision making.

5.3 Gender equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives

Initiatives to promote gender equity, diversity and inclusion will be implemented at all levels across Council and included in Council's Gender Equality Action Plan. Initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Training and development activities.
- Audits and reviews to examine pay and conditions, and diversity in roles.
- Review participation in professional development and career advancement opportunities.
- Review of recruitment, performance management, mentoring and retention.
- Review of Council policies and procedures to support gender equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Review of internal and external communication materials.
- Promotion of flexible working arrangements.
- Action to address identified issues.

5.4 Compliance and reporting

This policy and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) are the foundation for Council's obligations under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic.).

The Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic) requires Council to regularly report on gender equality progress. The progress report includes:

- mandatory Council workforce data;
- policies, programs and services that were subject to a gender and inclusion impact assessment (GIIA) and the actions taken as a result of the GIIA;
- progress made in relation to strategies and measures outlined in the Campaspe Shire Council GEAP; and
- progress made in relation to seven workplace gender equality indicators as stated below and outlined in the Act:
 - gender pay equity
 - gender composition at all levels of the workforce
 - gender composition of governing bodies
 - workplace sexual harassment
 - recruitment and promotion
 - gendered work segregation
 - leave and flexibility

5.5 Responsibilities

Responsible Officer	Responsibilities
Chief Executive Officer and Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead by example and champion the policy. • Model appropriate behaviour based on the Council values. • Endorse planned strategies, actions, measures, and targets. • Actively promoting and implementing this policy and advocating for gender equality, gender equity, diversity and inclusion in all Council programs, policies and services.
People Leaders (Managers, Coordinators and Team Leaders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to the policy and address issues when raised. • Model appropriate behaviour based on the Council values

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement agreed workplace strategies, actions, measures, and targets in alignment with the Policy. • Actively promote and implement this policy and advocate for gender equality, gender equity, diversity and inclusion in all Council programs, policies and services. • Take reports of sexism harassment, discrimination, violence or any other form of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour seriously and immediately address and action these reports. • Take a leadership role across the organisation in raising awareness about issues of gender equality, gender inequity, sexism, harassment, discrimination, and violence against women.
People and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring, reporting and compliance of relevant gender equity workplace strategies, actions, measures and targets in alignment with the Policy. • Communicate policy across the organisation. • Advise and assist leaders in addressing issues. • Provide regular training / awareness in relation to gender equity, diversity and inclusion.
Workplace participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be responsible for making themselves familiar with this policy and other relevant policies and procedures. • Model appropriate behaviour based on the Council values. • Attend and participate in all required training relevant to this policy. • Use language and images that promote equal and respectful relationships and do not reinforce gender norms or gender stereotypes in all aspects of work. • Take bystander action if they see or hear about sexism, harassment, discrimination, violence or any other form of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. • Report any instances of victimisation, bullying, harassment, or intimidation to their Leader or People and Culture team immediately.

5.6 Inequity Resolution and support

Council makes all necessary efforts to foster a workplace where there is no tolerance of inequitable behaviour/conduct and will deal with all reports seriously and promptly. Workplace participants are encouraged to report matters of inequity in accordance with Council's Grievance Procedure.

Council will provide workplace participants with access to confidential mechanisms to report concerning, threatening and inappropriate behaviour they have experienced or witnessed.

6. Exclusions

Nil

7. Human Rights

This report has considered and complies with the Human Rights and Responsibilities contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

8. Related Legislation

Commonwealth

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013

Workplace Gender Equity Act 2012

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Fair Work Act 2009

Victoria

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Local Government Act 2020

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Gender Equality Act 2020

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (The Charter)

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

This Policy is not intended in any way to diminish the requirements as outlined in the legislation listed above.

9. Related Documents

Campaspe Shire Council Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025

Campaspe Shire Council Enterprise Agreement 2022 (or its successor)

Campaspe Shire Council Workforce Plan 2021-2025

Employee Code of Conduct

Respect and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Recruitment and Selection Procedure and Guidelines

Grievance Procedure

Learning and Development Policy

Performance Management Policy

Gender and Inclusion Impact Assessment Form

10. Attachments

Nil

11. Review Period

Three years.

Responsible Officer

Manager People and Culture

12. Administrative Updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter the policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a council department, a change to the name of a federal or state government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

13. Approval History

Adopted

April 2019

July 2024

Minutes Book Reference No

Policy adopted

Replaced the Gender Equity Policy

Chief Executive Officer:

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Date:

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 26/07/2024