



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact (03) 5973 1000.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Somerville Secondary College's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. Somerville Secondary College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. This policy should be read alongside the Department of Education policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- For staff, the [Respectful Workplaces](#) policies (including [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#)) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Somerville Secondary College.

POLICY

Definitions

Personal attribute: a personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

Direct discrimination: unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination: imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Sexual harassment: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

Disability harassment: humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability.

Vilification: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).



Somerville Secondary College Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Inclusion and diversity

Somerville Secondary College strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff. The college is a vibrant, energetic community that seeks to positively influence all aspects of a student's development. Learning and wellbeing go hand in hand.

The significant contribution of our community to our school is of the highest importance to enable the development and success of the young people in our care, and there is a belief in a shared responsibility for creating tomorrow's thinkers, leaders and positive change makers.

"Together we use our voice to challenge and grow a confident community"

Somerville Secondary College is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Somerville Secondary College acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Somerville Secondary College we value the human rights of every student and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

Somerville Secondary College will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, formals on the same basis as their peers)
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

We understand that every child is unique, and that there will need to be a range of different pathways to support the journey of each student through our school. We work in partnership with families to deliver a holistic education in which we will together equip our students with not only the desire but also the skills to play an active role in shaping the future, and to have a positive impact on the world.

The work we undertake is guided by our vision statement and College Values of Integrity, Respect and Responsibility. These values form the basis of all interactions between staff, students, parents and the broader community as we work together to support students in their learning to achieve their desired pathways.



Somerville Secondary College Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Somerville Secondary College. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying* policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Somerville Secondary College also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student, their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact the school office for on 5973 1000 for further information.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Through Compass newsfeeds
- Included in staff/volunteer induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at student forums
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#) which apply to all staff working at our school.

Other relevant Department policies and resources on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Koorie Education](#)
- [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Supports and Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)



Somerville Secondary College
Inclusion and Diversity Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2024
Approved by	Principal
Reviewed by	College Council – May 2024
Next scheduled review date	May 2028