

Procedures & Principles

Name: Equal Education Opportunity
Number: AC-99/05

Equal Education Opportunity

Policy Manager: Student Experience Manager
Category: Academic
Authorised by Academic Approvals Committee

Date Approved: February 1999
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Next Review Date:

1. Definitions

Access

Ability to participate in all facets of tertiary education, including access to buildings, enrolment and course information, programmes of study, course materials and Wintec services.

Accommodations

Adaptations that remove barriers to enable equal opportunity and participation. This can include treating people differently, provided the goal is to achieve equity and does not disadvantage or advantage others.

Accommodations include all facets of providing an inclusive environment, such as physical access, teaching practices, support services and provision of enrolment information and course materials in accessible formats (refer [Kia Orite: Achieving Equity](#), Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Education, 2004).

Barriers

Direct or indirect structures, processes, policies and/or practices and attitudes that have the effect of preventing or disadvantaging potential or current students in relation to entry, access, participation, retention and/or achievement.

Disability

Wintec adheres to the definition of 'disability' as stated in the [New Zealand Disability Strategy \(2001\)](#):

"Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments. Instead, 'Disability' is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have".

The [Human Rights Act \(1993\)](#) provides the legal framework for accommodating people with impairments who are attending a tertiary institution. This includes people with short-term injury or illness, the Deaf community and people with other long-term and/or fluctuating impairments such as medical conditions, learning problems, head injury, physical / mobility limitations, blindness or low-vision, speech problems, mental health and other hidden impairments.

Equity

Principles that promote fairness and equal opportunity for people from disadvantaged situations to participate and/or succeed in tertiary education.

Equal Education Opportunity

The provision of an environment that values diversity and actively promotes equal opportunities for access, participation, retention and outcomes for potential and current students.

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2. Expectations

- 2.1 To achieve equal education opportunities for potential and current students, Wintec policies and procedures covering recruitment, selection, assessment and access to facilities, programmes of study and other Wintec services will enable people to pursue their educational and vocational goals, without being limited by impairment factors irrelevant to those goals.
- 2.2 Wintec is also committed to actively
 - a) identifying and eliminating institutional barriers to equal opportunity, including educational, social, physical, geographical and financial barriers; and
 - b) encouraging people from disadvantaged situations or under-represented groups to enrol in Wintec courses and fully participate in Wintec activities.

3. Providing Equal Opportunities to Students

- 3.1 To maximise the likelihood of success in the chosen programme of study, applicants for any programme may be interviewed and/or asked to complete a short assessment to determine their literacy, numeracy and language abilities, as well as other factors that may impact on success. If an applicant has an impairment (e.g. deafness, visual impairment, mobility problems) that may impact on this assessment, an alternative assessment may be used, in consultation with Student Learning Services.
- 3.2 If Wintec considers an applicant is unlikely to succeed in their chosen programme because of an impairment staff may suggest another programme or offer limited entry to a specified number of modules. Such students should be referred to Student Learning Services for a further assessment to establish the level and type of study assistance needed to maximise their likelihood of success. Staff need to keep in mind that some students may require a full-time programme of study for student allowance / loan purposes, noting that 'limited full-time status' of more than half the full-time course factor for the length of the programme, on grounds of 'academic advice', satisfies StudyLink criteria.
- 3.3 Applicants with an impairment likely to impact on their ability to participate and/or achieve in any aspect of their intended programme, must contact Student Learning Services at the time of enrolment. The purpose of this is for Wintec to undertake an assessment of the student's needs and make arrangements for reasonable accommodation of those needs. Failure to inform Student Learning Services may cause difficulties (to the student or to others) resulting in the student being withdrawn, at the discretion of the Office of the Dean.
- 3.4 Wintec may decline to admit or enrol an applicant whose impairment requires special services or facilities greater than what Wintec can reasonably be expected to provide (in accordance with section 60(1) of the Human Rights Act 1003).

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4. Responsibilities

Council	<p>To be aware of legislative, socio-political and other factors relevant to an equal education opportunity institution;</p> <p>To promote and endorse best practice initiatives that ensure Wintec maintains an inclusive and equitable learning environment;</p> <p>To support the Chief Executive in ensuring legislative and social obligations related to equal education opportunity are met, thus reducing the risk of equity-related complaints under the Human Rights Act or other legislation.</p>
Chief Executive	<p>To be aware of legislative, socio-political and other factors relevant to an equal education opportunity institution;</p> <p>To promote and endorse best practice initiatives that ensure Wintec maintains an inclusive and equitable learning environment;</p> <p>To take steps that ensures staff understand and meet their responsibilities in relation to equal education opportunity.</p>
Executive	<p>To promote awareness of equity issues and commitment to equal education opportunity amongst staff;</p> <p>To promote and approve resources for the implementation of equity initiatives;</p> <p>Communicate with the Chief Executive regarding the management of equal education opportunity at Wintec.</p>
Centre Directors / Heads of Schools	<p>To ensure staff are aware of legislative, socio-political and other factors relevant to an equal education opportunity institution and inclusive learning environment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting and implementing non-discriminatory philosophies and practices • promoting and supporting reasonable accommodations for students with impairments affecting their likelihood of success; • responding appropriately and efficiently to complaints about discrimination or inequity within the school or service; • bringing to the attention of the relevant Executive member/s any identified barriers to equal education opportunity and working cooperatively to remove these barriers.
Quality and Academic Unit	<p>To ensure all policies, procedures and planning processes promote equal education opportunity and an inclusive learning environment;</p> <p>To ensure policies and procedures related to student complaints, appeals, harassment and disciplinary procedures address equity and impairment issues;</p> <p>Ensure effective monitoring and evaluation processes related to the above are in place.</p>
Wintec Applicants/ Students	<p>To inform Student Learning Services, prior to enrolment where possible, of any disability or other impairment likely to impact on their ability to participate fully or complete all requirements of their intended programme of study (refer Section 2.5 and 2.6, above).</p>

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5. Measurements of success

Equal Education Opportunity will be achieved at Wintec when the following are in place:

- 5.1 The Wintec Council and Executive are aware of Wintec's legal obligations regarding equity and disability and endorse best practice initiatives;
- 5.2 Factors irrelevant to course and/or vocational requirements do not act as barriers to learning opportunities at Wintec;
- 5.3 The Wintec student community is culturally diverse and representative of the wider community in terms of Tangata Whenua, ethnicity, gender, marital or parental status, age, religious or political beliefs, country of origin, disability, sexual orientation and economic status (Human Rights Act, 1993);
- 5.4 No complaints of discrimination or inequity are made against Wintec.

6. Records Management

In line with the Public Records Act 2005, Wintec is required to provide a records management programme to ensure that authentic, reliable and usable records are created, captured and managed to a standard of best practice and to meet business and legislative requirements. All records relevant to a specific policy need to be listed in every policy in the following format:

Record	Minimum retention period	Disposal Action
Application forms, Client files	7 years from date of last action	Destroy