



# Mitcham Community House

## Disability Action Plan

---

Policy number	CAP 2	Date approved	7 December 2016
Draft number	Final	Scheduled review date	7 December 2018

### OUR ORGANISATION

Mitcham Community House was established in 1975 as a community-focused organisation providing a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment where people participate, develop skills and connect to the community. Mitcham Community House has delivered an increasing number of quality and affordable activities, programs and services ever since and will continue to meet the ever-changing needs of the local community now and into the future.

The range of activities, programs and services that Mitcham Community House currently offers with the assistance of local, state and federal government funding, includes childcare and playgroups, ACFE Adult Education classes, health and fitness activities, languages, special interest classes and support groups.

Located in the heart of Mitcham, the Mitcham Community House is operated by committed staff, tutors, volunteers and a Committee of Management (COM).

### AIMS

Mitcham Community House aims to:

- Offer and promote lifelong learning, social interaction and support to individuals from a broad cross section of the community through accessible and affordable activities, programs and services in a welcoming, inclusive and safe learning and working environment
- Create quality, innovative activities, programs and services and commit to continuous improvement in response to diversity and the ever-changing needs of the community
- Develop links and work closely with other community organisations and government to ensure high quality activities, programs and services are delivered
- Be open to new ideas and identify relevant training for staff, tutors and volunteers when interacting with individuals from a broad cross section of the community, and to meet their needs where appropriate

### REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

To address discrimination experienced by people with disabilities, the Victorian *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (EO Act) creates a duty in employment, education and the provision of goods and services to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities to help them perform the job or access education and goods and services.

The EO Act has a list of factors to help determine when it might be reasonable for adjustments to be made. This includes balancing the need for the adjustment with the expense or effort involved in making the adjustment.

The EO Act has a limited exception to the duty to make reasonable adjustments by allowing the educational authority to discriminate where adjustments are not reasonable or where the person with a disability could not participate in the employment, education or service provision even if the adjustments were made.

There are similar duties to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities under Commonwealth law.

## **POLICY**

Mitcham Community House is committed to providing activities, programs and services as well as a place of employment and volunteering that is free from discrimination. All staff, tutors, volunteers and students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. People with disabilities have the same rights as people without disabilities to access, participate in and enjoy the benefits of the education and training provided by Mitcham Community House.

Shaped by the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*, the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and its policies and procedures, the Mitcham Community House's Disability Action Plan aims to ensure and promote the needs of people with disabilities in all areas, including:

- Enrolment
- Participation
- Curriculum Development, Accreditation and Delivery
- Student Support Services
- Student Welfare (Discrimination, Harassment and Victimization)

## **ENROLMENT**

### **Aims:**

- Information about enrolment processes addresses the needs of students with disabilities and is provided in hard or soft copy formats
- Enrolment procedures can be completed without undue difficulty

### **Outcome:**

- Prospective students with disabilities are able to enrol in an activity, program or service and make informed learning choices on the same basis as prospective students without disabilities and are provided with the necessary reasonable adjustments to do so

Barriers	Strategies to remove barriers	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources	Performance indicators
Reasonable adjustments at enrolment	Preliminary interview to discuss any adjustments, including course requirements and additional materials needed	Staff, tutors and volunteers	Ongoing/as required	May need budget allocation	Satisfactory enrolment and student feedback
Communication	Interpreters as required	Staff and volunteers	Ongoing/as required	List of interpreters at reception	Maintain list of interpreters
Privacy	If a disability is disclosed, a request for a medical plan from a health professional can be made	Staff, first aid officer and relevant tutor	Ongoing	Nil	Satisfactory enrolment and privacy of information upheld
Prospective student may not disclose disability	Ensure staff, tutors and volunteers undertake appropriate professional development of any needs identified and provide information sessions as required	Manager	Annually	Professional development budget allocation	Staff, tutors and volunteers undertake professional development annually

## PARTICIPATION

### Aims:

- Course activities are sufficiently flexible for all students to participate, including any activities that are not conducted in a classroom
- Learning activities are negotiated, agreed upon and implemented
- Reasonable alternative learning activities are offered where necessary

**Outcome:**

- Students with disabilities are able to participate in the learning experiences, including the assessment and accreditation requirements, of an activity, program or service on the same basis as students without disabilities and without experiencing discrimination

Barriers	Strategies to remove barriers	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources	Performance indicators
Document and promote inclusive teaching strategies for staff, tutors and volunteers	Staff, tutors and volunteers encouraged and supported to attend professional development and information sessions as required	Manager	Annually	Professional development budget allocation	Staff, tutors and volunteers undertake professional development annually and incorporate inclusive teaching strategies into activities, programs and services
	Identify any gaps in current practices by responding to need	Manager, staff and tutors	Ongoing/as required		Satisfactory participation and student feedback
	Membership of relevant organisations	Manager			Membership of Scope Victoria and ACE Disability Network (ACE)

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, ACCREDITATION AND DELIVERY****Aims:**

- Curriculum, teaching materials and the assessment and accreditation requirements are appropriate and accessible
- Study materials are made available in a format that is appropriate for the student and conversion of learning materials into alternative formats is done in a timely manner
- Course assessment and accreditation procedures are adapted to enable the student to demonstrate the knowledge, skills or competencies being assessed and accredited
- Course delivery modes and learning activities take account of the learning capacities and needs of the student and meet intended educational outcomes

**Outcome:**

- Students with disabilities are able to participate in the learning experiences, including the assessment and accreditation requirements, of an activity, program or service on the same basis as students without disabilities and without experiencing discrimination

Barriers	Strategies to remove barriers	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources	Performance indicators
Curriculum, teaching and assessment materials are not appropriate for students' needs	Determine how staff and tutors can provide reasonable adjustments to curricula and teaching materials whilst maintaining the integrity of course delivery and educational outcomes	Manager, staff and tutors	Ongoing/as required	Possible grants	Evaluated by Manager
	Identify best practice strategies through ACE	Manager	Ongoing	ACE emails, newsletters, meetings and professional development opportunities	Involvement in ACE
	Source alternative course materials, such as DVDs, CDs, audio or large print	Tutors	Ongoing/as required	\$200 budgeted each year	Materials sourced and purchased
Policies and procedures not appropriate	Review policies and procedures	COM and Manager	Ongoing	Nil	Policies and procedures meet current requirements

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES****Aims:**

- Staff are aware of the specialised support services available for the student and are provided with information that enables them to assist the student to access required support
- Access to specialised services for the student, where necessary, is facilitated, including through collaborative arrangements with specialised service providers in health, personal care and therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy

**Outcome:**

- Students with disabilities are able to access support services on the same basis as students without disabilities and to access specialised support services where necessary

Barriers	Strategies to remove barriers	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources	Performance indicators
Lack of awareness by staff of support services	Develop a resource kit of local support services available to students with disabilities	Staff and volunteers	Ongoing	Internet and consultation with local government and ACFE	Current online or hard copy resource kit developed
Where students need specialised support, staff can facilitate those needs by arrangements with specialist service providers	Ensure staff are aware of supports available	Manager	Ongoing/as required	Nil	Evaluated by Manager
Staff, tutors and volunteers are appropriately trained to offer support to students with disabilities	Professional development and training sourced	Manager	Ongoing	Professional development budget allocation	Professional development and training undertaken
Privacy	If a student needs support, this must be kept confidential	Manager, staff and tutors	Ongoing/as required	Nil	Privacy of information upheld

**STUDENT WELFARE (DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VICTIMISATION)****Aims:**

- Our policies, procedures and codes of conduct for staff and students explicitly prohibit discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of disability
- Complaints procedures are fair, transparent and accountable
- Staff and students are reminded from time to time of their rights and responsibilities under the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA)
- Staff are made aware of the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter)

**Outcome:**

- Students with disabilities are able to learn in an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of their disability

Barriers	Strategies to remove barriers	Responsibility	Timeframe	Resources	Performance indicators
Staff and students are unaware of their responsibilities and the rights of people with a disability under the DDA	Ensure staff and students are aware of their responsibilities and the rights of people with a disability under the DDA	Manager	Ongoing	Staff induction and appraisal, staff meetings and possible posters pinned up around the House	Evaluated by Manager
	Ensure staff, tutors and volunteers are aware of relevant legislation, such as the Charter, and our policies and procedures	Manager	Ongoing		All policies and procedures available on the IT repository

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Inclusive Participation Policy
- Workplace Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Classes and Activities Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy
- Recruitment, Employment and Training Policy
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Protection Policy

**AUTHORISATION**

Signature of Committee Chairperson	
Date of approval by the Committee	