



Document Control

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Fairness and Equal Opportunity Policy

1. Introduction

King's Own Institute (KOI) acknowledges its moral and legal responsibilities as an accredited higher education (HE) provider to commit to the fundamental values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, trust and trustworthiness, respect and self-respect, and fairness and justice that act as the basis for KOI's business as a registered provider of higher education courses. KOI applies the principles of fairness and equal opportunity to all staff, students and persons seeking to enrol in courses or subjects at KOI.

This policy provides an overarching explanation of KOI's approach to fairness and equal opportunity. Relevant KOI policies that stipulate how the principles espoused in this policy relate to specific part of the KOI business are listed in Section 5 of this policy. This policy and all related policies are available on the KOI website www.koi.edu.au under *Policies and Forms*, and are summarised where relevant in the KOI Student Handbook.

2. Policy Principles

KOI seeks to fulfil its responsibilities of fairness and equal opportunity to applicants (persons seeking to enrol), students and staff by:

- Providing access to opportunities in education and employment at KOI using processes which are free of discrimination;
- Respecting and appreciating the diversity of its applicants, students and staff;
- Selecting, progressing and promoting staff and assessing students and applicants on merit, using fair and transparent processes;
- Ensuring applicants, students and staff are treated fairly and equitably in an environment free of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment;
- Recognising the rights of applicants, students and staff to raise complaints in good faith under KOI's complaints procedures, without fear of retaliation or victimisation, integrating equal opportunity and diversity principles in all policies and practices.

These fairness requirements adhere to KOI's obligations as an accredited higher education provider under the *Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003* generally, and specifically in relation to Subdivision 19-C, Sections 19-30 and 19-35.

Fairness and equal opportunities responsibilities include:

- fair treatment
- equal benefits and opportunities
- student grievance procedures
- student review procedures
- requirements to appoint review officers
- personal information procedures
- tuition assurance – Higher Education.

Please note: The application of fair treatment does not require that all students are treated the same. Fairness is considered in the context of all relevant circumstances. There may be situations in which the fair treatment results in a student with individual circumstances being treated differently.



3. Fairness and Equal Opportunity

3.1 General Applications

KOI will apply the principles of fairness and equal opportunity by:

- Treating applicants, students and staff courteously, with respect and fairness;
- Using open, fair, clear and transparent procedures that are based on clearly defined entry criteria for making decisions about the selection of students and staff. Student entry criteria and application procedures are published on the KOI website (www.koi.edu.au) for the information of students and those seeking to enrol with KOI.
- Attracting and retaining the best possible staff to assist and teach students;
- Using a standards-based assessment approach in which student achievement is measured against externally verified academic criteria and standards, referenced, wherever possible, to industry or professional standards;
- Making all reasonable efforts to ensure that assessment tasks are designed to be contextually relevant and culturally inclusive, and to avoid bias or other unintended negative outcomes resulting from assessment design;
- Ensuring criteria and standards of performance are explicitly articulated and made available to all staff and students;
- Providing a safe, respectful and flexible working, teaching and learning environment.

3.2 Fairness and Equal Opportunity in Admissions and Enrolment

KOI upholds the principle that all applicants seeking to enrol are treated fairly and equitably. KOI has open, fair, clear and transparent procedures that are based on clearly defined entry criteria for making decisions about the selection of students. This does not prevent KOI, when making decisions about admission, from taking into account an assessed educational disadvantage of a particular applicant. However, KOI does not use 'proxy indicators' of educational disadvantage in the absence of clear evidence that all students in such a group necessarily suffered educational disadvantage.

Students will be selected on merit, based on published criteria. KOI will ensure that throughout the process of selection and admission, applicants are treated courteously and promptly. Entry criteria and application procedures are published on the KOI website (www.koi.edu.au) for the information of students and those seeking to enrol with KOI.

3.3 Fairness and Equal Opportunity in Assessment

KOI adheres to the three core principles of effective assessment for higher education as articulated by the *Centre for the Study of Higher Education* (<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/>),

1. Assessment should guide and encourage effective approaches to learning;
2. Assessment should validly and reliably measure expected learning outcomes, in particular the higher-order learning that characterises higher education;
3. Assessment and grading should define and protect academic standards.

Criteria and standards of performance are explicitly articulated and made available to all students at the commencement of the study period for each assessment task. Criteria and standards are also discussed with students, so that students can understand the standards of academic performance against those standards.

Standards-based assessment is incompatible with norm-referenced assessment schemes. Therefore, no pre-determined or ideal distribution of grades will be applied across a student cohort. Marks and grades awarded to students are to be based solely on merit in relation to prescribed academic standards and against specified marking criteria.

Some assessment modes or designs may unfairly privilege or disadvantage students. All reasonable efforts are made by to ensure that assessment tasks are designed to be contextually relevant and culturally inclusive, and to avoid bias or other unintended negative outcomes resulting from assessment design. Particular account is taken for student diversity, including international student cohorts from non-English speaking backgrounds.



Students with identified disabilities or special needs can request assessment tasks to be modified to ensure equal access and opportunity. KOI will endeavour to satisfy any such reasonable requests whenever possible.

4. Complaints and Grievances

The *Complaints and Appeals Policy* seeks to support the achievement of this goal by providing a transparent, timely and consistent process for resolving complaints, grievances and appeals of a non-academic nature.

KOI's *Complaints and Appeals Policy* seeks to:

- ensure that the rights of the complainant, the person against whom a complaint is made, and KOI are protected when an eligible person submits a complaint;
- ensure that KOI processes and procedures enable complaints to be resolved as expeditiously and effectively as possible;
- ensure that the resolution of complaints follows standard procedures;
- categorise, collate and publish internal and external complaints procedures in accordance with legislated requirements.

The *Complaints and Appeals Policy* and the associated procedures do not remove the right of any party involved in a complaint to take further action through any other legal remedies or any other responsibilities which arise under other higher education provider policies.

5. Staff Training

Academic and non-academic managers are responsible for the training of staff in the application of all KOI's policies, and implementation and adherence of this and all related policies at local level. Prior to implementation, staff effected by any KOI policy are to attend a relevant training session.

6. Related Policies

All policies may be found on the KOI website www.koi.edu.au and summarised where relevant in the KOI Student Handbook, also available on the KOI website. Related policies include:

- Admissions and Enrolments Policy
- Assessment and Assessment Appeals Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Course Progress and Intervention Policy
- Credit Transfer Policy
- Fees Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Academic Misconduct Policy
- Student Misconduct (Non-Academic) Policy
- Student Charter
- Student Refund – Domestic Policy
- Student Refund – International Policy
- Student Workload Policy

7. Privacy

KOI seeks to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of student information. However, information collected from students may, as required in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003* and other legislation be provided to the Department of Education, Department of Immigration and Border Protection and Commonwealth, State or Territory Government agencies.

KOI is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Australian Privacy Principles (APPs)* under the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012* with respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. Please see KOI's *Privacy Policy* www.koi.edu.au for more information.

***** END OF POLICY *****