

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) values, respects and promotes the diversity of life experiences of our participants / students, their families and the communities in which we work. Diversity is a strength to celebrate and Aspect recognises it is essential for creating an Aspect culture that is inclusive, respectful and equitable. In creating and maintaining a diverse culture in Aspect, we recognise that individuals' strengths, needs, values, beliefs and contributions differ and we respond accordingly.

Aspect maintains service access policies and practices which promote equitable access to Aspect services by people on the autism spectrum, families, and communities. Our policies are inclusive of people regardless of age, gender, identity, cultural or language background, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or family structure, and are framed around a deep respect for all inherent Human Rights.

Aspect programs and activities are designed to be culturally competent, responsive, respectful and inclusive of the needs, culture, values and beliefs of people from diverse backgrounds. Aspect services share resources and knowledge about communities with one another to improve access across programs. We engage with diverse communities and organisations that represent them to understand their needs, barriers to accessing Aspect services, and collaboratively design services and supports that represent an inclusive, person-centred environment. This includes the active maintenance of community linkages to cultural, spiritual and language groups; to support participants / students and their families to maintain their cultural identity and connection to their chosen community.

Aspect is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and encourages a diverse and inclusive workplace which brings out the best in our people; and helps to more successfully achieve our mission and more effectively respond to our participants / students, their families and the communities in which we work. Staff at Aspect are supported to understand the variety of needs that may come with cultural and linguistic diversity; how to utilise an interpreter, accessible information or alternative / augmented communication; and how to access community linkages relevant to individuals due to their age, ability, culture, sexual orientation, family structure, religion as well as their particular interests.

Aspect monitors and evaluates performance on diversity by maintaining statistics on the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of participants / students. Where barriers exist, accessible information formats (translated materials, plain English & visual information), the use of interpreters, augmented and alternative communication systems, advisory groups and advocates are engaged to overcome communication difficulties wherever possible.

## External Framework

The Embracing Diversity policy demonstrates how Aspect upholds the United Nations:

- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948](#);
- [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006](#);
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#).

This policy also illustrates Aspect's compliance and commitment to the:

- NDIS Practice Standards (2018) and NDIS Code of Conduct, specifically within the NDIS Practice Standards & Quality Indicators:
  - Core Module: 1. Rights and Responsibilities, under all Outcomes;
  - Core Module: 2. Provider Governance and Operational Management, under the relevant Outcomes;
  - Core Module: 3. Provision of Supports, under the relevant Outcomes;
  - Core Module: 4. Support Provision Environment, under the relevant Outcomes;
  - Supplementary Module: 3. Early Childhood Supports, under the relevant Outcomes;
  - Supplementary Module: 4. Specialist Support Coordination, under the relevant outcomes.
- Disability Standards for Education (2005), specifically:
  - Part 3: Making Reasonable Adjustments;
  - Part 4: Standards for Enrolment;
  - Part 5: Standards for Participation;
  - Part 6: Standards for Curriculum Development, Accreditation and Delivery;
  - Part 7: Standards for Student Support Services; and
  - Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimisation.
- NESA Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW Manual), specifically:
  - 3. Requirements for Registered Non-government Schools, under requirements for Curriculum; and Safe and Supportive Environments.
- Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia, specifically the relevant quality related criteria for:
  - Standard 2 Student Learning and Assessment;
  - Standard 3 Student Safety, Health and Welfare.

## Critical Definitions

*Cultural competency* - describes individuals and organisations with a set of behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, skills, practices and processes which enable effective work in cross-cultural settings. It is more than cultural awareness. It means that individuals and organisations are proactive, rather

than responsive, regarding cultural diversity to ensure effective and relevant service delivery or supports.

*Diversity* - encompasses the differences among people arising from age, gender identity, cultural or language background, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or family structure.

## **Legislation References**

### **International**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

### **National**

Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

Disability Services (Principles & Objectives) Instrument 2018 (Cth)

Disability Standards for Education Act, 2005 (Cth)

National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and other measures) Bill 2017 (Cth)

National Standards for Disability Services 2013 (Cth)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Privacy Amendment Act (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth)

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

### **New South Wales**

Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)

Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 (NSW)

Education Act 1990 (NSW)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)

### **Victoria**

Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)

Disability Act 2006 (VIC)


Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (VIC)

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (VIC)

Human Services Standards Victoria 2012 (VIC)

### **South Australia**

Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)



Disability Services (Rights, Protection and Inclusion) Amendment Act 2013 (SA)  
Education Act 1972 (SA)  
Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (SA)  
Equal Opportunities Act 1984 (SA)

**Australian Capital Territory**

Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)  
Disability Services Act 1991 (ACT)  
Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)

