

Discrimination and Harassment

Your rights and responsibilities at FedUni

Your rights

As FedUni staff and students you can expect that:

- > You are not treated unfairly because of a personal characteristic that you have or someone assumes you have. These personal characteristics include:
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy
 - Breastfeeding
 - Marital status
 - Status as parent or carer
 - Physical features
 - Religious belief or activity
 - Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
 - Political belief or activity
 - Gender identity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Lawful sexual activity
 - Employment or industrial activity
- > You are not harassed (made to feel intimidated, offended or humiliated) because of any of the above characteristics
- > You are not subjected to sexual harassment
- > You receive reasonable adjustments or flexibility (for example, due to a disability, or for carer, religious or cultural responsibilities)
- > Your concerns about discriminatory treatment or harassment are dealt with promptly and fairly.

Every student and every staff member has a part to place in making FedUni inclusive, flexible and free from discrimination and harassment.

Your responsibilities

As FedUni staff and students you can expect that:

- > When you enrol or sign an employment contract at FedUni, you sign on to FedUni expectations on how you treat other members of the University community.
- > Within any FedUni activity, you must make sure that what you say and do doesn't discriminate against another person, or have the potential to make, a student, staff member, or other person feel intimidated, humiliated or offended (harassed), either on a sexual basis (sexual harassment) or on the basis of one of the personal characteristics listed above.
- > Within the scope of your particular role, staff are required to provide appropriate flexibility for students and staff (for example, because of disability, pregnancy, carer, religious or cultural responsibilities).
- > Some staff (including managers, supervisors, teachers and academics) have additional responsibilities. Depending on your role it may be your responsibility to make sure that the staff and students you are responsible for, know, and are accountable for, their own responsibilities. You may also be required to act on concerns that are brought to your attention. If unclear on your responsibilities, check with your manager or the Manager, Equity and Equal Opportunity.

All students and staff have an important role in keeping FedUni a great place to learn and work.

Contacts

If you have a concern, the first thing to do is get advice and support. Here are some starting points for information and assistance.

Their role is to listen to your concerns and help you decide on the best way forward to resolve your concern. For example, taking direct action yourself, approaching a relevant member of staff, or invoking a FedUni process – eg harassment complaint, student grievance or staff grievance procedure.

Equity and Equal Opportunity Office

Phone: 03 5327 9357 or 03 5327 8104

Email: equity@federation.edu.au

Web: www.federation.edu.au/equity

Disability Liaison Officers

Phone: 03 5327 9470

Email: disability@federation.edu.au

Web: www.federation.edu.au/disability

Student Advisory Service

Phone: 03 5327 6105

Email: studentadviser@federation.edu.au

Web: www.federation.edu.au/studentadviser

Human Resources

Phone: 03 5327 9756

Email: hr@federation.edu.au

Web: www.federation.edu.au/hr

Students at Partner Provider Institutions

(Eg. MIT, IIBIT, partner TAFEs), initially contact the section responsible for student services at your institution.

The next page provides more information on harassment, discrimination and reasonable adjustments at FedUni.

Contact us for more information, advice or referral

equity@federation.edu.au

federation.edu.au/equity

03 5327 9357 or 03 5327 8104

Equity and
Equal Opportunity

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What do we mean by harassment?

Harassment is unwelcome behaviour that causes another person to feel intimidated, offended and/or humiliated, on a sexual basis or on the basis of one of the person characteristics listed over the page.

It doesn't matter if the behaviour was intentional or unintentional – it all depends on the effect it has on another person.

Harassment is hard to predict – what might be acceptable to one person might be offensive to another. You have to think in advance.

Behaviours which might result in another person feeling intimidated, offended and/or humiliated include:

- > Physical intimacy or contact
- > Sexual remarks or gestures
- > Sexual jokes or images
- > Intrusive personal questions
- > Spreading gossip about a person, such as sexual gossip or gossip about a person's (real or assumed) characteristics such as race, religion, sexual orientation or disability
- > Negative comments or actions about adjustments made because of a person's disability, culture or carer responsibilities
- > Requests for sexual acts or favours, or unwelcome requests for dates
- > Sexist language, humour or images
- > Displays of offensive images (eg on computers, posters or phones) which are sexual or target race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age etc
- > Negative comments, jokes or insults for example at the expense of others nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, age etc.



Contact us for more information, advice or referral
equity@federation.edu.au
federation.edu.au/equity
03 5327 9357 or 03 5327 8104

What do we mean by discrimination?

Discrimination happens when you are treated unfairly because of a specific personal characteristic such as age, sex, physical features, disability, race, colour, nationality or ethnicity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, status as parent or carer, pregnancy, breastfeeding, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, lawful sexual activity, employment or industrial activity.

Sometimes discrimination happens in an indirect way, for example if an activity or rule is applied 'equally' to all students/staff, but which has an unequal effect on a particular group of students/staff.

Some examples include:

- > A timed exam. That might look fair to all, but would unfairly affect most blind/vision impaired students who need longer to have the exam paper read to them and to dictate their answers.
- > Early morning meetings. Everybody might have to get up early, but staff who have to get children to school just can't get there 'on time'.
- > A teaching/meeting/socialising space that only has access by stairs. Everybody (equally) has to negotiate the stairs but that may not be possible for a staff member or student with a mobility disability.

Sometimes harassment and lack of appropriate flexibility can be a form of discrimination.

What do we mean by reasonable adjustments/flexibility?

Treating everyone the same does not necessarily result in equal treatment.

Often students and staff with disabilities require adjustments and flexibility so that barriers to their participation are removed eg documents in alternative print, assistive technology, interpreters, note-takers, additional time, changed teaching methods, or changed work practices.

Students and staff with responsibilities as carers may need flexibility, such as selection of tutorial or meeting times to suit childcare, flexible work arrangements to accommodate family crises, or bringing a child to the University when arrangements break down.

Students and staff may need flexibility to accommodate religious or cultural obligations, such as alternatives to a Saturday field trip/meeting day, or extensions because of time away for an important ceremony.

It is hard to say what is reasonable or appropriate in every case. But FedUni aims to, and is often obliged by law to do its best to make sure students and staff do not have unfair barriers through an unfair lack of flexibility.

Help is available to explore how to provide flexibility in the study and work environment, what might be possible, and what is reasonable. You may wish to talk with a Disability Liaison Officer, Student Advisory Service, Equity and Equal Opportunity or Human Resources. Staff wishing to explore how to provide flexibility in learning and teaching practices can contact the Centre for Learning Innovation and Professional Practice (CLIPP).