

BSBDIV501

Manage diversity in the workplace

Release 1

Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.1

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Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBDIV501 Manage diversity in the workplace*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples and case studies	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks and learning checkpoints. Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.



Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies, analyses and evaluates complex texts to determine particular diversity requirements
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collates ideas and information from various sources Prepares factual and informative documentation to suit purpose and audience Records investigation findings according to organisational and legislative requirements
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information and opinions using language and non-verbal features appropriate to audience Participates in discussions using listening and questioning to elicit the views of others and to clarify or confirm understanding
Navigate the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes full responsibility for following policies, procedures and legislative requirements Seeks to improve policies and procedures to better meet organisational goals
Interact with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects, implements and seeks to improve protocols governing communications to clients and co-workers in a range of work contexts Collaborates with others to achieve shared goals Interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds Manages conflict in the workplace through the recognition of contributing factors and by implementing strategies to resolve conflict
Get the work done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts responsibility for planning and sequencing complex tasks and workload, negotiating key aspects with others Uses analytical skills to decide on appropriate application of diversity policy in a range of complex situations Investigates new and innovative ideas as a means to continuously improve work practices and processes

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Implement diversity policy	1A Locate and review diversity policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Apply the policy to specific work contexts	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Ensure that the diversity policy is understood and implemented	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1D Provide feedback and suggestions to ensure currency and efficacy of diversity policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2 Foster respect for diversity in the work team	2A Address own prejudices and demonstrate respect for difference	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Select and recruit diverse staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2C Identify and address training needs to address issues of difference in the team	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2D Manage tension and encourage collaboration and respect between staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2E Assist staff to see the benefits of diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2F Manage allegations of harassment and address complaints according to organisational procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 3 Promote the benefits of diversity	3A Promote the organisation's diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Capture ideas and information to enhance products and services through a diverse workforce	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3C Support organisational efforts to value diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic 1

Implement diversity policy

A reputation for embracing diversity is a positive attribute and an asset for an organisation.

Diversity is promoted and implemented through an organisation's diversity policy, along with other organisational policies. Underpinned by legislation, a diversity policy is used to recruit a diverse staff, respond to staff needs and manage complaints.

Managing a diverse workforce includes knowing relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislation, keeping staff informed and providing opportunities for staff to discuss and contribute to diversity in the workplace.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 1A Locate and review diversity policy
- 1B Apply the policy to specific work contexts
- 1C Ensure that the diversity policy is understood and implemented
- 1D Provide feedback and suggestions to ensure currency and efficacy of diversity policy

1A

Locate and review diversity policy

Organisations are obligated to develop policies and procedures based on legislation relating to human rights, equal opportunity, harassment and anti-discrimination, to guide management and employees in managing diversity in the workplace. Most organisations' philosophy and objectives for managing diversity are expressed in their diversity policy.

Objectives of a diversity policy include:

- treating everyone with respect and dignity
- providing a safe, secure and healthy workplace
- making decisions such as hiring and promoting based on equity and fairness
- valuing a diverse workforce
- eliminating discrimination.

Procedures specified in a diversity policy

Procedures specify how an organisation achieves the aims of its diversity policy.

Here are examples of procedures for managing actions that contravene an organisation's diversity policy, and actions that are intended to promote diversity.

Procedures to support diversity

- Dealing with noncompliance
- Managing complaints
- Reviewing policies and procedures for managing diversity
- Promoting diversity
- Training the workforce in areas relevant to managing diversity

What is diversity?

Diversity encompasses the range of differences between people. A workforce may employ a range of people who exhibit a number of these differences. Management needs to ensure that the differences benefit the workplace and that everyone works together harmoniously.

Having a diverse workforce means there is a range of abilities and skills to draw on; people can learn from each other's different experiences and skills; new ideas and innovation are generated; and people learn tolerance and compassion, and to view situations from perspectives other than their own.

Here is what diversity in action can look like.

Ideas and innovation

Staff with different backgrounds, ages, genders and abilities provide ideas, innovative ways of doing business or producing goods, and suggestions to improve products and services to meet changing needs.

Access to local community

New staff who speak the language of members of the local community may be employed to increase the customer base and customer relations.

Access to international customers

Having staff from different countries who speak a range of languages and understand specific cultures and traditions may provide access to new markets and expand international links and networks.

Improved customer relations

An organisation that shows it values differences in gender, age, culture and ability can work collaboratively with its customers, as it reflects the diversity of the communities it operates within.

Characteristics that make up diversity

Organisations can employ or interact with people who are diverse in ways that have different implications for interactions.

Here are some categories of diversity and a short explanation of each.

Ability, aptitude or disability



Staff may have a basic education or be highly qualified.

People may have a physical or cognitive disability.

Some people may be more suited to a particular job role than others based on their skills, ambitions and aptitudes.

Age



An organisation may employ people of all ages, from young people straight from high school to mature age people in their 60s or 70s.

Personality



A diverse workforce has people with a range of different qualities, such as people who are outgoing, shy, cheerful, quiet, talkative or imaginative.

Marital status or family arrangements



Staff may be married, not married, in a de facto relationship or separated. They may be a single parent, have children or have no children.

More complex characteristics

Culture, language, ethnicity and race are characteristics that can interrelate in complex ways. People can be first, second or seventh generation immigrants or be Indigenous. People from the same ethnic group can speak the same or different languages. People can have different layers of identity and their cultural identity can be very important to them.

Here are some categories that may be part of the diversity of a workplace.

Ethnicity, culture and race

People may come from a variety of countries with different languages, cultures, beliefs and ways of dressing; in other words, different ethnic backgrounds.

People have different cultures; they may be from other countries and may wish to continue their customs and beliefs. They may have a different work ethic to others.

Race is a broad category. A person's race is determined by their ancestry and genetic background; for example, Caucasian (European or Anglo-Celtic ancestry).

Language

While English is the major language in most Australian workplaces, English may not be the first language for many employees.

Nationality

A person may settle and work in Australia but retain their original nationality. Even when a person is naturalised as an Australian, the person's original nationality may still affect their views and actions.

Religion

People may have a specific religion they follow rigorously, have beliefs based on their culture or have no religious affiliation.

Gender

A workforce may have a balanced ratio of male to female staff, while some may have more male or more female staff.

Sexuality

Sexuality can include heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality.

Commonwealth diversity legislation

Organisations must comply with Commonwealth and state/territory legislation relating to anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, bullying and sexual harassment. Organisations are obliged to take proactive, reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation. Ignorance of the law is no protection against breaking the law.

Here are examples of anti-discrimination laws aimed at promoting fairness.

Age

The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth) states that people must not be treated less favourably on the grounds of their age.

Disability

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) aims to prevent the discrimination that occurs when people with a disability are treated less fairly than people without a disability. All states and territories have established bodies to deal with disability discrimination issues under the legislation they administer.

Race

The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) underpins Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Its major objectives are to promote equality before the law for all people and to make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

Sex

The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) recognises the need to prohibit, as far as possible, discrimination against people on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, breastfeeding or family responsibilities.

Human rights

The *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth) aims to ensure that people of all backgrounds are treated equally and have the same opportunities. The Act also makes discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

This Act established the Human Rights Commission and gave it the functions to protect individuals' rights.

You can read more about human rights at: www.humanrights.gov.au.

Gender

The *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* aims to improve and promote equality for both women and men in the workplace, rather than just focusing on women, as both men and women have been discriminated against in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and family care arrangements.

State diversity legislation

Each state and territory has enacted additional legislation to counteract discrimination.

Further information on state/territory legislation is available through the websites of the agencies listed under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

Here are the state/territory human rights agencies.

State and territory human rights authorities

- ACT Human Rights Commission
- Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
- Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland
- Equal Opportunity Commission (Western Australia)
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission
- Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (Tasmania)
- Equal Opportunity Commission (South Australia)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

Diversity policies

To ensure organisations are meeting their legal obligations to follow the principles of workplace diversity in their business practices and culture, management should develop a diversity policy (also known as an access and equity policy or an equal opportunity policy) that shows how they plan to ensure their workforce is diverse and how they will display respect for their customers and the public.

A diversity policy also enhances an organisation's competitiveness and standing in the community, as well as staff morale and satisfaction. The policy must relate to all staff: permanent, part-time, casual and contracted.



It is not a legal requirement for all organisations to have a specific diversity policy, but it is implied under the law that all organisations must adhere to the principles of diversity and equity. Some organisations, such as registered training providers and childcare centres, are required under legally binding industry codes to establish such policies.

Under Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation, an employer may be held legally responsible for any discrimination or harassment that occurs in the workplace or in connection with a person's employment unless it can be shown that all reasonable steps have been taken to reduce this liability.

A diversity policy helps an organisation plan and administer a management system and culture that encourage diversity, and implement practices and procedures to ensure the policy is enacted.

Components of a diversity policy

A diversity policy should be relevant to the specific workplace and have the endorsement of the CEO, board and/or manager responsible. It may also include supporting documentation, such as an ethics guide, code of conduct, workplace behaviour guidelines, and guidelines for managing poor behaviour in the workplace or a complaints procedure.

The policy should begin with a framing statement on diversity that states the organisation's philosophy on diversity, which should include the need for staff to reflect the Australian community and include people of different abilities, ages, genders, ethnicities and backgrounds.

A diversity policy should include the following components.

Components of a diversity policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions of discrimination, harassment and behaviours that will not be tolerated in the workplace • Consequences of breaches of the policy • Management responsibilities for equal employment opportunity (EEO) • Procedures for complaints and how these are to be made and managed

Guidance provided by diversity policy

A diversity policy provides direction and rules for an organisation when it needs to engage in actions.

A diversity policy provides guidance in:

- hiring and promoting staff
- allocating tasks
- allocating overtime
- providing information about workplace behaviour
- managing complaints about harassment and bullying
- developing other policies, such as a human resources policy.

Requirements of a diversity policy

A diversity policy needs to be updated regularly to ensure it is current and as effective as possible.

Requirements include checks for the following.

Accessible	Up to date
<p>Make sure the diversity policy is easily accessible. The document may be made available as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a download from the organisation's intranet• a document displayed in a prominent place or on display boards• a pamphlet available for the public as well as employees• a part of induction manuals or organisation resource guides.	<p>Responsibility for the diversity policy may lie with the manager, the HR manager and/or other managers. Specific tasks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensuring all employees have access to the document both at induction and as needed• keeping records of all employees who have been inducted to the policy and when they receive refresher training, or retraining if the policy and procedures are updated or reviewed• reviewing the document to ensure currency and relevance:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– if legislation changes– as a result of organisational restructures– if it is found to have gaps or be unworkable– as a result of application– to improve readability and usability– for benchmarking against other policies• maintaining version control of the document so that the current version is always used.

Example: introduction to a diversity policy

Here is an example of a diversity policy's introduction.

Philosophy

We believe in having a workforce that comprises people from a range of backgrounds and with varying ages, genders, abilities and outlooks. We believe that our business will prosper and grow by effectively utilising staff and their full range of capabilities and by valuing their contributions. The organisation will ensure that all employees and potential employees are treated fairly and equitably, and in accordance with relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislation.

Policy application

- All employees have the right to a safe and healthy workplace free from discrimination and harassment.
- Selection and recruitment, training, promotion and leave must be based on a person's individual ability regardless of their human characteristics. Recruitment should reflect the Australian community and include people of different abilities, ages, genders, ethnicities and backgrounds.
- Leave may be given for cultural and religious events if prior notice of four weeks is provided. This will be based on individual circumstances and the manager's discretion.
- Maternity and paternity leave is granted (see specific leave policy).
- Leave may be given for family reasons. This will be based on individual circumstances and the manager's discretion (see specific leave policy).
- Employees must follow organisational policies and procedures and work cooperatively, fairly, respectfully and without bias or prejudice.

Breaches of the policy will be handled by the CEO and the HR manager.

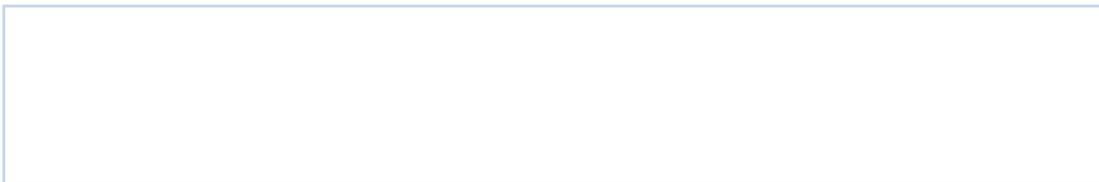
* This excerpt covers the way the policy begins, but leaves out key sections such as a grievance procedure and the roles and responsibilities of managers and employees.

Practice task 1

1. Identify and outline key features of current Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation.



2. Identify relevant state or territory anti-discrimination legislation.



1B

Apply the policy to specific work contexts

Workplace diversity involves recognising the value of individual differences and managing these to ensure a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and unethical practices. A workplace that embraces diversity is accepting and respectful of the various racial, cultural, societal, geographic, economic and language backgrounds and abilities of its staff and clients.

There are a number of requirements of managers if they are to carry out their duties in a fair and non-discriminatory way.

To implement a diversity policy effectively, managers must:

- know the legislation they have to comply with
- understand all aspects of the diversity policy and supporting documentation
- have sound analytical skills to determine how to apply the policy when:
 - hiring and promoting staff
 - allocating overtime
 - managing complaints
 - disseminating information.

Non-discriminatory language

Using inclusive and non-discriminatory language in all internal and external written and verbal communications demonstrates a commitment to equality and avoids stereotyping.

Here are some tips for using inclusive language.

Examples of inclusive language

- Instead of using only 'him' or 'her', use 'they'.
- Avoid sexist language such as, 'He's behaving like an old woman'.
- Don't use derogatory expressions such as 'loony bin' or sexist terms such as 'tradesmen'.
- Ask yourself whether you need to refer to personal characteristics such as age or gender at all.
- Calling someone 'an epileptic' fails to recognise that a disability is only one characteristic of the person. Avoid terms like this.

Comply with diversity legislation and organisational policy

When applying the diversity policy in the workplace, managers need to be aware of how to proactively comply with the policies and how to avoid noncompliance.

Here are examples of diversity legislation and organisational policy.

Age	Age must not be a consideration when hiring an employee. Discrimination on the basis of age may include hiring only younger people or not employing younger workers even though they have the required skills to perform the work. Your workplace may be able to employ older workers by adjusting the physical conditions of some jobs or recruiting them on a reduced-hours basis.
Ability, aptitude or disability	Employment should be offered on the basis of a person's ability to carry out the job. It is illegal to refuse to hire someone with a disability that does not prevent them doing the job.
Personality	Employees must be hired based on their ability to do the job. Rejecting an otherwise suitable applicant for a job based on personality (for example, 'She's too outgoing to be a manager') is a form of discrimination.
Culture	Celebrating important cultural events in the workplace is an example of promoting diversity, as is allowing people to dress according to their traditions as long as this does not breach safety laws or dress codes. Refusing leave requests made in a timely fashion to attend cultural or religious festivals and ceremonies can be discriminatory.
Language	Important notices should be translated into community languages for display on noticeboards. It is discrimination to hire a person who speaks a language other than English and not offer them safety information in their community language.
Ethnicity and race	Staff must be hired, promoted, trained and rewarded based on merit, regardless of ethnicity. Offering better conditions to members of a specific ethnic group is illegal. A person's race must not be made an issue in hiring, promotion or workplace behaviour. It is against the law to allow racist behaviour, such as jokes being circulated in the workplace that insult people of a specific race.

Equal opportunity requirements

Here are some examples of equal opportunity issues that may arise in the workplace.

Gender

Hiring and promotion must be based on the best person for the job, not whether they are male or female. Treating a person differently to others because of their gender is discriminatory.

Nationality

Organisations can be proactive to ensure the spread of staff nationalities reflects local population diversity. Refusing to hire people of specific nationalities is a form of discrimination.

Religion

Providing flexibility for employees to meet required religious observances is an example of embracing diversity. Refusing a request, for example, to attend Friday afternoon devotion at a local mosque in lieu of taking a lunch break at the middle of the day can be discriminatory, particularly where lunch hours are not mandated.

Sexuality

Organisations must not make an issue of a person's sexual preference. Dismissing a person because of their sexuality is illegal.

Marital status/family arrangements

Addressing women by generic titles such as Ms is one way to be compliant. Embracing diversity may involve offering staff with children later starting hours to accommodate taking children to school and flexible hours during school holidays. Refusing reasonable and timely requests for leave from parents of school-age children during school holidays can be a form of discrimination.

Address and embrace diversity

Where work involves customer contact, the diversity policy should also address the rights of customers. This includes providing information about how customers can make and lodge a complaint against a staff member if they feel they have been discriminated against because of their age, gender, language, ability or sexuality, and how this complaint will be managed.

There are many ways to address and embrace diversity. It is a good idea for managers to regularly address the issue by brainstorming ideas, holding general discussions with staff, reading industry journals and visiting websites about diversity.



For example, the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General's guide *Adapting your business to the ageing workforce* has tips for managing age issues.

You can read these tips at the department's website: www.justice.qld.gov.au/fair-and-safe-work/industrial-relations. On the menu on the left-hand side, select the 'Mature-aged-employment' option and select the heading 'Adapting your business to the ageing workforce.'

Example: clear diversity policy guides recruitment

Robin, the marketing manager of a medium-sized organisation, is asked to recruit three more staff for the department. The CEO of the organisation stresses the importance of the new unit being able to 'reach out across the community'.

Maikel, the HR manager, provides a copy of the organisation's diversity policy, which states the need for the employee profile to reflect the diversity of the community. Further research by Robin shows that the major community languages in the target area of the organisation, other than English, are Turkish, Arabic and Croatian.

When advertising the new positions, a preference is included for speakers of community languages – particularly Turkish, Arabic and Croatian.

Recruitment focuses on both internal and external applicants, and results in the recruitment of an internal staff member who speaks Turkish and two people from the external pool who speak Croatian and Arabic. Robin makes sure these applicants also have the appropriate skills and knowledge required for the job in addition to their language skills.

Robin receives good feedback from both the CEO and the HR manager. The new unit proves to be very successful in gaining business across the local community.



Practice task 2

1. Locate an organisation's diversity policy. In your own words, describe what it says about addressing religion in the workplace. What legislation does this relate to?

2. Comment on how your organisation, or an organisation that has a diversity policy you are familiar with, manages diversity in the areas of gender and disability. The following questions could guide your answer. Make sure you have permission to undertake this research.
 - Are there staff with physical or other disabilities employed in this workplace? Is there full access to resources and facilities? Could someone who uses a wheelchair work there?
 - Is gender evenly spread across this workplace? Why or why not?
 - Are there managers of both genders in this workplace? If not, what barriers exist for the gender not represented equally in the management team?

3. Access the Australian Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency website and key in *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*. Access the Australian Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency website at: www.wgea.gov.au and select 'About WGEA'. Select the 'Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012' option. This Act replaced the *Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999*. In your own words, list three of its key aims. Why do you think its emphasis has changed?

1C

Ensure that the diversity policy is understood and implemented

It is important that everyone connected with the organisation is aware of the diversity policy. This includes board members, the CEO, managers, staff, contractors, visitors, customers and other people likely to enter the premises or to come into contact with staff from the organisation.

The amount of detail that needs to be communicated will vary; for example, visitors may only need to be aware of the organisation's diversity statement and the aims of the policy, whereas all staff require a full explanation of all procedures associated with the policy and its implementation, as well as the consequences of noncompliance.

Explain the contents of the policy

Staff need to learn about diversity more broadly, as well as about the diversity policy and its provisions.

Here are some ways to inform staff about the diversity policy.

Presenting information on all aspects of the policy

- How the policy complies with relevant legislation
- The areas of diversity
- The organisation's statement on diversity
- Definitions of all technical terms such as discrimination, harassment, bullying and ethnicity
- Procedures for addressing areas of diversity
- Consequences if the policy is breached
- Management and staff responsibilities
- How complaints are made and managed

How and where to explain the policy

Having well-developed communication skills, including the ability to explain clearly and cater for a variety of learning styles and abilities, is essential for those responsible for promoting the diversity policy. Staff may include people with different abilities, backgrounds and language levels, so make sure you use a mix of speaking, graphical representations, photographs, videos, written handouts, anecdotes and information translated into commonly used languages.

There are a range of strategies and forums you can employ to ensure that the policy is promoted effectively and that people understand their obligations and follow procedures.

Training settings and methods to explain diversity include:

- induction programs
- information sessions and formal presentations
- staff meetings
- role-plays.

Information sessions and formal presentations

It is a good idea to make a formal presentation about the diversity policy to senior management and board members to ensure their acceptance and understanding. Emphasise that the policy complies with current legislation. Check that all relevant staff are present and follow up with any who are absent on the day.

Work with other managers to support their role in informing team members of their rights and responsibilities and how they can use diversity in their everyday work practices.

You can deliver an information session to staff focusing on the diversity policy and their responsibilities towards other staff, customers, visitors and contractors. A session could include an electronic presentation, an expert speaking on diversity and legislation, opportunities to role-play, handouts with an overview of the policy, and/or tips to implement diversity within each team.

Make sure the language expression is appropriate for the audience and handouts are written clearly in English and/or relevant community languages. Explain technical words and discuss legislation using plain English. Make sure the content does not offend anyone; for example, be careful that a description or joke intended to illustrate an area of diversity is not offensive to any specific characteristics of your audience.

Organise presentations in the following way.

Characteristics of information sessions and presentations

Hold them in a comfortable learning environment

Make them relevant to the workplace and the staff of the organisation

Have clear objectives

Provide a variety in activities with time for participants to check their understanding

Provide an opportunity for participants to brainstorm ideas, ask questions or discuss the information and how it impacts on the workplace with team-mates

Training opportunities

Induction programs are a key opportunity for disseminating information about the organisation's diversity policy and for communicating the importance that the organisation attaches to having a diverse workplace. Staff meetings can also be used for short training sessions.

Here is more information about training opportunities.

Induction programs

The diversity policy must be explained to all new staff as soon as they commence work, so they are aware of the organisation's aims and practices and their own responsibilities for diversity. A copy of the policy should be included in the organisation's policies and procedures manual as part of the induction kit.

Retain records of attendance and completed training for compliance purposes and to show that the organisation has taken a proactive stance to promote the policy and eliminate discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Role-plays

Role-plays can be used to further staff understanding during training and information sessions. For example, you may ask staff to role-play what they might do if they are uncomfortable working with a specific team member because they don't have the same religious and cultural beliefs.

Take care to ensure that the participants are volunteers and are advised beforehand of what they are expected to do.

Staff meetings

Staff meetings can be used to explain aspects of the policy, explain how it is to be implemented, raise issues and discuss hypothetical incidents with the aim of educating staff about their responsibilities in relation to diversity. For example, you may explain what sexual harassment means, define bullying, instigate a discussion with a team member about how a policy may be implemented in their team, and describe what to do if they have a complaint about an aspect of diversity (such as perceiving that they were denied a promotion because of their age or gender).

You can invite a guest speaker to talk about specific issues related to diversity and human qualities; for example, other nationalities, people with disabilities, older workers, and communicating and working with specific cultural groups.

Ensure the policy is understood

It is important to make sure the information you explain is understood and the diversity policy is respected by your audience.

Here are several suggestions for running training and information sessions effectively.

Allow for questions

Provide time during a session for people to ask questions such as:

- Why do I have to know all this – isn't it the managers' responsibility?
- How can I get to know about another person's culture?
- What do you mean by the word 'ethnicity'? I didn't understand what you were saying.
- Why should anyone need to know about my personal living arrangements?

Be prepared with answers to questions such as these. Some managers prepare a set of frequently asked questions with responses that people can take away and refer to when needed.

Seek feedback

To confirm that people understand diversity and its benefits, and know what to do to comply with the policy, you may need to seek feedback by:

- asking further questions to clarify any misunderstandings or confusion
- providing a survey or questionnaire to gauge their interest in, understanding of and attitude towards diversity
- observing them as they go about their tasks.

Ask questions

You may ask questions such as:

- In your own words, describe what 'diversity in the workplace' means.
- Why does our organisation have a diversity policy?
- What do you have to do to ensure you are meeting the organisation's diversity policy?
- Why is it important for an organisation to understand your personal arrangements such as having children to care for or being a single parent?
- What should you do if you feel you are being bullied?
- What are the consequences of not complying with the diversity policy?

Publicise the policy

Effective promotion and modelling by managers send the message that the diversity policy is important and that the organisation wants everyone to embrace the policy.

Here are examples of opportunities for making sure the policy is widely available and its location and content are continuously referred to.

Publicity strategies

Distribute copies of the policy to staff as part of the policies and procedures manual.

Make copies available around the workplace and organise displays of information on noticeboards (physical and electronic).

Insert material into induction training and other training events such as annual refresher training.

Add new or updated material to the organisation's intranet when a law is amended or a situation relating to diversity is resolved.

Reinforce the policy's key messages whenever the opportunity arises; for example:

- supervisory discussions
- performance appraisals
- day-to-day observations.

Include excerpts in internal newsletters.

Implement the policy

There are many ways to ensure the policy is being successfully implemented once its implementation has become a goal of the organisation.

Here are strategies and tips for managers who have implementation responsibilities.

Strategies for implementation	Tips for implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe staff in their day-to-day interactions with others. • Check that procedures for recruiting and promoting staff are being followed. • Identify the number and types of complaints being made in relation to harassment and discrimination. • Discuss diversity at performance appraisal sessions to confirm understanding. • Check that recommended changes are being implemented, such as celebrating other cultures, including newsletter articles on diversity or introducing flexible work hours for parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a colleague for advice on how to approach a client or customer from the same cultural background. • Learn how to say 'hello' in community languages and use this to greet colleagues who speak these languages. • Speak up when someone tells a joke or makes a comment that appears derogatory based on specific human qualities such as age, gender, race or sexuality. • Scan for any indirect discrimination when reviewing policies and procedures; for example, where a requirement that should apply to all staff accidentally excludes some members of staff on the basis of specific qualities or characteristics. • Seek balance when approaching staff as volunteers for a specific task; for example, encourage both younger and older people, and both men and women to volunteer for tasks.

Measure success

There are various ways of monitoring whether the implementation of a diversity policy has resulted in positive changes in the workplace.

Here are examples of ways to measure success.

Different measures of success
<p>Responses of staff from observation, sampling, interviews and quizzes in the organisation's newsletter can show the levels of understanding and acceptance of the policy.</p>
<p>Completing a profile of staff with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and so on can show the diversity of the workforce and whether it is more diverse than previously.</p>
<p>A job satisfaction survey can reveal an increase in job satisfaction, with positive comments for flexible work hours.</p>

Records of incidents and complaints lodged with the HR manager about harassment, bullying and discrimination can show whether incidents and complaints have reduced.

Records can show whether verbal or written client feedback relating to inappropriate behaviour by staff has reduced and whether most feedback is now positive.

The number of celebrations and events held to celebrate significant cultural events may have increased and staff may be showing greater enthusiasm and participation.

Example: embrace diversity

A new CEO with a strong and passionate commitment to diversity initiates a review of the organisation's diversity policy.

The following steps are included in the review process:

- Launch review at staff meeting.
- Check that the policy reflects current legislation.
- Check when diversity training has been conducted.
- Interview staff using a questionnaire to check their knowledge and understanding of the diversity policy and their responsibilities, and of where the policy is located.
- Check how visible the policy is.
- Analyse the diversity of the workforce in relation to ethnicity, age, gender and so on.
- Check supporting documents such as a code of ethics.
- Hold staff meetings to gain staff input on how the organisation can embrace diversity and use it as a business asset.
- Research best practice.



After this review, the policy is revised and then endorsed by the board, CEO, senior management and staff, and a copy of the updated policy is displayed in the reception area and staffroom.

In addition, the HR team initiates a monthly newsletter that includes examples of best practice in supporting diversity, explanations of how the diversity policy affects the work of different sections of the organisation and announcements of cultural significance to staff.

Practice task 3

Plan a presentation aimed at a work team to discuss a diversity policy that has just been developed and is ready to be implemented. Include dot-pointed notes of the areas you will cover and the main points of what you will say. Include a set of frequently asked questions with responses.



1D

Provide feedback and suggestions to ensure currency and efficacy of diversity policy

A valuable strategy to ensure that a workplace values diversity and gains benefits from a diverse workforce is to spend time and effort talking to staff about diversity, the diversity policy in place, the procedures that have been implemented and any actions being taken by the organisation to support diversity.

Staff can provide valuable feedback and suggestions to ensure the policy is implemented effectively and efficiently, and maintains currency.

A key responsibility for a manager is to implement regular, critical reviews of the diversity policy to ensure it remains current. This includes checking legislation, seeking and analysing feedback, and making suggestions to improve the policy.



Maintain currency

A diversity policy must relate to current Commonwealth and state/territory legislation, so make sure any legislative changes are noted and interpreted in your organisation's policy.

Here are some strategies for monitoring changes in legislation and trends relating to diversity and codes of conduct.

Strategies for monitoring changes

- Maintain membership of professional networks of HR practitioners, equal employment opportunity officers and other relevant groups.
- Monitor relevant websites such as state/territory agencies that focus on anti-discrimination.
- Attend information sessions provided by relevant agencies, including law firms, government agencies and training providers.
- Subscribe to journals whose target audience includes managers of organisations, HR professionals and related employees.

Seek and analyse feedback

You need to know whether the policy is working and whether it is effective.

Here are some practices that can assist you in seeking and analysing feedback.

Monitor incidents

There may be incidents that tell you the policy is ineffective. For example, if a staff member complains to a team-mate that they are being harassed, the manager might identify two points that demonstrate the policy is not being complied with: the staff member did not complete a written complaint form as instructed in the policy, and another staff member may have breached legislation in relation to harassment.

Observe interactions

Observing staff interactions and listening to discussions at staff meetings can let you know whether staff understand the diversity policy. If not, find out the cause, such as the policy using complex language or providing unclear instructions, or people forgetting the information after their initial training.

Check procedures

Checking that procedures are being followed confirms that the policy is effective; for example, that recruitment notices use inclusive language and hiring is based on ability.

Conduct a formal, critical review of the policy

A review of your organisation's diversity policy requires planning and is a more formal way of evaluating the currency and effectiveness of the policy.

Making sure all staff are consulted will indicate how effective the policy is. Go through each section of the policy and check it for currency, how effectively it relates to the organisation, what amendments or additions should be made and whether it could be written more clearly.

Here are examples of actions that could be undertaken as part of a review of diversity policy.

Strategies for consultation and review
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open informal forums that encourage input, debate and an exchange of ideas and views• Arranging for staff to visit other workplaces to research best practice• Surveys or questionnaires completed by staff, managers and board members• Interviews with relevant stakeholders• A suggestion box for anonymous comments and suggestions related to diversity and policy implementation• Engaging state/territory agencies responsible for implementing diversity legislation to review the organisation's diversity policy and practices• Role-plays that challenge staff members to manage situations involving potential incidents of noncompliance with the diversity policy

Make suggestions to improve the policy

You may be able to suggest a range of improvements following a formal review, staff feedback, observations and informal discussions. If so, follow the organisation's procedures for implementing suggestions, such as preparing a formal report to management, discussing the improvements with staff and ensuring training is organised.

You may have found that the religious practices of growing numbers of your staff have not been adequately catered for and suggest including new provisions in the policy: a request form to attend religious ceremonies; a specific area for staff to observe prayer requirements; and a dress code that embraces people's cultural dress while still complying with safety regulations.

There are a number of ways to address issues you have discovered in your review of the efficacy and currency of your organisation's diversity policy.

Suggestions to strengthen your diversity policy include:

- revising the wording of the policy to eliminate complex language
- conducting regular diversity discussions with staff
- making the policy more visible through displays or newsletter articles
- promoting the organisation's diversity policy within the local community.

Example: a manager contributes to an organisation's diversity policy

Sue, a manager working in a community-based organisation providing services in housing support, attends a meeting of local support groups where she receives an information pack published by their state's EEO commission on working with refugees.

Returning to work after the meeting, she studies the information and arranges a meeting with the HR manager and a member of the HR team who manages the diversity policy.

At the meeting, they decide that the information will assist staff at the organisation to work more effectively with refugees, and they arrange for Sue and the HR team member to plan an information session and deliver this as part of the fortnightly staff meeting.

Feedback from staff is received saying that the information is useful in working with refugees, and they ask for some information to give to clients who are refugees.

The HR team develops a flyer relating to the rights of refugees and this is translated into relevant community languages.

The CEO of the organisation makes a point of congratulating Sue on her contribution and acknowledges this in the staff newsletter that month.



Practice task 4

Locate your organisation's diversity policy or the diversity policy of another organisation.

1. List some actions you could take to maintain the currency of the policy in relation to legislation.

2. List at least three strategies for identifying how well the diversity policy is being complied with.

continued ...

... continued

3. Describe a possible improvement that could be made to the policy.

Summary

1. Diversity encompasses the range of differences between people in relation to age, gender, ability, ethnicity, race, religion, sexuality, language, culture and personality.
2. A diversity policy is an essential element for promoting and implementing diversity in the workplace. Underpinned by Commonwealth and state/territory legislation, a diversity policy is used to recruit diverse staff, respond to staff needs and manage complaints.
3. A diversity policy includes statements about conduct for behaviour in the workplace to eliminate harassment, bullying and discrimination.
4. Discrimination is illegal and may be based on age, race, sexuality, gender, marital status, religion, ethnicity, ability, culture, language and personality.
5. The diversity policy should be well displayed and actions must be taken to ensure it is understood and complied with by everyone in the workplace.
6. The diversity policy needs to be current and effective in supporting and promoting diversity in the workplace. Every individual has a role in this task by providing feedback and suggestions.

Learning checkpoint 1 Implement diversity policy

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in implementing diversity policy.

Part A

1. Complete the following table. List three major pieces of Commonwealth legislation related to diversity and briefly explain what each covers.

Legislation	Explanation

2. Describe your responsibilities in your role in relation to meeting the requirements of the legislation that you have listed in Question 1.

3. Explain in one paragraph why an organisation should have a diversity policy.

4. Describe at least three ways a manager can ensure that the organisational diversity policy is explained to staff and is understood and easily accessed.

5. Provide four actions that management and staff should follow to ensure they are complying with a diversity policy.

6. List at least three ways that an organisation can review the diversity policy and encourage suggestions for improvement.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Kristy overhears a group of colleagues discussing another staff member and making disparaging comments about this person based on their appearance and race.

After giving the matter some thought, Kristy speaks to Blake, her manager, who says, 'I'll attend to the matter as soon as I can find some time'.

Blake mentions the conversation the next day to the HR manager. The HR manager is disappointed to hear of the incident, as the diversity policy was recently reviewed and discussed with all staff. She is also disappointed that Blake did not address the issue immediately.

She asks Blake what he intends to do about the matter. Blake says he will check whether all his staff attended the diversity training held the previous month and then arrange a team meeting to discuss the issue. The HR manager insists on a response by the end of the day.

1. What part of the organisation's diversity policy and legislation was breached?

2. What action should have been taken when the staff member raised the disparaging remarks with the manager?

3. What message was communicated to Kristy (and those making the disparaging remarks) by the delayed response of the manager? Was this a good message or not and why?

4. Whose responsibility is it to ensure all staff attended the diversity training?

5. How could this incident be used to improve the diversity policy?

Topic 2

Foster respect for diversity in the work team

One of a manager's responsibilities is to encourage and promote diversity in the workplace. They can do this by addressing their own prejudices about people who are different to themselves and by being a positive role model for changing negative attitudes and behaviour.

Strategies that support the organisation's diversity policy include promoting the benefits of diversity, providing training in diversity to staff and managing conflict between team members.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A Address own prejudices and demonstrate respect for difference
- 2B Select and recruit diverse staff
- 2C Identify and address training needs to address issues of difference in the team
- 2D Manage tensions and encourage collaboration and respect between staff
- 2E Assist staff to see the benefits of diversity
- 2F Manage allegations of harassment and address complaints according to organisational procedures

2A

Address own prejudices and demonstrate respect for difference

Prejudice is a preconception or belief we hold about a person, action or situation. A prejudice is often negative; for example, people may dislike or feel uncomfortable around a specific group of people because of the way they dress or talk. This can lead to harmful and hurtful personal interactions, which may take a long time to heal and are unnecessary and avoidable. Anti-discrimination legislation and diversity policies are designed to minimise or eliminate these kinds of interactions for the benefit of both individuals and organisations.

A negative bias towards people can affect many of the decisions that managers are required to make, such as recruiting or disciplining a staff member.

Processes or decisions that are flawed because they are based on a manager's prejudices may result in an organisation having a poor image in the community and/or low staff morale.



Reflect on your own beliefs and values

Managers should always be fair, honest and unbiased in their dealings with staff. Managers are accountable for their behaviour and their decisions. They are role models for their staff and must always demonstrate actions that are based on impartial, objective evidence and are free from prejudice.

Everyone has their own system of values, beliefs and traditions that have been developed over time based on their culture, genetic makeup and upbringing. Managers must learn to accept everyone's views, even if they disagree with them.

How can you be confident that you are free of prejudice in your personal reactions? The best test is to consider your interactions with others.

Reactions and traits:

- Patience with older people and children
- Ease when talking to a person in a wheelchair
- Avoidance of assumptions about people of a particular ethnicity because of one or two negative examples
- Being comfortable if my child announced they were in a relationship with someone of the same gender
- Friends including people of a different age, race, religion, ethnicity or sexuality to me

Develop an unbiased attitude

By self-reflecting and considering our interactions with people different to ourselves, we can learn more about our own values, and then work to change our attitudes and prejudices, and how we communicate with people.

Tools available to self-assess your prejudices include the following:

- Take the Brief Implicit Association Assessment Test developed at Harvard University at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>. It provides some personal feedback on your prejudices and is a useful tool to start thinking about how you view the world around you and interact with others.
- Visit the Beyond Prejudice website at: www.beyondprejudice.com/reduce_your.html. It provides some useful strategies for reducing your prejudicial behaviour.



Strategies for developing an unbiased attitude

Our biases can be reduced if we become more sensitive to what is involved in skilful intercultural communication and interaction, and what is going on when less skilful communication takes place.

Here are examples of strategies that can be used to assist in the development of unbiased attitudes.

Strategies to boost cultural competence

Listening to yourself talking about others and checking what you say for prejudice

Reading material that challenges your present attitudes

Watching others you admire for their lack of bias and seeing them interacting and making decisions

Learning more about other cultures, religions, physical disabilities, personality types and backgrounds to help you see things from other people's perspectives

Taking extra time to make decisions and reflecting on whether your decision includes any bias

Respect differences

Your workplace is likely to be made up of a diverse range of people of different ages, genders, abilities, cultures and backgrounds. This diversity provides a variety of opinions, values and beliefs.

It is your responsibility to demonstrate respect for each person's point of view. A workplace that has a culture of respect and equal opportunity promotes loyalty and satisfaction in employees and is good for the organisation.

There are some negative outcomes, including higher costs and lost opportunity, of having a workplace culture where there is insufficient respect for difference.

Disrespecting difference can lead to:

- low staff morale and higher absenteeism and turnover
- a sector of the community rejecting your organisation or business
- loss of organisational reputation in the local community
- inability to engage with sectors of the community
- loss of creative input and energy within the organisation
- lower productivity.

A manager's role

You may find yourself holding different views, opinions and values to those of your staff, customers and clients. Your job is to recognise and understand the characteristics that make people different from each other, and to be able to respond effectively and sensitively to issues that arise. You need to acknowledge that, while differences exist, no-one deserves less courtesy, respect or consideration because of these differences.

Always approach people in a way that respects their experience, work style, culture and abilities, and avoid making judgments based on preconceived ideas.



Modelling by managers is a powerful way to promote diversity in the workplace. If a manager routinely tells jokes that are offensive to certain groups (such as women, people born overseas, members of religious groups or people with disabilities), the message staff receive is that the organisation does not actively support a diverse workplace.

On the other hand, managers have the opportunity to actively promote diversity by modelling appropriate behaviours such as never telling offensive jokes, basing decisions on ability rather than human qualities and characteristics such as age and gender, and acting promptly when the diversity policy is breached.

Positive interactions

Here are some tips for respecting differences when interacting with others.

Strategies to promote positive interactions

- Use inclusive language that recognises a person's worth. Avoid remarks that are demeaning, such as referring to women as 'dear'.
- Avoid jargon and Australian colloquialisms; use plain English when speaking and writing.
- Be aware of a person's physical and mental limitations, but do not assume that a person needs to be treated differently because of a physical or intellectual disability.
- Acknowledge the experience and skills that older people bring to the workplace.
- Develop a professional rapport with colleagues and customers.
- Be aware of different learning styles and adapt your interactions to accommodate the ways other people like to work.
- Show genuine interest in other people's beliefs. Listen actively and ask clarifying questions.
- Respect people's traditions such as bowing when greeting, having sufficient personal space when speaking and addressing people in certain ways.

Example: a manager addresses own issues and prejudices

Steve is employed in a food distribution business as an overseer, supervising the work of the dispatch team of five workers. The company has recently undergone expansion and now imports canned foods from Spain, Greece, Italy and Croatia.

As much as he tries not to, Steve finds he still gets impatient with some of his crew who do not speak English well. He becomes annoyed when he has to read documents aloud for individual crew members, as his own reading skills are not strong.

The training manager arranges literacy support for the crew, which Steve also attends. He says he is only there to help his crew. The sessions focus on reading workplace documents.

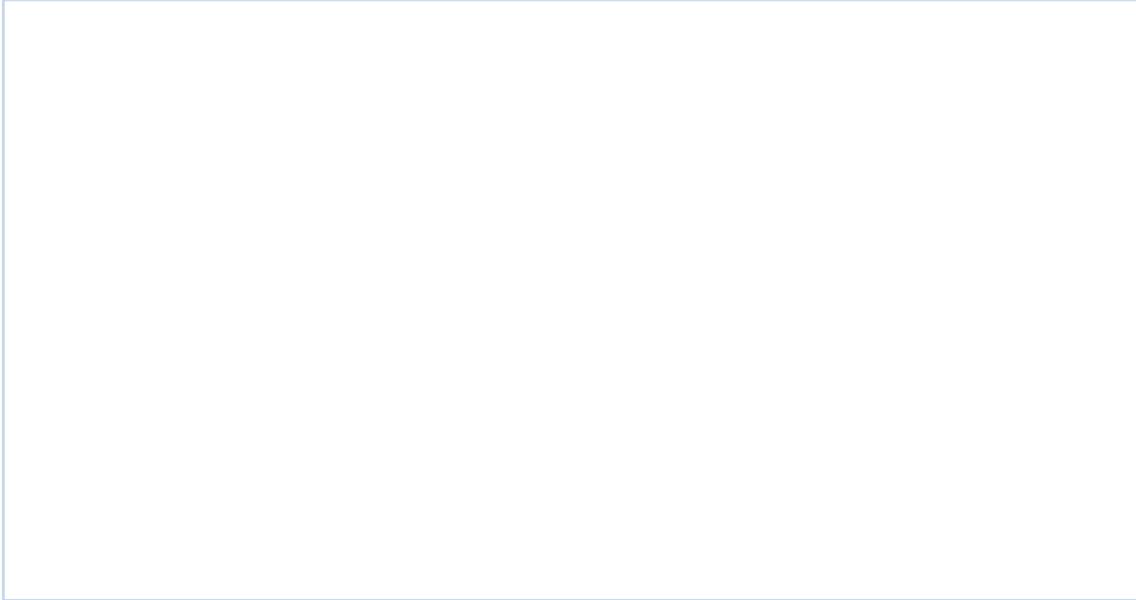
By the end of the sessions, everyone has improved their reading skills, including Steve. Morale at work improves and Steve now enjoys working with the crew. He asks for their help in reading the labels on the imported foods, using their community language skills.



Practice task 5

Think about a cultural, ethnic or religious group you either know very little about or have preconceived ideas about. Research the group and arrange to visit this group. For example, talk to a local religious leader about a religion that is prominent in your community; visit a facility that caters for people with a disability; or visit an organisation that supports refugees.

Make sure you do some research beforehand so you have an idea of what to expect when you visit. Use a diary to record your reactions, thoughts and feelings related to your visit, and then evaluate what you have gained from the experience.



2B

Select and recruit diverse staff

If it is to embrace diversity, an organisation needs to look at its profile and then set targets to better reflect community profiles. Discrimination can appear at any part of the selection and recruitment process, from the initial advertising to the interview and selection procedures.

An organisation may talk about wanting to have a diverse staff and state the benefits of having diverse staff, but unless recruitment and selection are done without bias, the organisation may place its prejudices ahead of who is best qualified for the job.

A positive bias towards older workers, women, people of diverse ethnic origins or people with disabilities is often referred to as positive discrimination, but this should not be done at the expense of recruiting the best people for the job.

Here are some benefits, identified by research, of the competitive advantages gained by organisations that embrace a diverse workforce.

Diverse input

Organisations that accommodate diversity in all its forms are able to generate new markets, ideas and processes that would not be possible without the input of a diverse workforce.

Diverse skills set

Having a staff that represents a range of ages, abilities, cultures, ethnicities and genders can expand the organisation's skills set, increase the flow of ideas and innovation, influence staff retention and morale, promote tolerance, and add character and vibrancy to the organisation.

Reflection of diverse communities

A valuable asset for an organisation is to have staff members who reflect the community so it can better understand its clients and customers and better respond to their needs. Staff can help develop strategies to engage the community, customers and clients, and use community languages to facilitate communication.

Advertising

When drafting position descriptions and advertisements to recruit staff, a number of guiding principles are useful to prevent discrimination or bias from creeping into the process. Advertising must be approached sensitively and with due regard for anti-discrimination. Even the medium used may unconsciously introduce a bias.

Here are strategies that can be effective ways to prevent inadvertent discrimination.

Advertise widely

Place advertisements so they are exposed to the greatest number of potential applicants. Restricting an advertisement to a trade journal may disadvantage some people, as may advertising solely on the internet.

Fully inform applicants

Ensure the advertisement is accurate and informative; back this up by ensuring a job description is made available to applicants before they submit an application.

Use inclusive language

Use inclusive language and avoid stereotypical language such as 'salesman'. Instead, use gender-neutral words such as 'sales staff'.

Avoid age bias

Be careful when asking for 'recent graduate' or conversely 'person with at least 10 years' experience managing staff', as this introduces age biases.

Respect privacy

Do not request personal details unless they directly affect the job.

Use a direct recruitment agency

If using a recruitment agency to vet applications and put forward a list of applicants for interview, ensure that the directions given to the agency reflect what your organisation is looking for; that is, a process free from bias and discrimination that encourages a more diverse staff profile.

Consult guidelines

The Australian Human Rights Commission provides a publication, *Best practice guidelines for recruitment and selection*, on its website. The commission also provides a range of resources to assist organisations and business in supporting good practice and a workplace free of discrimination and harassment.

Recruitment

Before starting the recruitment process, decide how the process will be conducted, including how you run the interviews, what references are required and whether any work samples or psychometric and skills testing are needed.

Here are aspects to consider when you seek to recruit staff in a non-discriminatory way.

Follow laws and principles

Follow equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws as well as diversity principles to ensure that people are treated equally throughout the recruitment process. It is unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their gender, sexual preference, disability, marital status, beliefs, race, age, physical features, pregnancy (including potential pregnancy) or industrial activity.

Take care with selection criteria and tests

Selection criteria should be consistent with the job specifications and what the person will do in the role. Check whether there are specific requirements essential to the job; for example, a certain level of education or English language skills. Make sure you are familiar with the wording you can and cannot use.

Ensure conditions, equipment and time allowed are the same for each test candidate.

Interviews and selection of candidate

During the interview process, discrimination against applicants (either intentionally or unintentionally) is unacceptable. All members of the interview panel need to understand diversity, equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination principles, as well as associated legislation and their legal obligations.

Here are examples of the process that could be followed when interviewing and selecting staff.

How to interview and select staff in an equitable way

1

Prepare interview questions and check these for discrimination before the interviews begin. To maintain consistency, all applicants must be asked the same questions.

2

Devise a rating system to rate each candidate against the key selection criteria. This makes the decision objective, rather than subjective. You may choose to have certain criteria worth more 'points' than others.

3

Record the selection process and how a decision has been arrived at. This is crucial if an applicant appeals a decision.

4

Provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants; this process is useful to the applicants, but also enables the selection team to make objective decisions by asking the panel why a specific candidate was not chosen.

Example: a manager takes an active role in promoting diversity when recruiting

Example 1: recruiting

Tracey is a manager at an organisation that offers financial services in an area with a large number of Chinese people. She receives approval to expand her team to support the introduction of new software that will assist clients in a range of small businesses to manage their finances better.

She discusses the process with her staff and the HR manager. They note that the current staff profile has a low percentage of young people, women and people from diverse ethnic origins. Tracey wants to incorporate strategies to appoint the best person for the job while expanding the diversity of the staff employed.

Once the position descriptions are developed for the new positions, Tracey double-checks the requirements and decides that the level of education requested is not essential, while speaking a community language would be an asset in dealing with prospective clients in small businesses. She adds this to the desirable criteria for the positions and changes the educational requirement from 'post-secondary schooling' to 'secondary schooling'.

Advertisements are placed in a variety of newspapers (including some in languages other than English), on a job search website and in a women's magazine. The panel later concludes that this enabled them to attract a more diverse range of applicants.

Example 2: selecting

Tracey asks for the applications they receive to be copied but with all personal details that show age, ethnicity and education level removed. This is to ensure the panellists do not prejudice the candidates.

The selection panel consists of Tracey, a young Chinese-Australian woman from the HR team and a person from the financial management team. They vet the applications using a rating system that gives one to three points for the extent to which the person meets each of the selection criteria. Additional points come from a keyboarding test. Referees' reports are obtained for five of the applicants who are rated highest in the interview process.

Tracey offers positions to three applicants and they accept. Two women are selected; one speaks Cantonese and has recently completed Year 12, while the other is completing her degree in economics part-time. The third person is male, left school early and is extremely intelligent with innovative ideas. All are competent keyboarders with good speed and accuracy.

At the conclusion of the recruitment process, the panel reviews the process and decides that:

- using a rating system made the decisions more objective and made it easier to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- amending the academic qualification requirement provided two applicants who are extremely well suited to the positions advertised.

Practice task 6

Write a brief for a recruitment agency. You are asking the agency to recruit four new workers for an organisation that provides support to homeless people. The organisation is seeking people who:

- can relate to homeless people in a way that maintains the dignity of these people
- speak community languages, particularly Vietnamese, Arabic or Spanish
- can work flexible shifts, including night shift on a rotating basis.

It requires a mix of younger and mature age people, and at least two of the successful applicants must be female.

The brief to the recruitment agency should include:

- the preferred media for advertising the positions
- a rough draft of the advertisement to be used in print media and on websites
- guidelines (dos and don'ts) to be used in vetting and culling the applicants to supply a group of 8–10 applicants from received applications
- how a positive bias towards women can be produced without showing unfair bias.



2C

Identify and address training needs to address issues of difference in the team

To carry out their role in fostering diversity, managers need good communication skills and may need to provide training in diversity to help team members and others address issues of difference.

Management skills around diversity include:

- ability to explain and promote the benefits of diversity
- ability to work well and collaborate with people from a range of backgrounds
- negotiation skills to manage tensions
- ability to identify diversity training needs
- knowledge of how to cater for different learning styles.

Identify diversity training needs

People may require training to see the benefits of diversity and to effectively address issues of difference within a team. While you may know who needs training and the type of training required, it is useful to conduct a training needs analysis and audit to confirm your thinking, and to see where team members themselves feel they need training.

Training needs can also be identified through observation, discussion, interview, performance appraisals and surveys, and review of complaints, incidents and issues. Do other managers identify conflict arising from differences and act appropriately to address the issues using conflict management and negotiation skills? Ask yourself questions about how the organisation encourages staff to embrace diversity in the workplace.

Here are several traits of culturally competent staff.

Traits of culturally competent staff

A satisfactory understanding of the various aspects of diversity

An understanding of the benefits of having a diverse staff

Skills (for example, self-reflection, checking bias, listening skills and cultural awareness) to embrace diversity

Types of training

Analyse the results of your investigations to identify where training is needed. General training in diversity may be required. The aim of general diversity training is to raise participants' awareness of aspects of diversity and how these are applied in a workforce for the benefit of both the organisation and the individual employees.

The focus is on how diversity can be included in employees' work on a daily basis. Tips for working collaboratively with others should be provided.

Here are other types of training that may be valuable, depending on the nature of your organisation.

Cultural competence	Culturally specific training
<p>Cultural competence training can be general or specific. Generally it refers to the skills to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds. It can also refer to an ability to interact effectively with one particular cultural group through having a foundation of knowledge about its history and culture that serves as the basis for skill development, to enable effective and appropriate communication and engagement with people of that cultural group.</p>	<p>Culturally specific training focuses on a specific cultural group and describes its traditions, beliefs, languages and other factors, and the issues relevant to this culture in both the past and the present.</p>

Training for staff with HR responsibilities

In some circumstances, training for staff with HR responsibilities may be suitable for other groups in the organisation.

Here are examples of areas of training that an organisation may offer.

Equal opportunity

Equal opportunity training focuses on reducing an organisation's risks of claims for sexual harassment, bullying and bias against promotions based on age, sexuality or gender. Explore strategies for ensuring each person has equal opportunities in the workplace.

Workplace bullying

Workplace bullying, discrimination or harassment training informs employees about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It also covers the consequences of unacceptable behaviour in line with organisational policies and procedures, which are underpinned by relevant legislation.

Grievance management

Employees need to know how to make a complaint about alleged discrimination, harassment or bullying. Managers and HR team members need to understand the organisation’s grievance and dispute handling procedures. Training may also include how to identify grievances before they are formally lodged.

Recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection training emphasises the need for non-discriminatory practices during the recruitment and selection process. Strategies to avoid indirect and direct discrimination in recruitment and selection should be explored.

Industry-specific training

Different industries have different client groups and issues.

Here are two types of training that are delivered in industries where understanding of ethics and human rights is considered essential.

Ethics training

Ethics training focuses on an industry or a specific type of industry (for example, business services, manufacturing or aged care) and the established ethics of working in that industry. Definitions of ethics and codes of conduct are discussed.

Human rights training

Human rights training focuses on human rights legislation and people’s rights and responsibilities. This is especially valuable for people working in the disability sector or with refugees and asylum seekers, and links human rights legislation and day-to-day work with clients.

Training design and delivery

Team training sessions are useful to provide input and share ideas and thoughts, while training conducted by an external agency or trainer can introduce new ideas and provide new perspectives.

Here are some examples of training providers.

Types of training providers

- Specialist learning and development staff
- A manager or HR team member assigned to the task
- Representatives of a training institution or registered training organisation (RTO)
- A consultant with appropriate expertise from a state or territory agency established to support and promote diversity in the workplace

Effective training

Seek to facilitate conditions that allow training to be delivered effectively and provide an evaluation form to evaluate its effectiveness. Devise a meaningful way of monitoring changes that can be observed or objectively measured, such as reported incidents.

Effective training usually:

- is well designed with a clearly stated objective, a sequence of learning steps and appropriate activities that cater for a diverse audience
- provides an opportunity to discuss concepts and ideas and ask questions
- includes variety in tasks
- provides an opportunity for participants to build on their own experience and previous learning
- includes feedback provided by the presenter or trainer.

Practice task 7

Prepare a half-page survey of questions to identify where training in diversity may be needed in your organisation or one you are familiar with. Ask colleagues or fellow learners to complete the survey. Analyse the results and prepare a list of strategies to address the training needs identified.

2D Manage tensions and encourage collaboration and respect between staff

Tensions and issues may arise from a person's inability to work effectively with difference. Be particularly sensitive to the potential impact of world events on tensions between staff from different backgrounds. Some discretion in allocating project teams and reporting lines may be required.

When conflict occurs, managers need to encourage collaboration and respect between staff who struggle with diversity, and negotiate a solution to maintain team morale and keep differences from affecting staff performance.

Tensions and differences of opinion may arise because a team member:

- does not understand another person because they have an accent, are softly spoken or misuse the English language
- misunderstands or mishears a comment
- interprets directness as aggression or indirectness as evasiveness
- has a different sense of humour or laughs when nervous, which another person sees as dismissiveness or failing to take a matter seriously
- becomes annoyed with a person who always needs to be shown a new procedure rather than reading the manual
- is frustrated with always having to watch what they say in case they make a comment that is unintentionally offensive to another person's culture
- attempts to resolve a difference of opinion by argument, rather than an exchange of views in a structured discussion.

Manage tensions

A manager's role in relation to workplace tensions is to encourage understanding between the parties, identify where the problem lies and negotiate a solution that results in greater understanding and improved work performance.

Individual meetings with the people concerned provide an opportunity for them to air their differences, see each other's points of view and come to an agreement.

Staff meetings can be used to discuss tensions and work together to solve problems that affect the whole staff, such as divisions between groups that result from differences in values, opinions and beliefs.

Informal opportunities for discussion are useful, as they may defuse a situation before a small difference escalates into a bigger issue.

Managers can also use the organisation's performance appraisal process as an opportunity to discuss issues that have arisen with individual staff members, providing the issue is not urgent.

Here are some tips for using conflict management strategies and negotiation skills.

Conflict management strategies

Listen to the position of each party in the dispute or conflict without judgment or questioning of their position.

Get to the root of the problem and analyse whether the problem has a plausible solution or is a personality clash that requires you to separate the conflicting parties.

Speak to both parties about the nature and cause of the problem and suggest small, simple changes that can improve the chances of resolving the conflict successfully.

Work further with each party separately, and with both parties together, to come up with possible solutions. Obtain agreement from both parties regarding a solution.

Implement a solution.

Review and learn from the incident.

Example: a manager assists her team to collaborate and deal with tensions

Following a state election, two departments are combined into one. One of the departments is external to the ministry and comprises six men who are career public servants with an average of 25 years' experience. The men were all born in Australia and are of Anglo-Celtic ancestry. The other department consists of five women and two men and has a much lower average age. All have university degrees. One of the men is gay. Four members of this group were born overseas.

Fiona, the manager of the new department, addresses each group separately and acknowledges that the groups have different qualities and values. She asks each staff member to write, anonymously, what they are most concerned about with regard to the restructure.

On the first day of the new arrangement, all 13 staff attend a half-day program to facilitate the restructure and work through a process to get each person to talk about their skills and what they offer the new team.

Fiona then facilitates a process to determine what skills gaps exist that could be addressed through training. She arranges for the group to attend a program called 'Working with diversity'. Other plans include having a fortnightly lunch together. Staff meetings are to be held once a week, where they can air any grievances or talk about issues that have arisen.



Practice task 8

List four strategies a manager could use to settle tensions between team members as a result of a person's age, ethnicity, abilities, culture, sexuality or language.

2E

Assist staff to see the benefits of diversity

Working effectively with difference is a strength that can improve the organisation's products, services and customer relations. An organisation that encourages diversity often receives public recognition and respect as well as business success, customer satisfaction and staff retention. Respect for difference in human qualities is more than a 'nice thing to do'. It is a smart way to do business and utilises assets that may not currently be capitalised on.

In order to be strong in this area, staff need to understand diversity, which they may come to do through their own lived experience or through more formal interventions. Aim to foster understanding of the benefits of diversity with each staff member.

You may have developed a personal commitment to diversity because you have seen or believe in benefits in the following areas.

Here are some tips that can help you to assist staff in seeing the benefits of workplace diversity.

Morale

Having a range of cultures, backgrounds, ages and abilities contributes to an interesting and lively workplace with high staff morale and a variety of opinions and points of view.

Productivity and conditions

Working harmoniously with others lessens tensions and increases productivity. Understanding different cultures, points of view and opinions leads to a workplace that is free from harassment, discrimination and bullying. Employees feel safer. More flexibility can be introduced to accommodate religious holidays.

Ideas and access

An organisation can use ideas and information from the diversity of its workforce to contribute to its competitive advantage. For example, having staff who speak other languages and understand other cultures provides a pool of people to help solve problems when working with clients from diverse backgrounds. It may also help increase access to wider markets, including overseas opportunities.

Trust and connection

Understanding customers' situations and backgrounds helps you develop a rapport with customers and improves customer service. Demonstrating a commitment to diversity raises the organisation's profile and builds trust within the community.

Strategies to promote understanding

As well as developing good understanding of the potential and actual benefits of diversity to an organisation yourself, and allowing your understanding to flow through to your discussions and interactions (for example, being respectful towards individuals who wish not to share details), there are further actions you can take to help staff understand the advantages of diversity.

Strategies to promote understanding of diversity include:

- informal discussions within the team when an issue arises based on a person's differences
- discussion of the benefits of a diverse workforce during a team meeting
- a session in which team members talk about their culture, traditions and life experiences
- showing and discussion of videos about diversity in Australian workplaces
- highlighting of instances where gender and age balance have changed, with statistics and examples to support; for example, in the finance industry
- acknowledgment and celebration of people's achievements
- invitations to experts in diversity to speak to the team.

Practice task 9

1. Describe benefits of diversity that you have observed in your organisation or an organisation you are familiar with.

2. List four ways of promoting diversity that would be appropriate in your organisation, given its staff and clients. If you are not currently working for an organisation, answer in relation to one that you are familiar with.

2F

Manage allegations of harassment and address complaints according to organisational procedures

The complaints process set out in the diversity policy and supporting documentation (procedures and a complaints form) are designed to provide a fair process for dealing with allegations of bullying, harassment and discrimination.

All staff should be aware of the complaints procedure and feel able to use it when necessary.

This helps minimise the legal risks associated with noncompliance, which can be costly in terms of morale and lost staff time.



What is harassment?

Harassment in the workplace includes actions by one person towards another that humiliate, intimidate or offend and are unwelcome and uninvited. Harassment can be unintentional or deliberate.

It includes behaviour that may be physical, verbal, nonverbal and/or written (including inappropriate emails, text messages and social media comments).

Harassment is behaviour that is derogatory towards a person's:

- race, where race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin
- sexual orientation, lawful sexual activity or gender identity
- gender, marital status or age
- parental status, pregnancy or breastfeeding
- physical features
- impairment or disability, including total/partial loss of body function/part; mental or psychological disorder; disease, malformation, disfigurement
- religious beliefs or activities.

Laws relating to harassment

Harassment is against the law. This is underpinned by a series of Commonwealth and state/territory Acts that form the legislative base for policy developed by organisations to address potential claims of harassment, discrimination and bullying.

Bullying can also be regarded and handled as a WHS matter. A criminal case can be brought against another person (a colleague) for workplace harassment, as well as for bullying or discrimination.

Here are some relevant laws.

Commonwealth laws relating to harassment

- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

Respond to complaints of bullying and harassment

Workplace bullying and harassment can be very serious matters and have led, in the worst cases, to suicide, large damages payments, negative publicity for an organisation, high staff turnover and poor morale.

It is vital that managers take any reports of bullying and harassment seriously and respond promptly.

Make sure that you respond to complaints of bullying or harassment:

- according to established policy and procedure
- in a fair manner and with awareness of the potential effects on the victim
- in proportion to the seriousness of the incident
- to protect the right that all staff have to a workplace free from harassment
- to minimise staff turnover from inaction
- promptly.

Manage complaints

Managers have a responsibility to implement policies and associated procedures relating to complaints of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the workplace, including taking action when a complaint is raised with them. Individual employees have a responsibility to comply with the policy.

If a complaint is received, the first and often the best approach to low-level incidents (such as verbal comments or suggestive body language) is to ask the offending person to stop the unwanted or offensive behaviour. This may be difficult depending on the assertiveness of the person concerned, the difference in seniority of the people concerned and the culture of the organisation.

Once a manager is approached about a complaint, action must be taken. In the event of inaction, a later claim may potentially be made against the organisation for failing to act appropriately.

A complaint may be directed to the state or territory EEO commission (or equivalent) or may become the subject of a claim and legal action. Minor incidents of harassment are judged more seriously in a court case if the person has been approached or warned by a manager and has not changed or discontinued the unwanted behaviour.



Organisational responsibilities

Organisations need to be aware of their responsibility to protect individuals' rights by having a robust anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy in place, with associated procedures implemented in the workplace.

Here are examples of an organisation's responsibilities around the management of an individual's rights.

Organisations' responsibilities regarding rights of individuals
Having an effective and workable grievance procedure
Making the policies available to all employees in the workplace
Training employees on the policies and procedures and how complaints will be managed
Implementing the policies and associated procedures where a breach arises
Taking immediate and appropriate action when a harassment complaint is made
Having arrangements for adequate supervision and monitoring of the workplace

Contact officers

Some organisations select and appoint contact officers, who are trained to support anyone in the workplace who needs to discuss an incident. A contact officer's role does not include investigating the incident.

Here are some tasks that can be undertaken by a contact officer.

Contact officer's tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be an initial point of contact for inquiries from staff related to harassment, bullying or discrimination• Discuss actions the person can take based on the organisation's policy and procedures• Act as a support person once a complaint is acted on• Contribute to staff awareness of policy and procedure related to harassment, bullying and discrimination• Provide feedback to the HR manager or diversity officer related to the number of issues raised with contact officer

Manage informal complaints

Many complaints can be managed successfully within the workplace between the parties concerned and a manager. However, while managing complaints informally may lessen their impact and prevent the situation from escalating, a complaints policy must allow complaints to be immediately taken to a formal level if the person making the complaint wishes this to happen. Explain to staff that people making a false claim are subject to severe penalties.

When managing complaints informally, use communication strategies such as asking the person open questions to learn about the way they see the situation. Ask clarifying questions such as: 'I am not sure what you mean when you say they were speaking to you in a bad way. Were they using swear words? What words did they use?'

Here are examples of dealing with a complaint informally.

Dealing with an informal complaint

A staff member may just want the inappropriate behaviour to stop and is happy to use an informal approach. A resolution of the issue is worked out quickly and easily.

The individual may want to deal with the situation themselves by approaching the person harassing them and just want advice before proceeding.

The harasser may admit that the complaint is founded in truth and make an acceptable apology to the individual.

A manager may witness an instance of unacceptable behaviour (without a complaint being received) and counsel the people involved.

Manage formal complaints

If the person accused of harassment continues their unwanted behaviour or challenges the complaint, a formal complaint may be made in writing.

If the issue involves bullying or harassment, this can be seen as a WHS matter and state legislation such as the South Australian *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* must be followed in relation to incidents. Legislation requires that health and safety incidents be recorded, notified and managed appropriately and within specified time frames. Managers must ensure that the organisation's incident-reporting procedures are followed. This will assist in meeting the notification requirements placed on the organisation under the WHS Act and in initiating risk management processes.

A formal complaint procedure may involve an interview with relevant witnesses (such as a contact officer, union delegate, legal representative or supportive colleague); a formal report prepared by the HR manager; and/or referral of the matter to the organisation's legal representative or relevant state/territory anti-discrimination agency.

A complaints form

A complaints form may require details such as the complainant's name, the date and a description of the incident, the name of the alleged harasser and actions already taken. Following an incident, the organisation should conduct a review of what occurred and how the complaint was managed, to strengthen its commitment to preventing harassment in the workplace and managing incidents in the future.

Training in incident investigation and managing complaints is available through registered training organisations and appropriate agencies.

There are a number of possible outcomes when a formal complaints procedure has been entered into. Here are several examples of formal complaint outcomes.

Possible outcomes of a formal complaint

- A formal apology
- Counselling
- Disciplinary action against the harasser up to and including dismissal or demotion, transfer, suspension or probation
- Official warnings that are noted on the harasser's personal file
- Conciliation or mediation conducted by an impartial third party, where the parties to the complaint agree to a mutually acceptable resolution
- Reimbursing of any costs associated with the harassment and crediting of any leave taken as a result of the harassment

Examples: instances of harassment

Example 1: failure to support

A staff member sees a colleague, Zac, walking along the street holding hands with another man. The next day, he tells some of his colleagues at work that Zac is gay. The next week, someone in the workplace sticks a postcard of two men dressed in suspenders and stockings on Zac's computer monitor. Zac complains to his manager, who says she will take action if he can tell her who did this. As Zac does not know the culprit, the manager expresses sympathy but says she can't do anything.

Over the following weeks, an array of cards, notes and newspaper clippings alluding to his sexuality are stuck on Zac's monitor. Zac talks to his manager again but receives little support, so he raises the matter at a staff meeting. He tells his colleagues that his sexuality is his own business and that the behaviour of some people in this workplace is harassment, against the law and contrary to the policy of the organisation. The activity stops from that point onward, but Zac decides to look for another job.

Example 2: provision of support

Bert is a keen cricket fan and barracks for England. At work, Bert gets teased about his support for the English team. After a while, he asks his colleagues to 'knock it off', as he is sick of the comments. His colleagues ignore his request and he is subjected to a barrage of abusive and negative comments about the English cricket team.

He talks to his manager, who is at first dismissive of the issue until Bert appears to be close to tears. The manager then approaches the main staff members responsible for the comments and has an informal chat with them about harassment and how it is dealt with in the organisation. The comments stop and one of the group apologises to Bert. The two men have an interesting discussion about cricket and decide to go together to a forthcoming one-day game.

Practice task 10

Read the case study, then complete the tasks that follow.

Case study

A staff member makes a formal complaint to their manager about harassment by another staff member. They accuse a colleague of making derogatory comments about their culture, their accent and the difficulties they sometimes have with the English language. These comments and insults are increasing, although the harasser is careful not to do this when anyone else is nearby. The harasser can see how it is upsetting the person. The person accused of being the harasser challenges the truth of the complaint.

To complete these tasks, use the complaints management policy and procedures from your workplace or locate a sample that is available on the internet from a government department, university or private organisation.

1. Either role-play the situation with you as the manager and colleagues, fellow learners or friends as the person making the complaint and the accused harasser, or write down the process that you as the manager would follow to resolve the complaint in line with the organisation's complaints policy and procedure. If role-playing, use listening and questioning to elicit the views of others and to clarify or confirm understanding. Use language and nonverbal features appropriate to the situation.

2. What stages of the investigation need to be recorded?

3. What information is required as a minimum on an employee grievance or complaints form?

Summary

1. Managers must be fair, honest and unbiased in their dealings with staff and must demonstrate actions that are based on impartial, objective evidence and are free of prejudice.
2. A manager must address their own prejudices and demonstrate respect for differences in other people in all interactions in the workplace.
3. Follow diversity principles when recruiting and selecting staff. Ensure no bias or discrimination are evident in advertising, interviewing or the making of employment decisions.
4. Encourage staff to see the value and benefits of having a diverse staff, such as new ideas and innovations, learning about other cultures and using people's expertise in business operations.
5. When conflict occurs, managers need to encourage collaboration and respect between staff who are struggling with diversity, and to negotiate a solution to maintain team morale and keep differences from affecting staff performance.
6. Identify where people need additional training so they can effectively address issues of difference within a team. Training needs can be identified through observation, discussion, interview, performance appraisals and surveys, and review of complaints, incidents and issues.
7. Complaints of harassment in the workplace should be managed promptly and according to organisational policies and procedures. Harassment is illegal and may result in court action if it is serious, repeated or ignored after a complaint is made.

Learning checkpoint 2

Foster respect for diversity in the work team

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in fostering respect for diversity in the work team.

Part A

1. Using dot-points, list at least five responsibilities that may be included in a manager's role in fostering respect for diversity in the workplace.

2. Explain why it is important for a manager to address their own prejudices about people who are different to themselves. List three strategies they can follow to address any prejudices they have.

3. List at least five reasons that you can give to staff to explain the value of working effectively with differences.

4. If you are speaking to a staff member who has upset someone in their team by repeatedly teasing them about their accent, what are examples of questions that you can ask to learn what has occurred and then to clarify or confirm your understanding?

5. What is one example of legislation that prescribes that bullying incidents are to be recorded? What organisational reporting forms may be used to record details of incidents?

6. List some strategies for managing conflict in the workplace.

7. Complete this table to show why a team member may need additional training in diversity and how to address this training need.

Area	Reason for training	Strategies to address the training need
Diversity training		
Equal opportunity training		

Part B

Read the scenario, then complete the task that follows.

Case study

You work for a local government department that provides support for a range of community groups, including groups that support people from specific cultures, older people, people with disabilities and youth. You have been asked to recruit three staff for a new branch of your organisation.

The abilities to speak community languages and to work with people of diverse backgrounds are essential selection criteria for these positions.

The current staff profile of the council is not representative of the local community, which has a high percentage of people born overseas. Your task is to ensure there is greater diversity within the organisation by recruiting staff with diverse backgrounds.

As the first step, you are asked to write down the process you will use for recruitment and selection.

Prepare a one-page document (using dot-points) to outline the strategies you will use to manage the selection process.



Topic 3

Promote the benefits of diversity

Developing and implementing a diversity policy and complementary policies and procedures, and fostering respect for diversity and difference in the work team are essential to managing a diverse workforce effectively. This topic discusses the strategies that a manager can use to promote the organisation's diverse workforce, both within the organisation and to the wider community.

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 3A Promote the organisation's diversity
- 3B Capture ideas and information to enhance products and services through a diverse workforce
- 3C Support organisational efforts to value diversity

3A

Promote the organisation's diversity

An organisation that proudly promotes its policies for embracing a diverse workforce gains immeasurably in terms of customer and community support. Other benefits include an increased customer base, more efficient and productive ways of doing business, an enhanced image and reputation, a higher calibre of staff applying to join the organisation, and increased staff retention due to the organisation's preferred-employer status.

These benefits to the organisation flow on to individual staff. A strong organisation is more stable and less prone to upheaval in times of downturn.

Companies that are publicly recognised in best-employer awards generally allow employees a good work-life balance and flexible employment conditions. These arrangements are good ways of catering for a diverse workforce. A pleasant and harmonious working atmosphere is also regarded highly.

Whenever the opportunity arises, managers should help promote the organisation's workforce diversity in both internal and external forums, to enhance the organisation's image and reputation.

Enhance the company's image and reputation

Ongoing promotion of diversity within an organisation sends a strong message to staff that its commitment to diversity is real and diversity is valued across the organisation.

Staff induction sessions are a key opportunity to discuss the issue of diversity and promote the organisation's policy and its benefits.

This message can be repeated at regular intervals through staff meetings, refresher training, team meetings and performance appraisals. It should be reinforced by the board and CEO to make it clear that diversity is important at all levels of the organisation.

It is always a good idea to refer to diversity in informal situations, as well as formal ones, so that diversity is seen as part of day-to-day operations and the culture of the organisation, rather than as a separate issue.

When promoting diversity, seek as many examples as you can find that demonstrate the organisation's commitment. There are various ways that an organisation may experience benefits from catering for a diverse workforce.

A commitment to diversity can be seen in:

- flexible arrangements to support parents of school-age children
- the number of older workers employed
- new ideas put forth by people from other countries that have been implemented
- increased vibrancy due to the influence of other cultures
- a mix of genders
- a wider spread of languages spoken
- greater understanding of other people's points of view
- increased staff morale.

Acknowledge workplace diversity

Here are some suggestions of opportunities that may be used to enhance the organisation's image and reputation by acknowledging the workforce's diversity.

Staff meetings

Arrange for staff other than managers to chair staff meetings so a diverse range of staff are given a high profile within the organisation.

Newsletters and bulletins

Newsletters and bulletins are usually available to all staff and may also be available to customers. Newsletters can demonstrate the organisation's commitment to diversity by including an article on different learning styles, providing a staff profile to show the organisation's diversity or describing improvements to the office layout and workstations that provide better access for people with disabilities.

Staff updates

Staff updates can be used to celebrate achievements associated with diversity, such as an employee's return to work after maternity leave or a male staff member going part-time to be at home with young children.

Poster displays

Before posting on noticeboards, the organisation may translate posters providing safety, quality and other important information into relevant community languages or develop them so as to address different learning styles and abilities.

Induction materials

Induction materials can explain the diversity policy and associated procedures, and can include a component that provides training in cultural awareness.

Organisational website

The organisation's website or intranet may be used to showcase events within the organisation that promote diversity, such as a morning tea to celebrate a culturally important event.

External forums

External forums complement internal efforts and spread the company's reputation and image even further. Public exposure can be gained through a range of situations.

Here are some strategies for using public or external forums to showcase how an organisation embraces diversity.

Conferences and seminars

An organisation that gains a positive reputation for embracing diversity may receive invitations to speak about its policies and achievements at seminars and conferences. This may further enhance its reputation.

Professional networks

Professional networks are used by individuals for professional development. In some industries, they are a way to maintain registration or certification for professional bodies. This may include providing professional development to showcase your organisation's policies and practices around diversity. In turn, the organisation may attract highly respected and skilled staff based on information they discover through networking.

Press releases/print media

Press releases are a way of gaining the attention of the media, particularly if an important event is scheduled or an announcement is being made; for example, announcing new flexible arrangements to support the employment of mature age workers in your organisation.

Trade journals and publications

Trade journals are a way of taking positive information about an organisation into competing businesses. In this way, when advertising for new staff, experienced operators in rival businesses may be attracted to your business based on how you support and promote diversity. Promote your organisation's commitment to diversity by showing a range of workers in different roles.

Awards

The organisation can assess itself against other organisations and, in the process, compete for awards given by a variety of agencies to reward commitment to diversity.

Example: spread the word about an organisation's diversity practices

Kim works as the community relations manager for an organisation that has been awarded the title of 'Most inclusive aged care provider'. The business is expanding based on its enhanced reputation. Kim has been asked by the CEO to speak at a forthcoming conference for aged care providers.

After talking to the CEO and the managers in the aged care centres run by the organisation, Kim prepares a presentation for the conference. She plans the content of her electronic presentation as follows:

- Overview of the organisation, including geographical spread of centres
- Mission statement of organisation
- Diversity policy
- How diversity policy is implemented in:
 - recruitment of staff
 - customer service and how staff interact with residents, visitors, other staff
 - activities run in centres
 - other services, including interpreters used with healthcare professionals' consultations
 - types of food provided, including input from residents
 - design of centres to include promenade areas, communal squares and cafes
- Involving residents in the running of the centres
- Plans for the future



Her presentation is well received and Kim runs out of time to respond to all the questions. She spends the break talking further about her organisation's commitment to diversity and how this is implemented across all its aged care centres.

Practice task 11

1. Why is it important to promote an organisation's workforce diversity?

2. Investigate new and innovative ideas for promoting diversity in an organisation. Describe one that you would consider using in your organisation (or one you are familiar with).

3. Draft a paragraph suitable to include in the newsletter of your organisation (or one you are familiar with) that promotes some part of diversity in the organisation; for example, the introduction of flexible working hours or the announcement that information about the organisation will now be translated into Vietnamese to cater for the increasing number of people of Vietnamese background within the staff and the community.

3B

Capture ideas and information to enhance products and services through a diverse workforce

Organisations continually look for ways to enhance products and seek competitive advantage. One source of competitive advantage is the diversity of their workforce.

Making use of this diversity involves planned efforts to use the skills, ideas and abilities of an organisation's employees to enhance its products and services, and to achieve better organisational and business outcomes.

A diverse staff provides more diverse ideas, suggestions and information. These ideas may come from a range of people.

Ideas can come from a variety of people, including:

- staff who have overseas business experience and contacts, and who speak different languages and understand different cultures and traditions
- women and men who have experienced discrimination because of age or gender
- people with disabilities
- people who think differently.

Benefits of adopting ideas

Contributions made by staff may have a positive effect on productivity, the types of products being developed and customer service, all of which adds to the organisation's reputation and advantage over its competitors.

Here are examples of ideas that can assist an organisation in catering for diversity.

Ideas to cater for diversity

Employ more staff who can speak the languages of the local community, to increase the customer base, meet changing needs and improve customer relations.

Suggest ways to access new markets and expand international links, such as having a liaison officer who speaks a specific language or using a staff member's contacts with overseas markets.

Use strategies that have been used successfully overseas.

Ensure either men or women are available to work with clients who have cultural restrictions on interacting with someone of the opposite sex.

Have regular brainstorming sessions to generate innovative ideas, to improve competitiveness within the organisation's market.

Improve the layout of the business, to assist staff and customers with disabilities.

Actively promote the diversity of the organisation's staff in the industry, as a strategy to attract new customers and contribute to competitive advantage.

Suggest that the organisation investigates having an onsite crèche if there are many single parents on staff.

Strategies for capturing suggestions

Information and ideas may come from many places. As a manager, you should be alert to ways that you can capture the ideas and information raised by staff. Record the results of all sessions and any actions to be taken.

Here are some examples of ways you can source ideas and information.

Sources of ideas and information

- Discussion forums where new ideas for products and improvements to customer service are put forward and debated
- SWOT analysis sessions to identify where there are opportunities to increase the organisation's competitive advantage and its strengths and weaknesses
- Discussions at inductions
- Team meetings
- Review of incidents to learn from mistakes
- Visits to other organisations to share ideas on embracing diversity in running and managing the organisation
- Guest speakers who present ideas on how organisations can become better at managing diversity
- Conferences and in-service sessions focused on diversity issues

Practice task 12

1. Explain how your organisation (or one you are familiar with) captures ideas and suggestions from its diverse workforce to enhance its products and services, and improve its competitive advantage.

2. Provide at least three suggestions from staff members in your organisation that have enhanced products and services or increased its competitive advantage. If you are not currently working for an organisation, interview staff from an organisation you are familiar with. Use listening and questioning to elicit views and clarify or confirm understanding.

3C

Support organisational efforts to value diversity

As a manager, you are a role model for implementing, supporting and promoting diversity in the workplace. It is your responsibility to cooperate, assist and encourage others to comply with the organisation's diversity policy and procedures, and to show that you value diversity and its benefits.

Your words and actions need to match. Think about your behaviours.

'Walk the talk' checklist. Do you:

- interact with all staff?
- respect people's differences?
- listen to other people's points of view?
- learn about the backgrounds, beliefs and cultures of staff to improve your relations with them?
- take action to manage tensions and to deal with complaints of harassment or discrimination?

A manager's role in supporting organisational efforts to value diversity

Take every opportunity to support the strategies that the organisation has in place.

Here are examples of ways that an organisation can demonstrate it values diversity and how a manager can support these organisational efforts.

Newsletter and celebrations

- Use the newsletter to promote the diversity of staff and celebrate important cultural events.
- Offer help to organise, attend and participate in a range of cultural activities.
- Write articles for the newsletter about cultural activities and profile staff from diverse backgrounds.

Induction and mentoring

- Include diversity in the induction program and set up a mentorship program for new staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Offer to conduct this part of the induction training.
- Contribute to writing this part of the induction training kit.
- Become a mentor to a new staff member.
- Support the mentors in the program.
- Assist in training mentors.

Profile organisation

- Research statistics, census figures, and industry and community benchmarks for diverse workforces.
- Compare the organisation with the information obtained.

Promote organisation efforts

- Promote efforts in media and at conferences.
- Research suitable trade journals, magazines and other publications and suggest writing an article for them.
- Draft articles for publication.

Diversity contact officer

- Implement a diversity contact officer program.
- Research how this type of program works and prepare a business case for establishing one at your organisation.
- Train a volunteer as a diversity contact officer or offer support to contact officers in their role.
- Support a staff from your department to volunteer as a diversity contact officer.

Award program

- Apply for awards for excellence in diversity.
- Research awards and volunteer for a committee to apply for awards.

Recruitment and selection

- Apply diversity to recruitment and selection.
- Contribute to drafting new procedures for training material.
- Offer to sit in on interview panels as an impartial person from another area of the business.

Develop products

- Develop new services or products by capturing ideas and information from the diversity in the workplace.
- Contribute to organising a consultative approach.
- Research other organisations that have been successful in this area and publicise the results.

Example: establish a network of diversity contact officers

Joe is a member of the HR team in a national manufacturing company. He is aware that in the last three years, there have been a number of complaints about harassment, bullying and discrimination in the workplace. Staff have been dismissed as a result of their actions, and time, energy and money have been spent on managing these situations.

Joe remembers that, in his previous workplace, diversity contact officers raised the diversity profile, acted as a sounding board for staff and promoted compliance with the organisation's diversity policy. He decides to prepare a proposal for diversity contact officers to be appointed in his organisation. His manager says she will take the proposal to the senior management team.

The completed plan includes:

- the numbers and locations of diversity contact officers
- a role statement for the contact officers and explanatory material designed to help local managers recruit volunteers to be trained as contact officers
- the type of training needed, where it can be accessed and its cost
- Joe's role in supporting the implementation and ongoing maintenance of the program
- an implementation program.

The plan is approved. Joe and his manager discuss how the plan will be announced, including press coverage in a trade journal and an HR magazine.



Practice task 13

Select one of the strategies an organisation can use to show it values diversity. List in dot-points the actions you would take to support this strategy.

Summary

1. Whenever the opportunity arises, managers should help promote the organisation's workforce diversity in both internal and external forums, to enhance the organisation's image and reputation.
2. Internal forums for promoting an organisation's workforce diversity include staff meetings, management meetings, newsletters, bulletins, poster displays, induction material, the intranet and the website.
3. External forums for promotion include conferences and seminars, professional networks, press releases, trade journals and awards.
4. An organisation should plan how to capture and use its employees' skills, ideas and abilities, to enhance its products and services, and to add to the organisation's reputation and advantage over its competitors.
5. Staff who have different backgrounds, such as overseas business experience or experience with discrimination, may have ideas, suggestions and information that the organisation can use to improve its practices.
6. Ideas and information may be captured at discussion forums, SWOT analysis sessions, inductions and team meetings.
7. Managers have a responsibility to implement, support and promote organisational efforts to value diversity in the workplace.

Learning checkpoint 3

Promote the benefits of diversity

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge in promoting the benefits of diversity.

Part A

1. What benefits could an organisation receive from promoting the diversity of its workforce?

2. Select one internal forum for promoting workforce diversity and explain the ways that this strategy enhances the organisation's image and reputation.

3. An organisation may have a diverse workforce, but not take advantage of its diversity to enhance its products and services, and increase its competitive advantage. Complete the following table:

In the first column, list three ways that an organisation could capture ideas from its staff. In the second column, list the information it may receive from different groups, such as women, older staff, those from another country. An example has been provided.

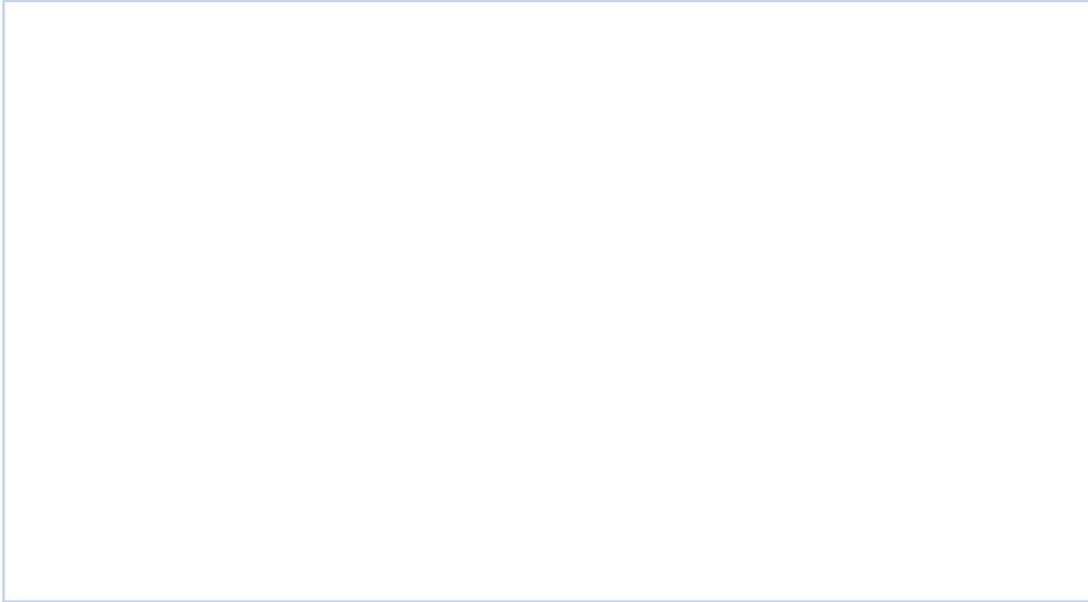
Strategies for capturing ideas	Ideas and information generated
At an induction session	A new staff member who speaks Cantonese volunteers to translate information about products and services on the organisation's website into Cantonese. This is intended to help customers in the local community and promote the organisation to Chinese markets.

Part B

Use the organisation you work for, or research an organisation, to complete the following tasks.

- Plan a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation that promotes the organisation's workforce diversity. Indicate what information would go on each slide. The presentation should include:
 - a description or profile of the organisation's diverse workforce
 - strategies and forums the organisation uses to promote diversity
 - benefits the organisation has gained from its diverse workforce
 - methods the organisation uses to capture ideas from staff
 - recent ideas staff members have suggested that stem from their experiences and backgrounds (include the images and other material to support the presentation).

2. Draft an article for your organisation's website that promotes the organisation's workforce diversity.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin blue border, intended for the student to draft an article promoting workforce diversity.