



4.07

MERCY EDUCATION POLICY 4.07 GENDER EQUITY IN MERCY EDUCATION WORKPLACES

Introduction:

Mercy Education Ltd (Mercy Education) is committed to justice and respect which necessitates that women and men are treated with equity in all aspects of its operations. The approach taken by Mercy Education as an employer to gender equity across the employment lifecycle is based on the theology of creation which states that men and women were created equal, the practice of Jesus who opposed the power structures of his time and Church teaching exemplified in the Second Vatican Council document, *The Church in the Modern World*, which exhorts us to eradicate discrimination based on human attributes including sex.

Purpose:

To clearly outline the intent of Mercy Education to ensure that men and women are treated with gender equity across the employment lifecycle to support and improve gender equality outcomes throughout the organisation and its schools.

Definitions:

Gender equity: means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender equality: means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men must become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Workplace diversity: means that the workplace includes individuals of varying characteristics including gender, age, religion, race, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation, languages, education, abilities, etc.

Employee: means an employee of Mercy Education and its schools and includes teaching and non-teaching staff, contractors and volunteers.

Policy Coverage:

This policy applies to all Board members, employees, contractors and volunteers of Mercy Education and its schools.

Policy Statement:

- 01 Mercy Education is committed to a gender diverse Board of Directors and workforce within the organisation and in its schools. Mercy Education acknowledges equitable employment and participation of women and men which is not only just, but of benefit to the organisation as a source of vitality, creativity and growth
- 02 Mercy Education will engage fairly and equitably with all its employees and other stakeholders, whether male or female, in a positive, respectful and constructive manner. Mercy Education wishes to provide equitable opportunities, rights and benefits to all women and men within the organisation and ensure that all employees can realise their potential. Mercy Education will assist its schools, which are responsible for the management of their staff and accountable for gender equity and equality in their workforce, to do the same
- 03 Mercy Education requires that all Board Directors and employees are respected for their unique attributes and not excluded, harassed or bullied through unconscious bias, stereotypes or unlawful actions that may form the basis of discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation
- 04 Mercy Education acknowledges that while discrimination against a person based on gender is unlawful there are many systemic, often unintended and largely invisible effects which continue to impact on the participation and progression of women and men equally within Australian society
- 05 This policy is designed to assist Mercy Education to:
 - provide both women and men access to equal opportunities and outcomes, including equal remuneration, benefits and rewards for work of equal or comparable value
 - remove any barriers to the full and equal participation of women and men in the Mercy Education workforce
 - provide full and genuine access to all occupations within Mercy Education, including to leadership roles, for women and men
 - provide full and equal access to training, professional learning and enrichment opportunities for men and women according to their role
 - provide gender equality principles to health and safety and other employee support processes
 - drive a culture where rewards are directly linked to employee contributions and performance
 - eliminate discrimination based on gender particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities for both women and men
- 06 Mercy Education is committed to promoting a culture that embraces gender equity and equality at all stages of the employment cycle including recruitment, advertising, selection, interview, appraisal processes and exit interviews. Appointments will be made on merit and on the requirements of the role. Mercy Education will review the employment cycle on a regular basis to eliminate potential sources of bias

- 07 A range of leadership styles are recognised and fostered within Mercy Education. Potential leaders of both genders are identified and nurtured and performance standards and feedback processes are designed to be equitable and transparent
- 08 Promotional opportunities are widely advertised and accessed by all employees in the organisation and support is provided to assist with transition to new roles. Succession planning is aligned with gender equity and equality considerations and strategies
- 09 Mercy Education is committed to provision of support for employees with family and caring responsibilities, including while employees are on parental leave
- 10 Mercy Education is mindful of the need to consider flexible working arrangements where practicable for all employees in alignment with the applicable enterprise bargaining agreement
- 11 Mercy Education is committed to employee engagement and retention and has strategies in place to support the development, health and safety of the workforce which are consistent with the principles of gender equity and equality
- 12 Mercy Education is sensitive to the psychological health and well-being of all women and men in their employ
- 13 Mercy Education will educate all employees that any form of sexual harassment will not be tolerated and will respond swiftly to any complaints
- 14 Mercy Education seeks to ensure that its publications and official documents, and those of its schools, use inclusive and non-discriminatory language and imagery
- 15 Schools governed by Mercy Education may choose to establish specific local protocols that are compatible with this policy and may choose to form a gender diversity review committee
- 16 Mercy Education schools will be particularly mindful of their obligations to provide role models of gender equity and equality practices to students
- 17 Mercy Education, as an organisation, is accountable for implementing this policy and has a documented complaints management process which provides an avenue for addressing perceived or discovered examples of gender inequity or inequality

Related Documents:

Australian Government

- *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*
- *Gender Equality Strategy Guide (October 2019)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

Australian Human Rights Commission

- *Gender Equality: <https://humanrights.gov.au/quick-guide/12038>*

Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV)

- *Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2022 (CEMEA)*

Catholic Education South Australia (CESA)

- *South Australian Catholic Schools Enterprise Agreement 2020*

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA)

- *WA Catholic School Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2022*
- *WA Non-Teaching Staff Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2014*

Mercy Education Limited (MEL)

- *1.06 Policy: Complaints Management*
- *1.06 Operational Instructions: Complaints Management*

Church Documents

- *GAUDIUM ET SPES: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, DECEMBER 7, 1965, Paul VI. (1965)*

Review History

Version	Date Released	Next Review	Author	Authorised by:
1.0	October 2016	2020	Risk and Compliance Leader	MEL Board
2.0	June 2020	2023	Head of People and Culture	MEL Board
2.1	Sep 2023	Jul 2026	Head of People and Culture	MEL Board