

TL012 Learner Code of Conduct

TAFE Gippsland is committed to providing learners with a safe and supportive place to learn.

Every learner has the right to take part in TAFE Gippsland programs, free of inappropriate behaviour that may disrupt the learning processes, or social wellbeing of others.

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

This Learner Code of Conduct applies to all learners enrolled at TAFE Gippsland.

All learners are expected to follow the Learner Code of Conduct at all times.

All learners have the right to:

- expect the best quality education TAFE Gippsland can provide
- be provided with current and clear guidelines regarding course content, time demands and assessment details
- expect impartial, constructive and prompt assessment of work
- information on assessment criteria and expected standards
- access to required facilities and resources to complete the course
- be treated in a non-discriminatory and respectful manner by both staff and fellow learners
- expect that scheduled classes will take place, or to be told of alternative arrangements
- have access to staff for help with their studies

On a day-to-day basis you are asked to:

- look after TAFE Gippsland property and let your educator know if any items that are not in working order promptly
- abide by the dress code
- respect the environment: reuse and recycle where possible and use litter bins
- reimburse TAFE Gippsland or others for damage to property or facilities
- drive safely on TAFE Gippsland property and park legally and in designated areas for learner parking
- return any property belonging to TAFE Gippsland when requested by a staff member and return or renew library and / or resources by the due date

Learner Expectations

Attendance and Punctuality

- Be on time for your classes, return from breaks at the agreed times and notify the educator beforehand if you need to leave the class early.

- Let your educator know if you cannot attend and other learners with whom you are undertaking group activities and assessments.
- Bring a signed and dated note from your parent or guardian if you need to leave class early for an appointment
- Follow-up an absence from class by either speaking with the educator or getting the necessary notes from another student.
- Talk to your educator if you are concerned you are not meeting the attendance and participation requirements.

Respectful Communication

- Address other students and the educator in a courteous and civil manner at all times. This means one person speaking at a time and everyone having the right to speak.
- It's okay to disagree with an idea but disagree with the idea, not the person.
- Be aware that the group is made up of many different cultures, ages and backgrounds - be sensitive and tolerant to differences.
- Don't swear, tell inappropriate jokes, and use 'put downs'.
- Respect the confidentiality of what people talk about in class and don't repeat it to others outside of class.

Effective Participation

- Make it your business to understand all the course requirements
- Make the best possible use of the opportunities and facilities that TAFE Gippsland offer
- Participate actively in learning activities and support and encourage the participation of others.
- Come to class with the necessary materials, including in full PPE or uniform where required
- Pay attention in class. Not paying attention is not a reason for asking for additional attention from the educator or other students.
- Follow instructions from the educator while on TAFE Gippsland campuses or engaged in TAFE Gippsland activities online or off campus
- Give positive and constructive feedback
- Submit work, which is genuinely your own work and on time. Plagiarism (passing off someone else's work as your own) will not be tolerated

Behaviours leading to disciplinary actions

The Learner Discipline Guidelines will apply to breaches of the Learner Code of Conduct.

In cases of serious misconduct a learner may be suspended or expelled from TAFE Gippsland. When necessary the matter will be referred to the Police or other appropriate authority.

The following conduct will not be tolerated and will be addressed through disciplinary processes:

- Behaviour that impacts negatively or disrupts the learning of others
- Behaviour that does not respect the rights, health, safety, privacy and welfare of TAFE Gippsland staff and learners
- Behaviour that brings TAFE Gippsland into disrepute
- Swearing or use of foul language
- Acting in a way that threatens the safety of others
- Behaviour that causes another student or staff to feel threatened
- Unwelcome attention towards another learner
- Assault (physical, verbal or via text)
- Behaviour that causes psychological distress to another person
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Acts of forgery
- Wilfully damaging others' property
- Stealing others' property
- Plagiarism, including information from the internet
- Passing on private information
- Bringing, keeping or consuming alcohol or other drugs or narcotics on TAFE Gippsland grounds – or being affected by these when on TAFE Gippsland Campuses or in program activities.
- Smoking anywhere on TAFE Gippsland property, within 5 metres of a TAFE Gippsland campus boundary or during any approved learning activity
- Failing to wear appropriate clothing and footwear and comply with the workplace health and safety requirements specific to your area of vocational study area – including wearing all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Wearing headphones or using mobile phones and other electrical devices in classrooms without the approval from your educator.
- Inappropriately using the internet services provided for educational purposes

What is Bullying?

Bullying happens when a person repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards a person or group of people and causes a risk to health and safety. This behaviour doesn't have to be related to the person or group's characteristics and adverse action doesn't have to have happened.

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, would be considered bullying:

- Verbal abuse by staff or learners, including ridicule, humiliation and so on
- Excluding or isolating learners in the classroom
- Psychological harassment by learners or staff

- Cyber harassment including verbal, written or posted images via online forums and social media sites
- Deliberately ignoring another learner

Victoria's anti-bullying legislation, known as Brodie's Law, commenced in June 2011 and made serious bullying a crime punishable by up to 10 years in jail. Brodie's Law makes serious bullying a criminal offence by extending the application of the stalking provisions in the Crimes Act 1958 to include behaviour that involves serious bullying.¹

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination happens when there is 'adverse action', such as demoting someone because of a person's characteristics.

Under federal and state legislation, unlawful discrimination occurs when someone, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin; sex, pregnancy or marital status; age; disability; religion; sexual preference; trade union activity; or some other characteristic specified under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation.

What isn't discrimination?

Adverse action isn't always discrimination, even though it might seem to be. There can be lawful reasons that have nothing to do with someone's personal characteristics.

It's not discrimination if the actions:

- are allowed under state or federal anti-discrimination laws; or
- do not relate to one of the protected attributes² under law.

What is Harassment?

Under federal and state legislation, unlawful harassment occurs when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin; sex; disability; sexual preference; or some other characteristic specified under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation. It can also happen if someone is studying in a 'hostile' – or intimidating – environment.

Harassment can include behaviour such as:

- telling insulting jokes about particular racial groups
- sending explicit or sexually suggestive emails
- displaying offensive or pornographic posters or screensavers
- making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's race or religion
- asking intrusive questions about someone's personal life, including their sex life

¹ <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/crime+prevention/bullying+--+brodies+law>

² Protected attributes include: race, colour, sex, sexual preference, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family or carer's responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin. <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/protections-at-work/protection-from-discrimination-at-work>

Sexual harassment is unlawful behaviour under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995. A criminal offence of a sexual nature can include inappropriate touching and inappropriate verbal comments concerning people in the workplace and members of the public. Sexual harassment involving physical or indecent assault, stalking, making nuisance phone calls or the sending of obscene material using mail, email or the internet, may be an offence under criminal law.

Document Version Control Table

Item	Summary of Update	Version Control	Revised Date
1	Document Developed	V1.0	24/11/2016
2	Document updated	V1.1	23/11/2017
3	Rebranded from Federation Training to TAFE Gippsland	V2.0	12/06/2019
4	Renamed and renumbered from TL 014 Student Code of Behaviour Policy and content updated	V3.0	07/09/2021
5	Plagiarism further explained and acts of forgery added to behaviours leading to disciplinary actions	V3.1	10/08/2021