

# Inclusion & Diversity Strategy

**2019 - 2021**



# INCLUSION & DIVERSITY



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**from the CEO**

I am pleased to endorse The Gordon's Inclusion and Diversity Strategy. Our commitment to action, outlined in the strategy and plans, will enable us to promote the value that an inclusive and diverse workforce brings to The Gordon and our wider community.

To achieve our vision of 'first choice for skills | learning, inspiring, transforming' we require a workforce that reflects our community; a workplace which is inclusive and empowers everyone to contribute their best. Diversity in our workforce is not just a 'nice to have', it's a business imperative and it's everyone's responsibility.

Our history, location and service delivery focus provides an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the diversity of the Vocational Education and Training workforce and to social inclusion outcomes for the wider Victorian community. The strategy and associated actions underpin the commitment to this responsibility. It also outlines our commitment to providing a positive and safe workplace where inclusion is a priority and a right.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the work of the Inclusion and Diversity Advisory Committee and encourage staff to contact members with ideas to ensure The Gordon continues to develop its support for this important agenda in line with best practice and developing ethos.

Thank you for your contribution to ensuring the Institute is a great place to work and study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ormeno'.

*Joe Ormeno*  
Acting CEO

Definitions



# INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

## Inclusion

An inclusive culture is one where everyone feels valued and respected and is able to fully contribute. It is about removing barriers to make sure everyone can fully participate in the workplace and have equal access to opportunities. Inclusion is about empowering people to contribute their skills and perspectives for the benefit of organisational performance and business outcomes.

## Diversity

Diversity is about our individual differences and acknowledging the unique blend of knowledge, skills and perspectives people bring to the workplace. Diversity can include characteristics such as cultural background and ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, language and education. Diversity also includes characteristics such as professional skills, working style, location, and life experiences.

## Carers

Carers have responsibility for the care of a child of school age or younger, or provide personal care, support and assistance to someone in need of support due to disability, medical condition, terminal illness, mental illness or is frail and aged.

## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

CALD refers to those parts of our identity which stem from where our parents were born and the languages they speak, where we were born and the languages we speak, our ancestries and our religious identity. For data purposes the definition is usually people whose first spoken language was not English.

## Disability

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible.

The Gordon uses the definition of disability as defined by section 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 for the purposes of its disability employment policies, programs and processes. The definition of disability includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological, and
- Learning disabilities, as well as
- Physical disfigurement, and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

A person has a disability if they report that they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities.

## Gender Equality

Gender Equality refers to creating workplaces where everyone is afforded equal opportunities and employment conditions irrespective of their gender.

## LGBTQIA

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex and Asexual, (LGBTQIA) includes people who are same sex attracted, attracted to both men and women, identify as a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth and those who have biological characteristics that are not typically male or female.

## Mature Age

Whilst being of mature age is not defined to a specific age bracket, for data collection purposes the definition of mature age refers to people aged 50 or over. To acknowledge the lifespan disparity of Indigenous Australians compared to non-Indigenous Australians our mature age employee initiatives will also support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are aged 40 or over.

## Strategic alignment

Key to The Gordon achieving its vision to be 'first choice for skills | learning, inspiring, transforming' is its diverse workforce and student community. It is through our staff that we will have the necessary knowledge, experience and capability to design and deliver high quality Vocational Education and Training outcomes that best meet the needs of students, employers and our community. The Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2019-2021 provides a roadmap to foster inclusion and diversity in our workforce, helping us make positive contributions to social inclusion and workforce participation.

## Inclusion and diversity vision

The Gordon is committed to reflecting our diverse community across the workforce and to creating an inclusive work environment. The Institute also recognises that valuing the individual skills, perspectives and experiences staff and students bring to the workplace contributes to a high performing organisation and improved service delivery.

The Gordon aims to ensure staff and students feel included, valued and respected and have access to equal opportunity, which supports full participation at work and in the broader community. We want to retain the diverse talent in our workforce and support staff to maintain a long and productive working career.

## Why inclusion and diversity matters

When we value workplace inclusion and diversity we see benefits such as higher employee engagement, improved performance, greater innovation, retention of talent, improved employee wellbeing and lower levels of unlawful behaviour such as harassment and discrimination. Diversity is central to innovation. It helps to harness the benefits of technology and improve the efficiency and quality of our services. Inclusion is the key to unlocking this potential.

## Guiding principles

Drawing on the experience of other public sector organisations who have been recognised for developing inclusive and diverse cultures, The Gordon will adopt similar guiding principles that will be key to achieving our inclusion and diversity vision.

- Recruit: our workforce reflects the diversity of our community
- Include: our culture fosters access and inclusion
- Develop: we provide opportunity for growth
- Lead: we are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.

These critical success factors provide areas of focus that underpin our diversity and inclusion strategy.

## Action Pillars

To progress our commitment, a range of actions have been identified to build an inclusive workplace culture, retain our diverse workforce for the benefit of performance and productivity and support individuals to have long and productive working careers. These actions support the 9 pillars of inclusion and diversity identified as central to our goal:

1. Work/Life Flexibility
2. Cultural Diversity
3. Multi-Faith
4. Disability
5. Generation/Mature Age
6. Indigenous
7. Identity
8. Social Deprivation
9. Gender.

It is also recognised that individuals at The Gordon may identify across a number of diversity groups.

## Monitoring progress

The Inclusion and Diversity Advisory Committee (IDAC) will monitor progress against our action plans and provide a progress report to the CEO by December each year. We will regularly measure and monitor the diversity of our workforce, evaluate trends and identify areas for improvement.





The logo used to identify The Gordon's commitment to inclusion and diversity is the result of a competition run for our Graphic Design students in 2018. The winning design was selected by popular vote from both our students and staff. Nay Bu's design rationale for the logo explains that the flower is widely known as a special symbol, used to represent a range of life events and celebrations of love, and is not exclusive to any group or demographic. The symbols used are detailed below:

### BOOMERANG



To represent and acknowledge and pay tribute to the Indigenous.

### ALL OF US IN THE GORDON



These small dots in a circle are the people within The Gordon represented in different colours to reflect different kinds of people.

### THE GORDON



This is The Gordon, by using the main colour blue.

### FLOWER PETAL



The flower petals represent the vibrant Gordon community.

The strategy will help The Gordon to provide a positive and safe environment for both staff and students, where inclusion is a priority. An inclusive culture is one where everyone feels valued and respected, and is able to fully contribute.

The strategy focuses on acknowledging and recognising the value of individual differences and diversity based on the unique blend of knowledge, skills and perspectives people bring to the workplace. These include: cultural background and ethnicity; age; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical abilities; religious beliefs; language; education; and social economic status.



**Work/Life  
Flexibility**

**Our aim**

We aim to increase the range of support available at The Gordon to ensure individuals have balanced and productive careers. We are committed to providing workplace flexibility arrangements that support staff to balance family and caring responsibilities and work participation.



**Cultural  
Diversity**

**Our aim**

We aim to increase the representation of staff and students from CALD backgrounds at our Institute. We aim to value and embrace their skills, perspectives and experiences for the benefit of providing culturally appropriate and improved services to our students and our communities.



**Multi-faith**

**Our aim**

We aim to provide a safe and secure workplace and learning environment regardless of faith or beliefs. We aim to increase the representation in our workforce, including in senior leadership positions.



**Disability**

**Our aim**

We aim to increase the representation of people with disability in our workforce and to improve their capability and career development opportunities. We are a disability confident employer and work to create an environment of trust where staff and students with disability feel comfortable to share their information with us.



**Generation/  
Mature Age**

**Our aim**

Our aim is to harness the expertise and experience this talent source brings to our performance and productivity. We aim to retain our mature age employees and recognise the wealth of corporate knowledge they bring to the workplace, and the important role they play in passing on this knowledge to support improved performance and succession planning.



**Indigenous**

**Our aim**

Our aim is to provide an environment where staff and students feel supported, including using our Wurreker Plan as a guide. This plan seeks to improve the employment outcomes and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across our community.



**Identity**

**Our aim**

We aim to create a workplace which is fair, safe and inclusive of all people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. We aim to foster a workplace environment and culture where all employees can feel free to be themselves without the need to guard or self-edit their conversations, and without fear of bias, labels or negative behaviour.



**Social  
Deprivation**

**Our aim**

To ensure that study and employment at The Gordon is open to all members of our community as appropriate.



**Gender**

**Our aim**

We aim to create a workplace which provides equal opportunity and advancement in employment regardless of gender and where gender balance supports improved business decision-making, merit and performance.

## Action Pillar 1



### Our aim

We aim to increase the range of support available at The Gordon to ensure individuals have balanced and productive careers. We are committed to providing workplace flexibility arrangements that support staff to balance family and caring responsibilities and work participation.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
<b>RECRUIT</b>	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
<b>INCLUDE</b>	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will promote a flexible workplace environment to support work-life balance for parents and carers and which promotes the role men play, including male leaders and managers, in supporting employees to have an active career along-side an active parent role.	<b>Dec 2019</b>
<b>DEVELOP</b>	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will develop a range of materials to support Carers to undertake responsibilities.	<b>March 2020</b>
		We will implement training to build manager capability in effectively supporting employees before, during and after return from parental leave, and to manage a flexible workplace which benefits both the employee and business outcomes.	<b>June 2020</b>
<b>LEAD</b>	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will provide training for our leadership team to ensure they are able to support a balanced approach to work.	<b>Continuing</b>

## Action Pillar 2



### Our aim

We aim to increase the representation of staff and students from CALD backgrounds at our Institute. We aim to value and embrace their skills, perspectives and experiences for the benefit of providing culturally appropriate and improved services to our students and our communities.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will celebrate cultural days of significance such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week.	<b>Annually</b>
		We will provide multicultural awareness training for our staff.	<b>Continuing</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will ensure our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are culturally competent.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will provide multicultural awareness training for our leadership team.	<b>Continuing</b>

## Action Pillar 3



### Our aim

We aim to provide a safe and secure workplace and learning environment regardless of faith or beliefs. We aim to increase the representation in our workforce, including in senior leadership positions.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
<b>RECRUIT</b>	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
<b>INCLUDE</b>	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will celebrate cultural days of significance such as Harmony Day and Refugee Week.	<b>Annually</b>
<b>DEVELOP</b>	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will ensure our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are culturally competent.	<b>Continuing</b>
<b>LEAD</b>	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will provide multicultural awareness training for our leadership team.	<b>Continuing</b>

## Action Pillar 4



### Our aim

We aim to increase the representation of people with disability in our workforce and to improve their capability and career development opportunities. We are a disability confident employer and work to create an environment of trust where staff and students with disability feel comfortable to share their information with us.

We are committed to eliminating or reducing barriers which prevent full participation at work or with studies and to provide a universally accessible environment which supports those with disability to fully contribute.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will ensure recruitment systems and processes are accessible and inclusive for people with disability.	<b>Continuing</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will implement a Workplace Adjustment policy and guidelines which makes it easier to request, access and implement workplace adjustments and assists employees with disability to perform at their best.	<b>June 2020</b>
		We will celebrate events of significance such as International Day of People with Disability, R U OK? Day and World Mental Health Day.	<b>Annually</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will ensure our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are culturally competent.	<b>Dec 2019</b>
		We will increase awareness of mental health and the attendance at mental health learning solutions, particularly by managers.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will build on our existing workplace accessibility programs to maximise digital technology improvements and provide innovative accessibility solutions for employees with disability.	<b>Continuing</b>
		We will review our procurement policies and practices to ensure accessibility is considered in service, system and property related procurement activities.	<b>March 2020</b>

## Action Pillar 5



### Our aim

Our aim is to harness the expertise and experience this talent source brings to our performance and productivity. We aim to retain our mature age employees and recognise the wealth of corporate knowledge they bring to the workplace, and the important role they play in passing on this knowledge to support improved performance and succession planning.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will develop procedures and guidance which support employees seeking to change their employment status as a transition to retirement arrangement.	<b>June 2020</b>
		We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will ensure workplace adjustments, assistive technology and health case management are extended to mature age staff to minimise workplace barriers caused by acquired disability or chronic health conditions.	<b>Continuing</b>
		We will provide staff with access to information and resources on how extended working may affect their superannuation.	<b>Continuing</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will develop an extended work-life framework which supports the career development and extended working-life of mature age employees, including life planning and transition to retirement support.	<b>Dec 2020</b>
		We will continue to provide learning and development methods which support all learning styles, and provide mature age workers with support to adapt to new technology.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will explore implementation of an alumni program to support mature age employees to return to work following retirement on short-term flexible arrangements which benefit business outcomes and productivity.	<b>July 2020</b>



## Action Pillar 6



### Our aim

Our aim is to provide an environment where staff and students feel supported, including using our Wurreker Plan as a guide.

This plan seeks to improve the employment outcomes and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across our community.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will develop procedures and guidance which support Indigenous applicants, including the development and implementation of an Employment Strategy.	<b>March 2020</b>
		We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>Dec 2019</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan.	<b>Annually</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will provide mentoring and coaching opportunities to support Indigenous staff in their careers.	<b>Annually</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will provide multicultural awareness training for our leadership team.	<b>Continuing</b>

## Action Pillar 7



### Our aim

We aim to create a workplace which is fair, safe and inclusive of all people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status. We aim to foster a workplace environment and culture where all employees can feel free to be themselves without the need to guard or self-edit their conversations, and without fear of bias, labels or negative behaviour.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices to ensure they are inclusive of LGBTQIA staff and students and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will review our people policies and resources to ensure they reflect the requirements of the Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender (Gender Guidelines).	<b>March 2020</b>
		We will develop guidance to support gender transition and gender affirmation in the workplace.	<b>March 2020</b>
		We will promote days of significance such as International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOTB), Wear it Purple Day and Intersex Awareness Day.	<b>Annually</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will ensure our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) providers are LGBTQIA inclusive and able to support LGBTQIA employees.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will promote training which supports implementation of the Gender Guidelines.	<b>Dec 2020</b>

## Action Pillar 8



### Our aim

To ensure that study and employment at The Gordon is open to all members of our community as appropriate.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will review our people policies, guidelines and procedures to ensure a flexible workplace which supports operational requirements and considers the individual needs of employees.	<b>June 2020</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will work to identify potential employment opportunities to support our community in its aspiration to address social disadvantage in all its guises.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	Leaders at The Gordon will actively identify and support initiatives that address social disadvantage.	<b>Continuing</b>

## Action Pillar 9



### Our aim

We aim to create a workplace which provides equal opportunity and advancement in employment regardless of gender and where gender balance supports improved business decision-making, merit and performance.

TOPIC	COMMITMENT	ACTION	BY
RECRUIT	<b>Our workforce reflects the diversity of our community.</b>	We will review our people policies and practices and develop resources to implement better practice approaches to address unconscious bias in the workplace, including in selection processes.	<b>June 2020</b>
		We will continue to ensure appropriate gender balance in selection panels.	<b>Continuing</b>
INCLUDE	<b>Our culture fosters access and inclusion.</b>	We will review our people policies, guidelines and procedures to ensure a flexible workplace which supports operational requirements and considers the individual needs of employees.	<b>June 2020</b>
		We will promote days of significance such as International Women's Day, International Men's Day, White Ribbon Day and National Carers Week.	<b>Annually</b>
DEVELOP	<b>We provide opportunity for growth</b>	We will promote the completion of Family and Domestic Violence training to support a flexible and safe workplace for staff affected by family and domestic violence, and to enable them to continue their employment and receive further assistance as appropriate.	<b>Continuing</b>
LEAD	<b>We are bold and innovative, with leaders who pave the way.</b>	We will undertake a diagnostic audit of gender inclusion within the Institute to identify gaps and implement further actions to support gender equality.	<b>Dec 2020</b>
		We will monitor workforce metrics to track the retention and career progression of employees returning from parental leave.	<b>Annually</b>







