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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Diversity means respect for individual differences, unique knowledge, skills and attributes that reflect the variety of personal experience that arises from differences in culture and circumstance. Diversity encompasses cultural background and ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, language and education. The approach to diversity in Defence Youth Programs is founded on four key elements - People, Expectations, Community and Continuous Improvement.

- a. **People:** embracing diversity and being mindful of related sensitivities to help provide a welcoming and enriching program experience.
- b. **Expectations:** valuing the skills, experiences and perspectives that diversity in background and thinking bring to program activities.
- c. **Community:** recognising the cultural and social impacts when interacting with communities.
- d. **Continuous Improvement:** encouraging and fostering a shared commitment to continuously improve and strengthen collective actions to deliver flexible, inclusive and sustainable programs, experiences and activities.

POLICY INTENT

1.2 This policy details the approach to diversity in Defence Youth Programs.

1.3 The use of the correct terminology is critical to demonstrating diversity in Defence Youth programs. The terms listed at the end of this document are applicable to this policy only and explain the language used to support additional needs and disability in the context of Defence youth programs.

1.4 Defence acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of this country and recognises the unique skill sets, knowledge and perspectives that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders bring to Defence to strengthen and enhance an inclusive culture.

1.5 The Youth Policy Manual (YOUTHPOLMAN) [Glossary](#) provide definitions applicable to this policy

POLICY PRINCIPLE

1.6 The principle that underpins this policy is:

- a. **Principle 1** – Defence youth programs recognise diversity, anticipate circumstances and implement appropriate strategies to support, encourage and value individual's access and inclusion in youth activities.

POLICY PRACTICE AND MEASURES

1.7 An accessible and inclusive Defence Youth Program is one that features each of the components detailed below:

1.8 **DIVERSITY.** Defence Youth Programs acknowledge that each individual is unique and actively promote the importance of recognising, accepting, and respecting both differences and similarities. Consideration of diversity in race, ethnicity, physical ability, socio-economic status, age, religious/faith beliefs, political beliefs, and sexual orientation is vital in the planning and provision of program activities.

1.9 **ACCESS.** Defence Youth Programs provide all participants with fair and equitable access to program information, facilities/environments and activities. Defence Youth

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Programs will so far as reasonably practicable ensure adjustments are made to enable the inclusion of people with disability, medical conditions or additional needs to access and participate in activities free from discrimination.

1.10 Achievement of reasonably practicable adjustments involves working in partnership with parents/guardians, to identify needs and plan support strategies. Specific guidance regarding reasonable adjustments connected to a particular program/unit/activity should be provided by the relevant youth program.

1.11 **INCLUSION.** The process of equitable and fair treatment in Defence youth programs, practice and environments should provide the necessary conditions that enable people to feel valued, have a sense of belonging and connectedness, and be encouraged to actively participate in activities. A flexible approach to activity planning should also consider the full range of faiths, beliefs and individual attributes.

1.12 **EQUITY.** Defence youth programs will so far as reasonably practicable ensure an equitable and fair approach in the provision of activities according to participant's needs, rights and eligibility. Additional guidance connected to a particular program/unit/activity is to be provided by the relevant youth program and/or the relevant cadet organisation headquarters.

1.13 **INDIVIDUAL PLANS.** Every individual's situation will be different and their participation should be managed on a case-by-case basis. If required a written plan can be requested for each individual who requires one. The plan should be in place prior to the commencement of the individual's participation in the program.

1.14 The primary means for a young person to notify the relevant DYP of any diversity and inclusion needs or requirement is at the point of program registration or enrolment. The individual should provide a plan which includes information applicable to them. For example:

- a. the requirement for modified activities and/or accommodation.
- b. the toilets, changing rooms, showers, facilities to be used by the individual based on the young person's gender identity and the facilities they will feel most comfortable using.
- c. the need for additional support (ie buddy system).
- d. the young person's correct/preferred identity names and pronouns.

1.15 Maximising a person's participation means that DYP also take the following into consideration:

- a. access to facilities such as communal accommodation, toilets, showers and changing rooms.
- b. any additional supervision requirements involving overnight stay/shared accommodation for transgender young people under the age of 18.

1.16 When determining activity arrangements, it is important to discuss situations not usually encountered during unit activities, such as sleeping arrangements and areas for showering and changing clothes.

1.17 **SUPPORT TEAM.** Core individuals involved in discussion and planning throughout the person's involvement in the program may form part of an individual's support team. The names, roles and responsibilities can be recorded in the IMP.

1.18 **CONFIDENTIALITY.** It is important to maintain appropriate levels of privacy and confidentiality. Individual's making decisions are to consider what information is shared, with whom and when. All decisions about sharing information should be made with the individual's explicit consent (or parental consent for young people unable to give explicit consent). Information should only be shared with those who have an appropriate reason to

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know and be limited to what they need to know. Guidance on the disclosure of personal information can be found on the [YOUTH HQ](#) website.

1.19 Defence youth programs must comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* that protects an individual's rights in relation to the collection and use of personal information. Supplementary information regarding privacy can be found on [YOUTH HQ](#).

1.20 **RECORD KEEPING.** IMPs must be stored in accordance with the Defence Records Management Policy Manual (RECMAN).

RELATED MATERIAL

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (and Optional Protocol)

Discrimination Act 1999

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Privacy Act 1988

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

National Disability Agreement

National Disability Insurance Scheme (SA launch site for children initially from 2013–2015, followed by full implementation by July 2018)

National Disability Strategy 2010–2020

Defence Youth Safety Standards

Accountable Officer: Chief Joint Capability

Policy Officer: Head Reserve and Youth Division

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Accessibility refers to the methods by which people with a range of needs, such as people with disability, people with caring responsibilities, people on low incomes or other socially excluded groups, find out about and use services, advice, information and opportunities.

Additional needs refers to the individual requirements of a child or young person with a sensory, communication, behavioural, physical or learning disability. This also includes long-term and life limiting conditions.

Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the everyday life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and/or social barriers. A condition caused by accident, trauma, injury, genetics or disease that may restrict a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions to undertake or perform a job/task/activity in the same way as a person who does not have disability. This includes physical, sensory, intellectual, mental health, neurological and learning disabilities, as well as physical disfigurement and serious illnesses. Disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired.

Impairment is the loss or limitation of physical, mental or sensory function on a long-term or permanent basis. Most impairments or disability are not visible. Hidden disability include mental and cognitive disability, some hearing and visual impairments, epilepsy and diabetes.

Inclusion describes embracing all people irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, medical or other need. It refers to processes aiming to remove the barriers and factors which lead to exclusion, isolation and lack of opportunity.

Reasonable adjustment is a change to a work process, practice, procedure or environment that enables a person with a disability to perform or participate in a way that minimises the impact of their disability. For example

- provision of appropriate equipment or assistance to ensure there is no barrier in the enrolment process and/or selection process
- training or retraining
- providing essential information in accessible formats
- modifications to equipment or the supply of specialised equipment, furniture or related aids
- alterations to premises or related areas.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) affect a child or young person's ability to learn. This may include difficulties in social skills, behaviour, reading and writing, understanding, concentration and physical needs.

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex.

Intersex is a long-established medical condition where an infant is born with reproductive organs and/or sex chromosomes that are not exclusively male or female.

Gender diverse is used to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their biological sex. It includes people who identify as transgender, a-gender (having no gender), bi-gender (having two genders), and non-binary (not strictly woman or man) Gender identity is a word or series of words that a person of any sexuality may use to describe their gender (for example, girl, boy, woman, man, transgender, gender diverse etc).

Same-sex attracted any person who identifies as being same-sex attracted. This may include people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

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Sexual orientation is the underlying direction of sexual attraction towards people of a particular gender or genders. Sexual orientation can include being heterosexual,

Homosexual or bisexual having a homosexual or heterosexual orientation does not always mean people will have a gay, lesbian or heterosexual identity.

Sexual identity is how a person sees themselves sexually and how they present themselves to others. It includes being gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual

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