



Fairness at Work

E/1.1

Purpose

At the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod, we are committed to fostering a fair and inclusive work environment where all employees are treated with dignity, respect, and equality. Our strategic purpose of the Synod Office is to enable, equip, and encourage a renewing and growing Church across Queensland, and a critical focus is how we treat and support our people.

We recognise that fairness goes beyond compliance with laws and regulations; it is about creating an environment where every employee feels valued, heard, and treated with dignity and respect. This commitment to fairness and inclusivity is not just foundational to our internal operations but is also integral to our strategic objective of nurturing a growing and renewing Church. By ensuring our employees are empowered in an environment that respects their dignity and values their contributions, we are laying the groundwork for a thriving Church community that reflects these same principles.

Scope

This policy applies to all lay staff & volunteers engaged in work and ministry agents in placement within activities of the Uniting Church in Australia within the bounds of the Synod Office including Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College, Alexandra Park Conference Centre, and Uniting Early Learning.

Policy

The Synod Office is committed to the following:

- Provide equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants.
- Prohibit and protect employees from unlawful workplace discrimination and adverse actions.
- Maintain a zero-tolerance policy for harassment in the workplace. This includes but is not limited to sexual harassment, verbal abuse, bullying, or any unwelcome conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment.
- Ensure that processes related to recruitment, promotions, performance evaluations, and disciplinary actions are fair, transparent, and free from discriminatory bias or favouritism.
- Provide regular training and educational programs to raise awareness about fairness, diversity, inclusion, and the prevention of discrimination and harassment.

The Synod Office will determine remuneration of all Award Free positions in accordance with the Mercer Job Evaluation methodology to ensure pay equity across all individuals and teams.

The Synod Office provides procedures, governed by A1.3 Complaints and Allegation Policy, B1.1 Privacy Policy and E2.1 Performance Policy, for employees to raise grievances relating to unfair decision making and/or inappropriate conduct towards their person or other person/people within the workplace.

All employees will have a right of reply in instances where allegations have been made against them, irrespective of the nature or severity of the allegations as per the A1.3 Complaints and Allegation Policy.



Related documents

A1.3 Complaints and Allegation

B1.1 Privacy Policy

E2.1 Performance Policy

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Synod Office	Means the work and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia performed within the bounds of the Synod Office including Uniting Early Learning, Trinity College Queensland, Raymont Residential College, and the Alexandra Park Conference Centre.
The Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (also called we or us or the Church):	Means the functions and activities of the Uniting Church in Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within and in relation to the bounds of the Queensland Synod and• Outside the bounds of the Queensland Synod (where managed by parts of the organisation located within the bounds of the Queensland Synod), under the Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977 (Qld).
Unlawful workplace discrimination:	Unlawful workplace discrimination under the general protections in the Fair Work Act (FW Act) occurs when an employer takes adverse action against an employee or prospective employee because of one or more of the following attributes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• race• colour• sex• sexual orientation• breastfeeding• gender identity• intersex status• age• physical or mental disability• marital status• family or carer's responsibilities• pregnancy• religion• political opinion• national extraction• social origin
Adverse action	Adverse action is unlawful if it is taken for a discriminatory reason. The FW Act describes a number of adverse actions. Adverse action taken by an employer includes doing, threatening, or organising any of the following:



Term	Meaning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• dismissing an employee• injuring an employee in their employment• altering an employee's position to their detriment• discriminating between one employee and other employees• refusing to employ a prospective employee• discriminating against a prospective employee on the terms and conditions in the offer of employment.
Bullying	Bullying happens at work when: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a person or group of people repeatedly behave unreasonably towards another worker or group of workers• the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.
Sexual harassment in the workplace	<p>Under the Fair Work Act, sexual harassment at work happens when a worker or group of workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• makes an unwelcome sexual advance• makes an unwelcome request for sexual favours• engages in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to another worker. <p>To be sexual harassment, it has to be reasonable to expect that there is a possibility that the worker being sexually harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.</p> <p>Some forms of sexual harassment can also be considered bullying if the behaviour is repeated or continuous. But unlike bullying, sexual harassment does not need to be continuous or repeated behaviour, it can be a one-off event. There is also no need to establish a risk to health and safety.</p>
Ministry Agent	Includes Uniting Church in Australia candidates, community ministers, deacons, deaconesses, interns, lay pastors, ministers of the word, pastors, youth workers and ministers from other denominations serving in approved placements in the Queensland Synod.

Revisions

Document number		E/1.1			
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
1.1	19.02.2024	Executive Leadership Team	19.03.2024	People and Culture	People and Culture Manager



Next scheduled review	19.03.2025
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