



DONCASTER
SECONDARY COLLEGE

RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION POLICY

College council will review this policy every three years or as directed by DET

Date approved: June 2016

Date of next review: 2019

RATIONALE

Doncaster Secondary College is committed to providing a workplace and school environment which encourages respect, inclusiveness and diversity. The College does not tolerate vilification on the grounds of race or religious belief or practice. This policy supports and complies with the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2002 and the Racial Discrimination Act 1975

DEFINITION

Racial or religious vilification is public behaviour, which has the effect of inciting hatred, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of people's racial or religious backgrounds and practices.

Instances of vilification include but are not limited to:

- racist graffiti in public places;
- making racist speeches at a public rally;
- displaying racist materials in a public place;
- engaging in racist or religious vilification in a public place; and
- making offensive racist comments in a publication, using electronic media.

To maintain freedom of speech, while protecting the rights of all people in our society to participate as equals, the Act includes exemption for conduct and discussion that is reasonable and in good faith, such as:

- an artistic work or performance,
- a statement, publication, discussion or debate for any genuine academic, artistic, religious or scientific purpose or that which may be considered in the public interest, and private conduct.

PURPOSE

In keeping with Doncaster Secondary College's responsibilities and the belief that the College should provide a safe and supportive environment in which individuals respect each other, the College aims to:

- provide a school environment which is free from racial or religious vilification;
- eliminate racial or religious vilification; and
- empower and provide redress for individuals who have been vilified.

IMPLEMENTATION

The College will:

- seek to provide a safe environment for students, staff and visitors;
- foster an environment in which individuals are able to take appropriate action in relation to vilification;
- seek to ensure that students, staff and community are aware of the Racial and Religious Vilification Policy;

- implement the Racial and Religious Vilification Policy and College Codes of Conduct in a fair and consistent manner;
- respond promptly to all reports of vilification;
- expect that staff model appropriate behaviour on a consistent basis; and
- implement strategies to counter vilification, including:
 - implementation of programs which encourage positive relationships between students, their peers and teachers, such as peer support, peer mediation including curriculum within the Victorian Curriculum framework.
- continued provision of a supportive well-being and management structure comprising Sub-school and Level Coordinators, Assistant Level Coordinators, Student Well-being Coordinator and a Chaplain;
- incorporation of material, where appropriate, on vilification in the curriculum;
- provision of counselling for students involved in vilification;
- inclusion of information about vilification for student assemblies;
- through classroom codes of conduct and College values;
- involvement of students e.g. SRC representatives, in developing strategies, as required, to prevent vilification;
- involvement of families, as appropriate, in dealing with individual cases of vilification;
- provision of advice to the College community on how to support students in relation to instances of vilification.

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE VILIFICATION

- The vilified person or the person who witnesses or who becomes aware of vilification should contact one of the following people: a Level Coordinator, Student Well-being Co-ordinator, Discovery Teacher, Chaplain, Assistant Principal or Principal.
- The incident will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and with discretion.
- The Person who has been vilified will be supported by counselling and assisted to develop strategies to respond to such behaviour.
- Students who have been involved with vilification will be required to modify their behaviour and will be provided with counselling to assist in this process. The graded sanctions outlined in the Student Code of Conduct will be applied, however, incidents of a serious nature may be immediately responded to by more severe penalties, such as suspension.
- The parents/guardians of students involved in cases of vilification will be notified and their assistance sought in resolving the situation.
- All complaints regarding vilification involving staff will be dealt with according to the DET Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance.