



# ASSOCIATION OF COEDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS

## ACS Inclusion Policy

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Responsible person	Michelle Sheehan	Scheduled review date	6 November 2024

The ACS supports and encourages the participation of all students in our sporting programs and competitive events. It is important to ACS to create and foster an environment where students of all abilities, cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations feel included and have access to the same opportunities.

The ACS will work with schools and other stakeholders to ensure that opportunities are provided for all students to participate in sport and competitive events with dignity. In partnership with schools, ACS will support all concerned to build the confidence and capacity to support participation in sport and other competitive activities.

Discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated, and the ACS is committed to preventing this behaviour.

### **Students with disabilities**

Where practicable, ACS will work with member schools to provide student with disabilities opportunities to play sport or participate in other activities in settings where they may compete with students with or without disability. Schools should make minor modifications to rules and adjustments as are appropriate in the circumstances to enable students to participate as fully as possible.

### **Gender identity and sex**

Students of all genders are encouraged to participate in the sport or activity of their choice. Directors/Heads of Sport will work together to support and encourage their participation. If a student is unable to play a sport in ACS competitions because it is not a sport programmed for their gender, a student can play in the team subject to the guidelines set out by the national/state body of the sport. The school concerned must also have regard to its duty of care and consider whether the student has the strength, stamina and physique to safely compete in the competition.

### ***Discrimination - exceptional circumstances***

It is unlawful under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic) to discriminate against another person by refusing or failing to select them in a sporting team or excluding them from participating in a sporting activity on grounds including sex or gender identity unless an exception applies. In limited circumstances, for example where the physiological background of the competitors is relevant, it may be lawful to exclude a student on the basis of the inherent requirements of a particular activity.

This exception will only be considered after all other options have been exhausted and concerns remain.

In deciding whether to apply an exception to discrimination, consideration should be given to:

- the skill and competition level of the sport or activity
- whether the student would have an unfair physical advantage over other students

- in sporting competitions involving player-to-player contact, whether the disparity in strength or physique of a student differs so significantly that it may give rise to concerns for the safety of the student or other students
- the impact the exclusion would have on both the student and the school
- health and safety considerations

Consideration of applying exceptional circumstances will be done on a case-by-case basis by the ACS Principals with information and recommendations from the Directors/Heads of Sport.

#### *Access to facilities*

ACS recognises that students participating in sport may need access to appropriate bathroom and changing room facilities and have the right to use the facilities relevant to their gender identity, and without hassle.

#### *Uniforms*

Students should be encouraged to wear the uniform that aligns with their gender identity provided it complies with the uniform requirements of their chosen sport or activity.

#### *Communication*

Communication between schools is important, however all concerned must be mindful of privacy and confidentiality.

Any commentary relating to the gender identity or sexuality of a student or staff member is inappropriate and should be addressed immediately.

### **Glossary of Terms**

Cisgender: A term for someone whose gender identity exclusively aligns with their sex recorded at birth.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse [CALD]: A term commonly used to refer to Australia's population who do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples, or the English-speaking, Anglo-Saxon majority.

Disability: A condition which may restrict a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions to undertake or perform a task in the same way as a person who does not have a disability.

Gender Diverse: A broad term that can refer to all forms of gender identity and gender expression and includes people who may identify as trans, transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, or gender questioning. It refers to people whose gender expression or identity may not correspond with their designated sex at birth or society's expectations.

LGBTIQA+: Refers to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual community.

Non-binary: People who do not identify as exclusively male or female and may identify with more than one gender or no gender.

Pronouns: Common pronouns are she/her and he/his. Non-binary people may have gender neutral pronouns like they/them, use their first name instead of a pronoun, or use another pronoun. It is important to respect a person's pronoun and it is best not to assume it.

Transgender: An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the sex assigned to them at birth. An example is a child who is assigned a male sex at birth but actually feels more comfortable living as a girl and identifies as female.