

proud at work

including and supporting LGBTIQ+ staff



A Workforce Strategy for
LGBTIQ+ Support and Inclusion

2018 - 2020



**Queensland
Government**

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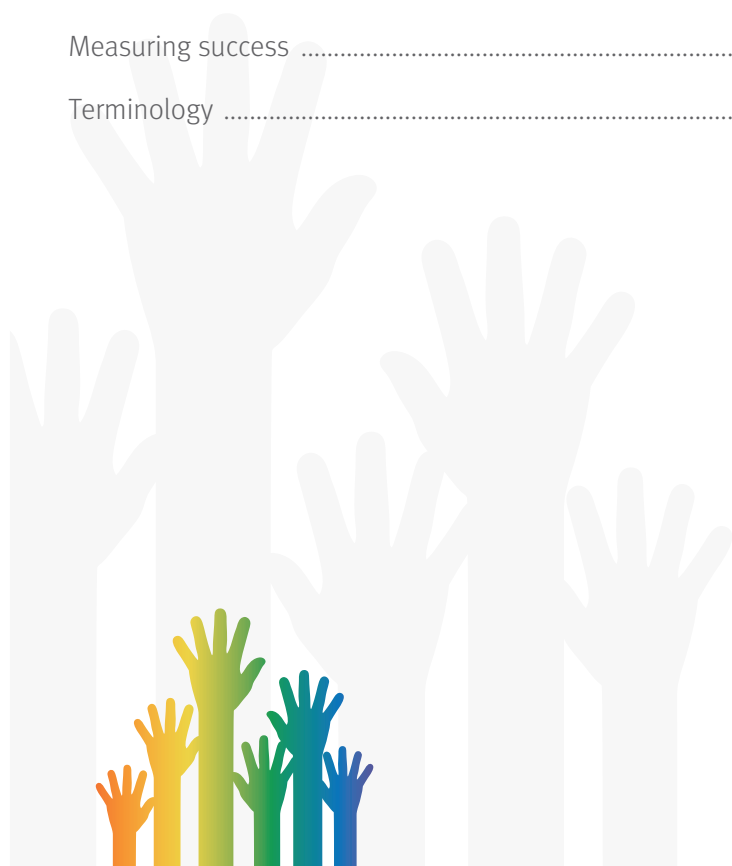
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A note about terminology

Throughout this document, the terms sexual orientation, gender diversity, intersex and LGBTIQ+ are used interchangeably to refer to the wide range of diverse and fluid sexual orientations, gender identities, and intersex variations that exist among the Queensland community.

The acronym LGBTIQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer and the + represents other identities not captured in the letters of the acronym such as Sistergirl and Brotherboy.

Every LGBTIQ+ person or community has terms and language they prefer when describing their own sex, gender and sexual orientation. The use of these collective terms is not intended to be limiting or exclusive of certain groups, although not all LGBTIQ+ people will use these specific terms.

We understand that LGBTIQ+ people form a diverse group and sexuality or sex or gender identity is only one aspect of a person's total identity.

Of particular note, the term ally is used to describe a person who supports and publicly stands up for LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities. They may or may not identify as LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy. Ally networks may be made up of people who do or do not identify as LGBTIQ+, Sistergirl or Brotherboy.

For more a comprehensive terminology guide, please see the final page of this document



Copyright statement

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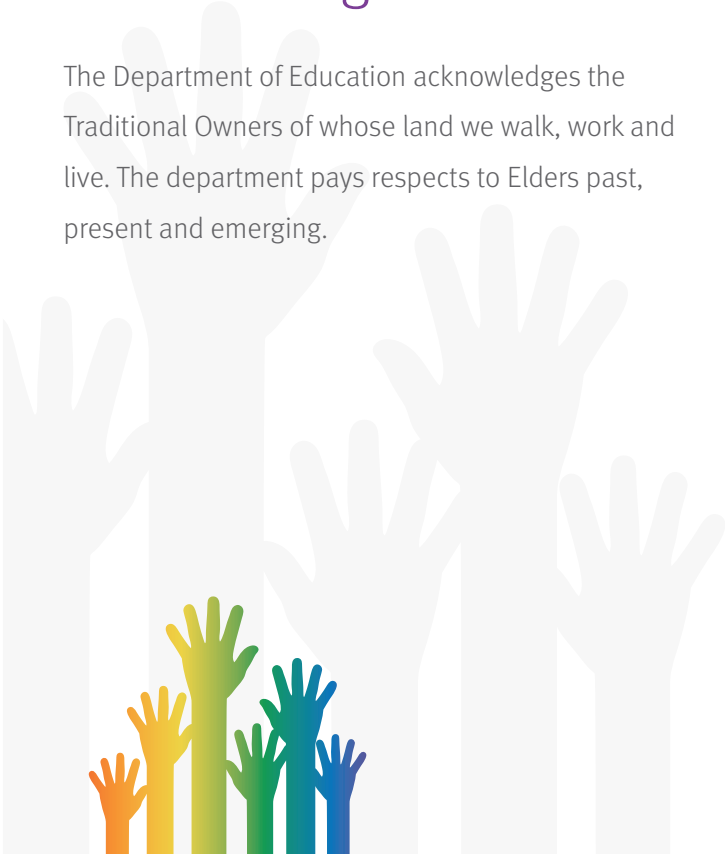
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Traditional Owner acknowledgment

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of whose land we walk, work and live. The department pays respects to Elders past, present and emerging.





Message from the Director-General

The Department of Education is committed to diversity and the right to equality, fairness and respect for all LGBTIQ+ staff and allies. LGBTIQ+ inclusion is an important focus area in the department's diversity and inclusion framework – We all belong.

Allowing our employees to bring their true selves to work maximises the performance, wellbeing and engagement of all our staff. This allows us to better serve the diverse communities of Queensland. This strategy sets out a clear plan on how the department will achieve increased LGBTIQ+ inclusion in our workplaces and demonstrate the value we place on the diversity of our staff.

MR TONY COOK

Director General

Department of Education



Vision

The Department of Education aims to provide workplaces where all employees feel safe, valued and supported to bring their whole selves to work. Being an LGBTIQ+ inclusive employer ensures we can maximise the productivity, wellbeing and engagement of all of our staff, so we can better support all Queenslanders.

The department also views the diversity of its staff as a great strength and a much valued asset for the learning community of Queensland. We support diversity in the education sector and we recognise the rights of our LGBTIQ+ employees to live and work free of prejudice and discrimination, with all the essential freedoms enjoyed by the broader population.

As one of the largest and most diverse employers within the Queensland public sector we have both a unique opportunity and responsibility to make LGBTIQ+ inclusion a priority for our workforce.

Background

This strategy is a key deliverable of the department's Diversity and Inclusion Framework – We all belong. This framework recognises that diversity and diverse experiences amongst our employees are critical if we are going to understand and connect with all Queenslanders – so we can better meet their needs.

Creating a workplace that is genuinely inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations provides positive physical, mental and emotional benefits for LGBTIQ+ employees, their families and allies.

We want all workplaces to ensure members of the LGBTIQ+ community feel comfortable and safe to bring their whole selves to work. Stigma, exclusion and discrimination can result in LGBTIQ+ staff members feeling either excluded or invisible in the workplace.

This strategy aims to ensure every employee feels valued for who they are, as well as outlining actions and approaches which can be taken at a local, regional and state level to make our workplaces inclusive for all.



Department of Education context

It is estimated that up to 11 per cent of the population are LGBTIQ+¹, which equates to around 9000 LGBTIQ+ staff working in the department. In 2016, the Queensland College of Teachers estimated that there were around 4500 LGBTIQ+ teachers in Queensland².

Nationally, research highlights the following in relationship to LGBTIQ+ experiences in education environments:

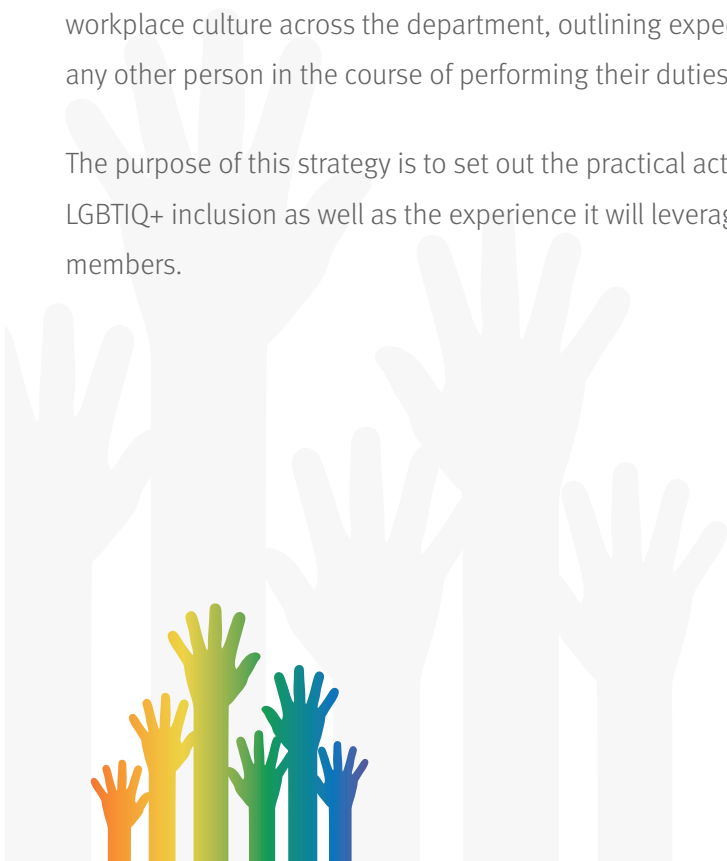
- One third of people who worked in Australian schools felt they were unable to name their partner on forms or use their preferred gender³
- 56% indicated they were not supported to 'be out'⁴
- 79% of staff in Australian schools indicated their sexual orientation or gender identity made them feel uncomfortable at work and harboured fears of discrimination and job loss⁵

The policy context

This strategy aligns to the Queensland public sector's diversity and inclusion policy framework, most notably, the Queensland Public Sector LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy 2017–2022. LGBTIQ+ Inclusion is also one of six focus areas for delivery within the department's Diversity and Inclusion Framework – We all belong.

Implementation of this strategy also supports the department's Preventing workplace bullying, sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination Policy. This policy mandates the establishment and maintenance of a respectful workplace culture across the department, outlining expected behaviours of employees regarding the treatment of any other person in the course of performing their duties.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the practical activities that the department will undertake to ensure LGBTIQ+ inclusion as well as the experience it will leverage in order to improve outcomes for LGBTIQ+ staff members.



The legal context

Discrimination

The rights of LGBTIQ+ employees to access and experience a workplace free of discrimination are enshrined in state law through the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) which prohibits direct or indirect discrimination of persons on the grounds of sexuality or gender identity. At the Commonwealth level, the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.

Direct discrimination is treating another person less favourably on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status, than someone without that attribute would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

Indirect discrimination is imposing, or proposing to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that has, or is likely to, disadvantage people with a particular sexual orientation or gender identity or intersex status, and which is not reasonable in the circumstances.

Employees are able to make complaints to either the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission or the Australian Human Rights Commission if they believe they have been directly or indirectly discriminated against on the basis of their sexuality or gender diversity.

Vilification

The Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* also prohibits the vilification of individuals or groups of people on the basis of their sexual orientation. The department has an obligation to respond swiftly and appropriately where a member of the community publicly incites hatred towards, contempt for, or ridicule of, staff members because of their sexuality. Serious vilification offences which involve the threat of physical harm to property or persons should be reported immediately to Police (Refer to the fact sheet: *Managing Vilification against LGBTIQ+ employees* for further information).

Exemptions

The Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* also provides some specific exemptions for discrimination where it can benefit particular population groups, such as positive measure that:

- benefit LGBTIQ+ people (welfare measure); or
- promotes equal opportunity of LGBTIQ+ people (equal opportunity measure).

This provides workplaces with many opportunities to action a range of measures to provide more support to LGBTIQ+ employees.



Our approach

We all play a role

Creating a respectful working environment where LGBTIQ+ inclusion is the norm is not the responsibility of LGBTIQ+ employees. Whilst many are, and have been, strong advocates and champions for LGBTIQ+ inclusion, all departmental employees, managers and the department's leadership team have a responsibility to develop an understanding of issues faced by LGBTIQ+ staff members and work towards creating inclusive workspaces. We recognise the important role that allies play in leading and championing this work and encourage ally networks at the local level wherever possible [refer to the fact sheet on LGBTIQ+ Allies].

Action at all levels

In order to be successful there needs to be activity and consistency across all levels of our organisation. Therefore this document outlines specific areas of action for implementation at the local, regional and state level. Roles and responsibilities at these levels are outlined in the section entitled Governance.

Whilst there are specific actions for different levels across our organisation, the biggest impact will be achieved through the combination of activities at all levels of the agency.



Key objectives

Our three key objectives of visibility, education and leadership have been built around the principle that through increased visibility, and strong leadership, the department will achieve a more inclusive environment for all LGBTIQ+ employees and allies.



Priority areas

The department will focus on the following three priority areas in order to deliver the key objectives of this strategy.





PRIORITY AREA 1

Support for LGBTIQ+ employees and allies

Goal: Ensure all LGBTIQ+ employees and allies feel supported, see signs and symbols of support and have access to a number of support mechanisms, including peer support officers and ally networks.

Key Objective	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Education	Establish Rainbow Liaison Officers (RLO) in every region to ensure an accredited trainer and a peer support officer is available to the Region	Appointed and trained by December 2018	State – Program management & Steering Committee Region –RLO
Leadership	Establish an LGBTIQ+ Steering Committee (including Regional Representation) to provide LGBTIQ+ perspectives, strategic direction and advice to the Proud at Work Strategy and the departmental LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Program	Appointed by end of October 2018	State – Program management & Steering Committee
Visibility	Promote and encourage whole-of-department participation in key LGBTIQ+ events such as the Brisbane Pride March, Regional Pride Marches, IDAHO day and Wear it Purple Day	Begin August 31 & (ongoing)	All
Visibility	Develop a fact sheet for local ally programs and make this information available to staff on OnePortal and through OneSchool Notices.	Local ally programs in place across the state by June 2019	All
Visibility	Establish LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy ally networks across the state	Across the state by June 2019	Region –RLO & Regional Committees
Visibility	Details of specific counselling services are available to all employees	December 2018	All
Visibility	Make visible signs of inclusion such as lanyards, posters and other materials available to broader workforce	Embedded by December 2019	All
Visibility	Actively represent the agency as an inclusive employer of choice at promotional and recruitment events	Begin August 2018	All





PRIORITY AREA 2

Build capability and awareness

Goal: Provide specific training and events to build the capability and understanding of all staff in LGBTIQ+ inclusion and promotes a safe and accepting space for people of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities to bring their whole selves to work.

Key Objective	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Education	Join Pride in Diversity to access specialist resources and expertise in LGBTIQ+ inclusion	Completed	
Education	Engage in train-the-trainer with Pride in Diversity as well as ongoing training opportunities for RLOs	First round July 2018 + ongoing	State — Program Management Region — RLO
Education	Resources and Information, including Pride in Diversity resources created/distributed for managers.	June 2019	State — Program Management
Education	Develop a fact sheet for managing vilification of LGBTIQ+ employees through consultation with the Queensland Police Service and the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland	October 2018	State — Program management
Education	Aim to deliver face-to-face or online training to staff across the state.	December 2019	State — Program Management
Education	Develop a guideline for managers of Transitioning Staff to assist with administration best practice, HR considerations and staff wellbeing	October 2018	State - Program Management
Education	Provide peer-led speeches, panels and other awareness opportunities at events	Mid 2018 + ongoing	All
Education	Provide resources and information relevant to different cultural groups e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brotherboys and Sistergirls	December 2018	State — Program management & Steering Committee





PRIORITY AREA 3

Inclusive policies, practice and language

Goal: Ensure workforce policies and procedures include and support LGBTQ+ employees of the department, including the acknowledgement of intersex status and diverse gender identities.

Key Objective	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Leadership	Conduct a review of the inclusiveness of the language used in our policies as part of the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) benchmarking process	June 2019	State — Program management
Leadership	Ensure the rights of employees of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations are considered in all agency HR policies and processes	December 2019	State — Program management
Education	Receive advice on how to build more inclusive policies from a HR perspective from Pride in Diversity	June 2019	State — Program management
Leadership	Use the W4Q survey to gain a better understanding of issues and progress	Annually	State — Program management
Leadership	Work with the Public Service Commission and sector steering committee to benchmark our progress against the rest of the sector	Ongoing	State — Program management & Steering Committee

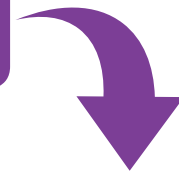


Governance

State Level – Diversity Culture and Engagement Team

The Diversity, Culture and Engagement (DCE) team will lead and assume responsibility for this strategy and the LGBTIQ+ workplace inclusion program.

This includes the development of policies, procedures and initiatives to contribute to positive experiences for employees of the department. DCE will also develop specific strategies to achieve, maintain and monitor LGBTIQ+ inclusion within the department. Finally, DCE will conduct the preparation of the AWEI accreditation submission.



State Level – Department of Education True Colours Steering Committee

The department's LGBTIQ+ Steering Committee is a network of staff who align themselves with, advocate on behalf of, and celebrate a diversity of identities and individuals within the LGBTIQ+ umbrella term. The role of the Steering Committee, in collaboration with the DCE, is to:

- actively plan, promote and participate in key events and communications that celebrate, advocate for and promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion
- contribute to strategic direction through consultation on the development of plans, policies and procedures
- contribute to communication of the LGBTIQ+ strategy

Please refer to the steering committee terms of reference for further information



Regional Level – Rainbow Liaison Officers (RLOs)

The purpose of the RLO is to build LGBTIQ+ awareness and understanding across the workforce and to support the implementation of the department's Proud at Work Strategy. RLOs are accredited trainers as well as a peer support officers and can provide a safe and confidential point of contact for all staff who wish to have a conversation about LGBTIQ+ related issues. In regions, which are piloting the RLO network on behalf of the sector, there will be an additional RLO that supports staff from other Queensland departments.



Local Level – Ally Networks

Governed and led by the Steering Committee and RLOs, Ally Networks will be established across the state to work on local awareness, events and support for smaller clusters of employees. Individual staff members can show their support to the program and LGBTIQ+ inclusion through these Ally Networks.



Measuring success

The department will monitor our progress in meeting the milestones and deliverables of this Action Plan and workforce targets as part of our diversity and inclusion program.

To support and demonstrate our aspirational goals on LGBTIQ+ inclusion, we will:

- Submit our first entry into the Australian Workforce Equity Index for the year of 2019
- Appoint an official Steering Committee with chairperson by mid-2018
- Observe and report on results in Working for Queensland Survey
- Have RLOs appointed and trained as accredited trainers in every region across the state by December 2018
- Record and report on outcomes from other cultural change measures including those from Rainbow Liaison Officer pilot regions
- Update of policies and language guides to reflect an inclusive environment by December 2019

Further reading

- Queensland Public Sector LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Strategy 2017—2022
- We All Belong Framework (Proud at Work)
- Every Person Succeeding HR Strategy 2017 — 2021
- AWEI standards and submission requirements
- Support resource referral guide (to be on OnePortal)
- Significant dates and events (to be on OnePortal)
- Fact Sheet — Managing Vilification against LGBTIQ+ employees (to be on OnePortal)
- Fact Sheet — LGBTIQ+ Allies and Local Ally Networks (to be on OnePortal)
- LGBTIQ+ Steering Committee Terms of Reference
- RLO Position Description (to be on OnePortal)

References

¹ Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, 2012, National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Ageing and Aged Care Strategy

² Queensland College of Teachers, Queensland Teachers Report 2016, <http://www.qct.edu.au/pdf/QLDTeachersReport2016.pdf>

³ Jones, T., Gray, E., & Harris, A. (2014) GLBTIQ teachers in Australian education policy: protections, suspicions, and restrictions, *Sex Education*, 14:3, 338-353

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid



Terminology

LGBTIQ+

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer. The + reflects the many sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations not captured in the acronym.

Sexual orientation

A person's intellectual, emotional, romantic or sexual feelings towards others. Gender

Each person identifies their own gender with a term that is significant to them. Some people identify as non-binary rather than choosing a gendered term.

Lesbian

A woman who identifies as being attracted to women.

Gay

A man who identifies as being attracted to men. Sometimes used to refer to someone who is attracted to the same gender.

Bisexual

A person who identifies as being attracted to two or more genders.

Pansexual

A person who identifies as being attracted to other people without regard to their gender or sex, including people of non-binary genders or intersex people.

Asexual

A person who does not experience sexual attraction and/or desire towards other people, regardless of sex or gender. Unlike celibacy or abstinence, asexuality is an orientation rather than a choice.

Heterosexual

A person who identifies as a man or woman whose primary sexual, romantic or emotional attraction is to the opposite gender to their own.

Sistergirl

An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander term which may be used by someone assigned male or intersex at birth who may live with a female identity. Cultural and spiritual beliefs are pivotal to their lives and identities.

Brotherboy

An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander term which may be used by someone assigned female or intersex at birth who may live with a male identity. Cultural and spiritual beliefs are pivotal to their lives and identities.

Intersex

A person who is born with physical or hormonal sex characteristics that are not male or female. Other terminology includes unspecified or gender X.

Trans

A term which someone may use if their gender does not match or align with their sex.



Terminology (cont)

Queer

An umbrella term used by people who may feel that specific labels do not fit their identity.

Cisgender

A person whose assigned sex at birth and gender presentation aligns with their internal sense of gender identity, e.g. cis male refers to a man assigned male at birth.

Sex

A medical term that refers to a person's chromosomal, biological and physical sexual and reproductive system characteristics.

Ally

A person who supports and publicly stands up for LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities. They themselves may or may not identify as LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl and Brotherboy.

Phobia

Fear or discomfort of cultures, communities or individuals.

