

# Proud at Work Workforce Strategy 2022–2024

A workforce that, at all levels, reflects the diversity of the community we serve and workplaces where our Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer (LGBTQ+) staff and allies feel included and engaged.

## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands from across Queensland and pays respect to the Elders – past and present – for they hold the memories, traditions and cultures of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

We acknowledge the importance of connection with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTQ Sistergirl and Brotherboy peoples in relation to this workforce strategy.

## Message from the Director-General

An inclusive workplace culture allows us to perform better, attract and retain the workforce we need, and deliver services that support our strategic goal of every student succeeding. Proud at Work is an important focus area in the department’s inclusion and diversity framework – *We all belong*.

While we have made significant progress in inclusion for LGBTQ+ staff, we know we have more to do. Through evaluation of the implementation of the Proud at Work Workforce Strategy 2018–2020 and receiving feedback from our staff, we have identified areas of opportunity where we can continue to strengthen inclusive practice.

These opportunities include: a focus on providing information to schools and regional offices, capability development for people at all levels of the department, a continued focus on policy and procedure updates, and a focus on providing opportunity for active allies to lead where they are.

This, our second Proud at Work Workforce Strategy, sets out the next phase as we continue to transform workplaces and enable all staff to achieve to their full potential. We see your diversity as our strength in creating work environments that are welcoming, safe and inclusive of LGBTQ+ staff and allies.

**Michael De’Ath**  
Director-General, Department of Education

## Inclusion matters for LGBTQ+ people



of the Australian population self-identify as LGBTQ+ <sup>1</sup>. Yet only about **5%** of departmental corporate staff self-identify as LGBTQ+ <sup>2</sup> and national research shows that **46%** of school staff feel safe to be out at work<sup>3</sup>.



LGBTQ+ staff who are out at work are **50%** more likely to innovate than those who are not <sup>4</sup>

LGBTQ+ staff who are out at work are **28%** more likely to provide excellent customer/client service than those who are not <sup>4</sup>



**85%** of LGBTQ+ people see inclusion as more important than all other job factors <sup>5</sup>

## Accomplishments

The Proud at Work Workforce Strategy 2022–2024 sets out clear and measurable actions on how the department will continue to work towards achieving and sustaining equitable and inclusive workplaces for LGBTQ+ people. It builds on the actions of the Proud at Work Workforce Strategy 2018–2020.

Achievements of the Proud at Work Workforce Strategy 2018–2020 include:

- ranking as gold status 2020 and 2021 in the [Australian Workplace Equality Index \(AWEI\)](#), the national benchmarking instrument in workplace inclusion for LGBTQ+ people
- appointing an Executive Champion to help drive organisational change with visibility, governance and accountability
- achieving notable annual improvement in agency engagement (+8%), safety to identify (+2%) and feelings of inclusion (+44%) from LGBTQ+ staff who participated in the Working for Queensland survey
- appointing and training Rainbow Liaison Officers (RLOs) in the Metropolitan, South East, Darling Downs South West, Central Queensland and Far North Queensland regions
- creating a gender affirmation guide and supporting 5 school-based staff to affirm their gender in the workplace
- providing facilitated awareness sessions to over 3,700 people in more than 60 locations including schools and regional offices
- designing and launching a Proud at Work online self-paced module increasing accessibility into schools and regional offices across the state
- updating 9 policies and procedures within the department for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people
- providing 3 gender neutral bathrooms to staff in Education House
- annually celebrating and commemorating significant days including International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), Wear it Purple Day and Brisbane Pride in schools and workplaces across the state.

## Proud at Work 2022-2024 aligns strategically with

Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy 2021–2025

Queensland public sector LGBTQ+ inclusion strategy

Department of Education Strategic Plan 2021–2025

Department of Education workforce inclusion and diversity framework – We all belong

## Find out more



**Proud at work OnePortal**  
[bit.ly/ProudOnePortal](https://bit.ly/ProudOnePortal)



**True Colours Network**  
[bit.ly/TrueColoursNet](https://bit.ly/TrueColoursNet)

<sup>1</sup>LGBTQ+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/ gender diverse, and queer – the ‘+’ recognises that LGBTQ doesn’t include a range of other terms that people identify with, or use to describe themselves.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission 2014; <sup>3</sup> Working for Queensland survey 2021; <sup>4</sup> Workplace Experiences of Australian Lesbian and Gay Teachers, Western Sydney University, 2015; <sup>5</sup> Diversity Council Australia, Out at Work: From Prejudice to Pride, 2018; <sup>6</sup> Price Waterhouse Coopers, LGBTI Perspectives on Workplace Inclusion, 2018;

# Proud at Work Action Plan 2022–2024

## 1 – Capability

The department is committed to building capability in inclusion at all levels of the organisation. Proud at Work initiatives are purposeful in their approach to including LGBTQ+ people from all regions and schools across the state.

1.1 Engage and retain active RLOs in all 7 regions of the state and build their capability and capacity to deliver regular awareness sessions and provide peer support	<b>Year 1</b>
1.2 Focus on schools and regional offices in delivering face-to-face/facilitated awareness sessions	<b>Ongoing</b>
1.3 Develop and deliver targeted awareness sessions to increase trans and gender diverse awareness for staff with an HR-specific component on gender affirmation in the workplace	<b>Year 1/2</b>
1.4 Build leadership capability across the organisations to enable environments where individuals feel confident to share LGBTQ+ information	<b>Ongoing</b>

## 2 – Visibility and support

Leaders champion inclusive leadership and their commitment is evident both internally and externally. The True Colours LGBTQ+ Steering Committee, True Colours online community and LGBTQ+ allies are engaged and supported to lead from where they are across the state. Our department embraces and values the diverse backgrounds, perspectives and life experiences of LGBTQ+ people.

2.1 Deliver the Recognised Allyship Program with a focus on communications in schools and across regions	<b>Launch year 1</b> <b>Ongoing</b>
2.2 Expand the True Yarns Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTQSB+ Sub-committee and the LGBTQ+ Women and Non-binary Sub-committee	<b>Ongoing</b>
2.3 Expand whole-of-department participation in key LGBTQ+ events such as IDAHOBIT, Wear it Purple Day and Pride – with a focus on communications in schools and across regions	<b>Annual</b>
2.4 Actively represent the department as an inclusive employer at promotional and recruitment events and via departmental social media channels	<b>Ongoing</b>
2.5 Provide bi-annual updates to the Executive Champion who reports on the Proud at Work action plan progress to the Executive Management Board	<b>Ongoing</b>

## 3 – Policy and governance

Departmental practices and policies are based on best practice to support inclusive workplace environments. The department actively participates in whole of Queensland Government initiatives and engages with the community on inclusion for LGBTQ+ people

3.1 Undertake an audit on employment life-cycle policies, processes and practices to identify remaining gaps and complete required changes, ensuring the inclusion of staff of all sexual orientations and gender identities	<b>Audit year 1</b> <b>Implement year 2/3</b>
3.2 Seek to add sexuality demographic data to the States Schools Opinion Survey and Workforce Diversity Census and analyse data alongside an annual review of Working for Queensland Survey	<b>Year 1</b>
3.3 Review selection and recruitment practices with an LGBTQ+ lens including advertising, forms, policies, screening and interviewing procedures and implement recommendations	<b>Review year 1</b> <b>Implement year 2</b>
3.4 Provide recommendations on new department infrastructure for the inclusion of all-gender facilities for staff	<b>Ongoing</b>
3.5 Submit annual evaluation for the Australian Workplace Equality Index with the aim to strive for and maintain the department's Gold Tier Employer status	<b>Biennial</b>

The Inclusion and Diversity team (HR) is responsible for delivering all actions in collaboration with: Rainbow Liaison Officers: 1.1, 1.2; True Colours Steering Committee: 2.2, 2.3; Governance Strategy and Planning teams: 3.1; Talent and Attraction teams (HR): 3.3; Facilities team: 3.4

## Measuring progress

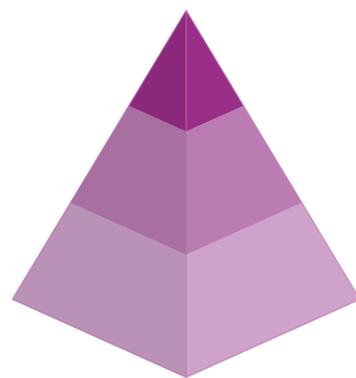
The department has a strategic approach to inclusion for LGBTQ+ people and this is strengthened through governance and reporting. The department will monitor our progress in meeting the milestones and deliverables of this action plan.

Tools we will leverage to support and demonstrate our progress include:

- continued submission in the Australian Workforce Equity Index on an ongoing annual basis
- observe and report on results from the annual Working for Queensland survey.

## Action at all levels

To achieve the department's vision of inclusive workplaces, there needs to be action across all levels of our organisation at state, regional and local level.



### State level

- Proud at Work Executive Champion – providing governance and executive support
- True Colours Steering Committee – contributing to strategic direction

### Regional level

- Rainbow Liaison Officers – providing awareness and confidential support direction

### Local level

- Recognised Allies – providing allyship at all levels
- Online Community – providing information and connection for all

## Legal and policy context

The strategy is underpinned by a policy and legal framework that supports inclusive and diverse workplaces. These include:

- the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status
- the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019, which protects rights of employees to be treated fairly and to not be discriminated against
- the department's Inclusion and diversity policy, which encourages the establishment and maintenance of respectful workplace cultures.