

Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy

(STAFF and STUDENTS)

AC.02

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Short Description	Sonoma Adventist College believes that gender equality and social inclusion are critical elements of the organisational commitment to ensure human rights of all women and men. Sonoma commits to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace that respects intersecting identities, fosters a sense of belonging without fear of judgement or retaliation, and encourages diverse views that enable staff and students to bring their true selves to work and to reach their full potentials.
Relevant to	This policy applies to all staff employed by Sonoma Adventist College, and to all students enrolled at the College. It also applies to visitors, contractors and all persons representing the Sonoma College.
Authority	Sonoma Adventist College Administration Committee
Responsible Officer	Human Resources Manager, Quality Assurance Officer
Responsible Office	Human Resources, Quality Assurance
Date introduced	September 2019
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Related College documents	
Related legislation	Gender Equity in Education Policy, and the HIV and AIDS Management and Prevention Act 2003:
Key Words	Gender, Inclusion, Diversity, Race, Age, Equity, Male, Female

1. Rationale

Sonoma's motto is "*To Know, to Love, to Serve*" and the College's commitment to uphold the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, are based on Scripture. The Bible states that all people, male and female, are created equal, in the image of a loving God (Genesis 1:27); that Christ died for all (2 Corinthians 5:15), regardless of gender, age and race; and that in Christ there is no discrimination in regard to nationality, gender, or social status (Galatians 3:28). Because Christ is our supreme example, we believe that all people should be treated equitably regardless of gender, age or race. The requirement of this policy ensures that organisations comply with

- *Family and Sexual Violence Policy,*
- *Papua New Guinea Country Report,*
- *The National Disability Education Policy,*
- *National Policy for Women and Gender Equity, 2010 – 2015,*
- *Health Gender Policy AIDS Council Act 1997,*
- *Incentive Fund in partnership with Department of Community Development Cross-Cutting Issues, New Guinea*
- *Gender equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy for Microfinance Institutions PNG 2013*
- *PNG National Disability Policy 2015-2025*
- *Families and Children Affected by HIV/AIDS and Other Vulnerable Children in Papua New Guinea - Department of Community Development (2006)*
- *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy - Papua New Guinea Economic and Public Sector Program (2012)*
- *Integrating Gender into HIV and AIDS Activities: A Guide for Implementers - National AIDS Council Secretariat*
- *National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015 - Department for Community Development*
- *Papua New Guinea National HIV and AIDS Strategy 2011-2015 - National AIDS Council Secretariat*
- *Papua New Guinea National Policy on Disability - Department for Community Development*
- *PNG National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015 - Department for Community Development (2010)*
- *Presentation to the Cultivating Communities of Practice – Office for the Development of Women (2011)*
- *Vision 2050 - Government of Papua New Guinea*

Country Report: Stop Violence: Responding to Violence against Women in Melanesia and East Timor, Gender Equity in Education Policy, and the HIV and AIDS Management and Prevention Act 2003:

Our aim is to provide equality and fairness to all, and not provide more or less favorable facilities or treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or any other class or category.

The College will commit to:

- Maintaining a responsive organisational culture
- Build an inclusive workplace and study environment
- Advance women and under-represented employees and students
- Strengthen a safe and secure workplace and environment
- Promote GESI awareness and implementation in projects

2. Scope

Sonoma's Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy rests on the pillars of equity, diversity, and inclusion with gender as a key area of focus. Sonoma is dedicated and committed to advancing gender equality and social inclusion in our institution and in all programs and projects. Sonoma will strengthen institutional accountability towards GESI transformative performance and enhance program effectiveness to promote sustainable impacts in all areas of the College community.

3. Policy Statement

As a Christian organisation Sonoma acknowledges the need to be sensitive to and respectful of cultural differences (1 Cor. 9:19-23; Rom 12:1, 2). At the same time, we believe that God's principles transcend cultural traditions (Dan 1:8, 9; 3:17, 18; Matt 15:3; Acts 5:27-29), and that the fundamental principles of Scripture provide a basis for the transformation of cultural practices. While acknowledging that gender inequality and social exclusion is firmly entrenched in many cultures, we find this practice to be incompatible with Biblical principles.

4. Guiding Principles

Sonoma's Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Policy will be guided by the following principles and commitments:

4.1 Organisational Culture

Sonoma commits to maintaining a GESI responsive organisational culture and work environment by:

- Sharing our GESI commitments and providing orientation to all staff and students on GESI policy and related strategy.
- Developing knowledge on GESI of all levels of staff and students; and building capacity of the stakeholders and partners to understand and implement GESI interventions.
- Incorporating GESI criteria and requirements in monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems.
- Ensuring GESI balanced staffing as well as incorporating GESI criteria and requirements in job descriptions and performance systems.
- Demonstrating leadership in organisational capacities by each and every team member to behave in a mutually respectful and cooperative way to advance GESI as an agenda of human rights and dignity.
- Maintaining GESI friendly working environment by promoting a GESI sensitive workplace culture.

4.2 Workplace Culture

A positive workplace is characterised by mutual respect that supports employee and student engagement. It also creates a high performance culture that encourages innovation and creativity. Sonoma will promote a workplace culture that embraces GESI principles and values to:

- Enhance a culture of inclusion in which individual differences across intersecting identities such as age, gender identity, people with disabilities, gender, class, race, ethnicity, marital status, single parent, etc. are valued and heard.
- Strengthen a culture of no discrimination and establish control mechanisms through behavioural change systems and processes.
- Promote participation of youth, ethnic and racial minorities, and people with disabilities.
- Uphold dignity and respect, and provide support to every employee and student across life stages from diverse backgrounds.
- Create a safe space to encourage reflection, discuss issues, voice concerns, seek help, suggest ideas and provide constructive feedback to tackle power dynamics and hierarchy.
- Represent our commitment to social justice and gender equality through our external marketing, fundraising, advocacy and communications activities including being respectful using inclusive and positive language and images, and avoiding stereotypes.

- Attract and hire a diverse workforce committed to gender equality and review the recruitment policy annually with a gender diversity and social inclusion perspective.
- Recognise and embrace the nuances of intersecting identity's such as, but not limited to, disability, gender identity, class, race, ethnicity and marital status.
- Encourage new ideas and diverse perspectives to continually improve both our internal processes and the services that we deliver in the community where we work.
- Sustain and engage a diverse workforce and student enrolments.
- Equip staff to access training development and progression opportunities.

4.3 Advance woman and underrepresented employees in the workforce

- Promote gender equality as a universal human right and ensure women leaders and underrepresented groups are recognised, supported and promoted at Sonoma.
- Strengthen processes to ensure bias free recruitment, remuneration, promotion, and succession planning policy through well-defined, communicated, and transparent processes and systems.
- Promote diversity among our staff by removing structural barriers to the success of women and underrepresented groups.
- Facilitate an enabling environment and adequate support for pregnant or parenting staff and students irrespective of age, gender or marital status.
- Strengthen gender balance and diversity by reviewing policies, processes and systems through a GESI perspective to develop an equitable workplace.

4.4 Strengthen a safe and secure campus

- Sustain and maintain a campus where all feel safe and secure.
- Assure zero tolerance to any form of intimidation, bullying or harassment and discipline those that breach this policy.
- Establish a rigorous process for staff to raise concerns and report discrimination or retaliation in a timely confidential manner.
- Select office space that promotes staff safety and accessibility.
- Commit adequate funding to meet Sonoma's gender commitments (specifically addressing measures for "do no harm / gender-based violence prevention measures, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the GESI policy).

4.5 Sonoma will promote project structures and procedures to ensure that:

- All projects development processes integrate Sonoma perspectives by incorporating GESI awareness and GESI analysis at every stage of programme cycle management.
- All projects planning processes are participated by the potential target people including women and marginalised communities, including affirmative actions to provide space for women and excluded groups to actively participate in decision making processes.
- All projects allocate adequate financial and human resources to implement GESI specific interventions.
- All projects are guided by GESI impact assessment to reduce gender and exclusion based inequalities.
- All projects will maintain GESI disaggregated data and indicators of the target groups based on social economic and geographical diversity.
- All projects monitor and document GESI lessons as well as disseminate to promote GESI learning for knowledge management.

5. Through this GESI Policy, Sonoma commits to implementing practices that create equal opportunities for staff and students across the campus and the wider community, in awareness,

knowledge and tools necessary to implement this policy. This policy reinforces our existing policies on child protection, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination.

Sonoma will commit in the implementation of GESI as a Code of Conduct to:

5.1 Right to Equal Treatment

No person will be unfairly discriminated against, either directly or indirectly in regard to GESI.

5.2 Respect Others

All students and staff must respect the rights of each other.

5.3 Institutional Responsibility

The College will avoid GESI discrimination by employing personnel on the basis of qualifications and experience and enrol students on the basis of academic achievement.

5.4 Personal Responsibility

Students and Staff are responsible for their personal behaviour and choices and for treating others equitably.

5.5 Leadership

College leaders will take responsibility for ensuring that the institution integrates GESI strategies into its core functions, and supports students and staff of both genders, race and age.

5.6 Teaching for Life

The College will ensure that students are provided with the opportunity and the guidance to act responsibly in all aspects of their lives. In addition to formal course offerings, this will include the provision of other educational activities and services within the broader culture of the institution.

5.7 Teaching GESI within Formal Curriculum

The College will aim to include GESI principles across all aspects of curriculum in order to build the human capacity of both genders of all races and ages.

5.8 Research

The College will encourage staff and students to engage in internally initiated research related to GESI and will cooperate with the PNG Education Department, National Research Institute, National Aids Council Secretariat (NACS) and DHERST in its research initiatives related to GESI.

5.9 Holistic Approach

The College will foster a holistic approach to GESI that promotes an environment of trust, respect for human rights, promotes personal spirituality, and the principles of participation and greater involvement for all, regardless of GESI.

5.10 Unique Approach for the Institution

The College will take into account its unique vision, mission, needs, and values from a Biblical and Seventh-day Adventist perspective, when addressing the issues of GESI.

5.11 Care and Support

While the prevention of any form of discrimination will be a priority, the College will offer care and support to any student or staff member who report having experienced some form of GESI discrimination. This may be in the form of counselling or through formal grievance processes as outlined in the Sonoma Grievance and Procedure Policy.

5.12 Collaboration within Higher Education

The College will foster cooperation and partnerships with other tertiary institutions in response to GESI issues.

5.13 Collaboration with Other Organizations

The College will cooperate and partner with Government, NACS, NGOs, Churches and other organizations in research, counselling, and education programs in response to GESI issues.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The College will commit to implement the principles of this policy and will regularly monitor the effectiveness of its GESI procedures, in order to review its policies and improve its response.

Definition of Terms

Affirmative Action	Affirmative action aims to identify and remove any barriers which may be stopping women or other marginalised groups of people from enjoying the full range of opportunities in life. It results in taking action to minimise unfair and discriminatory work practices and to promote equality and equity in all aspects of employment and other services.
Bias or Gender Bias	Bias or gender bias is a stated position; an assumption or situation which shows a preferred view or treatment of one sex over the other.
Cross-Cutting Issues	A cross-cutting issue is an issue which is important to be taken into consideration in all policies, processes and practices; usually with a goal to address the needs of a particular marginalised group in society. Cross-cutting issues may include HIV/AIDS, gender, disability, child protection & environment and other marginalised groups.
Culture	Culture is a complex set of learned and shared experiences which embrace the beliefs, values, ideas, customs, languages, and laws of a group of people.
Disability	Disability refers to people with special needs who require special attention, care and support in their families, communities and workplace. And encouragement to determine the full potential in life and refers to the needs created by the interaction between a person with impairment and the environmental and attitudinal barriers he/ she may face.
Discrimination	Discrimination is when decisions are made based on a person's social attributes such as gender, race or ethnic origin, religion, association, physical characteristics and/or other differentiations.
Direct Discrimination	Direct discrimination happens when a person is treated less favourably than another person in same or similar circumstances on a ground of a particular attribute, such as their age, gender, disability, race, region, religion, culture, social status or other grounds.
Indirect Discrimination	Indirect discrimination happens when there is a policy or rule or a way of doing things that might appear on the surface to be fair or neutral, but which has an unequal effect on certain groups of people with a particular attribute and the policy or rule is unreasonable. Indirect discrimination is unlawful regardless of whether the person discriminating intended to discriminate or is unaware that they are doing so.
Equal Employment Opportunity	Equal employment opportunity (EEO) means that employees are given an equal opportunity in accessing jobs, training, promotion, work conditions and other career development opportunities.
Equity	Equity is a process of being fair. It means steps being taken to achieve fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities. It often requires programs and policies to end existing inequalities. Equity leads to equality.
Equality	Equality means that all people enjoy the same status. All people have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development and to benefit from the results.

Gender	Gender describes the different roles and responsibilities of women and men – what males and females do, what they are responsible for, how they are expected to behave, what they are allowed to do, and what is seen as normal and proper behaviour. Gender roles responsibilities vary according to cultural, religious, historical and economic factors.
Sex	Sex describes the biological differences between men and women. Females and males are born with different reproductive organs - only women have the capacity to give birth and breastfeed whilst only men have the capacity to impregnate women (make women pregnant).
Gender Awareness	Gender awareness is the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.
Gender Equality	Gender equality means that men and women have equal value, rights and opportunities to participate in every aspect of employment and life.
Gender Equity	Gender equity is the process of being fair to disadvantaged men or women through specific interventions and actions such as balancing past or current differences that have had a negative impact on a woman or man's ability to participate fully and equally in employment and other opportunities.
Gender Inequality	Gender inequality means that a man or a woman does not have equal values, rights or opportunities.
Gender Mainstreaming	<p>Gender mainstreaming is the process of ensuring that all women and men have equal access and control over resources, decision making and benefits at all stages of organisational processes, practices and policies.</p> <p>The United Nations Economic and Social Council Agreed Conclusion 1997/2 defines gender mainstreaming as "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implication, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. This ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."</p> <p>Gender mainstreaming seeks to produce transformatory process and practices that will concern, engage and benefit women and men equally by systematically integrating explicit attention to issues of gender into all aspects of the organisation's work (Morrison - Gender and Development 2010).</p>
Harassment	Harassment refers to unwanted or uninvited behaviour that is offensive, intimidating and humiliating. Common forms of harassment that have been identified are sexual, religious, bullying, physical disability, physical attack, threat etc.
Health	The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease, injury or infirmity.

HIV/AIDS	<p>HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is the virus that causes AIDS.</p> <p>AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. It is the condition caused by the HIV virus which weakens the body's immune system. This makes the person more susceptible to other infections which may eventually lead to death. A person who becomes infected with HIV may not show any signs of illness for many years (7-10 years is the average).</p>
Kirapim Wok GESI	<p>"Kirapim Wok GESI" is a gender equity and social inclusion initiative developed by the Department of Personnel Management in conjunction with AusAID's Economic & Public Sector Program (EPSP). This initiative provides a call to action for all Public Service officers, employees and agencies to work together and embrace GESI principles and values throughout National Public Service (NPS) workplaces and in the delivery of NPS services.</p>
Sensitivity	<p>Sensitivity means to have consideration, concern and care about another person and treat them with kindness.</p>
Sexual Harassment	<p>Sexual harassment is when an individual makes an unwelcome sexual advance, an unwelcome request for sexual favours, or engages in other unwelcome sexual conduct in relation to another person; in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.</p>
Social Exclusion	<p>Social exclusion may be imposed by law, result from economic circumstances or from failure to supply social goods or services. Groups that are socially excluded include the unemployed, ethnic minorities, homeless, elderly, people with disabilities. These groups experience worse health outcomes than the general population.</p>
Social Inclusion	<p>Social inclusion describes a process whereby certain groups in society are systematically excluded from opportunities that are open to others. Groups can be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, age, caste, clan, descent, disability, ethnic background, HIV or other health status, migrant status, religion, sexual orientation, social status, where they live or other social identity. Social inclusion means ensuring that socially excluded people have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development and to benefit from the results.</p>
Social Norms	<p>Social norms are rules of conduct or models of behaviour expected by a society or social group. These are rooted in customs, traditions and value systems that gradually develop in a society or social group. It is important to understand that social norms, whilst generally accepted, may not always exhibit ethical or fair treatment of others.</p>
Threat	<p>A threat refers to a statement or behaviour that causes a person to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked and/or intimidated.</p>
Victimisation	<p>In this policy, victimisation refers to an officer or a staff member who has been affected because he or she has formally made an allegation or complaint in relation to discrimination, harassment or unacceptable workplace behaviour.</p>

Gender Based Violence	<p>Gender based violence means violence committed against women because of their gender. It also refers to forms of violence particular to women such as rape, other sexual assault and sorcery-related violence against women and girls.</p> <p>Violence against women is any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women,</p>
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Violence Against Women	including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private.
Wellbeing	Wellbeing is a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy and ties in closely with the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease, injury or infirmity”. The term ‘health’ involves subjective and objective elements, environmental and government policy components, as well as individual and cultural elements that all affect the health of our populations. “Health has to do with bodily, mental and social quality of life of people as determined in particular by psychological, societal, cultural and policy dimensions”. So if our experience of ‘health’ is related to our state of ‘wellbeing’, what exactly is ‘wellbeing’ and how is it achieved? The term ‘wellbeing’ encompasses much more of the human experience and describes our ability to respond to or take control over everyday challenges and changes.
Workplace Bullying	Workplace bullying refers to any unreasonable and oppressive behaviour directed at an officer or staff member that may create a risk to the physical and psychological wellbeing.
Workplace Violence	Workplace violence refers to any incident where an officer or staff member is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace.