

## Equity@ANU

*'Irrespective of its sources, racism is racism. Ignorance is no excuse.  
Insecurity is not justification...racism in all its forms should be uncompromisingly condemned'*  
Michael Dodson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner 1996

### What is racial discrimination?

The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (RDA)* s.9(1) makes

*it unlawful for a person to do any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*

The *Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)* also makes it unlawful to discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of race in education and employment.

### What is racism?

Racism is the expression of attitudes, or behaviours, based on an assumption of the superiority of one race or group of persons of colour, ethnic origin, or culture, over another. Racism may also be expressed by what is not done as well as what is done.

### What is racial vilification?

Racial vilification is a public act that is:

- done, in whole or in part, because of the race, colour, or national or ethnic origin of a person or group and
- reasonably likely in all the circumstances to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate that person or group.

The [Racial Hatred Act](#) 1995 makes racial vilification unlawful.

### What behaviours are racial discrimination?

Racial discrimination can involve non-verbal threats, verbal remarks or non-verbal contact of a race based nature.

- jokes or comments denigrating a racial group;
- displays of racist graphic material including posters, pinups, cartoons, graffiti or messages left on notice boards, desks or common areas or on computer screens;
- race-based insults, taunts, teasing or name-calling; offensive phone calls or letters;
- threatening violence against an individual or group because of their race;
- racist gestures made in public; mimicking a person's accent;
- people wearing racist symbols (such as badges) or clothing with racist slogans in public;
- offensive e-mail messages or computer screen savers.

ANU grievance procedures can be used on any issues of race discrimination.

### What do we do at ANU against racism?

We act towards the inclusion and respect of all people in our community. We have policies supporting our commitment to equal opportunity to the access of education and employment irrespective of race, colour, national or ethnic origin and specific policies for Assessment Arrangements for Students from Language Backgrounds other than English.

We support the Jabal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre and the Aboriginal Employment strategy. We provide learning support for culturally diverse students in programs such as StudySmart Classes, SIGN Student Information & Guidance Network and conversation classes. The ANU library catalogue tour provides virtual tours in the languages English, Cantonese, Indonesian, Japanese, Mandarin, Thai, Vietnamese And Dzongkha (Bhutanese) with tours of the libraries in the languages Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Vietnamese. We encourage international students to attend ANU and study abroad programs for ANU students, with specific support for students. Chaplaincy services are available through an interfaith team of chaplains from the Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim faiths.

### Where can I find out more information?

ANU Equal Opportunity Policy and Policy on the Prevention of discrimination, harassment and bullying

[Guide to the Racial Discrimination Act](#) HREOC

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Phone: 1300 369 711; or

ACT Human Rights Commission Phone: (02) 6205 2222

*Race Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth) and Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)*

This is intended as a guide only and is not legal advice. Seek advice for specific issues.

Information sheet May 2007