

Anti-racism policy

Focusing on culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Statement of policy

Ahpra will not tolerate acts of racism, and deeply regrets any racist behaviour that may have occurred to date. As an organisation we are committed to taking consistent, committed, and targeted action to eliminate and prevent racism and to create a workplace that is free of all acts of racism.

Context

This policy has been designed to bolster a range of existing policies that have already been developed by Ahpra to support respectful workplaces and encourage all Ahpra staff to treat others with dignity and respect. This policy seeks to reinforce Ahpra's values of Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, and Achievement.

The [Respect @ Ahpra Framework](#), in conjunction with [Ahpra's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#), define key roles and relevant responsibilities in relation to creating, and maintaining a healthy and safe place to work. The [Respect @ Ahpra Framework](#) acknowledges:

- that various types of disrespectful behaviour may take place at the same time (for example, bullying, victimisation, harassment, and sexual harassment may occur together),
- that policies and procedures alone will not successfully address disrespectful behaviour. Education, ongoing training, and awareness programs are vitally important for achieving behaviour change, and
- that the policies underpinning the framework give effect to our legal duties that are reasonable, and proportionate, to achieve our aspirations of respect in the workplace.

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander anti-racism policy* commits Ahpra to ensuring the environments and workplaces which Indigenous board, committee, panel, and staff members (and other Indigenous People such as practitioners, students, and patients accessing the Scheme) operate within actively address racism, are safe, and culturally respectful.

This policy has been designed with input from culturally and linguistically diverse Ahpra workers, including some who have been exposed to racism within, and outside, the workplace based on their race, or aspects of their race. Other interested Ahpra workers have also had an opportunity to contribute to the design of this policy.

Ahpra will respond to any, and all, forms of racism in accordance with this policy, as well as through Ahpra's [Code of conduct](#), [Code of conduct for Board and committee members](#), [Discipline policy](#), [Unsatisfactory performance and conduct policy](#), and other relevant, and appropriate, policies.

Purpose

This policy commits Ahpra to ensuring that the environment, and workplaces, in which its workers operate are free of all forms of racism, racial discrimination, harassment, and vilification, and that the values of respect, integrity, collaboration, and achievement are core to the culture and behaviour of all Ahpra workers.

This policy reinforces section 9 of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) which stipulates that 'it is 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'.

This policy articulates Ahpra's Guiding Principles for eliminating racism, outlines the decisions, behaviours and actions that constitute racism, the related policies, and procedures, to manage disclosures and complaints related to racism, and the consequences of non-compliance with this policy.

The policy seeks to eliminate racism during all stages of a worker's lifecycle at Ahpra.

Scope

This policy applies to all Ahpra workers, defined in accordance with the [Definitions – People Policies and Procedures PC002](#) as a person who carries out work with Ahpra, including the Ahpra Board, National Executive, employees, contractors, agency workers, volunteers, interns, work experience staff, and statutory appointees (board, committee, and panel members).

This policy defines workplace violence and aggression in accordance with the [Definitions – Workplace Violence and Aggression Policy](#) as any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted at the workplace or while they are carrying out work.

This policy applies to all Ahpra workers at any time:

- when they are engaging in work duties
- interacting with others in the course of working
- when they are at the workplace
- when they are working remotely
- while using information and technology resources, including virtual spaces, messaging applications and social media
- regardless of location, when they are at social or off-site events that relate to their work
- regardless of location or platform, anywhere that Ahpra workers are readily identifiable and associated with Ahpra. This includes Ahpra workers while they are in public or on social media accounts where there is an identifiable connection to Ahpra.

This policy applies to all interactions between Ahpra workers with other Ahpra workers, and with external parties, including prospective workers at Ahpra, registered health practitioners or students, and members of the public, during their employment.

This policy applies to all interactions including, but not limited to, formal and informal, in-person or through the use of technology as well as verbal, written, or non-verbal gestures.

Policy

1. Guiding principles

- 1.1 Ahpra has overriding guiding principles in its [Anti-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy](#) which outline expected behaviour and how decisions are made. These guiding principles inform Ahpra's response to racism.
- 1.2 Further principles have been identified in this policy to ensure that Ahpra's commitment to elimination and prevention of racism can be enacted:
 - 1.2.1 Elimination and prevention: Ahpra firmly asserts that racism, racial discrimination, harassment, racial vilification, and hatred are unacceptable. Ahpra commits to taking action to eliminate and prevent racism. Ahpra workers found to have engaged in such conduct will be subject to appropriate action by Ahpra, including counselling, warning, and disciplinary measures (which range from formal discipline up to dismissal).
 - 1.2.2 Acknowledgment of lived experience: Ahpra understands that people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background have a unique lived experience of racism and any report of a racist incident must be assessed, investigated, and responded to, in genuine collaboration

with the complainant. Ahpra understands the importance of genuine collaboration and partnership, and will foster opportunities to learn through self-awareness, self-reflection, education, and training about actions to address racism in all its forms; and empowering communities and individuals to take action to prevent and eliminate racism and to seek redress when it occurs.

- 1.2.3 Detrimental impacts of Racism: Ahpra understands that systemic racism results in continued unfair advantage to some individuals, and unfair treatment of other individuals based on race, skin colour, nationality, descent, indigeneity, ethnicity, or religious background. Ahpra recognises that racism can have a significant detrimental impact on individuals, including on their health and wellbeing, and will provide trauma-informed support to all Ahpra workers making disclosures. Ahpra understands that racism is a workplace psychosocial hazard, and there is a positive duty under relevant legislative instruments to manage and address racism.
- 1.2.4 Empowering accountable leadership: All Ahpra leaders are accountable for upholding this policy and must, in turn, guide and empower all Ahpra workers to act in accordance with this policy and uphold and visibly champion these principles through their actions, words, and decisions.
- 1.2.5 Leadership role of Ahpra: Ahpra recognises its key role as the national regulator for health practitioners, and the scope of influence that it holds in the health sector and will take opportunities to enact change within the broader health and regulatory landscape, including through its own systems and processes that may contribute to institutional racism. Ahpra seeks to eliminate, as far as reasonably practicable, practices within Ahpra's remit which may serve as barriers to participation for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- 1.2.6 Inclusion: Ahpra promotes an organisational culture that is inclusive for all and provides opportunities to build workers' capability in identifying, and responding to, instances of racism in the workplace.
- 1.2.7 Empowering bystanders: Ahpra enables bystanders who confront racism to understand the mechanisms to report racism in all its forms, and will foster a culture of accountability, provide intervention training, and promote dialogue to empower individuals to challenge discrimination and create inclusive environments.
- 1.2.8 Transparent and effective process: Ahpra will transparently, clearly, and as quickly as possible, manage all complaints of racism sensitively and fairly, adopting a trauma-informed and culturally safe approach that actively listens to the needs of the complainant. Ahpra will respond to incidents of racism utilising the principles of natural justice, empowering, and providing choice through meaningful collaboration, and dialogue, in how an incident is responded to, and resolved, through either formal or informal pathways.
- 1.2.9 Promotion of anti-racism strategies: Ahpra will promote anti-racism strategies through reporting mechanisms, recruitment mechanisms, procedures, and training, and measure their impact.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 All Ahpra workers are responsible for ensuring they conduct themselves in compliance with this policy and all related documents.
- 2.2 All managers, supervisors, and board chairs are responsible for ensuring that those they manage or supervise conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.
- 2.3 All Respect Officers are responsible for championing this policy.
- 2.4 The People and Culture Unit is responsible for implementing and monitoring this policy.

3. Preventing racism

- 3.1 This policy commits Ahpra to taking action to prevent racism in all its forms; and to implement organisation-wide anti-racism strategies.

- 3.2 This policy commits all Ahpra workers to celebrate diversity and to create an environment that acknowledges, accepts, and welcomes all people, and allows them to reach their full potential.
- 3.3 Ahpra will support the implementation of this policy by focusing on the prevention of racism through.
 - 3.3.1 Education and training
 - 3.3.2 Focused strategies aiming to support diversity in recruitment
 - 3.3.3 Embedding anti-racism in performance management and professional development
 - 3.3.4 The development of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework ([see section 13](#))
 - 3.3.5 Annual reporting in relation to disclosures and reports of racism ([see section 13](#))
 - 3.3.6 Annual review of organisational practices and structures that may have contributed to acts of racism ([see section 13](#))
 - 3.3.7 A review of all policies to ensure alignment with this policy.

4. Disclosures of racism

- 4.1 Ahpra strongly encourages all Ahpra workers to report all incidents of racism. This enables Ahpra to effectively stamp out all racist conduct, collect data relating to incidents of racism and to understand and mitigate systemic or organisational racism.
- 4.2 If you experience racism, and if you feel comfortable and safe to do so, you may decide to take action which may help resolve the issue. You have every right to make someone aware that their behaviour or conduct is making you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. When you feel comfortable and it is safe for you to do so, you can ask the person to stop or make it clear that you are finding their behaviour unwelcome or upsetting. You may wish to speak to your manager or a Respect Officer first to seek guidance on how to have this conversation. This can be an effective way of stopping the behaviour(s) before it escalates.
- 4.3 In some circumstances, this self-management approach may be inappropriate, such as if there is a power imbalance between you and/or the other person(s), if previous attempts to discuss your concerns have been unsuccessful, or if there are safety concerns. Self-management is never appropriate if it is unsafe or against your wishes.
- 4.4 If you consider self-management to be inappropriate, contact either a Manager, People and Culture Business Partner, or a Respect Officer as soon as possible after the incident has occurred.
- 4.5 [Ahpra's Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#) provides various options for individuals seeking to address or escalate instances of inappropriate workplace behaviours, including instances of racism.

5. Reports of racism

- 5.1 There are multiple channels through which reports of racism can be reported and these are outlined in Ahpra's Workplace complaints and reporting procedure. These include:
 - 5.1.1 Speaking to managers
 - 5.1.2 Speaking to People and Culture Business Partners
 - 5.1.3 Lodging a health and safety incident report
 - 5.1.4 Anonymous reporting
- 5.2 Reports of racism can also be made to Respect Officers. A published list of Respect Officers and their profiles can be found on the Ahpra intranet [via this link](#).
- 5.3 Reports can be made directly by people affected or others who observe (active bystanders) or know about the conduct or behaviour.

- 5.4 Any Ahpra worker who receives a disclosure of racism must:
- 5.4.1 make themselves available to listen to the worker's concerns,
 - 5.4.2 not form a view of the merit of any allegations,
 - 5.4.3 provide information about the internal complaint process,
 - 5.4.4 advise the Ahpra worker making the report that in some situations where serious allegations are raised, the issue may need to be reported to management and dealt with as a formal complaint,
 - 5.4.5 provide support to the Ahpra worker making the report if they want to try and resolve the issue personally,
 - 5.4.6 provide information about available support services, as outlined in [section 8](#) of this policy, and
 - 5.4.7 outline other options available to the Ahpra worker making the report, including lodging a complaint with an external agency, as outlined in [section 8](#) of this policy.

6. Responding to racism

- 6.1 Reports of racism will be responded to pursuant to [Ahpra's Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#).
- 6.2 All decisions made pursuant to this section will be guided by and align with the Guiding Principles outlined in [Section 1](#) of this policy.
- 6.3 In implementing the [Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#), Ahpra commits to:
 - 6.3.1 centring its application on the complainant or the person making a disclosure,
 - 6.3.2 following a trauma-informed complaint handling process,
 - 6.3.3 ensuring that both parties have support available to them,
 - 6.3.4 being transparent and clear, and ensuring that the complainant or the person making a disclosure is regularly made aware of progress and action in their matter,
 - 6.3.5 ensuring that reports made are confidential, and
 - 6.3.6 ensuring that all disclosures and reports are acted on in a timely manner.

7. Supporting Ahpra workers at all stages

- 7.1 In implementing this policy, Ahpra will implement initiatives relating to diversity in leadership and diversity in recruitment and recruitment practices.
- 7.2 To support the elimination of racism, Ahpra will embed anti-racism in performance management and professional development.
- 7.3 To support its workforce, Ahpra will implement practical approaches to celebrating and acknowledging diversity.

8. Support for those involved in a disclosure or complaint

- 8.1.1 Ahpra recognises the impact that racism can have on individuals' well-being and morale and is dedicated to fostering an environment where all individuals who have experienced, witnessed, or reported on racism feel supported.
- 8.1.2 Following an experience of racism, individuals are encouraged to report incidents promptly, and will actively receive support through managers or People and Culture Business Partners.

- 8.1.3 Ahpra's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling, coaching and wellbeing service that is available to all employees and their immediate family members by calling 1800 080 374 or info@assureprograms.com.au. Alternatively, the I-CARE program (as part of Ahpra's EAP offering) provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with access to qualified, specialist, counselling services provided by First Nations Peoples.
- 8.1.4 Ahpra has a network of specially trained Respect Officers who can assist with initial advice and guidance to navigate the [Respect @ Ahpra framework](#), policies, and procedures.
- 8.1.5 Additional specialist support is available externally and can be found in [Appendix two \(2\)](#).
- 8.1.6 Contact numbers for additional services can be found in the [Workplace Complaints and Reporting Procedure](#).

9. Timeliness of resolution

- 9.1 Resolution of all disclosures and complaints of racism must be done in a timely manner to ensure that they are trauma-informed and responsive.

10. Transparency, limited confidentiality, and use of information

- 10.1 Ahpra recognises that complainants may need to share details of racism-related incidents with managers, Respect Officers, investigators, support persons, advocates, counsellors, and union representatives as well as friends and family members to maintain their own health and wellbeing.
- 10.2 Ahpra recognises the right of individuals to share their experiences with whomever they deem it necessary and appropriate to do so. However, it is expected that, where possible, complainants (and others who have been informed of the matter in question) will abide by the need for confidentiality, the principles of natural justice, and the public comment requirements detailed in [Ahpra's staff code of conduct](#).
- 10.3 Ahpra will only share information with third parties when required to comply with the law, to obtain legal advice, to report a matter to the police, discrimination tribunals, a health and safety regulator, to facilitate access to support services, or to allow for investigation into a complaint.
- 10.4 In some instances, a matter may need to be referred to seek specialist advice, to those who need to be informed to take steps to ensure that the workplace is safe, or to a third party in circumstances that constitute a criminal offence or a health, safety, or wellbeing risk.

11. Active bystanders

- 11.1 Racism is everyone's business at Ahpra and Ahpra encourages all workers who witness any form of racist behaviour to stand up and ensure that it does not take place.
- 11.2 Some research indicates that some consider a lack of bystander assistance more harmful than the experience of racism itself.¹
- 11.3 Ahpra strongly encourages any Ahpra worker who may have witnessed racism against others to take the following steps:
- 11.3.1 check with the person who has experienced racism to ask if they are ok
 - 11.3.2 diffuse the situation by remaining calm and asking the perpetrator to stop
 - 11.3.3 record the incident including the date and time
 - 11.3.4 report the incident in accordance with [Section 5](#).

¹ Nelson, J., Dunn, K., Paradies, Y., Pedersen, A., Sharpe, S., Hynes, M., & Guerin, B. (2010). Review of bystander approaches in support of preventing race-based discrimination. *Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)*.

<https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:11584/datastream/PDF/view>

- 11.4 Ahpra workers who do not feel safe or confident to take such action should seek assistance and support from Ahpra Respect Officers or their manager to support them.
- 11.5 A lack of bystander intervention by Ahpra workers in relation to actions by other Ahpra workers, registered health professionals, or the broader community does not align with the values of Ahpra, and inaction will be considered unfavourably in annual performance reviews. Standards for progression include demonstration of Ahpra values and behaviours and any form of bystander inaction will be considered unfavourably.²
- 11.6 Further information about active bystanders can be found in the [Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#).

12. No victimisation

- 12.1 Ahpra and its workers must not treat an Ahpra worker unfairly or harshly or in any way subject an Ahpra worker to reprisal action or any detrimental action as a consequence of an Ahpra worker:
- 12.1.1 Making a disclosure, report, or complaint of racism or being an active bystander
 - 12.1.2 Providing any information relating to a disclosure, report, or complaint of racism
 - 12.1.3 Supporting a person who has made a disclosure, report, or complaint of racism
 - 12.1.4 Engaging in reasonable bystander action.
- 12.2 If an Ahpra worker believes they have been victimised, they are strongly encouraged to make a complaint under the [Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#).
- 12.3 Victimisation of an Ahpra worker pursuant to this section may result in disciplinary action.

13. Measuring impact and annual reporting

- 13.1 To support transparency and ensure that this policy is having an impact, Ahpra commits to measure the impact of this policy and to report annually to staff on achievement against its intended outcomes.
- 13.2 Ahpra will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the impact of this policy and the achievement of intended outcomes.
- 13.3 In its annual staff surveys, Ahpra will embed questions relating to its approach to anti-racism and whether staff feel that Ahpra is doing enough to eliminate and prevent racism in all its forms. The results of responses to these questions will be published alongside annual staff survey results.
- 13.4 Annually, Ahpra should undertake an audit of the demographic composition of the workforce.
- 13.5 Ahpra will keep appropriate records of all disclosures and complaints of racism centrally and securely.
- 13.6 Ahpra will use these records to identify trends, address any incidents of systemic racism, and to develop tailored responses to racism at Ahpra.
- 13.7 Each year, Ahpra will publish a de-identified report of these records, including information about actions taken in response to disclosures and complaints of racism.
- 13.8 Each year, after publishing a de-identified report pursuant to section 13.7, Ahpra will conduct a review of organisational practices and structures that may have contributed to the acts of racism to minimise and mitigate structural racism.

Related documents

- [Ahpra Enterprise agreement 2022 – 2025](#)

² Appendix 4, Ahpra Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025

- [Anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity policy](#)
- [Bullying and harassment policy](#)
- [PC011 - Code of conduct](#)
- [Code of conduct for Board and committee members](#)
- [Discipline policy](#)
- [PCXX Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander anti-racism policy]
- [Grievance policy](#)
- [HSW014 – Health, safety and wellbeing policy](#)
- [HSW010 – Health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities guideline](#)
- [Information and IT acceptable use policy – Ahpra staff – IS002](#)
- [Information and IT acceptable use policy – Board and committee members IS010](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Respect Officers at Ahpra](#)
- [Respect @ Ahpra framework](#)
- [Sexual and sex/gender-based harassment policy](#)
- [Unsatisfactory performance and conduct policy](#)
- [Workplace complaints and reporting procedure](#)
- Family and domestic violence policy
- [Workplace violence and aggression policy](#)

Relevant legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1966 (NT)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
- Racial Vilification Act 1996 (SA)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Definitions

Term	Definition
Ahpra worker	Defined in accordance with Definitions – people policies and procedures PC002 as a person who carries out work with Ahpra, including the Ahpra Board, National Executive, employees, contractors, agency workers, volunteers, interns, work experience staff, and statutory appointees (board, committee, and panel members).
Anti-racism	‘Anti-racism is an active process, unlike the passive stance of ‘non-racism’. Anti-racism work requires consistent, committed, and targeted action and attention.’ ³ Anti-racism involves focusing on all level of racism, including internalised, interpersonal and institutional racism.

³ Australian Human Rights Commission. (2021). Racism: Nobody wins – Definitions of key terms. *AHRC*. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-11/ahrc_sr_2021_4_keyterms_a4_r3.pdf

Bystander	A bystander is ‘a person or persons, not directly involved as a target or perpetrator, who observes an act of racially motivated violence, discrimination or other unacceptable or offensive behaviour. Although not actively partaking in racist conduct, bystanders have a choice to respond to these incidents. Bystander actions may include aiming to stop the perpetrator of racism, reducing its escalation, supporting a target of racism, formally reporting the incident or seeking assistance from others. Often, someone who chooses to take action in this instance is called an Upstander.’ ⁴
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Illustration of bystander action

A bystander overhears a racist remark. The bystander checks to see if the person against whom the remark was made is ok. The bystander tells the person who made the racist remark to stop saying harmful things. They may also choose to try and diffuse the situation by asking an open-ended question, such as ‘why did you say that?’, or ‘I’m surprised to hear you say that - I’ve always thought of you as an open-minded person’. The bystander makes a few notes of the incident, including the time, date and location. The bystander reports the incident and encourages the person against whom the remark was made to make a report.

Complaint	Means a complaint of racism relating to Ahpra matters made by an individual who wants Ahpra to take specific action in response to the incident.
Complainant	Means any person who makes a complaint of racism to Ahpra.
Covert racism	Covert racism is a form of racism that is disguised and subtle, rather than public or obvious; ‘[c]oncealed in the fabric of society, covert racism discriminates against individuals through often evasive or seemingly passive methods.’ ⁵ Covert racism can be conscious or unconscious. Examples may include microaggressions or tone policing.

Illustrations of covert racism

- Telling a culturally and linguistically diverse individual who was born and raised in Australia that they speak ‘good English’.
- Associating a lack of English fluency with lower intelligence.
- Not hiring a candidate because their surname indicates that they are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

Cultural safety	Cultural safety is ‘the outcome of education that enables safe services to be defined by those who receive the service. Unsafe cultural practice is any action which diminishes, demeans or disempowers the cultural identity and wellbeing of an individual.’ ⁶
Disclosure	Means an individual telling anyone who is part of Ahpra about their experience or witnessing of racism. Unlike a complaint, a disclosure does not trigger an investigation or action unless Ahpra has a duty of care to do so. It may also be the first step prior to a complaint being made.

⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission. (2021). Racism: Nobody wins – Definitions of key terms. AHRC. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-11/ahrc_sr_2021_4_keyterms_a4_r3.pdf

⁵ Coates, Rodney (ed.). Covert Racism (2007).

⁶ National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Health Worker Association, Cultural Safety Framework. (2017). p 4, quoting Nursing Council of New Zealand (2002), Guidelines for cultural safety in nursing and midwifery.

Guiding principles	Are the principles outlined at Section 1 which inform this policy and establish the basis for expected behaviour and decision-making at Ahpra with regards to racism.
Interpersonal racism	'Refers to racism that occurs between individuals. It can be intentional or unintentional and can come in the form of abuse, harassment, humiliation, or exclusion or can be expressed through off hand jokes or comments.' ⁷
Intersectionality	Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social categorisations/positionality such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation, disability etc. that create overlapping and interdependent systems of oppression and privilege. Intersectionality acknowledges that experiences of oppression and privilege cannot be fully understood by looking at individual identity traits in isolation. Rather these traits intersect and interact, leading to unique experiences and challenges that are not adequately addressed by examining each aspect in isolation. ⁸
Lateral violence	<p>Lateral violence is a form of racism in which anger, blame or jealousy are directed by Indigenous Peoples towards other Indigenous Peoples. Lateral violence occurs when people who are targets of, and who have internalised, racism and colonisation turn on each other instead of confronting the system that oppresses them. Lateral violence is also known as horizontal violence, intra-racial racism, or internalised colonisation.</p> <p>As with (inter-racial) racism more generally, there are many forms of lateral violence from innuendo, verbal abuse, favouritism, gossiping, belittlement and bullying to exclusion, ostracism, isolation, scapegoating, shaming, blaming and physical assault. A common form of lateral violence is questioning someone's authenticity, Indigenous identity and/or cultural/spiritual connections. Lateral violence results from cycles of abuse due to systems of racism, oppression, colonisation and intergenerational trauma in which the oppressed become the oppressors of themselves, turning on each other. Unfortunately, lateral violence is common and normalised at all levels of Indigenous communities in Australia, with significant impacts on health and wellbeing.⁹</p>
Microaggressions	Microaggressions include subtle, often unintentional, everyday racist actions, comments, or behaviours towards, or about, members of marginalised or oppressed groups (sometimes also called casual racism). These actions can be verbal or nonverbal and may reflect underlying biases, prejudices or stereotypes. Microaggressions collectively contribute to a hostile or unwelcoming environment, impacting the psychological well-being and sense of belonging of those who experience them (leading to what is called racial battle fatigue).

⁷ Australian Human Rights Commission (2022). National Anti-Racism Framework Scoping Paper. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/publications/national-anti-racism-framework-scoping-report>.

⁸ Crenshaw, K. 1989. Intersectionality definition. Oxford English Dictionary.

⁹ Theoni Whyman et al. (2021). Lateral violence in Indigenous peoples. *Australian Psychologist*, 56(1): 1-14.

Illustration of microaggressions

- Telling someone from a culturally and linguistically diverse background that they aren't like other people from their country of birth.
- Telling someone that you didn't realise that they were of a certain cultural background because they don't look that way.
- Asking someone, 'but where are you really from?' when they are Australian.

Overt racism	Overt racism involves conscious and intentional harmful attitudes or behaviour directed at a specific person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, or national origin. It can be perpetrated by individuals, groups or institutions.
Power	Power 'can be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. Power is unequally distributed; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates.' ¹⁰
Prejudice	Prejudice refers to biased judgments, attitudes and evaluations towards individuals or groups based on their (perceived) membership in a particular social category.
Racial vilification	<p>Vilification is behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule for a person or group of people because of their race or religion.</p> <p>It is also unlawful to give permission or help a person or group of people commit this behaviour.</p> <p>Further information about racial vilification is provided in Ahpra's Anti-discrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy.</p>

Illustration of behaviour that may be racial vilification

- 'speaking about a person's race or religion in a way that could make other people hate or ridicule them
- publishing claims that a racial or religious group is involved in serious crimes without any proof
- repeated and serious spoken or physical abuse about the race or religion of another person
- encouraging violence against people who belong to a particular race or religion, or damaging their property
- encouraging people to hate a racial or religious group using flyers, stickers, posters, a speech or publication, or websites, email or social media.'¹¹

Racism	The definition of racism adopted for the purposes of this policy is set out in Appendix 1 .
Respect Officer	Respect Officers (sometimes referred to in other organisations or industries as Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Contact Officers) play an important role in implementing the Respect @ Ahpra framework, including this policy. They

¹⁰ McLeod, J. (2021). Understanding racial terms and differences. *National Institutes of Health*. <https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/understanding-racial-terms-and-differences>

¹¹ Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission, <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/legal-and-policy/victorias-human-rights-laws/racial-and-religious-tolerance-act/>

	<p>act as a contact for employees who wish to raise concerns about inappropriate behaviour with a colleague rather than through more formal channels.</p> <p>Ahpra's Respect Officers are trained to provide confidential information and support to other employees with concerns about discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Their role is not to advocate for individuals or take action to resolve a complaint. Instead, their role is to offer options and referrals that help employees to determine the steps they wish to take in response to an issue of concern.</p>
Respondent	Means a person about whom a complaint is made.
Stereotypes	A stereotype is a widely held and oversimplified belief or perception about a particular group of people. Stereotypes can be positive, negative or neutral and are based on assumptions, generalisations or preconceived notions. These beliefs may not accurately reflect the individuality and diversity of the group being stereotyped and can lead to biased judgments and unfair treatment. Stereotypes can be harmful when they contribute to discrimination, prejudice, and inequality.
Systemic racism	Systemic racism involves the norms, laws, ideologies, policies, and practices that are designed to promote the interests of a single demographic while creating barriers or reinforcing racial inequity for individuals outside of this demographic. It describes the way in which institutions and structures fail to provide adequate service provision and equal opportunities to people because of their racial or cultural background. This macro level functioning of racism operates without needing dedicated laws, policies or practices to keep it in place, and underpins and enables other forms of racism to operate. ¹²
Unconscious bias	Unconscious biases (sometimes called implicit biases) are the 'learned stereotypes about certain groups of people that are formed outside of conscious awareness. They are automatic, unintentional, deeply engrained in our beliefs, universal and have the ability to affect our behaviour. Unconscious bias can be favourable or unfavourable attitudes which form the basis of positive or negative impressions of others.' ¹³
<p>Illustration of unconscious bias</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preferencing asking an unaccented team member to present findings, over a team member who has an accent. • making assumptions about a person based on their accent or skin colour. 	
Vicarious liability	According to Australian legal principles, employers can be held legally responsible for acts of discrimination or harassment that occur in the workplace or in connection with a person's employment. This is known as vicarious liability. In certain circumstances employers can be held vicariously liable for discrimination and harassment that occurs in the workplace, or in connection with a person's employment.
Victimisation	Victimisation is subjecting or threatening to subject someone to a detriment because they have asserted their rights under the law, made a complaint,

¹² Australian Human Rights Commission (2022). National Anti-Racism Framework Scoping Paper. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/publications/national-anti-racism-framework-scoping-report>.

¹³ NSW Department of Education. (n.d.). Unconscious bias. *Department of Education*. <https://racismnoway.com.au/about-racism/understanding-racism/unconscious-bias/>

helped someone else make a complaint, or refused to do something because it would be discrimination or victimisation.¹⁴

Illustration of victimisation

- ostracising someone who has made a complaint.
- obstructing someone by unfairly scrutinising their work after they make a complaint.
- failing to invite someone to meetings or providing them with information required to complete their role after they make a complaint.

Document control	
Approval authority	Ahpra Board
Policy owner (administrative)	Executive Director People and Culture
Responsible officer	National Director Organisational Capability
Approval date	<date>
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¹⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission. (2021). Racism: Nobody wins – Definitions of key terms. *AHRC*. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-11/ahrc_sr_2021_4_keyterms_a4_r3.pdf

Appendix 1

Defining racism

This policy adopts the following definition of racism:

- Racism exists in systems and institutions that operate in ways that lead to unequal outcomes. Racism can come in many forms and can happen in many places. Racism includes prejudice, discrimination or hatred directed at someone because of their race, colour, nationality, or national origin, descent, indigeneity, ethnicity, or religious background. Racism can be revealed through people's actions, as well as their attitudes and beliefs. It includes all the barriers that prevent people from enjoying dignity and equality because of their race.¹⁵

Ahpra recognises that racism operates at systemic, organisational, interpersonal, and individual levels. Interpersonal racism involves an individual's beliefs, attitudes, and actions that discriminate, exclude, or disadvantage another person. Systemic racism refers to the 'history, ideology, culture, and interactions of institutions and policies that work together to perpetuate inequity. It describes the way in which institutions and structures fail to provide adequate service provision and equal opportunities to people because of their racial, or cultural, background. Systemic racism is responsible for certain communities experiencing poor life outcomes (including health outcomes), lower pay, and less opportunities for advancement within leadership positions.'¹⁶

Racism continues to be widespread in Australia. A 2021 study mapping social cohesion found that 16 per cent of Australians experienced discrimination because of their skin colour, ethnicity or religion in the previous 12 months, with 34 per cent of people born in a non-English speaking country having experienced discrimination.¹⁷ Further, an online survey of over 6000 Australians in 2015-2016 found that while 80.4 per cent believed that it was a good thing for a society to be made up of different cultures, 79.3 per cent recognised that racism exists within Australia, with 17 per cent of respondents stating that they had experienced racism in the last 12 months. 33 per cent of respondents reported having experienced racism at their workplace and 25 per cent reported experiencing racism while seeking health care.¹⁸

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Racism can present in a variety of ways. It can be 'conscious or unconscious, active or passive, obvious or subtle.'²¹ It can come in the form of harassment, abuse or humiliation, violence or intimidating

¹⁵ Adapted from Australian Human Rights Commission definition, Australian Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). What is racism. *AHRC*. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/what-racism>

¹⁶ Australian Human Rights Commission (2021). Racism. Nobody Wins: Definitions of Key Terms. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/ahrc_sr_2021_4_keyterms_a4_r2_0.pdf

¹⁷ Markus, A. (2021). Mapping social cohesion. *Scanlon Institute*. <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2021/>

¹⁸ Blair, K et al. (2016). Challenging Racism Project 2015-16 National Survey. Western Sydney University. https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1202226/Challenging_Racism_Report_3.pdf

¹⁹ Markus, A. (2021). Mapping social cohesion. *Scanlon Institute*. <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2021/>

²⁰ Blair, K et al. (2016). Challenging Racism Project 2015-16 National Survey. Western Sydney University. https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1202226/Challenging_Racism_Report_3.pdf

²¹ Diversity Council Australia. (2022). Racism at work. DCA. <https://www.dca.org.au/research/racism-at-work>

behaviour. However, racism also exists in systems and institutions that operate in ways that lead to inequity and injustice.²²

1. Power is at the heart of racism. Racism 'involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies, and practices, of the society, and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices'.²³ Race-based societal power is the power some people have in society because of their race, including in education, employment, health, and government organisations.²⁴
2. Racism in Australia is enmeshed with systems of Colonisation in complex ways.²⁵ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' experiences of racism are unique in that they follow from historical and contemporary forms of assimilation, colonisation, dispossession, and genocide. The 'process of colonisation, and the beliefs that underpin it, continue to shape Australian society today.'²⁶ Racism evolves, and can impact communities and individuals in different ways, in different places, and in different points in time.
3. The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) makes racial discrimination, and racial hatred, unlawful in public life. It strives to protect everyone in Australia from discrimination based on race, and guarantee that everyone enjoys equality before the law, regardless of their racial background. Ahpra's **Anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policy** provides more information on anti-discrimination, including definitions and examples of direct and indirect discrimination.
4. Anti-racism focuses on systemic racism. Anti-racism is an active process requiring consistent, committed, and targeted action and attention.²⁷ It involves actively attempting to combat racist policies, practices, culture, and ideas. Anti-racism goes beyond being 'not racist'. It requires people to make active choices to confront and overcome injustice and promote racial equity.²⁸

²² Australian Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). What is racism. *AHRC*. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/what-racism>

²³ McLeod, J. (2021). Understanding racial terms and differences. *National Institutes of Health*. <https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/understanding-racial-terms-and-differences>

²⁴ Diversity Council Australia. (2022). Racism at work. *DCA*. <https://www.dca.org.au/research/racism-at-work>

²⁵ Creative Equity Toolkit (n.d). <https://creativeequitytoolkit.org/>

²⁶ Australian Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). What is racism. *AHRC*. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/race-discrimination/what-racism>

²⁷ Australian Human Rights Commission. (2022). Anti-racism. *AHRC*. <https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/commit-to-learning/key-terms>

²⁸ Australian Human Rights Commission. (2022). Anti-racism. *AHRC*. <https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/commit-to-learning/key-terms>

Appendix 2

Support services

If the discussion of racism in this policy causes you distress, free 24/7 support is available by calling:

Lifeline: 13 11 44; Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636; 13 YARN: 13 92 76

Anyone who has experienced racism is encouraged to contact:

Support service	Contact details
Police (in an emergency)	000
Ahpra Employee Assistance Program	1800 808 374, info@assureprograms.com.au
ACT Human Rights Commission	Website: https://hrc.act.gov.au/discrimination/sexual-harassment/ Phone: (02) 6205 2222 TTY: (02) 6205 1666 Victims Support ACT: 1800 822 272 (free call)
Anti-Discrimination NSW	Website: https://antidiscrimination.nsw.gov.au/ Phone: (02) 9268 5544 Free call: 1800 670 812
The Asian Australian Alliance Register	Website: www.asianaustralianalliance.net/
Australian Human Rights Commission	Website: www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints#main-content Phone: 1300 656 419 or (02) 9284 9600
Call It Out	Website: https://callitout.com.au/register/ Phone: (02) 9514 4454
Equal Opportunity Tasmania	Website: https://equalopportunity.tas.gov.au Phone: (03) 6165 7515 or 1300 305 062
Islamophobia Register	Website: https://islamophobia.com.au/report-an-incident/
Jewish Community Security Group	Website: www.csgvic.com.au Phone: 1300 000 274
Lifeline	Website: www.lifeline.org.au Phone: 13 11 14
NT Anti-Discrimination Commission	Website: https://adc.nt.gov.au Phone: (08) 8999 1444 or 1800 813 846
The Office of the eSafety Commissioner	Website: www.esafety.gov.au/report/forms
QLD Human Rights Commission	Website: www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-rights/sexual-harassment Phone: 1300 130 670, TTY: 1300 130 680

SA Equal Opportunity Commission	Website: https://eoc.sa.gov.au Phone: (08) 8207 1977 or 1800 188 163
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission	Website: www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/sexual-harrassment/ Phone: 1300 292 153
WA Equal Opportunity Commission	Website: www.eoc.wa.gov.au Phone: (08) 9216 3900