Equity, diversity & inclusivity

Ethics Standards

kascade®

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Document and Revision Control

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Date	Version	Author	Comments
25/11/2023	0.1	Jennifer Bennett	This is a combination of the following legacy policies: • Equal opportunities
20/01/2026	0.2	Amber Slocombe	Added link to menopause awareness training to the menopause support section.

Introduction

We know that to be our best, we need the best people.

We're working hard to demonstrate our commitment to representation at all levels, including leadership.

We know that balanced teams work best but we only have a small workforce in an industry that is still, predominantly male.

It's not easy to create a diverse and inclusive team (especially for tech roles) so we ensure that our culture is welcoming to all and seek to remove preference and eliminate bias.

In seeking to build an inclusive working environment, where all Kascaders have a strong sense of belonging, we prioritise building psychological safety so everyone (regardless of how they identify) can bring their opinion to the table. We always try our best to accommodate reasonable adjustments.

We'd like our workforce to be representative of the wider community as a benchmark.

Inclusivity

The equity, diversity and inclusivity policy gives us a platform of guidance upon which to make appropriate decisions but we also appreciate that everyone is different so personalised guidance can be provided to suit your specific needs.

To help us with this, we draw upon our values of engage everyone and understanding is crucial.

You'll have a different perspective on life so you may find that you don't agree with everything in this document. We're all ears when it comes to learning what we don't yet know, so if you have an alternative viewpoint that you don't think has been fully represented, or some insight into more progressive or inclusive ways to conduct ourselves, please let the document owner know.

Our values

To be a Kascader you must share our values – **no excuses. These aren't just some fancy** words on a wall, this is how WE do business. Our values underpin the way we make **decisions and the way we work, and we call it out when someone doesn't live to our values,** because this is our organisational DNA.

The Kascade values are how WE do business. Our values underpin the way we make decisions and our guiding principles for how we behave.

Honesty is the best policy

Be open with your teammates and give clients honest answers. We want a solid team and long-standing relationships – showing integrity and trustworthiness will make this happen.

What this means to us:

- We are truthful and we don't intentionally mislead
- We act with complete integrity and adhere to strong moral and ethical codes of doing the right thing
- We can be relied upon and trusted
- We are transparent
- We are candid and help others to develop by identifying their blind spots

What this doesn't mean:

- We are brutal, harsh or hurtful
- We have to share every detail; we respect privacy and discretion
- We excuse rudeness; we communicate truth kindly and in a considerate way

Take ownership

Show people you can be counted on to deliver because we go above and beyond for our clients. And step in when your colleagues need support or encouragement to honour our business commitments.

What this means to us:

- We empower, and are empowered, to make choices and take initiative

- We lift the load for others and own our responsibilities. We do what we say we are going to do, when we say we are going to do it

- We take responsibility for our actions and recognise how we affect others

What this doesn't mean:

- We are overly protective of our areas of responsibility

- We work in isolation and don't seek advice or support when we may benefit from it

- We are rigid and unwilling to be flexible or adjust course as necessary

Be constructive

Apply your distinct knowledge to investigate and solve problems. Think critically, and ask for advice to refine your skills and keep learning. Give others clear and helpful feedback in return, and always celebrate success.

What this means to us:

- We find solutions rather than dwelling on problems

- We communicate, openly, candidly and respectfully to encourage a conversation

- We open our minds to others and consider different points of view even if we are a subject matter expert

- We have a continuous improvement mindset where we constantly seek to make things better

- Help to build foundations of knowledge rather than just saying what you need to know right now

What this doesn't mean:

- We disrespect boundaries or overstep to force our point of view

- We are overly positive and ignore reality

- We are assertive in a way that is disrespectful

Engage everyone

Build rapport and share your expertise. Learn from each other, and always be respectful. We want to be seen as industry-leading professionals, so it's OK to be opinionated – but never arrogant.

What this means:

- We make the effort to build relationships by getting to know one another, what makes us tick and where our strengths lay

- We are present in the moment, we give our full attention to the person we are with at the time

- We welcome thoughts and experiences from others, actively listening to what they have to say and encouraging them to be open and honest

- Encourage others to participate authentically and have a voice

What this doesn't mean:

- We overcommit ourselves and spread ourselves too thinly across projects

- We reach too far to understand points of view or make decisions by committee

- We disrespect professional boundaries, especially where we may-not–know-what-we-don't-know

- We take our problems to people who can't improve the situation, solely to share our pain or to build support

- We gossip or talk behind peoples' backs to seek validation for our opinions

Embrace adaptability

Anticipate and communicate changing circumstances – if we need to switch things up, we do so without scrimping on performance. Proactively manage situations and look for ways to enhance people experiences.

What this means to us:

- We are open to change and flex to new ideas, approaches and ways of doing things
- We are resilient and bounce-back quickly in the face of challenge
- We seek to understand the benefits rather than focus on the problems
- We can be brave and fail-fast
- We play as a team and know when to build others up in good times and bad

What this doesn't mean:

- We are inconsistent and flighty, chasing from one shiny thing to the next
- We don't finish what we have started
- We resist any kind of structure to keep things fluid
- We don't worry about the consequences of our actions

Understanding is crucial

Be interested and inclusive – ask lots of questions of different people. Listen with patience and care so that people feel comfortable sharing their **opinions... and are receptive to yours in return.**

What this means to us:

- We have empathy and respect for the thoughts and experiences of others
- We really listen carefully and encourage others to speak up
- We read between the lines and delve deeper where we think something is not being said
- We embrace respectful debate and candidness
- We offer our opinions thoughtfully and kindly

What this doesn't mean:

- We passively agree with everything we hear or every differing perspective
- We excuse harmful or unethical behaviour
- We expect others to educate us rather than putting in the effort to understand the topic for ourselves
- We ignore facts or reality
- We blindly believe what we're told and skip our due diligence

What we mean by Equity, diversity and inclusion

Equity

If equality is giving everyone the same, equity is giving people what they need to have the same experiences.

We are committed to building tools and support those who need it to achieve their goals. This may mean that neuro-diverse Kascaders are offered alternative ways to learn, give or receive feedback, etc or those who have caring responsibilities can join in with company events during their working hours and not have to make difficult decisions between career and family responsibilities.

Diversity

Across history, large numbers of specific groups have been underrepresented in the workplace. Today, people from these groups are prejudiced or underrepresented and improving diversity means improving representation.

Inclusion

Inclusion refers to the behaviours, values and social norms we work by which ensure that people from all backgrounds feel welcome. Inclusivity is crucial for diversity efforts to success and also in building a better world for everyone.

What are we doing to improve our position?

The Kascade senior leadership team is currently a bunch of white people and despite our best intentions, there may be blind spots to identify, or biases to unlearn.

To ensure that Kascade is genuinely an inclusive place to work for everyone we need feedback on our policies and processes. We need to be actively listening to what we are told and stay accountable and humble.

All of our guidance and policies includes and inclusivity statement to ensure that we **recognise that we don't know what we don't know and encourage Kascaders will a different** point of view to help us to grow.
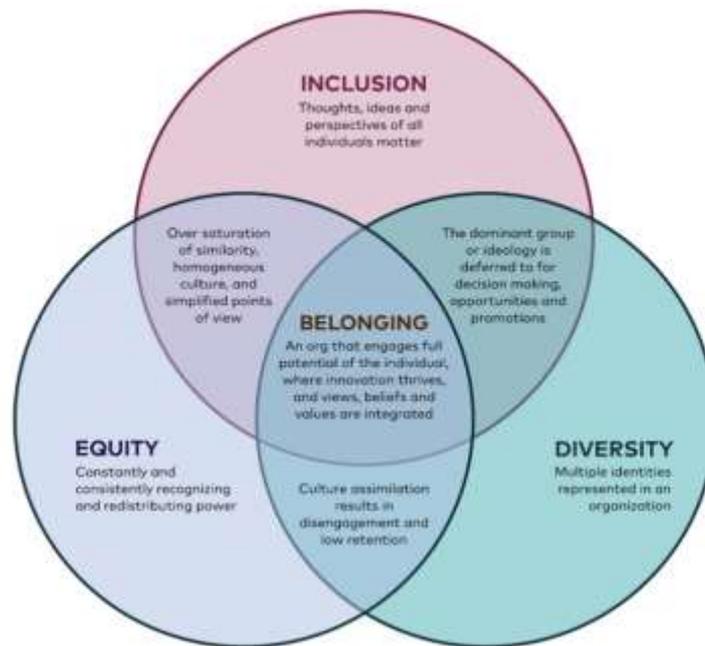
It is a key part of our induction process to help new Kascaders understand how prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination are handled at Kascade.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination so if you spot it, call it out.

Belonging

Belonging is the feeling of being part of something and mattering to others, able to bring your authentic and full self. Belonging is important to us, it helps attract talent, the settling in for new Kascaders, talented Kascader retention and team spirit generally.

To help with belonging we:

- Get to know our team members
- Praise publicly or privately
- **Learn one another's preferences**
- Manage communications to ensure that everyone has the chance to have their say
- Consider different learning styles in training provision
- Be vigilant to identify exclusivity
- Give everyone a chance to shine
- Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing
- Build social connections

Recruitment

We know that balanced teams work best but we only have a small workforce in an industry that is predominantly male. **We'd like to have a 50/50 gender split but we don't see parity in** our candidate applications.

We ensure that as part of our attraction methods we go off the beaten track and we check our role descriptions for biased and gendered language.

We don't discriminate in our hiring process, we hire on skills, experience and personality traits – existing and potential.   We recognise that there is systemic barriers to entry for marginalised candidates so we work hard to break those down by understanding how you may have had to work harder or differently to another candidate with a different story.

We know that recruitment tends to be led with bias so we pay careful attention to hold those with responsibility for hiring to account that they are not simply hiring in their own image or with preference.

We are an equal opportunities employer and a pleasant and supportive place to work. We welcome applications from those who are significantly underrepresented in the technology sector, such as women, non-binary people, transgender people, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ community and individuals from Black and Minority ethnic communities.

Gender pay gap

Our total reward policy guides us to ensure that we pay fairly.

Learning & development

We believe in everyone so our training matrix ensures that learning and development is role focussed rather than individual.

Language

We avoid language which is either offensive or exclusive and always seek to use inclusive language like:

- Person with disabilities or special abilities *rather than* disabled person
- 'Hi all' *rather than* 'hi guys'
- Sexual orientation *rather than* sexual preference
- 'Would you mind rephrasing' **or 'let me say that back to** you to ensure I understood **correctly'** *rather than* 'that doesn't make sense'
- Overwhelming or wild *rather than* crazy or insane
- Role model *rather than* poster boy

Menopause support

We support Kascaders who are experiencing issues as a result of menopause symptoms.

We create an environment where:

- Kascaders can discuss menopause openly and comfortably
- Reasonable adjustments can be discussed openly and without concern for judgement
- Managers have support and training to understand symptoms and how they can be supportive
- Conversations about individuals are treated confidentially and sensitively

You can access an awareness module via your e-learning account : elearning247.com