

Rainbow Ready roadmap



**Guide B5: Setting guide
for learning environments**



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Except where otherwise indicated, the images in this document show models and illustrative settings only, and do not necessarily depict actual services, facilities or recipients of services.

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the contributions of Dr Catherine Barrett and Daniel Witthaus in development of this resource.

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Available at **Rainbow Ready roadmap** <<https://www.vic.gov.au/rainbow-ready-roadmap>>.

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Guide B5: Setting guide for learning environments

About the Rainbow Ready roadmap

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* is a set of resources for rural and regional communities to build lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQA+) inclusion. The resources were developed by LGBTIQA+ communities, for all regional and rural communities to work together and to address inequalities experienced by LGBTIQA+ people. The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* responds to calls from rural and regional Victorians for the need to build LGBTIQA+ inclusion by equipping communities with practical resources.

About this setting guide



The Setting Guide should be read following **Guide A: User guide**.

The setting guide for **learning environments** has been developed for rural and regional learning environments that want to be more LGBTIQA+ inclusive by using the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*. Learning environments include TAFE colleges, universities and schools. It recognises that students of all ages can experience LGBTIQA+phobic bullying that reduces their capacity to learn.

This setting guide includes



A goal for learning environments to become LGBTIQA+ inclusive



10 indicators to show that the goal has been achieved



Tips and suggested activities for achieving each indicator



The goal and indicators in this **setting guide** have been developed from consultations with learning environments in rural and regional Victoria. The resource also draws on the Victorian Government's Safe Schools program¹, which is delivered by the Department of Education and Training.








1 Visit the Victorian Government's website <<https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-schools>>.

Using the setting guide

This setting guide is used in:

Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Assess your community group's current state of LGBTIQA+ inclusivity with the assessment and evaluation tool, identifying areas for improvement	Plan your activities using the action plan	Evaluate your progress, again using the evaluation tool to measure project outcomes against the indicators for LGBTIQA+ inclusivity

Steps

 Step 1	Read this setting guide including its goal, indicators, tips and suggested activities
 Step 2	Complete an assessment of the current state of your learning environment against the indicators, using the assessment and evaluation tool
 Step 3	Use the assessment results and setting guide to identify areas for opportunity. Develop your action plan to improve against the LGBTIQA+ indicators of inclusion
 Step 4	Deliver the activities under your action plan
 Step 5	After your activities, use the assessment and evaluation tool to again measure your progress against the LGBTIQA+ indicators of inclusion
 Step 6	Discuss evaluation results and findings with your project team and LGBTIQA+ community members. Consider making the evaluation report publicly available to demonstrate progress
 Step 7	Repeat your evaluation to check progress until all indicators have been achieved

Demonstrating Rainbow Ready status

As one of the steps to demonstrating Rainbow Ready status, you will need to complete the **evaluation tool** and meet all the indicators in this **setting guide**. Ratings of 'unmet' or 'partly met' mean you cannot show Rainbow Ready status. You will need to undertake further activities to progress in these areas.

In some instances, there may be genuine team, group or organisational constraints that mean you won't be able to meet an indicator for the time being. Where this applies, the indicator should be marked as '**unable to be met**', with an explanation of why the indicator will not be achieved.

Marking indicators as '**unable to be met**' will not stop you from achieving Rainbow Ready status. Indicators that are validly marked as 'unable to be met' will not be considered for the purpose of completing the Rainbow Ready checklist.

Refer to the **user guide** for the process on how to demonstrate Rainbow Ready status.



Goals and indicators for learning environments

Goal

The learning environment, including universities, schools and TAFE colleges, is free from LGBTIQ+phobic bullying and discrimination and LGBTIQ+ students feel safe and supported.

Indicators

Indicators are measures used to understand the ways in which a learning environment has strengthened its LGBTIQ+ inclusion, and where there might be room for improvement.

Each indicator aligns with one of the four core principles of LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

1 Understanding



1. Education is provided to staff on how to support LGBTIQ+ students.

2 Inclusion



2. LGBTIQ+ students are supported to take part in the learning environment.
3. Support is provided for an LGBTIQ+ student support group.

3 Visibility



4. The learning environment has a policy on LGBTIQ+ inclusion.
5. Curriculum content and language is LGBTIQ+ inclusive.
6. The learning environment displays messages of welcome to LGBTIQ+ staff and students.

4 Safety



7. LGBTIQ+ students and staff are free from bullying and discrimination.
8. LGBTIQ+ students and staff feel safe in the learning environment.
9. Potential risks to the safety of LGBTIQ+ students and staff are identified and minimised.
10. The learning environment responds to LGBTIQ+phobic incidents by supporting LGBTIQ+ staff and students and taking steps to prevent future incidents.



The 10 indicators are used to show the goal has been achieved or areas for improvement.

Tips and suggested activities

The following activities and tips will help you achieve the indicators and progress your *Rainbow Ready roadmap* activities.



Are you considering intersectionality?

Intersectionality is an approach to understanding the diverse experiences of people and their identities. It involves recognising that this can create different layers and types of discrimination for an individual or group.

It is important to understand that LGBTIQ+ experiences are not all the same.

As well as being diverse in their sexuality, gender identity or sex characteristics, LGBTIQ+ people are diverse in other ways. This might include their Aboriginality, ethnicity, skin colour, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, faith, ability, age, mental health, housing status or geographic location. For example, LGBTIQ+ Victorians from ethnic faith communities experience life as LGBTIQ+, as well as being a person of colour and person of faith.



It is critical to consider intersectionality when using the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*. This will help ensure your activities engage, include, support and respond to the needs of all LGBTIQ+ people. Ask the questions: Who is not at the table? Are we including LGBTIQ+ people with different identities, and lived experiences in planning and project delivery? How are we enabling the voices of those who we don't usually hear from?

	Indicator	Tips	Activities
	<p>1.</p> <p>Education is provided to staff on how to support LGBTIQ+ students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who understand LGBTIQ+ experiences and challenges may be more likely to understand the need for LGBTIQ+ inclusive learning environments. • Training should support staff to reflect on their own values and beliefs, and the impact these have on how they engage with LGBTIQ+ students in the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule annual training for staff to build knowledge and understanding of LGBTIQ+ experiences. • Collaborate with local community groups to host an educational workshop on LGBTIQ+ allyship. • Develop an inclusion policy to communicate expectations on LGBTIQ+ inclusivity to staff.
	<p>2.</p> <p>LGBTIQ+ students are supported and able to take part in the learning environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the Victorian Government's <i>Guide to making your school safe for LGBTIQ+ students</i>². • When LGBTIQ+ students feel supported, they can contribute meaningfully in the classroom. • Supporting LGBTIQ+ students can decrease absenteeism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate messages of LGBTIQ+ support in senior staff speeches at assemblies and public events. • Display posters that celebrate diversity • Complete a Safe Schools participation plan³. • Promote appropriate LGBTIQ+ support services, such as Rainbow Door⁴.

2 <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/safeschoolsguide.pdf>

3 https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/safeschools_progparticipation.pdf

4 <https://www.rainbowdoor.org.au/>

Indicator	Tips	Activities
 <p>3. Support is provided for an LGBTIQ+ student support group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTIQ+ students who express interest in establishing LGBTIQ+ support groups are assisted to do so. • LGBTIQ+ support groups are provided with ongoing assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the support group to all new students when they start at a university, school or TAFE college. • Provide funding to the LGBTIQ+ support group to run an IDAHOBIT⁵ event.
 <p>4. The learning environment has a policy on LGBTIQ+ inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies on LGBTIQ+ inclusion can clarify expectations on providing LGBTIQ+ inclusive spaces for students and safe workplaces for staff. • Consultation with LGBTIQ+ students and staff can help identify content for policies on inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inclusion policy that explicitly mentions support for LGBTIQ+ students, staff and their families
<p>5. Curriculum content and language is LGBTIQ+ inclusive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Victorian Government's <i>Inclusive language guide</i>⁶. • LGBTIQ+ students and staff will value the use of inclusive language. This allows them to feel seen, valid and represented. • Inclusive language can have a positive impact for students and staff who don't feel safe disclosing their LGBTIQ+ identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include inclusive language in printed and online learning materials. • Consider how curriculum content and language can be inclusive of diverse LGBTIQ+ communities. For example, you could include images of people of colour in learning resources. • Emphasise the importance and contributions of LGBTIQ+ people across history.
<p>6. The learning environment displays messages of welcome to LGBTIQ+ staff and students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow flags, stickers and badges can provide simple welcome signals. • Support these symbols with meaningful actions and policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate or commemorate key LGBTIQ+ days of significance. • Communicate the school's vision for creating a safe learning environment. • Achieve Rainbow Ready status and include it in your welcome message to students and staff.

5 <https://www.vic.gov.au/idahobit-day-events-victoria>

6 <https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>

Indicator	Tips	Activities
 <p>7. LGBTQIA+ students and staff are free from bullying and discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an LGBTQIA+ inclusive learning environment is key to addressing bullying and harassment, and preventing student suicide and self-harm. • The commitment to becoming a safe learning environment may result in less discriminatory behaviour and increased student attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and promote a commitment statement to LGBTQIA+ inclusivity on your website. • Offer bystander training to staff, to support them in challenging discriminatory language or behaviour whenever they witness it. • Support student-led LGBTQIA+ activities, sporting events and support groups.
<p>8. LGBTQIA+ students and staff feel safe in the learning environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who do not feel safe or included cannot learn effectively and reach their full potential. • Student-led action is an effective way to create change in learning environments, so consult with LGBTQIA+ support groups and students to understand their experience of safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an all staff and student survey to gain feedback on whether LGBTQIA+ staff and students feel safe. • Publish a plan to address any areas for improvement identified by the survey.
<p>9. Potential risks to the safety of LGBTQIA+ students and staff are identified and minimised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning environment should consult with LGBTQIA+ consumers or service users about their safety concerns. • Consider any risks to LGBTQIA+ students or staff in a classroom setting. • Remember that under Victoria's Schools Mental Health Fund, wellbeing programs can include LGBTQIA+ affirming work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a risk management plan to ensure LGBTQIA+ students and staff are supported and able to feel safe. • Forge partnerships with local community groups to undertake a joint Rainbow Ready project, addressing safety concerns collaboratively.
<p>10. The learning environment responds to LGBTQIA+phobic incidents by supporting LGBTQIA+ students and staff and taking steps to prevent future incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take immediate steps to stop the incident. Offer support to the LGBTQIA+ student or staff member. • Provide feedback or discuss consequences of actions with the perpetrator. • Communicate to student, staff, parent and carer bodies that LGBTQIA+phobic incidents will not be tolerated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a policy for responding to LGBTQIA+phobic events and a system for keeping a record of incidents, responses and follow-ups.