

# PROVISION OF DISABILITY SUPPORT Guidelines



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RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:	Client Services Manager
CATEGORY:	Student Information and Services
DATE ENDORSED BY THE DIRECTOR:	28 April 2009
RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS:	<a href="#">Access and Equity Policy</a> <a href="#">Academic Grievance Procedure</a> <a href="#">Australian Quality Training Framework</a> <a href="#">Complaints Resolution Procedure</a> <a href="#">Disability Act 2006</a> <a href="#">Disability Standards for Education 2005</a> Learning Plan Template <a href="#">Student Support Services Brochure</a> <a href="#">Privacy Statement</a>

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## Introduction

South West Institute of TAFE is committed to providing accessible and flexible education and training options to people with a disability in compliance with the requirements of the Disability Act 2006, the Education Standards and the Australian Quality Training Framework.

The aim of the Institute's Disability Support service is to enable people with a disability to access educational opportunities on an equal basis, not to provide them with an undue advantage. There are a range of services available and eligibility for each type of service is dependent upon the disability and its direct impact on the student's capacity to learn. These services are administered through the Disability Support Coordinator (DSC).

These Guidelines are designed to provide clear direction for staff and students in regards to access to service, eligibility and possible costs of additional educational supports.

## Scope

These Guidelines apply to all students enrolling at the Institute who identify as having a disability and to all teaching and support tutor staff.

## Eligibility

Support services are available to eligible students who have a disability, they will be required to demonstrate or show evidence that they have a disability and are eligible for services.

The following are **not eligible** to access disability support funds:

- People who have literacy and numeracy difficulties because of social reasons, English as a second language, or limited educational opportunities.
- People under the age of 16 years of age are presumed to be within the secondary educational system and not included in disability support funding.
- TAFE in Schools (TAFEiS) students who need support are to be provided this by their secondary school, the exception to this is if they need additional support at TAFE that they would not usually require at school.
- Apprentices and trainees may be able to access alternative support funds and application is made by the DSC through the relevant Apprenticeship Centre.

## Enrolment Process

Students are required to complete the Enrolment Form in full and have it signed by an appropriate teacher prior to their enrolment being accepted.

It is the teacher's responsibility to check whether the person has declared that they have a disability. If they have, the teacher must ask whether they need additional assistance and provide them with the brochure detailing Institute support services available.

If additional support is indicated then a meeting must be scheduled with the teacher, student and the DSC **prior to commencement of the course**. It is the responsibility of the teacher / course coordinator to ensure that this meeting is scheduled.

Enrolment confirmation includes the following statement:

*IMPORTANT INFORMATION: South West TAFE can provide a range of additional support to students who may require assistance. Please read our Student Support Services brochure and familiarise yourself with the services available.*

*If you have any type of disability please ensure that you have marked this on your enrolment form, if not, please notify South West TAFE and get your enrolment adjusted. It is important that our information is accurate; this information is used for statistical purposes (non-identifying) and provided to our Disability Support Coordinator as required.*

### **Students with a disability who don't require support**

All students who identify that they have a disability but don't require support will be sent an information pack including:

- An overview of the range and type of assistance available
- A copy of the complaints procedure including how to contact the Disability Services Commissioner
- A privacy statement outlining how TAFE uses and stores personal information.
- An outline of the process undertaken to get additional support.
- A statement specifying our requirement for people who have individual support funds to provide TAFE with the amount of these we are entitled to as a registered Disability Service.
- The contact details of the Disability Support Coordinator and an invitation to contact the DSC if they decide they need additional help at any point during their course of study.

If assistance is requested at a later date then the student must agree to have their enrolment adjusted to reflect this. A Learning Plan will be developed with the student, teacher and DSC.

### **Students with a disability who require additional support**

Students who indicate that they require additional support and are eligible will be required to have a Learning Plan developed in conjunction with the DSC and course coordinator. This should occur prior to commencement of the course; additional supports may be withheld until the Learning Plan is completed. The course coordinator is responsible for initiating the meeting to develop the Learning Plan.

All students who have a Learning Plan developed will be provided with an information pack including

- An overview of the range and type of assistance available
- A copy of the complaints procedure including how to contact the Disability Services Commissioner
- A privacy statement outlining how TAFE uses and stores personal information.
- An outline of the process undertaken to get additional support.
- A statement specifying our requirement for people who have individual support funds to provide TAFE with the amount of these we are entitled to as a register Disability Service.
- The contact details of the Disability Support Coordinator.
- A copy of their Learning Plan

A mid semester report will be completed by the teacher / course coordinator to update the DSC of the student's progress. The employer of apprentices / trainees will be updated on the student's progress as a part of this review.

A Learning Plan review can be requested at any time by the student, teacher, DSC, primary caregiver or advocate.

Students will be notified that funding is 'outcome based' and to think very carefully about what courses / competencies they enrol in as their results may have an impact on the level of support they receive in the future. If they have already enrolled then the withdrawal process will be explained in the event they decide to change courses or seek other educational options.

## **Support provision guidelines**

- Only the DSC or Client Services Manager can assess the student's requirements, source appropriate tutors and authorise a funding allocation for support.
- Teaching staff are not to organise a support tutor unless specifically requested to do so by the DSC or Client Services Manager.
- Where possible, additional assistance in the form of a support tutor is to be "outside" the classroom or in the format of "teacher support", with a focus on students with particular learning needs as opposed to "student support". (*This is to minimise the student feeling "different" and is in line with the State Plan, Education Standards and Disability Act*).
- There will not be more than one support tutor per class except in "exceptional" circumstances. If more than one person in the same course of study requires "out of class" tutorial assistance then this will be provided in a group situation.
- There will be greater access to Assistive Technology to help students and more training for teachers on its use. Where possible this technology to be used instead of Support Tutors who will undertake to train the students in its use with the aim of increasing independence and withdrawing as the student becomes more competent.
- There is a nominal cap on the number of support hours available, this is due to limited resources and the large number of students requesting assistance. The number of hours allocated to each student / classroom within this range will be determined by the DSC and is dependant upon funding and need.
- Students can "purchase" additional support hours if required, support other than when provided for TAFE in Schools students must be by support staff employed directly by TAFE and appropriately trained in their role and responsibilities.
- The role of the support tutor is not to do the work for the student but to be a tool to facilitate their learning. The work must still be the students own and they need to prove that they are competent.
- The DSC will be available to assist course coordinators / teachers to be compliant with the AQTF in regards to inclusive practices and provide regular training available to TAFE staff on all aspects of disability and related legislation.

## **Cancellation of classes or changes to timetabling**

It is the course coordinator / teacher's responsibility to ensure that support tutors and the DSC are informed of any changes to time tabling / classes.

Support tutors and the DSC require a minimum of one weeks notice for any changes, if this is not provided resulting in the support tutor attending and not being required then the Department in which the support is being supplied will be responsible for payment of the scheduled hours and any related costs in full.

## **Potential student costs**

In accordance with Department of Human Services (DHS) Policy and/or negotiated by South West TAFE, if a student with a disability who requires support is in receipt of individualised support funds able to be used for educational purposes then they are required to provide TAFE with these funds. The level of funds required will be determined on an individual basis dependant upon funding and assessed need; this is usually determined by the funding provider.

Students may be provided with a range of equipment / technology on a "loans" basis via the library system, they are responsible for ensuring the safe return of this equipment in good condition and in a timely manner. If the equipment is damaged or lost then the student may be held accountable for the cost of its replacement.

Students can "purchase" additional support hours; this can be done via a brokerage arrangement with other service providers or via a direct purchase. The hourly rate may vary dependant upon the qualifications of the support staff but is generally based on the current DHS unit cost