

LEARNING - POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Policy Title	Access, Equity & Support Policy & Procedure
Date	January 2022
Review Date	January 2023
Authority	Head of Learning
Responsibility	Compliance Manager
Standards (SRTOs)	Clause 1.7, Clause 4.1, Clauses 5.1-5.4, Clauses 8.5-8.6

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline ASFA’s approach to ensuring fair and equitable access and support to our services regardless of an individual’s age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or location.

SCOPE:

This policy and procedure applies to all prospective and current ASFA students and staff.

POLICY:

Access, Equity and Support Principles

- ASFA is committed to:
 - equal opportunity for all students
 - providing an inclusive learning experience
 - giving students with disability the right to participate in its courses on the same basis as students without disability via reasonable adjustments
 - being responsive to individual needs
 - non-discriminatory enrolment procedures where all individuals are treated fairly and equitably
 - being sensitive to students’ needs and circumstances
 - increasing the participation of all learners
 - creating and maintaining a learning environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying
 - ensuring access and equity issues are considered during course development
 - the promotion of and adherence to the principles of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying

- ASFA is committed to creating and maintaining a learning environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying on the grounds specified under State and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation and ASFA’s own related policies.

- ASFA will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying of students or ASFA staff members, presenters, trainers or assessors by any other student or ASFA employee.
- Staff and students are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour contributes to the maintenance of a learning environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.
- All students and staff are encouraged to bring any instances of perceived harassment, discrimination or bullying to the attention of ASFA by following ASFA's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
- If there is a suspected violation of any of these above, action may be taken by ASFA which may include suspension or withdrawal from the course. For serious incidents, ASFA reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities.

Course Design

- When planning a new course or developing learning materials, ASFA considers access and equity issues to ensure the course is flexible and inclusive of a range of student needs, has a mix of instructional and assessment modes to accommodate different learning styles, has sufficient support mechanisms for all students and avoids non inclusive and discriminatory language and examples.
- ASFA follows the principles of 'Universal Design' and design training and assessment strategies, learning materials and learning activities to be accessible and useable by learners with widely different backgrounds and abilities.

Enrolment/Reasonable adjustment

- ASFA's enrolment process is free from bias, non-discriminatory and the same for all applicants.
- ASFA will not exclude, discontinue or dismiss a student on the grounds of having a disability alone.
- Students are encouraged to disclose their disability or learning needs and request reasonable adjustments on these grounds. Specific needs for students with a disability may also be disclosed by the student at any time during their training with ASFA.
- Disclosure of a disability to ASFA is optional and an individual does not have to disclose their disability unless they want to arrange reasonable adjustments, or if their disability poses a risk to themselves or others.
- All personal information provided around disabilities is handled confidentially and any data collected is in accordance with the *ASFA Privacy Policy*.
- ASFA recognises that it may not always have the internal knowledge and expertise to identify and provide the support needed for some individuals and may ask for support from external providers where needed.
- Any adjustments made will not compromise the integrity of the learning or assessment process. Adjustments are made to allow the student an equal chance at completing the assessment – they are not designed to provide an unfair advantage to the student.
- Any adjustments considered must be 'reasonable' in that it must not impose unjustifiable hardship on the person or ASFA. Decisions on whether the adjustment can be made will be based on consideration of a range of factors, including the impact on ASFA, staff and other students, and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment as detailed in Section 10 of the Disability Standards for Education 2005, and in consideration of the definition of 'unreasonable hardship' defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)

- In accordance with 1.7 of the Standards for RTOs, ASFA is required to ensure that all students undertaking a nationally recognised qualification have sufficient language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills to complete the course. These

requirements are outlined in the *Enrolment Policy and Procedure* and in the course outline for any nationally recognised course.

- ASFA is committed to supporting students with LLN needs and to assist students to identify these needs prior to enrolment so they can make an informed decision about whether the course is suitable for them.
- Where LLN gaps are identified during the enrolment process ASFA will discuss options with the student including:
 - referring the individual to language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) programs or EALD programs (recommended providers can be found in Appendix 1)
 - referring to a learning specialist for advice regarding appropriate learning support and reasonable adjustment
 - identifying preliminary support programs or discussing alternative study options.

PROCEDURE:

Reasonable adjustment

- Individual learning needs should be disclosed by the student when enrolling into a course by contacting ASFA Student Services: learning@superannuation.asn.au
- Specific needs may also be identified by the student or ASFA staff at any time during the student's study.
- If individuals have additional support requirements identified which are over and above what is normally offered in the course and wish to be provided with additional support mechanisms or reasonable adjustment, the Compliance Manager will be consulted and an *Individual Support Plan* developed in consultation with the student which will outline the strategies used to provide the student with additional support.
- As part of this process, students may be required to provide evidence of the support need or disability (for example, a medical report), which will be handled in confidence. It is recommended that the report include information about the nature of the disability, how the disability affects the student and any recommendations regarding reasonable adjustments.
- The discussion and development of the *Individual Support Plan* will consider:
 - the nature of the disability
 - how the disability affects their participation
 - the students preferred adjustment
 - whether the adjustment affects others
 - how the adjustment will help them achieve the learning outcomes
 - the impacts on ASFA.
- Individual Support Plans will be saved against the student's record in the ASFA Client Relationship Management (CRM) system and communicated to the relevant parties as required (i.e. the trainer, course developer or Student Services). This communication will be in line with ASFA's *Privacy Policy*.
- If a reasonable adjustment is required, this will be discussed with the relevant ASFA staff members to ensure that the adjustment is implemented in a timely and positive manner.
- If the specific adjustments required cannot be implemented due to posing unjustifiable hardship on ASFA, or where it may result in a work health and safety issue (in accordance with state and/or federal legislation), the student will be notified in writing with the reasons the adjustment is unable to be provided and alternate options provided, including referral to an external service for support where required.
- Individuals can appeal a decision around whether an adjustment can be made by following ASFA's *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

APPENDIX 1: SUPPORT SERVICES

Name of Service	Contact	Services Offered
TAFE NSW	131601 or https://www.tafensw.edu.au/	LLN support/courses English language courses
TAFE VIC	131 823 or https://www.education.vic.gov.au/	LLN support/courses English language courses
TAFE SA & NT	1800 882 661 or https://www.tafesa.edu.au	LLN support/courses English language courses
TAFE QLD	1300 308 233 or https://tafeqld.edu.au	LLN support/courses English language courses
TAFE WA	08 6212 9888 or https://www.fulltimecourses.tafe.wa.edu.au/	LLN support/courses English language courses
Canberra Institute of Technology (TAFE Canberra)	(02) 6207 3188 or https://cit.edu.au/	LLN support/courses English language courses
TasTAFE	1300 655 307 or https://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au/	LLN support/courses English language courses
Reading Writing Hotline	1300 6 555 06 or https://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au/	LLN support
National Disability Coordination Officer Program	https://www.dese.gov.au/access-and-participation	Assistance for people with disability to access and participate in tertiary education
ADCET	https://www.adcet.edu.au/	Information for anyone working in education or students on best ways to provide support for students with disabilities
National Disability Coordination Officer Program	https://www.dese.gov.au/access-and-participation/ndco	Works strategically to assist people with disability to access and participate in tertiary education and subsequent employment
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	https://www.ndis.gov.au/	The NDIS provides funding to Australians who

		have permanent and significant disability
National Relay Service	https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/phone/services-people-disability/accesshub/national-relay-service	Services for people with disability
Vision Australia – Print Accessibility Services	https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/print-accessibility/	Print accessibility services