

Practice Guide

Participation

Overview

This practice guide is about supporting participation of students with disability in all aspects of education and training. It explores the strategies for providing accessibility, usability and inclusive education and examines how to empower students to engage in requesting support and reasonable adjustments.

What is participation?

Participation, in this context, means a student with disability can take part in courses or programs provided by a registered training organisation (RTO), on the same basis as a student without disability. This includes the use of facilities, services and supports. This participation should occur without discrimination. It means RTOs must take reasonable steps to ensure all learners are able to participate equitably in the courses or programs they provide.

'On the same basis' means the student with disability has the same opportunities, choices and experiences as a student without disability.

This equitable access extends to all required training and assessment methods, materials, resources, tools and technologies.

An RTO may provide this access to a student by owning, leasing or renting resources. Alternatively, the RTO can arrange for these materials and resources to be accessible to the students in another way, such as loan arrangements with the institution's library or an inter-institutional loan.

In the case of workplace delivery, many of the required resources may be readily available. Where a student will not have access to all required resources in the workplace and they are attending as part of a practical placement requirement of a qualification, the RTO will need to address any such gaps.

Practice considerations and checkpoints

The RTO must demonstrate the strategies it uses to enable the student to participate in the course or program, facilities, services and supports. In doing so, the RTO must have strategies to ensure:

- access on the same basis as a student without disability

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- course or program activities are sufficiently flexible to enable a range of students to participate
 - core (inherent) requirements of a course or unit, including prescribed physical requirements, are made clear to students so they can make informed decisions
 - information provided by the student, or an associate of the student, informs decisions about supports, services and adjustments that support participation
 - appropriate processes are in place to negotiate, agree and implement supports, services and adjustments to enable participation
 - student supports, services and adjustments are appropriate to assist the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes
 - the provision of a reasonable substitute (e.g., alternative elective unit) where a core (inherent) requirement cannot be achieved within the context of the overall aims of the course or program
 - any activities that are not conducted in classrooms and associated extracurricular activities or activities that are part of the broader educational program, are designed to include the student.

Links to the relevant legislation and standards to meet RTO obligations

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(DDA\)](#)

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of disability in education.

[Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\) \(DSE\)](#)

Standards for Participation – Part 5: The educational provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to participate in the course or program provided by the educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs):

[National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcomes Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations\) Instrument 2025](#)

Outcome 1: Quality training and assessment engages VET students and enables them to attain nationally recognised, industry relevant competencies.

Outcome Standard 1.1: Training is engaging, well-structured and enables VET students to attain skills and knowledge consistent with the training product.

Outcome Standard 1.4: The assessment system ensures assessment is conducted in a way that is fair and appropriate and enables accurate assessment judgement of VET student competency.

Outcome Standard 1.8: Facilities, resources and equipment for each training product are fit-for-purpose, safe, accessible and sufficient.

Outcome 2: VET students are treated fairly and properly informed, supported and protected.

Outcome Standard 2.1: VET students have access to clear and accurate information concerning the organisation, the relevant training product, and students are made aware of any changes that may affect them.

Outcome Standard 2.2: VET students are advised, prior to enrolment, about the suitability of the training product for them, taking into account the student's skills and competencies

Outcome Standard 2.3: VET students have access to support services, trainers and assessors and other staff to support their progress throughout the training product.

Outcome Standard 2.4: Reasonable adjustments are made to support VET students with disability to access and participate in training and assessment on an equal basis.

Outcome Standard 2.5: The learning environment promotes and supports the diversity of VET students.

Outcome Standard 2.6: The wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort are identified and strategies are put in place to support these needs.

Please note: RTOs registered by the *Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority* or the *Training Accreditation Council Western Australia* may refer to the following websites for requirements specific to you.

[Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority](#)

[Training Accreditation Council Western Australia](#)

Benefits

- Student – can participate in their learning on the same basis as their peers.
- Trainer and assessor – building capability, experience and confidence in providing supports and reasonable adjustments.
- RTO – enhanced reputation and reduction in complaints about barriers.

Training and resources

- [*Practice Guides / Australian Skills Quality Authority \(ASQA\)*](#)
- [*VET Educators Supporting Students with Disability e-Learning Program*](#)
- [*UDL in Tertiary Education e-Learning Program*](#)
- [*Inclusive Teaching \(ADCET\)*](#)
- [*UDL Resources \(ADCET\)*](#)

Disclaimer

The 'supporting students with disability resources' provide guidance on legislation and policy for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) regarding vocational education and training for students with disability, but they should not be considered legal advice or impose additional legal obligations. RTOs should seek tailored legal advice to understand their specific obligations.

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