

Practice Illustration

Participation – Training Location Orientation

Practice scenario

A student has enrolled but has not yet commenced the Certificate in Information Technology (IT). The student approaches the registered training organisation (RTO) about seeking some help to orientate to the training location. The student states that they are on the autism spectrum. They say they are anxious about where the classrooms are situated and how they will be able to navigate the building. They say they have concerns about how they will know which class to go to and what rules the RTO has. The student is particularly interested in whether there are any quiet areas. These are useful when they get anxious.

The student tells the RTO staff member they use a range of strategies to manage their anxiety. It helps to prepare. They also say that they worry about who their teachers will be, and they ask if the teachers are kind. Do they provide extra support and instruction when the work gets difficult? The student says that many teachers don't give enough clear information, which is confusing. Some don't have time to explain things further. The student says this is stressful. It affects their ability to think and makes writing assessments difficult.

The RTO staff member reassures the student and says the trainers and assessors will be supportive. They take the student's details, promising that the course coordinator will be in contact with them this week.

Better practice response

The course coordinator calls the student and arranges to meet in the week before the first class. When the student arrives, the course coordinator greets them. They introduce themselves and ask the student how they would like to be referred to and whether they would like to shake hands or not. They offer the student a couple of choices about where to sit, suggesting the office or a quiet area nearby. The student indicates that they are comfortable with meeting in the office.

The course coordinator starts by outlining some of the key points for discussion. They check with the student to see whether there is anything else they want to cover. What would they like to start with? The student says they would like to have an orientation tour first.

The course coordinator provides a building map and highlighter pen for the student, suggesting they highlight key areas as they take the tour. The coordinator explains how the rooms are coded and identifies where all the bathroom facilities, kitchens and general student areas are. They identify the IT classrooms and the paths to key facilities. The coordinator also identifies a quiet area near the IT classrooms. The student confirms that the area is suitable for them and marks it on the map.

The course coordinator provides the student with a list of the IT trainers and assessors. Alongside each person is their email address and a photo. While explaining that email is the best way to communicate with the trainers and assessors, they clarify that staff are only expected to respond during weekdays, not on weekends. It is explained that the student phone line goes to a generic number with an answering service. This number is best to use when the student is not able to attend class.

The course coordinator asks the student to get out their schedule. Together they discuss how the schedule works, including how it indicates when there are classes on-site and when there are classes online. The trainer and assessor will provide an orientation to the online platform during the first class. The student is reassured that it is fine to make an appointment if they have any concerns after that session.

The student confirms that they are happy with the information provided. They ask if it is okay to do one more walk around. Encouraging the student to take the lead, the course coordinator offers to answer any more queries along the way.

The course coordinator explains where the closest public transport stops are. They also indicate local food outlets, noting that most students bring their lunch and use the kitchen facilities, including a fridge for storing food and a microwave for reheating. They show the student the undercover outdoor area they are free to use.

The student says they feel less concerned now they have had an orientation. The course coordinator suggests they meet again in the first week of class. They will send the student an email to make a time.

Action and Evidence

This RTO has taken reasonable steps to be responsive to the student's needs. They have also provided a range of support services that align to these needs.

The student has been provided with accurate and relevant information about services and supports available to them, as well as information about participation expectations. After receiving this type of support, the student is likely to feel empowered and confident about attending and participating.

The RTO can also document these provisions in the student's file and use any feedback from the student about this process to improve orientation for all students.

Please note: Every student's particular circumstance will be unique, and the illustration of practice is indicative and offered as guidance only.

Links to the relevant legislation and standards to meet RTO obligations

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

Making reasonable adjustments – Part 3: The Standards generally require providers to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken by an education provider in relation to applying for enrolment, participating in the course or program, or accessing services and facilities. The education provider must ensure the student with disability can access, use and participate on the same basis as a student without disability. There is no requirement to make unreasonable adjustments.

Standards for Enrolment – Part 4: The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the prospective student is able to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment in, the institution on the same basis as a prospective student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination. Enrolment includes marketing, course information, communication and counselling, assessment of learner needs, disclosure, and fees information.

Standards for Participation – Part 5: The education provider must take reasonable step 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.

Standards for Student Support Services – Part 7: The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to use support services used by the students of the institution in general on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination. This includes having available internal and external services and supports, informing students of what is available, and providing access to specialised services and supports as necessary.

2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs):

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

Outcome1: Quality training and assessment engages VET students and enables them to attain nationally recognised, industry relevant competencies.

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 those 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*](#)

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.

This resource is funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations through the Supporting Students with Disability in VET project.