# Transcripts: Reasonable Adjustments – Opening the door for learners with a disability

Reasonable adjustment is an action taken to alter the teaching method or assessment that allows a person with a disability to participate in the course on the same basis as any other student. Registered Training Organisations are required by law to allow students with a disability equal access to education. The laws are: the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) The Education Standards (2005) which make it unlawful for education provider to discriminate against a person because of their disability. In Victoria there is also the Equal Opportunity Act (2010), which requires organisations to take proactive measures to eliminate discrimination.

When thinking about reasonable adjustment the teacher should consider: how the disability affects the student's ability to participate. The adjustment requested. Ensuring an unfair advantage is not given to the student and the adjustment does not affect other students and staff.

Every person with a disability is different and will request adjustments to meet their individual needs. Common adjustments are: Extensions for assignments. Extra time for tests. A note-taker for theory classes.

Consultation and negotiation is an important part of ensuring teachers meet their reasonable adjustment obligations. Students with a disability are often the best source of information on the adjustment that is appropriate for them. [Music]

Consultation involves speaking to the student about the assistance they require to identify support strategies. Agreed adjustments must be stated in writing to all parties and follow-up meetings scheduled. The disability support service is available to assist with a determination of reasonable adjustments. Teaching departments can assess and approve adjustment requests without external assistance Institutes need to have review mechanisms to deal with any grievances arising from differences in the students preferred adjustment and the adjustment recommended. The education provider should act on information about an adjustment in a timely way that optimises the students participation in education or training. Teachers must ensure that the integrity of the course is maintained.

Reasonable adjustment is not intended to bridge the gap between the students aspirations and their ability to successfully complete the training. The Education Standards state that RTOS can refuse an adjustment request if it would impose unjustifiable hardship. An adjustment should not affect the capacity of the Institute to provide high-quality education and remain financially viable.

The institute should consider the costs and benefits that are likely to result for the institute, the student and the student body [Music] If an institute does decide to apply unjustifiable hardship, the student should be advised about the decision and the reasons why as soon as possible. Financial hardship for an institute is always closely weighed against the benefits to the student with a disability.

Where a decision has been challenged in the courts there appears to be a greater emphasis on the effects of the adjustments on the student rather than the financial considerations for the institute. Where a student feels that discrimination has occurred because an adjustment was not granted the student can make a complaint to: the Australian Human Rights Commission or the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission [Music]