

Practice Illustration

Enrolment – Student Consultation

Practice scenario

A support worker approaches the registered training organisation (RTO) via email on behalf of a student who is Deaf. The student wants to enrol in a Community Services certificate course. The email states that all communication needs to take place through them by email. They say they will discuss the information with the prospective student.

The support worker outlines that the student will need:

- an Auslan interpreter for all oral communication (e.g., oral presentations by teachers or students, tutorials, placement sessions)
- a notetaker for any oral sessions
- extra support and tutoring
- provision of accessible materials (e.g., captions on videos and visual information.)

The support worker states in the email that all education providers are obliged to provide an equal and accessible education, and for this student, that means having Auslan interpreters, note takers and accessible materials (captions, visual information).

The student wants to enrol this term and take advantage of the current discounted price. They would appreciate a quick response confirming the availability of these supports and adjustments.

Better practice response

An RTO staff member begins to explore the viability of these requests. The RTO delivers all training online via a learning management system (LMS) and webinars. Captioning is available on all live and recorded webinars. There are print-based workbooks containing the course materials and other content. These are available in digital format as well. There are online student forums and regular question-and-answer sessions. Students are provided with a list of other resources to enhance their learning. The RTO can also help source and negotiate a placement if required.

The RTO staff member considers the qualification requirements and potential barriers. They also consider some prompting questions:

- Will the course meet the person's long-term employment and other goals?
- What are the potential challenges in meeting assessment performance requirements?
- How will the student manage vocational placement requirements?
- What strategies and assistive technologies do they already use?
- Are the requested adjustments actually required in an online course?
- What other support is currently available to the student through staff/family/friends?
- Are there appropriate arrangements for ongoing contact with trainers and assessors?

The RTO staff member is aware of the need to consult with the individual. This provides an opportunity to identify the student's specific needs, impact of their disability and any preferences they have. It is also an opportunity to explore the specific training and assessment strategy and the core (inherent) requirements for their chosen course.

Not all requested adjustments may be reasonable or necessary, and not all proposed adjustments are viable.

As the RTO staff member cannot contact the student directly, they formulate an email to the support worker. The email explains the importance of communicating with the prospective student. If this is not possible, consent is required to continue working with the support worker. They outline the consultation process.

The email also includes information about:

- the structure of delivery and the types of resources within an online course
- the general types of supports available for all students if required, including:
 - allocation of one trainer for the study journey
 - extra time to complete assessments
 - more frequent communication with staff
 - extensions to course end date
 - communication formats suitable for the individual
- availability of access and inclusion supports, including:
 - captioning on live and recorded webinars
 - conversion of print workbooks to digital formats
 - online auto-captions for student forums and question-and-answer sessions
 - a list of other resources to enhance learning
 - help to source and negotiate vocational placement

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- an analysis of the delivery and assessment methods in relation to Auslan interpreters and notetakers
 - a commitment from the RTO to support the student and to see them achieve their study goals.

The email invited the student to make further contact. The RTO has received no response or further contact.

Action and Evidence

The RTO must take reasonable steps to ensure a student with disability can participate on an equal basis as students without disability. It is also important that the student is at the centre of these discussions, or appropriate consent be provided to have these discussions with a third party. The RTO should review their policies, procedures and practices regarding access and equity; in particular, provision of training to students with disability.

All staff should have training to understand and apply the policies and procedures. The procedures should be supported by template documents. A statement on the RTO website about accessibility can also be valuable, as can a list of potential supports and reasonable adjustments. These can align with the RTO's delivery and assessment methods. These strategies inform prospective students. The RTO can also ensure that all online materials and resources are accessible and should consider creating a budget line to support these initiatives and responses. This strengthens the RTO's responsiveness to requests for support or reasonable adjustments.

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

[Australian Skills Quality Authority - Self-assurance \(examples of actions and evidence\)](#)

Links to relevant legislation and standards to meet RTO obligations

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

The RTO is a medium-to-large training provider. It must prove it has explored all options for support and reasonable adjustments and then consider the cost vs benefit of providing Auslan interpreters and note takers as requested before deciding whether providing this causes unjustifiable hardship. If it is decided that they cannot provide the adjustment on the grounds of unjustifiable hardship, the student must be informed in a timely manner.

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

Making reasonable adjustments – Part 3: The Standards require education 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 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.

[Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#)

Standard 1: The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses. The RTO must support students and respond to individual learner needs.

Standard 4: Accurate and accessible information about an RTO, its services and performance is available to inform prospective and current learners and clients. The RTO must provide accurate and accessible information to prospective and current students.

Standard 5: Each learner is properly informed and protected. The RTO must ensure learners are adequately informed about the services they are to receive, their rights and obligations, and the RTO's responsibilities under the RTO Standards.

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. More information on this disclaimer can be found at adcet.edu.au/vet/disclaimer or by contacting the [Department of Employment and Workplace Relations](#).