Reasonable adjustment

in teaching, learning and assessment for learners with disability

A guide for VET practitioners

Queensland
Government

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July 2018

Acknowledgements

This resource is an update of *Reasonable adjustment in teaching, learning and assessment for learners with disability — A guide for VET practitioners* prepared by the Queensland VET Development Centre, Department of Education and Training in November 2010.

Enquiries about this resource should be directed to InclusivePractice@desbt.qld.gov.au.

Contents

Purpose of the guide

This guide has been designed to assist VET practitioners (teachers and trainers, tutors, disability practitioners and educational managers) to make reasonable adjustment in teaching, learning and assessment for learners with disability.

It explains the concept and role of reasonable adjustment in VET to:

- increase the participation of all learners (especially those with disability)

- reduce the impact of disability on achieving a vocational qualification leading to employment.

The guide provides information and practical strategies on how reasonable adjustment can be applied in teaching, learning and assessment. It also discusses system-based actions, such as providing information on courses as well as rights and responsibilities, to pave the way for effective implementation of reasonable adjustment.

The acronyms VET, for vocational education and training, and RTO, for registered training organisation, are used throughout.

In the back of the guide are a range of fact files containing detailed information and useful references to guide RTOs and VET practitioners in making reasonable adjustment.

The information and strategies in this guide are underpinned by two sets of standards:

- *Disability Standards for Education 2005,* formulated under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992.* These standards clarify the obligations of education and training providers to make sure that learners with disability can access and participate in education without experiencing discrimination.

- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015.* These standards are based on equity and access principles and were specifically developed to ensure RTOs meet quality and compliance requirements.

Both sets of standards are helpful references for RTOs in the area of disability and reasonable adjustment and will be referred to throughout the guide.

What is reasonable adjustment?

Reasonable adjustment is a legislative term that, for VET, refers to a measure or action taken by an education provider to enable learners with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as learners without disability.

All RTOs are obliged to provide reasonable adjustment to ensure maximum participation of learners with disability. Its purpose is to make it possible for learners with disability to:

- participate fully, with the same learning opportunities as learners without disability

- have the same opportunity to perform and complete assessments as those without disability.

Reasonable adjustment in teaching, learning and assessment activity lessens the impact of an individual's disability on their capacity to learn. But, the learner still needs to do the work and demonstrate the required knowledge. Reasonable adjustment does not give learners with disability an advantage over others. Nor does it change course standards or outcomes or guarantee success. It is also not about making unreasonable adjustment; every reasonable adjustment needs to be justifiable and must uphold the integrity of the qualification.

A reasonable adjustment can be as simple as changing classrooms to be closer to amenities, or installing a particular type of software on a computer for a person with low vision.

Practices that facilitate making a reasonable adjustment include:

- encouraging learner disclosure of disability

- gathering relevant supporting information (evidence of need)

- consulting with the learner, and/or their associate where applicable.

Context for reasonable adjustment for VET learners with disability

People with disability have employment rates well below people without disability, and this is linked to poor educational outcomes *(Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers).*

But technological advances in the learning environment and the workplace, including assistive technologies specifically designed to assist people with disability, continue to open up employment opportunities.

There are two guiding principles underlying the context for reasonable adjustment in VET – inclusive practice and universal design. These principles are inherent in a learner-centred approach – they benefit all learners and can reduce the need for specialised services or supports for individual learners.

Inclusive practice in teaching is about using a range of teaching strategies to meet individual needs, and providing learning experiences that:

- take into account differing learning styles or preferences

- recognise the differences among learners

- ensure no one is excluded.

Universal design in VET means designing courses, instructional materials and instruction to be accessible and useable by learners with widely different backgrounds and abilities.

However, a learner with disability may still need additional support in the form of reasonable adjustment, to ensure the same access to learning and opportunities as a learner without disability.

A learner-centred approach in VET focuses on individual learners and their needs, and therefore any decisions about reasonable adjustment should also focus on the individual learner. Primarily, adjustments need to be based on each learner's ability to participate and achieve outcomes.

Reasonable adjustment applied to participation in teaching, learning and assessment activities could include:

- customisation within the training package or accredited course

- modification to teaching tools, tasks, methodologies and the learning and assessment environment, for example, alternative tasks, different presentation medium, learner support, use of assistive technologies

- provision of accessible information prior to enrolment plus accessible learning materials

- monitoring the adjustments to ensure learner needs continue to be met.

RTOs are obliged by law to provide reasonable adjustment to ensure maximum participation of learners with disability in teaching, learning and assessment activities.

To ensure the participation of all learners, RTOs need to:

- make sure that course activities are sufficiently flexible

- provide additional support to learners where necessary

- where a learner cannot participate, offer a reasonable substitute activity within the context of the overall course.

Fact File: Resources

- Information design

Reasonable adjustment and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Regardless of an individual's eligibility for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), RTOs remain obliged to provide reasonable adjustment.

The NDIS provides reasonable and necessary supports that are associated with activities of daily living.

RTOs provide reasonable adjustment to facilitate VET participation and learning.

Reasonable adjustment and the Skills Disability Support program

Skills Disability Support (SDS) is a Queensland Government participation strategy to ensure Queenslanders with disability achieve equitable participation in VET. Under this strategy, RTOs that have been pre-approved to deliver training and assessment services as pre-qualified suppliers (PQS) in Queensland can access specialised services.

These services are available by application only and are applied as reasonable adjustment under the *Disability Standards for Education 2005.* They include:

- assistive technology such as software, magnification aids and specialised computer accessories

- reimbursement for specialised support services such as Auslan interpreters, disability coaches, mentors and reader/scribes.

Preparing for reasonable adjustment

Reasonable adjustments don't need to be expensive or complex, but they do require preparation and planning. This includes sharing information, making decisions collaboratively and following the guidelines in the various acts and standards.

Sharing information

Sharing accessible information freely means that both the learner and the RTO can make the best decisions about the course and any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Providing information to the learner prior to enrolment is crucial in helping them select the right course as well as preparing their home or work environment to meet course demands.

Use a range of accessible formats such as web, print and electronic to ensure useful information is flexibly and optimally accessible by all learners.

Useful information includes:

- course information

    – course structure and assessment

    – core requirements of the course

    – delivery methods (including distance and e-learning options, facilities and resources available to learners)

    – industry licences or professional association requirements relevant to the qualification

    – relevant legislation

    – Occupational Health and Safety requirements for the industry area

    – literacy and numeracy levels needed for the course.

- reasonable adjustment information for learners with disability (explains the learner's responsibilities and how to access disability services)

- suggestions about how the learner can disclose information about their disability.

Refer to:

- *Disability Standards for Education 2005*, section 4.3;

- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*, Standards 1 and 5.

Example of a reasonable adjustment process

- Learner requests that a reasonable adjustment be made.

- RTO asks for evidence of disability (for example, school or medical reports) and investigates learner's eligibility for reasonable adjustments (evidence of need).

- RTO discusses the impact of disability on learning and support needs directly with the learner. (It may be possible to immediately make a reasonable adjustment, for example, granting a time extension for tasks).

Fact File: Legislation, standards and obligations

Disclosure

Disclosure of disability is the learner's choice – it is not a requirement for participation in a VET course or program. It is also their choice as to who their information is shared with. You must seek consent from the learner before sharing any of their disclosed information.

Keep in mind that creating a safe environment and proactively encouraging learners to disclose and share information about their challenges can lead to a holistic and justified approach to making reasonable adjustment.

Fact File: Exemplar: Reasonable adjustment – information for learners with disability

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Making decisions about reasonable adjustment

In order to determine what's reasonable, it may be necessary to consult with a range of people (such as, teachers, support personnel, disability specialists) in addition to the learner. Reasonable adjustment doesn't necessarily mean that all learner requests are granted. It's about consultation and negotiation, so that no one in the process is disadvantaged.

> **Fact file:** Who can help?

To get you started, here are a few specific things you might consider in your decision-making process. Think about the learner's needs around:

- writing

- reading

- hearing

- communicating with others or getting ideas across

- moving or manipulating objects

- paying attention/staying on track

- sitting for long periods

- moving around the learning environment

- remembering/retention

- dealing with frustration.

It is possible that even with reasonable adjustment, a learner may not meet the inherent requirements of the course. For instance, Occupational Health and Safety requirements may preclude learners' participation in some core course activities.

Even after all possible adjustments have been considered and expert assistance sought where applicable, the course may still remain unsuitable for the learner. RTOs should discuss these concerns directly with the learner to enable informed decisions about enrolment and participation. RTOs could also offer advice about alternative training and career path options.

Variation and individual needs

Different types of disability call for alternative teaching, learning and assessment strategies. Even within the same type of disability, individual learners may need different strategies.

For example, some learners with low vision may require audio files or text-to-speech technology; others may need large print materials or magnification aids.

Course delivery

Depending on the type of course and its method of delivery, learners with similar challenges may have different requirements.

For instance, teaching and assessment strategies for a learner undertaking a practical course may differ from those for a learner in a course that demands high levels of reading and writing.

Whole-of-life issues

Whole-of-life issues may also have an impact on learning for people with disability. The focus for the RTO should be on supporting the learner to succeed, through identifying and removing barriers to learning.

Some of the ways RTOs and teachers can help are by:

- referring a learner to a specialised external service

- facilitating learner's access to specialised services, such as a personal carer

- using strategies that address particular whole-of-life needs. For example, self-paced learning as an alternative to physically attending class; reduced study load; or online delivery.

Extra-curricular activities

Adjustments may also be required for training activities not conducted within the training environment, including 'extra-curricular activities or activities that are part of the broader educational program ...' (*Disability Standards for Education 2005*, 5.3(f)).

This may include access to library resources, participation in field trips, vocational placement and attendance at approved learner activities.

Integrity of the qualification and units of competency

Through their coursework, assessment and qualification, learners need to be able to present themselves as having the knowledge, experience and skills implicit in the award. This means any changes made to materials, activities or assessment tasks need to preserve the integrity of the course.

In the process of determining reasonable adjustment, teachers and RTOs have to balance meeting the needs of the learner with this principle of integrity.

For example, in tailoring units of competency, you need to think about: the purpose of the unit; industry standards and licensing; skills and their context; assessment methods and the skills and knowledge needed; and the evidence required to demonstrate competence.

There are rules, regulations and obligations which guide the process of reasonable adjustment in relation to course integrity, including those outlined in the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (section 3.4).

Contact the relevant Industry Reference Committee for advice on industry skills requirements, or specialist educational staff such as educational quality advisers for advice on tailoring teaching, learning and assessment for learners with disability.

Fact file: Legislation, standards and obligations

Practical applications of reasonable adjustment

Applying reasonable adjustment in your day-to-day teaching and assessment practices doesn't have to be complicated. Most ideas in this section are based on common sense and practical strategies – some that you may already use – which will benefit all learners.

Firstly, ask yourself the following questions:

- Are my materials and teaching methods inherently flexible and designed for the widest range of learners?

- Have I used the principles of universal design in my learning and assessment materials and delivery strategies?

Practical applications in teaching

- Look for opportunities to customise a unit of competency or a course with a view to allowing more flexibility.

- Provide learning materials, texts and handouts in an electronic format for greater accessibility.

- Modify teaching tools/tasks:

  – substitute alternative tasks where existing ones pose a problem for a learner

  – modify the presentation medium; for example, use visual, oral, print, demonstration and provide practice opportunities

  – adapt the physical environment and equipment; for example, use audio-visual aids, specific furniture

  – provide access to information and communication through assistive technologies, sign language interpreters, etc.

  – make time-related changes – extend or otherwise alter timeframes for teaching and learning.

- Provide learning materials, texts and handouts ahead of the class so:

  – learners and support workers can become familiar with them beforehand

  – arrangements can be made to have them converted to a different format, if needed.

- Use generic, inclusive terms when constructing learning activities; for example, use 'communicate', 'present', 'create' instead of 'speak', 'talk', 'listen', 'look', 'draw' and 'write'.

- Monitor the adjustments to ensure learner needs continue to be met.

Practical applications in learning

- Encourage learners to explore and identify the learning style that best suits them.

- Encourage as much learner independence as possible; this develops their confidence and prepares them for the workplace.

- Adopt a gradual approach towards independent learning; for example:

  – use assistive technologies that enable the learner to complete tasks independently

  – gradually reduce intensive one-on-one assistance.

- Provide learning experiences that develop all learners' acceptance of and respect for people with different needs.

- Keep in mind multiple accommodations may be necessary to meet a single learner's needs. For example, learners who require sign language interpreters may also need a note-taker as watching an interpreter precludes taking detailed notes.

- Identify if any other adjustments would be 'less disruptive and intrusive and no less beneficial' for the learner. (*Disability Standards for Education 2005,* Section 3.6).

- Monitor, in collaboration with the learner and others where applicable, the continuing relevance of adjustments to meet changing learner needs over the duration of the course.

Practical applications in assessment

- Extend or modify timeframes for assessment.

- Consider the impact of the type of assessment task on the learner.

- Present information in a range of media to increase accessibility.

- Use oral assessments (presentations, recorded responses and telephone sessions) as alternatives to written tasks.

- Seek evidence from a third party to demonstrate competence (for example statutory declaration, video of the learner undertaking a task).

- Ensure the language of assessment instruments does not create barriers (use plain English).

- Use generic terms when constructing assessment tasks; for example, use 'communicate', 'present', 'create' instead of 'speak', 'talk', 'listen', 'look', 'draw' and 'write' (inclusive language).

- Provide sufficient feedback on the progress individual learners make in relation to their learning goals.

Examples of alternative assessment methods

If a learner has difficulty with	you might be able to adjust your assessment through
concentration	- split sessions – break the assessment into appropriate component parts which can be undertaken separately - rest breaks during lengthy sessions - separate assessment venue if learner is distracted by others' movements or noise - additional time - variety of assessment methods; for example, recording devices for oral testing, telephone assessments for off-campus testing - evidence provided by the learner of completing the task in another venue; for example, an employer could verify satisfactory

If a learner has difficulty with	you might be able to adjust your assessment through
	demonstration of the competence.
expressing knowledge in writing	- oral assessment - digital recorder or similar - a scribe - sign language interpreter - additional time.
spelling and/or grammar	- additional time - a scribe - sign language interpreter - oral assessment - digital recorder or similar - a computer with generic spelling and grammar checkers, dictionaries, thesauruses or specialised literacy software - models and practical examples for the learner to demonstrate what he/she means - alternative assessment methods such as recorded interviews, slide presentations, photographic essays or models.
numbers and numerical concepts	- additional time - a calculator - assistive technology/equipment; for example, a talking calculator.

If a learner has difficulty with	you might be able to adjust your assessment through
understanding spoken information and instructions	- additional time - written instructions to complement the spoken information/instructions - sign language interpreter - rest breaks or split sessions - simple direct language (plain English) - step-by-step instructions - repetition of information given - paraphrasing to check for understanding – ask the learner to repeat what she/he is required to do - demonstration of what is required.
examination-related stress	- additional time - rest breaks - separate examination venue - online assessment - other assessment methods; for example, assignment or third-party evidence.
the English language	- a computer with a spelling and grammar checker, dictionary and thesaurus - additional time - language interpreter.

If a learner has difficulty with	you might be able to adjust your assessment through
maintaining writing posture for any length of time or writing quickly	- digital recorder or similar - oral assessment - a personal computer (if using a keyboard is preferable or more comfortable than writing by hand) - rest breaks - a scribe - other assistive technology or equipment - additional time.
reading standard-sized print/handwriting	- assistive technology such as magnifying devices to enlarge print or screen readers - Braille examination papers (with tactile diagrams, maps) - oral assessment or recorded questions - a reader - additional time - models, graphics or practical examples to illustrate questions - heavy lined paper.
hearing verbal information	- facing the learner and speaking clearly (if a learner lip-reads) - producing all relevant information in writing/digital text - assistive technology/equipment - sign language interpreter - additional time.

If a learner has difficulty with	you might be able to adjust your assessment through
physical tasks such as turning pages	• a disability support worker • a personal assistant provided by the learner • alternative methods for demonstration of competence, for example, oral assessment or third-party evidence • assistive technology/equipment • additional time.
oral communication	• additional time • an interpreter • a computer with voice synthesiser • a reader of the learner's work.

Consider other needs of the learner

Physical environment

• lighting and the elimination of glare for learners with low vision or epilepsy

• suitable furniture

• adequate space for equipment and support personnel

• access to power points to plug in assistive devices or equipment.

Separate examination venue

• if the learner is likely to be distracted by others

• if there is a risk that the use of assistive equipment or support personnel may cause distraction to other learners.

NB: Learners who are blind may need orientation to unfamiliar venues.

Making learning materials accessible

It's important for all learners, including learners with disability, to be able to readily access learning materials in a format suitable to them. These may be materials developed by individual teachers and RTOs, commercially available materials or materials which have been converted from other formats.

It's a legal obligation of the RTO to provide these learning materials.

Planning for accessible learning materials

Making materials accessible to all learners can take time. You need to plan ahead so that accessible materials are available when they're needed.

When considering which materials to use, first check the availability of existing materials (both commercial and non-commercial) in accessible formats. This saves having to convert materials into other formats, saving time and money.

It's a good idea to buy new materials in digital format where possible. This makes it easier to convert materials into a range of formats if necessary. You may also like to check for alternative digital versions of material for the same competency (say, from a different author).

When designing and developing your own learning materials, use the principles of universal design. This ensures that your materials are accessible to more people, most of the time.

Fact File: Resources

- Information design

Converting materials – creating accessible versions

Sometimes even with universal design, some learning materials will need to be converted into different formats to make them accessible to learners with disability.

While creating accessible versions for learners with disability is considered a reasonable adjustment, there are limits on what you can do for educational purposes. There are implications regarding copyright and maintaining the integrity of the materials. It is critical to be mindful of your responsibilities and rights under copyright law. Visit the Copyright Agency website at www.copyright.com.au to see current requirements, or you may like to consult a copyright librarian or other expert.

Creating accessible versions takes time – from selecting what needs to be converted to making the necessary arrangements with your organisation. Arrangements include identifying copyright and publishing details and possibly engaging an external provider to perform the conversion.

Commercial resources and organisations are available that can help you with creating accessible versions of your learning materials.

> **Fact file:** Creating accessible versions of learning materials

> **Fact file:** Resources
>
> - Copyright
>
> - Information design

Fact files

Creating accessible versions of learning materials

Converting materials (or creating accessible versions) is the practice of copying material from one format to another to make them accessible for learners with disability. For example, converting materials from hard copy to a digital sound recording for a learner with print disability.

Where creating accessible versions involves the copying of existing materials, limitations and conditions apply which are outlined in the *Copyright Act 1968*.

The laws surrounding the use of copyright material by people with disability changed as a result of amendments to the Copyright Act in 2017. Visit the Copyright Agency website at www.copyright.com.au to see the most recent information or you may like to consult a copyright librarian or other expert.

In general you should respect and protect the moral rights of the copyright owner by correctly attributing the creator or owner, and by faithfully reproducing and protecting their work.

Considerations also include:

- which copyright provisions are being relied on for the conversion

- the amount of material that can be converted

- any administrative requirements; for example, warning notices, technological and password protection measures (TPMs), how materials are communicated or shared, and notifying the Copyright Agency Limited (CAL).

When to convert materials

Before embarking on any conversion, consult with the learner and others to decide the best ways to meet their needs.

There may be a number of reasonable adjustments that can accommodate a learner's needs that are no less beneficial for the learner than converting materials into accessible formats.

For example, for some learners with low vision, rather than creating large print or audio versions enlarging text on a computer screen may be the only reasonable adjustment required.

Or for a learner who is blind, digital text-only versions of materials may become accessible through the use of a screen reader or a refreshable Braille display, removing the need for a hard copy Braille version.

When considering conversion, think about the:

- delivery and assessment methodology and general technology available

- learner's eligibility to access converted materials (Does the learner have an identified print disability?)

- most suitable format of materials as required by the learner and the amount and complexity of the material. (For example, large numbers of textbooks converted to large print may prove difficult to transport)

- assistive technology that might be used.

You should only convert materials that are not already available in the format that the learner can access. You can check for availability through:

- other RTOs and agencies

- bookshops, distributors and publishers

- other organisations (for example, Vision Australia)

- specialist databases (for example, the Copyright Agency Master Copy Catalogue – a searchable database of educational materials converted for learners with disability).

Ensuring quality

It's important to ensure that converted learning materials are of a high quality. You can maintain and improve the quality of the materials through:

- collaboration – work with the learner, teachers and any other staff when creating new materials

- feedback – provide sample materials to users to check accessibility and alignment with individual needs; develop ongoing feedback mechanisms for when materials are finalised and in use

- verification – as a minimum standard, ensure the converted materials are checked for errors, are aligned with the original materials (for example, page numbers) and where possible, are compliant with the principles of universal design.

Legislation, standards and obligations

Reasonable adjustment and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA)

- The DDA deals with discrimination in the provision of educational services.

- RTOs are required to take action to ensure people with disability have equal access to education.

- The DDA makes it unlawful to refuse a person admission to a course on the basis that they are unlikely to be able to gain employment because of their disability.

- RTOs are obligated to make reasonable adjustment if they know an adjustment is required.

- Reasonable adjustment is not intended to bridge the gap between the learner's aspirations or career goals and their current capacity to successfully complete the training.

- The DDA does not require RTOs to deliver services that they are not in the business of providing.

- Refusal to make reasonable adjustments for learners with disability may amount to discrimination.

- The onus is on RTOs to prove reasonableness where discrimination is believed to have occurred.

Reasonable adjustment and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Standards)

- Reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken in the areas of enrolment, participation, curriculum, facilities and services, plus approaches to assist a learner with disability to participate on the same basis as learners without disability.

- The Standards clarify and elaborate on the legal obligations of educational institutions, which include VET providers, and clearly identify rights and responsibilities in assisting people to understand and comply with their obligations.

- An adjustment is reasonable if it is based on the individual's needs and abilities and is balanced with the interests of all parties affected. This includes the interests of:

    - the learner with disability

    - associate(s) of the learner

    - the training provider

    - teachers and staff members involved with assisting the learner

    - other learners.

- RTOs need to provide study materials in a format that is appropriate for individual learners (section 6.3). Learners should not be disadvantaged because of the time taken to convert materials into appropriate formats.

Reasonable adjustment and the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*

- Principles of access and equity are embedded throughout the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* and include direct reference to course integrity, flexibility and ensuring reasonable adjustment is applied and monitored.

- Standard 1 relates to the integrity of the course and access to the necessary services, including reasonable adjustment, that enable learners the opportunity to master and demonstrate the skills the course is designed to teach and test.

- Standard 5 is explicit about providing upfront information to learners. If the course is not suitable for the particular learner, RTOs should discuss the concerns with the learner and offer advice about alternative training and career path options in accordance with sections 5.1 and 5.2.

Reasonable adjustment and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

A key principle underpinning the NDIS is equal right of access to services, consistent with the goals of the National Disability Strategy, which aims to maximise the potential and participation of people with disability.

The NDIS does not replace the obligations of mainstream services, such as VET. Rather, it funds personalised support related to the functional impact of an individual's disability where those supports are not part of another service system's universal service obligation or covered by reasonable adjustment.

Resources

The following is a list of resources to help with reasonable adjustment in VET. Resources are organised alphabetically under the following headings:

- copyright

- inclusive practices

- information design

- legislation, policy and guidelines

- other useful links.

Disclaimer:

Every attempt has been made to ensure the resources and tools are current. Archived resources may contain references that do not relate to current policy and standards and some links may no longer be active.

Copyright

- Copyright Act 1968, Commonwealth Consolidated Acts website

  Copyright provisions which allow copyright products to be converted into accessible formats for people with print disability.

- Master Copy Catalogue, Copyright Agency website

  A searchable database of materials converted into accessible formats for learners with a print disability.

- Copyright guidelines for people with disability, Copyright Agency website

  - Copyright Amendment (Disability Access and Other Measures) Act 2017
  - Overview of the legislation
  - Provisions for education

Inclusive practices

- A Way with Words: Guidelines for the portrayal of people with disability, Queensland Government website

  Queensland Government resource designed to raise awareness of language-based issues specific to the portrayal of people with disability.

- Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), ACPET website

  ACPET provides a range of information to VET and higher education providers, including resources on inclusive practices and supporting learners with disability.

- Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET), ADCET website

  ADCET provides up-to-date and comprehensive information about inclusive teaching, learning and assessment strategies; reasonable adjustment; and support services for people with disability in post-secondary education and training.

- Choosing your Path – Disclosure: It's a Personal Decision, University of Western Sydney website

  A National Disability Coordination Officers resource (formerly the Network of Regional Disability Liaison Officers & Disability Coordination Officers) providing advice about disclosure.

- Getting to grips with learning styles, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) website

  Authors: Peter Smith, Jennifer Dalton. (NCVER, 2005).

  This booklet gives VET practitioners some easily digestible information about learning styles. It provides practical tips on how to identify learners' learning styles, and how to respond to individuals and groups based on their preferred methods of learning. There is no one best theory about learning styles, however understanding various learning styles theories helps teachers to observe their learners more systematically and be more methodical in experimenting with alternative teaching approaches.

- [Love Apptually: Apps to support learning,](#) Department of Employment, Small Business and Training website

  Resource designed to assist VET practitioners and learners to select applications (apps) for mobile devices that support inclusive VET teaching, learning and assessment.

- [Queensland VET Inclusive Learning Framework,](#) Department of Employment, Small Business and Training website

  The framework outlines Queensland Government's plan for providing greater access to, participation in and outcomes from VET.

- [Skills Disability Support,](#) Department of Employment, Small Business and Training website

  Queensland Government program to support the participation of learners with disability in VET.

- [Supporting an inclusive learner experience in higher education,](#) Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), UK website

  Practical information about making the learner experience more inclusive.

Information design

- [Create and verify PDF accessibility (Adobe Acrobat Pro),](#) Adobe website

  Information on accessibility best practices for PDF authors.

- [Make your Word documents accessible,](#) Microsoft Office Support website

  Best practice for making Word documents accessible.

- [Making the web accessible,](#) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) website

  Information, standards and guidelines to assist organisations in making the Web accessible. Includes Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) that explain how to make web content (the information in a webpage or web application) accessible to people with disability.

- [Queensland Government Information Standard 26 – Websites policy](#), Queensland Government Chief Information Office website

  Information from the Chief Information Office on the minimum requirements that Queensland Government agencies' websites need to adhere to for the delivery of information and services.

- [Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc.](#), Print Disability website

  Information and resources on the production and use of quality alternative formats for people with a print disability.

- [Universal Design for Learning](#), National Centre on Universal Design for Learning website

  A set of principles for curriculum development that gives all individuals equal opportunity to learn.

- [Using assistive and accessible technology in teaching and learning](#), Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), UK website

  Information about accessing and using assistive technology.

Legislation, policy and guidelines

- [All Abilities Queensland: opportunities for all](#), Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors website

  Queensland Government's State Disability Plan 2017–2020 as well as links to various Queensland Government departments' disability service plans.

- [Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) – disability rights](#), AHRC website

- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#), Commonwealth Consolidated Acts website

- [Disability Services Act 2006 (QLD)](#), Queensland Legislation website

- [Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)](#), Federal Register of Legislation website

- [National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)](#), NDIS website

  - [NDIS - Mainstream interface: higher education and VET factsheet](#)

- National Disability Strategy (Commonwealth), Department of Social Services website

- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth), Federal Register of Legislation website

- Right to Information Act 2009 (QLD) and the Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD), Queensland Government website

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) website

- United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), United Nations website

Other useful links

- Australian Network on Disability (AND), AND website

  A national, membership-based, for-purpose organisation that supports organisations to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business.

- Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND), ATEND website

  ATEND is a peak professional body for disability practitioners in the tertiary education and training sector, including the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) program.

- Centre for Applied Disability Research (CADR), CADR website

  A repository of links to a wide range of disability research and evaluation resources.

- National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), NCVER website

  NCVER is a national professional body providing authoritative research on Australian VET including VET-specific statistics and research on learners with disability.

- People with Disability Australia (PWDA), PWDA website

  PWDA is a national disability rights, advocacy and representative organisation..

Who can help?

Making reasonable adjustment in teaching, learning and assessment is primarily the role of teachers and trainers, but there are people and organisations who can help.

If you need advice or clarification about some aspect of reasonable adjustment, talk to specialist staff and relevant Industry Reference Committees.

Specialist educational staff

Educational managers or educational quality advisers have a critical role in supporting teachers, trainers and other staff to develop the skills and knowledge to apply reasonable adjustment.

They can help with making decisions about reasonable adjustment strategies and refer you to specialist help.

Marketing teams

Marketing teams can help by making information on reasonable adjustment available to learners with disability through their marketing materials, and on the RTO website.

Disability practitioners

A disability practitioner is often the first point of contact for learners and teachers when it comes to supporting learners with disability.

Disability practitioners have access to a range of networks and resources – and can help learners and teachers in a number of ways such as:

- negotiating reasonable adjustments in teaching, learning and assessment activities

- recommending and arranging for the use of assistive technologies as well as creating accessible versions of learning materials

- arranging support services (for example, accredited Auslan interpreters, disability support workers, coaches)

- informing teaching staff on inclusive teaching practice for learners with different types of disability

- clarifying the RTO's role through contractual arrangements such as in relation to delivery of VET in Schools or with international learners.

The disability practitioner will work with teachers, tutors, trainers and learners to monitor the quality and effectiveness of reasonable adjustments.

Disability support

Under the direction and guidance of the disability practitioner and/or teaching staff, a mix of supports can be provided for individual learners, which may include:

- assistance in the learning environment

- note-taking during classes

- reading to the learner

- scribing for the learner during assessments

- mentoring the learner

- coaching the learner

- interpreting in the learning environment.

Disability support personnel need to be mindful of their responsibilities when working with learners with disability. Considerations should include:

- boundaries

  Support personnel need to maintain a professional distance, while showing empathy for the learner.

- work completion

  Learners need to complete their own work to demonstrate competency. It is unacceptable for the support worker to complete work on the learner's behalf.

- punctuality

  Support staff must be on time for all commitments and appointments.

- accuracy

  Learners should not be disadvantaged by mistakes in, for example, note-taking or interpreting – accuracy is crucial.

- playing a supporting role

  As far as possible, support staff should encourage direct communication between teaching staff and the learner, and should refrain from acting as the go-between.

- service improvement

  Support staff should aim for continuing improvement in their performance by following learner's instructions; seeking feedback from learners about their level of satisfaction with the support worker's job performance; and being prepared to accept constructive criticism.

- preparation

  Support workers need to prepare in advance for appointments with learners to ensure they are familiar with terminology, concepts, signs, spelling of technical terms and language used in the unit of competency.

- adherence to the relevant code of ethics

  Support staff should be aware of and abide by their professional standards (for example, the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators Inc. (AUSIT)) and the code of conduct of the training organisation.

Exemplar: Reasonable adjustment – information for learners with disability

Reasonable adjustment can be made for learners with disability participating in VET. The following information will help you to understand how reasonable adjustment works.

What is reasonable adjustment?

Reasonable adjustment means modifications or changes that give you the same opportunities in training as a person without disability.

Adjustments need to be reasonable. That is, they need to consider the needs of everyone involved so that no one is disadvantaged. This includes you, other learners, your teachers and the impact on your training organisation.

Reasonable adjustment does not:

- give you an advantage over others

- mean that course standards or outcomes will be changed for you – you will still need the basic knowledge and skills to do the course and will need to demonstrate competency in all tasks

- mean that you do not have to follow the student rules

- give you a guarantee of successful course completion – you still need to do the work.

You will have a say in deciding what your reasonable adjustment will be. The decision will take account of:

- your needs, abilities and independence

- how and where your course will take place

- the types of reasonable adjustment and resources available.

Some examples of reasonable adjustment are:

- books or learning materials in an alternative format; for example, audio, electronic, etc.

- access to specialised software or equipment

- assistance from a support person; for example, a note-taker or sign language interpreter

- extra time to complete assessments.

What you need to do

Make sure you understand the theoretical and practical requirements of the course before you enrol. Find out about any professional association registration and industry licences that you will need for a job.

Make sure you have the underpinning knowledge and skills for the course you want to do.

Be aware that reasonable adjustment can take a significant time to organise and may need several meetings. The earlier you discuss your needs with your teacher and/or disability services officer the better.

It's your responsibility to make contact and request assistance.

Disclosure

It is a difficult decision whether to tell someone about, or disclose, how your disability affects you. The main benefit of disclosing is that the teacher/disability services officer can then discuss with you whether reasonable adjustment can help you in your course.

For further information go to: Choosing your path – Disclosure: it's a personal decision resource on the University of Western Sydney website.

You can take someone with you when you meet with the teacher/disability services officer. It could be a family member or case worker who can help you to explain your needs.

Be prepared to give details and evidence about the nature and impact of your disability. A medical and/or school report could be suitable.

You will be asked to sign a form allowing your details to be passed on to the people who need to assess your case for reasonable adjustment.

Keep in mind the support that you may have used in the past may not be appropriate in a new training environment. Discuss other supports and try new things so that reasonable adjustment works for you.

Remember that reasonable adjustment is only reasonable if it considers the needs of everyone involved. The type and amount of support will be negotiated with you.

Keep in contact with your teacher and/or disability services officer. Your needs may change over time so your reasonable adjustment may also need to change.