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FACT SHEET

Student Support Services

Last updated 20 January 2017

SMT012-17

Student Support Services

Student Support Services works across all campuses to coordinate and implement support for students with disabilities whether temporary or permanent. People with disabilities have a right to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as those without disabilities.

The service is free, confidential and your disclosure is voluntary. The fact sheet aims to help student understand the following:

- who is eligible;
- how to contact and register for Student Support Services;
- how to request reasonable adjustments; and
- further information.

Am I eligible for Student Support Services?

Nearly one in five Australians has a disability. The definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 is broad. It includes physical, intellectual, sensory and learning disabilities, medical conditions and mental illness.

You are encouraged to approach the service directly and register for assistance in order to access support. Students with disabilities do not have to disclose unless they wish to arrange reasonable adjustments whilst studying or need to notify about a health risk to themselves or others.

Please note: even if you advise about your diagnosed disabilities on your enrolment questionnaire, you should also make an appointment with a Student Support Advisor so that your support requirements can be discussed in more detail with you.

How do I contact to make an appointment?

You can contact Student Support Services as follows: Call 9374 6268 or email student.access@smtafe.wa.edu.au. Alternatively give permission for a staff member to refer you to Student Support Services and we will contact you.

What documentation do I need to provide?

You will also be asked to provide current evidence from an authorised health professional outlining the functional impacts of your disabilities. Personal information provided to Student Support Services will be kept confidential and only for the purposes of being able to offer support and arrange reasonable adjustments. If you are a minor, Student Support Services will consult with you and your guardian about confidentiality provisions.

What are Reasonable Adjustments?

In tertiary education, any support or assistance given to students with disabilities to assist with study is called a Reasonable Adjustment as outlined in the DDA legislation and Disability Standards for Education (2005).

Reasonable Adjustments refer to modifications or changes that give you the same opportunities to participate in education and training as people without disabilities. The types of Reasonable Adjustments put in place will be discussed with you and will take into account your needs and abilities.

Reasonable adjustments must balance the inherent requirements of the course and the interests of all parties affected: yourself, the education provider, staff and other students.

What are the inherent requirements of the course?

Inherent requirements are the fundamental parts of a course that must be met by all students in order for them to be deemed competent. They are the abilities, skills and knowledge students need to complete the course - those components which, if removed, would compromise the learning outcomes. Please be aware that any proposed adjustments or recommendations must also meet the inherent requirements of the course.

Some examples of Reasonable Adjustment are:

- access to course material in alternate formats;
- access to an Auslan interpreter;
- access to assistive and ergonomic equipment; and
- extra time to complete an exam (whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment).


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Reasonable Adjustment does not:




- give you an advantage over others and any adjustments must balance the needs of all parties affected.
- modify course standards or outcomes (you will still need to acquire the core knowledge and skills outlined in the course and demonstrate competency in required tasks).
- mean that the Student Code of Conduct or reasonable directions for occupational health and safety guidelines are not to be followed;
- guarantee academic success as you will still be responsible for completing the work and meeting the required standards.

Please note: Reasonable adjustment provisions may also vary between Registered Training Organisations in their implementation and delivery.

Further information:

1. Discuss your needs openly with the Student Support Advisor and let them know how they can help you. Be prepared to provide evidence of the nature of your disabilities and/ or other diagnosed conditions,
2. Reasonable Adjustments can take time to organise and may require several meetings. It is your responsibility to make contact and request support.
3. You are eligible to register throughout the semester but the earlier you make contact to discuss your needs the better.
4. Stay in regular contact with your Student Support Advisor each semester. Your needs or personal circumstances may change over time so please provide updates and current contact details and be aware of your course units census dates.

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