

## ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

In line with obligations under Commonwealth legislation, AUSCHS is committed to promoting a fair and equitable environment for personnel and clients that is free from discrimination, harassment and vilification.

*Access and equity* means policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.

Access and Equity principles include:

- Equity for all people through the fair and appropriate allocation of resources;
- Equality of opportunity for all people without discrimination;
- Access for all people to appropriate quality training and assessment services; and
- Increased opportunity for people to participate in training.

*Disadvantaged groups* include the following groups who traditionally have been under-represented in Vocational Education and Training:

- People with a disability;
- Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders;
- Women;
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- People in rural and remote areas; and
- Long term unemployed.

AUSCHS is committed to complying with Commonwealth and State legislation and policies regarding access, equity and cultural diversity. This legislation includes the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*, the *Anti-discrimination Act 1998 (Cth)* and the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*.

AUSCHS also maintains compliance with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)* including processes relating to:

- Enrolment;
- Participation;
- Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery;
- Student support services; and
- Elimination of harassment and victimisation.

AUSCHS strives to maximise opportunities for access, participation and outcomes for all students within the vocational education, training and employment system.

AUSCHS undertakes to identify and, where possible, remove barriers that prevent individuals from accessing and participating in our services. AUSCHS is committed to treating all prospective and actual students *on the same basis*.

### **On the same basis**

A person with a disability is able to seek admission to, or apply for enrolment in, an institution on the same basis as a prospective student without a disability if the person has opportunities and choices in admission or enrolment that are comparable with those offered to other prospective student without disabilities.

AUSCHS ensures it treats prospective students with a disability on the same basis as prospective students without a disability as it makes any decisions about admission or enrolment on the basis that *reasonable adjustments* will be provided.

An *adjustment* is a measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken by AUSCHS that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability:

- In relation to an admission or enrolment — to apply for the admission or enrolment;
- In relation to a course or program — to participate in the course or program; and
- In relation to facilities or services — to use the facilities or services;

On the same basis as a student without a disability, and includes an aid, a facility, or a service that the student requires because of his or her disability.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

An adjustment is reasonable in relation to a student with a disability if it balances the interests of all parties affected. In assessing whether a particular adjustment for a student is *reasonable*, AUSCHS has regard to all the relevant circumstances and interests, including the following:

- The student's disability;
- The views of the student or the student's associate;
- The effect of the adjustment on the student, including the effect on the student's:
  - Ability to achieve learning outcomes; and
  - Ability to participate in courses or programs; and
  - Independence;
- The effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including AUSCHS, personnel and other students; and
- The costs and benefits of making the adjustment.