

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Central West TAFE
2007 - 2008



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Introduction

During 1993, the Western Australian Government introduced the Disability Services Act. This legislation aims to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as other members of the Western Australian community. It is a requirement under this Act that State Government Agencies and Local Governments develop a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan that outlines how their services will be made accessible to people with disabilities.

Central West TAFE first developed a Disability Service Plan in 1995. The Plan was co-ordinated by the Disability Services Committee, which was formed as a sub-committee of the Student Service team. In 2002 the College recognised the need to update this Plan to reflect the changing VET environment and significant changes experienced in the College in terms of training delivery methods and facilities. During this time the College also reviewed its strategic plan and recognised the value in better integration between planning for services to meet the needs of diverse client groups and the organisational or strategic planning activities. The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, which should be read in conjunction with the strategic plan, represents the specific strategies the College will employ in order to achieve increased access and participation by clients with a disability to the College's programs and services. In developing the College's plan a planned approach to consultation occurred with 24 service provider organisations and 44 people with disabilities/carers and parents rather than through a call for feedback through the College website or local newspapers. These consultations occurred as part of a broader Building Capability through Inclusivity program funded by the Department of Education and Training. Ongoing feedback on the College's plan will be sourced through publication of the document on the College website with a link provided for comments.

Central West TAFE's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan includes:

- A policy statement on the College's commitment to addressing the issue of access for people with disabilities.
- Identification of strategies and actions to increase opportunities for access and successful participation for people with disabilities in the programs and services offered by the College.
- Expected time lines and the positions responsible for implementing the proposed strategies.
- Review and evaluation methods for the DAIP.
- List of contacts for further information

Access and inclusion policy statement for people with disabilities, their families and carers

Central West TAFE Code of Practice outlines the organisation's commitment to providing quality service to our clients including our commitment to access and equity principles. This Plan is developed in alignment with our Code of Practice and with the Western Australian Government's *Better Planning ; Better Futures*¹, which has as its vision,

"...the best opportunities for current and future generations. Western Australia will be a creative, sustainable and economically successful State that embraces the diversity of its people and values its rich natural resources. The Western Australian public sector will work towards providing the best opportunities for current and future generations to live better, longer and healthier lives."

Central West TAFE recognises the diversity of people living in the Midwest, Gascoyne and Murchison regions of WA and is committed to increasing opportunities for all clients to participate in, and gain successful outcomes from vocational education and training programs. The Access and Participation Plan addresses the particular needs of people with disabilities and seeks to identify ways in which the College can better provide its programs and services to minimise barriers to participation and encourage successful outcomes for students. During its implementation staff will develop strategies to inform agents and contractors on their obligations to the Disability Access and Participation Plan. In the State's current strong economic environment the College is keenly aware of the role that education and training can play in ensuring that all Western Australian's have the necessary skills to participate to their fullest in employment and community life.

Six key outcomes

In order to achieve this vision the following broad outcomes have been identified. These outcomes are consistent with the objectives identified by the Disability Services Commission as essential elements of agency Disability Access and Inclusion Plans. This approach will focus actions and resources on strategies designed to assist the organisation to meet its objectives across all areas of business. These are:

- People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the relevant public authority.
- People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the relevant public authority.
- People with disabilities receive information from the relevant public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
- People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of the relevant public authority.
- People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the relevant public authority.

¹ Better Planning : Better Futures, a Framework for the Strategic Management of the Western Australian Public Sector, September 2006.

Context of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

People with disabilities are comparatively under represented in the VET system, both in terms of participation and successful completions. Nationally 12.1% of the total population aged 15 – 64 years participate in vocational education and training whereas the participation rate for people with disabilities is 2.3%.²

Furthermore students with disabilities are more likely to participate in training at the lower levels of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) or in non-AQF education. Students with disabilities are less likely to undertake a qualification at AQF Certificate III or above level than other VET students (38% of students with disabilities compared to 46% of all VET students). Certificate III and above qualifications are more likely to have direct job related outcomes associated with them than qualifications at the lower levels.

As members of the Western Australian community, people with disabilities have the same rights as other people to access state public authorities and the services they provide. These rights are enshrined in both State and Federal legislation that makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability in certain areas of public life including education and employment.

The College seeks to integrate planning for the needs of students with a disability into organisational planning activities, including the strategic plan. The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan sets out specific strategies and aims to ensure that each area of the College include in their core operational plans, equity issues relevant to the needs of people with disabilities. This Plan will provide an integrated description of barriers, strategies, responsibilities and associated time-lines to achieve the key outcomes. Teams through the operational planning process may also identify additional objectives and strategies.

As a Registered Training Organisation the College complies with the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework, in which the principles of access and equity are seen to be integral to all areas of the organisation's operations. Although we have specialist staff with specific responsibilities for supporting people with disabilities, the College encourages a collective approach where all staff have responsibility to foster a working and learning environment in which all clients have the best opportunity to participate and succeed in their training.

The College's strategic planning process establishes the policy context to identify strategies to encourage the participation and success of people with a disability in education, training and employment. The College has also made use of the Department of Education and Training's *Building Diversity* framework, which provides additional guidance on adopting a strategic approach that ensures "everyone has the opportunity to successfully gain skills and knowledge through education, training and employment services".³

Building Diversity operates under three broad guiding principles – that training and employment services should:

² People with Disabilities in Vocational Education and Training : a Statistical Compendium, T. Cavallaro, P. Foley, J. Saunders, K. Bowman, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). 2005.

³ Building diversity and the AQTF : a Guide to Access and Equity, Western Australian Department of Education and Training.

- Build on individual talents and experiences;
- Recognise and respond to the diversity of individual needs; and
- Offer choice and flexibility to cater for individual circumstances.

The principles are based on the recognition that Western Australia's future prosperity rests on its ability to harness the skills and talents of each member of its diverse community. The *Building Diversity* framework sees individual differences as strengths and seeks to enable people opportunities to build on these strengths. The Building Diversity framework has three main areas of focus that also underpin the College's approach to planning, as outlined in this Access and Inclusion Plan. Focus areas are:

- Increasing client access to VET
- Improving achievements within VET
- Enhancing entry to employment during and after VET

The College offers a wide range of support networks for students with disabilities through the College's Client Services team. This team provides support and services to students and potential students enabling them to pursue their study and career aspirations. Part of this service includes the appointment of a Disabilities Liaison Officer whose role is to ensure equity of opportunity for client groups with special needs. Specific reasonable assistance through the modification of course delivery, adjustment to assessment methods and physical items may be provided in order for appropriate adjustments to be made to lessen the impact of the impairment.

The purpose of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is to ensure that people with disabilities, can access the programs and services offered by the College in a learning environment that encourages both participation and success. The development and review of this plan is overseen by the Client Services team, including the Disability Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Director Organisational Effectiveness and other relevant staff.

Review and Evaluation

The following methods have been identified as mechanisms for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIP's).

- a) The Disability Liaison Officer, through the Client Services team will review the progress of the implementation of the strategies identified in the plan and report to the Director Organisational Effectiveness on a regular basis (at least once per year). Client and external stakeholder feedback will be sought as part of the review process.
- b) The Disability Liaison Officer will provide regular reports to the Manager Client Services including reports of student participation, support provided and interaction with service organisations and groups. These reports are also an opportunity to raise issues requiring discussion and to monitor the progress of the DAIP.
- c) Information on the implementation of the DAIP's will be provided in the College's annual report, in accordance with the Disability Services Commission reporting requirements.
- d) Information from relevant student feedback processes will be captured by the Disabilities Liaison Officer who will use this for making continuous improvement to the delivery of disability services to students.
- e) The Disability Access and Inclusion plan will be placed on the College internet site for information and feedback and references will be made to the plan in College compiled documentation.
- f) The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will inform organisational planning and, where appropriate, the allocation of Disability Services funding provided to the College through the Delivery and Performance Agreement.

Communication of Plan to Stakeholders

It is intended that the Disability Access and Inclusion plan be a working document used by College staff to plan and review the provision of training, assessment and support services. The objectives, strategies and progress of the plan will be reported to clients and other stakeholders in various College documents including the annual report, and via news stories on the College website and in local newspapers. Additionally the availability of the plan will be advertised in local newspapers (Geraldton Guardian and the Northern Guardian). The plan will be made available in alternative formats upon request including electronic, hardcopy (standard and large print), audio, by email and on the College website.

Stakeholders are identified as:

- Students with disabilities participating in College training programs or accessing College services
- People with disabilities in the community who are potential students
- Parents/guardians, families and carers of people with disabilities
- Service providers including government and community agencies and organisations
- Schools and the District Education Office
- Funding agencies, including the WA Department of Education and Training
- College staff

Further Information

Central West TAFE

Manager Client Services
Fitzgerald Street
GERALDTON WA 6530

Telephone: (08) 9956 2780
Freecall Number 1800 672 700

Email: walkec@grdton.training.wa.gov.au

Disability Liaison Officer
Fitzgerald Street
GERALDTON WA 6530

Telephone: (08) 9956 6134
Freecall: 1800 672 700

Email: johnsr@grdton.training.wa.gov.au

Department of Education and Training

Level 2, 151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004

Telephone: (08) 9264 4111
Facsimile: (08) 9264 5005

Website: www.det.wa.edu.au (then click on Training, Access & Equity)

Career Development Centre

2nd Floor, 166 Murray Street
PERTH WA 6000

Telephone: (08) 9224 6500
Freecall: 1800 999 167

Website: www.det.wa.edu.au/training/cdc

Appendix One : Outcomes

Outcome 1: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised, by Central West TAFE.			
Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
1.1 College events will be organised in ways that ensure the same opportunities are available for people with disabilities.	<p>Liaise with staff responsible for planning and organising events to ensure awareness of the need to provide opportunities for access.</p> <p>Liaise with external service providers to promote College events and identify specific client needs.</p> <p>Liaise with external organisations to identify access issues where events are held off campus and to address these where possible.</p> <p>Raise focus through team meetings prior to events.</p> <p>Types of might events Open Days; Graduation and Awards events; Special events (eg, conferences); work experience placements (on campus); NAIDOC Week celebrations</p>	Ongoing, specific timeline related to individual events	<p>DLO (coordinate awareness raising)</p> <p>Manager Client Services; Client Services Team, Marketing Co-ordinator responsible for events coordination</p>

<p>1.2 Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to comment on access to programs, services and advice provided by Central West TAFE.</p>	<p>Ensure clients are aware of ways in which feedback can be provided to the College, eg. Quality Feedback Stations on campus; through the Website; directly to Client Services staff including DLO; through Community Services Industry Advisory Committee; through their service providers; student satisfaction surveys; course and unit evaluations</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DLO Manager Quality and Planning Manager Client Services Lecturers</p>
<p>1.3 Promote Central West TAFE programs, services and facilities to people with disabilities</p>	<p>Ensure College marketing materials advertising enrolments etc make mention of opportunities for people with disabilities and highlight the availability of services to support access and participation in training</p> <p>Develop promotional material that highlight people with a disability attending and succeeding through their attendance at Central West TAFE</p> <p>Identify need for specific training programs for people with disabilities, and work with academic areas to develop suitable courses and support for people participating</p> <p>Provide opportunities for clients to identify specific learning needs and support required (<i>Learner Needs Checklist</i>). Work with other staff and external organisations to make appropriate adjustments to the learning environment and provide specialised equipment and facilities where possible</p> <p>Every effort is made to make learning materials and assessments available in alternative formats upon request and in consultation with the lecturer</p>	<p>June, September, January (aligned to enrolment advertising campaigns)</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Within 4 weeks of commencement of each semester</p> <p>As requested</p>	<p>DLO Marketing Coordinator</p> <p>Marketing Coordinator</p> <p>DLO Academic Directors Lecturers</p> <p>DLO Data Administrator</p> <p>DLO Lecturer</p>

Outcome 2: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of Central West TAFE.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
2.1 Ensure maximum physical accessibility of all buildings and facilities for people with disabilities.	<p>Regularly audit and identify access barriers to buildings and facilities, utilising expert advice where needed</p> <p>Where barriers are identified the College will make every attempt to acquire appropriate funding or allocate resources to address access issues</p> <p>Ensure key staff maintain an awareness of Australian standard AS1428 (Part 1 - 4) Design for Access and Mobility and the Building Code of Australia (BCA) both of these standards have regular email updates and amendments</p> <p>College Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Committee addresses access issues in accordance with their Terms of Reference</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	DLO Manager Physical Resources Director Corporate Services
2.2 Future buildings, modifications and renovations are to reflect the needs of people with disabilities.	<p>Ensure key staff liaise with contractors to ensure that all works comply with relevant standards</p> <p>Renovation and new buildings scheduled for commencement of construction in 2007/08 in Metals, Construction and Hospitality</p>	Ongoing	<p>Manager Physical Resources</p> <p>DLO in consultation with Director Organisational Effectiveness</p>

2.3 Ensure that people with disabilities are provided with an opportunity to comment on physical access to buildings and facilities	Actively seek input and advice about the design and development of new buildings, modifications and renovations to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are met.	Ongoing (linked to above for new buildings in 2007/08)	DLO
2.4 Ensure the ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disabilities in terms of quality and location	Undertake audit of ACROD bays and address any issues including location Monitor use of ACROD bays Consider need for additional bays including reviewing availability of regional campuses and BCMI	Annually Ongoing 19/12/2007	Manager Physical Resources Manager Client Services
2.5 Central West TAFE provides student residential accommodation that is accessible and designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities (one unit, housing four persons, is provided within Residential Village)	Monitor suitability on an ongoing basis and ensure adequate maintenance of this unit Promote availability of residential unit to clients and service organisations within the region	Ongoing	DLO Residential Supervisor Facilities Officer
2.6 The needs of staff and students with disabilities using Central West TAFE motor vehicles are provided for.	All College buses to be accessible for people with disabilities At least one College car for staff use to have assessable dual controls	By end 2008 By end 2007	Manager Physical Resources

Outcome 3: People with disabilities receive information from Central West TAFE in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
3.1 Provide information about programs and services in concise, clear language using a variety of media. Information is provided directly to clients and through service organisations.	<p>Ensure information is written in clear language and that documents are reviewed updated prior to re-publication</p> <p>College staff make regular contact and visits to services organisations to provide current information and ensure they are aware of programs and services so that they can inform their clients. Two way communication between the College and service organisations is also a valuable source of information and advice</p> <p>DLO makes presentations to external organisations to raise awareness of College programs and services</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DLO Marketing Coordinator</p> <p>DLO</p> <p>DLO</p>
3.2 Improve community awareness that Central West TAFE information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	<p>Ensure that all documents carry a notation regarding availability in alternative formats.</p> <p>Advise the community via local media that other formats are available</p>	Ongoing	<p>DLO Marketing Co-ordinator</p>
3.3 Staff are aware of accessible information needs and are aware of how to obtain information in other formats if clients request this.	Attend team meetings to raise general awareness of clients' needs for information in alternative formats and of the process for requesting within the College.	Each semester	DLO

	The College will seek advice and information about the most appropriate format for information to suit individuals' needs and will use relevant accessible information guidelines when trying to meet individual's specific communication requirements.	As requested by staff or clients	
3.4 The Central West TAFE website is made accessible for people with disabilities and information is presented in clear, easy to navigate formats.	The website is reviewed and updated to ensure accessibility and compliance with established standards for government websites	By end 2007	DLO eBusiness Coordinator

Outcome 4: People with disabilities receive the same level and quality of service from the staff Central West TAFE as other people.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
4.1 Central West TAFE will provide advice and information about services to people with disabilities to enable them to make an informed decisions about their training options.	Staff will set up meetings with clients to provide advice. This may through their service organisation, or in a location or at a time that suits the client.	Ongoing, particularly aligned to full time enrolments	DLO Manager Client Services
4.2 Staff have a high level of awareness of access and inclusion issues for people with disabilities and improve their skills in delivering programs and services.	<p>As per above, discuss with lecturers specific issues that may impact on the participation of students with disabilities studying in their academic area.</p> <p>Lecturers are aware of the need to incorporate the specific needs of learners with disabilities into their course delivery planning through the Learning and Assessment Strategy (LAS).</p> <p>Parents/guardians or carers of people with disabilities are provided opportunity to discuss student's participation and progress in their programs at regular intervals on request. This discussion may be with lecturers and/or support staff as needed.</p> <p>Staff actively seek feedback on quality of service at the end of course/enrolment</p>	Ongoing	DLO Principal Lecturer, Quality Training and Delivery Lecturers Manager Client Services

4.3 The College provides professional development and ongoing support for staff to improve their skills in working with people with disabilities	DLO provides induction sessions for staff (mandatory for all new staff) at the beginning of each semester or on request, to raise awareness of the support and services provided by that role.	Ongoing, each semester	DLO
	BCTI project to conduct survey of lecturers to ascertain training requirements, in conjunction with project team	July/August 2007	BCTI project team
	DLO organises guest speaker or provides appropriate training through "Hot Topics" sessions	Ongoing, Hot Topics held monthly	DLO
	Sessions are provided in College Professional Development Week	Annually	DLO
	Client Services teams provides day to day support, advice and response to critical situations as they occur	Daily	Client services team
	Individual staff are supported to attend specialised PD programs as appropriate to their needs	As required	Directors/Managers

Outcome 5: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to Central West TAFE.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
<p>5.1 Ensure that complaint and grievance processes are accessible for people with disabilities and continue to conform with required standards for government agencies.</p>	<p>Monitor use of complaints and grievance processes to ensure they are accessible for people with disabilities and act on opportunities to improve processes</p> <p>Promote the availability of grievance and complaints processes to clients through various media and through student induction sessions</p> <p>Provide grievance mechanism process and client feedback forms in alternative formats upon request.</p>	<p>Ongoing, complaints process in place</p>	<p>DLO</p> <p>Manager Quality and Planning</p> <p>Manager Client Services</p>
<p>5.2 Raise awareness and improve staff knowledge of complaints process and complaints handling.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of processes for lodging a complaint or grievance, including appeal against an assessment decision, and ensure staff are aware of responsibilities in relation to acting on complaints. Eg through professional team meetings, in PD sessions, staff inductions etc</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DLO</p> <p>Manager Quality and Planning</p> <p>Manager Client Services</p>

Outcome 6: People with disabilities have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by Central West TAFE.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
6.1 Increase community awareness about consultation processes and seek a broad range of views on disability and access issues from the community	<p>Complete College project Building Capability Through Inclusivity, which includes extension community consultation process</p> <p>Following conclusion of this project ensure recommendation and outcomes leading to improved consultation are acted upon</p> <p>Gain a range of feedback about the College through surveys with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) existing Central West TAFE students with disabilities (ii) community/service organisations both those utilising the College and those not currently utilising the College (iii) families, carers and support networks (iv) College staff (v) attempt to gain feedback from people with disabilities in regional and remote locations 	Ongoing	DLO
6.2 Encourage people with disabilities to be included on the College Industry Advisory Committees and the College Governing Council	Promote the role of IACS and College Governing Council and the contribution people with disabilities could make to these groups. Make information about joining these groups available to people with disabilities, including promoting opportunities through service organisations.	Ongoing	Directors Managing Director