

# Access and Equity Policy and Procedure

Vocational Augment Pty Ltd t/a Vocational Augment Training (hereby referred as VAT)

## Policy Context

This policy relates to:	
Registration Manager	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Conditions of Registration	VET Quality Framework (VQF)
Codes and Standards	ESOS National Code 2018 – Standard: 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6; 6.7; 6.8; 6.9; Standards for RTOs 2015 – 1.3(b); 1.3(c); 1.3(d); 1.7; 5.1;
Legislation or other requirements	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure VAT give a coordinated approach to ensuring access and value standards throughout its operations, and to treat similarly and genuinely all students looking to study in a VET course.

## Objective

The objectives of this Policy and Procedure are that VAT:

- Follows the access and equity guidelines designed to remove barriers and obstacles so that all students can gain skills, knowledge and experience through access to Vocational Education & Training (VET) subjects.
- Implements these access and equity guidelines through the following strategies:
  - Access to VET programs will be available to all eligible participants regardless of gender or race.
  - All participants will be provided with the opportunity to gain a full qualification.
  - For participants with special needs, access to additional assistance will be provided.
- Where poor literacy and/or numeracy skills present a barrier to participation, additional support will be provided to the participants within the capacity of the organisation's resources to provide such support and/or external assistance will be accessed as required.

## Scope

This policy is applicable on the following VAT stakeholders:

- Staff
- Students

## General Processes

### 1. Availability of Policy and Procedures

The policy, procedure and related form are made available to all students and potential students by directly contacting VAT, through VAT's website and/or Student Handbook.

### 2. Establishment of non-discriminatory selection procedures

We actively encourage the participation of a cross-section of the community. This is achieved through the establishment of non-discriminatory selection procedures, encouraging access for all members of the community.

In the first instance, the Trainer/Assessor will assess literacy, language and numeracy concerns. When indicated, the Training Coordinator will make available to the Trainer/Assessor such materials or training processes to assist with learning. Interpreters are welcome to attend the training of a student with literacy difficulty; however, VAT will not incur any expense associated with interpretation services.

If the student requires support for any reason at all whilst enrolled with VAT, please contact VAT directly. VAT staff will endeavour to assist students to the fullest capacity, or where appropriate, direct students to a suitable professional agency. This referral service is of no charge to the student. (Support can include interpreters, trauma, disability, harassment, welfare etc.)

### 3. Barriers

VAT understands the barriers to accessing education and training may or may not include:

- Language, literacy or numeracy skills
- Low levels of formal educational achievement,
- Racism,
- Low socio-economic status,
- Inappropriate training environments,
- Living in rural and remote areas,
- Lack of information,
- Lack of continuity of programs in rural areas etc.

### 4. Access and equity principles

The following principles are applied by VAT in the development and implementation of all training and assessment strategies.

To ensure that the student recruitment and admission process is bias-free and non-discriminatory, VAT:

- provides advice to the prospective learner before enrolment or commencement of the training product appropriate to the learner's needs taking their existing skills and competencies into account.
- uses the same recruitment and admission process for all applicants
- provides a special admissions program for specific groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as set out in our selection and admissions policy
- bases admission to courses and programs solely on availability of places and the applicant satisfying course entry requirements
- provides applicants with adequate information and support to enable them to select the most suitable program for their needs

To ensure that the learning environment is free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation, VAT:

- specifies standards of behaviour expected from students and staff in its Codes of Conduct
- has policies and procedures in place for preventing harassment and discrimination

To ensure that all curriculum developed by VAT are inclusive of a range of student needs, VAT:

- considers issues relating to access and equity when specifying course entry requirements and prerequisites
- offers flexible course design that provides multiple entry and exit points or pathways through the course, including credit transfer and recognition of prior learning
- considers the requirements of students with a disability when designing courses
- provides inclusive and non-discriminatory learning materials
- in the case of vocational courses, language, literacy and numeracy requirements are consistent with the vocational level of the qualification
- provides students without online access with information through other media according to needs

VAT provides an assessment process that is fair, valid, reliable and consistent through:

- recognition of previously acquired skills and knowledge
- adequate information on course and subject assessment, prior to enrolment in the course
- adapting assessment to meet student needs while still maintaining a high quality, valid and consistent process (see reasonable adjustment below)
- gives students the right to appeal an assessment or recognition decision
- gives all students equal opportunity to demonstrate competence

Support is provided to those with special needs. The reasonable adjustment is provided to those with a disability or special needs according to individual circumstances. This means providing the appropriate services and/or facilities for student learning and assessment.

The reasonable adjustment may include but is not restricted to:

- the use of adaptive/assistive technology (equipment and software designed for use by people with a disability)
- educational support
- alternative assessment methods
- learning and assessment aids such as papers in large print or the use of scribes or interpreters
- extra time to complete a course or assessment

Learning support is facilitated for those with basic literacy, numeracy or English language difficulties or other identified areas of learning difficulty.

Special consideration may be granted if through misadventure (e.g. illness, bereavement or personal trauma) a student is prevented from completing an assessment or sitting an examination; or believes that their performance in an assessment event has been affected by the incident.

VAT premises will provide appropriate access to those with a physical disability. Where VAT provides training and assessment at other venues, VAT will ensure to the best of its ability that the venues are accessible to people with a disability.

Complaints and appeals are addressed in a fair and equitable manner. Individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly are encouraged to use VAT's student complaints and appeals procedures. VAT will promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints and appeals in accordance with stated procedures.

Students also have the right to appeal against any decisions as set out in the complaints and appeals procedure.

