

Access and Equity

Blueprint Career Development

1 Policy

Blueprint Career Development will, at all times, recruit staff and learners in an ethical and responsible manner that complies with Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination legislation. Where applicable, recruitment will also be consistent with the requirements of the National Training Package.

Blueprint Career Development endorses the principles of access and equity by adopting the following guidelines:

- Equity for all people through the fair and appropriate allocation of resources and involvement in vocational education and training.
- Access and opportunity for all people to appropriate, quality vocational education and training programs and services without discrimination.
- Increased opportunity for stakeholders to participate in relevant decision-making processes within our organisation and the service we provide.

2 Purpose

Blueprint Career Development is committed to meeting the needs of learners, staff and other stakeholders through the integration of access and equity principles as specified in the Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Act 1987, Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

3 Scope

This policy is relevant to all Blueprint Career Development staff including contractors, consultants, trainers and assessors, co-providers and partners. It also applies to existing and potential learners.

4 Procedure

Language & Literacy Skills

All staff are required to observe, identify and immediately act when a student has problems with language, literacy, or numeracy.

- Staff will maintain the confidentiality of student's language, literacy, or numeracy problems except as required to facilitate support and assistance.
- Staff will not make discriminatory or judgmental statements about any student or other employee based on the level of language, literacy, or numeracy skills or any other issues.
- Students with language, literacy, or numeracy problems will be counselled to discuss the possible impact that may have on their chosen training program.
- Recommendations for assistance, additional training, mentoring and support will be presented to students who have language, literacy or numeracy issues.

- If a student rejects recommended language, literacy or numeracy support and Management determines that the potential student will be unlikely to successfully complete a fee for service course, Blueprint Career Development reserves the right to refuse the enrolment. This refusal is based on protecting the financial interests of the student concerned.
- Where a language, literacy or numeracy support program is needed, the effectiveness of that program and its impact on a student undertaking any training program with Blueprint Career Development will be monitored.
- Management and staff have the joint responsibility for maintaining a high level of awareness of courses available to students with language, literacy, or numeracy problems.
- Management will hold discussions with staff to reinforce organisational policy if inappropriate behaviour has been observed or identified.

Students with Disabilities

The purpose of this section is to clarify the obligations of Blueprint Career Development staff and the rights of people with a disability, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

All students, including students with a disability, should be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in a supportive environment which values and encourages equal opportunity participation. Including the right to comparable access, services and facilities, and the right to participate in education and training without discrimination. Blueprint has a legal and ethical obligation to make changes to reasonably accommodate the needs of a student with a disability.

Reasonable Adjustments

Blueprint Career Development will make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with a disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, Blueprint Career Development will take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people. Students will have a say in deciding what reasonable adjustments may be.

Any adjustments need to consider the needs of everyone involved so that no one is disadvantaged.

Reasonable adjustment does not:

- give one student an advantage over others
- mean that course standards or outcomes will be changed for a student. All students still need the basic knowledge and skills to successfully complete courses and will need to show competency in all tasks
- mean that a student does not have to follow the student rules.

Some examples of reasonable adjustment are:

- books or learning materials in an alternative format e.g. audio, electronic
- access to specialised software or equipment
- assistance from a support person, e.g. a note-taker or sign language interpreter
- extra time to complete assessments.

Blueprint Career Development will ensure that the student has timely and confidential information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to Blueprint. Blueprint may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for itself, the student and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and trainers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and trainers
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available if the student participates.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 does not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship on a person or organisation.

Blueprint Career Development Responsibilities

- Provide students with information about their rights and responsibilities, including a copy of this policy and any other information that may assist them, such as: Choosing your path: Disclosure it's a personal decision
- Maintain the confidentiality of all disclosures and requests for assistance. They must not be passed on to others without the student's permission unless required by law or to prevent harm or injury.
- Provide a copy of the "Consent to release information" form to any student who may require assistance and the involvement of another party in their learning.

Student Responsibilities

- Make sure they understand the theoretical and practical requirements of the course before they enroll
- Discuss their needs, including the nature and impact of their disability, and request assistance. Disclosure is not mandatory however but Blueprint Career Development staff can provide assistance, specialised support and reasonable adjustments only if we are accurately informed
- Sign a “Consent to release information” form if they agree to have information or details passed on to another person, such as a family member or case worker, who needs it
- Find out about any professional association registration and industry licences required for job roles relevant to the training
- Be aware that reasonable adjustment can take a significant time to organise and may need several meetings.

Training of staff in the principles of Access and Equity

- All staff has access to the organisation’s Access and Equity Policy
- All staff will attend the staff induction, which covers among other topics, the implementation of the Access and Equity Policy
- Any staff member who breaches the Access and Equity Policy will be counselled on the breach and, if required, the staff member will undertake further training or disciplinary action as appropriate.
- Management will ensure that staff are aware of changes to the Access and Equity Policy. Staff are encouraged to make suggestions which they feel may improve the Access and Equity Policy.