

Learner Support Framework

Statement

Learner support is crucial in ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity to succeed in their education. ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre acknowledges that there is a diverse list of reasons that may necessitate learner support or additional support and is committed to providing a supportive and effective learning environment for all learners and the RTO.

This framework outlines the strategies, policies and procedures for blended and online learner support and monitoring to ensure the success and well-being of our learners.

Information related to learners' support needs will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Relevant staff members will have access to this information strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Learners will be informed about the availability of support services during the enrolment and induction process. Clear communication channels will be established to facilitate open discussions about learner support needs.

Objectives

- To identify and address the diverse needs of learners to enhance their learning experience.
- To promote an inclusive and supportive culture that values diversity and fosters equal access to education.
- To establish transparent strategies and processes for requesting and providing learner support.
- To uphold principles of fairness, equity, and respect in all aspects of learner support.

Scope

This policy, process and strategy applies to and is not limited to:

- Blended and online learners and trainers and assessors in a:
 - Synchronous learning environment
 - Asynchronous learning environment
- Education staff and ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre Staff
 - eLearning Officer
 - Education Assistants
 - Education Coordinator
 - Education Manager
 - Quality and Compliance Officer

- Library Technician / LLN Specialist
- Trainers and assessors for accredited courses
- Facilitators for non-accredited CPD courses

Reasons for Learning Support

Learning Support may include but is not limited to the following:

- Diverse Learning Styles and Needs
- Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy (LLND) Challenges
- Physical or Sensory Disabilities
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
- Learning Disabilities such as dyslexia or ADHD
- Work or Family Commitments
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Limited Technology Access
- Financial Constraints
- Disruptions Due to Personal Circumstances
- Low Confidence or Self-Efficacy
- Time Management Skills
- Transitioning from Other Educational Systems
- Access to Learning Materials
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Career Guidance and Pathways
- Remote Locations

Enrolment Application Process

- During the application process learners have the opportunity to disclose any learning considerations they may have.
- For our accredited qualifications, learners complete an ACER test which consists of Numeracy, Reading and Writing skills assessment. This test is used in the Pre-Training Review to determine suitability for the course.

Pre-Training Review Support Strategy for accredited qualifications

ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre conducts a Pre-Training Review to identify if learners require any learning support or considerations. This review discusses the requirements of the course, and the learners work life balance, and skills and knowledge to identify if this is the right course for them.

- Education Assistants email applicants a Pre-Training Review letter requiring them to complete a skills test on reading, writing and numeracy (ACER Test).

- Upon completion of the ACER, the Librarian will conduct an interview to identify any possible learning barriers or learning needs. The Education Coordinator or Education Manager will conduct these interviews in the absence of the Librarian.
- Learning Considerations are recorded on the Skills First Pre-Training Review Template.
- Any other considerations such as holiday's interstate/overseas will be discussed and if any Individual Learning Plans (ILP) will need to be created.

The Pre-Training Review is conducted by the ANMF (Vic Branch) Librarian who holds the following qualifications:

- Graduate Certificate in Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy
- Master of Adult and Vocational Education
- TAE40116 Cert IV in Training and Assessment

In the absence of the Librarian, the Education Manager or the Education Coordinator will conduct the Pre-Training Review.

Student Induction – Support Services

ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre provides the following information in the learners course induction during their first class:

- Information about support services
- How they can get help if they have a problem or find the course difficult
- Support services to use technology and access the learning resources they need
- How to make a complaint about their training or support services if they are not satisfied
- If the agreed services are changed.

Online and Blended Learner Support Strategy

This strategy applies to and is not limited to:

- Blended and online learners and trainers and assessors in a:
 - Synchronous learning environment; and
 - Asynchronous learning environment

Accessibility

- Digital Accessibility: All online learning materials and platforms will adhere to accessibility standards to ensure equitable access for all learners, including those with disabilities and individual learning needs.

- Online Service Standards: The Online Service Standards is a learner accessible document that provides support and requirements for online learners with contacts and communication channels. This document is available on the ANMF (Vic Branch) website.
- Technical Support: The ANMF (Vic Branch) eLearning Officer and Education Coordinator are available to assist learners with any technical issues related to the online learning platform, software, or hardware.

Academic Support

- Learners have access to a variety of virtual learning resources, including multimedia content, discussion forums, and additional materials to enhance their understanding of course materials.
- The Education Centre staff and trainers are available during business hours for all learners at their behest.
- Learners have access to bespoke Individual Learning plans and requests for assessment extensions.
- Clear communication channels, including email, discussion forums, and virtual office hours, will be established to facilitate communication between learners and trainers and assessors and facilitators.
- Asynchronous learners have the opportunity for live online support sessions weekly to fortnightly throughout their course.

Assessment Support

- Learners with assessment related questions must be directed and emailed to the learner's trainer.
 - Trainers will include the Education Coordinator and Quality and Compliance Officer into their email response. This may be to demonstrate learner support or provide feedback to ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre for continuous improvement opportunities. The ANMF (Vic Branch) staff do not need to respond to these emails unless a complaint or appeal is escalated.
- Trainers do not need to answer questions outside of their paid working hours.
- Assessors only are not required to provide support prior to submitted assessments if it is not in their contract. Feedback will be provided after assessment judgments have been made.
- ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre staff or trainers will endeavour to acknowledge requests for assistance or questions related to the assessments within seven (7) seven calendar days.
 - In instances where there is a study day, responses from trainers may take up to 14 calendar days.
- Questions based on assessments must be submitted at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the due date, questions submitted on or after seven (7) calendar days are not guaranteed a response prior to the due date.

- If an assessment question falls before a study day, learners can attend the scheduled optional online study support session on the designated study day to ask their question with a representative from the ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre.
- ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre can offer assessment extensions, according to the Assessment Policy.

Social and Emotional Support

- Opportunities for learners to engage with their peers through virtual discussion groups or collaborative projects will be encouraged to foster a sense of community.
- Opportunities to book time with the Education Coordinator or the Education Manager to discuss their progress or provide guidance for support during their course.

Online and Blended Learner Monitoring Strategy

Attendance and Participation

For synchronous online learners:

- Trainers and assessors will monitor learner attendance and participation in online discussions and activities.
- Trainers and assessors are available on timetabled study days for additional learner support.
 - Support sessions will operate during business hours on scheduled study days.

For asynchronous online learners:

- The Education Assistants will send out a monthly email to check in on the learners and remind them to contact the ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre if they require additional support.
- Communication channels such as Padlet or LMS discussion forums, to be determined, will be created to monitor weekly communication and engagement.
 - Learners will be required to participate in these engagement activities for monitoring purposes.
 - Trainers and assessors will contact learners who do not engage to ensure they are progressing with the course as scheduled.
 - Analytical tools on the LMS may be utilised to track learner engagement, including log-in frequency, time spent on the platform, and participation levels.
- Trainers and assessors will conduct weekly 2-3 hour zoom support sessions during the initial weeks after enrolment to provide additional support until the learner becomes accustomed to the requirements of the course and asynchronous learning. The weekly support sessions will then progress to fortnightly support sessions.

- The trainers and assessors will be available via a booking system if learners require extra support time or can make the scheduled sessions. These sessions can also be used for assessments.
 - Support sessions will operate during business hours.

Academic Progress

- Regular assessments and timely feedback will be provided to learners to gauge their academic progress.
- Learners can view their progress on the LMS (Moodle).
- Assessments have been clustered and scaffolded to build upon learning.
- Trainers and assessors will identify learners who may be struggling and implement strategies to provide additional support.
 - Trainers and assessors will contact the Education Centre about learners that require additional support.
 - If learners have applied for three (3) extensions the trainers are required to contact the Education Team so they can follow up with a wellness and support check and identify if the learner requires additional support.
 - An Individual Learning Plan will be created, implemented and monitored.

At Risk Register

- The LMS (Moodle) has been programmed to send out reports of learners who have not logged onto the learning platform after a significant pause and to identify if asynchronous learners have engaged in the course after the commencement.
- A register has been created to record this data which can be accessed to assist students in recommencing engagement or to provide additional support.

Technical Monitoring

- Learners will be required to undergo a Pre-Training Review prior to enrolment to ensure they have the digital literacy and technical readiness to ensure they have the necessary hardware, software, and internet connectivity for a successful online learning experience.

Process for Applying, Identifying and Providing Additional Support to Learners

i. Early Identification and At Risk Register

- i. Trainers and assessors should consistently monitor learner performance through assessment quality, participation, and engagement metrics.

- a. Look for warning signs such as declining participation, missed assessment submission deadlines, a sudden drop in work quality, or consistent low performance.
- ii. Trainers are required to encourage open communication and provide multiple channels for learners to express concerns or seek help, such as virtual office hours, discussion forums, or private messaging.
- iii. Trainers are then required to contact the Contact the Education Coordinator as soon as there is a learning barrier, absences, late assessments.
- iv. Education Coordinator will record the student issues on the Student Support Register on SharePoint.
- v. The Education Coordinator will the schedule an Individual Assessment Meeting.

ii. Individual Assessment Meeting

- i. The Education Coordinator will initiate communication with the struggling learner to express concern and offer support.
- ii. Schedule an individual meeting to discuss the specific challenges the learner is facing, including academic, technical, or personal difficulties.
- iii. Work collaboratively with the learner to identify the root causes of their struggles, considering both academic and non-academic factors.
- iv. Inform the learner about available support resources, such as tutoring services, counselling, or technical assistance.

iii. Developing an Individual Learner Plan

- i. The development of the Individual Learner Plan may be initiated at:
 - a. The discretion of the learner / candidate
 - b. The request of a trainer and assessor
 - c. Documentation on the At Risk Register
 - d. Multiple emails to the trainer and assessor or the Education Coordinator / Education Centre
 - e. The discretion of the Education Coordinator
- ii. The Education Coordinator will conduct an assessment of the learner's needs, considering academic, technical, and personal aspects. The Quality and Compliance Officer or the Education Manager will be present in this meeting to record the minutes and complete the Additional Learning Considerations.
- iii. The Education Coordinator will develop an individualised learner plan that outlines specific accommodations, resources, and support strategies to address the identified needs, detailing agreed-upon accommodations and support measures.
- iv. The Education Coordinator will communicate the plan to relevant support services, such as technical support, or trainers and assessors to ensure coordinated assistance, if applicable.

iv. Regular Monitoring and Feedback

- i. Continuously monitor the learner's progress to assess the effectiveness of the support plan.
- ii. Schedule fortnightly check-ins with the learner to discuss progress, address concerns, and provide ongoing feedback.
- iii. If necessary, adjust the support plan based on the learner's evolving needs and progress.
- iv. If the learner's struggles persist despite interventions, report the situation to the Education Coordinator/Manager.
- v. Repeat the process of developing support plans if necessary.

Learner Non-Cooperation

If the learner does not cooperate with the ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre regarding support services such as:

- Not providing guidance to their learning needs
- Not acknowledging offered support by the Education Centre
- Refusing to meet with the Education Centre regarding student support
- Withholding learning requirements during the application process
- Offered support services are not being utilised effectively or being attended
- The individual learning plan is not being adhered to

The ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre staff will assess the situation to determine the best course of action.

This decision will be based on the learner's enrolment, standard of submitted assessments, adherence to the individual learner plan, documented efforts, RTO compliance requirements and what is in the learner's best interests.

These decisions may include withdrawal from the course:

- If a learner does not disclose their support needs and fails to provide guidance on how the RTO can assist, and their continued enrolment is not in their best interest or that of other learners.
- If the learner does not accept or attend any reasonable support offered.
- If learners support requests are deemed unreasonable changing assessments beyond reasonable adjustment or requesting the Education Centre to purchase equipment or services. This is not an exhaustive list.

Additional Support Services

If the struggles are related to specific issues, such as mental health or learning disabilities, the learner can be referred to specialised support services.

Reasonable Adjustment

Reasonable Adjustment, as outlined by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) standards, refers to the process of making fair and equitable modifications to the way assessment tasks are conducted for learners with diverse needs. This principle is grounded in the commitment to providing an inclusive education environment that accommodates the specific requirements of individual learners, ensuring they have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

It is imperative to emphasise that Reasonable Adjustment should never compromise the integrity of the assessment process. While making necessary accommodations, trainers must uphold the validity and reliability of assessments, maintaining the same rigor and standards for all learners. Any adjustments made should be carefully considered to preserve the authenticity of the assessment outcomes.

Trainers are encouraged to seek guidance and assistance from the Compliance Team when implementing Reasonable Adjustments. The Compliance Team will ensure that adjustments align with legal requirements, industry standards, and our organisational policies. Collaboration with the Compliance Team helps to strike a balance between inclusivity and assessment integrity, ensuring that all learners have a fair opportunity to succeed without compromising the credibility of our educational programs.

Refer to the Reasonable Adjustment Policy within the Assessment Policy.

Approved by

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