

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

2025–2029





Acknowledgement of Country

TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to elders past and present and we are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas as well as their rich contribution to society.

We recognise that Aboriginal cultures and communities form the foundation of cultural diversity within New South Wales. Hundreds of cultures, languages and kinship structures have long been embedded in the lands of Aboriginal Countries throughout the state. We acknowledge and celebrate these diverse traditions, customs and cultures that have existed since the beginning of time.

We will continue to value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote their rights and interests. In doing so, we acknowledge the wrongs of the past, respect the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and commit to embedding equality and equity throughout all areas of our organisations by integrating inclusive and innovative opportunities that will result in stronger relationships built on respect and trust.

© Amy Allerton, contemporary Aboriginal Artist of the Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung and Gamilaroi nations.

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Message from the Managing Director



I am proud to introduce the TAFE NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2029, reaffirming our commitment to accessibility and presenting an ambitious roadmap to advance equity and eliminate barriers for people living with disabilities.

At TAFE NSW, we believe disability inclusion is not just our responsibility, it is fundamental to our purpose of providing accessible, high-quality education and employment opportunities.

This is reflected in the TAFE NSW Charter, which outlines our commitment to supporting students’ lifelong learning needs, regardless of their personal circumstances.

As the largest VET provider in Australia, TAFE NSW is uniquely positioned to lead and champion equitable access, which will in turn help deliver a more skilled workforce, promote inclusion, empower individuals, support community development, and contribute to economic growth. The recently released NSW VET Review recognised the critical role a strong TAFE NSW plays in improving the lives of people from all backgrounds and capabilities.

This plan goes beyond ensuring equal access. It focuses on improving participation, shifting attitudes and behaviours, and creating environments where students, employees and community members with disabilities can thrive.

Importantly, this plan recognises the intersectionality of disability with other identities including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, cultural background, gender and LGBTQIA+ communities.

By addressing these diverse experiences and needs, we take an integrated approach to inclusion to serve all members of our community.

Over the next four years, this plan will guide our efforts to:

- Shift attitudes and behaviours by building knowledge, capability and awareness around disability inclusion and access
- Create an environment where everyone belongs, ensuring our working and learning spaces are safe, inclusive and enable meaningful participation for all
- Provide equitable access to employment opportunities through inclusive recruitment practices, workplace adjustments, and training that delivers skills and professional growth
- Embed universal accessibility into our systems and processes, ensuring they are inclusive, safe and easy to navigate for all.

Through targeted actions addressing attitudes and behaviours, employment practices, physical and digital environments, and organisational systems, we have embedded inclusion in every aspect of the plan, and TAFE NSW’s policies and practices. In doing so, we aim to set a benchmark for accessible education and workplace opportunities across New South Wales.

The NSW VET Review recognised the provision of vocational training as a public good and the critical role of a strong TAFE NSW at the heart of the VET sector.

I am confident that this plan will inspire and guide us in achieving a more inclusive and accessible organisation. Together, we can make this vision a reality.

Chloe Read
Managing Director,
TAFE NSW



At TAFE NSW, we believe disability inclusion is not just our responsibility, it is fundamental to our purpose of providing accessible, high-quality education and employment opportunities.



Message from the Executive Sponsor



The 2025 – 2029 Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) marks the next step in our ongoing journey of growth and improvement, reinforcing our commitment to accessibility, equity and inclusiveness for everyone. By embracing the strengths and unique contributions of people with disability, we not only create better workplaces and learning environments but also enhance our ability to serve diverse communities and drive innovation.

This action plan outlines specific, measurable steps we will take to break down barriers and ensure people living with disability feel supported, respected and valued. It is an opportunity for TAFE NSW to adopt a more social approach to disability and inclusion, moving away from the historical medical view. The DIAP presents an opportunity for the people of TAFE NSW to become role models and ambassadors to other organisations, in demonstrating best practices on inclusion.

I am excited in the possibilities for TAFE NSW to deliver meaningful change for students, staff and the broader community. I would like to encourage all TAFE NSW staff to join me in championing this plan and to create a workplace and learning environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed with dignity.

Hugh Greenough
Executive Director,
TAFE NSW

About this plan

The DIAP 2025–2029 is a detailed plan designed to drive meaningful change and enhance accessibility in our organisation and our communities. It is a strategic initiative developed in line with the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines. It aligns with broader strategies, including the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan and the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan 2023–2027.

Recognising people’s diverse experiences within our community, this plan outlines practical actions that will foster inclusion. It focuses on the needs of individuals with disability and addresses intersectional factors such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, cultural background, gender and LGBTIQ+ identity.

The DIAP 2025–2029 seeks to improve outcomes for students, employees and community members with disability by removing barriers, fostering accessible environments and creating opportunities to participate with dignity. Building on the

success of the previous TAFE NSW DIAP 2020–2022, this plan strengthens our commitment to advancing accessibility and inclusion from 2025 to 2029.

Structured around four key areas, this plan seeks to ensure that accessibility is embedded in everything we do. These key areas are:

- attitudes and behaviours
- employment
- liveable communities
- systems and processes.

It identifies what is required to improve accessibility in physical spaces, employment practices and organisational culture, as well as on digital platforms.

By implementing this DIAP, we are continuing our journey to create an environment where all people can contribute with dignity and thrive.

“Disability inclusion is not just a goal — it is a cornerstone of TAFE NSW vision for a supportive, equitable and inclusive future.”

”

Discovery Process

This plan was developed through a comprehensive, co-designed process that actively involved employees, students and stakeholders, with 50 per cent of participants contributing accounts of their lived experience. We worked with a range of community and industry partners to include diverse perspectives. The discovery process was thorough, consisting of workshops, focus groups and surveys, as well as consultations with relevant community organisations. This collaborative approach allowed us to gather a wide range of insights, assess current accessibility and inclusion practices, and identify areas where we can drive meaningful improvements. By incorporating feedback from all participants, we ensured that the plan captured both the challenges and opportunities identified.



Our Journey

TAFE NSW has been working for many years to improve accessibility and inclusion for our students, employees and communities.

Our services at TAFE NSW include providing TAFE NSW Disability Teacher Consultants, who have empowered students with disability to achieve their educational, vocational and employment goals for more than 45 years. Using their knowledge of disability laws, reasonable adjustments and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), our services provide tailored support to ensure students with disability have full participation in education. In addition to personalised support that gives students access to the necessary resources, additional TAFE NSW services include counselling, Aboriginal support services and multicultural specialist support.

TAFE NSW offers employees support through counselling, an Employee Assistance Program and workplace adjustment specialists who can provide support with work-related adjustments.

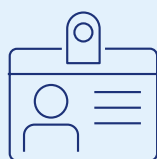
While our goals may seem ambitious, we are proud of the significant progress we have made on our journey. Since the release of our DIAP 2020–2022, we have:

- increased the number of employees with disability, in line with the NSW election commitment that 5.6 per cent of NSW Government sector roles be held by people with disability
- provided targeted training and resources to raise awareness among all TAFE NSW employees, including executive leaders and management, about identifying barriers to training and employment for people with disability
- conducted a comprehensive digital accessibility audit
- built, and continue to embed, capability in the application of UDL across all corporate, delivery and product development areas
- developed guidelines to support employees in understanding and delivering workplace adjustments

- reviewed employment practices to improve equitable access and participation in TAFE NSW recruitment and retention processes for people with disability
- created programs to help employees, including executives and management, to follow inclusive and accessible practices
- established advisory groups to review and evaluate campus facilities, workplaces and learning environments, making sure we meet accessibility standards and improve for the future.



11%
TAFE NSW Students
with Disability*



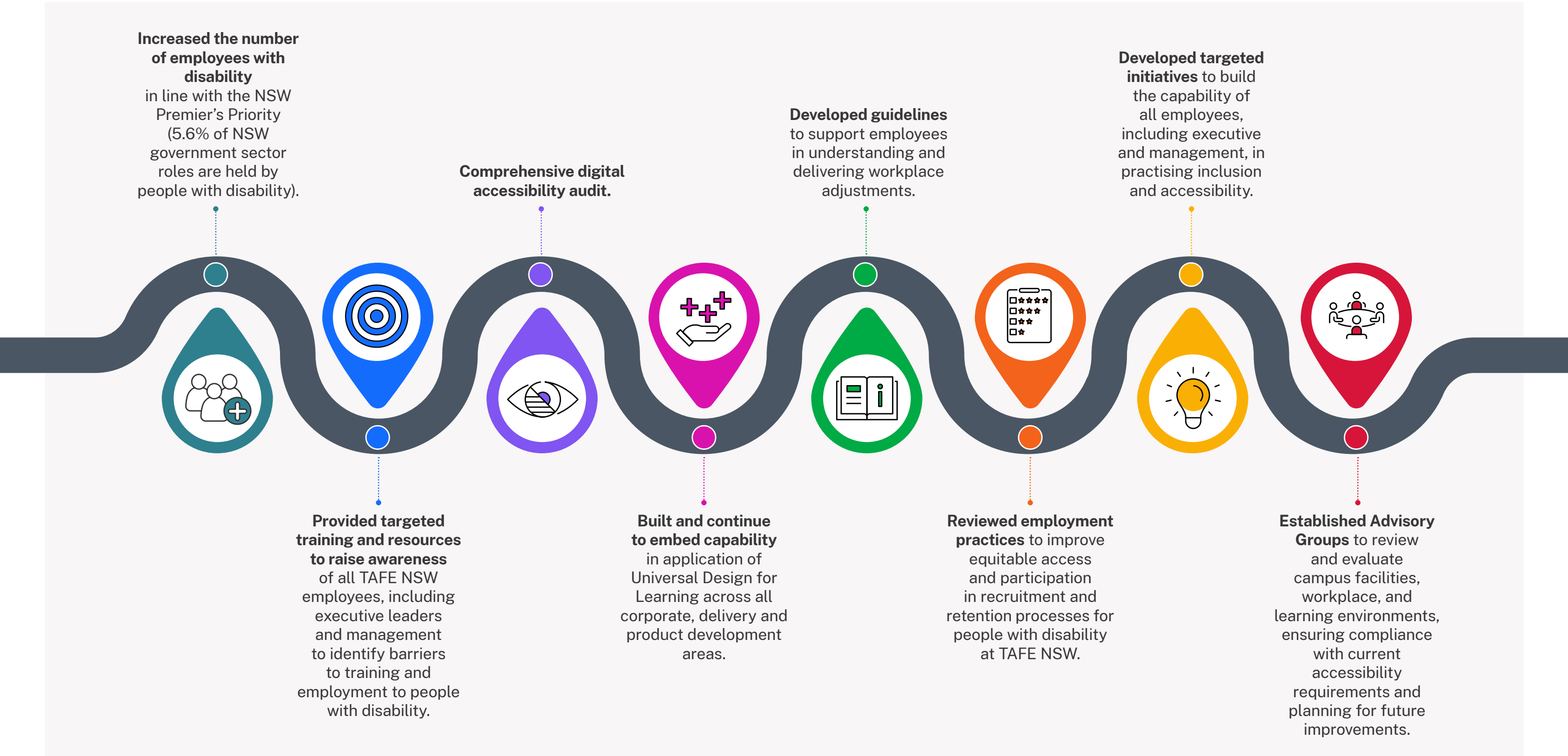
2.25%
TAFE NSW Employees
with Disability†



5.6%
Total Employees with
Disability Goal



Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020 – 2022 Achievements



The Social Model of Disability

TAFE NSW’s commitment to disability access and inclusion is informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD). The UNCRPD outlines what we now refer to as the ‘Social Model of Disability’.

The UNCRPD states people with disability are not disabled by their impairment, but by the barriers in society. These barriers limit access to gaining equal access to information, services, transport, housing, education, training, employment and social opportunities.

This definition reinforces the importance of viewing disability as the result of interactions between people living with impairments and their physical and social environments. Disability is not just about impairment. The whole community is responsible for removing barriers.

TAFE NSW, alongside the broader NSW public sector, is committed to the Social Model of Disability and does not support the old Medical Model of Disability. The Medical Model views disability as a problem to be fixed or cured, focusing solely on what a person cannot do or be, rather than recognising and addressing societal barriers.

By adopting the Social Model, TAFE NSW confirms its commitment to fostering an inclusive environment in which everyone can participate safely and with dignity.

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) defines disability as: The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

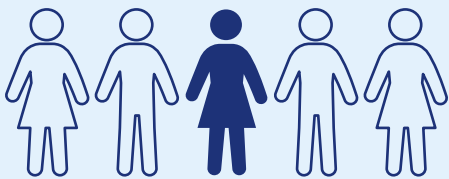


Having recently graduated from Bradfield Senior College, I feel a huge sense of achievement and pride for making it this far. Thanks to the support of the staff members and their willingness and patience to work with and accommodate my disability, I have successfully done my dream courses through TAFE NSW and found education more enjoyable and accessible. The adult learning environment allowed me to grow as a person and gain independence while also teaching me how to manage personal responsibility.

Seth Leggatt
Alumnus Bradfield Senior College
– first blind student accepted at the college



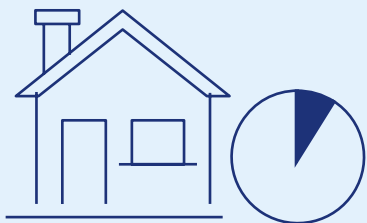
4.4M+
people in Australia have some form of disability.



1 in 5
people in Australia have some form of disability.



1M
Australians of working age (15-64 years) have disability.



9%
of Australia’s households include a person with disability.

Statistics from Australian Network on Disability

Our commitment to people living with disability

TAFE NSW is committed to fostering an environment that is accessible, inclusive and safe—physically, psychologically, culturally and socially. We recognise that students and employees living with disability should have the freedom to choose their education or employment pathways with dignity and without facing unnecessary barriers.

We acknowledge the ongoing biases and stereotypes that people with disability often encounter and are determined to challenge and remove these obstacles. Our goal is to create a space where individuals with disability can thrive, succeed and achieve their full potential.

TAFE NSW takes a proactive stance in identifying and addressing systemic barriers that limit the full participation of people with disability in both study and work. We are committed to creating an environment in which all students and employees can engage in campus life independently and with dignity.

Understanding that identity is both complex and unique, TAFE NSW is committed to recognising how a person's disability intersects with other factors, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, race, gender and LGBTIQ+ identity. We make sure to include these factors in our approach to inclusion.

We will prioritise including the voices of people with disability in decision-making processes that impact them. By embedding co-design principles and actively listening to and engaging with those with lived experience, we aim to create an environment that is inclusive and accessible for everyone.



Guiding principles

This plan is guided by principles of equity, respect and dignity. It ensures that everyone, no matter their ability, can access opportunities and thrive in an inclusive environment. These principles guide our actions to remove barriers and foster true participation for everyone.



Data

We are committed to following ethical and inclusive data practices that align with our commitment to serving diverse students, employees and communities.



Inclusive design

We are dedicated to inclusive design and to developing programs, services and facilities that are accessible and responsive to the needs of all individuals, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. TAFE NSW ensures that everyone can engage and thrive in their learning environment.



Safe and inclusive spaces

We advocate for physical and digital spaces that are accessible, welcoming and culturally appropriate to meet the needs of all students, employees and communities. These spaces should promote safety, dignity, comfort and equal participation regardless of ability or background.



Accessibility

We focus on making physical spaces, digital tools and workplaces accessible and culturally safe for all students, employees and community members. By focusing on these aspects, we ensure that students, employees and community members can be their authentic selves in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bias and harm.



Employment

We aim to proactively attract, recruit and retain employees who live with disability by providing culturally safe, accessible, inclusive and flexible processes, including targeted and identified positions, workplace adjustments and career development opportunities.



Marketing and communications

Cultural and diverse authenticity is embedded in TAFE NSW messaging in all internal and external communications, brand campaigns and recruitment processes. We commit to inclusivity and accessibility in our marketing and communications materials, ensuring that the language, content and imagery reflect the diversity of our students, employees and community.



Safe and respectful practices

We promote safe and respectful practices by fostering an inclusive culture that embraces diversity and encourages mutual respect among all employees and students. Through targeted D&I initiatives, TAFE NSW aims to prevent discrimination, support equity and create a safe, welcoming environment for all.



Capability

We are committed to providing ongoing education and training to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of disability inclusion and accessibility, as well as broader issues of culture, diversity, equity and inclusion. Ongoing training helps us meet the needs of students, employees and communities in a safe and inclusive way.



Governance

TAFE NSW is dedicated to implementing and delivering diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives to strengthen our reputation and attract students, employees, industries, partners and communities who value social impact. We will track and follow legal and regulatory standards and ensure alignment with the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan and the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan.



Policy

When developing a policy, lived experience must be embedded in the co-design and consultation process to ensure the perspectives of those directly affected by the policy are thoroughly understood. This ensures the policy will provide practical, equitable solutions that are aligned with the needs of diverse communities.



Stakeholder engagement

Inclusive stakeholder engagement is vital for co-designing and collaborating on projects, programs and initiatives. It fosters a human-centred approach that is equitable, impactful and representative of the diverse communities of students and employees.

Strategic activities

Through engagement and feedback with TAFE NSW students, employees and community members, it became clear that many people who live with disability often do not feel safe, valued or fully included at TAFE NSW and can't always participate fully in learning or employment.

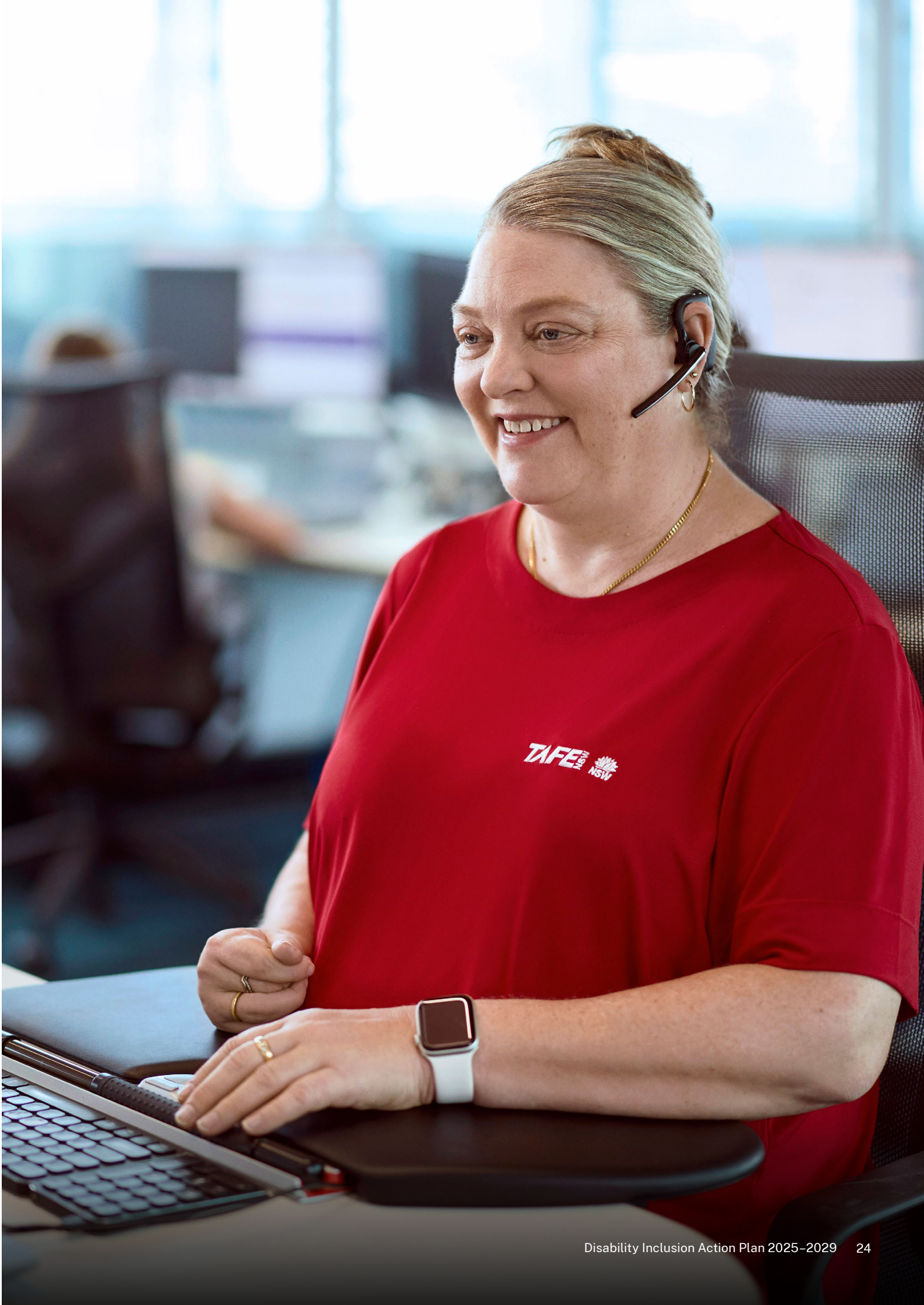
To address these challenges, we are committed to taking a data-driven approach in the next phase of our DIAP. We have structured our efforts around our four key areas: Attitudes and Behaviours, Employment, Liveable Communities and Systems and Processes. These key areas focus on overcoming the barriers that limit participation, safety and accessibility for individuals with disability. By fostering inclusive behaviours, improving employment opportunities, creating accessible communities and refining systems to better support diverse needs, we aim to create an environment in which all individuals can fully participate, thrive and feel valued.

This DIAP is grounded in a Theory of Change approach, ensuring that each initiative is aligned with a clear path to impact. By identifying the core challenges faced by individuals with disability and defining our desired outcomes, this plan

outlines strategic actions and measurable outputs. This framework enables us to track progress; assess social, cultural and economic impacts; and remain focused on creating meaningful, sustainable improvements in accessibility, inclusion and participation for people living with disability across TAFE NSW.

The long-term impacts we hope to achieve are as follows.

- Students, employees and community members living with disability feel safe, valued and included at TAFE NSW and can fully participate in learning or employment with dignity.
- TAFE NSW employees with disability experience success and are empowered to grow and develop in their roles.
- Students with disability achieve their goals at TAFE NSW.



Case study

I had a rough childhood, which led to me feeling disconnected during my teen years and like I didn't belong. While studying a Small Business Course at Wyong TAFE, I became pregnant at 19. With the encouragement and support of my teacher, I was able to complete my studies. Over a number of years, I was diagnosed with non-visible illnesses—Complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic fatigue, severe anxiety, fibromyalgia and agoraphobia, adding to my fear of leaving the house. I needed to get out of the house and increase my confidence, so I enrolled in Cert IV Accounting at Ourimbah Campus. Following completion of my TAFE study, I went to uni to become a high school teacher.

In May 2022, I rejoined TAFE NSW as an Aboriginal Student Support Officer, determined to put into practice strategies I'd developed to help students like me find a pathway through education.

Supported by TAFE's flexible work policy and an understanding team leader, I don't feel judged. I feel seen and understood. Now I work to 'pay that forward' and help students find their purpose and direction. When invited to join the staff network TAFE-Ability, I wasn't sure if all my issues made me 'disabled enough'. Thankfully, I overcame my hesitation; since joining, everyone has been so accepting of my disabilities and has been so amazingly supportive and welcoming.

Ashlee Miller (she/her)
Proud Wiradjuri woman living and working on Darkinyung Country

Supported by TAFE's flexible work policy and an understanding team leader, I don't feel judged. I feel seen and understood.



Focus Area 1: Attitudes and Behaviours



The attitudes and behaviours of the general public towards people with disability have been described as the single greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. These attitudes and behaviours permeate all aspects of life. Consultation to date has identified that negative attitudes towards people with disability often stem from ignorance, fear or lack of opportunity to interact. Fostering positive attitudes involves increasing awareness and changing negative perceptions over time. This is a long-term goal that may need to be dealt with in stages.

Goals:

- The students, employees and communities we serve feel respected, represented and included in TAFE NSW activities and communications.
- Students and employees with disability can engage, participate and communicate using their preferred or required method or channel of communication.
- Students and employees living with disability have equitable access to all services and opportunities at TAFE NSW and can choose how they participate.



To achieve this, we will:

- Build a culture of disability inclusion; our leadership team will take accountability for this.
- Ensure all internal and external communications, including advertising and marketing materials, are inclusive and accessible and use language that focuses on strength and capacity.
- Uplift all TAFE NSW employees' capability in using inclusive language and practices and educate them in the barriers people with disability face in training and employment.



Measures of success:

- An increase in the number of students and employees with disability who feel that:
- their experience is respected and represented in TAFE NSW activities and communications
 - they can engage, participate and communicate using their preferred or required method or channel of communication
 - they have equitable access to services and opportunities and can choose how they participate.

Focus Area 1: Attitudes and Behaviours Implementation Plan

Goals	High-level activity		Responsibility
1. Learners, employees and communities we serve feel respected, represented and included in TAFE NSW activities and communications.	1a.	Create a library of storytelling and truth-telling resources and provide opportunities for individuals with lived experience of disability to share their stories through case studies and training in a safe and empowering environment.	Chief People Officer
	1b.	Design and deliver capability programs that foster inclusive leadership and review these annually.	Chief People Officer
2. Students and employees with disability engage, participate and communicate using their preferred or required method or channel of communication.	2a.	Develop practical resources to encourage relevant events - virtual, in person and social - are accessible and inclusive.	Office of the Managing Director
	2b.	Create a library of imagery showcasing students, staff and community members with disability, reflecting TAFE NSW's commitment to inclusion and representation.	Chief Operating Officer
	2c.	Develop accessible and inclusive marketing and communication practices for use in imagery, documentation, social media posts and advertisements.	Chief Operating Officer
	2d.	Design and implement an inclusive TAFE NSW Accessibility Framework that meets and embeds accessibility standards and needs into all functional areas of TAFE NSW.	Chief People Officer
3. Students and employees living with disability have equitable access to all services and opportunities at TAFE NSW and can choose how they participate.	3a.	Implement a transcription service to enable full participation for individuals with disability.	Chief Product and Quality Officer
	3b.	Establish a resource library that includes resources to support inclusive delivery, adjustment planning, policies, legislation and the use of inclusive language for students, educators and employees.	Chief Product & Quality Officer
	3c.	Hold accessible social events that foster connection, belonging and inclusion across all communities.	Chief People Officer
	3d.	Develop guidance on human-centred design processes for embedding the voices of people with disabilities in decision-making.	Office of the Managing Director
	3e.	Review and update services, provide recommendations and offer training so that stakeholders can effectively support individuals with disability.	Chief Learning & Teaching Officer

Case study

Having lived with a physical disability since birth, I have accomplished more in my career than I thought possible. Starting in the IT unit in 2003, I 'got by' with minimal workplace adjustments. I wasn't aware of what was available to support me and when I did ask, my requests were often rejected due to budget constraints. After researching what was possible, I began to introduce tools and technology that reduced barriers and addressed injuries related to working when living with a disability. It was life-changing once I started using a one-handed keyboard, reducing repetitive strain. Around 2019, TAFE NSW began to utilise JobAccess to make larger changes to the workplace. For me, these changes were the installation of an automatic door to the area where I worked on campus and light switches and swipe card [readers] were moved to a more accessible height.

Starting a new role in 2022 with the Diversity and Inclusion team, a detailed review included the installation of the software Dragon NaturallySpeaking on my laptop, which translates my words into texts and commands. I received a new powered office chair that allows me to move around the office and it has height adjustment, so it lowers to the height of my skateboard, allowing an easy and safe transition onto the chair. For the first time ever, my new chair can raise me up to eye level with my colleagues, which goes partway to addressing the unconscious bias I sometimes encounter.

I believe that a workplace that is built around being a "liveable community" can transform that environment from one that caused anxiety to one that feels almost like home.

Steve Lyons (he/him)
Birpai Country (Port Macquarie)

“ I believe that a workplace that is built around being a “liveable community” can transform that environment from one that caused anxiety to one that feels almost like home. ”



Focus Area 2: Liveable communities



Creating liveable communities involves focusing attention and resources on the elements of community life that most people desire. For people with disability, it is about more than modifying the environment; it covers areas such as accessible housing, access to transport, community recreation, education and social engagement, and universal design.

Goals:

- Students, employees and community members with disability can attend and fully participate in learning, events and other activities at TAFE NSW.
- People with disability know where they are and can find their way around TAFE NSW campuses safely, independently and with dignity.



To achieve this, we will:

- Improve the physical infrastructure and digital accessibility at TAFE NSW.
- Enhance safety by improving emergency response processes and providing clearer signage.
- Create appropriate spaces for work and learning, including quiet spaces for learning and low-sensory offices.



Measures of success:

- The number of TAFE NSW campuses that meet accessibility standards
- The number of TAFE NSW buildings that have had accessibility upgrades
- The number of TAFE NSW events that meet our accessibility requirements
- The percentage of students and employees with disability who report they can find their way around TAFE campuses safely and independently

Focus Area 2: Liveable communities Implementation Plan

Goals	High-level activity		Responsibility
1. Students, employees and community members with disability can attend and fully participate in learning, events and other activities at TAFE NSW.	1a.	Uplift capability by updating templates, training and resources that embed mandatory accessibility elements in infrastructure, procurement and business practices.	Chief Operating Officer
	1b.	Develop a digital accessibility framework to guide and standardise digital accessibility across all TAFE NSW platforms and systems.	Chief Information Officer
	1c.	Develop and implement a digital student adjustment passport to streamline support for students with disability.	Chief Student & Community Officer
	1d.	Conduct an audit across campuses to identify accessibility gaps in work and learning spaces, identify new safe spaces and prioritise improvements.	Chief Operating Officer
2. People with disability know where they are and can find their way around TAFE NSW campuses safely, independently and with dignity.	2a.	Develop emergency response plans in multiple accessible formats, including audio versions accessible via QR codes, to meet diverse needs.	Chief People Officer
	2b.	Establish a standardised process for creating, storing and managing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for students and employees with disability.	Chief People Officer
	2c.	Include endorsed signage and wayfinding standards in the Campus Master Plan to enhance accessibility and consistency.	Chief Operating Officer
	2d.	Create an app with accessible digital campus maps to provide clear navigation pathways, enabling users to locate and move around TAFE NSW campuses.	Chief Operating Officer

Case study

Since 2023, TAFE NSW has partnered with Woolworths to support the Mini Woolies program, which enhances the educational experiences of people with disability.

Each Mini Woolies site replicates all aspects of a Woolworths supermarket, with baskets for fresh food, shelving for groceries, ticketing, signage and Woolworths-branded uniforms. At the check-out, grocery items are scanned using fully operational registers.

The TAFE NSW Mini Woolies program provides people an opportunity to engage in hands-on learning experiences and practice skills in retail services.

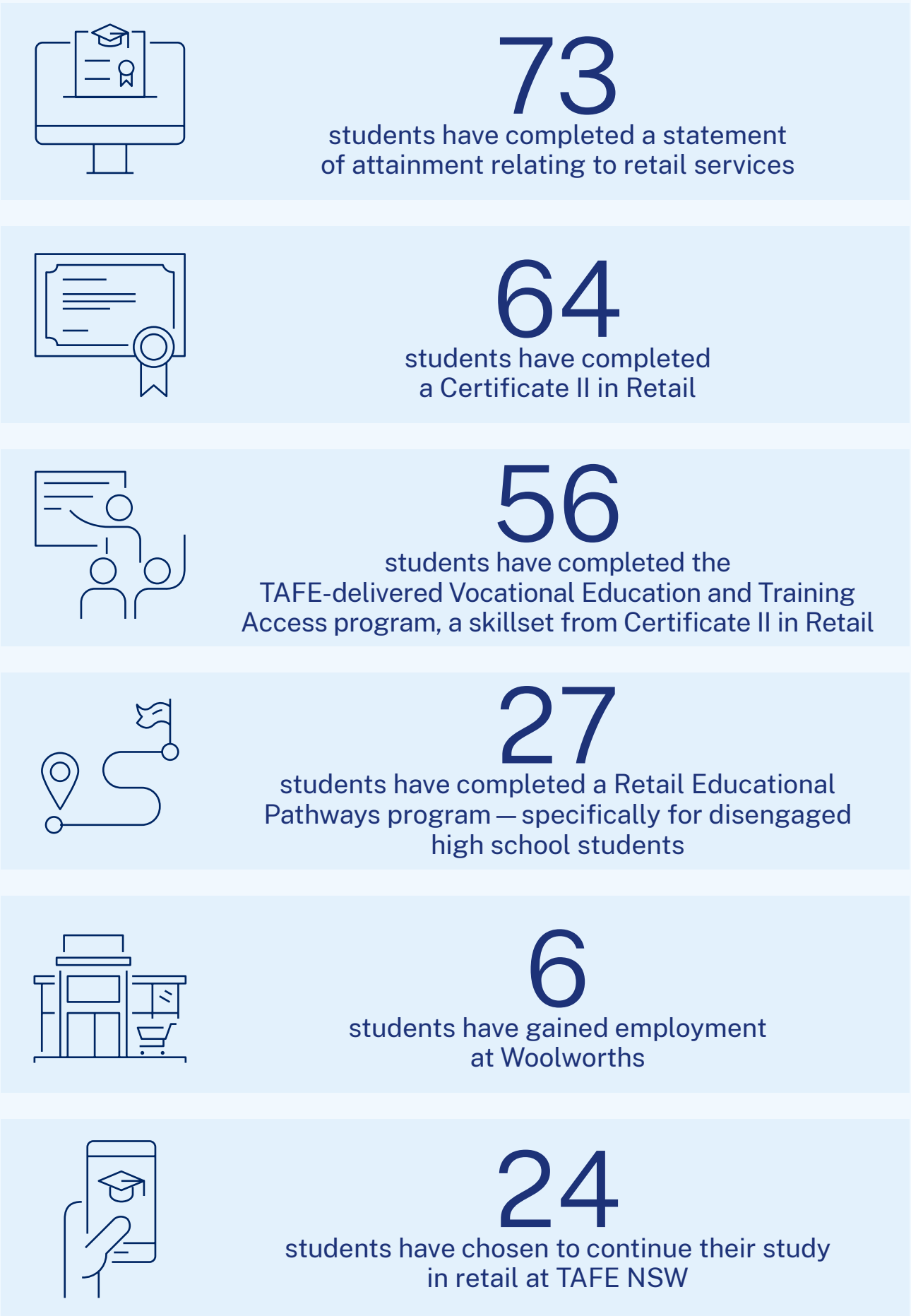
TAFE NSW currently has seven Mini Woolies—located at its Shellharbour, Griffith, Port Macquarie, Loftus, Campbelltown, Cessnock and Tamworth campuses.



I have loved my time at TAFE. I have met so many new people and made some good friends but especially my time spent working in the Mini Woolies shop at Loftus TAFE has given me the skills and confidence to be able to secure a job at the Woolworths Kirrawee store. I had the best teacher—Cathy Sammut; she has encouraged and helped me so much and I now feel ready to face a retail career.

Brittany Cvetkovski
Dharawal Country
(Loftus Campus)

Since its inception:



Focus Area 3: Employment



People with disability experience multiple barriers at all stages of the employment process, ranging from inaccessible interview venues, lack of reasonable adjustments to the work environment, poor career planning opportunities, rigid role descriptions and online testing that may place applicants at a disadvantage. These factors reduce their opportunities to gain and retain employment.

Goals:

- An increased number of people with disability working at TAFE NSW at all levels.
- Candidates with disability have an inclusive recruitment experience and new employees with disability have a successful onboarding experience.
- TAFE NSW employees with disability can fully participate in employment activities and career development opportunities.
- Students with disability can access vocational pathways of their choice during their studies at TAFE NSW.



To achieve this, we will:

- Increase the number of identified and targeted positions, including leadership roles.
- Make attraction, recruitment and onboarding practices more inclusive.
- Support employees, including by providing an information hub, career pathways, a mentor program and manager training in inclusive practices.
- Provide students with more employment pathways.



Measures of success:

- An increase in people living with disability employed at TAFE NSW at each level
- Percentage of candidates with a disability who report an inclusive recruitment experience or successful onboarding experience
- Percentage of employees with disability who report they can fully participate in employment or career development opportunities
- Percentage of students with disability accessing vocational pathways of their choice

Focus Area 3: Employment Implementation Plan

Goals	High-level activity		Responsibility
1. Increase the number of people with disability working at TAFE NSW at all levels.	1a.	Review and understand baseline data to inform change.	Chief People Officer
	1b.	Set targets for creating disability-targeted and identified roles, including leadership positions.	Chief People Officer
2. Candidates with disability have an inclusive recruitment experience and new employees with disability have a successful onboarding experience.	2a.	Develop and implement a Talent Management and Acquisition Inclusive Recruitment framework.	Chief People Officer
	2b.	Introduce mandatory training in inclusive and accessible recruitment practices to build leadership capabilities in fostering inclusive and supportive workplaces.	Chief People Officer
	2c.	Review recruitment processes to ensure accessibility and inclusivity are embedded.	Chief People Officer
3. TAFE NSW employees with disability can fully participate in employment activities and career development opportunities.	3a.	Ensure employees with disability are included in leadership capability development programs.	Chief People Officer
	3b.	Establish a structured mentoring and coaching program for employees with disability, including training on disability confidence, reverse mentoring and career confidence.	Chief People Officer
	3c.	Develop a resource hub for students and employees to support recruitment outcomes and provide ongoing support for disability inclusion.	Chief People Officer
	3d.	Create a pilot program for coaching and disability confidence training, inviting expressions of interest for participation and fostering reverse mentoring opportunities.	Chief People Officer
	3e.	Review D&I recruitment outcome success, and consider human resource needs to support diversity employment through every stage of recruitment.	Chief People Officer
4. Students with disability can access vocational pathways of their choice while studying at TAFE NSW.	4a.	Identify new community and industry partnerships to support employment opportunities and career pathways for students with disability.	Chief Student & Community Officer
	4b.	Conduct a review of Jobs Connect to identify its effectiveness in supporting inclusive recruitment and employment pathways for learners with disability.	Chief Student & Community Officer

Case study

School teachers described me as shy and were concerned I did not understand the content but when asked a question, I often knew the answer—I just didn't put my hand up. Teachers also said that I could only comprehend things as black and white instead of shades of grey. I was bullied and I figured it was due to my ethnicity—having a Greek family name and olive skin made me a target. I always have had an eye for detail and perform repetitive things.

For a while, my doctor thought I had OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder). In my 40s, I was referred to a psychologist who picked up my lack of eye contact and my literal responses. I fit more into the Asperger's syndrome diagnosis, which is now part of the broader ASD (autism spectrum disorder). It explains a lot.

Turning 40 also meant my eyesight started to deteriorate. An ophthalmologist has diagnosed me with epithelial basement membrane corneal dystrophy (bumps in the front of my eyes akin to looking through broken glass) and cataracts (cloudy areas in the back of my eyes). I have glasses to help me see, but I also need to shine a light on some printed words and use screen magnifiers on computers to be able to read everything. Knowing about my diagnosis and being able to share it with others certainly helped me be understood at work as well as in my home life.

After a 24-year career as a Trainee Computer Programmer working up to a Senior Analyst at Western Sydney University — I started at TAFE NSW as an Industry Liaison Support Officer disability-identified. I believe starting in an entry position was a great thing as I learnt a lot about how things work and the differences between the VET (vocational education and training) and higher education sectors. Being in a disability-identified position not only allowed me the opportunity to get a job again but also allowed me, with my neurodivergent diagnosis, not to have to put on a strict work persona; I was accepted and understood for who I was.

My current role at TAFE NSW as a Lead Universal Design is to advise on how to make our content accessible to not only people with disability but also to give everyone a choice on how we need to comprehend information. People only have difficulty navigating systems and processes when they are not designed with accessibility in mind from the start. Disability has been socially constructed, resulting from people interacting with an environment that contains attitudinal, communication, environmental and social barriers. People with disability are not the problem; it is the environment that must change to enable all of us to participate on an equal basis. We must accommodate it as part of human diversity.

John J Fardoulis (he/him/his)
Darkinjung Country
(Ourimbah Campus)



Focus Area 4: Systems and Processes



A common challenge for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating systems and processes to access the services and supports they need in the community. Some of these difficulties stem from the quality of service and training of frontline personnel, the systems and processes required to access services, and the lack of accessible options for communicating, accessing information or providing input or feedback. There is often confusion about the services provided across all levels of government, leading to frequent repetition of information provided to public authorities and services.

Goals:

- Students and employees with disability can access the adjustments they need to participate fully in learning or work.
- Students and employees with disability can access and effectively use the platforms they need to participate fully in learning and work.
- Students and employees feel safe to provide feedback and make complaints and feel that TAFE NSW has responded appropriately.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure appropriate adjustments are available to students and employees with disability.
- Ensure accessible digital and assistive technology is available to students and employees with disability.
- Improve compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and other accessibility standards.
- Ensure accessibility is a fundamental requirement of all TAFE NSW systems and processes, is included in all procurement processes, and people with disability are consulted regarding system design.
- Ensure feedback and complaints processes are safe, trusted and accessible for people with disability.

Measures of success:

- The percentage of reasonable adjustment requests that are filled.
- The percentage of students and employees with disability who report they can access and effectively use the platforms they need to learn and work.
- The number of TAFE NSW digital platforms that meet accessibility standards.
- The percentage of procurement processes that include accessibility considerations.
- The percentage of students and employees who feel safe to provide feedback and make complaints, and feel that TAFE NSW has responded appropriately.

Focus Area 4: Systems and Processes Implementation Plan

Goals	High-level activity		Responsibility
1. Students and employees with disability can access the adjustments they need to participate fully in learning or work	1a.	Create guidelines, procedures and processes to define and support reasonable adjustments for students with disability.	Chief Student & Community Officer
	1b.	Develop an Inclusive Education policy to ensure equitable access and support for students with disability.	Chief Student & Community Officer
	1c.	Develop clear procedures and frameworks to guide employees through the adjustment process safely and easily.	Chief People Officer
2. Students and employees with disability can access and effectively use the platforms they need to participate fully in learning and work.	2a.	Develop and implement a Digital Accessibility policy to ensure all digital platforms and tools meet accessibility standards.	Chief Information Officer
	2b.	Develop and implement a Procurement Accessibility policy, ensuring that Australian ICT Procurement Standards are fully adopted, and embed accessibility considerations in all purchasing decisions.	Chief Operating Officer
	2c.	Develop a legal and compliance framework and supporting documentation to outline legal obligations and compliance requirements, including Essential 8 requirements.	Chief Operating Officer
	2d.	Establish an Inclusive Design Community of Practice to promote and integrate accessibility-first approaches across projects and systems.	Chief Information Officer
	2e.	Create an AI policy to govern the use of AI tools to enhance accessibility, including Essential 8, and support diverse needs.	Chief Information Officer
	2f.	Create an assistive technology library that provides students and employees with access to technologies and functionalities to achieve their goals.	Chief Information Officer
	2g.	Provide strategy and action plans in diverse, accessible formats, tailored to the needs of diverse audiences.	Chief Operating Officer
3. Students and employees feel safe to provide feedback and make complaints and feel that TAFE NSW has responded appropriately.	3a.	Build the skills and knowledge of those handling complaints to address issues effectively and equitably.	Chief People Officer
	3b.	Develop a unified system for reporting that has multiple accessible pathways to ensure inclusivity and ease of use.	Chief Information Officer
	3c.	Ensure compliance is in alignment with all relevant federal and state legislation and best practice standards and guidelines.	Chief Operating Officer
	3d.	Assess current complaint systems for digital accessibility, provide recommendations and update tools using a horizon-based approach.	Chief People Officer, Chief Product & Quality Officer

Measurement of progress and accountability

TAFE NSW is committed to embedding the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines into our operations, ensuring that clear governance and accountability frameworks support the implementation of the DIAP 2025–2029. We will integrate the plan’s outcomes and actions into business processes at every level, supported by an implementation guide that assigns responsibility for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Regular progress reports will be provided through the relevant D&I implementation group to the Diversity & Inclusion Action Coordination Group and the People Enabler Steering Committee.

In addition to internal reporting, we will submit annual updates to the Department of Communities and Justice and engage closely with staff networks, internal councils and government agencies to incorporate diverse perspectives and address intersectionality.

We will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure success, including:

- the completion of key actions from 2025 to 2029
- feedback from our community
- analysis of People Matter Employee Survey results
- feedback from students and employees through focus groups and surveys.

Annual reporting

The NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan Guidelines issued by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice require all agencies to submit annual progress reports for the life of the plan.

To support this process, we will develop metrics and targets (where requirements are appropriate) for each action outlined in the implementation plan.

Legislative requirements

The DIAP will continue to support the TAFE NSW Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan, the TAFE NSW Strategic Plan 2023-2027 and the NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan Guidelines.

This plan ensures that TAFE NSW meets federal and state legislation relating to disability and discrimination, including the:

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

Recognition of contribution

TAFE NSW used an accessible human-centred design for the DIAP 2025–2029.

In creating this plan, we consulted and collaborated with colleagues across the organisation to capture the diverse thoughts, voices and experiences that make up our tapestry of communities. We sincerely thank all contributors, including TAFE NSW employees, Social Outcomes, the Diversity and Inclusion team, the project team, TAFE-Ability and other relevant internal and external stakeholders.

This human-centred approach saw us conduct 75 workshops and focus sessions with key stakeholders, following a co designed approach, with 50 per cent of participants providing accounts of their lived experience.

We acknowledge the value of the individual and collective contributions that helped us formulate the actions and activities in this plan.



This document has been endorsed by the Centre For Accessibility Australia, and conforms with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 to Level AA.



For more information:

🔍 [TAFE NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#)