

Students with Disability

Approved by: Chief Student and Community Officer

Approval date: 30 June 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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Section 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the strategies and services provided by TAFE NSW to students with disability through TAFE NSW procedures and in compliance with all relevant legislation.

Section 2. Scope and Audience

- 2.1 This policy applies to TAFE NSW students, staff, Support workers or Personal Care workers, contractors, vendors and all TAFE NSW courses and learning environments.

Section 3. TAFE NSW Commitment

- 3.1 TAFE NSW is committed to providing a safe, equitable, respectful, inclusive and accessible Vocational Education and Training (VET) experience for students that:
- a. is free from discrimination and bias and supports wellbeing
 - b. enables students to make informed choices
 - c. enables full participation in the student's chosen pathway
 - d. is guided by the social model of disability and general principles of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) and
 - e. is aligned with the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#).
- 3.2 TAFE NSW's commitment to being the preferred place of learning for students with disability is further strengthened through our [Disability Inclusion Action Plan \(DIAP\)](#).

TAFE NSW is committed to:

- a. Collaborative student support services recognising the intersectionality students with disability have with other diverse communities.
- b. Timely and tailored reasonable adjustments to ensure students can fully participate in their studies.
- c. Assistance for students with disability, including physical, intellectual, sensory and mental health conditions through the student lifecycle including course selection, enrolment, participation and assessment.
- d. Capability development in disability awareness and responsive inclusion. This involves inclusive teaching practices and targeted specialist development for Disability Teacher Consultants, ensuring they remain informed of current methodologies and cultural competencies.
- e. Creating accessible and inclusive physical and digital learning environments guided by the [TAFE NSW Accessibility and Dignity Design Standards](#), [TAFE NSW Inclusive Design Standards](#) and [Universal Design for Learning](#).

Section 4. Policy statements

4.1 Equitable Access

- 4.1.1 TAFE NSW provides access to training as well as specialised services to students with disability, as stipulated in Part 3 (6) of the [Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1990 No 118](#).
- 4.1.2 TAFE NSW offers disability and access services including assistive technology, specialist Disability Teacher Consultants and disability inclusion staff to ensure that students with disability have the adjustments they need to apply, enrol and fully participate in their vocational education and training.
- 4.1.3 TAFE NSW applies government-subsidised training fee exemptions, under State Training Authority guidelines, to students who meet the eligibility and timing criteria. Fee exemptions do not apply to courses that are not government subsidised.
- 4.1.4 TAFE NSW designs, monitors and evaluates educational programs and services with a strong commitment to equity, quality and customer responsiveness. In alignment with the [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011](#), all courses are developed to provide a coherent, engaging, accessible and comprehensive learning experience.
- 4.1.5 TAFE NSW ensures that its learning platforms and online presence embed [TAFE NSW Inclusive Design Standards](#) and [Universal Design for Learning](#) to support inclusive and effective education and training.
- 4.1.6 TAFE NSW staff have access to professional development opportunities designed to:
- a. increase awareness of the rights, needs and diversity of students with disability
 - b. equip staff to respond effectively to individual differences
 - c. support effective consultation, planning and application of best practice service principles for students with disability
 - d. promote available student support services and referral pathways
 - e. educate staff and students about their obligations to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation of students with disability; and enabling staff to respond appropriately if such conduct occurs.
- 4.1.7 In line with the [TAFE NSW Accessibility and Dignity Design Standards](#), and [Disability \(Access to Premises-Buildings\) Standards 2010](#), TAFE NSW is committed to providing safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for students with disability. This includes:
- a. clearly marked, designated accessible parking spaces located in proximity to learning areas to support ease of access
 - b. adequate lighting within buildings and along outdoor pathways
 - c. secure, covered, and well-lit transport pick-up and waiting areas
 - d. maps and tactile signage which identify accessible facilities.

4.2 Reasonable Adjustments

- 4.2.1 TAFE NSW provides Disability Teacher Consultants who facilitate reasonable adjustments throughout key stages of the student journey, including application, selection, enrolment, participation, and assessment.
- 4.2.2 Students requiring adjustments to participate fully in training are supported through the timely and responsive development of reasonable adjustments. These are regularly reviewed by the Disability Teacher Consultant in consultation with the student to ensure they continue to meet the student's educational needs. Students participate and are consulted over the content and implementation of their reasonable adjustment.
- 4.2.3 Students can access assistive technology provided by TAFE NSW or choose to use their own assistive technology where appropriate. Support and guidance are available to assist students to identify options that best meet their individual learning needs.
- 4.2.4 In alignment with TAFE NSW policies, Support workers and Personal Care workers who provide mobility support or personal care to students are required to provide a Disability Teacher Consultant relevant documentation before entering a classroom or other learning environment, including:
- A current Working with Children check including WWC clearance number
 - For paid workers - proof Public Liability and Workers Compensation insurance
 - For volunteers – Public Liability insurance
 - A complete and signed Agreement for [Support workers and Personal Care workers attending TAFE NSW classrooms and other learning spaces form](#).
- 4.2.5 Assistance animals that support a student in a teaching environment must be:
- accredited by an animal training organisation recognised by the Australian Government and meet the appropriate standards of hygiene and behaviour appropriate for an animal in a public space
 - assessed by Disability Teacher Consultants for compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 before the student commences classes or training
 - registered with the local council to confirm the dog is not classified as a dangerous breed
 - up to date with vaccinations.
- 4.2.6 Assistance animals in training will be considered in alignment with legislative requirements.
- 4.2.7 Companion animals or emotional support animals, used solely for the purpose of providing comfort and reassurance, are not permitted on TAFE campuses. Companion or emotional support animals are not covered by the Disability Discrimination Act.

4.3 Identification and Privacy

- 4.3.1 While identification of disability is voluntary, students are encouraged to identify their disability during enrolment to access support and any eligible fee exemptions. TAFE NSW is committed to creating a supportive environment where students feel safe and empowered to identify in line with Standard 2,4(1) of the [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator \(Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations\) Instrument 2025](#), [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) and [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).
- 4.3.2 If a student acquires a disability while enrolled at TAFE NSW or chooses to identify disability after enrolment, they can contact a Disability Teacher Consultant anytime during their course enrolment to access support.
- 4.3.3 With the consent of the student, information is communicated to facilitate reasonable adjustment or provision of services. Information is limited to staff directly involved in the required support.
- 4.3.4 Personal information collected by TAFE NSW is managed in accordance with the [TAFE NSW Privacy Policy](#), [TAFE NSW Privacy Management Plan](#), [Privacy Act](#) and the [Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 \(NSW\)](#).

4.4 Feedback, Complaints and Appeals

- 4.4.1 TAFE NSW values student feedback and considers complaints an essential tool for enhancing our services, facilities and the overall student experience. In accordance with our commitment to continuous improvement, TAFE NSW has a process for submitting complaints and feedback. Details of this process can be found at [TAFE NSW Complaints and Feedback](#).
- 4.4.2 A student with disability may nominate an advocate or support person to assist them with the feedback, complaint and appeal process.
- 4.4.3 TAFE NSW appeals processes can be found on the [TAFE NSW Website](#) including the [TAFE NSW Assessment Appeals Policy](#), [TAFE NSW Higher Education Student Progression and Exclusion Procedure](#), [Course progress and attendance monitoring for international students \(VET and ELICOS Policy\)](#).

Section 5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 This section outlines the positions or teams that have responsibilities within the policy.

Position	Responsibility
Chief Student and Community Officer (Accountable Officer)	Oversight of the development, review and amendment of this policy, with the authority to approve revisions to the policy to ensure alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements and current TAFE NSW operations.

Position	Responsibility
Executive Director Student and Campus Services (Responsible Officer)	Support the Accountable Officer in the development, monitoring, review and amendment of this policy, to ensure alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements and current TAFE NSW operations.
Disability Teacher Consultant	<p>Disability Teacher Consultants (TC) are educational specialists, with specific qualifications, expertise and experience in supporting students with disability in an educational setting. The role actively promotes access of students with disability to TAFE NSW courses maximising enrolments, participation, and completions in vocational education and training, leading to successful achievement of student goals and employment for people with disability.</p> <p>Disability Teacher Consultants (TC) liaises with disability communities, schools and external support providers.</p>
Staff	TAFE NSW staff must adhere to TAFE NSW policies and procedures. All staff are expected to actively contribute to creating a safe inclusive and equitable environment that supports student with disability.
Students	Students must adhere to TAFE NSW policies and procedures as outlined on the TAFE NSW website and in the TAFE NSW Student Guide.

Section 6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The use, effectiveness and efficiency of this policy is reviewed through the following:
- Fulfilling our obligations at stated in Section 5 Responsibilities
 - integration of student, staff and community feedback in course development, and disability and access services
 - audit and reporting requirements in legislation and compliance obligations
 - regular review and updating of this policy on a three-year cycle to maintain relevance and compliance. Out of cycle review will be undertaken as required by legislative, regulatory or TAFE NSW policy updates.

Section 7. Where to get help

- 7.1 Disability Teacher Consultants can provide advice to students and are the first point of contact for inquiries regarding this policy. TAFE NSW staff may contact the Disability and Access Services Manager. For further information visit the [Disability and Access Services](#) on the TAFE NSW website.

Section 8. Governance information

Governance	Details
Legislation, regulations, and standards	This policy is governed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability Discrimination Act 1992 - Disability Inclusion Act 2014 No 41 - NSW Legislation - Disability Standards for Education 2005 - National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Outcome Standards for Registered Training Organisations) Instrument 2025 - Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1990 - the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol - Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 - Federal Register of Legislation - https://www.accessibility.org.au/policy/australian-policy/
Related procedures	This policy governs the following procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students with Disability Implementation and Reasonable Adjustment Procedure - Higher Education Assessment Procedure
Related policies	This policy is to be read together with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TAFE NSW Course Design Development and Review Policy - TAFE NSW Assessment Policy - Higher Education Assessment Policy - TAFE NSW International application form v9 - TAFE NSW Privacy Management Plan - Every student's Guide to Assessment in TAFE NSW - Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy
Accountable Officer	Chief Student and Community Officer
Responsible Officer	Executive Director Student and Campus Services
Content Manager number	PROJ25/343
Next review date	3 years

Section 9. Definitions

Word	Definition
Appeals process	A formal mechanism for applicants to challenge decisions relating to decisions made by TAFE NSW including complaint, recognition, assessment and breach of student conduct outcomes.
Assessment	The process by which TAFE NSW, or a third-party delivering services on its behalf, collects evidence for the purposes of determining whether a student is competent (VET) or has met their Learning Outcomes (Higher Education) or NSW Education Standards (HSC).
Assistance animal	<p>Section 9(2) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Act) defines an assistance animal as a dog or other animal that meets the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is accredited under a law of a state or territory that provides for the accreditation of animals trained to assist individuals with disability in alleviating the effects of that disability. b. It is accredited by an animal training organisation that is prescribed by the regulations for these purposes, or it has been trained: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. to assist a person with disability to alleviate the effect of the disability; and ii. to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour that are appropriate for an animal in a public place
Disability	<p>The social model of disability defines disability as the result of societal barriers rather than individual nuances. It emphasises that people are disabled by inaccessible environments, discriminatory attitudes, and systemic obstacles rather than their personal characteristics. This model advocates for removing barriers and creating inclusive spaces, ensuring that everyone can fully participate in society.</p> <p>TAFE NSW abides by the legal definitions of disability as outlined in the following legislative documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability Discrimination Act 1992 - Disability Standards for Education 2005 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Disability Teacher Consultant	Disability Teacher Consultants (TC) are educational specialists, with specific qualifications, expertise and experience in supporting students with disability in an educational setting.

Word	Definition
Reasonable adjustment	Reasonable adjustment is a measure taken to support a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as a student without a disability and in alignment with Disability Standards for Education 2005.
Support Worker or Personal Care	Support worker or Personal Care worker is an external employee that provides non-educational personal assistance to students with disability within the TAFE NSW environment.

Section 10. Document history

No.	Effective	Approved by	Amendment
2	30 June 2025	Chief Student and Community Officer	Renamed to Students with Disability Policy The revised policy uses dignified, inclusive, and accessible language, guided by the social model of disability and ASQA, TESQA compliance.
1	13 DEC 2005	Associate Director - TAFE equity strategy and programs	Updated to reflect new format requirements and current legislative and regulatory arrangements.

Note: (6 March 2026) Accountable and Responsible Officer roles have been updated since publication, as part of an automated update associated with recent operating model changes. These updates reflect position title or organisational alignment changes only and will be captured in the version history when the document is next reviewed and published.