STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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PURPOSE

This policy is to outline MTA's approach to ensuring it manages student and learning support effectively to ensure students are able to successfully complete all course requirements.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

Clause 1.3

The RTO has, for all of its scope of registration, and consistent with its training and assessment strategies, sufficient:

a) trainers and assessors to deliver the training and assessment

b) educational and support services to meet the needs of the learner cohort/s undertaking the training and assessment

c) learning resources to enable learners to meet the requirements for each unit of competency, and which are accessible to the learner regardless of location or mode of delivery

d) facilities, whether physical or virtual, and equipment to accommodate and support the number of learners undertaking the training and assessment.

Clause 1.7

The RTO determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in training packages or VET [vocational education and training] accredited courses.

POLICY

MTA is committed to ensuring that all students receive adequate support while undertaking their training and assessment. This includes ensuring that:

– The learning and support needs of the intended target group are considered in the course development and review processes

– Appropriate support staffing and external support service arrangements are in place.

– The individual learning and support needs of all students are confirmed prior to course commencement.

- All students are informed of how to access the services they require to successfully complete their training and assessment program.

- Regular contact with students and host workplaces is maintained throughout the duration of student enrolments.

- Feedback is collected about MTA's provision of support services and the feedback is systematically collated, analysed and used to improve support services provided.

- Student rights are considered in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

No charge is made by MTA to the student for referral to appropriate external support services and every effort will be made to access free or low cost services. The student should be aware that costs directly associated with the delivery of support service will be payable by the student.

Needs identification

Student needs are identified through:

- Analysing the possible needs of the target group and considering their needs in relation to the delivery model throughout the course design and review process
- Information provided by the student on the application and/or enrolment forms.
- Discussion with the student during their course entry interview.
- Assessment of the formal language, literacy and numeracy skills test which is given to each student upon commencement of the course.
- Discussion with the student during their induction to the program.

Support needs may include:

- Low levels of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN)
- Low digital literacy
- Disability or medical concerns
- Cultural, social or economic issues
- Limitations in access to resources such as money, time or support

Provision of learning and support services

Support services include internal support staff and mechanisms provided by MTA, or via referrals to external providers. Support services may include:

- Peer support mechanisms such as discussion boards, forums and student social events

- Referral to relevant external support organisations who specialise in specific areas such as health, financial, advocacy, legal, financial, social etc.
- Student support and welfare staff to assist students

MTA provides a range of learning support options and resources to help students achieve competency. This includes:

- Referral to other courses or adult learning materials
- Assistive technology
- Access to equipment or materials owned by MTA such as computers, wifi, books or journals
- Additional or supplementary resources to support learning goals such as readings, links or activities
- Extra tutorials or teaching support
- One on one support from the trainer/assessor
- Development of an individual support plan to meet student needs.
- Supporting those with additional needs by making reasonable adjustments to suit needs if possible

Information about support services

MTA provides students with information about the type of support available and how to access it. Information is provided:

- During enrolment/pre-enrolment
- On an ongoing basis

Information is reviewed annually for currency and accuracy and updated accordingly

Feedback and improvements

- Students are surveyed on their support needs using the Unit/Cluster/Course Survey
- Students may also provide feedback at any time using the Feedback Form.
- Feedback is regularly considered in order to make improvements to student and learning support services. Feedback is always reviewed at least annually during a course review in accordance with the Course Development and Review Policy.

Who to Speak to:

Students requiring assistance or support should contact the Student Support Officer.

The Student Support Officers are Mr Wayne Arnold and Ms Melissa Clark and the Accountable Officer.

INTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE

Clients who speak English as a Second Language

MTA trainers are experienced in working with people from culturally diverse backgrounds for whom English is not their first language.

The trainers have developed a range of practical devices to assist in overcoming the language barrier. These include games, pictures and diagrams.

Literacy and numeracy

MTA trainers are experienced in working with people who require some assistance with literacy and numeracy.

All assessments are available in oral form.

MTA has on-site LLN support that is offered to students who require or request this support.

Computer Literacy

Students needing to build computing skills will be provided with assistance in accessing appropriate computing training. Referral will be at no cost to the student and all costs associated with the training program will be the responsibility of the student.

Personal Counselling

MTA trainers and staff are not qualified counsellors and will not provide personal counselling. Information regarding referral to an appropriate counselling service will be made available on request.

Academic Mentoring

MTA trainers and staff will provide additional academic assistance if a student requires it.

This assistance is generally provided out of class hours for groups or in particular circumstances a one on one appointment can be arranged.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) & Credit Transfer (CT)

RPL & CT are available to all students and MTA trainers and staff will provide students assistance to prepare for RPL or Credit Transfer.

Study Skills & Assignment Preparation

MTA trainers and staff will provide students with assistance to develop their self directed study skills and assignments.

Employment Pathway Guidance

MTA trainers and staff will provide students with career pathway information.

Library Services

Assistance will be provided to students to register for and use the services of an appropriately located library facility if required.

Assistance will be provided in identifying and accessing appropriate web based information sources.

Tea, Coffee and Meals

Tea and coffee and meal facilities are provided for students but nor supplied.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

No charge is made by MTA to the student for referral to appropriate external support services and every effort will be made to locate free or low cost services. The student should be aware that costs directly associated with the support service will be payable by the student.

1. Academic Counselling

MTA will provide additional academic mentoring support for those students who require particular levels of assistance.

Students who require higher levels of support will be referred to an external specialist i.e. language, literacy and numeracy, mathematics, etc. This support is arranged on an as needs basis.

2. Personal Counselling

MTA will assist students to access counselling options.

Generally, students less than 18 years of age are referred to Access Programs for personal counselling. In this instance permission will be sought from the parent/guardian.

3. Financial Counselling

MTA will provide students with and assist them to access reasonable counselling options.

Students less than 18 years of age, without family support, should be referred to Access Programs.

4. Mediation Services

ACCESS Programs can provide students with access to trained and qualified mediators to work with them to resolve complaints and appeals associated with MTA.

5. Legal Services

MTA will provide assistance in the identification of appropriate legal services should a student require them for any purpose. Wherever possible and appropriate referral will be made to SA Legal Services which is a free service.

6. Addiction Support Services

Where a student has been identified as or has identified themselves as requiring assistance in regards to an addiction the Student Support Officer will assist them to access an appropriate service.

PROCEDURE

PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT SUITABLE SUPPORT SERVICES

Analyse the needs of the cohort

During the course development process, identify typical support needs of the cohort and describe these in the Training and Assessment Strategy. Consider whether the target group is likely to have:

- Low levels of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN)

- Low digital literacy

- Disability or medical concerns

- Cultural, social or economic issues

Limitations in access to resources such as money, time or support

Determine suitable support services

Consider which internal and external learning and support services are suitable and can be made available. Consider:

- Available support services listed in clause 3 of this policy.

- How Insight Academy of Australia can help students to successfully complete the program without compromising the Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence.

- Previous feedback received in relation to support services.

- How students will access information about support services and the services themselves.

- How Insight Academy of Australia will maintain regular contact with the student and any other stakeholders involved in the delivery of the course, for example workplace hosts or workplace supervisors.

Student rights as detailed in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Update support services documentation

- Once provision is confirmed, publish these in the Student Handbook, Student Orientation or other relevant documentation.

- Update documentation where additional support services are offered.

- Include list of support services in the External Support Services Register.

- Ensure you consider the age and cultural relevance in terms of the cohort from active courses (per the Training and Assessment Strategies).

- Contact service providers to determine point of contact and request promotional or informational materials relevant to student cohorts.

- Record and update details on the External Support Services Register at least annually.

- Update Student Handbook and Student Orientation/Induction materials at least annually and as new materials or information is sourced or developed

IMPLEMENT SUPPORT STAFF ARRANGEMENTS

Identify appropriate support staffing arrangements

- Identify support staffing arrangements sufficient for the number of students.

- Ensure all support personnel roles are clearly defined in position descriptions.

- Ensure staff understand their roles and are provided with the appropriate information and training for their role.

- Consider cross cultural training relevant to the student cohort.

Maintain support staffing arrangements

- Regularly provide any updated support information to staff

- Organise information and training associated with support functions as required.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS IDENTIFICATION

Student applies to enrol

- Upon receipt of a completed Enrolment Form, review the documentation to check for any student support needs referred to.

- Advise the Academic Manager/Trainer/Assessor to follow this up during the course entry interview.

Entry Interview

- Complete the course entry interview and

  - Follow up any support needs identified in the enrolment form.

  - Explore support needs identified through course entry.

  - Document support needs.

- Ask the student to complete the LLN assessment at the Entry interview. Mark the LLN assessment and determine appropriate LLN levels based on the marking guide. Determine whether the student has suitable skills to enrol in the course and whether or not additional support would be required. Document additional support required on the LLN assessment.

- Where a student requires additional support identified through the course entry and/or LLN assessment, develop an Individual Support Plan.

Individual Support Plans

- For students that have had individual support requirements identified, an Individual Support Plan will be developed which will outline the strategies used to provide the student with additional support over and above what is normally offered in the course.

- This may include:

  - Additional one-on-one support from the trainer/assessor.

  - Assigning of a mentor/coach that is able to provide additional support in the workplace and who works closely with the student and the trainer/assessor.

  - Adjustments to the way training resources are accessed or provided.

  - Adjustments to the way assessments are to be conducted or extra time for assessments.

o Additional online support

- Linking with additional resources in the community

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Making reasonable adjustments

- Reasonable Adjustments may be required to training and/or assessment methods for students with a disability to provide them with the same educational opportunities as everyone else.

- Assessors can refer to this guide for further information about how and when to make reasonable adjustments https://www.velgtraining.com/library/files/Reasonable%20Adjustment.pdf

- When determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, consider the information in the above mentioned guide and refer to the Disability Standards for Education 2005. https://education.gov.au/disability-standards-education

- Where a reasonable adjustment is made to assessment, this should be documented in the students assessment records.

RESPONSIBILITY

RTO Manager

It is the overall responsibility of the RTO Manager to ensure that:

- student support services are budgeted for and accessible;

- students are aware of this policy, the options available and how to request assistance for support;

- RTO staff and in particular Trainer/Assessors are aware of this policy, the options available to students and how to apply for support.

Student Support Officer

It is the responsibility of the Student Support Officer to ensure that:

- appropriate support services are available for students;

- students are clearly informed as to the services that are included in fees and those that the students would be required to pay for;

- approve all external support services prior to arrangements being finalised;

- Trainer/Assessors are fully informed in regards to student support services;

- Trainers/Assessors are appropriately trained to conduct support services;

- Trainers/Assessors and other staff are aware that they are not to provide counselling services and the consequences of doing so.

Trainers & Assessors

It is the responsibility of Trainers/Assessors to identify learning or language difficulties and to advise the Student Support Officer to facilitate support and intervention at the earliest possible time.

MTA Trainer/Assessors are not qualified counsellors and therefore there is not an expectation that they have the capacity to identify personal or financial issues. However, the relationship between a Trainer/Assessor and student should be one of openness and trust and if a student confides such issues to their Trainer/Assessor the Trainer/Assessor is responsible for encouraging and assisting them to access appropriate assistance through the Student Support Officer.

Counselling is a qualified and licensed professional and Trainer/Assessors providing personal counselling to students face disciplinary action.

Child Protection

Under the Child Protection Act 1993 it is the legal duty of care of all employees working with minors to notify appropriate authorities of suspected Child abuse. This is called Child Safe Environments and all people working/volunteering with young people below the age of 18 years must undertake and keep updated this training. It is the staff member's responsibility to comply with this requirement. No internal records or conversations regarding such issues are permitted.

It is the responsibility of the student to identify learning and language or other supports they may require and advise MTA as soon as possible and to accept assistance offered.

ACCESS

All MTA students have access to the Student Support Officer and all support mechanisms and networks.