

## P44- Students with Special Needs

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to identify the general methodology which will be employed when identifying special needs and making reasonable adjustments and catering to those students' needs. The main purpose is to ensure that Baxter Institute provides an accessible and conducive learning environment to all students that are identified as having special needs.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the selection, admissions and enrolment of potential international students is equitable, fair and in compliance with the requirements, training packages and relevant legislation (the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, National Code 2018 and National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015). The Policy also underpins the processes required to meet the conditions of participating in the Streamlined Visa Processing (SVP) arrangements.

### 2. Responsibility

- 2.1. The CEO/Deputy CEO has a responsibility to ensure that this policy is accessible to all staff and students.
- 2.2. The Director of Studies and Student Support Manager are responsible for ensuring and monitoring the implementation of this procedure.
- 2.3. Baxter Institute and its staff must:
  - Ensure students feel safe and supported at school
  - On enrolment or when a special need is identified, develop and maintain clear plans and processes to support the student's special needs
  - Allocate time to discuss, practice and review support planning policies and processes

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Special Needs** means any individual that may have a need that is considered a barrier to successfully completing his/her course. This could be classified into special educational needs, learning difficulties, medical conditions/ disability or requires further skill development in language, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3.2. **Disability**, according to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE)*, in relation to a person, means:
  - a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
  - b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
  - c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
  - d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
  - e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
  - f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
  - g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour; and includes a disability that:
  - h) presently exists; or
  - i) previously existed but no longer exists; or

- j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
- k) is imputed to a person.

**3.3. Reasonable Adjustments** means:

- a) reasonable actions taken to help a student with disability/special needs take part in an education program on the same basis as other students, without impacting too much on other people
- b) are determined after considering:
  - the barriers, needs or challenges that face a student with special needs
  - the views of the student or their associate
  - whether an adjustment will impact on the academic standards or requirements of the course
  - what advantages or disadvantages the adjustments may create for the people affected by it
  - the costs of making the adjustments

## 4. Requirements / Process

### Step 1 – Identifying the student’s special needs

- 4.1. Before enrolling the student in his/her proposed course of study, Baxter Institute conducts Pre-training review process, which includes a pre-training questionnaire (PTQ), an LLN assessment, and a pre-training interview (PTI), during which the student skills, abilities, and support needs are determined.
- 4.2. Disabilities and special needs, if any, are identified during this process and documented in the PTI and PTQ documentation. When required, the student should also be able to provide medical certificate to support any claimed condition.
- 4.3. All identified special needs, regardless of whether or not a medical certificate is provided, will be recorded and noted on the student’s training plan for monitoring purpose.
- 4.4. During this process, the assessor undertakes an initial appraisal of the student for internal use only. Training for students with learning needs that cannot be met by the standard training program can be delivered in several ways, including but not limited to:
  - in regular classrooms with a modified training plan or additional training support
  - in regular classrooms with a standard training plan, but with additional homework or reasonably adjusted assessment methods
  - special small classes, including one-on-one training sessions

### Step 2 – Determining reasonable adjustments

- 4.5. The Director of Studies and Course Coordinator of the student’s proposed course of study review the student’s special needs as recorded in the PTQ and PTI documentation, and determine reasonable adjustments to be made to the student’s training program.
- 4.6. When applicable, the Director of Studies and Course Coordinator should seek medical advice from the student’s medical/health practitioner.
- 4.7. Reasonable adjustments that may be made to the student’s training program include, but are not limited to:
  - a) For students with visual impairment (medical certificate required):
    - Hard copies of training materials and assessments with large font size may be prepared. The student may need to specify the enlargement ratio.
    - The student may be provided extra time to complete assessments.

- b) For students with dyslexia (medical certificate required):
- The student may be provided extra time to complete assessments.
  - One-on-one training sessions between the student and trainer may be arranged.
- c) For students with hearing impairment (medical certificate required):
- All administrative matters will be communicated to the student via written means.
  - The student will be seated near the front of the classroom.
  - The student may request additional written instructions for practical assessments.
- d) For students with psychiatric conditions (medical certificate may be required):
- Psychiatric conditions may include anxiety, difficulty with concentration or cognition as a result of depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder or other mental illnesses.
  - Trainers will pay attention and provide in-class support to accommodate the student.
  - The student may request for extra time to complete assessments.
  - The student's study load may also be reduced.
- e) For students with low language, literacy or numeracy skills:
- Trainers will pay attention and provide in-class support to accommodate the student by using the following strategies:
    - Providing extra time to complete the assessment
    - Using short sentences and simple language to explain
    - Using stories and real-life examples to demonstrate technical concepts
    - Utilising Power Point presentation, videos, pictures, etc. in classes
    - Confirming the student's understanding by asking questions
    - Encouraging the student to ask questions during and after classes
  - Baxter Institute may also refer the student to courses that may help them to develop their level of language, literacy and numeracy.
- f) For students with low computer skill:
- The student may request for assistance from the Student Support Officers in using the online Learning Management System.
  - The student may request for paper-based tests instead of online tests.
- g) For students with other disabilities:
- Reasonable adjustments made to the student's training program will be considered on case-by-case basis.
  - It is preferable that the student provides medical certificate to support their claim.
  - In some cases, even if no reasonable adjustment to the student's training program is made, trainers are still made aware of the student's condition and how it may affect the student's learning outcomes.
  - For guidance on how to support students with specific health conditions, Baxter Institute will refer to: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/studenthealth.aspx>

For further detailed information on addressing students' needs by modifications to assessment methods/tools, please refer to Table 1 in Appendix.

4.8. Other supports provided by Baxter Institute to students with special needs may include:

- Organising and allocating appropriate internal and external disability support staff
- Providing advocacy and conflict resolution services if any grievance arises
- Ensuring adequate physical access and facilities
- Developing a health care plan for students with health concerns, which may involve:
  - Details of the student's specific health care needs
  - Agreed actions to be taken to meet the identified needs
  - An emergency care/response plan, which is developed in conjunction with medical professionals and families
  - A statement of agreed responsibilities
  - Authorisation and contact details for the medical practitioner
  - Emergency phone numbers for ambulance, parents and/or emergency contact
- Developing a behaviour support plan for students with mental instability, which may involve:
  - The student's behavioural needs
  - Possible triggers / antecedents for the behaviour, including clear, measurable and objective descriptions
  - A process to be undertaken when the safety of the student or others is at risk

4.9. The assistance determined by the Director of Studies and Course Coordinator will be discussed with the student. Upon the student's agreement, the adjustments will be clearly stated in the student's training plan, which is signed by both the student and Baxter Institute's representative.

4.10. According to demand, Baxter Institute will provide training for its staff including but not limited to:

- Basic first aid

### **Step 3 – Monitoring the student's progress**

4.11. During the student's course of study, Baxter Institute closely monitors the student's progress, as documented in P10 Course Progress and P01 Student's Code of Behaviour:

a) Only applicable to International Students:

Being "at risk" of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress requirements occurs when the student:

- Fails more than 50% of modules in a study period
- Is in danger of being unable to complete a course within the expected duration of study reported on the Student Management Systems
- Fails pre-requisite units

b) Only applicable for Domestic Students:

If students are found to have less than 80% attendance for scheduled classes across the duration of 5 weeks starting from the commencement date, the class roll will reflect that the students have unsatisfactory attendance.

4.12. Trainers also pay close attention to the student and their progress during class time, in order to identify if the student is still having learning difficulties even after reasonable adjustments have been made to their training program.

4.13. Formal and informal communication between the student and Baxter Institute will also be frequently established, in order to discuss successes achieved, development and changes, and any other health and education concerns.

#### Step 4 – Intervention

4.14. Intervention takes place when:

- a) The student requests for additional support; or
- b) The student or their trainers report that that the student's special needs have not been met and that they still face continuing learning difficulties; or
- c) It has been identified in the monitoring stage that the student does not have satisfactory progress

4.15. In any of those circumstances, a meeting between the student, their trainers and a Student Support Officer is arranged to discuss whether any further support could be provided to the student. This meeting is documented on form SS132.a Student Intervention Strategy.

4.16. After the determination of additional reasonable adjustments, steps 2 to 4 are repeated, until the student's needs are met, or when the third intervention takes place, whichever is first.

4.17. If the student is still faced with learning difficulties after the third intervention, the student is considered unsuitable for the training program, and therefore, will be given advice on enrolling in more appropriate courses.

Appendix

Table 1 – Addressing students’ needs by modifications to assessment methods/tools

Category	Potential issue	Possible solutions
Low language, literacy or numeracy skill level	Writing Reading Calculating Confidence	Verbal assessment (recorded or transcribed). Presentations or demonstrations can be used rather than writing exercises. Use of diagrams as visual cues when asking questions, or for the candidate to explain answers.
Candidates whose first language isn't English	Writing Reading Speaking Confidence Cultural and religious differences	Demonstrations. Use of diagrams. Production of a product. Organise assessment times which are suitable to the client to allow for prayer times or reschedule to allow for special religious events.
Candidates with a disability	Speaking Reading Writing Movement Hearing	Observation checklist using adaptive technology such as Braille or screen readers (for visually impaired candidates). Assistance from an Auslan interpreter (for hearing impaired candidates). Using an interpreter, reader, attendant carer, or scribe to write down answers to questions. Observation of tasks performed on suitably adjusted equipment or environment.
Older candidates	Different age to the assessor Confidence Limited technology skills	Use case studies instead of role-plays as some older candidates may feel uncomfortable. Ensure that candidate is comfortable in the assessment setting.
Ill health	Fatigue Lack of concentration Effects of medication	Shorter assessment tasks that allow for medication or fatigue. Specific instructions on projects that can be submitted at various stages. Longer period of time allowed to complete tasks. Use a scribe or tape recorder.
Gender	Culture of workplace with women in non-traditional trades Different gender of the assessor	Use same gender assessor if it is appropriate. Make sure assessment tools are not gender specific in content.

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