

# Access and Equity Policy

Australis College Pty Ltd  
RTO Number 31518

## PURPOSE

Australis College is committed to offering equal opportunity to everyone to access and participate in learning in a quality education environment. This policy outlines that commitment to our students as we make every effort to ensure students are treated fairly and with respect, regardless of their background, nationality, disability or sexuality.

## SCOPE

Australis College continually seeks to extend its scope of courses on offer and develop a range of quality training models such as online, blended, classroom-based and practical workshops, at various locations to constantly improve access to potential students.

In order to provide industry current and engaging training and assessment material, Australis College develops networks with a range of job service providers, employment agencies, mentors and where permitted under legislation, for certain course offerings and funding types, other training providers or education brokers. These partners are all experts in their chosen industry and have undergone rigorous training with us, to ensure that the level of service the students receive from them is at least equivalent to the Australis College standard. All third parties affiliated with the College are listed on the Australis College website, and are communicated to both the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and the Department of Education and Training (DET). They are expected when representing the College to abide by the same governing legislation and access and equity principles.

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) it is the responsibility of Australis College to create and maintain an environment of access and equity, to maximise outcomes for its students. Australis College cooperates with the National VET Regulator (ASQA) to ensure:

- Students are provided with all the necessary information at pre-enrolment to make an informed decision on the services and courses provided by the College.
- Students are selected based on eligibility criteria outlined in our Enrolment Policy (POL\_TA\_EP1). We do not exclude potential students on nationality, gender, age, background, disability or sexuality.
- Students will be provided with every reasonable opportunity to enrol and are provided with information on how to access the services they require to successfully complete their chosen course.
- Student's individual needs are addressed and students will be provided with support services where it is within our scope of services, or we refer the student to appropriate external providers.
- Assessment tools and decisions are fair, flexible, valid and fair to ensure quality outcomes for students.

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## LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

[Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)

[National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011](#)

[Higher Education Support Act 2003](#)

[VET Student Loans Act 2016](#)

[VET Student Loans Rules 2016](#)

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Privacy Amendment \(Private Sector\) Act 2000](#)

[Further Education and Training Act 2014](#)

[VET Pre-Qualified Supplier Agreement](#)

[Certificate 3 Guarantee Program Policy 2016-2017](#)

[Higher Level Skills Program Policy 2016-2017](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)

[Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)

[Age Discrimination Act 2004](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

[Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986](#)

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. ACCESS

**1.1** Access generally refers to the ability to enter training. Improving access may include improving physical access to a training venue and ensuring that selection criteria and marketing activities encourage all potential students to undertake learning to improve their career prospects despite an individual's age, gender, nationality, disability and sexuality.

### 2. EQUITY

**2.1** Equity is the term used to address issues relating to access to, participation in and achievement of Vocational Education and Training (VET) outcomes. Equity issues may range from providing a supportive learning environment to adjusting assessments to meet the needs of the individual student, including policies on fees and the development of inclusive training materials.

**2.2** Equity is about treating students as individuals and recognising the differences. It is about ensuring that all people and all groups of people participate, have the opportunity to reach their potential, make choices and receive responsive and appropriate products and services.

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### 3. AUSTRALIS COLLEGE SERVICES POLICY STATEMENT

**3.1** Australis College is committed to access and equity principles and processes. The College acknowledges and ensures that regardless of cultural background, gender, sexuality, disability or age, our students are provided with a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. All Australis College students are treated in a fair and considerate manner.

**3.2** These principles are integrated into all College services delivered to students. This covers but is not limited to the following student engagement services and information platforms:

**3.2.1** Student recruitment services provided by Australis College, third party training and assessment providers and third party referral partners. Includes sources of information provided to the student such as:

- Advertising such as radio, brochures, banners.
- Social media and forums.
- Australis College and Agent websites.
- Phone or email correspondence.

**3.2.2** Training and assessment services such as:

- Online and social media forums.
- Training and assessment content and supporting materials.
- Engagement with Trainer/Assessor or Head of Faculty by phone or email.
- Classroom based training at one of our campuses.
- Practical placements or workshops.
- Assessment methods including Credit Transfer (CT), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and reasonable adjustment.

**3.2.3** Support services:

- Core Skills Assessment Program.
- Cancellation and Variations to course enrolments.

**3.2.4** Student application and administration services:

- Collection and processing of student information.
- Processing of enrolment.
- Fees, charges and refunds.

**3.3** All application enquires are transferred to Australis College Course Consultants to ensure the potential student is provided with accurate and up to date information on the relevant course and terms and conditions of becoming a student at Australis College prior to enrolment. This allows individuals to discuss their career aspirations, styles of learning and perceived barriers to study to ensure that our services match their expectations and learning outcomes.

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## 4. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR ENROLMENT

4.1 Australis College selection for courses is determined by:

- Queensland funding eligibility (refer to [4.2](#)).
- Loan eligibility for VET Student Loans (refer to [4.3](#)).
- Eligibility requirements for a course (refer to [4.4](#)).

4.2 **Queensland funding eligibility.**

4.2.1 **Queensland Certificate 3 Guarantee.** Please note this only applies to Queensland Certificate 3 Guarantee listed qualifications on Australis College scope of registration. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Not currently enrolled in or have completed a certificate III or higher qualifications. This does not apply to school-based certificate III's which are exempt.
- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or Permanent Resident.
- Reside in Queensland.
- Be aged fifteen (15) years of age and above.
- No longer be attending school.

4.2.2 **Queensland Higher Level Skills.** Same criteria as [4.2.1](#) with the exception that students must not have enrolled in or have completed a Certificate IV and or higher qualification.

4.3 **VET Student Loan eligibility.**

- Must be an Australian citizen, qualifying New Zealand who can meet eligibility requirements, or permanent humanitarian visa holder who will be a resident in Australia for the duration of the unit of study ([Refer to ID and Evidence Requirements](#)); **AND**
- Are a full fee-paying/fee for service student studying a diploma, advanced diploma, graduate certificate or graduate diploma level course at an approved VET Student Loan provider; **OR**
- Have not exceeded the FEE-HELP limit (see below); **AND**
  - Meet the tax file number (TFN) requirements: **OR**
  - If a student does not hold a TFN *Australis College will accept a Certificate of Application for a TFN*. This certificate is available from the [Australian Taxation Office](#) after a TFN has been applied for.
- Must also meet the entry criteria to ensure their suitability for the course they are enrolling into. The student must either:
  - 1) Provide Australis College with a copy of their Australian Senior Certificate of Education for completion of year 12, **OR**
  - 2) Provide Australis College with a copy of an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) qualification level four (4) or higher that has also been delivered in English, **OR**
  - 3) The student must complete a CSPA (Core Skills Profile for Adults assessment demonstrating competence at, or above Exit Level 3 in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) in both reading and numeracy, **AND**

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- 4) Australis College reasonably believes the student has the competence to complete the course.

**4.4 Course enrolment eligibility.**

- 4.4.1** Specific qualifications delivered by Australis College may require the student to meet pre-requisite requirements, for the course they wish to enrol into. Consideration takes into account prerequisite, entry requirements and Training Package assessment guidelines. Entry requirements for each of our courses are available on [training.gov.au](http://training.gov.au) and are also available on the course page on the Australis College [website](#).

**5. LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND NUMERACY (LLN)**

- 5.1** Qualifications delivered under the vocational and education framework are developed according to the AQF level of criteria expressed as learning outcomes. This includes the outcomes of knowledge and skills required for the industry such as employability, foundation and communication skills, and the application of these knowledge and skills based on the level of qualification. (i.e. certificate III, certificate IV, diploma, etc.)
- 5.2** In order to determine that a student possess the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the qualifications being delivered; potential students may, depending on the level of course they are enrolling into, be required to complete either an internal or government approved core skills assessment activity before being enrolled in their chosen course. Criteria for entry into this activity is based on the level of high school completed, prior study and work experience (refer to Enrolment Policy POL\_TA\_EP1).
- 5.3** As the majority of our courses are blended, the Australis College internal core skills activity assesses a student’s ability to:
- Use computer applications.
  - Communicate in written form.
  - Follow instructions.
  - Perform basic numeracy tasks.
  - Schedule time and study commitments in a calendar.
- 5.4** These skills are essential for the courses that Australis College deliver and therefore at any stage during a student’s application or enrolment, a student may be referred to Student Support to determine if the course is suitable, should additional training support and resources may be considered to assist the student, or if a referral to external support services specialising in LLN is necessary.
- 5.5** All results from these activities are recorded on our Student Management System (SMS) and discussions for entry into Australis College courses are based on the specific requirements for each course and the AQF level required for successful learning outcomes for the individual student.

**6. ASSESSMENT AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT**

- 6.1** Trainers and Assessors are responsible for using communication and training/assessment methods that encourage, connect and support individuals within the learning environment.

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- 6.2 Australis College has identified and understands that the learning journey required by individuals may be different and therefore has developed processes to support individual learners successfully complete their studies. As an example, some students may gain the qualification through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process; where others may complete training before being assessed, while other learners may require a different timeframe than others, due to family responsibilities or because they are returning to education after a long period.
- 6.3 All students will have a discussion with a Course Consultant at application as to their prior learning and work history to determine whether they may qualify for CT or RPL.
- 6.4 Australis College implements the four (4) Principles of Assessment and Rules of Evidence to ensure quality outcomes for students that are fair, flexible, valid and reliable. Competency standards are measured against the VET accredited course as per the National Training Register ([training.gov.au](http://training.gov.au)). Australis College implements processes to set high standards for consistency in assessment marking across Trainers and Assessors. Students will be provided with constructive feedback to address any gaps in learning and improve on results.
- 6.5 Where relevant, a Trainer or Assessor may need to make reasonable adjustments in the delivery of training and assessment methods to cater for and assist students with a disability or barrier to participate in assessment, however can demonstrate competency using another method of training and assessment. Examples include:
  - Providing additional resources such as hard copy resources, audio, course materials in a different format.
  - Adjusted assessment methods such as oral presentations, practical demonstrations, role plays, video or additional assignments and course work.
- 6.6 Reasonable adjustment(s) must be approved by the Head of Faculty. All adjustments must be recorded on the SMS and the student must still demonstrate competency against the unit of competency requirements on [training.gov.au](http://training.gov.au).

## 7. ACCESS AND EQUITY COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 Students, staff or clients that have reason to believe anyone representing Australis College, or any marketing, training and assessment material has breached the access and equity principles outlined in this policy, should raise their concerns by emailing Quality at [quality@australiscollege.edu.au](mailto:quality@australiscollege.edu.au) or completing the Complaint and Appeal Form available on the Australis College website. For further information on complaints, grievances and appeals, refer to the Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy (POL\_TA\_CA1).

## 8. COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND RECORDKEEPING

- 8.1 *For internal use only* - refer to the Communication, Training and Recordkeeping Procedure (PRO\_SM6).

## 9. ABBREVIATIONS

- 9.1 ASQA – the Australian Skills Quality Authority.
- 9.2 DET – Department of Education and Training.

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- 9.3 RTO – Registered Training Organisation.
- 9.4 VET – Vocational Education and Training.
- 9.5 CT – Credit Transfer.
- 9.6 RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning.
- 9.7 SMS – Student Management System.
- 9.8 AQF – Australian Qualifications Framework

## 10. REFERENCES/SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS/DEFINITIONS

- 10.1 **Access and Equity** means policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.
- 10.2 **Language** is the main way we make and understand meaning as humans. Includes speaking, listening, reading, writing, and visual communication. In its broadest sense, language involves the words, verbal structures and gestures we use to convey meaning. It also refers to using words and grammatical structures and other meaning support system (e.g. gestures when speaking and listening; punctuation and formatting when reading and writing to make meaning of, or to understand someone else’s meaning).
- 10.3 **Literacy** is the ability to read and use written information as well as to write in an appropriate manner at home, at work and in the community. Literacy is the ability to read and use written information as well as to write in a range of contexts. Literacy involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing.
- 10.4 **Numeracy** is the ability to use the mathematical concepts needed to function effectively in work and social contexts. Numeracy involves the practical application of mathematical skills to absorb, use and critically evaluate information in numerical and graphical form. This can include number skills, spatial and graphical concepts, the use of measurement, problem solving.
- 10.5 **Reasonable adjustment** in VET is the term applied to modifying the learning environment or making changes to the training delivered to assist a learner with a disability. This can be as simple as changing classrooms to be closer to amenities or installing a particular type of software on a computer for a person with vision impairment.
- 10.6 [Training.gov.au](http://Training.gov.au).
- 10.7 [Inclusive learning – A way forward, Department of Education, training and employment](#).
- 10.8 Complaints and Appeals Policy (POL\_TA\_CA1).
- 10.9 Training and Assessment Policy (POL\_TA\_TA1).
- 10.10 Core Skills Assessment Policy (POL\_TA\_PA1).
- 10.11 [AQF Levels](#).
- 10.12 Complaints and Appeals Form.
- 10.13 Student Handbook.
- 10.14 ID and Evidence Requirements.

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**10.15 Principles of Assessment:**

**10.15.1 Fairness** – the individual learner’s needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.

**10.15.2 Flexibility** – assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:

- reflecting the learner’s needs;
- assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and
- drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.

**10.15.3 Validity** – any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires:

- assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;
- assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;
- assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
- judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.

**10.15.4 Reliability** – Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

**10.16 Rules of Evidence:**

**10.16.1 Validity** – the assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.

**10.16.2 Sufficiency** – the assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner’s competency.

**10.16.3 Authenticity** – the assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner’s own work.

**10.16.4 Currency** – the assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

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## APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

Completion of the following signature blocks signifies who is responsible for the creation, implementation, review and approval of this policy.

	Name	Job title	Date
<b>Prepared by</b>	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	15/12/2014
<b>Owned by</b>	Byron Gray	General Manager, Faculties	15/12/2014
<b>Approved by</b>	Andrew Hetherington	Managing Director	15/12/2014

## SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

Australis College is committed to maintaining systematic control over its documentation. This includes the accurate recording of amendments and versions of documents through the Version Control Register SmartSheet.

This policy document will be reviewed two (2) years from its effective date or sooner as required.

Date	Name	Job Title	Version Number
15/12/2014	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	1.0
09/01/2015	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	1.1
02/11/2015	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	2.0
08/03/2016	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	3.0
13/07/2016	Lisa Street	Quality Auditor	3.1
04/01/2017	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	4.0
20/01/2017	Sharleen Ejlertsen	Quality Officer	4.1