Core Skills Assessment Policy and Procedure

Policy Owner: Managing Director

PURPOSE

Australis College is committed to offering equal opportunity to all potential students to access and participate in learning as per the Access and Equity Policy. The College will act with honestly and integrity in its dealings with students including determining student suitability for a course and conducting the Core Skills Assessment.

This policy outlines the framework for how the College identifies the learning needs of students and delivers training, assessment and support services to meet these needs to achieve successful outcomes for students.

SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to Course Advisors, Trainers/Assessors and Student Support in:

- Determining student academic suitability according to applicable funding/loan criteria and qualification level.
- Identifying students that may have Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) challenges impacting on their ability to learn successfully through the implementation of government approved assessment tools.
- Addressing these challenges appropriately (in a fair and non-discriminatory manner).
- Providing practical support or referrals to relevant services.

This document must be considered in conjunction with the Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure, Access and Equity Policy and Student Entry Procedure for VSL Eligibility.

POLICY

1. STUDENT ACADEMIC SUITABILITY

- At the pre-enrolment stage, the Course Advisor will ask a series of questions to determine suitability for the training product/course the student wishes to enrol into. The purpose of these questions is to determine:
  - That the course meets the students' career goals.
  - Whether the student is academically suited to the level of the course they are enrolling into. *(Suitability is assessed against eligibility criteria specified in the VET Student Loans Rules 2016, VET Student Loan Manual and Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training policies.*
  - Any barriers to study (physical challenges, learning disability, mental health concerns, time-commitments).
  - The student has access to a computer or can operate and use technical systems (as the College's courses are predominantely delivered and assessed online).
- Students will need to provide evidence of their academic suitability. Depending on the evidence supplied, the enrolling student may need to sit the Core Skills Profile for Adults matched to the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF).

VET STUDENT LOANS ACADEMIC SUITABILITY – DIPLOMA OR HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS.

- VET Student Loan applicants for a diploma level qualification or above, are required to hold and provide evidence of their:
  - Australian Senior Secondary Certificate of Education, **OR**

    - A certificate of an AQF qualification at a Level IV or above and the qualification was delivered in English, or at a level in a framework that preceded the AQF that is equivalent to level 4 or above in the AQF, **OR**
    - International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma qualification, **OR**
    - A letter or certificate issued by a Federal, State or Territory government agency which assesses overseas qualifications (or an organisation contracted by such an agency to undertake such assessments), that evidences that the student's qualification has been assessed and determined to be equivalent or comparable to a qualification in the AQF at level 4 or above, or a qualification at a level in a framework that preceded the AQF that is equivalent to level 4 or above in the AQF.
- If the student is unable to provide the evidence or the Course Advisor is concerned about their suitability for the course, they will be referred to the **Core Skills Profile for Adults.** Students will need to complete at or above an Exit Level 3 in both reading and numeracy.
- Students who have previously completed an approved LLN Assessment at or above an Exit Level 3 within the past three months may be exempt from re-sitting the assessment providing the College is able to attain a formal copy of the results, and is satisfied that there is no change to the student's circumstances or indication of a LLN issue during pre-enrolment conversations. Only LLN assessment tools approved by the Secretary will be accepted.

FEE FOR SERVICE AND LOWER LEVEL QUALIFICATION ACADEMIC SUITABILITY.

- Applicants enrolling under a Fee for Service agreement, or a Certificate IV and lower level qualification (including those applying for a Queensland-funded program) will be referred to the **Core Skills Profile for Adults** prior to enrolment if during pre-enrolment discussions the Course Advisor or Student Support is concerned with:
    - The applicant's prior level of learning (lower than Year 11, or Year 10 for Certificate III qualifications) and no further study undertaken, **AND/OR**
    - The student has indicated a learning disability in discussions, or on application forms, **AND/OR**
    - An observation is made that the applicant is unable to communicate effectively.
- Results will assist Student Support in consultation with the Faculty to identify:
    - Any learning gaps or challenges in literacy and numeracy.
    - The students' communication skills and ability to maintain the selected level of study.
    - Students' ability to study.
    - A clearer understanding of the resources and support including reasonable adjustment strategies that a student may require prior to engaging in study. Refer to Training and Student Engagement Policy and Procedure.
    - Whether a student may need to be referred to an external support agency.

2. CORE SKILLS PROFILE FOR ADULTS

- The Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA) assesses students against five performance levels for Core skills in the areas of; reading, numeracy and writing.
- Students applying for the VET Student Loan scheme will need to complete this assessment at an Exit Level 3 or higher before their enrolment is finalised by Student Services. If the student fails the Level 3 standard, a minimum of three months needs to pass before the student is able to re-sit the CSPA.
- Results will be documented appropriately and retained with the student's file for a minimum of five years.
- Students enrolling under a full fee paying agreement, lower level qualification or state funding referred to the CSPA may still proceed through to enrolment if they fail the Exit Level 3, providing the Faculty determines that the LLN gap identified will not prevent the student from completing the requirements of the course satisfactorily or the Faculty can provide reasonable adjustment.

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- For students enrolling into Queensland-funded traineeship programs – where LLN concerns are identified, these concerns must be documented in the student's training plan together with appropriate training support and reasonable adjustment strategies. (Refer to Traineeship Training and Administration Procedure.) Results will be retained with the student's file for a minimum of six years.
- Students who successfully complete the CSPA will continue through the enrolment process. The enrolment process and census dates for students applying for a VET Student Loan (if applicable) are communicated to the student so they are informed of the ability to withdraw from their course prior to their census date without incurring fees.
- Where a student is identified as lacking the skills to successfully complete the qualification, they may be referred to an external agency that specialises in LLN remedial assistance with the goal that the student can enrol at a later date.
- For lesser challenges, reasonable adjustment may be agreed between Student Support, Faculty and the student. Any reasonable adjustment(s) are to be recorded in the Student Management System.

3. FOLLOW UP/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Student Support will assess and document the CSPA results.
- After the assessment, Student Support will provide feedback to each student on their results from the CSPA as soon as practical and will make appropriate recommendations. This will be carried out with sensitivity and confidentiality.

4. MONITORING

- The effectiveness of this policy is determined by the student cohort enrolling in training products and is also dependent on the type of qualifications and payment options offered by Australis College. Therefore, this process will need to be monitored in line with continuous improvement processes.

PROCEDURE

1. ASSESSING REFERRAL TO THE CORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT – COURSE ADVISORS.

1.1 The Course Advisor asks a series of questions during the pre-enrolment stage of the student application. During the interview/discussion they observe:

- The ability to listen and articulate.
- The willingness to study and other commitments which may impact on their level of engagement in a course.
- Listening and processing (auditory listening).
- The comprehension ability (stays on track and answers questions appropriately).
- Use of language, ability to communicate.
- Knowledge of own learning style.

1.2 The Course Advisor discusses:

- The level of study previously completed.
- Any prior work placement and/or formal accredited training.
- Any learning disabilities.

1.3 Responses are documented on the pre-enrolment notes. (Refer to Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure.)

1.4 The Course Advisor assesses the academic suitability of each student for the course and funding/loan type they are enrolling into. Should the student not meet this criteria, or be able to provide appropriate evidence, the student is referred to Student Support using the CRM - ATLAS to complete the CSPA.

1.5 Observations at **1.1-1.2** may also prompt referring the student to Student Support to complete the CSPA or continue with the enrolment process.

1.6 All conversations that take place with the student will be carried out with sensitivity, and the benefits of the student taking part in this activity will be outlined together with a timeframe and clear expectations of what will be required.

1.7 Students enrolling into a traineeship may also be referred to the CSPA if the Trainer identifies any learning challenges during the induction process. Refer to the Traineeship Training and Administration Procedure.

2. MONITORING CORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT REQUESTS VIA ATLAS – STUDENT SUPPORT.

2.1 In the CRM, navigate to the Support tab and the LLN waiting list.

2.2 Locate the student under Actions & Tools column; proceed to Notes (this will show the pre-enrolment notes).

2.2.1 Review enrolment form and pre-enrolment notes to ascertain any additional information collected by the Course Advisor (e.g. checking for disabilities).

2.2.2 Check funding/loan type, qualification level, and prior learning (i.e. Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or AQF level qualification held).

2.3 Set up **ACER CSPA** assessment access for students.

2.4 **Actions to update in ATLAS** (these will change the profile status and move the student to Student Services or the relevant training faculty).

2.4.1 On issuance of the student log in details, click Actions > Has the Student been issued Log in details? **Yes.**

2.4.2 Any student not required to complete the Core Skills Assessment, will be sent directly to Student Services for enrolment via the CRM - ATLAS.

3. ENROLLING STUDENTS IN CSPA – STUDENT SUPPORT.

3.1 Go to http://vawe.acer.edu.au/ (students are referred to as 'Candidates' in this system) and log in.

3.2 Search for the candidate, go to Candidates, and click on List.

3.3 Type search criteria e.g. name and search.

3.4 If no record appears, click on Add a candidate (make sure there are no groups ticked when searching).

3.5 If a record appears, go to candidate record by clicking on the username (check it is the same student e.g. check Date of Birth and email address).

3.6 Candidate details, ADD NEW or UPDATE EXISTING:

- First Name.
- Last Name.
- Unique ID (this is the student's mobile number).
- Email.
- Program, select Australis Diploma.
- Group, select the relevant intake (e.g. 2018 Intake – in progress).

3.7 New ASSIGN package, select the relevant assessment(s):

- CSPA Practice.
- CSPA Numeracy 2016.
- CSPA Reading 2016.

3.8 Click ADD.

3.9 Once added, the screen will refer back to the home screen. Search for the candidate again. On viewing the recently added candidate, click on their username to access their details again. Click Send/Reset Login Details (the student will receive an automatic email from ACER when this step is actioned to support the student to log in).

3.10 Add a note to ATLAS with a copy of the log in details confirmation from the ACER webpage.

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3.11 Notify student via email or SMS using the appropriate template from the Support folders.

3.12 SMS: ATLAS > Contact Tools > Send SMS > Templates > CSPA 1st.

4. CSPA FOLLOW UP AND RESULTS – STUDENT SUPPORT.

4.1 Students should aim to complete their online assessments as soon as possible. Students will be followed up over a period of two weeks to complete and finalise the assessment. After this timeframe, Student Support will refer the student back to Course Advisors. If prior to this, Support is unable to follow up all LLN candidates within set timeframes, then an alternative plan should be made with the Student Services Manager.

4.2 Maintain contact attempts with student for the follow up period via a combination of SMS's, calls and emails are to be sent. Monitor student's CSAP login date and progress through the assessments.

4.3 SMS templates can be sent through the candidates profile in ATLAS > Contact Tools > Send SMS > Templates > CSPA 1st, 2nd.

4.4 Email templates can be found in Z: OPERATIONS/SUPPORT/TEMPLATES FORMS.

4.5 **Final follow up ACTION:** If no response received within 10 days e.g. the student has not responded with a date that they will complete the assessments, move the student back to Course Advisors in ATLAS, include a note that they have been non-responsive. In ATLAS, go to, Support TAB > LLN waiting list > locate Student, under Actions & Tools column; go to, Move > Select: Back to Sales.

4.6 **Successful Completion:** Student Support will contact the student to discuss the outcome of the assessment, provide feedback and recommend the appropriate course of action. All notes regarding an agreement with the student needs to be recorded and emailed to the student. Check if there are:

- Prerequisites required to be completed for the course. Add notes and inform Student Services.
- Concerns with progressing a student, discuss with Student Services Manager.
- Reasons to increase one-on-one support.
- Change of learning methodology to support a different learning style.
- Supplementary materials to support the students learning.

4.7 **Unsuccessful Completion of Exit Level 3.** Review the results, call the student to discuss their results and determine the following:

- How they felt they went?
- Did they have any problems during the test?
- Do they feel they can improve their results?
- Was there anything that impacted their results e.g. distractions, computer issues?
- Does the student understand and believe they can improve?
- Is the student willing to review their results and take feedback into consideration before proceeding to a re-sit?
- Do they want to speak to someone about a lower level course?

4.7.1 Inform the student of identified LLN gaps, methods, and/or referrals to LLN providers to assist them to improve on specific areas. Advise the student that the College is unable to register them for a re- sit until three months has passed for CSPA under VET Student Loans Rules; one month for FFS/state funding.

4.7.2 **For VSL students:** Where a re-sit is required and the student is happy to undertake another attempt, note the date they are able to re-sit in ATLAS and move student back to Course Advisors to set up an alert to contact student. A Course Advisor is to confirm enrolment details are current and whether the student is still interested in continuing with a re-sit upon follow up.

4.7.3 Alternatively, refer the Student back to Course Advisors for discussion on different level courses or pathways. In ATLAS, go to Support TAB > LLN waiting list > locate Student. Under Actions & Tools column; go to Move > Select: Back to Sales. If interested in a lower level qualification, please refer to **4.7.4**.

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4.7.4 **For FFS, state funding or lower level qualifications:** If the student has not achieved an Exit Level 3 consult with the Faculty to determine if this will impact on the student's suitability for the course (AQF level and training package requirements) or if reasonable adjustments may be used to assist the student through the course. Alternatively, the student may re-sit after one month working on their LLN skills before they can reapply. Make note of the date they are able to re-sit in ATLAS and send back to Course Advisors to set up an alert for contact.

4.7.5 Alternatively, refer the Student back to Sales for discussion on different level courses or pathways. In ATLAS, go to Support TAB > LLN waiting list > locate Student. Under Actions & Tools column; go to Move > Select: Back to Sales.

4.8 **Re-sit Assign package for un-successful attempt.**

4.8.1 Once Course Advisors has confirmed details and sent the student back for a re-sit after the required date, determine what steps the student has done to progress and improve in specific LLN area. If satisfied that improvements have been made, go to candidate record and UPDATE EXISTING.

4.8.2 Click, Assign packages and select CSPA Numeracy Attempt 2 2016 and CSPA Reading Attempt 2 2016.

4.8.3 Click Assign.

4.9 **In all cases, no matter what the result achieved is:**

4.9.1 It is imperative that the conversation is dealt with sensitivity and confidentiality.

4.9.2 Make notes in ATLAS regarding the outcome of the Core Skills Assessment and discussion with the student.

4.9.3 Email the student post discussion with a copy of their results.

5. REMOVING CANDIDATE ACCESS TO ACER – STUDENT SUPPORT.

5.1 When a student has decided not to proceed or becomes non-responsive after the follow up period, their access will be removed from the ACER testing to ensure they do not proceed without permission and the College does not incur fees for commencing the tests.

5.1.1 Go to candidate record.

5.1.2 Change the email address to support@australiscollege.edu.au, click Save.

5.1.3 Click Send login details/Reset password, this will email Student Support.

5.1.4 From the email received from ACER, click the link to update the password (make sure you are logged out of your ACER account).

5.1.5 Update the Candidates password.

6. ACCEPTING PREVIOUS ACER RESULTS FROM STUDENTS – STUDENT SUPPORT.

6.1 If a student has previously completed the ACER testing within the last three months and achieved the required score (Exit Level 3):

6.1.1 Obtain a formal copy of the results – as per ACER export PDF.

6.1.2 Check if there are any changes in the student's circumstances that would make their previous results invalid:

- If **NO**, and no LLN concerns are identified in conversations with the student then we can accept their previous results – move the student to Student Services in ATLAS.
- If **YES**, the student is to re-sit the assessment with Australis College via ACER – follow the usual process to enrol the student into CSPA.

7. UPDATING CORE SKILLS ASSESSMENT STATUS VIA ATLAS – STUDENT SUPPORT.

7.1 **Actions to update ATLAS**, go to Support TAB > LLN waiting list (this will change the profile status and move the student to the correct department).

7.2 When the assessment is completed successfully, click Actions > has this student completed the LLN to acceptable levels? **Successfully** (this passes the student to Student Services to progress their enrolment).

7.3 When the assessment is completed unsuccessfully, click Actions > has this Student completed the LLN to acceptable levels? **Unsuccessfully** (this passes the student back to the CC to discuss more suitable options).

7.4 If at this point a student **DOES NOT** want to continue following a discussion with them (mandatory), manually move the student back to Course Advisors. In ATLAS, go to Support TAB > LLN waiting list > locate Student, under Actions & Tools column; go to Move > Select: Back to Sales.

7.5 Refer the student to other training providers that specialise in the LLN gap the student requires, or to other LLN support agencies such as job service providers, and community organisations, as required, to suit the individual's needs. Refer to the external support and welfare services list.

8. OUTCOMES.

8.1 Where a student continues to enrol into the program, the Faculty and Student Support will need to monitor the student progress closely.

8.2 Based on the results, the Faculty in consultation with Student Support and the student will adjust the training delivery accordingly and develop a study plan. This is mandatory for QLD funded students. Any allowances made to written assessment material due to LLN challenges must be fully documented in the Student Management System.

9. CONFLICT RESOLUTION.

9.1 Where a conflict occurs during the student interview the following steps will be taken:

- The student will be referred to Student Support.
- Student Support speaks to the student, reviews the discussion notes and guides the student towards enrolment, Skills Assessment, external support networks or withdrawal of enrolment.

9.2 Should a student still disagree with the decision or recommendation following the Core Skills Assessment activity, the Grievances Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure will be followed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Management

- Approves, implements and manages all policy documents for Australis College RTO operations.
- Responsible for communicating organisational strategies and standards to Heads of Faculty.
- Ensures smooth operation of the technical support and systems for Core Skills Assessments conducted online and monitors the effectiveness of this policy/procedure; that this is carried out to comply with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, the VET Student Loans Act 2016 (Part 2, Division 2, 12 Academic Suitability) and Queensland Pre-Qualified Supplier policies.

Faculties

- Develops and implements the study plan for Queensland-funded students.
  Note: Training plans for Trainees under User Choice must include any LLN challenges identified and support strategies. Refer to the Traineeship Policy and Procedure.
- Monitors and adjusts remedial actions with the student and documents in the Student Management System.
- Regularly monitors student progress.
- Provides reasonable adjustment where necessary.
- Refers to Student Support where further support is required along the student journey.

Student Services

- Quality-checks enrolment information received, particularly comments in the pre-discussion notes and refers to Student Support if they feel a student presents LLN challenges but has not yet been flagged to Student Support by Course Advisors.

Student Support

- Administration of the Core Skills Assessment.
- Discusses the results of the Core Skills Assessment with the student, documenting all evidence on the students file in ATLAS and Student Management System.
- Determines if any intervention strategies are required as outlined in the procedure.
- Discusses outcomes and recommended intervention strategies with the Faculty.
- Assists Faculties in developing a suitable study plan for the student (for Queensland-funded students).
- Assists the Faculty in developing training strategies for the student.
- Liaises with the Student Services Manager on any issues with facilitating a Skills Assessment.
- Promotes access and equity within Australis College.

Course Advisors

- Conducts the initial assessment interview/discussion during the pre-enrolment process.
- Makes an initial assessment on the student's language and communication skills during this discussion.
- Records the outcome of the student interview and directs the student to either Student Support if LLN challenges are identified, or proceeds with the enrolment as per the Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

- A list of applicable legislation is detailed within the legislation tab in the Quality Management Register.
- Environment, Health and Safety – refer to the Health and Safety Policy.
- Internal recordkeeping, communication and training – refer to the Communication, Training and Recordkeeping Procedure.
- Language. 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).
- Literacy. 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.
- Numeracy. 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.
- Crux of the Matter.
- Inclusive Learning - A way forward.
- NQC/Foundation Skills in VET Products for the 21st century.
- AQF levels.
- Access and Equity Policy.
- Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure.
- Student Entry Procedure for VSL Eligibility.
- Training and Student Engagement Policy and Procedure.

- Assessment Policy and Procedure.
- Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- CRM – Customer Relationship Management System.
- FFS – Fee for Service (full fee paying arrangement).
- Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF).
- CPSA – Core Skills Profile for Adults.
- LLN Assessment Tool Approval List – https://www.education.gov.au/language-literacy-and-numeracy-lln-assessment-tool-information.

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