

GOTAFE Reasonable Adjustment Plan 2018 - 2021

Introduction

Since the development and implementation of its inaugural Disability Action Plan in 2004, GOTAFE has seen many developments the areas of facilities, curriculum and cultural change: embracing diversity as the accepted ethos. The concept of diversity encompasses inclusiveness and respect; it means understanding that everyone is unique and recognises our individual differences. It's the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive and inclusive environment that goes beyond tolerances to embracing and celebrating the richness of an individual's dimensions contained therein.

The legislation of both Federal and State Governments requires that attention be paid to ensuring equitable treatment of individuals. GOTAFE regards legislative compliance as being a baseline to build upon; striving to then go beyond the minimum standards required by legislation.

Reasonable adjustments are about responding to individual needs by taking account of their circumstances, embracing the diversity an individual brings to the GOTAFE community, celebrating this diversity and drawing strengths from it.

In light of these developments and achievements, I am pleased to endorse our Reasonable Adjustment Plan. This is a living plan and will continue to be updated as we achieve important milestones and encounter new challenges that reflect an on-going commitment by GOTAFE to embrace, respect and celebrate diversity.

Travis Heeney
CEO GOTAFE

Executive Summary

About us

GOTAFE is the largest post-compulsory, educational provider in North East Victoria, Australia delivering vocational education and training to more than 20,000 students annually.

Our campuses are located in regional Victoria at Shepparton, Wangaratta, Seymour, Benalla, Wallan and Werribee. Activities are conducted locally, state-wide, nationally and internationally. Education and training are delivered to the business sector, industry, community, local, state and national governments and to the non-profit sector.

GOTAFE has entered a new era of educational innovation that aims to be flexible, creative and provide outstanding service to students, employers and industry. We provide training on campus, off campus, online, in the workplace, or a mix of these delivery methods.

Vision

A world class institute delivering quality education and training beyond expectations. A thriving organisation known for inspiring, motivating and equipping people for success.

Purpose

To deliver quality vocational training and tertiary education that responds to the needs of industry, enterprises, communities and individuals in the regions we serve.

Values

GOTAFE's people, practices and processes commit to the following values:

Integrity Always being honest,

reliable and trustworthy.
Ensuring that if you cannot meet your commitment that you communicate this and renegotiate an

outcome.

Collaboration Through external alliances

and internal teamwork.

Accountability To be responsible for your

own actions, your role within your team and as a representative of GOTAFE.

Respect To be open to other's

perspectives and to appreciate and accept the different points of view of student's staff and

customers.

Excellence Achieving the highest

standards in all that we do.

Why Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP)?

Throughout the consultation process to inform this action plan both students and staff reported their concerns about the use of the language around disability as being negative and setting stereotypes; often becoming a barrier to understanding the reality of disability. In recent years people with disabilities have claimed individual and collective rights and sought to change their circumstances by changing the words used to describe them.

For this reason we have adopted the Disability Discrimination Act's use of the principle of reasonable adjustment, sometimes called reasonable accommodation, to ensure equal treatment for people with disabilities. This means that, wherever possible, reasonable steps will be made to meet the individual needs of a person with a disability.

Creating a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) supports our commitment to Universal Access. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability in participating in education and training on the same basis as other students. It provides our organisation with strategic direction in addressing issues and ensuring that Universal Access is embedded into everything that we do.

AQFT

The Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF) defines reasonable adjustment as changes that can be made to the way in which evidence of student performance can be collected. Good vocational education, training and assessment include adjusting what we do to meet the learning and assessment needs of individuals. Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made in terms of the way evidence of performance is gathered, the evidence criteria for making competent decisions should not be altered in anyway. Standards expected should be the same, irrespective of the group and/or individual being assessed. Reasonable adjustment is a legislative term that, for VET, refers to a measure or action taken by an education provider to enable learners with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as learners without a disability (Reasonable Adjustment – A guide for VET practitioners).

What do we mean by disability?

While people with disability may regard the terminology surrounding disability as negative in its use, GOTAFE acknowledges its legal requirements and understands the importance of the use of accepted definition across a wide range of policy and procedures. "Disability" is a broad concept that can be temporary or permanent, from birth or acquired. It can include: physical, sensory, mental health, disease causing organisms, disfigurement and neurological (including intellectual and learning) impairments.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Australia on 17 July 2008, recognises that disability is an evolving concept and that "disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

GOTAFE adopts the definition of disability in section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992 (Cth), under which disability, in relation to a person, means:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- · Total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- 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:
 - Presently exists; or previously existed but no longer exists.
 - May exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or is imputed to a person.

Legal Framework

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) is a federal law that aims to:

- Eliminate discrimination against people with disability
- Promote community acceptance of the principle that people with disability have the same fundamental rights as all members of the community
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that people with disability have the same rights to equality before the law as other people in the community.

The Act prohibits unlawful discrimination against people with disability and promotes an inclusive approach whenever possible, rather than the provision of separate or parallel services. Areas covered by the Act that are relevant to GOTAFE include: employment, education, access to premises, and the provision of goods, services, accommodation and facilities.

Disability Act 2006 (Vic) covers areas such as the delivery of information, community inclusion, access to services, planning, complaints and review and the provision of high quality services.

Requires that a public sector body must ensure that a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purpose of:

- Reducing barriers to persons with disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- Reducing barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability.
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices, which discriminate persons with disability.

Education Standards 2005 (Cth)

The Disability Standards for Education
2005 were formulated under the Disability
Discrimination Act and clarify the obligations
of education and training providers to ensure
that students with disabilities can access and
participate in education without experiencing
discrimination. GOTAFE is committed to
meeting its requirements as set out in the
Standards.

The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic) The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Charter) requires all public authorities including educational providers to properly consider human rights when developing policies and providing services. Accordingly, GOTAFE must protect and promote human rights to such reasonable limits as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society based on human dignity, equity and freedom.

Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
The Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
(Equal Opportunity Act) protects people from discrimination on the basis of their individual attributes in certain areas of public life and provides redress for people who have been discriminated against. It also aims to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

Legal Framework

Alignment of Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP)

In the consultation and development process of this Reasonable Adjustment Plan, it was agreed to align all actions under each section against the organisational strategic plan with the aim to embed inclusive practices and fair and equal treatment of all people in all business actions and future decisions.

Support for Apprentices with disability (Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support DAAWS)

Government assistance is available to registered training organisations for tutorial, interpreter and mentor services for apprentices with a disability. Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS) is an Australian Government incentive payable to an employer who employs an Australian Apprentice with a disability in an Australian Apprenticeship/traineeship and school-based apprenticeship.

Statistics of student numbers over the past 5 years

The introduction of a student entitlement to vocational training in Victoria has led to a large increase in participation by a number of cohorts, including people with a disability which has increased between 2017 and 2019. GOTAFE has also seen an increase in students disclosing disability and accessing the supports necessary to assist them to participate with about 92% successfully completing their chosen course.

TABLE OF DISABILITY DISCLOSURE OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total Student Enrolment	14,921	13,127	11,930	9,314	5250
Total Student Disclosure	1,525	1,234	1,165	897	621
Percentage	10.22%	9.40%	9.77%	9.63%	11.8%

It is always difficult for any TAFE to gain accurate data regarding students disclosing disability upon enrolment. There is no legal requirement for students to disclose their disability status and nor should there be. Our focus is to create a supportive, learning environment that is free of discrimination where students feel comfortable to disclose their disability status.

Many students report that they don't feel comfortable disclosing their disability status in fear of being ostracised based on experiences previous to studying with GOTAFE. With this in mind, we have implemented strategies to address these concerns in the creation of this Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) with the removal of possible barriers for students to disclose their disability in an environment that is supportive and free of judgement.

Reducing barriers to persons with disability obtaining and engaging in employment outcomes.

STRATEGIC GOAL: WORK FORCE PLANNING

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Explore the synergies between employment strategies, the opportunities for collaboration, early identification of vacancies and matching of applicants with disability in local areas.	 Enhance stronger partnerships with targeted Disability Employment Agencies, Job Network providers and mainstream recruitment agencies to identify skill sets and capabilities sought by local employers. 	Director Student Success	Ongoing
	 Investigate the feasibility of a pathways model in partnership with Centrelink for people with disability considering entry into tertiary education. 	Director Student Success	February 2019
	 Improve career development opportunities for potential candidates with disabilities who are suitable for employment upon successful completion of course. 	Director Student Success /Careers Advisors	June 2019
	Develop guidelines for ease of referral to employment agencies which places the individual at the center of the process, and which responds flexibly and sensitively to his/her needs.	Director Student Success /Careers Advisors	July 2019
	GOTAFE to work with local government in the development and sponsoring of an Inclusive Employer Award through local business awards.	Director People & Culture Director Student Success	March 2019
Foster a workplace that is inclusive of staff with a disability and promotes equitable participation.	Promote the Reasonable Adjustment plan on GOTAFE Intranet and in staff induction.	Director Student Success Equitable Learning Advisor	Ongoing
	 Ensure all staff with disability affecting mobility has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) in place. 	Equitable Learning Advisor OHS Coordinator	Ongoing
	Continually provide staff with information about and access to GOTAFE Employee Assistance Program (EAP).	Director People & Culture Director Student Success	Ongoing
	Provide advice and support to Managers, team leaders and Human Resources on reasonable adjustments for staff with disability.	Director Student Success Equitable Learning Advisor	Ongoing
	Develop a disability employment strategy for the recruitment and retention of staff with disability.	Director People & Culture Director Student Success	January 2019

Reducing barriers to persons with disability accessing goods and services

STRATEGIC GOAL: TEACHING AND LEARNING

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
GOTAFE will be a leader in actively developing and promoting products and services for people with a disability.	 Promote an Institute wide definition of "reasonable adjustments" for equity minority groups with the use of multiple plat forms e.g. Website, staff intranet, student handbooks and external media. 	Whole of Institute Approach	Ongoing
	 Develop and implement a resource with examples that inform new and existing staff of "reasonable adjustments" in differing contexts. 	Director Student Success Equitable Learning Advisor	Ongoing
	Promote a culture and awareness of Universal Design and inclusive delivery mechanisms throughout GOTAFE with regular information sharing.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Ongoing
	Communicate GOTAFE's commitment to its Reasonable Adjustment Plan as part of the new employee induction process.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Ongoing
	 Communicate GOTAFE's commitment to its Reasonable Adjustment Plan in the upgrade of the TAE. 	Director Student Success L&D Coordinator	Ongoing
Foster a model of service delivery that is culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (ATSI) with disability and Aboriginal people who support them.	 Work with members of the Aboriginal community to develop culturally friendly images and terminology for use in information publications with ATSI people with disability. 	Director Student Success Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural	July 2019
	 Facilitate collaborative and culturally appropriate practice and dialogue between Aboriginal and Disability practitioners. To be initiated. 	Koorie Liaison Officer Equitable Learning Advisor	Ongoing
	Improve access, participation and outcomes for students who identify as ATSI People with disabilities.	Director Student Success Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural Koorie Liaison Officer Equitable Learning Advisor	Ongoing
	 Information signs and brochures are made accessible to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the five most used languages in the Shepparton area. 	Director Student Success Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural	Dec 2015

Reducing barriers to persons with disability accessing goods and services (continued)

STRATEGIC GOAL: TEACHING AND LEARNING

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Foster and provide an environment that is inclusive with enhanced duty of care to Minors while undertaking study.	Investigate the feasibility and potential of becoming a registered provider of "out of home care education commitment" through Department of Human Services.	Director Student Success	March 2019
	Develop training for staff on mandatory verses duty of care reporting for the care needs of minors.	Director Student Success L&D Coordinator	June 2019
	Develop and initiate enhanced frameworks for better understanding of roles and responsibilities of institute staff in the management of minors within tertiary educational environments.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Nov 2019
	• Develop new or align current policy and procedures to the Foyer Project in Shepparton.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Aug 2019
	In conjunction with all stakeholders develop a framework for seamless transitioning from the Foyer project into GOTAFE courses.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	July 2019
	 Ensure all recommended additional courses for minors registered through the Foyer are on our scope of registration, ready for enrolment upon completion and opening of building project. 	Director Student Success Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural	July 2019

Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices, which discriminate persons with disability.

STRATEGIC GOAL: POLICY AND CULTURE

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Increase capacity and confidence for staff through targeted training in addressing the learning needs of students with mental health within their teaching and interaction practices.	 Raise awareness of the presence of people with mental health in the classroom by increasing staff knowledge, about the range of mental illnesses, their symptoms and how to manage them appropriately. 	Director Student Success	Ongoing
	 Improved teacher confidence in accommodating students with mental illness through the delivery of Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA). 	Director Student Success	Ongoing
	Set targets for all fulltime and part-time PACCT and Teaching EFT staff to be trained in YMHFA.	Director Student Success Student Wellbeing Coordinator	Dec 2018
	 Improve linkages and coordination between mental health, alcohol and other drug usage. Primary care services to facilitate earlier identification and improved referral/treatment of mental and physical health problems. 	Director Student Success Student Wellbeing Coordinator Student Wellbeing Advisors	Ongoing
GOTAFE will continually improve feedback and reporting mechanisms, then use that information to improve current and future planning and service delivery.	GOTAFE to participate in public awareness events such as International Day of People with Disability.	Director Student Success Director Marketing	Ongoing
	 Carry out an annual review of the Reasonable Adjustment Plan taking into consideration items that arise through various feedback streams. 	Director Student Success Director Quality	Ongoing
	Provide complaint-handling training to staff including issues relating to students, staff and parents/carers who have a disability.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Dec 2019
	 Complaints resolution process to be clear and robust to ensure complaints are resolved swiftly to promote a workplace that is free of discrimination, bullying and harassment. 	Director Student Success Director Quality	July 2019
	 Investigate the feasibility of creating a Customer Liaison Officer to investigate and handle client/ student feedback. 	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	December 2019
	Seek and actively apply for Government funding opportunities in the development of initiatives to further enhance an inclusive learning environment.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	Ongoing

Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability.

STRATEGIC GOAL: STUDENT AND STAFF EXPERIENCE

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Provide teaching, learning and an environment that is flexible, inclusive and allows Reasonable Adjustments to meet the needs of our diverse staff and student populations.	 Report progress of Reasonable Adjustment plan actions to Higher Education Skills Group (HESG) on an annual basis in the required format. 	Director Student Success	Annually
	 Promote positive stories and images through websites and publications about students and staff with a disability. 	Director Student Success Director Marketing	Ongoing
	Develop and deliver training to staff that further promote positive communications and teaching practices to students with a disability.	Director Student Success Coordinator L&D	Ongoing
	Further enhance partnerships with secondary schools with the aim of seamless transition for students with disability into Vocational Education and Training (VET).	Director Student Success All Education Directors	Ongoing
	 Investigate the use of the Helpdesk as a data collection platform for greater targeted statistical information to enhance future and present reasonable adjustment needs of students and staff. 	Director Student Success Director Student Attraction & Enrolment	October 2018
Provide an environment that can meet the reasonable adjustment needs for parents with infant care needs.	Develop a proposal for the provision of an allocated Baby Care Room for the Shepparton campus as a trial with the intent to roll out the other campuses.	Director Student Success Director People & Culture	January 2018
	Work with the Australian Breastfeeding Association in the development of a strategy to assist GOTAFE to become a baby friendly environment.	Director Student Success	December 2018
	Promote GOTAFE as a baby friendly organisation in the support of parents with infants to enter into or remain within their chosen studies.	Director Student Success Director Marketing	January 2019
Regularly update a GOTAFE Reasonable Adjustment plan to reflect current and future legislative requirements and build on these capacities beyond expectation.	GOTAFE will further enhance the delivery of culturally appropriate programs to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with disability.	Director Student Success Equitable Learning Advisor Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural	Ongoing
	 Review GOTAFE's selection and enrolment processes and develop a Flow Chart to assist teachers in the recruitment of students with disability into the tertiary educational environment. 	Director Student Success Director Further Learning, Koorie & Multicultural Director People & Culture	December 2020
	Lodge the Bi-annual revised Reasonable Adjustment Plan with HREOC in both PDF and Word format and Higher Education and Skills Group (HESG) Victoria.	Director Student Success	August 2020
	Report on GOTAFE Reasonable Adjustment Plan targets and actions to Executive each semester.	Director Student Success Director Quality	End of each Semester

Key Terms

Continuous Constantly improving our **Improvement** processes and systems to

better meet the needs of our staff and student population.

DDA Disability Discrimination Act

(1992)

ELA Equitable Learning Advisor

EDS Educational Development

Services

SS Student Success

Learner Support Services

HR Human resources

CEO Chief Executive Officer

IT Information Technology

NS Network Systems

TAE Training and Assessor

PD Professional Development
TEC Technical Education Centre

100111110di Eddoddori Ooridi

MEC Multicultural Education

Centre

IA Information Access

EOA Equal Opportunity Act (2010)

PDF Portable Document Format

C.M Corporate marketing

CC Careers Counsellor

WCAG2.0 Web Content Accessibility

Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 covers a wide range of recommendations for making Web content more

accessible.

VEOHRC Victorian Equal Opportunity

and Human Rights

Commission

Inclusive Practice

Attitudes, approaches and strategies taken to ensure that students are not excluded or isolated from the learning environment because of any of these characteristics and consider individual learning styles/preferences and individual needs relating to disability, race, socio-economic status, gender, language, ethnicity, geographical isolation, sexuality, work commitments and family responsibilities.

Reasonable Adjustment

A measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

Universal Design

Defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as the design of products, environments, programs, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where these are needed

Principle of Inclusive Curriculum Design

Provides the opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds to access, participate and succeed; building on the life experiences and differing points of view of students to enhance the learning of all students, not just those with disability. Good course design is flexible in order to accommodate a range of abilities and cultural backgrounds

Australian Quality Training Framework

The Standards for Registered Training
Organisations with the focus on strong
quality training outcomes but also

fundamentally addresses access and equity

requirements.

Key Terms

Social Inclusion

Refers to a situation where all people feel valued and can participate in decision-making that affects their lives; allowing them to improve their overall wellbeing

Social Exclusion

The process of being shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems that contribute to the integration of a person into the community

Target Groups

Target groups include women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, people with disability, youth at risk, mature aged workers; people living in disadvantaged communities (including under-serviced, isolated and rural communities). Emerging groups as may be identified by future development of social policy.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (ATSI)

The range of issues that impact Indigenous participation in education and training is well documented. The rate of disability between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians is almost twice as high as the non-Aboriginal peoples.

CALD

It has also been estimated that one in four people with a disability come from a non-English speaking background or is the child of parents from a non-English speaking background and almost a quarter of Victoria's population was born overseas.

The SMART principle for performance indicators:

S Specific

M Measurable

A Achievable

R Realistic, Relevant

T Timely

The Inclusive Practices are grounded in the Social Model of disability access that emphasises lessening the impact of disability rather than the cause. This model describes disability as a complex interaction between environmental and social factors and the functioning ability of the individual. Essentially, by taking a proactive approach to environmental design and challenging certain attitudes, many of our general work and teaching practices can incorporate the capacity to accommodate a wide range of abilities.

Consultation

In the development of this Reasonable Adjustment Plan, GOTAFE conducted lengthy consultations with management, staff and students GOTAFE acknowledges that people are experts in their own lives and values their input.



gotafe.vic.edu.au | 1300 GOTAFE (468 233)

RTO 3094 | Version 1.1 | 19.05.2020