

Policy on Access and Equity

Purpose

SMA is committed to ensuring that access and equity principles are applied in the vocational education and training that it delivers. All personnel across the organisation are aware of, and adhere to these principles. This policy exists to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to successfully gain skills, knowledge and experience through education and training.

Principles

SMA endeavours to deliver its training and education, having regard to the particular needs of target groups and individuals. In particular, it is SMA's aim to ensure that no individual participant is discriminated against and that access to its courses will not be limited on the basis of: sex, sexuality, transsexuality, relationship status, pregnancy, breast feeding, parental or carer status, race, religion, political conviction, disability or age.

Students will have every opportunity to maximise their training and learning experience. Where there is a perceived difficulty achieving learning goals, discussion with the student will be encouraged. Information will be provided about possible alternative pathways to achieve goals, or options to overcome barriers and ways to access support.

Student(s) participating in training may have special needs. This may include but is not limited to students with language, literacy and/or numeracy problems, or disabilities.

A certain level of language, literacy and numeracy requirements are needed to undertake SMA training course. Specifically, students would need the ability to: prepare a written incident report or provide sufficient information to enable preparation of an incident report (e.g. a first aid report); communicate effectively and assertively in an incident situation; use literacy and numeracy skills as required to read, interpret and apply guidelines and protocols. Students must also be aware that appropriate sensory levels (e.g. hearing, vision, smell) to make accurate reports, check for dangers and apply appropriate injury management strategies.

If a person is identified as having special needs, SMA will work with the student to make "reasonable adjustments" necessary for that student to perform their coursework. These reasonable adjustments may include:

- Changing methods of how assessment is conducted, in order to achieve desired competency whilst still adhering to required performance and /or the knowledge evidence required such as a verbal recorded assessment rather than a written assessment.
- Changing course delivery. For example, providing study notes or research

materials in different formats; providing the ability to have support personnel with a student in class.

Implementation of this Policy

SMA will use the following strategies to implement this policy.

Students

Students can implement this policy by either contacting the SMA office conducting the course to advise and discuss any special needs, or by providing truthful answers to all questions asked at registration. Students will be asked to self-identify:

- any literacy and/or numeracy impairment;
- any assistance/modification that they need to complete the training program that they are registering for; and,
- the assistance/modification that they need to complete assessment activities.

A third party may also contact SMA on a student's behalf to help identify ways in which the student can be supported within the training environment.

SMA Staff

SMA staff will make every effort to accommodate a student's request for support, but may not be able to accommodate all requests. Student special needs will be assessed on a case by case basis taking into account the type of training the student is requesting enrolment into. SMA staff members will:

- make contact with students who have self-identified themselves as requiring assistance or support prior to the training program, to discuss special arrangements/requirements;
- maintain confidentiality regarding any student's medical conditions, disabilities or impairments, or their prior education;
- ensure that SMA presenters/facilitators are briefed regarding the special needs of students prior to the training program; or,
- inform the student of the reason their request was unable to be supported.

Course Lecturers/Facilitators

SMA course lecturers and facilitators are bound by SMA policies and will work with students requiring special needs support by:

- using appropriate language and visual signs;

- maintaining confidentiality regarding a student's personal special needs requirements;
- modifying activities within the training program to accommodate students who have requested support; and,
- modifying assessment to accommodate a student's request for support.