

## ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

Axiom College is fully committed to Access and Equity and upholding obligations under the Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Standards for Education 2005, across the full range of services that we offer, within the constraints of current work location and available resources.

The Access and Equity policy as identified for vocational education and training system will be continuously implemented and reviewed for areas of improvement.

Consequently, Axiom College will make every endeavour to meet the needs of individuals, and the community as a whole through the integration of access and equity guidelines.

### Enrolment

Every student with a disability has the right to admission to, or apply for enrolment in a course at Axiom College on the same basis as a prospective student without a disability, without experiencing discrimination. In making the decision whether or not to offer the prospective student a place, Axiom College must treat them on the same basis as a prospective student without a disability, and without discrimination.

Axiom College will:

- consult with the prospective student (or their associate)
- decide whether an adjustment is necessary so that the student can seek admission, apply for a place, or enrol in the program on the same basis as other students
- identify what that adjustment might be
- make the adjustment to allow the application or enrolment to proceed.

Axiom College ensures information about the program:

- is accessible to the student with a disability (or their associate)
- includes entry requirements, choice of programs, pathways and educational settings
- is comprehensive to enable the student to make an informed choice.

Information about the enrolment process:

- addresses the needs of students with a disability
- is accessible to the student and his or her associates
- is available in a range of formats depending on the resources and purposes of the provider within a reasonable time frame.

### Participation

Every student with a disability who is enrolled with Axiom College has the right to participate in the courses or programs and to use the services and facilities provided by the institution, on the same basis as other students without disabilities.

Axiom College takes reasonable steps to ensure that, without experiencing discrimination, the student is able to participate in the courses or programs and use the facilities and services provided.

Axiom College will:

- consult with the enrolled student (or their associate)
- decide whether an adjustment is necessary so that the student can participate in the courses or programs and use the facilities and services on the same basis as other students

- identify what that adjustment might be
- make the adjustment to allow the student to participate.

Axiom College ensures the course or program activities are sufficiently flexible for the student to be able to participate and will review course or program activities in light of information from the student to include activities in which the student can participate. Additional support for the student where necessary is provided and will arrange for a reasonable substitute where a program includes an activity in which the student cannot participate. Extra-curricular activities to include the student will be designed.

### **Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery**

Every student with a disability has the right to participate in educational courses or programs that are designed to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, including relevant supplementary programs, on the same basis as other students without disabilities.

Axiom College will take reasonable steps to ensure that the program is designed in such a way that the student is able to participate in:

- the learning experiences
- assessment and certification
- supplementary courses or programs.

Axiom College will:

- consult with the enrolled student (or their associate)
- decide whether an adjustment is necessary so that the student can participate in the learning experiences of the program on the same basis as other enrolled students
- identify what that adjustment might be
- make the adjustment to allow the student to participate.

Axiom College will:

- endeavour to ensure curriculum, teaching materials, assessment and certification requirements are learner-centred, appropriate to the needs of the student and accessible to him or her
- take account of intended educational outcomes and the learning capacities and needs of the student when deciding on delivery modes and learning activities
- adjust strategies to address any disadvantage in learning arising from the student's disability
- ensure students are not disadvantaged by time taken for conversion of study materials into suitable formats
- ensure assessment procedures and methodologies are adapted to enable the student to demonstrate the knowledge, skills or competencies being assessed
- organise flexible activities, field trips and work placements (so all can participate)
- design learning experiences and activities to include the student (including extracurricular or out of class activities)
- make offers of alternatives or reasonable substitutes to the student
- review adaptations in light of information supplied by the student.
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### **Student support services**

Every student with a disability who is enrolled has the right in relation to specialised services needed by them to participate in the educational activities for which they are enrolled. These services may be provided by Axiom College or contracted to another person or agency.

Axiom College takes reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to use the support services on the same basis as a student without a disability and without experiencing discrimination.

If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and already provided by Axiom College, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that the student has access to the service.

If a specialised support service is necessary for the student to be able to participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled, and is of a kind that is not provided by Axiom College, we will take reasonable steps to facilitate the provision of the service to the student by another person or agency.

Axiom College will:

- consult with the enrolled student (or their associate) about the need for the student to have access to specialised support services
- decide whether an adjustment is necessary so that the student can participate in the activities for which he or she is enrolled
- identify what that adjustment might be
- make the adjustment for the student.

Axiom College will make staff aware of the services available for the student and provide them with information to enable them to assist the student to access the services they need and will facilitate the provision of specialised services for the student where necessary including using collaborative arrangements with specialised service providers. Axiom College may provide necessary specialised equipment to support the student, including adaptive technology and assistive devices and may make arrangements for interpreters and note-takers if needed.

### **Harassment and victimisation**

Harassment includes an action taken in relation to the person's disability that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person or their associate with a disability.

Axiom College has developed and implemented strategies and programs to support the rights of students with a disability to education or training in an environment that is free from discrimination caused by harassment or victimisation on the basis of their disability.

Axiom College also supports the right of students who have associates with disabilities to the same discrimination-free educational environment.

Axiom College will:

- develop and implement strategies and programs to prevent harassment or victimisation
- take reasonable steps to ensure its staff and students are informed about the obligation not to harass or victimise students with a disability or the associates of students with a disability
- take appropriate action if harassment or victimisation occurs
- have a complaint mechanism available.
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### **Reasonable adjustment**

Axiom College makes reasonable adjustments where necessary. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it takes into account the student's learning needs and balances the interests of all parties affected - the student, Axiom College, staff and other students.

A student with a disability may not require adjustments in some circumstances or at all times. Conversely, multiple adjustments may be required and may include multiple activities. At all times the integrity of the program, and the assessment requirements and processes should be maintained.

Axiom College will be timely in investigating and implementing any adjustments and maintain confidentiality.

Factors taken into account include the nature of the disability. Axiom College is entitled to information about the student's disability and how it affects their ability to participate in training in order to make reasonable adjustments or clarify the student's ability to comply with non-discriminatory requirements of a program.

Axiom College will seek information from the student about their preferred adjustment, as the student may have a good understanding of what might be needed.

### **The costs and benefits of making the adjustment**

The effect of the adjustment on others and direct and indirect costs will be considered by Axiom College, including:

- costs associated with staffing, special resources, modifying curriculum
- the adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits to all deriving from the student's participation.

Axiom College will consult the student (or their associate) about the adjustment. The student's choice of adjustment is a very significant consideration. The provider may select an alternative adjustment if it is effective in achieving the desired purpose.

### **Exceptions**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Standards for Education 2005 do not render it unlawful for a provider to fail to comply with a requirement of the standards if:

- Axiom College claims it would impose unjustifiable hardship
- the student's disability is an infectious disease or other condition and it is reasonably necessary to isolate or discriminate to protect the health and welfare of the student or others
- Axiom College is complying with court orders, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission decisions, prescribed law and regulations of the Commonwealth, State or Territory as per Section 47 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992

### **Unjustifiable hardship**

Axiom College works within the standards to the maximum extent of not involving unjustifiable hardship. Once an adjustment is considered reasonable in the circumstances, balancing the interests of all parties affected, the next step is to consider whether it would nonetheless impose unjustifiable hardship on Axiom College.

Where a claim of unjustifiable hardship is made, Axiom College will take into account all the financial and other resources that are reasonably available for the purpose of making any necessary adjustments for the student, and the impact of those adjustments on their capacity to provide education of high quality to all students while remaining financially viable.

Axiom College will consider direct and indirect costs and benefits including:

- costs associated with staffing, special resources, modifying curriculum
- the adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits to all deriving from the student's participation.

Should Axiom College apply unjustifiable hardship, we will:

- ensure the process for seeking the adjustment is accessible and transparent
- notify the student regarding the decision and the reasons for the decision as soon as practicable after the decision is made.
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### **Equity Principles**

Axiom College staff and contractors will ensure that equity principles for all people are implemented through the fair allocation of resources and the right to equality of opportunity without discrimination.

We will increase opportunities for people to participate in the vocational education and training system, and in associated decisions, which affect their lives by working very closely with relevant government organisations, employers and trainees.

We will implement customer oriented programs and target the specific needs of market segments in enhancing the economic development of the organisation.

We will achieve the above through:

- Being aware of our industry and community needs through participation in a number of organisations throughout the community
- Marketing our services in a non-discriminatory, inclusive and welcoming manner
- Ensuring that we do not discriminate against potential clients in giving access to our full range of services
- Applying approved government policies that assist the client by waiving additional prohibitive costs and charges or sourcing additional funding where required
- Ensuring access and equity issues are considered during curriculum and assessment development
- Providing access to staff and professional development to assist trainers and managers who deliver or assess courses for under-represented groups, so that trainers can develop additional skills to work with clients with differing learning requirements, and
- Formulating, implementing and reviewing our operational policies and strategic plans and subsequently evaluating the aims, objectives and delivery of our programs and services on a structured and on-going basis.