

PROCEDURE: S4.1- P4.1

STUDENT DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Related Policy

Student Diversity and Equity

1.2 Purpose

This procedure outlines the manner in which the Australian Institute of Management (AIM) provides supportive pathways for new and existing students with diverse backgrounds and or disabilities. This procedure ensures fair and equitable access and support to all AIM services for all students and ensures that AIM promotes inclusive practices across its core operational areas.

1.3 Scope

This procedure applies to all prospective and existing students of AIM.

This procedure also applies to academic and administrative staff in terms of the actions required to support students with differing needs and from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All administrative and academic staff of AIM are required to uphold the principles of access and equity as outlined in the Student Diversity and Equity Policy as they carry out their normal duties of work.
2. Marketing staff are required to design and develop marketing collateral (both physical and digital) that accommodate the principles of access and equity and are sensitive to cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of prospective students.
3. AIM is required to publish information on its website which includes information on student support including disability support services.
4. AIM staff are required to ensure that prospective students are provided with information on the support services offered by AIM and the availability of consideration for disability adjustment.

5. Students seeking consideration of a disability are required to provide documentary proof to support their application when requested.
6. Students who have received approval for consideration of a disability are required to advise the AIM Student Support Team if their circumstances change, or they are no longer in need of disability support.
7. Students who have been placed on an Adjustment and Support Plan are required to comply with the requirements of the plan.
8. The Head of Academic Delivery VET is required to assess consideration for disability applications based upon information provided by the student and advice from internal and/ external organisations. The Head of Academic Delivery VET will advise the Enrolment and Support staff of the outcome of any application. The program coordinators are required to monitor the implementation of disability Adjustment and Support Plans and ensure the student is being provided with the requisite support outlined in the special consideration approval.
9. Product Development teams are required to ensure that access and equity principles are considered during the development of training and assessment resources.
10. Trainers and Assessors will be provided with relevant details of students with a disability and their Adjustment and Support Plans and will respect the privacy of these students while supporting them during learning and assessment .
11. The CEO is required to ensure that appropriate funding and access to staff development is available to all staff that engage with students who are seeking to have or who have had disability applications considered.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Enrolment

1. During the enrolment process, AIM staff provide prospective students with information about AIM support services.
2. Where prospective students have further questions regarding their enrolment, they can direct these questions to the Student Support staff.
3. During the online application process, students are requested to indicate on the application if they have any disability that may impact their enrolment or cause barriers in achieving the outcomes of their chosen course.
4. Where a student discloses a disability, the student will provide supporting documentation as part of the application for enrolment process.

3.2 Assessment of disabilities and the provision of reasonable adjustment

1. Where a student has disclosed a disability and/ or has made a request for reasonable adjustment on their application form, the Student Support team will notify the Head of Academic Delivery VET who will then schedule a meeting to discuss their individual requirements. The meeting will allow the student to discuss all relevant circumstances, including the student's needs, the reasonable adjustment being sought, and the student's view on the assistance required. This meeting must be held prior to AIM accepting the student's formal application for enrolment.
2. If the student has already been admitted, their application for reasonable adjustment will be referred by Student Support to the Head of Academic Delivery VET who will meet with the student to discuss all relevant circumstances and interests, including the student's needs, the reasonable adjustment being sought, and the student's view on the assistance required.
3. The meeting between the Head of Academic Delivery VET and the student will consider the following:
 - the nature of the individual's disability;
 - the information provided by the student (e.g., information from doctor, psychologist, learning disability specialist etc.) and how the disability may have an impact on the student's learning environment and the actions AIM could take to accommodate their disability;
 - information provided by the student about his or her preferred adjustment;
 - the Adjustment and Support Plan, potential adjustments, and the student's views on the proposed adjustment;
 - the effect of the adjustment on anyone else affected;
 - the effect of the adjustment on the student, their ability to participate, achieve learning outcomes and operate independently; and
 - the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.
4. Reasonable adjustment activities in the Adjustment and Support Plan could involve, but are not limited to, the following:
 - additional time for exams (if exams are used for assessment);
 - extensions for assessments;
 - adapting the assessment methodologies, without impacting on the validity of the attainment of the relevant standards;
 - changes to attendance requirements;
 - providing special assistance such as provision of paper-based materials in advance of face-to-face sessions;
 - recording of lectures/ tutorials for those that are deaf or hard of hearing;
 - Printing assessment materials on different coloured paper; and
 - except where it involves an Unjustifiable Hardship for AIM, providing other potential alternatives suggested by the student, based on previous experience and evidence of practice at other educational providers.

5. If the Head of Academic Delivery VET requires further information to assist and inform any decisions, then they will seek advice from relevant government agencies, support organisations or specialists in the disability area to determine what needs to be done to accommodate the requirements of the student. The Head of Academic Delivery VET must seek the student's permission if they are going to identify the student in these circumstances.
6. If the adjustment is reasonable (and in the opinion of the Head of Academic Delivery VET, would not cause Unjustifiable Hardship on AIM) and is within the capacity of AIM, the adjustment will be made within a reasonable time according to the provision of relevant information in the student's possession about how they would be affected in relation to their course.
8. The Head of Academic Delivery VET will communicate their decision in writing to all relevant stakeholders including the Trainers and Assessors. In communicating the decision, the Head of Academic Delivery VET will only advise of the reasonable adjustment, and not the cause of the adjustment. The Head of Academic Delivery VET will observe all relevant privacy principles and protect the privacy of the student. A copy of the decision will be placed on the student's private file, and access to this file will be in accordance with AIM's Privacy of Student Information and Records Policy.

3.4 Unjustifiable Hardship

1. 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 AIM.
2. Where a claim of unjustifiable hardship is made, AIM 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 AIM's capacity to provide education of high quality to all students while remaining financially viable.
3. AIM should seek the advice of relevant external parties to help meet the needs of the student and to implement a financially viable option for the student, where reasonably possible.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Access** - The principle of the fair and equitable provision of all services provided by AIM that are free of any form of discrimination irrespective of a person's country of birth, language, culture, race or religion.
- **Equity** - The principle of the provision of services by ABS that are developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of all students who are eligible to receive them, irrespective of background.
- **Disability** - as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, meaning:

- 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; or
- may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
- is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a **disability** that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

- **Reasonable adjustment** - A measure or action taken by AIM to assist a student with a disability to participate in a course of study 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, including the student, the provider, staff and other students.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Framework
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)
- Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (Staff and Students)
- Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student Progression Policy and Procedure
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwlth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015](#)
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Diversity and Equity Policy
- [VET Student Loans Act 2016](#)
- [VET Student Loans Rules 2016](#)

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Executive Director AIM
Status	Reviewed on July 2022
Approval Authority	Chief Executive Officer
Date of Approval	13 September 2022
Effective Date	26 September 2022
Implementation Owner	Executive Director AIM
Maintenance Owner	VET Compliance and Operations Manager
Review Due	11 August 2025
Content Enquiries	VET Compliance and Operations- Brenda Cleaver Email: Brenda.cleaver@aim.com.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
S4.0- P4.0	13 September 2022	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Policy and procedure separated updated in accordance with review of Scentia governance; Combined Access and Equity and Student Support and changed to Student Diversity and Support
S4.1 - P4.1	4 October 2023	VET Compliance and Operations Manager	Addition of information related to VET Student Loans (VSL) and government funds for approved courses.