

## Disability Standards Review-Leadership Team

### Transition

***What has been your experience assisting students with disability to transition from one education sector to another?***

This has been an exceptionally challenging area for us. When students from special education are required to transition into mainstream education, they are often unsupported and even unwelcomed by their mainstream school. We believe this is a systemic area requiring significant work.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students with disability

***What has been your experience supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability?***

Positive that there are additional services and supports for students in this group.

### Specific Experiences

***What has been your experience supporting education participation for students with disability who may be affected by other circumstances such as age, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, intersex status, ethnic origin or race, and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?***

Special education is a supportive and inclusive place, so our experiences have been positive.

### COVID-19

***Has COVID-19 impacted the experience of your students with disability in participating in education? Have their experiences ever been impacted by other major events, such as natural disasters?***

It was discriminatory for the Victorian government to say that remote learning did not work for students with a disability. We had many learners who were thriving in the remote learning environment. It was divisive to have different rules for schools catering for students with a disability.

### Awareness of the Standards (1)

***Are you familiar with the standards and what they are designed to do? If so, where did you find out about the standards?***

Yes. In Victorian Special Education we have a good understanding of the standards.

### **Awareness of the Standards (2)**

**Have you received training of any kind about the Standards? What did this involve?**

No. We would like to see all Victorian teachers be required to complete a mandated training module.

### **Awareness of the Standards (3)**

**Do you understand your obligations when it comes to students with disability being able to access and participate in education? How have the Standards helped you to understand your obligations?**

Absolutely; we have a great understanding in Special Education.

### **Awareness of the Standards (4)**

**Do you feel confident negotiating and implementing a reasonable adjustment? Do you know how to determine if this would result in unjustifiable hardship?**

Yes, we make adjustments constantly in Special Education.

### **Awareness of the Standards (5)**

**Do you think the Standards help students with disability to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability? Why, or why not?**

Lack of clarity of implementation of the standards in special education settings.

### **Improving the Standards (1)**

**How do you think the Standards could be improved to help overcome barriers for students with disability in accessing or participating in education?**

Ensure application of the standards with TAFE courses and all VET providers. Improve clarity of expectations of reality of implementing the standards in a variety of educational settings.

### **Improving the Standards (2)**

**Do the Standards need changing? If so, please let us know how you would change them.**

No. Clarified with improved examples.

### **Improving the Standards (3)**

**What should be done to improve awareness of the Standards?**

All education providers should be required to complete a training module.

#### **Improving the Standards (4)**

**Do you need more or different support to help you to understand and apply the Standards? What kind of support would be useful?**

Improved clarity with examples in a broader range of educational settings.

#### **Improving the Standards (5)**

**Do you find the Guidance Notes for the Standards useful? If not, why not?**

Yes, they are useful. Would like further guidance with a broader range of educational settings.

#### **Enrolment and access**

**What has been your experience with students with disability accessing education?**

Improved curriculum in our school has allowed for more students to access the Vic Curriculum, making it more engaging relevant particularly for those who are more academic and able to access a wider variety of learning opportunities. Students who transition out of our school into mainstream, due to no longer being eligible, there are significant barriers around programs provided, accessibility and safety.

#### **Participation**

**What has been your experience of students with disability participating in education and training?**

Students can participate within our Specialist Ed programs as we cater closely to their needs and learning challenges. Our school is now able to offer VET & VCAL options which have been limited in the past.

#### **Supporting students**

**What has been your experience of students with disability being supported in education and training?**

Student welfare and wellbeing staff are active in supporting student attendance, communication with parents and outside agencies in order to increase/support student's attendance. Our staff understand the barriers and are able to better provide support.

#### **Harassment or victimisation**

**What has been your experience of students with disability experiencing harassment and/or victimisation in education and training settings?**

Transitions to mainstream have been quite difficult for many of our students as they do not have full attendance, have modified programs which restrict their attendance or pressures as teenagers mean they cannot attend, feel left out or not included fully.

#### **Transition**

**What has been your experience assisting students with disability to transition from one education sector to another?**

See notes above. Our experiences have been not positive and students have fully disengaged with schools at all.

#### **COVID-19**

**Has COVID-19 impacted the experience of your students with disability in participating in education? Have their experiences ever been impacted by other major events, such as natural disasters?**

Remote learning was incredibly challenging - access to technology, parent involvement, student independence.

#### **Awareness of the Standards (4)**

**Do you feel confident negotiating and implementing a reasonable adjustment? Do you know how to determine if this would result in unjustifiable hardship?**

Somewhat in our specialist setting - but not as to how this would look for mainstream adjustments.

#### **Improving the Standards (3)**

**What should be done to improve awareness of the Standards?**

Publication, training & "friendly" language

#### **Improving the Standards (4)**

**Do you need more or different support to help you to understand and apply the Standards? What kind of support would be useful?**

Is it different in our specialist setting as it is our role compared to mainstream, we have an understanding already.

#### **Improving the Standards (5)**

**Do you find the Guidance Notes for the Standards useful? If not, why not?**

Shorter version.

## **Enrolment and access**

Over the years, there has been significant improvement in accessibility including during remote learning as this provided students with the opportunity to access learning online. There has also been improvement with teamwork between agencies, families and schools.

## **Participation**

VET: A standard form of practice for training and RTO's mostly accepting of this. However, some RTO's put a great amount of emphasis of LLN testing scores to determine the outcome/ future of a student.

VCAL: the requirements for students to completed numerous pieces of evidence, in multiple contexts lends itself to all students. Foundation level ensures student can receive the support they require with every step in order to be successful, and apply their learning.

Students who are accessing the Vic Curriculum and in conjunction with the school's curriculum maps, teachers are able to plan and deliver learning experiences at the appropriate level, while providing age appropriate content.

Providing communication opportunities for students with complex needs can still be challenging.

## **Supporting students**

Mental health initiatives for mainstream and specialist school is welcome and timely.

Available "Student support services (SSS)" is very limited and lacks disciplines such as occupational therapists and physiotherapists. It would benefit student outcomes and staff wellbeing to increase supports from allied health professionals, including in early childhood settings (kinder).

VET/VCAL: reasonable adjustments and inclusiveness for students to access a variety of opportunities.

## **Harassment or victimisation**

### **What has been your experience of students with disability experiencing harassment and/or victimisation in education and training settings?**

We have found that Educational organisations are committed to minimising harassment and victimisation

## **Compliance**

### **What has been your experience of compliance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 among education providers?**

Positive compliance in mainstream and specialists up until year 10s. Beyond this challenges remain in terms of vocational learning.

## **Transition**

**What has been your experience assisting students with disability to transition from one education sector to another?**

Inconsistencies with adult transitions dependent on provider.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students with disability \***

**What has been your experience supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability?**

## **COVID-19**

**Has COVID-19 impacted the experience of your students with disability in participating in education? Have their experiences ever been impacted by other major events, such as natural disasters?**

For all students – remote learning provided varying experiences. We had students, particularly in the senior school, that have been non attenders in pre COVID times, yet during remote learning a high number of these students accessed support and completed learning outcomes.

## **Awareness of the Standards (1)**

**Are you familiar with the standards and what they are designed to do? If so, where did you find out about the standards?**

We have an awareness of the standards but wouldn't agree that we have a thorough understanding of the contents.

## **Awareness of the Standards (2)**

**Have you received training of any kind about the Standards? What did this involve?**

Yes – staff attended a 30 minute webinar.

## **Awareness of the Standards (3)**

**Do you understand your obligations when it comes to students with disability being able to access and participate in education? How have the Standards helped you to understand your obligations?**

Absolutely, we have a very thorough understanding.

## **Awareness of the Standards (4)**

**Do you feel confident negotiating and implementing a reasonable adjustment? Do you know how to determine if this would result in unjustifiable hardship?**

Yes

**Awareness of the Standards (6)**

**Do you think the Standards help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as students without disability? Tell us why you think this.**