

PURPOSE

To assist all the students to achieve successful completion of their education and training through the provision of quality training and support services and orientation.

To achieve this, this policy aims to provide a framework for supporting students in adjusting to study, to achieve their learning goals and to maintain satisfactory progress towards meeting all learning outcomes.

This policy outlines support services available to the students as well as how student information on these services is disseminated and how students may access them.

SCOPE

All students who study at Matrix Training (MT) will be provided the appropriate support from Student Support Staff in relation to study, academic issues, support and general welfare arrangements. The students and staff will be given information and advice pertaining to their personal safety and security.

DEFINITIONS

Student contact officer Student Support Staff member (Student Support Officer) is the designated personnel as the official point of contact for students.

Academic performance Assessment of competency as a student progress through the qualification

Course Refers to the specific course a student is enrolled in

Face to face Usually classroom based but may also entail practical, workshop and other learning environments, provided the trainer assessor is present. It should be noted that face-to-face training may involve the use of online / electronic tools and media; for instance, Moodle platforms and eLearning. Providing the online/electronic tools and media do not replace to negate the need for a trainer assessor to be present. Face-to-face mode should be trainer / assessor-lead rather than self-paced learning. Some electronic mediums, such as Skype, make live-time discussions possible.

SSO Student Support Officer(s)

Unit Unit of Competency

VET Vocational Education and Training

SMS Student Management System

Study Period A study period is the regular scheduled term of study between study breaks, often of ten to thirteen weeks duration

POLICY

Students will be provided with contact details referring them to relevant professionals in the instance that they require assistance outside the scope of student services. Any referrals are conducted at no cost to the student, however there may be fees and charges involved where an external service is used by the student. This should be clarified with the Support staff and student prior to using external services. The following student support services are available and accessible for all students studying with MT either by providing the service in-house or having an arrangement to refer students to affordable externally provided services:

- student support services available to students in the study
- legal services
- emergency and health services
- English and academic support services
- tutoring support
- study skills centres
- counselling, mental health and disability services
- housing and tenancy services
- financial support services
- facilities and resources
- complaints and appeals services
- support relating to course progress and/or attendance as appropriate
- career services and working and employment rights and conditions

Introducing Student Support

Information regarding support is also provided prior to enrolment. Engaging students through an orientation day before the commencement of studies, will cover key points of the Student Support, role of the SSO and details of policies and procedures, such as:

- Who are their Student Support Officers / Contact Personnel?
- When are they available?
- Contact details.
- What processes in accordance with policies and procedures are available to students.

Provision of Information

Assistance shall be provided to all students, regardless of a student's place of study, to access study support and welfare-related services, both at orientation and throughout their time as a student.

- MT provides free services designed to assist students in achieving academic progress, with sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the students enrolled.
- Electronic methods of disseminating such information include the RTO website, emails, SMS and social media.
- Written formats methods of disseminating such information include the student handbook, noticeboard, newsletters or even a wallet-sized card with useful numbers may be provided as required.
- Students have the right to privacy and as such all staff, policies and practices must consciously safeguard the student's privacy and confidentiality in order to satisfy the Privacy Act.
- Student Support staff are engaged to provide such assistance, with at least one designated member of staff to be appointed as Student Support Officer, This officer or officers must have access to the most up-to-date details regarding support services.
- MT has comprehensive *Critical Incident policy and procedure* to support students in times of need. These procedures contain immediate, during, after and post CI event and are well documented with feedback and review components.

- MT have dedicated staff as points of contact on all issues pertaining to a student's academic, living in the community and social concerns.
- All modes of study and learning needs will be catered for to facilitate access to and the provision of student support services, such as students undertaking practical or industry work placements, or online units of study.

Safety and personal security

MT is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure a safe, secure and beneficial environment is maintained for the students, both on campus and at practical or industry work placements.

- Advice on possible actions taken to enhance safety and personal security is given at orientation and in the student and staff handbooks.
- Personal security and safety information is provided and readily available at any time to both students and staff.
- Detailed information will be provided to all the students about how to seek assistance for and report any incidents which may significantly impact upon their wellbeing, (including critical incidents).
- MT will provide the students with general information on safety and health or refer them to such information as appropriate (including electronically).

RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of Student Support Officers to respond to student enquiries and to be a first contact for students. Where student enquiries or needs are beyond the scope of training, knowledge or experience of the Student Support Officer they must seek advice from their manager.
- Student Support Officers shall be responsible for initiating the Critical Incident procedures if they have deemed it a Critical Incident.
- Student Support Officers shall maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the student ceases to be an accepted student.
- Student Support Officers must update student management system for each enquiry and all documentation is to be filed in the student's file.
- Student Support Officers must ensure that any written response to a student enquiry is generated from the Student Management System, so it has a contact log and a copy of the information sent. No verbal outcomes are to be acceptable practice by MT staff.
- Responsibility for briefing all staff of any obligations.
- Day to day responsibility for the oversight and management of student welfare support services lies with RTO Manager.
- The CEO will have overall responsibility for this policy and the ensuing procedures.

Student Responsibilities

Students shall be made aware of the following responsibilities at orientation and in their student handbook:

- The students must advise the RTO of any changes in their addresses and / or contact details within 7 days. This include emergency contacts.

PROCEDURE

Student Support Services

MT has a officials designated to support students as Student Support Officers, who are approachable as first point of contact at MT during business hours. Students can approach any MT Student Support Officer for help or general enquiries. For emergency and after hours, Student Support Officers are available using official email. Student can also approach other staff members at MT, if required.

Pre-Enrolment

- Pre-enrolment information is supplied to all potential students in accordance with the *Enrolment Policy and Procedure*, Course information and *Student Handbook*.
- Student Support Services information is provided to all potential students via MT website, *Student Handbook*, and via staff. This information can also be obtained by email.
- On enquiry students are directed to the website, e-mailed a copy or posted a copy of the *Student Handbook*, *Course Information material*, *Enrolment Policy and Procedure* and *Enrolment Application Form*.
- Students are provided sufficient information to assist them in making in informed decision on course and education provider.
- Students are forwarded clear information on how to apply for a course, what information to supply and provided contact details for accessing support if they have any questions or difficulties.
- Students are encouraged to seek assistance with any part of this process and to contact the Student Support Officer with questions.
- Students are consulted if any information on their application requires clarification or further investigation prior to coming to a decision on their application.

Please refer to *Enrolment Policy and Procedure* for detailed enrolment process and requirements.

Enrolment

Students with special learning needs

- MT provides access and equity to candidates with special learning needs. Please refer to *Access and Equity Policy and Procedure* for details of resources and services provision.
- As special needs extend to more than physical or learning difficulties, our trainers also consider the best approach when dealing with candidates with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.
- MT trainers take special needs into consideration from the planning stage onwards and adopt particular delivery and assessment methods as appropriate.
- Depending on any specification given in the standards, the trainer may be able to accept alternative evidence from a candidate with special needs.
- MT staff contact other RTOs, external support organisations or RTO consultant for assistance and guidance, as required.
- In making arrangements for students with special learning needs all meeting minutes, advice and amended delivery/ assessment material is stored in the student file in accordance with *Records Management Policy and Procedure*.
- The delivery and assessment processes, materials, resources and equipment may be adjusted to address a student's learning needs. Adjustment to the assessment process is undertaken in accordance with Training package guidelines, the rules of evidence and principles of assessment.
- The student is kept fully informed of the process during the enrolment and afterwards.
- MT may refer students to external organisations for support to enable them to successfully enrol and complete their course.
- MT liaises with external organisations to facilitate students learning and course progress / achievement.

- Where a student's learning needs cannot be addressed by MT, the Institute will not enrol the student.
- MT may refer student to undertake a course prior to commencing the MT course to satisfy entry requirements and address learning needs.

Post-Enrolment

Orientation

All students go through an Orientation Program before the commencement of studies at MT. The Orientation program involves familiarisation with the campus, facilities, staff and processes.

A culturally sensitive and age-appropriate orientation must be undertaken, in support of assisting students commencing their study and achieving the academic progress as outlined in their Training Plans / Timetables. All information is to be provided without cost to the student.

The orientation program should be accessible to all the students and allow for late arrivals and students who begin at different entry points.

Information provided on orientation should be included in, and not conflicting with the student handbooks and website.

It is a requirement that all students attend an orientation session prior to commencement of their studies with MT. Along with general orientation activities, new students may have particular needs or issues requiring specific support and interventions, therefore question time should be included.

The orientation will cover information regarding studying at MT, such as the following:

- support services available to assist in study
- legal services
- information on course progress and, if applicable, attendance
- emergency and health services
- English language and study assistance programs
- personal and crisis support services available and how to access them
- information on employment rights and conditions, resolving workplace issues and services available
- Personal security and safety

The orientation will also cover information about the RTO such as

- a comprehensive student handbook
- outline of facilities and resources
- relevant course information
- requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate
- important dates such as term/study period/semester, breaks and public holiday dates
- complaints and appeals processes
- critical Incidents and how they are handled
- reinforcing the RTO expectations on behaviour and academic progress

Orientation Session

During the orientation it is ideal that commencing students meet with their course trainers and student support staff.

They will also receive course information which informs students of the essential requirements of their course being studied and covers delivery and assessment methods of the course.

Orientation Topics

Information to be presented at orientation to commencing students includes, but is not limited to:

Non-Academic

- Emergency evacuation from building and muster points
- Emergency protocols, services and contacts
- How to report harm (abuse, neglect or other)
- What's nearby i.e. shops, food, ATMs, services, parking and medical
- Essential services and contacts
- Transport and travel
- Legal Services
- Keeping student address and contact details up-to date
- Reporting requirements

Academic

- Credit transfer and RPL
- Competency based assessment
- Qualifications and Statements of Attainment
- Completion of the course within the expected amount of time
- Student Support Services and Staff, as well as how to access these
- Campus and facilities
- Courses, class calendar study periods and important dates
- Fees and refunds
- Student Management System and record keeping
- Course progress / attendance requirements
- Procedures and methods for assessment of competencies
- Process for submitting or re-submitting assessments
- Work placement requirements
- Student code of conduct
- Misconduct and discipline
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Complaints and Appeals
- Communication (e.g. internet and mobile phones)

Orientation Forms

Students will receive

- Student handbook containing all information listed above
- Relevant RTO and course information publications
- Forms to be completed
- Student Orientation Checklist and acknowledgement to be completed

Course/ Unit of Competency Orientations

At the commencement of each course, the orientation is provided for the group or commencing student, covering learning outcomes, delivery and assessment methods of the course / unit(s).

Student Handbook

All students are provided with a copy of the *Student Handbook*, which is already available on website as well. It contains information on:

- Services, facilities and resources available to students
- Policies and Procedures
- Other relevant information in assisting students in learning

Identifying learner needs

- The specific support is identified during the Pre-Enrolment Review and LLND test. Student general support is available to all student and it is part of policy at MT to mention the same during the Pre-Enrolment Review of the student. During the Pre-Enrolment Review process, the assessors are instructed to acknowledge the student about the availability of support services, and tick it as support identified during the process.
- MT assesses whether the course applied for is suitable for addressing a student's learning needs in accordance with the *Enrolment Policy and Procedure*. The Institute also identifies students learning needs through assessing their Literacy, Language, Numeracy and Digital Literacy (LLND) Test and Pre training Review.
- Students are consulted if any information on their LLND Test or Pre-Enrolment Review requires clarification or further investigation prior to commencement of their training.
- An Assessor guides are available to assist the MT staff member when supervising LLND Test or undertaking Pre-Enrolment Review of the student.
- A decision is made whether the course is suitable for addressing a student's learning needs and the outcome, communicated to each student.
- If the student has special learning needs, the Institute will implement reasonable actions to support these needs and enrol the student (given that entry requirements are satisfied) where appropriate and feasible. Please refer to *Access and Equity Policy and Procedure* of MT.
- A support plan will be negotiated with the student with needs and the level and type of support documented.

Support for Students with Disabilities

- MT will endeavour to support students with their disabilities in a fair and respectful manner.
- Students should advise MT in advance and provide documentation of any disabilities that may affect the student's academic progress prior to commencement of the course.
- MT will provide students with a disability access to appropriate facilities and specialised equipment to aide their learning, as appropriate.
- Where staff are aware of a disability affecting a student, reasonable adjustments can be made to teaching arrangements, assessment and/or materials and access to assist these students with their learning.

Academic, Language and Learning Support

Academic support is the responsibility of the trainers / teachers during the course. Students are advised to approach their trainers or the Student Support Officers if they need assistance in meeting course requirements.

The Trainers / Student Support Officer can assist students with the following:

- Study Skills
- Timetables
- Learning Support Strategies
- Academic issues

Monitoring course progress

- MT supports the students to maintain satisfactory course progress in accordance with the *Course Progress Policy and Procedure*.
- MT provides the students with information relating to course progress at pre-enrolment, orientation and throughout their course. The support services and outcome of not achieving satisfactory course progress is communicated to all students.
- The emphasis of the *Course Progress Policy and Procedure* is on clear communication to the students before and after enrolment, of the importance of maintaining satisfactory course progress and early identification and intervention where issues arise.
- The support services identified in course progress and student lifecycle are to assist the student in successfully completing their course within the expected duration.

Academic support

- MT provides all students access to a range of academic support services to support them to successfully complete their course within the expected duration.
- Students can access academic support at any time by contacting their trainer or Student Support Officer or through email.
- MT will attempt to assist the student where feasible by:
 - Providing access to training and assessments staff
 - Reviewing learner materials with the student
 - Re-phrasing explanations
 - Providing information in a context that the student understands
 - Providing extra time to complete tasks
 - Providing access to supplementary reference materials
 - Providing supplementary exercises to develop understanding
 - Providing access to resources like calculators and dictionaries
 - Providing information in larger text
 - Arranging access to computers with relevant software
 - Arranging access to modified resources
 - Adjusting the student timetable and/ or course schedule
 - Providing opportunities to re-attempt assessments
 - Providing opportunities to undertake additional units to catch up
 - Minimum attendance requirements are established
 - Providing English language support
 - Referral to external support services

Please refer to *Access and Equity Policy and Procedure* and *Course Progress Policy and Procedure* for further details.

- If the student has language, learning/ academic issues that Institute staff cannot address then the student may be referred to external organisations for assistance.
- Institute staff liaise with the student and the organisation (if permitted by the student) to review the students learning needs and make arrangements to adjust the learning and assessment processes and materials where feasible and appropriate.
- Appropriate Institute staff contributes to supporting the student.
- Intervention strategies may be implemented in accordance with the *Course progress Policy and Procedure* to assist the student in successfully completing their course within the expected duration.

Financial advice

- Students should initially contact the Student Support Officer for any financial matters.

- Where students have financial concerns during the course of their studies, they will be referred to the RTO Manager for their financial options.
- Students can use online resources and help them budget and save money:
 - GENERAL BUDGETING
 - [Budget Your Money](#) is a government website calculator that helps check:
 - where the money is going
 - if spending more than one can afford
 - that the money is going towards the priorities
 - It allows to enter weekly, fortnightly, monthly and annual expenses without the need to convert.

Legal advice

- Students should initially contact the Student Support Officer for any support on legal matters.
- The Student Support Officer will refer students to further sources of legal aid if required.
- A Student Support Officer can also refer the student to the following services:
 - [Law Institute of Victoria](#)
 - [Moonee Valley legal service](#)
 - [Brimbank Community Legal Service](#)
 - [Victoria Legal Aid](#)
 - [WEstjustice](#)
 - [Youth law](#)
 - [Northern Community Legal Centre](#)

Medical Issues

- The Student Support Officer will always have an up-to-date list of medical professionals within the local radius of the delivery location.
- Any student with medical concerns may inform the Student Support Officer who will assist them in finding an appropriate medical professional.
- In emergency situations the Student Support Officer will call for an ambulance to attend to the student.
- Refer to student Handbook.

Student Safety

- MT will implement strategies to raise student awareness to personal safety risks and issues and what to do in the event of a personal crises.
- Information will be provided to students on the types of behaviour's which are considered unacceptable and what to do if they experience such events.
- MT has policies and procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of students including to monitor and address any reported or identified hazards, manage critical incidents and emergency situations.

Student Welfare Services

MT has designated Student Support Officers to provide a basic counselling service to all students. This service provides assistance to students experiencing difficulties in any aspect of their lives, including issues of academic or personal nature. If specialised requirement arise, students will be referred to services like Life Resolutions.

The Student Support Officers are available to students to help them access study support and welfare-related services such as;

- Legal Services – MT can refer a student who requires to a legal practitioner, the referral is at no cost to the student. Student would be responsible for any cost related to the legal advice provided.

- Emergency and Health Services – During orientation students are advised on campus safety and how to access emergency and health services. For non-urgent services students are encouraged to talk with student services. For medical or other emergencies students are instructed to contact the appropriate services, e.g. 000 and inform MT as soon as appropriate.
- Facilities and Resources – At orientation students are given a guided tour of the campus and all MT facilities so that they will become aware of all the resources available to them.
- Complaints and appeals processes – The *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* is detailed on the website and made available from administration at any time. The policy is specifically explained in the *Student Handbook* and during orientation.

MT can also refer students to external counselling service for various issues if necessary however each issue is dealt with on a case-to-case basis. There is no fee attached to this welfare support and referral service. Any cost charged by the external services will be paid by students.

As stated earlier, MT also has a documented *Critical Incident Policy and Procedure* that cover the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, the required follow-up to the incident, the recording of the incident and the action taken.

- Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:
 - missing students;
 - severe verbal or psychological aggression;
 - death, serious injury or any threat of these;
 - natural disaster; and
 - issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse

For further information, please refer to *Critical Incident Policy and Procedure*.

OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES

- All students will have access to our student support services through our Student Support Officer who will have access to available student welfare services available locally.
- Where the nature of the concern is beyond the Student Support Officer's experience and abilities, the student will be referred to an appropriate person for professional assistance.
- The Student Support Officers will respond to all questions pertaining to the student's progress, course requirements, satisfactory progress and/or attendance, and refer the student to other staff members as appropriate.
- The Student Support Officers will assist the students with general welfare issues, through providing appropriate advice and direction. The Student Support Officers are authorised to refer the student to professional welfare assistance (Social Workers, Legal Aid, etc.) as they see fit.
- Student Support Officers will detail the student support services provided to each student, and will make ensure that details of services provided are placed on the students file.
- Academic counselling is provided by the delegated official who is responsible for monitoring all aspects of student academic progress. Discussion notes, outcomes and follow up actions are recorded in student files according to *Records Management Policy and Procedure*.
- Trainers / assessors will report any concerns they have, to the Training Coordinator, about changes in a student's behaviour, attitude, health or general demeanour for immediate follow up.
- In circumstances requiring personal counselling and where there is no qualified counsellor employed as a staff, the Student Support Officers will be responsible for making a referral to a suitable outside agency for the student at no charge to the student. Student Support Officers will ensure that the student is well supported during the process, liaise with the outside agency if appropriate and follow up with the student as often as necessary.

A recommended agency are listed below.

Lifeworks Relationship Counselling & Education Services

Contact: <https://go.lifeworks.com/contact-us>

- The Compliance Officer will ensure that the Student Support Services are reviewed regularly in meetings, and corrective actions are applied as appropriate.