EQUAL TREATMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Intent and objectives

The Change Academy is committed to ensuring the highest quality support for our students. This includes ensuring that our students are well prepared to be able to undertake study with The Change Academy. The Change Academy applies access and equity principles through all its policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of all students, to foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to assist students to identify and achieve their goals. The intent of this document is to provide The Change Academy staff with information to be able to guide and manage a student’s experience. This document is intended to communicate The Change Academy’s commitment to the fair treatment and equal benefit of all students.

Related Policy and Procedures and Associated Documents

- Equal Employment Opportunity Legislation
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Guardianship and Administration Act 2000
- Higher Education Support Act 2003

Related Functions

- Compliance with all relevant Legislation
- Student Placement Policy and Procedure
- Privacy Policy

Definitions

**Principle of Assessment**

- **Fairness:** The individual learner's needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to take into account the individual learner’s needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.
- **Flexibility:** Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:
  - reflecting the learner’s needs;
o assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and
o drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.

- **Validity**: Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires:
  o assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance;
  o assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;
  o assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and
  o judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.

- **Reliability** - Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.

**Rules of Evidence**

- **Validity**: The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
- **Sufficiency**: The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner’s competency.
- **Authenticity**: The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner’s own work.
- **Currency**: The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

*Source: ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations (STROs) 2015.*

**Scope**

The policy and procedure applies to all staff, contractors, and other personnel employed with The Change Academy. The Change Academy staff will ensure that they:

- Go through the pre-enrolment checklist with all students to ensure they understand all requirements of the course.
- Enrol the right student into the right course at the right time.
- Guide and manage a student’s learning experience to ensure that it is free from vilification, bullying, harassment or harm.
- Take action, record and report any suspected instances to enable both the business and the student to move forward.
Exclusions
Not applicable

Procedures

The Change Academy will provide a learning environment that promotes and encourages the values of the company, determination, passion, trust, growth and excellence. The Change Academy will work with our students to realise this potential, and assist student’s to achieve their learning goals.

All students will be treated fairly and equally for the duration of a learning experience. Students and staff will behave in a responsible manner towards others, treating each other with fairness and integrity at all times. All interactions will be free from discrimination, bias or prejudice.

The Change Academy shall uphold the principles of equity and equality regardless of an individual’s gender, sex, pregnancy, race, marital status, sexuality, age, family/career responsibilities, cultural heritage, linguistic background, disability, transgender, political conviction or religious belief.

1. Access and Equity

The Change Academy applies access and equity principles through all its policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of all students in its courses, to foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to assist students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes.

2. Fair Treatment

As a VET Provider The Change Academy will treat fairly:

a) all students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (“the Act”); and

b) all persons seeking to enrol with The Change Academy in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under sub clause 45 (1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.

3. Equal Benefits and Opportunities

As a VET Provider The Change Academy will have open, fair and transparent procedures that are based on merit for making decisions about:

a) the selection, from among persons who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under sub clause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who seek to enrol with The Change Academy in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under sub clause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act; and
b) the treatment of students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act undertaking a VET course of study.

The above undertakings do not prevent The Change Academy taking into account, in making decisions about the selection and treatment of students, educational disadvantages that a particular student has experienced or the fact that the student may be enrolled via a VET restricted access arrangement.

4. Pre-Enrolment and Enrolment

The Change Academy will ensure that prior to enrolment prospective students receive full disclosure regarding the course, training, assessment, service and Commonwealth assistance provided by The Change Academy to enable students to make an informed decision about the suitability of the course and The Change Academy for their individual needs. The Change Academy will provide clear and accurate information to each student, prior to enrolment, which includes:

- Student selection, enrolment and orientation procedures
- Course information, including educational and vocational outcomes
- Fees and charges
- VET FEE-HELP assistance (where applicable)
- Policy and Procedure information relating to Cancellation, Complaints, Refunds/Re-crediting of VET FEE-HELP and other processes
- Provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance
- Student support services
- Welfare and guidance services
- Flexible learning and assessment procedures
- Grievance and appeals procedures
- Disciplinary procedures
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer arrangements

Student enrolments will be subject the following conditions:

- No student will be enrolled under the age of 17 years of age, without express permission from the Chief Academic Officer, or as approved by specific funding and/or project arrangement. See Appendix A.
- Student must provide all information relevant to their enrolment, to ensure that The Change Academy is able to make an informed decision about their enrolment. This will include arrangements such as Power of Attorney or Impaired Capacity arrangements (where relevant).
- If The Change Academy is unable to provide a student with entry into a program or course, we will support the student to engage with a suitable provider or support contact.
- Students under the legal age will be subject to the conditions outlined in Appendix A.
5. Entry Requirements

The following general Entry Requirements apply to all courses offered by The Change Academy:

- A minimum age requirement of 17 years*. Students under the age of 18 will:
  o be required to complete a consent form
  o require the co-signature of a parent/guardian on the 1296A Form if applying for VET FEE-HELP assistance.
- LLN skills. Any student applying for VET FEE-HELP assistance will be required to demonstrate adequate competence at or above Exit Level 3 in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) in both reading and numeracy, by either:
  o Providing a copy of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or;
  o Completing an assessment of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) using an approved testing tool.
- IT skills
- An ability to undertake learning at Diploma level

Due to the nature of some courses additional requirements may include:

- Sufficient and relevant experience and knowledge in the sector/industry.
- A Suitability for Working with Children Check and/or a National Criminal Record Check.

* Our Youth Work, Youth Justice and Counselling Diploma courses have a minimum age requirement of 20 years. Our Community Services Diploma has a minimum age requirement of 18 years.

6. Student Selection

Students will be selected on merit based on published criteria. The Change Academy will ensure that throughout the process of selection and admission, applicants will be treated fairly, courteously and expeditiously.

Forming part of the application and enrolment process is the completion of an Information Session (IS) which assesses a student’s literacy and numeracy. Students are formally enrolled based on sufficient literacy levels required to complete their chosen study path. Students are also required to complete a Pre-Enrolment Profile, a Student Enrolment Agreement (as outlined in the Student Entry Procedure) and an Individual Learning Plan. Details regarding our enrolment process can be found in The 7 step entry procedure at The Change Academy located on The Change Academy website (www.changeacademy.edu.au/the-7-step-entry-procedure-at-the-change-academy).

Entry requirements and student selection is contingent on funding arrangements, VET FEE-HELP eligibility, training package and course requirements. Specific entry and course requirements are published in The Change Academy’s marketing material and on The Change Academy website. Where an application cannot be processed, contact will be made with the student to discuss options to progress their application.
Selection may include successful completion of a language, literacy or numeracy question to ensure the correct level of support is offered and provided.

7. Application

Individuals who seek to enrol in a course with The Change Academy must complete and submit the Application Form which is available upon enquiry. Applications must be submitted as indicated on the Application Form.

The application should include evidence that the applicant meets the published entry requirements for their chosen course.

8. Assessment against Published Entry Criteria

The Campus Manager assesses the application against the published entry requirements. Where the application is not complete or if further information is required to make an assessment of whether the applicant has met the published entry requirements for their chosen course, the applicant will be contacted and given the opportunity to provide further information.

Forming part of the application and enrolment process is the completion of an Info session (IS) which assesses a student's literacy and numeracy. Students are formally enrolled based on sufficient literacy levels required to complete their chosen study path.

Applicants who do not meet the published entry requirements will be notified by the Campus Manager who will explain the reasons why they have not been offered a place in the course. Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal the decision and will be provided with information regarding how to access the appeals process.

9. Offer and Acceptance

Applicants who meet the published entry requirements will be advised and have a date scheduled to complete their induction and orientation sessions to start their study. Students are also formally advised of their census dates.

10. Commonwealth Assistance

The opportunities and benefits of Commonwealth assistance will be made equally available to all eligible students upon enrolment.

11. Training Delivery

All training delivery will be conducted in the best interest of all parties and shall reflect the values of the organisation with respect to diversity and inclusiveness. This consideration will include, resources and content for delivery. All staff will be active role models for The Change Academy values.
12. Assessment

All assessment activities will meet the principles of assessment and rules of evidence. Assessment practices must be based on procedural fairness and take into account the needs of the individual, in light of the assessment methodologies utilised at The Change Academy. Students must be provided with opportunity to challenge the result of an assessment and be reassessed where appropriate. Assessment practices must be flexible, assess competence holistically and draw on a range of methods, that are consistent with the requirements, context and needs of the individual.

13. Student, Work and Vocational Placements

All placements must adhere to the company values and be monitored to ensure that ongoing support and guidance is provided to the student.

Where a student is placed in an organisation that does not uphold these values, The Change Academy staff are responsible for discussing this with the student and where necessary connecting the student with a more appropriate source of placement.

*Details can be found in the Student Placement Policy and Procedure.*

14. Record Keeping

All records must be free from bias, innuendo and assumption. Records are to provide a true and accurate record of the business and its undertakings. All records are subject to audit.

The above commitments do not prevent The Change Academy taking into account and making decisions about the selection and treatment of students, educational disadvantage that a particular student has experienced or the fact that the student may be enrolled via a VET restricted access arrangement1.

15. Changes in Circumstances

Where a student experiences circumstances that impact a change in their capacity to continue their studies, the students must advise the relevant The Change Academy personnel as soon as practicable. This would include situations where they experience impaired capacity of enduring power of attorney arrangements. Upon receipt of this information The Change Academy will reassess an individual’s capacity to complete the course using the review process and will contact the student or other relevant people to discuss the changes.

16. Cancellations, Complaints and Refunds

Specific policies and procedures have been generated to ensure our students receive fair treatment throughout the duration and conclusion of their studies. Processes regarding the cancellation/withdrawal from a course, the refunding of course fees, the re-crediting of a VET

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1 Restricted Access Arrangements - A restricted access arrangement is an agreement entered into between a provider and an employer or industry body for the provision of a course or places in a course in which enrolment is limited or restricted to employees of the employer or industry body

FEE-HELP debt or the addressing of any complaints and/or concerns can be found in the following:

- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- Fee for Service Refund Policy and Procedure
- VET FEE-HELP Re-Crediting and Review Policy and Procedure
- Withdrawal Policy and Procedures

These documents and additional policies and procedures can all be found on the Policies and Procedures page on The Change Academy website (www.changeacademy.edu.au/policies-and-procedures).

17. Publication

The Equal Treatment Policy and Procedure will be made available to students and persons seeking to enroll with The Change Academy through publication published on The Change Academy website (www.changeacademy.edu.au/policies-and-procedures).
Appendix A

Underage Student Enrolment

Students under the age of 18 must have parental or legal guardianship consent to enrol in any course with The Change Academy.

The guardianship arrangement is a formal legal arrangement and merely being of age and in close proximity to the minor is not sufficient to be considered guardian. Guardianship remains solely with the parent/parents of the minor. In order to be granted guardianship a legal application is required to be lodged and an order granting guardianship would be obtained. In this instance, despite the minor not living at home with the parent and the relationship being estranged, legal guardianship continues to reside with the parents.

Who can be classed as a guardian?

Guardians are charged with protecting the well-being of the minor. In entering into a relationship with the minor - the result of which a child has been born, a partner / friend has not demonstrated that the interests of the minor are paramount. Whilst there is no legislation that precludes a partner / friend being a guardian, all the principles of guardianship indicate that the guardian relationship to the child should more appropriately be in the category of “parental”.

In considerations of our role as an RTO and a Service Provider, all services procured fall under the Commission for Children and Young people and Child Guardian Act 2000 (CCYPCG Act 2000), which states that services provided by a service provider to a minor must be in that minor’s interest and necessary to meet the child’s needs. Committing the minor to a VET FEE-HELP debt with study commitments exceeding 12 months is not within the minor’s interest and not necessary to meet the minor’s needs.

Links and Further Information

Guardianship
A useful guide on guardianship and associated responsibilities can be found at:

Teaching and Assessment
www.adcet.edu.au/inclusive-teaching/teaching-assessment