

Support Services Guide

Scope

This guide applies to all nationally recognised qualifications on Meerilinga Scope of delivery and assessment.

In accordance with the Standards for RTOs 2015, at a minimum, support includes identifying particular requirements (such as literacy, numeracy, English language or physical capabilities) students would need to complete each course and developing strategies to make support available where gaps are identified.

MTC acknowledges every learner is unique and strives to maximise opportunities for access, participation and outcomes for all students. MTC ensures the provision of access and equity services to students as an integral part of all services and will undertake to identify and, where possible, remove barriers that prevent students from accessing and participating in our services.

The following support will be available to students:

Cultural Support

Meerilinga Cultural Engagement and Liaison Officer will work with individuals from different cultural heritages and identities and evaluate the cultural needs of such individuals and provide necessary support, resources, introductions and reconciliation.

Language, Literacy & Numeracy (LLN) support

Based on the results of the applicants enrolment, and if deemed applicable through online LLN assessment, a meeting can be arranged to discuss the LLN assistance that MTC may be able to provide for a student, with a view to creating an action plan that best addresses a student's LLN needs. Please note: Students who are training to become Educators require a sufficient level of Literacy (including digital literacy) to be able to perform tasks such as researching online and reading standards and regulations, writing observations and completing workplace forms and to be able to perform the assessment tasks.

MTC will make every reasonable effort to ensure that it can accommodate a student's needs. However, sometimes those needs are beyond the assistance that can reasonably be provided by MTC (for the purposes of LLN assistance, "reasonable allowance" is defined as the provider being able to accommodate the students' needs without significantly disadvantaging other students involvement in the course, or without causing the training provider significant financial disadvantage).

Individuals who require additional help with their literacy and numeracy can access information about their nearest LLN provider by calling The Reading Writing Hotline on 1300 655 506 or refer to their website at www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au. Any costs incurred for these services will be the responsibility of the student.

The types of assistance MTC will be able to offer:

Any LLN difficulty

To help establish competency, trainers may interview the student and/or allow students to demonstrate their skills or knowledge through reasonable adjustment.

Speaking difficulties

Students may access an interpreter to explain and interpret more complex issues at their own cost unless publicised by MTC. MTC has staff with diverse language and may seek assistance from a Western Australian Resource Centre.

Listening difficulties

Provision of seating close to trainer
Family/friend to 'sign' course content
Ensure course materials are in 'clear' easy English
Additional training and tutorials

Reading difficulties

Provision of seating closer to the trainer
The trainer may read the content on a one-to-one basis
Ensure course materials are in 'clear' easy English.
Students may access interpreter to explain and interpret more complex issues at their own cost unless publicised by MTC.
Increase use of graphics
Additional training and tutorials
Every effort, within reason, will be made by MTC personnel to ensure a successful outcome for its students.
Additional training and/or tutorial may be negotiated. Note: some options may incur additional costs.
Reading and Writing Hotline 1300 655 506

Reasonable adjustment

Where students are unable, due to extenuating circumstances, physical or mental disabilities, ill health or family emergency, to undergo assessment as outlined in the schedule, alternative forms and times of assessment may be negotiated with a trainer prior to the assessment date. In the event that illness is the reason why an assessment cannot be completed, a doctor's certificate must be supplied. Reasonable adjustment must be mapped to the elements and performance assessment criteria in the training package and approved by the CEO.

At risk

The following processes will be applied for students considered to be "at risk". MTC is at all times concerned with the welfare of our students. Personnel, will as appropriate, refer them to appropriate support services. Personnel are required to respond to and attempt to alleviate any signs of distress or discomfort by students, and to actively render appropriate first aid assistance.

Meerilinga's Commitment to Child Safe Organisation

Meerilinga enables a strong commitment to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments. All children and young people who come to our organisation have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services and this will always be our first priority. Trainers and Assessors will hold and maintain a current Working with Children Check at all times.

Documented Policies:

- Show members, volunteers, parents, guardians, carers and children that our organisation is committed to the safety of children
- Set out appropriate standards of behaviour and practices for people working and volunteering with children
- Increase members and volunteer awareness of risks to children and the strategies in place to minimise them
- Build members and volunteer knowledge of how to identify suspected child abuse or neglect and respond appropriately
- Set out compliance to have assessed and maintained checks and licences as required by law at all times
- Enable children and young people the right to complain, appeal and have matter dealt with in accordance to policy and procedure in a way that is lawful and developmentally appropriate. This may include the child's nominated representative, parent or guardian

Documented policies and procedures set out the steps our organisation takes to promote the safety and wellbeing of children to include;

- Consultation with children, families, members and volunteers
- A risk management plan
- Procedure for conducting Working With Children and National Police Clearance
- A code of conduct document
- A code of ethics document
- Procedures for dealing with personal and sensitive information
- Members and volunteer recruitment processes
- Members and volunteer supervision and professional development
- Procedure for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect
- Procedure for dealing with breaches of policy
- Procedure compliance for reporting to third parties
- Procedure reporting to supervisors, CEO/Board of Governors

Counselling/Personal support

- Lifeline - 131114 or www.lifeline.org.au
- Relationships Australia - 1300364 277 <http://www.relationships.org.au>
- MensLine Australia - (For men of any age) 1300 78 99 78 <https://www.mensline.org.au/>
- Kids Helpline (For young people aged 5-25) 1800 551 800 <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>
- Derbarl Yerrigan Health Services Counselling (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) 9421 3888 <https://www.dyhs.org.au/>
- 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732 <https://1800RESPECT.org.au>
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Mental Health Websites

- www.mindhealthconnect.org.au - Launched as part of the Australian Government's National E-Mental Health Strategy, this site is a trusted gateway to issues surrounding mental health care and a first step to finding relevant support and resources to meet mental health needs.
- www.beyondblue.org.au - Beyondblue's work is aimed at achieving an Australian community that understands depression and anxiety, empowering all Australians, at any life-stage, to seek help.
- www.mentalhealthonline.org.au – Mental Health online provides information and materials for common mental health problems and related issues, such as Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Depression
- <https://headspace.org.au> - Headspace provides mental and health wellbeing support, information and services to young people aged 12 to 25 years and their families.
- <https://headtohealth.gov.au> - Head to Health can help you find digital mental health services from some of Australia's most trusted mental health organisations. Provided by the Australian Department of Health, Head to Health brings together apps, online programs, online forums, and phone services, as well as a range of digital information resources
- <http://www.sane.org/index.php> - SANE Australia is a national charity helping all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life – through campaigning, education and research. SANE conducts innovative programs and campaigns to improve the lives of people living with mental illness, their family and friends. It also operates a busy Helpline and website, which have thousands of contacts each year from around Australia. 1800 187 263
- <https://www.womenshealth.gov/mental-health> 1800 994 9662 - Office on Women's Health - Good mental health means you're able to cope with daily stresses and accomplish personal goals.¹ Many things, such as trauma, stress, and sleep problems, can affect your mental health. You may not be able to prevent a mental health condition, but you can take steps to protect and support your mental health throughout your life.
- <https://www.mumspace.com.au/about-mumspace/> MumSpace is Australia's new one-stop website supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pregnant women, new mums and their families. MumSpace is designed to connect you quickly with the level of support you need, from advice and support in the transition to parenthood, to effective online treatment programs for perinatal depression and anxiety. The resources on MumSpace will help you 'step-up' to whichever level of support suits you best. MumSpace is also a resource for your healthcare professional.
- <https://www.panda.org.au/> - PANDA National Urgent Helpline 1300 706 306 PANDA continues to operate and remains committed to supporting the mental health of expecting and new parents, including those worried about the coronavirus, via our National Helpline and through our expert and accessible information and resources.

Learning needs identified

Students will have opportunity to identify needs through enrolment and induction process, including self-assessment and offered RPL. This is especially relevant for those currently working in the industry and/or hold a UoC equivalent issued by another RTO. This will enable training to be focussed on gaps and needs. Subsequently individual learning needs will be identified through observation of participation in learning and assessment activities and third party reports.

Individual Mentoring Support Plans

Individual plans may form part of the training plan when supporting students with learning difficulties. The extent of the students' difficulties will determine which of the processes are used.

It is advisable when developing the plan to follow a specific planning and implementation sequence.

Table 1 Stages in an Individual Mentor Support Plan

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Identifying the student's needs	Determining adjustments that need to be made to the learning and assessment	Completing and implementing an Individual Plan	Monitoring and evaluation

Stage 1: Identifying the students' needs

Trainers bring expertise in designing and delivering a learning program. Trainers are also able to identify and meaningfully liaise with others (e.g. employers, parent/guardian/carer, consultants) when profiling a student's strengths, skills, learning preferences and abilities, and identifying the most appropriate learning style.

Professional learning activities

Think about your students. What knowledge of their strengths, skills, learning preferences and abilities do you have? What other education approaches do you already know that you could bring to an analysis of how to meet a student's learning needs? Major differences in learning styles include learning by experimenting, reflecting, doing or feeling, and learning individually or within a group.

- Use reflective learning techniques
- Practical classroom or workplace based activity

Stage 2: Determining adjustments that need to be made

A plan can be used to set long and short-term educational goals. Consider these principles:

- Goals should allow the students to participate fully
- Goals should be based on unit content and experiences similar to those in the workplace
- Goals should be fully inclusive where possible
- All parties should agree upon the goals
- The goals should also be a priority for the student

- Goals should build upon the strengths and skills of the student
- Long and short-term goals need to be differentiated
- Goals must be achievable and able to be monitored and evaluated

Stage 3: Completing and implementing an Individual Support Plan

A plan typically defines what support needs are required so the student can be taught, priorities for the content to be taught, and appropriate andragogy. Training strategies can be used to support students with difficulties. They need to identify when, where, by whom, and with whom the training is to be delivered.

Table 2 Organisational strategies

Key questions	Considerations
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the student learns best • Time required for teaching and learning
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most appropriate environment (e.g. class, workplace)
By whom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team-teaching drawing on teaching strengths • Sharing of human and physical resources between RTO and employer or specialists
With whom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to allow for a variety of learning • Individual learning, small group learning, peer tutoring and cooperative learning arrangements

Stage 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessment and the development of revised strategies for teaching and learning is a core area of expertise of trainers.

Monitoring and evaluation for students with difficulties enables progress to be measured, the effectiveness of the program to be assessed and new goals to be developed.

Where a student's progress does not seem to be occurring within the time frame allowed for, or planned, trainers and assessors must seek support from the Lead Trainer and Assessor and Student Services and Delegated Support Staff to adopt problem-solving strategies to reassess goals, targets, activities and methods or even completion of the training.

Strategies and Evidence to Support Services

Support Services	What is expected from the Training Organisation	Expected Evidence
Staffing & Personal Support		*
Service Provider employs designated Aboriginal Support Staff	For cultural reasons where men and woman cannot study together, the requirements of having one male and one female staff in	Staff resumes Staffing records

	<p>the classroom. Literacy or language support. Only available to ATSI target group.</p>	<p>Attendance sheets signed by lecturer and support staff</p> <p>Signed mentoring plans for participating students</p>
<p>Service Provider employs designated Disability Support Staff</p>	<p>Support person as note taker, mentor. Only available to Disability target group.</p>	<p>Service and employment records for mentor</p> <p><i>Please note that the support staff role:</i></p>
<p>Provision of two lecturers at all times</p>	<p>It is identified that to maximise student's outcome it has been determined that two lecturers are required at all times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cannot also be the trainer</i> • <i>Does not include a CAVSS teacher</i>
<p>Provision of designated staff member, who works with students to produce a mentoring plan for each student.</p>	<p>At registration, student is made aware of and chooses to use a designated service provider mentor throughout their training program.</p>	
<p>Provision of psychological services or counselling</p>	<p>This is provided to the client by a referring external organisation or can be provided from a qualified independent person within a training organisation.</p>	<p>Statement from the external agency or internal officer of the number of students from each class that have used the service.</p>