

Transition information for students with a disability or chronic medical condition

Attention

- Students
- Careers advisors
- Disability specialist staff
- School counsellors
- Year level coordinators
- MIPS coordinators

There is a wide range of students whose disabilities or chronic medical conditions may impact on their studies and learning.

- They may be in mainstream classes, support classes or at a specialist school.
- They may or may not be funded to receive disability support services while they are at school.
- They may or may not receive special exam provisions at school.
- They may be diagnosed with one or more of a diverse range of disabilities and/or medical conditions, such as:
 - chronic medical conditions (for example asthma, diabetes, cancer, Crohn's disease, arthritis)
 - mental health conditions (for example depression, anxiety disorders)
 - learning disabilities (for example dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia)
 - sensory disabilities (for example hearing, vision)
 - neurological conditions (for example multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, Asperger's syndrome, acquired brain injury, autism)
 - physical disabilities (for example spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy)
 - intellectual disabilities (for example Down syndrome, Fragile X syndrome, Fetal alcohol syndrome).

One in five Australians has a disability or chronic medical condition. A further 10% to 12% of students have learning difficulties.

- How many students is that in your class or school?
- With the right information and guidance, students can successfully transition to their chosen post-school pathway.

Encourage:

- work experience, volunteer work and any exposure to Universities or TAFE to build confidence and skills
- the development of independence and self-advocacy skills
- students to talk about their disability or medical condition, especially how it impacts on their study or work and the 'adjustments' that they find work best for them
- the exploration of assistive technologies that may remove barriers in the learning environment, for example screen reading or speech-to-text software. Check out some of the free assistive software at www.eduapps.org
- students and their families to keep copies of assessments and documentation of disability or medical conditions (these are required for TAFE and University, and are used as part of the process of determining the appropriate adjustments to make for students).

Pathways and resources

TRANSITION SUPPORT

The National Disability Coordination Officer Program (NDCO) provides transition information, coordination and referral services for schools, tertiary education providers, and individuals. To contact the NDCO for your region, go to www.ndcovictoria.net.au

FUTURES FOR YOUNG ADULTS (FFYA)

Futures For Young Adults provides post-school transition support for students who are eligible for funding under the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Program for students with disabilities or its equivalent, in the Catholic or independent sector. For more information on FFYA, go to www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability/community-life-and-jobs/transitioning-to-employment

DISCLOSURE

To receive disability support at TAFE or Uni students need to disclose their disability. For more information about disclosure go to: <http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/disclosure/>

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Each TAFE and University in Victoria employs a disability liaison officer (DLO). DLOs can facilitate a range of supports and adjustments to ensure that students are able to fully participate in their studies and campus life. A list of DLOs for each Victorian Institute of TAFE and University can be found at <http://ndco.wodongatafe.edu.au/education.aspx>

TAFE and University open days are also good opportunities for students to explore courses and discuss needs and options with disability liaison officers. Dates for open days can be found at www.vtac.edu.au/opendays.html

STUDENT RIGHTS

Check whether or not the University or TAFE has a Disability Action Plan. Disability Action Plans are an indicator that the organisation complies with disability legislation and disability standards in education, and that it aims to provide quality education opportunities for students. For more information on rights, go to www.ddaedustandards.info

CAREER RESOURCES

The following websites provide career and transition information designed to assist young people successfully move from school to further study, work, or other programs.

My future
www.myfuture.edu.au

Career tips
www.careertips.net.au

Broaden your horizons
www.imvc.com.au/content/broaden-your-horizons

VTAC AND SEAS

School leavers with a disability who are applying for University or higher-level study in TAFE can apply through VTAC for the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS). Students are eligible to apply if:

- the disability is long term and has impacted on the students' education
- during Years 11 and 12, students experienced adverse circumstances related to disability, medical conditions, injury or mental health that impacted on their education.

For more information, go to www.vtac.edu.au/who/seas.html

EMPLOYMENT, TRAINEESHIPS AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Jobaccess is a comprehensive program for school leavers with a disability who are looking for work. Information and support include:

- help looking for a job
- help preparing for work
- assistance starting work
- assistance with Centrelink
- financial help and wage assistance
- help outside work, for example, independent living
- information about traineeships and apprenticeships
- workplace modifications
- disabled Australian apprentice wage support (financial support for tutoring,
- mentoring, and interpreter assistance)
- employment services.

For more information, go to: **Information for job seekers**
www.jobaccess.gov.au

Australian Apprenticeships Centre
www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Beyond expectations is a series of stories about people with various disabilities in a range of jobs. To view these stories, go to www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/communityed/disabilityaccess/beyondexpectations/index.html