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Equity and Fair Treatment
VET FEE-HELP

Purpose
To ensure that student application and selection processes at TAFE Queensland East Coast are fair, equitable and transparent and that all students and persons seeking to enrol at TAFE Queensland East Coast can be advised and treated in a fair and equitable manner.
TAFE Queensland East Coast supports the concept of equal opportunity and is committed to providing staff, students and potential students with a working and learning environment which values diversity, respects differences and provides an environment that is fair, safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Scope
This policy applies to both students and persons seeking to enrol at TAFE Queensland East Coast that are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Act.

Policy
Equity and Diversity Policy
This policy represents TAFE Queensland East Coast’s commitment to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to successfully gain skills, knowledge and experience through vocational education and training.

This policy has been developed to address the particular requirements of:
- potential students;
- students currently enrolled at TAFE Queensland East Coast; and
- TAFE Queensland East Coast staff.

TAFE Queensland East Coast is responsible for fulfilling its commitment to access and equity by ensuring continued participation of target groups in VET programs. These target groups include:
- women;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- people with a disability;
- rural and regionally isolated communities; and
- people in transition and other special groups (i.e. people re-entering the workforce, sole parents, people with literacy issues, the long-term unemployed, and those who have been institutionalised).

Equity
Essentially, equity means fairness. At TAFE Queensland East Coast it means that people are provided with an opportunity to access, participate in and successfully achieve outcomes. TAFE Queensland East Coast also has an understanding that:
- it is common for people to identify with more than one equity group;
- there are differences within and between equity groups;
- each equity group does not experience the same type of disadvantage; and
- there remain many common barriers for equity groups.

Diversity
TAFE Queensland East Coast recognises that there are many factors which influence the ability of people to access, participate in and succeed in a vocational education and training environment, including:

- prior educational experiences
- goals and expectations
- work and social experiences
- geographic location
- gender
- family
- learning styles
- values and beliefs
- language
- income
- cultural identity
- motivation
- religion
- age

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MAKE GREAT HAPPEN
This policy will be used to:

- inform staff, students and the wider community of TAFE Queensland East Coast;
- commit to equity and diversity;
- guide the development of TAFE Queensland East Coast specific equity implementation plans and strategies; and
- facilitate the design of products and services that are attractive to clients.

Policy Statements

TAFE Queensland East Coast:

1. Aims to provide training programs and services that are accessible to all people.
2. Account for the requirements of individual learners in the strategic and operational planning processes.
3. Provide opportunities for clients and staff to be involved in the planning and decision-making processes on matters that affect them.
4. Seeks to provide a broad, relevant and balanced range of high quality training programs and support services that account for the diversity of clients and the needs of people under-represented in vocational education and training.
5. Strives to enable members of equity groups to successfully participate in vocational education and training through training and support service delivery.
6. Provides opportunities for all people to achieve outcomes that meet their personal goals.
7. Provides training and support services in an environment free from harassment.

Fair Treatment

TAFE Queensland East Coast will treat fairly all students and other persons seeking to access the services offered by TAFE Queensland East Coast. TAFE Queensland’s access and equity procedures will be adhered to. Refer to TAFE Queensland’s Student Entry Eligibility Criteria.

Student Selection

TAFE Queensland East Coast has open, fair and transparent processes, based on merit for making decisions about:

- the selection, from among potential students; and
- the treatment of students.

Potential students seeking to enrol in a VET unit of study with TAFE Queensland East Coast, regardless of their background, circumstances or eligibility for funding will be assessed for entry to study through the same published entry requirements and through the same processes under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act.

The above paragraph does not prevent TAFE Queensland East Coast from taking into account, in making decisions mentioned above, educational disadvantages that a particular student or potential student has experienced or the fact that the student or potential student may be enrolled via a VET restricted access arrangement after consultation with the TAFE Queensland East Coast’s Student Support Officer.

TAFE Queensland East Coast will ensure that prior to enrolment; prospective students have access to information regarding the course, training, assessment, services and VET FEE-HELP provided by TAFE Queensland East Coast to enable them to make an informed decision about the suitability of the course and the facilities in meeting their individual needs.

TAFE Queensland East Coast will provide accurate and timely information to each student, prior to enrolment in regards to:

- student selection, enrolment and orientation procedures;
- course information, including educational and vocational outcomes;
- fees and charges, including refund policy;
- provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance;
- student support services;
- flexible learning and assessment procedures;
- appeals and complaints procedures;
- disciplinary procedures; and
- recognition of prior learning (RPL), including credit transfer processes.
Selection Procedures

As a rule TAFE Queensland East Coast is able to accommodate enrolment for all eligible students. However, in instances where it is identified that there are limited places available for enrolment in a particular program of study, TAFE Queensland East Coast will undertake a merit based selection process. Applications will be sought from eligible students and the selection process will be based on one or a combination of (but not limited to) the following evaluation methods:

- portfolio;
- academic record (including pre-requisite requirements);
- interview; or
- skills testing.

All students must be a minimum of 15 years of age upon commencement of the program to be eligible to be considered for entry into VET Programs. The selection process will be conducted by the relevant teaching team members. TAFE Queensland East Coast will ensure that throughout the process of selection and enrolments, applicants are treated fairly, courteously and expeditiously. Selection criteria and principles to be utilised, when applicable, will be published at time of advertising. These requirements will be communicated at time of enquiry or program advertising.

Publication

This Equity and Fair Treatment Policy and associated procedures will be made available to students and potential students through publication on the website TAFE Queensland East Coast.

Responsibilities

General Manager - TAFE Queensland East Coast

The General Manager - TAFE Queensland East Coast is responsible for approving the Equity and Fair Treatment Policy at TAFE Queensland East Coast.

Compliance support

Compliance support is responsible for:

- reviewing customer surveys to formulate plans to improve student satisfaction;
- reviewing any systemic issues identified and recommending appropriate and timely action;
- identifying and responding to improvement opportunities; and
- systematically reviewing the effectiveness of this process as per the Document Management Process.

Centre Director

Centre Directors are responsible for:

- providing support to teaching teams to implement continuous improvement for the fair and equitable treatment of students and persons seeking to enrol through the application and selection process;
- the process will be made available on TAFE Queensland East Coast’s website and course handbooks; and
- identifying systemic and recurring issues within the teaching teams and liaise with the Executive Director, Education and Training and/or the Quality Team for organisational improvement.

Educational Teams

Educational Teams are responsible for:

- ensuring they apply fair and equitable treatment of students and persons seeking to enrol in the application and selection process for their program of study; and
- implementing a selection process, if necessary, for high demand products.
Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons/Potential Students</td>
<td>Refers to all customers of TAFE Queensland East Coast seeking to enrol in or enquiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/s</td>
<td>Refers to all persons enrolled in a unit of study who are, or might be entitled to VET FEE-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Act</td>
<td>Refers to the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)</td>
</tr>
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Related Documents

- VET Fee-Help Academic Grievance and Appeals Policy
- VET Fee-Help Non-Academic Grievance and Appeals Policy
- VET Fee-Help Academic Grievance and Appeals Procedure
- VET Fee-Help Non-Academic Grievance and Appeals Procedure
- VET Fee-Help Grievance and Appeals Form
- Complaints and Feedback Process
- Feedback Form
- Business Improvement Request (BIR) Process

References

Commonwealth legislation (www.comlaw.gov.au)
- Higher Education Support Act 2003 [Clause 43 of Schedule 1A]
- Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2015 [Standard 1.7]

Other (www.education.gov.au)
- VET Provider Applicant Handbook

Enquiries

Enquiries in respect of this policy should be directed to the Manager, Student Services and Support.