



*We're working for
Western Australia.*



DISABILITY ACCESS

AND INCLUSION PLAN

2022–2026

Contents

Acknowledgement	3
Message from the Managing Director	3
Background	4
North Metropolitan TAFE	4
Student disability profile	4
North Metropolitan TAFE’s access and inclusion policy statement	4
Summary of the outcomes and achievements of the 2017 – 2021 DAIP	4
Introduction of Online Study Support	4
Increasing Staff Awareness and Capability	4
Introduction of the Wellbeing Framework	5
Introduction of the TAFE Specialist Employment Program (TSEP)	5
Focus on Facilities	5
Establishment of a Student Advisory Working Group	5
Introduction of the North Metropolitan TAFE Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025	5
Development of the North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022- 2026	6
Consultation Process	6
Key findings	6
Student survey responses	6
Staff survey responses	6
Service providers responses	6
Barriers and challenges	7
Commitment to DAIP outcomes	7
Responsibility for implementing the DAIP	7
Review and Evaluation Mechanisms	8
Reporting on the DAIP	8
Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion	9
Outcome One	9
Outcome Two	9
Outcome Three	9
Outcome Four	9
Outcome Five	10
Outcome Six	10
Outcome Seven	10

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is available on the North Metropolitan TAFE website (northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au). If you require a copy in an alternative format (such as large font, audio or Braille), please contact North Metropolitan TAFE on 1300 300 822.

Acknowledgement

North Metropolitan TAFE recognises Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to our society. We acknowledge the Noongar People, the traditional custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located and pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present.

Message from the Managing Director

I am pleased to present North Metropolitan TAFE's *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022–26*. This plan builds on North Metropolitan TAFE's achievements to date and provides the commitment and direction for further progress in improving access and inclusion for people with disability.

North Metropolitan TAFE provides ongoing opportunities for people to participate in vocational education and employment. We are committed to reducing barriers and improving accessibility for people with disability.

It is imperative that North Metropolitan TAFE continues to identify and reduce barriers to participation that are experienced by people with disability; providing the support necessary to ensure that they have access to education and skills development. Access to education is a vital first step toward providing opportunity for future meaningful employment and economic independence.

The commitments outlined in the North Metropolitan TAFE *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022–26* will be reflected in our strategies and services. An action plan has been developed that supports the implementation of the plan which will be reviewed quarterly and reported annually to monitor and report our progress.

I would like to thank North Metropolitan TAFE staff, students with disability and other stakeholders for their contribution in developing this plan. Their shared lived experiences, knowledge and expertise has enabled North Metropolitan TAFE to develop a comprehensive plan for the next five years.



Michelle Hoad
Managing Director

Background

North Metropolitan TAFE

North Metropolitan TAFE has 10 campuses across the central, greater north and north-eastern metropolitan regions of Perth. Our training delivery reflects the State Government's policies and strategic priorities and provides quality training choices to the market.

We recognise the benefits diversity and inclusivity brings to individuals, enterprise and the broader community. North Metropolitan TAFE welcomes participation from people disadvantaged in the labour market and our training provides pathways to jobs or further educational opportunities.

To better reflect the contemporary nature of its services, Disability Services was re-named Accessibility and Learning Support. The change of name aligns the service more closely with its role, promoting accessibility to benefit all students; and providing support to students with disability enabling participation in education.

Student disability profile

In 2021, North Metropolitan TAFE delivered training to 2,416 students who identified with a disability and Accessibility and Learning Support assisted 1,591 students with the provision of Learning Support Plans and study support sessions.

The majority of students did not specify their disability and 22% of students listed challenges with learning. 32% of students listed more than one category of disability. Statistics show a developing trend of co-morbidity of mental illness conditions. 24% of students disclosed mental illness.

North Metropolitan TAFE's access and inclusion policy statement

North Metropolitan TAFE is committed to ensuring that people with disability have access to its services, programs and facilities and to the continuous improvement of facilitating the inclusion of people with disability.

North Metropolitan TAFE will endeavour to:

- Ensure that all its services meet the needs of people with disability.
- Ensure that access to facilities and buildings meet the needs of people with disability.
- Provide information in formats that acknowledges the communication needs of people with disability.
- Maintain high levels of staff awareness and understanding concerning the needs and rights of people with disability.
- Provide an environment where people with disability have the opportunity to participate in relevant decision-making processes with the College.

Summary of the outcomes and achievements of the 2017 – 2021 DAIP

Introduction of Online Study Support

Ensuring continuity of services for students with a disability during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns was vitally important. Virtual and telephony-based services maintained continuity of support services for those students studying off-campus and have continued to supplement delivery after lockdown.

The introduction of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services allowed students to see and talk to an interpreter without being in the same room, providing uninterrupted Auslan services to our students.

Increasing Staff Awareness and Capability

Professional development to increase staff understanding and knowledge of disability remains a priority for North Metropolitan TAFE. Training opportunities have been well attended by all staff.

Professional development topics included:

- Strategies for supporting students with disabilities
- Disability awareness for customer service
- Autism awareness
- Diversity and inclusion
- Managing classroom behaviour
- Deaf awareness

Signifying the priority for awareness for all staff, learning modules for disability awareness were implemented as an online product for all new staff as part of the on-boarding process.

Statistical and demographic data has shown a steady increase of students presenting with mental health conditions during the period for the 2017-2021 DAIP. A number of professional development opportunities were provided to staff to raise awareness of and to support management of mental health conditions. This included *Mental Health First Aid*, *Accidental Counsellor training*, and *Mental Health Awareness - Blooming Minds*.

In November 2021 'All about Accessibility' was launched. This professional development program for lecturers aims to increase understanding about accessible resources. Online workshops demonstrated how to improve, develop and vary learning materials to support a range of accessibility needs.

North Metropolitan TAFE staff who have a personal disability were consulted on the development of the Blended Learning Champions Program. This program consists of 10 one-day sessions that teach lecturers the critical components of successful online and blended learning.

Introduction of the Wellbeing Framework

North Metropolitan TAFE developed the *North Metropolitan TAFE Wellbeing Framework* stating our commitment to ensuring students can maximise their potential and staff are provided a supportive environment to help students on their learning journey. The Framework has three key elements that underpin the College's activities and strategies to support all staff and students:

- Creating safe, supportive and understanding environments.
- Strong support systems.
- Ongoing learning and development.

The Wellbeing Consultant position was established in 2020 and has been positively received. This position offers comprehensive support in the development of College policy and programs as well as individualised guidance to staff. The consultant has implemented professional development programs that include, *Mental Health First Aid*, *De-escalation Skills* and *Safe Talk*. Sessions developed specifically for students include *Youth Focus*, *Headspace*, *Mates in Construction and Living Proud*.

North Metropolitan TAFE continued its service of a contracted provider in the provision of a professional support service to staff and students in a time of crisis or need.

Introduction of the TAFE Specialist Employment Program (TSEP)

The TSEP provides free employment service through the Jobs and Skills Centres at North Metropolitan TAFE. The program is aimed at supporting clients with a disability or medical condition to prepare for and to find employment. The program is provided in conjunction with the National Disability Coordination Office Program, Disability Employment Service Provider and BIZLINK.

Focus on Facilities

The North Metropolitan TAFE facilities team established a facilities DAIP focus group, recognising the vital importance of access to premises and facilities to many students with a disability. Initiatives have included:

- Installation of tactile markers at East Perth and Joondalup (Kendrew Crescent) campuses.
- Relocation of the Jobs and Skills Centres at Midland, Joondalup (Kendrew Crescent) and Perth campuses making them more easily identifiable and accessible to people with a disability.
- Relocation of the Mt Lawley campus library resulting in it being more accessible.
- The establishment of National Disability Insurance Scheme training facility at Mt Lawley campus.

- The plans for the redesign of the Balga campus address the issues such as access from the carpark and connectivity between buildings.
- Installing access ramps to lathes and milling machines, enabling students in wheel chairs to access these items of equipment at East Perth campus.

Establishment of a Student Advisory Working Group

A Student Advisory Working Group was founded to provide advice to academic portfolios on the approaches and strategies relating to the regulation and quality assurance of training package reviews. An Accessibility and Learning Support Coordinator is an integral member of the group, ensuring the needs of students with a disability are explicitly considered.

Introduction of the North Metropolitan TAFE Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025

The *North Metropolitan TAFE Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025* sets out the college's intentions to attract, retain, develop and celebrate people of specific diversity groups. Of these diversity groups, 'People with Disabilities' is one of the priority areas. Although North Metropolitan TAFE is currently tracking higher than the public sector average (at 3.3% versus 1.5%) in employing people with disabilities, the College aims to increase representation of people with disabilities to achieve the Public Sector Commission target of 5%.



NMTAFE Accessibility Support Staff assisting a student with a disability.

Development of the North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022- 2026

Consultation Process

The consultation process for the development of the *North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026* was in accordance with the *Disability Services Regulation 2004*. This included calls for submission in the West Australian newspaper on 20 December 2021, and on The College website.

Surveys were disseminated in February and March of 2022 to:

- All students and specifically targeted to students with a disability.
- All North Metropolitan TAFE staff
- Stakeholders and service providers

North Metropolitan TAFE received the following responses:

- 11 written submissions.
- Survey responses from:
 - 254 student disability cohort
 - 6 general student cohort
 - 119 academic staff
 - 85 government officers staff
 - 7 service providers in the community

Key findings

The key findings from the consultation process have informed the *North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026*.

Student survey responses

- 51% of students with disability did not access the Accessibility and Learning Support service at North Metropolitan TAFE. Students reported that they didn't believe they required the support of Accessibility and Learning Support or that they had been unaware of the Accessibility and Learning Support services.
- 71% of students disclosed one condition while 24% disclosed two conditions with the remainder disclosing three or more conditions.
- 79.9% of students indicated that they were able to access information on the support services available to them at North Metropolitan TAFE without issue.
- 83% of students reported that the course information on the website and information to enrol were accessible.
- 81.5% of students, on average, reported no problems with accessing campus facilities. Lack of accessible parking particularly at the Northbridge campus, and distance to

access to lifts at other campuses were the students' main concerns.

- 78.4% of students were satisfied with the assistance provided by lecturers.
- 69.5% of students reported being satisfied with the support offered to them by the College's Accessibility and Learning Support service. Students noted that having indicated on their admission form that they would require learning support they had expected to be contacted by Accessibility and Learning Support.
- 67.7% of students were satisfied with the reasonable adjustments and accommodations made in the assessment process.
- 62.8% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with the accessibility of learning material. Students noted opportunity to improve accessibility in Blackboard.
- 62.7% of students were satisfied with the implementation of their Learning Support Plans.

Staff survey responses

- 45.1% of staff reported undertaking disability awareness training at North Metropolitan TAFE. A higher percentage of staff indicated they would benefit from training in the area of mental health conditions.
- 77% of staff reported always or often reviewing their materials for accessibility.
- 65% of lecturers use Blackboard to provide resources to students. While 13% often provide resources via Blackboard.
- 51% of lecturers reported barriers to implementing the student Learning Support Plans. The feedback indicates a desire for improved collaboration during the development of the learning support plan between all parties.
- Staff feedback showed a desire for the promotion of diversity at NMTAFE to help raise awareness and encourage a more inclusive, caring and supportive environment.

Service providers responses

- 80% of service providers reported being aware of the Accessibility and Learning Support services available to people with disability at North Metropolitan TAFE and were satisfied with the services provided.
- 80% indicated being aware of literacy and numeracy support, counselling services, and reasonable adjustments and accommodations for assessments available to North Metropolitan TAFE students.
- 40% report being aware of the availability of customised equipment and support staff.

Barriers and challenges

The consultation process undertaken by North Metropolitan TAFE for the development of the *North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026*, revealed some barriers and challenges experienced by students and staff with disability, and by staff who seek to support, train and assess students with disability.

The number of students disclosing disability has increased exponentially at North Metropolitan TAFE during the period of the *North Metropolitan TAFE Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2022*. This has placed increasing demand on existing resources, particularly in the areas of support staff, including note-takers and Auslan Interpreters.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Students Identifying	1,401	1,462	1,629	1,840	2,416
Learning Support Plans	Total developed*		590	Data error	1,297
	Total sent to Portfolio		475	664	952

**Learning Support Plans (LSP's) are developed for students who register with Accessibility and Learning Support and request a Learning Support Plan. Not all students continue with their studies. Not all students identifying with a disability register with Accessibility and Learning Support.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented significant challenges to the College to respond to the individual needs of students with a disability while studying off campus. Like all delivery during this period, the College pivoted to online support services including teleconferencing, Zoom meetings, email communication and technology-based Auslan interpreting services. Students with disability were supported to develop the skills and confidence to access online learning. Lecturers were provided with professional development on accessible on line learning. Student feedback has been positive and online support continues to supplement delivery upon our gradual return to face-to-face learning environments.

There has been a marked increase in the number of students disclosing mental health conditions and the college has responded by implementing a Wellbeing Framework. North Metropolitan TAFE has established a Wellbeing Consultant position who provides professional development and coaching to staff, guiding their responses and interactions with students. The consultant is also responsible for wellbeing activity for staff.

Commitment to DAIP outcomes

North Metropolitan TAFE is committed to achieving the seven desired outcomes of the DAIP. These outcomes are that people with disability:

1. Have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, a public authority.
2. Have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and facilities of a public authority.
3. Receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.
4. Receive the same level and quality of service from staff of a public authority as other people receive from staff of that public authority.
5. Have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to a public authority.
6. Have the same opportunities as other people to participate in public consultations by a public authority.
7. Have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with a public authority.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

Under the Disability Services Act, it is a requirement that public authorities take all practical measures to ensure its officers, employees, agents and contractors implement the Disability Access Inclusion Plan (DAIP).

Implementation of the DAIP remains the responsibility of all areas of North Metropolitan TAFE; however, the Manager Accessibility and Learning Support will lead and monitor the implementation. Some sectional areas and individual personnel will be responsible for implementing individual tasks within specified timeframes outlined in an implementation plan.

Review and Evaluation Mechanisms

The *Western Australia Disability Services Act 1993* sets out the minimum review requirements for public authorities in relation to the DAIP. North Metropolitan TAFE’s DAIP will be reviewed at least every five years, in accordance with the Act. The DAIP Implementation Plan may, however, be amended on a more regular basis to reflect progress, and to accommodate any access and inclusion issues that may arise. Should amendment of the DAIP be required, consultation processes will be followed and a copy of the amended DAIP will be lodged with the Department of Communities.

The following methods have been identified as mechanisms to review and evaluate North Metropolitan TAFE’s performance against the outcomes:

- The Manager Accessibility and Learning Support will report on strategies and achievement of outcomes against the DAIP in the College’s Annual Report.
- Annual status reports outlining performance against the seven prescribed outcomes will be submitted to the Department of Communities and the Department of Training and Workforce Development.
- A consultation process with stakeholders will be carried out annually to review Accessibility and Learning Support services and obtain feedback on the effectiveness of the DAIP strategies to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery and services to students with disability.
- The annual consultation process will be advertised on the Colleges’ website, intranet, email, student Blackboard, newsletters and noticeboards. All interested parties will be invited to comment on Disabilities Support Services and to make suggestions for improvement.
- The DAIP Implementation Plan will be used internally to drive accessibility within the college, and be amended based on relevant feedback from the consultation and review.



Reporting on the DAIP

The *Western Australia Disability Services Act 1993* sets out the minimum reporting requirements for public authorities in relation to the DAIP. North Metropolitan TAFE will report on the implementation of the DAIP through NMTAFE’s Annual Report at the end of the calendar year and annual status reports to the Department of Communities and the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

The reports will outline:

- Performance and progress against the seven prescribed outcomes.
- Progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the seven prescribed outcomes.
- Strategies used to inform its agents and contractors of its DAIP and the process on how the agents and contractors respond.



Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion

The seven desired outcomes provide a framework for improving access and inclusion for people with disability across the North Metropolitan TAFE sites. The College has devised constructive strategies based upon the feedback received during the consultation phase.

Outcome One

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Conduct an audit to ensure the Colleges policies and practices are inclusive of people with a disability. Create a checklist to ensure all events organised by North Metropolitan TAFE are accessible for people with disability.
- Undertake audits to ensure people with disability have access to equipment they need to participate in class and continue to explore new assistive technology to increase accessibility for students with disability.
- Ensure that all North Metropolitan staff, their agents, and contractors comply with the relevant requirements of the Disability Services Act 1993 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.
- Implement universal design principles in the development and delivery of teaching and learning.
- Provide access to low sensory spaces on each North Metropolitan TAFE campus to facilitate a range of individuals with sensory and other accessibility needs.
- Work collaboratively with the Portfolio areas, Jobs and Skills Centres, to ensure that prospective students are aware of core skills and inherent requirements before making final course selections.

Outcome Two

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Upgrade facilities as required including doors, ramp access to classroom and pathways should there be an identified barrier to access.
- Ensure the needs of people with disability are considered when purchasing furniture and equipment.
- Review accessibility of existing lifts and toilets for people with disability.
- Investigate purchase of online campus and map products that aid locating classes and access to premises.

Outcome Three

People with disability receive information from North Metropolitan TAFE in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.

- Review North Metropolitan TAFE's registration and enrolment processes to ensure they are accessible and inclusive to support the success of students with disability.
- Improve the visibility of support services including Accessibility and Learning Support, Student Wellbeing and the Student Assistance Program.
- Explore Learning Management System accessibility features to support students with disability by providing easy access to most learning materials in alternative formats.
- Improve course marketing to ensure that students with disability have access to information that assists with informed choice when making course selections.
- Ensure that students with disability can access career guidance before application and enrolment to assist in identifying best-fit career pathways.

Outcome Four

People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of North Metropolitan TAFE as other people receive from the staff of North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Continue to develop staff awareness of access and inclusion to build our capacity to provide quality services to people with disability.
- Ensure all student service areas and customer facing facilities are accessible to people with disability.
- Establish a DAIP Steering Committee to assist with driving new strategies.
- Provide timely and appropriate reasonable adjustments to students, and support lecturing staff to implement reasonable adjustments within their learning areas.
- Continue the TAFE Specialist Employment Partnership (TSEP) program.
- Continue to review and refine the Wellbeing Framework.

Outcome Five

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Review North Metropolitan TAFE's complaints management processes to ensure they are accessible for people with disability.
- Evaluate available information sources to ensure students with disability are informed about the complaints process.

Outcome Six

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Promote accessible and inclusive stakeholder engagement to include people with disability.
- Regularly review both student and staff experience during and following study and employment respectively.

Outcome Seven

People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment at North Metropolitan TAFE.

- Improve the representation and inclusion of people with disability in North Metropolitan TAFE through the implementation of targeted workforce diversification and inclusion initiatives.
- Promote inclusion and participation for registered Disability organisations in building related contract tender process.





**North
Metropolitan**

RT0: 52786

 1300 300 822 |  enquiry@nmtafe.wa.edu.au |  northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au

 Balga | Clarkson | East Perth | Joondalup (Kendrew) | Joondalup (McLarty) | Leederville | Midland | Mount Lawley | Nedlands (OHCWA) | Perth

North Metropolitan TAFE acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples of Western Australia as traditional custodians of the lands and waters. We particularly acknowledge the Noongar Whadjuk people on whose land NMTAFE operates. We honour their wisdom, cultures, languages and communities and pay respect to the Elders past and present.

This Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is available on the North Metropolitan TAFE website (northmetrotafe.wa.edu.au). If you require a copy in an alternative format (such as large font, audio or Braille), please contact North Metropolitan TAFE on 1300 300 822.

Document last updated June 2022

C22-098