



VET Courses and Students with Special Education Needs

Introduction

School Certificate (SC) and Higher School Certificate (HSC) vocational education and training (VET) courses provide students with the opportunity to gain industry-recognised national vocational qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) as part of their schooling.

VET courses ([Industry Curriculum Frameworks](#) or [VET Board Endorsed Courses](#)) are based on qualifications and units of competency contained in nationally endorsed Training Packages.

VET courses are available to all students including those with special education needs.

Successful participation in VET courses for students with special education needs will require:

- collaborative curriculum planning
- appropriate learning and assessment strategies
- appropriate consultation on strategies to support work placement where mandatory
- ongoing partnerships between schools and colleges, students, parents, teachers, employers and others in the community.

Access to VET courses

Students with special education needs may access:

- any SC or HSC VET course under regular course arrangements
- OR**
- units of competency selected through the collaborative curriculum planning process from a SC or HSC VET course as detailed in the syllabus or course description.

The appropriate units of competency should be selected through the collaborative curriculum planning process to work towards the achievement of an AQF VET Certificate and an occupational outcome. It is recommended that units of competency that provide essential foundation skills for employment in the relevant industry be prioritised through the collaborative curriculum planning process.

Note: There are no Stage 6 Life Skills VET courses.

Work placement

Where a SC or HSC VET course has a mandatory work placement requirement, students with special education needs **must** undertake the minimum work placement requirement as detailed in the syllabus or course description.

This should be taken into consideration prior to the selection of a VET course.

Collaborative curriculum planning

Decisions about curriculum options that will lead to the award of the SC or HSC should be made through a collaborative curriculum planning process.

When considering the suitability of a VET course for inclusion in a student's pattern of study appropriate personnel should be involved in the decision making and the following points should be considered:

- selection of an appropriate industry area
- student interest in, and knowledge of, the proposed industry area
- suitability of the course
- selection of appropriate units of competency
- adjustments and/or support required for the student to access course work and demonstrate competency
- mandatory work placement requirements.

Once the decision has been made for a student to undertake a VET course, the following should be considered:

- entry-level skills and jobs within the vocational area for which the student could train
- short-term outcomes that the student could achieve
- post-school opportunities including further training
- availability and type of employment in the student's geographical area.

Assessment

Assessment in VET courses is competency-based. All students undertaking VET courses, including students with special education needs, are subject to the same assessment requirements.

Reasonable adjustments

To develop skills and knowledge to industry standard, students with special education needs may require extended time and/or additional support to develop competency as well as reasonable adjustments to assessment strategies both off-the-job and in the workplace.

Where adjustments to delivery and assessment are made, the industry competency standards, as expressed in the Training Package(s) from which the VET course is derived, must still be met.

An adjustment is any measure or action that a student requires because of their disability, and which has the effect of assisting the student to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as students without a disability.

An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account factors such as the nature of the student's disability, the views of the student, the potential effect of the adjustment on the student and others who might be affected, and the costs and benefits of making the adjustment.

An education provider is also entitled to maintain the academic integrity of a course or program and to consider the requirements or components that are inherent or essential to its nature when assessing whether an adjustment is reasonable.¹

Adjustments should be based upon the individual student's needs and abilities.

Credentiailling and future pathways

AQF VET qualifications

Eligibility for AQF VET qualifications is the same for all students. To receive AQF VET qualifications, students with special education needs must meet the assessment requirements of the Training Package that the qualification is drawn from. A qualified assessor must conduct the assessment.

Students who fulfilled the requirements of an AQF VET qualification will receive the relevant Certificate and an accompanying Transcript of Competencies Achieved.

Students who achieve partial completion of an AQF VET qualification (one or more units of competency) will be eligible for a Statement of Attainment, which lists all units of competency achieved towards the qualification.

Students' partial completion of a unit of competency, showing the elements of competency achieved, can be recorded in a competency record. While this is not a formal credential it can be used to indicate the elements of competency that have been successfully demonstrated.

School Certificate (SC) or Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Satisfactory completion of a VET course will be listed on the SC or HSC Record of Achievement. The Record of Achievement will refer to separate vocational documentation (Certificate or Statement of Attainment).

Further articulation

Pathways planning is an important element in the collaborative curriculum planning process to ensure that appropriate future employment and training pathways are available to students.

SC and HSC VET courses are entry-level courses that may articulate into other AQF VET qualifications. Students can undertake further training post-school to achieve a VET qualification that has been partially completed while at school, or to commence another AQF VET qualification.

¹ *Training Package Development Handbook*, www.deewr.gov.au/tpdh → Downloads → Mandatory Text → Assessment Guidelines

Further information

Further advice on the implementation of VET courses for students with special education needs is contained in the *Stage 6 Industry Curriculum Frameworks Support Document for Students with Special Education Needs (2005)*.