Learner Support Policy and Procedure

Contents

1. Purpose

This document describes the processes undertaken by Assured Learning Australia to ensure that Learners are supported through their training, learning needs are identified and critical incidents are managed. To ensure that Assured Learning Australia, through the actions of its staff, provide every Learner with the educational support the Learner needs to learn and maintain positive behaviour while ensuring a safe environment. Additionally, to ensure that where the safety of Learners, Employees or Trainers are put at risk, these situations are managed effectively.

2. Compliance

This policy and procedure maps to the 2025 RTO Standards 2.1-2.8, 4.3.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- o   Training and Assessment Strategies (outlines in more detail the learner cohort and expected reasonable strategies for cohort and program support strategies)

- o   Access and Equity Policy and Procedure (outlines how reasonable adjustment is applied, how access and equality are provided to learners in line with Disability legislation, etc.)

- o   Marketing and Advertising Policy and Procedure & Enrolment Policy and Procedure (outlines how learners are provided with information prior to enrolment and commencement, how previous knowledge and skills, competencies held are checked, discussed and recorded, how disabilities and support requirements are identified, etc.)

- o   Continuous Improvement and Quality Management Policy and Procedure (outlines how feedback on learner support is collected, reviewed and actioned, leading to improvements in learner support services)

- o   Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure (outlines how incidents and accidents on site are managed)

- o   Effective Training, Assessment and Validation Policy and Procedure (in coordination with this policy outlines the requirements for reasonable adjustment and the need to ensure that training package requirements are still met regardless)

- o   Capability Policy and Procedure (outlines how our staff get training on cultural safety, professional development to be able to provide learner support)

- o   Enrolment Policy and Procedure (outlines how LLND testing and determination of learner support occurs)

3. Responsibilities

- Chief Executive Officer/Director is responsible for overall application of this policy and procedure

- Quality Advisor is responsible for advising in line with events that take place and appropriate countermeasures

- All staff are responsible for communicating where a learner identifies a need or when a critical incident occurs

4.   Definitions

In this policy the terms:

Employee includes a contractor (or a contractor's employees).

Educator refers to any Employee who is directly involved with the training and/or assessment of Learners.

Company refers to Assured Learning Australia (RTO# 52765).

Incident Management Team (IMT) refers to the team responsible for reviewing, recording and providing advice in the event of a Critical Incident or Emergency where Learners are affected. The IMT is made up from two or more of the following individuals as appropriate:

- Quality Advisor

- RTO Manager

- Directors/CEO

Learner includes a candidate, trainee, apprentice, participant or client who is enrolled with the Company for the purpose of accredited training and/or assessment.

Critical Incident includes an incident in which there is a high likelihood of traumatic effects. A critical incident evokes unusual or unexpectedly strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with the ability of the individual, group or system to function either at the time or later. For example, an on-site accident-causing death or serious injury, Learner or staff suicide, major vandalism, sexual assault, Learners lost or injured on an excursion or intruders on site who cause harm to people or damage property.

Emergency includes an event, actual or imminent, which:

- occurs on or off site.

- endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment; and

- requires a significant and coordinated response.

For example, fire or bomb threats, hazardous materials spillage, prolonged loss of a utility (for example, water or power), cyclone and floods.

Note that this policy must be considered in tandem with general OHS/WHS and emergency management policies and procedures. This policy is specifically contextualised to how the Company manages these issues in relation to our duty of care over Learners and the additional responsibilities of the Company, Employees and Trainers in relation to duty of care for Learners both over and under the age of 18 years.

5.   Commitment

At Assured Learning Australia we are guided by the following commitments, to ensure that:

- Learners are provided with suitable information before enrolment and commencement.

- Learners are supported cognitively, as well as emotionally and socially.

- Employees and Trainers are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to Learner support, behaviour management and duty of care.

- on-site and off-site education related emergencies and critical incidents are minimised in relation trauma and distress to Learners and staff and damage to property and to ensure the teaching and learning programs are maintained or resumed where possible.

6.   Overview

This policy and the relevant procedure covers:

- How support will be provided to Learners when learning needs are identified.

- How we determine what reasonable support is for a cohort and learner.

- Day to day behavioural management of Learners.

- How learners' wellbeing will be supported.

- How we support learners that identify as having serious wellbeing issues.

- How we develop resilient learners.

It is understood that most critical incidents such as where learners' health and safety is affected, learner support is required and as such, the critical incident response of Assured Learning Australia is contained within this policy.

Effective emergency management involves coordinated actions based online management principles and designated responsibilities. This will:

- reduce the likelihood of emergencies and critical incidents.

- minimise the impact on Learners, staff and site activities; and

- facilitate the return of the site to normal operations as soon as possible.

Management of emergencies and critical incidents will involve consideration of prevention and mitigation of; preparedness for; response to; recovery from; and review of emergencies and critical incidents.

7. Managing access to staff, trainers and support resources

Assured Learning Australia is committed to ensuring that learners have appropriate access to training, support, and administrative resources to facilitate a positive and effective learning experience. Access to learning materials, trainers, administration, and campus facilities is structured to balance flexibility with operational requirements while maintaining a safe and supportive environment.

Access arrangements are as follows:

- Learning Management System (LMS): If applicable, Learners have 24/7 access to online learning materials, assessment submissions, and support resources through the LMS.

- Trainers and Assessors: Available during business hours for learning and assessment support. Additional access may be arranged for specific programs where extended support is required.

- Administrative Support: Learners can access administration services during business hours for assistance with enrolments, course information, and general inquiries.

- Campus Access: Learners may access campus facilities in line with their timetabled training sessions, ensuring a structured and secure learning environment.

- Additional Support Requests: Learners requiring extended or out-of-hours support may arrange scheduled appointments with trainers or be referred to external support services as needed.

These structured access arrangements ensure that learners can effectively engage with their training while maintaining appropriate support channels for their academic and wellbeing needs.

8. Timely access to resources

Assured Learning Australia has in place the following timelines for responding to queries:

- Emails within five business days

- Missed phone calls within one business day

- LMS access (request for reset) within one business day

- Meetings with trainers within five business days

- Meetings with management within ten business days

9. Determining reasonable support for learners

System for Determining Reasonable Support for Learners

Assured Learning Australia applies a systematic approach to determining and implementing reasonable support measures to ensure all learners receive appropriate and equitable assistance. This process is informed by Training and Assessment Strategies (TAS), which are developed prior to enrolment to identify support needs at both the cohort and program level. The TAS is designed based on industry feedback, regulatory requirements, and learner characteristics to ensure training delivery meets diverse learner needs while maintaining compliance with contractual and legislative obligations.

Learner support strategies are determined at **two levels**:

1) **Cohort-Level Support:** Conducted during **TAS development**, ensuring that appropriate strategies are in place for different learner groups.

2) **Individual-Level Support:** Identified through **enrolment documentation** and LLN assessments (as required), ensuring that learners receive tailored support as required.

The following key factors are assessed to establish the level and type of support required:

1. Learner Cohort Characteristics

- Age of learners – Support needs vary for school-based learners, young apprentices, adult learners, and mature-age career changers.

- Employment status – Learners who are already employed (e.g. apprentices, trainees) may require different support compared to jobseekers or full-time learners.

- Cultural and linguistic background – Additional support may be required for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) learners or English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners.

- Disability or additional needs – Learners requiring reasonable adjustments (as per the Disability Standards for Education 2005) will have tailored support plans developed.

- Welfare and Wellbeing factors – Support mechanisms consider personal, financial, or mental health factors that may impact learning.

2. Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) Considerations

Prior to enrolment, the TAS is developed to outline the expected learner support strategies for each training product.

The TAS considers:

- Industry feedback – Ensuring training is aligned with employer needs, workplace expectations, and practical skill application.

- Identified cohort needs – Including LLN levels, digital literacy, and demographic factors impacting engagement.

- Program structure – Determining suitable assessment methods, delivery modes, and available resources to support learning.

- Workplace integration – Ensuring support mechanisms align with on-the-job learning requirements for apprentices and trainees.

3. Duration and Intensity of Training

- Short courses (1–5 days): Support is focused on pre-enrolment guidance, LLN assessment, and immediate learning assistance.

- Certificate-level programs (3–12 months): Support extends to ongoing monitoring, mentoring, and LLN interventions.

- Apprenticeships & traineeships (1–4 years): Support includes workplace mentoring, employer engagement, and structured learning plans.

4. Delivery Mode of Training

- Face-to-face (in-class): Support includes in-person trainer assistance, mentoring, and group learning activities.

- Online learning: Support includes technical assistance, structured engagement plans, and scheduled live trainer support sessions.

- Blended learning: A combination of online and in-person support mechanisms ensuring consistency.

- Workplace-based training: Support includes on-the-job mentoring, employer liaison, and competency tracking.

5. Contractual & Legislative Compliance Requirements

- Funding contracts – additional support may be mandated by government-funded training contracts (e.g. JobTrainer, Skills Assure, state-based funding obligations).

- Workplace regulations – Industry-based learners may require compliance-related support (e.g. WHS, licensing requirements, competency tracking).

- Apprenticeship and traineeship obligations – Engagement with State Training Authorities (STAs), Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASN), and employers to monitor progression and intervention strategies.

Broad Support by Cohort

Assured Learning Australia adopts a structured approach to determining and implementing appropriate and reasonable support methods for learners. These strategies are designed using broad cohort methodologies and are incorporated into the Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS) at a high level. The approach considers the unique needs of each cohort, the nature of the program, and the delivery mode, ensuring compliance with State Training Authority (STA) requirements and the 2025 RTO Standards.

Support for Short Course Learners

For learners enrolled in short courses, there is a higher expectation of self-sufficiency. Most of these learners are older, employed, or have prior industry experience, which reduces the need for intensive support services. While some general assistance is available, most support is provided through generic RTO resources such as the learner handbook and self-paced learning materials.

Before enrolling in a short course, learners are informed of course expectations to ensure they can meet the demands of the program. Additionally, Assured Learning Australia may conduct a basic Language, Literacy, and Numeracy (LLN) and digital skills assessment, which typically occurs post-enrolment but before commencement. If the assessment identifies areas where a learner may require support, adaptive mechanisms are put in place, aligning with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 and Assured Learning Australia's reasonable adjustment policies.

Support for Fee-for-Service Long Course Learners

For learners enrolled in fee-for-service (FFS) long courses, a more structured support framework is in place. The enrolment agreement explicitly outlines the support services available, including any additional costs that may be incurred for enhanced learning assistance. Where necessary, learners may access a limited online orientation to familiarise themselves with course expectations, policies, and available resources before formal commencement.

Support for Apprentices and Trainees

For apprentices and trainees, learner support is structured over an extended period, given the duration and complexity of their training. The determination of reasonable support methods is undertaken in accordance with:

- State Training Authority (STA) requirements

- Funding guidelines

- Any additional contractual obligations

- Advice from the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) and employers

Prior to signing the training contract, a support plan is discussed with the AASN provider, employer, and apprentice/trainee to ensure that appropriate interventions are in place. The training plan and enrolment documentation clearly outline the support strategies available to the apprentice or trainee.

Apprentices and trainees benefit from both classroom-based training and workplace mentoring. In addition, Assured Learning Australia is reviewing unit selections to incorporate explicit well-being training, ensuring that learners are not only gaining technical skills but also developing resilience and workplace readiness.

Additional support mechanisms may also be available from state government funding initiatives. This could include access to incentives such as the Tools for Your Trade initiative, completion incentives, and commencement incentives designed to ease the financial burden on apprentices and their employers. While Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks (AASNs) provide most of this information, Assured Learning Australia will include relevant links and guidance on how to access these incentives.

Explicit Wellbeing Training Strategies

Assured Learning Australia is currently undertaking a **review of unit selections** to ensure that well-being-focused training strategies are embedded within course structures. This includes the integration of units such as:

- BSBPEF201 – Personal Wellbeing in the Workplace

- BSBPEF301 – Personal Effectiveness at Work

- BSBPEF401 – Manage Personal Health and Wellbeing

These units are designed to help learners manage stress, enhance resilience, and develop professional behaviours that support long-term employment success.

Final Considerations

Assured Learning Australia's approach to learner support is based on a combination of regulatory compliance, industry engagement, and a commitment to learner success. Support strategies are continuously reviewed and refined in line with feedback from learners, trainers, and industry stakeholders.

For further details on specific support services, learners are encouraged to refer to the Enrolment Policy, TAS Development Policy, and Workplace Placement Policy. These documents provide comprehensive guidelines on how support needs are assessed, documented, and implemented throughout the training cycle.

Please refer to the Enrolment Policy and Procedure for an outline of when the LLN assessment takes place (either alongside enrolment or in some cases post enrolment and aligning with course commencement). Disability is recorded through the enrolment form. Learner support forms are generally undertaken at the time of the LLN, however, may be upon review of the enrolment form or may occur post enrolment where the learner has not provided information about their disability.

Where support strategies cannot be provided due to cost, impact on ability to meet training package requirements or safety concerns, this will be communicated to the learner in writing.

10. Applying Reasonable Adjustment for Learners

When a learner discloses a disability or underperforms on the LLN (Language, Literacy, and Numeracy) assessment, Assured Learning Australia undertakes a suitability assessment to determine whether the learner can safely and effectively participate in the course. The first consideration is safety - both for the learner and others in the training or workplace environment. For example, if a learner is colour blind, enrolling in a telecommunications or electrical trade course could present a serious safety risk, as colour differentiation is essential for identifying wiring and electrical components. Similarly, if a learner has a disability that would prevent them from securing employment in their chosen field, this must be considered before enrolment to ensure that the training aligns with realistic career pathways. Additionally, if a learner's condition poses a risk to others - such as severe schizophrenia or antisocial disorders that impact their ability to interact safely in a team-based or high-risk environment - Assured Learning Australia must assess whether reasonable adjustments can be made while maintaining a safe learning and working environment.

It is important to note that learners are not required to disclose a disability or learning need if they choose not to. However, failing to provide relevant information that could impact course outcomes or safety may result in course cancellation if the learner is later found to be unsuitable for the program. To support their success, learners are encouraged to disclose any conditions or support needs that could affect their ability to participate in training. This allows Assured Learning Australia to explore reasonable adjustments, where applicable, and ensure that the learner can engage safely and effectively in their course. Prospective learners should carefully review enrolment and marketing materials to understand the suitability requirements outlined by Assured Learning Australia. By doing so, they can make an informed decision about their eligibility and ensure they meet the prerequisites and inherent requirements of the course before enrolling.

Checklist for Determining and Applying Reasonable Adjustments for Learners

When assessing whether a learner can be enrolled and what reasonable adjustments may be applied, Assured Learning Australia must **ensure that any adjustments do not compromise safety, course outcomes, or competency requirements**.

Trainer and Assessors are required to consider the below adjustments that affect cost or duration of the course must be approved by the CEO. Where adaptations are made to assessment practices, these should be approved by the Quality Advisor or RTO Manager.

The following checklist should be used to guide decision-making:

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1. Safety Considerations

✓ Does the learner's condition **pose a direct safety risk** to themselves or others in the **training or workplace environment**?

✓ If the learner has a **visual impairment** (e.g. colour blindness), does the course require **colour differentiation** for safety reasons (e.g. electrical wiring, telecommunications, laboratory work)?

✓ Does the learner have a **physical disability** that could prevent them from safely **operating machinery, tools, or equipment** required in the course?

✓ Would the learner's **medical or psychological condition** (e.g. severe schizophrenia, antisocial disorders) create risks in **high-risk environments** such as construction sites, laboratories, or healthcare settings?

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2. Employment Outcomes

✓ Would the learner's **disability or condition** prohibit them from securing **employment** in the chosen industry after training?

✓ Is the learner aware of **licensing, regulatory, or employer requirements** that may impact their ability to work in the field upon completion?

✓ Has Assured Learning Australia advised the learner on potential **career pathways or alternative study options** if the training is not suitable?

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3. Suitability for Training & Course Outcomes

✓ Has the learner disclosed any **learning needs, disabilities, or medical conditions** that may require reasonable adjustments?

✓ If no disclosure was made, does their **LLN assessment or early engagement in the course** indicate potential learning barriers?

✓ Can reasonable adjustments be made without compromising course competency standards or safety?

✓ Would additional **support services** (e.g. LLN support, assistive technology, mentoring, flexible assessment options) enable the learner to meet course requirements?

✓ Are there **work placement requirements** that the learner may struggle to fulfil due to their condition?

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4. Review of Unit of Competency Requirements

- ✓ Has Assured Learning Australia conducted a review of the units of competency to ensure that any proposed reasonable adjustment does not impact the integrity or validity of competency outcomes?

- ✓ Does the reasonable adjustment still allow the learner to demonstrate the full breadth and depth of required skills and knowledge?

- ✓ Would the adjustment alter the performance evidence, knowledge evidence, or assessment conditions beyond what is permissible under the unit requirements?

- ✓ Has the assessment team **reviewed** and **validated** the proposed adjustments to ensure compliance with **training package requirements**?

5. Reasonable Adjustments & Compliance

- ✓ Does the requested adjustment align with the **Disability Standards for Education 2005** and RTO policies?

- ✓ Can Assured Learning Australia provide the necessary reasonable adjustments without creating unjustifiable hardship for the organisation?

- ✓ Has the learner been advised of their **responsibility to disclose relevant information** that may impact their ability to meet the course requirements?

- ✓ Has the learner reviewed the marketing and enrolment materials to ensure they meet the stated suitability criteria?

By following this checklist, Assured Learning Australia can ensure that all enrolment decisions and reasonable adjustments are made in alignment with regulatory requirements, unit of competency standards, and learner success while maintaining a safe and compliant training environment.

11. Learner orientation

From the outset, it's crucial for learners to have a clear understanding of course requirements. To achieve this, Assured Learning Australia will conduct a thorough orientation that includes:

- a welcome and introduction by key personnel.

- detailed course information covering structure, curriculum, assessment, and progress reporting; information on available learner support services, as detailed in the Learner Handbook and this policy's appendix.

- guidelines on attendance, monitoring, and how to report absences.

- a comprehensive overview of the Code of Conduct, emphasising behaviour expectations and academic integrity.

- instructions on how to handle grievances and complaints, along with available support for learners facing difficulties; safety and security measures, including emergency procedures and reporting mechanisms.

- an emphasis on academic integrity, with guidance on avoiding plagiarism and academic misconduct; and finally, an orientation assessment to ensure learners have grasped all key concept

This orientation is provided to all learners before the start of their course to ensure a smooth and informed beginning to their educational journey.

12.   General Learner support

All learners complete at enrolment a Language, Literacy & Numeracy (LLN) assessment and the enrolment form which will allow Assured Learning Australia and the Learner to identify if there is a learning need that may require additional support or reasonable adjustment. Where a possible need is identified, the learner support form is designed to review the need and agree to the actions to be taken by Assured Learning Australia and the Learner in order to maximise their chances of success during training.

Support services may include but is not limited to:

- Language, Literacy & Numeracy (LLN); Identified through the LLN assessments and further actioned through available training in certificates in spoken and written English or additional contact hours provided by the trainer.

- Mentoring; Provided one on one by trainers and assessors or other staff as nominated by Assured Learning Australia.

- Disability support; Determined through Enrolment Forms and actions to be determined dependant on disability; further information can be found in the Access and Equity Policy and Procedure and Disability Inclusion and Access Plan.

- Information Technology (IT) support; For some courses Learners are provided with access to online materials through an online Learning Management System (LMS) these Learners are provided with materials which support Learners to access these resources.

- Job search and placement; where practical placement is required, Assured Learning Australia will facilitate finding placement. Further information is found in the Learner Handbook, TAS and marketing materials for these courses.

- Personal counselling; this is not formal counselling, any requirement for formal counselling will be undertaken via a referral service however, trainers will support the needs of learners where possible, providing a friendly ear. For certain disclosures such as disclosures of abuse of self-harming thoughts, refer to points further in this policy and procedure.

- Study support; this may include but is not limited to mentoring, one on one training, retraining after an NYC assessment, etc.

- Support programs; these may differ from state to state, services and programs will be reviewed and provided to Learners on a case-by-case basis based on a needs analysis.

- Learning and assessment programs contextualised to the workplace or cohort; see Effective Assessment and Validation Policy and Procedure and TAS Development Policy and Procedure for more information.

- Career guidance; for further information see Enrolment Policy and Procedure.

Relevant staff of Assured Learning Australia will organise for support to be provided where requested and agreed to as follows:

- In house by suitably qualified Assured Learning Australia staff (as above).

- In the work-based training placement (by suitably qualified Assured Learning Australia staff or by suitably qualified work-based training personnel).

- By an external organisation (counselling, disability support, financial aid, job support services).

13.   Learner progression

Assured Learning Australia has a range of policies and procedures in place to support the progression of Learners through qualifications in line with the developed Training and Assessment Strategy (TAS). Assured Learning Australia has a responsibility to provide training and undertake assessment, ultimately as VET is competency based, every Learner will choose to learn and demonstrate competency in their own timeframe.

Where Assured Learning Australia has concerns about the Learner's engagement in training, the following strategies are utilised, this will vary based on the age of the Learner and the program that they are enrolled in. Younger and less experienced Learners are monitored more closely whereas more experienced Learners who are not undertaking government funded programs are allowed more leeway in determining suitable progression timelines. The extent to which programs are funded, or the needs of the cohort will also affect this. More information can be found in the Risk Management Policy and Planning Tool.

Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Emails, phone calls and texts to remind Learners when they are scheduled to attend training

- Emails, phone calls and texts to remind Learners when they did not attend scheduled training

- Emails, phone calls and texts to employers where Learners do not attend scheduled training

- Options for extensions for assessment submissions

- Options to be reassessed (at the discretion of Assured Learning Australia)

- Options to be provided with additional or make up training or one on one support from a trainer or mentor (at the discretion of Assured Learning Australia)

- Formal warnings issued via email in relation to progression and requirements to participate in Individual Learning Contracts.

In extreme circumstances where multiple attempts have been made and formal warnings have been issued, Assured Learning Australia reserves the right to cancel the Learner's enrolment. Where the

Learner is undertaking this training as part of a Training Contract (Apprenticeship and Traineeship), Assured Learning Australia will also contact and update the relevant STA, Apprenticeship Office and AASN.

14. Learner wellbeing support services

It is acknowledged that the training environment today is more challenging than ever before. Additionally, data shows that current levels of wellbeing for Australians are at a 20-year low. However, there are several factors that can improve personal wellbeing, and active participation in education links to many.

The top five factors based on research conducted by the author of this policy that affect wellbeing are:

- Physical Health: Good physical health is a fundamental pillar of wellbeing. It includes factors such as access to healthcare, a healthy diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and the absence of chronic illnesses. When individuals are physically healthy, they are more likely to have a higher quality of life and experience greater overall wellbeing.

- Emotional and Mental Resilience: Mental resilience is equally crucial for wellbeing. This encompasses emotional well-being, resilience, and the ability to manage stress and cope with challenges. Positive mental health contributes to better relationships, job satisfaction, and a sense of purpose in life. Many qualifications now include training or units on how to better manage stress and health in the workplace, through WHS units such as HLTWHS006 Manage personal stressors in the workplace and BSBPEF401 Manage personal health and wellbeing, which Assured Learning Australia is reviewing to include in courses where relevant.

- Social Relationships: Strong and supportive social relationships, including close family bonds, friendships, and a sense of community, consistently rank as critical factors in wellbeing. Having meaningful and positive social connections can lead to increased happiness and a sense of belonging. Interactions through training support the creation of these relationships in the classroom and workplace.

- Financial Stability: Economic wellbeing, including financial stability and security, is another vital component of overall wellbeing. Having a reliable income, financial resources, and the ability to meet basic needs reduces stress and enhances life satisfaction. Meaningful training is designed to improve employment and financial outcomes for learners.

- Work and Employment: Job satisfaction, meaningful work, and a healthy work-life balance are important contributors to wellbeing. Employment provides not only financial security but also a sense of purpose, personal growth, and social interaction.

Supporting the development of resilient learners

Within Assured Learning Australia, we are committed to creating an inclusive and dynamic learning environment that values the development of resilient learners, the encouragement of alternative opinions, and the challenge of learners to foster growth and personal development. We firmly believe that these elements are essential for the holistic development of our learners and their future success.

Fostering resilient learners

Resilience is the ability to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity, setbacks, and change. It is a critical life skill that empowers learners to overcome challenges, persevere in their academic journey, and navigate the complexities of the modern world. By fostering resilient learners, we aim to:

- Equip learners with the emotional and psychological tools needed to manage stress, anxiety, and setbacks effectively.

- Encourage a growth mindset that embraces failures as opportunities for learning and personal development.

- Instil a sense of self-efficacy, self-confidence, and determination that extends beyond the classroom.

Providing alternative opinions

A diverse and inclusive learning environment thrives on the exchange of diverse perspectives and ideas. Encouraging alternative opinions enriches the learning experience by:

- Promoting critical thinking, open-mindedness, and intellectual curiosity.

- Enhancing learners' ability to analyse, evaluate, and synthesise information from various sources.

- Preparing learners to engage respectfully and constructively in discussions, debates, and collaborative problem-solving, which are crucial skills for academic and professional success.

Challenging learners

Challenging learners academically and intellectually is integral to their growth and development. It encourages them to expand their horizons, explore new ideas, and reach their full potential. By challenging our learners, we aim to:

- Inspire a sense of curiosity and a passion for lifelong learning.

- Raise academic standards and expectations, motivating learners to achieve their best.

- Help learners discover and develop their unique talents, interests, and strengths.

In summary, fostering resilient learners, providing space for alternative opinions, and challenging learners are essential components of our learner support policy. We believe that by nurturing these attributes, we empower our learners to become adaptable, critical, and confident individuals who are well-prepared to excel academically, professionally, and personally. Our commitment to these principles reflects our dedication to the holistic development and success of every learner within our educational community.

15.   Dealing with disclosure

Disclosure of abuse

Where a learner discloses that they are in an abusive relationship or provides disclosure of abuse, it is important to understand that as trainers, assessors, and Assured Learning Australia support staff, our responsibilities are different than those of counsellors, doctors or teachers.

It is recommended that you speak to the learner and ask for permission to pass the information on to QA or support staff within Assured Learning Australia who are better placed to provide support. Alternatively, provide the learner with information about organisations who are better placed to provide support services.

Disclosure of self-harm or intent to self-harm

Assured Learning Australia staff need to be mindful that some Learners may experience emotional and/or psychological distress, and that some Learners are exposed to trauma and cumulative harm. These factors, amongst others, could lead to an increase in the risk of mental health problems and, in some cases, suicidal behaviour and/or non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI). It is therefore of significant concern when suicide and self-harming behaviour is seen in Learners, and it is important to act. In Australia, cohorts that are most likely to attempt or commit suicide are youth between 15-24, Men, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those with Mental Health Conditions (such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and severe anxiety), according to statistics. The Company and Trainers can promote the mental health and wellbeing of Learners and members of their communities.

Suicidal behaviour includes suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and suicide.

- Suicidal ideation refers to an individual's thoughts about ending their life.

- An attempt refers to an individual harming themselves with the intent to die but not resulting in death.

- Suicide is a deliberate act to end one's life resulting in death. This is usually termed 'death by suicide' or 'suicided'.

A **direct disclosure** is when a Learner informs an Educator or Staff member of any feelings, thoughts or actions associated with suicidal behaviour or NSSI. This may include verbal disclosure or disclosure through an assessment where there has been an expression of suicidal behaviour or NSSI.

An **indirect disclosure** is when information or concerns for a Learner are brought to the attention of an Educator or Staff member by a third person such as another Learner, Staff, parent/guardian or community member.

At no time can staff maintain absolute confidentiality with a Learner who has disclosed suicidal behaviour or NSSI. Nominated Staff for notification within Assured Learning Australia are the Directors, QA or HR Manager. A Suicide Risk Assessment is to be referred to an appropriate Suicide Prevention association.

16. Learner Behaviour

Assured Learning Australia strives to support positive Learner behaviour that includes:

- a Learner code of conduct stating the behaviours that Learners are required to learn and maintain.

- the roles and responsibilities of staff in implementing behaviour support.

- training and Learner management strategies that support positive Learner behaviour including:

  o the management of the education environment to promote positive Learner behaviour.

  o the organisation's strategy for deciding on the application of disciplinary measures.

  o the organisation's approach to coordinating with external agencies where required.

  o measures to address:

- all forms of bullying.

- aggression.

- drug and alcohol misuse by Learners, including provision of evidence-based drug and alcohol education.

- the presence of weapons on site.

- risks of suicidal behaviour and/or non-suicidal self-injury, including risks associated with cumulative harm from maltreatment.

- the rules regarding personal use of mobile and other electronic devices, and responses or breaches of these rules; and

- the strategy for record keeping, and use of data in assessing the effectiveness of behaviour support.

- It is noted that learners have a shared responsibility to allow for a respectful and safe learning environment, where learners behaviour impedes on this for others Assured Learning Australia reserves the right to remove learners from classroom settings. The learner code of conduct is available through the learner resources library.

Bullying, harassment or assault (sexual or physical)

Assured Learning Australia must advise Learners that if they find themselves in a situation where they experience bullying, harassment or assault during a program, they must immediately inform:

- the Trainer.

- and/or the RTO Manager, Quality Advisor and Directors/CEO.

Trainers or Staff who become aware of any bullying, harassment or assault of Learners must inform the Quality Advisor or Director/s to determine appropriate action.

Bullying, verbal abuse or intimidation

Learners agree and sign a Code of Conduct at Orientation, where an Educator or Staff member become aware of this the measure which can be taken include but are not limited to:

- **Initial Verbal Warning** (this should be done one on one with the Learner in private, where the behaviour is clearly identified, e.g. *"John, this is a first verbal warning that (INSERT BEHAVIOUR "swearing to other Learners/using that word") is not appropriate. If you continue to (INSERT BEHAVIOUR), the next step will be a formal written warning or removal from class."*)

- **Formal Written Warning** (Verbal discussion with the Learner and a formal email or letter identifying the behaviour, reference to breach of Code of Conduct, explanation of possible further actions)

- **Removal from class**; Where the behaviour presents a gross breach of code of conduct or where previous actions above have not been effective, the Learner is removed from class. This can be done by an Educator but with approval from management. A formal written response must be provided in line with above, examples may include where bullying or abuse is consistent or where it is a gross abuse or where the nature of the verbal abuse is presenting as an obstacle to

the ability of all Learners within the environment to continue to engage with the training and assessment.

Physical assault on Learner or staff member

Any instance where a Learner physically assaults another Learner or staff member will result in immediate removal from class, a formal written warning, development of an IEP and consideration in relation to cancellation of the Learner's enrolment.

At all times the health, safety and welfare of Learners and Staff are paramount. No Staff member or Educator should willingly place themselves in danger.

Assured Learning Australia has an ethos and environment where using physical contact to manage Learner behaviour is not necessary. However, at times, a situation may arise where physical contact or physical restraint is warranted. Regulation 38 of the School Education Regulations 2000 states that school staff may, under certain conditions, use physical contact with Learners.

Staff may act, including physical contact with a Learner or a Learner's property, as is reasonable to:

- manage or care for a Learner; or

- maintain or re-establish order; or

- prevent or restrain a person from placing at risk the safety of any person.

For an understanding of how and under what circumstances this is appropriate please refer to the Physical Contact with Learners Guidelines.

After consideration of risk, actions may include but are not limited to:

- physical intervention.

- physical intervention with support from other Trainers.

- removal of other Learners from the area; and/or

- calls to local police or emergency services.

For further information on how this matter will be handled, please refer to Incident Reporting Procedure & Incident Investigation, Corrective and Preventative Action Procedure. The IMT will be responsible for determining further actions as well as identifying appropriate individuals to make contact with emergency contacts.

17. Force Majeure

Evacuation (Fire, Earthquake, Hazardous Substance or Bomb threat)

Response and responsibilities

In the event of a fire, earthquake, release of a hazardous substance or bomb threat that results in the need to evacuate the premises, Trainers are responsible for safely escorting Learners out of the campus.

Preparedness

Evacuation drills occur on a twelve-month basis and Learners are provided with information about evacuation procedures as part of their induction.

Note: Refusals to leave; where the Learner is refusing to leave, it must be documented by two staff members.

Lockdown

Response and responsibilities

Lockdown occurs when isolating Learners, staff and visitors from a perceived threat of physical harm at the site by confining people to classrooms or other buildings. Management is responsible for determining the appropriate action of confrontation with the individual in question, contacting local police or emergency response.

Preparedness

The enrolment form allows individuals to identify where court orders are in place which Assured Learning Australia needs to be aware of. This information will be passed on to Trainers where relevant. Assured Learning Australia can refer the learner on to counselling and mentoring services where this information is noted or identified.

Accident/injury while on campus

For further information on how this matter will be handled, please refer to WHS Policy and Procedure. The IMT will be responsible for determining further actions as well as identifying appropriate individuals to make contact with emergency contacts.

Destruction to property

Any instance where a Learner wilfully causes damage to Company property will result in immediate removal from class, a formal written warning, development of an IEP and consideration in relation to cancellation of the Learner's enrolment.

At all times the health, safety and welfare of Learners and Staff are paramount. No Staff member or Educator should willingly place themselves in danger. Physical contact with Learners is not allowed to prevent damage to property, with the exception of a circumstance where the behaviour also presents significant risk to the Learner's own physical safety or the safety of others.

The process for management of this includes:

• removal of other Learners from the area.

• verbal notification to the Learner to stop the behaviour and identification that the behaviour is a breach of the Code of Conduct.

• notification to management of the incident.

Upon completion of the damage, Trainers should remove the Learner from training for discussion and further action. It is recommended that the Learner speak with the Mentor or QA to document the incident and liaise with the IMT on further actions.

Major accident or incident resulting in death on campus

For further information on how this matter will be handled, please refer to WHS Policy & Procedure.

The IMT will be responsible for determining further actions as well as identifying appropriate individuals to make contact with emergency contacts.

Any incident resulting in a death on campus will trigger an Evacuation and be classified as a Critical Incident. The IMT is required to convene and determine the extent to which counselling and support services will be provided to Staff and Learners. Support services should include but are not limited to:

- review of directly affected Learners and Staff for signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

- grief counselling services for all Staff and Learners.

- presentations by grief counselling services to affected Learners & Staff.

Illegal objects/substances on site

There is no general right for Assured Learning Australia staff, trainers and assessors to search Learner possessions and confiscate Learner property. Trainers are not vested with the same powers as Police.

Assured Learning Australia policy states that Learners and staff are not allowed to bring weapons or drugs on campus. If illegal objects such as weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia are found on campus, Assured Learning Australia reserves the right to confiscate these items and alert police to their presence.

As such, response measures may include searching bags and lockers where there is a reasonable suspicion that such an object is in the possession of the Learner. It is always preferable for staff to request Learners to open their own bags and lockers for inspection. If the Learner is not sufficiently mature to make a reasonable and informed decision to permit a search of their possessions, Assured Learning Australia should obtain the consent of the parent. If the Learner is sufficiently mature to make the decision and refuses permission, the search should not be conducted unless:

- staff have reasonable suspicion that the Learner is in possession of a hazardous item such as a weapon or drugs **AND**

- the item poses an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of Learners and staff.

Consideration should be given to whether Police assistance should be sought to conduct a search.

Any search of a Learner's bag should be undertaken in a private setting away from other Learners and dealt with in a sensitive manner. Treating a Learner with respect, informing them of the reasons for the search and allowing them to be present with an independent observer, such as a member of staff, makes the process less intrusive and the Learner is more likely to cooperate.

Under the influence on site

Assured Learning Australia has a policy that Learners and staff are not allowed on site under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Any person under the influence represents a risk to themselves and other Learners and staff. Particularly considering the training offered, Learners under the influence are not able to safely operate potentially dangers equipment such as power tools.

Staff need to be aware of the potential signs of Learners and/or staff under the influence. Symptoms associated with substance abuse are dependent upon the type of substance used. The following outlines observable symptoms for drugs and alcohol abuse for Learners.

- Physical and health warning signs of drug abuse

- Eyes that are bloodshot or pupils that are smaller or larger than normal

- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns

- Sudden weight loss or weight gain

- Deterioration in personal grooming or physical appearance.

- Impaired coordination, injuries/accidents/bruises that they won't or can't tell you about - they don't know how they got hurt.

- Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing

- Shakes, tremors, incoherent or slurred speech, impaired or unstable coordination.

Behavioural signs of alcohol or drug abuse

- Skipping class, declining grades.

- Drop in attendance and performance at work - loss of interest in extracurricular activities, hobbies, sports or exercise - decreased motivation.

- Complaints from co-workers, supervisors, teachers or classmates.

- Missing money, valuables, prescription or prescription drugs, borrowing and stealing money.

- Acting isolated, silent, withdrawn, engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviours.

- Clashes with family values and beliefs.

- Preoccupation with alcohol and drug-related lifestyle in music, clothing and posters.

- Demanding more privacy, locking doors and avoiding eye contact.

- Sudden change in relationships, friends, favourite hangouts, and hobbies.

- Frequently getting into trouble (arguments, fights, accidents, illegal activities).

- Using incense, perfume, air freshener to hide smell of smoke or drugs.

- Using eyedrops to mask bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils.

Psychological warning signs of alcohol or drug abuse.

- Unexplained, confusing change in personality and/or attitude.

- Sudden mood changes, irritability, angry outbursts or laughing at nothing.

- Periods of unusual hyperactivity or agitation.

- Lack of motivation; inability to focus, appears lethargic or "spaced out".

- Appears fearful, withdrawn, anxious, or paranoid, with no apparent reason.

Assured Learning Australia has a policy in place where Learners can be asked to undertake a drug test where they present with symptoms that would reasonably indicate to an Educator to be under the influence and represent an immediate threat to the safety of themselves or other Learners if they remain on site under the influence.

Where a Learner discloses that they are under the influence or where a drug test confirms a positive result, the following actions will be taken:

- Results or disclosure will be placed in the Learners confidential file.

- Learner will be removed from the class for the day.

- The Learner will need to undertake counselling.

- An Individual Education Plan will be put in place to identify positive behaviours and support mechanisms.

Where the Learner is under the age of 18 years, the results will be shared with the nominated parent or guardian.

Leaving campus/training without permission or notification

Learners under the age of 18 are not allowed to leave the campus without express permission. Permission must be granted by parent or guardians, and Trainers must always be aware of Learner's location. Written permission is sought prior to or upon enrolment from parent/guardians. Verbal permission will be granted or denied by Trainers based on the Learner's participation and progress within the course. Where learners leave during an assessment without permission of the trainer, Assured Learning Australia reserves the right to charge fees for reassessment.

Unsafe use of equipment or general unsafe behaviour

All Learners are provided with inductions on how to use equipment and materials safely, this occurs upon the commencement of the qualification through WHS/OHS units as well as continually throughout training as new tools and equipment are introduced.

Where Learners do not conduct themselves in line with OHS/WHS, the following process is applied:

- Informal verbal warning

- Formal verbal warning (conducted one on one with Learner privately; "This is a formal verbal warning based on your decision to XXXX, we must maintain a safe environment for you and everyone else, as well as apply safety standards. If you continue to XXX, then we must remove you from practical training and issue a formal written warning. I need you to explain to me how your actions have breached OHS/WHS, why it was unsafe?")

Once the Learner has acknowledged, the formal verbal warning is to be documented via email or in a note on the Learner's profile.

18. Documenting incidents and issues

Where an incident of Learner behaviour needs to be documented, or where Learners participate in counselling, a file is created for the Learner in the Quality Drive/ Learner Critical Incidents / Learner Last Name_Learner first name. This folder has restricted access to the Directors and QA and is to be treated as confidential. Incidents as well as follow ups and debriefings need to be recorded and stored in the Learners file and within the Critical Incident Register.

Documentation:

- Sample emergency and critical incident management plan for individual Learners

- Critical Incident Reporting Form

19. Debriefing

Debriefing should be carried out within three to seven days of the critical incident, when affected staff and Learners have had enough time to take in the experience. Debriefing is not counselling. It is a structured voluntary discussion aimed at putting an abnormal event into perspective. It offers individuals clarity about the critical incident they have experienced and assists them to establish a process for recovery.

The Debriefer helps individuals to explore and understand a range of issues, including:

- The sequence of events

- The causes and consequences

- Each person's experience

- Any memories triggered by the incident

- Normal psychological reactions to critical incidents

- Methods to manage emotional responses resulting from a critical incident.

20. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed each year and as a standing item, include details of the date it was reviewed.

March 2025 - Reviewed in line with new RTO Standards (draft version) and DEWR policy guidance

June 2025 - Finalised

October 2025 – reference to previous RTO Standards removed.

Policy additions or amendments

Separate to the mandated annual review, the policy may be varied at any time due to legislative changes or to fall in line with widely accepted best practices in the workplace. In the event of any changes, the policy will be updated, and relevant stakeholders advised.

Lyle Barrett – CEO

Appendix- Support Referral Services

Study Support

One of the biggest challenges with study can be setting up good habits and knowing how to study. Here's a combination of websites and apps that can help you develop and maintain good study habits:

<u>Websites</u>

Khan Academy

Focus: Comprehensive educational resource.

Features: Offers a wide range of free courses covering various subjects. The platform includes video lessons, practice exercises, and a personalised learning dashboard. It's excellent for reinforcing classroom learning or for self-paced study.

Website: Khan Academy

Quizlet

Focus: Study tools and flashcards.

Features: Allows learners to create and use flashcards, practice quizzes, and games to enhance learning. It's particularly useful for memorisation and review of key concepts.

Website: Quizlet

<u>Apps</u>

Forest

Focus: Time management and focus.

Features: Helps users stay focused by planting a virtual tree that grows while you work and dies if you leave the app to check your phone. It's a playful way to encourage sustained focus during study sessions.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Evernote

Focus: Note-taking and organisation.

Features: A powerful tool for organising notes, documents, and to-do lists. It allows users to capture notes in various formats and sync them across devices, making it great for keeping study materials organised.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

My Study Life

Focus: Scheduling and task management.

Features: A cross-platform planner for learners, teachers, and lecturers designed to make your study life easier. It allows you to store your classes, homework, and exams in the cloud, making it available on any device.

Platform: Available on iOS, Android, and Windows.

These resources cater to different aspects of studying, from time management and focus to organising study materials and reinforcing learning through practice and quizzes. They can be invaluable aids for learners seeking to improve their study habits and academic performance.

Learner Wellbeing Support Referral Services

Lifeline Australia: A national charity providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Website: Lifeline Australia
https://www.lifeline.org.au/

Phone: 13 11 14

Headspace: National youth mental health foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25-year-olds.

Website: Headspace
https://headspace.org.au/

You can chat online by creating an account https://headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/

Phone: (03) 9027 0100

1800RESPECT: The National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service. It provides 24/7 counselling and support for people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, sexual assault, domestic or family violence.

Website: 1800RESPECT
https://www.1800respect.org.au/

Phone: 1800 737 732

Beyond Blue: Offers information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. They provide resources, online forums, and counselling services.

Website: Beyond Blue

Phone: 1300 22 4636
https://www.beyondblue.org.au/

Apps to Help Learner Wellbeing

Mindfulness and Stress Management Tools

Headspace

Focus: Mindfulness and meditation.

Features: Headspace offers guided meditations, mindfulness exercises, and sleep aids. It is designed to help users reduce stress, improve focus, and sleep better. The app starts with a basic course that teaches the fundamentals of mindfulness and meditation.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Calm

Focus: Meditation, sleep, and relaxation.

Features: Calm provides guided meditations, sleep stories, breathing programs, and relaxing music. It is particularly known for its sleep stories, which are designed to help users fall asleep more easily. The app also includes mindfulness exercises and programs tailored for anxiety reduction and improved focus.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Smiling Mind

Focus: Mindfulness meditation.

Features: Developed by psychologists and educators, Smiling Mind offers a variety of meditation programs for different age groups and needs. The app aims to improve mental health, reduce stress, and increase resilience and emotional intelligence.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

These apps are widely used and have been highly rated for their quality content and user-friendly interfaces. They are particularly useful for individuals looking to incorporate mindfulness and meditation into their daily routine to enhance mental health and well-being. As always, while these apps can provide great support, they are not a substitute for professional mental health care if you are dealing with serious mental health issues.

<u>Apps for Physical Health and Nutrition</u>

Note: Assured Learning Australia has undertaken general research on the top apps for fitness, serious concerns about fitness and nutrition should be undertaken with a doctor. This list is provided to provide some basic support and lead learners in the right direction for health resources.

For Physical Health

MyFitnessPal

Focus: Fitness tracking and exercise logging.

Features: Allows users to log and track activities, set goals, and monitor progress. It also includes a vast database of exercises for various fitness levels.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Strava

Focus: Running and cycling tracking.

Features: Popular among runners and cyclists for tracking routes, pace, and progress. It also has a social feature to connect with other athletes.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Nike Training Club

Focus: Comprehensive workout routines.

Features: Offers a range of workouts designed by professional trainers, including strength, cardio, yoga, and more. It also provides personalised workout plans.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

7 Minute Workout

Focus: Quick, effective workouts.

Features: Offers high-intensity interval training exercises that can be done in just 7 minutes, ideal for busy schedules.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

For Nutritional Health

MyFitnessPal

Focus: Dietary tracking and nutritional information.

Features: Includes a food diary, barcode scanner, recipe importer, and a database of over 11 million foods. It helps in tracking calorie intake and diet planning.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Yummly

Focus: Healthy recipes and meal planning.

Features: Provides recipe recommendations personalised to your dietary preferences and needs, including allergy restrictions, and offers a meal planning tool.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Fooducate

Focus: Educational tool for healthy eating.

Features: Grades foods based on their nutritional value, tracks calorie quality, and offers healthy alternatives. It's great for learning about nutrition in your food choices.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.

Water Drink Reminder

Focus: Hydration tracking.

Features: Helps you stay hydrated by tracking your water intake and reminding you to drink water throughout the day.

Platform: Available on iOS and Android.