

Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits and Opportunity Policy

Overview

The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd supports the concept of equal opportunity and is committed to providing all staff, students and potential students with a working and learning environment which values diversity, respects differences and provides an environment that is safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Scope and Application

This policy is designed to provide staff and students with the knowledge of their rights for Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits and Opportunity and how it is implemented by the Health Arts College.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the following applies:

The Act refers to the *Vet Student Loans Act 2016*

Student/s refers to genuine students as defined in section 5 of VET Student Loans Rules 2016

Fair Treatment The College will treat fairly all Students and potential Students.

Student Selection The College has open, fair and transparent procedures, based on merit for making decisions about:

- a) the selection, from among Potential Students; and
- b) the treatment of Students.

The College is The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd

Policy Principles

1. Fair Treatment

1.1 The College treats fairly all of its students. This applies to those who are, or who would be, entitled to VET Student Loans assistance and all of the persons seeking to enrol in a VET subject of study that meets the College' course requirements and who are, or would be entitled to VET Student Loans specifically the fairness requirements include:

- a. fair treatment
- b. equal benefits and opportunities
- c. student grievance procedures
- d. student review procedures
- e. requirements to appoint review officers
- f. personal information procedures
- g. tuition assurance

1.2 The application of fair treatment does not require that all students are treated the same. Fairness must be considered in the context of all the relevant circumstances. There will be situations in which the fair treatment of students may result in students in varying circumstances being treated differently.

1.3 The College publishes these fairness procedures and makes them publicly available on its website www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

2. Equal Benefits and Opportunities

2.1 The College has open, fair and transparent procedures that, in its reasonable view, are based on merit for making decisions about students undertaking, and persons applying for, VET approved courses. This includes:

- a. The selection, from among the persons who are, or would be, entitled to VET Student Loans under Division 2 of The VET Student Loans Act 2016 and who seek to enroll with the College in a VET subject of study that meets the requirements of persons to enroll; and
- b. The treatment of students who are, or who would be, entitled to VET Student Loans under Section 84 of The VET Student Loans Act undertaking a VET approved course or part of the course.

2.2 Refer below to 'Selection Procedures'

3. Application of Merit

3.1 The application of merit in decision-making processes involves the College considering each application on a case by case basis and not applying inflexible policies that preclude eligible applicants from having their application considered.

4. No income test

6.1 The College does not apply an income test when making decisions about which students are eligible for enrolment or for the application of VET Student Loans. The College also protects student fees paid in advance and is a financial member of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) and is a member of the ACPET Australian Student Tuition Assurance Scheme (ACPET ASTAS) to meet VET tuition assurance requirements.

5. Educational disadvantage

5.1 When making decisions about the selection of students, The College takes educational disadvantages that a particular student has experienced into account, including consideration of the actual disadvantages that a particular student has experienced. The College does not use 'proxy indicators' of educational disadvantage in the absence of clear evidence that all students in such a group necessarily suffered educational disadvantage. Such proxy indicators are not used because they assume that all people who satisfy the proxy condition (e.g. being from a low income group or being from a rural area) have necessarily experienced educational disadvantage. The College considers a particular student's specific circumstances before making a decision about whether the student has actually suffered educational disadvantage.

6. Restricted access arrangement

6.1 When making decisions about the selection of students, the College takes into account students that are enrolled under a restricted access arrangement, as appropriate. (This is an agreement entered into between the College and an employer or industry body for the provision of a course(s) or places in a course(s) in which enrolment is limited or restricted to employees of the employer or industry body.)

Selection Process

7. Pre-enrolment

7.1 All potential students are provided with the following information, related to the course/s of interest. This information is disseminated via website and/or provided to students by the staff at The Health Arts College:

- a. Selection processes
- b. course content and outcomes
- c. fees, charges and refund policy
- d. Information relating to VET Student Loans as per Section 98 of the VET Student Loans Rules 2016
- e. fair treatment, equal benefits and opportunities processes
- f. provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance
- g. learning support arrangements to achieve satisfactory course progress
- h. learning strategies and methods
- i. welfare and guidance services
- j. grievances, complaints and appeals processes
- k. disciplinary processes
- l. College approach to access and equity
- m. Skills recognition /Credit Transfer processes
- n. privacy requirements

7.2 References are made to The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd Policies and Procedures which are available on the College website www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook:

- a. Fair Treatment, Equal Benefits and Opportunities Policy and Procedures;
- b. Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures;
- c. Privacy Policy;
- d. Student Review Procedures VET Tuition Fee Refund Policy (Including Re-Crediting of FEE-HELP Balance Policy); and
- e. Tuition Assurance and membership of the Australian Student Tuition Assurance Scheme Operator (ACPET ASTAS) to meet VET tuition assurance requirements.

7.3 Prospective student enquiries are directed to the Academic and Student Support or Administration Officers that have the appropriate knowledge. Prospective students are encouraged to attend the College or to discuss with the Administration or Academic and Student Support Officer, details specific to intending VET students. Information Sessions may be scheduled throughout the year, and offer prospective students information concerning the above. Prospective students unable to attend information sessions are encouraged to discuss their enrolment application with Support Services staff and/or to make an interview time. Applicants are personally interviewed.

8. Applications

8.1 Applicants for full time study should apply through The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd.

9. Fair Selection Process

9.1 Selection is undertaken in a fair and transparent manner, based on a demonstration of ability to successfully participate in the study program and the completion of any prerequisites that may apply to a course or subject or VET study. This is demonstrated through interview. Students are not compromised on social, cultural, language, literacy, sex, religious, physical or other status. The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd has equal benefits and opportunities processes. Adult student/learner applicants are required to demonstrate readiness for a return to study or capabilities based on prior learning. All applicants are interviewed and may be required to provide some written responses to questions. Students who are returning to study or who may have learning difficulties are considered for a 'graduated entry', where a reduced study load may be offered. Where applicants do not have the prerequisites for course entry, as stated in the course information, they

may be offered an alternative course more appropriate to their current skill level. Course fees are finalised on enrolment.

10. Recognition

10.1 The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd has mutual recognition processes for credit transfer where students have completed equivalent studies with other RTOs. It also has processes for recognising work and life experiences which are relevant to competencies to be undertaken in a VET approved Course or Part of the Course. Any queries concerning selection procedures, prerequisites, recognition, policies and procedures should be directed to the student services and The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd website, www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

11. Enrolment

14.1 All candidates are notified in writing of their application result. Appeals may be lodged in writing to the CEO and are dealt with under The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd Grievance Policy and Procedures.

12. Induction/Orientation

12.1 All enrolled students are offered an orientation program. This is to confirm responsibilities and to provide further information regarding student services, facilities, vocational services, policies and procedures and the College resources. Students who are unable to attend orientation sessions are directed to the administration staff or student support officer and the College web site for further information. Students have access to a current Student Handbook summarising College policies and procedures, course information, and student responsibilities. Any queries concerning selection procedures and prerequisites should be directed to the student support services and the website, www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

13. Student Grievance Procedures

13.1 The College has student grievance procedures for dealing with complaints about academic and non-academic matters by students and persons who seek to enrol with the school. The College addresses complaints and appeals efficiently and effectively and makes publicly available its student grievance procedures available at www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook. The student grievance procedures required under VET-Student Loans are in addition to other requirements or responsibilities that The College has in place. There are grievance procedures addressing both Academic and Non-Academic matters.

14. Academic Matters

14.1 Academic matters include those matters which relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course. Please see Grievance Policy and Procedures for Academic Matters available at www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

15. Non-academic matters

15.1 Non-academic matters include those matters which do not relate to student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a course and include complaints in relation to personal information that The College holds in relation to a student. Non-academic grievances can arise from events occurring or from decisions made by The College and cover issues such as financial matters, payments, application procedures, exclusions from events and facilities, harassment, vilification, discrimination, and the use or misuse of personal information. Please see Grievance Policy and Procedures for Non-Academic Matters available at the website www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

16. Requirements

16.1 The College has arrangements for handling complaints that:

- a. are easily accessible to students
- b. are provided at no cost, or at a reasonable cost and which encourage timely resolution of complaints
- c. include provision for independent internal investigation of complaints which remain unresolved

- d. include provision for external review of decisions made following any internal investigation and a mechanism for considering any recommendations arising from external review
- e. are complete, unambiguous and are agreed to and ratified by The College
- f. do not discriminate or victimise
- g. are communicated to staff who are trained in their application
- h. specify reasonable timelines for responses
- i. allow third party representation
- j. if requested, provide reasons and a full explanation in writing of decisions and actions taken and require confidential accurate records of all grievances to be kept for at least 5 years.
- k. Students or those persons seeking to enroll with The College are entitled to access the student grievance procedures, regardless of the location of the campus at which the grievance has arisen, the student's place of residence or the mode in which they study.

17. Privacy Complaints and Advice

17.1 Student grievance procedures extend to complaints about breaches of personal information by The College (including its officers, employees and those who perform services by or on behalf of The College and relating to information obtained for the purposes of VET Student Loans and repayment of VET Student Loans. The Privacy Policy is available at the website www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

Applications and Student Review Procedures (reviewable decisions)

18. Applications

18.1 Applications for VET Student Loans are subject to the requirements of VET Student Loans Rules 2016. Any queries or initial requests for a change must be made in writing, via email to study@thacollege.edu.au or post to The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd 1/94 Foster Street, Dandenong, VIC 3175 clearly stating the reasons for the requested change and including all relevant documentation.

19. Review

19.1 A person has the right to apply for a review of a decision by The College to not re-credit or remit their FEE HELP balance (reviewable decisions). The Heath Arts College Pty Ltd has student review procedures for reconsidering such decisions. Students should submit a valid request for review in writing, including the required content, clearly stating the reasons. The College provides details of letters or required content of the letters that providers are required to send to a person who has requested the review of a decision to not re-credit or remit their FEE HELP balance. A request for a formal review of the decision made should be directed to the CEO, who is the person who can review decisions The College must acknowledge receipt of an application for review of a decision in writing, and inform the applicant that, if the reviewer has not advised the applicant of a decision within 45 days of receiving the application for review, the reviewer is taken to have confirmed the original decision The College makes publicly available its policy at the website www.thacollege.edu.au and Student Handbook.

20. Privacy - Personal Information Procedures

20.1 The College with the information privacy principles relating to information obtained for the purposes of VET Student Loans. The College has a personal information privacy policy which allows students to apply for and receive information that The College holds about them. The Privacy Policy is available on the website. This policy does not permit the disclosure of a student's personal information to a third party without specific, written, signed instruction by the student in specific circumstances.

Publication

This *Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits and Opportunity Policy and Procedure* will be made available to Students and

Potential Students through publication on the website www.thacollege.edu.au.