

Vision College Limited
Disability Strategy and Action Plan - 2023

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1. Overview

Vision College Limited is committed to supporting diversity and inclusion for all learners in our community.

To ensure that we are truly enacting our values in supporting all sectors of our community, we seek to create a warm, inclusive, and welcoming environment so that learners can flourish, succeed, and achieve their goals.

Vision College's Disability Action Plan (DAP) is the organisation's programme for inclusivity, support and accessibility for people of all abilities. This means continuously assessing and reviewing our learning environments on how they might be improved.

The organisation's Disability Action Plan provides the opportunity to identify and remove barriers so people of all abilities may achieve their potential. We are committed:

1. To working proactively with stakeholders to develop an organisation that embodies inclusion and respect for all people.
2. To providing equal opportunities for all learners.
3. To monitor, review and report on outcomes to ensure the organisation achieves its vision of inclusion and success for all people.

2. Definition

The New Zealand Disability Strategy explains that disability is not something individuals have, rather, what some individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, learning, or other impairments.

On that basis, "disability is the process that occurs when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have."

Therefore, people with impairments can be disabled by their environment. That is, disability occurs when people with impairments face barriers in society or within an organisation. This can occur through aspects such as negative attitudes, physical barriers, communication and information barriers, etc.

3. Reasons for a DAP

- 3.1. Encourages broader participation (24% of people in Aotearoa New Zealand have an impairment lasting six months or more).
- 3.2. Opens the door to additional people with a range of abilities.
- 3.3. Minimises discrimination and complaints.
- 3.4. Meets government expectations, such as the Tertiary Education Commission.
- 3.5. Legal and ethical requirements - Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), requires:
 - equality of access to an inclusive, quality education (Art 24(2)(b))

- reasonable accommodation of the requirements of disabled students (Art 24(2)(c))
- the delivery of support within the general education system (Art 24(2)(d))
- support measures that are effective, individualised, provide an environment that maximises academic and social development, and is consistent with the goal of full inclusion (Art 24(2)(e)).

4. Vision and Strategy

Vision College has a vision is to become a leader in disability inclusion that involves moving beyond compliance towards a new paradigm for inclusion. This strategy is supported by the senior management including the Board, CEO, and Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Vision College’s Disability Action Plan sits within the organisation’s broader strategic framework and is aligned within its first and second Key Strategic Elements: To create and deliver outstanding learning experiences for students and Championing the best in one another – our staff team.

Significant and sustainable change will not occur without an action plan. Social, environmental, digital, and attitudinal challenges and barriers may prohibit the inclusion, success, and participation of persons with an impairment and therefore barriers and challenges need to be addressed for Vision College to achieve its strategic goals for inclusion.

Vision College’s DAP is a strategy for changing practices that might result in discrimination (intentional or unintentional), against people with impairments and to improve outcomes for those learners in their education journey.

5. Responsibilities

The CEO, with support from the SLT is responsible for the leadership of the DAP initiative. The CEO is responsible to ensure the student voice, including those with disabilities, is well represented in a culturally safe and relevant manner during the development and ongoing implementation of the DAP.

The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team is responsible for the implementation of this strategy. The team is made up of staff across the organisation and meets regularly with records of minutes kept. The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team works closely with the Cultural Team and Academic and Quality Committee (AQC). The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team reports to the CEO. The CEO reports on DAP progress to the Vision College Board.

6. Strategic Process

6.1. Allocation of responsibilities

The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team is responsible for the implementation of this strategy. The team is made up of staff across the organisation and meets regularly with records of minutes kept. The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team works closely with the Cultural Team and AQC. The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team reports to the CEO. The CEO reports to the Vision College Board on DAP progress.

6.2. Review of current practices

This means reviewing our current practices using the Kia Ōrite Toolkit Disability GAP Analysis - Learning support responsibilities. The analysis assesses the following areas:

- Appropriate use of disabled learners' personal information tools
- learning support and teaching tools
- learning support for Māori disabled learner tools
- examinations and assessment tools
- other diverse learner tools
- learning support for learners with different impairments tools
- access to general and specialist support services tools
- transition into employment tools
- staff development tools

Once the assessment is completed, action plans are prepared and reviewed. The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team works through the priority areas to improve the organisation's ability to create an inclusive and supportive environment for disabled learners. The DAP Actionable Items worksheet is used to track actions, outcomes, responsibility, and timelines.

6.3. Setting Goals and Targets

Goals and targets are reviewed and include the following:

- current position, for example parity of achievement
- baseline and annual improvements
- professional development and training
- surveys

A schedule of deliverables is to be prepared annually to identify milestones and timelines – see section 7.

6.4. Evaluation strategies

Reviewing our current and future practices to track improvements and opportunities for further development is an important aspect of the DAP. The following items are reviewed:

- numbers of disabled learners
- levels of academic achievement by disabled learners
- employment outcomes for disabled learners
- changes in the staff understanding of disability discrimination issues
- physical accessibility of education facilities
- learning support and teaching tools
- learning support for Māori disabled learners

6.5. Student Voice

Working in partnership with our students we seek to hear and implement their voice in preparing and delivering the DAP. The students voice is made up from representatives of the student body, including learners with disabilities and neuro-diversities. The DAP Team will:

- engage the student voice in developing and implementing the DAP, with emphasis on hearing and implementing the voice of disabled learners
- invite the student voice to participate in DAP Team meetings and other meetings as appropriate
- seek feedback from the student voice on the effectiveness of DAP.

6.6. Communication of Policies and Programmes

The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team is responsible for the development of DAP policies and programmes for the organisation. This includes preparing and scheduling professional development and training of staff. Professional development and training records are kept. All policies and programmes are reviewed and approved by the AQC. All staff are updated on policy releases and programme reviews.

7. DAP in Action – Schedule of deliverables - 2023

7.1. Milestones and timelines

The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP Team is responsible to prepare a schedule of deliverables for each calendar year. The schedule of deliverables is to include: Milestone title, Milestone description and Deliverable date.

At the end of each calendar year, and potentially more frequently, an assessment of outcomes is to be noted against each Milestone and actions implemented to address any identified gaps.

At the beginning of each calendar year a new schedule of deliverables is to be prepared and reviewed by the Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP team.

No.	Milestone title	Milestone description	Deliverable date
Governance			
1.	Governance reporting	Through the Academic Quality Committee (AQC) the board is to be provided with updates on the DAP progress.	Bimonthly
2.	DAP Team	The Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP team is tasked with the implementation of the DAP strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The CEO is responsible for this initiative	Ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting facilitation is shared amongst team members • Meetings are to occur bi-monthly • Using the Toolkit, review the current DAP progress and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement • The student voice, including learners with disabilities are to be invited to at least two meetings per year • Meeting minutes are to be kept 	
3.	DAP strategy and schedule of deliverables	<p>A DAP schedule of deliverables is to be prepared and reviewed by the Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review is to occur within the 1st quarter of each calendar year • The DAP strategy is then to be approved by the AQC. 	31/3/2023
Creating and delivering outstanding learning experiences for students			
4.	Student Voice	<p>Involve the Student Voice, including representation from Māori, Pasifika, Non-Māori/Non-Pasifika and learners with disabilities and neurodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Student Voice initiatives that improve provider practice and processes and champion learner success. • Invite the Student Voice to attend at least two Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP team meetings per year. • Implement Student Voice initiatives that improve provider practice and processes and champion learner success. 	30/11/2023
5.	Cultural inclusivity	Engage the perspective of the Cultural team to support learners with disabilities and neurodiversity in a culturally safe and relevant manner.	Ongoing
6.	Survey	Learners are invited to participate in a student survey to express their views and opinions on how effective the organisation is	30/10/2023

		<p>in supporting learners with disabilities.</p> <p>Survey data is analysed and opportunities for improvement implemented with future surveys to track outcomes and improvements.</p>	
Championing the best in one another – our staff team			
7.	Staff professional development – <i>empowering the team</i>	<p>Support staff through professional development programmes focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upskilling staff on understanding types of disabilities and impairments and how to create positive learning environments for learners with disabilities and neuro-diversities 	30/11/2023
Building strong stakeholder/industry relationships			
8.	Strengthening Learner/Student and Industry Voice – <i>winning partnerships</i>	<p>Strengthen Learner/Student and Industry Voice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting employers/stakeholders to participate in Learner Wellbeing, Safety and DAP meeting – once a year. Review industry feedback and implement initiatives to strengthen industry’s voice, provider practice for student success, especially those with disabilities and neuro-diversities. 	31/10/2023
9.	Stakeholder support	<p>Working with our TEC relationship manager, seek their input and support in the development of our DAP strategy and schedule of deliverables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure our plan aligns with TEC’s expectations. 	30/4/2023
Academic integrity and business excellence			
10.	Data Collection	<p>Ensure effective systems are in place to collect and analyse outcomes for learners with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis will be available through the introduction of a new SMS system – Ensign Learnings and insights from data analysis are to be sensitively applied to help improve learning experiences and outcomes for learners with disabilities. 	30/8/2023