

Learning Support Policy



Williamstown High School

CONTENTS:

1. Rationale	pg. 3
2. Purpose	pg. 3
3. Implementation	pg. 3
4. Specific procedures	pg. 6
5. Evaluation and review	pg. 7
6. Definitions and references	pg. 7
7. Consultative process	pg. 8

A Williamstown High School education provides a dynamic learning culture that promotes integrity, innovation and the individual. As a school community we value:

- Excellence and creativity in our achievements and ambitions.
- Integrity and honesty in our actions and relationships.
- Diversity in our curriculum, in each other and in our community.
- Strong and open communication between our school and our homes, and between our teachers, our students and our families.
- A commitment to social justice and a passion to protect and improve our environment and our community.

1. RATIONALE

Williamstown High School values individual students. The School strives to support every student in their endeavor to achieve and recognises that some students will need extra assistance to do this. For this reason, the School has an inclusive support framework that enables all students to access the curriculum at their point of need.

Under section 32 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, education providers must comply with the *Disability Standards for Education 2005*. The Standards seek to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. To comply with the Standards, education providers must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with a disability.

Williamstown High School has a focus on growth for all students, irrespective of their entry point to learning. The school aims to celebrate the achievement of all students, at all levels.

2. PURPOSE

This policy ensures that all students requiring additional learning support are given the appropriate supports to access the curriculum. It provides guidance to the Williamstown High School Community as to what supports can be offered in order to ensure the achievement of positive learning outcomes.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Students who will be supported by this policy include:

- Students with a diagnosed learning need who are funded through the Department of Education and Training
- Students with a diagnosed learning need who are *not* funded through the Department of Education and Training
- Students who are identified as two years or more below in Literacy and/or Numeracy
- Students who are eligible for 'out of home care' support through the Department of Education and Training, and the Department of Health and Human Services
- Students who have had significant absences or disrupted learning
- Any students who are identified as benefitting from a targeted learning approach
- Students who are identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Students covered by the learning support policy will be considered to have '*Additional Educational Needs*'.

3.2 What is meant by the term '*Additional Educational Needs*' (AEN)?

Students will be considered to have an '*Additional Educational Need*' if they have been assessed by an external provider and diagnosed as having difficulties with their learning, or, if they are identified within the school as being two or more years below the expected achievement level in literacy or numeracy for their age or year level.

An '*Additional Educational Need*' may be due to a number of reasons including, but not limited to:

- Physical disability (e.g. blindness, Cerebral Palsy)
- Learning disability (e.g. Dyslexia, Language Processing Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder)

3.3 Supports Offered

Support strategies that may be provided include, but are not limited to:

- Differentiated work
- Modified assessment and programs at years 7 to 10

- Educational Support Plans
- Individual Learning Plans and Programs
- Student Support Group meetings
- Parent liaison meetings
- Modified timetable (withdrawal from certain subjects)
- Flexible examination conditions (based on advice from the VCAA Special Provisions for senior students, or NAPLAN guidelines for junior students)
- Withdrawal from class for targeted interventions
- Counselling with the Student Wellbeing Coordinators
- In-class support from specialist integration aides (dependent on funding)

Support strategies offered will be decided by the *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* at the relevant campus, in consultation with others, including but not limited to, the *Student Welfare Coordinator*, *Assistant Principals*, *classroom teachers*, the *Student Support Group*, *Differentiation Leading Teacher*, the *student*, and *parents/guardians*.

3.4 Staff support

Members of staff at the school provide support to students with *Additional Educational Needs*, in line with the staff member's role, and the students' specific needs. The descriptors below outline responsibility for supporting students with *Additional Educational Needs*:

3.4.1 Assistant Campus Principal:

The *Assistant Campus Principals* will consult with the *Additional Education Needs Coordinator* and/or the *Student Welfare Coordinator* to support all aspects of the implementation of the *Learning Support Policy*. The *Assistant Campus Principal's* role will include, but is not limited to:

- Management and organisation of timetables for modified programs and/or integration aides
- Overseeing and supporting the compilation of applications for DET funding
- Ensuring Student Support Group meetings are conducted with relevant parties
- Ensuring that Individual Learning Plans are written for the students who need this level of support.

3.4.2 Differentiation Leading Teacher:

The *Differentiation Leading Teachers* will monitor students with *Additional Education Needs* and work closely with the *Additional Educational Needs Coordinators* to ensure students are receiving the supports necessary for their learning. The *Differentiation Leading Teacher's* role will include, but is not limited to:

- Conducting Professional Development sessions that demonstrate best practice in teaching and learning; training and educating staff in regards to differentiation strategies, learning modifications, *Educational Support Plans*, *Individual Learning Plans*, and general curriculum delivery, and supporting staff to implement these
- Working with CAT leaders to build staff understanding of, and capacity for, differentiation
- Promoting professional development opportunities to staff that will improve their teaching skills
- Organising and leading *Student Support Group* meetings for students who require this support
- Acting as a point of reference for the *Additional Education Needs Coordinators* to receive support, and to communicate general staff needs
- Assisting and supporting the development of *Individual Learning Plans*

3.4.3 Additional Education Needs Coordinator (Pasco):

The *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* will act as the initial point of reference for families, teachers and students in regards to the provision of additional learning supports. The *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator's* role will include, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring an appropriate level of support is provided to students each year, according to their needs
- Creating, reviewing and updating *Educational Support Plans* for identified students requiring support
- Communicating with students and parents throughout the year in regards to students' needs and progress
- Supporting the *Differentiation Leading Teacher* to ensure *Student Support Group* meetings are organised for students who require this support
- Initiating decisions regarding modification of assessment conditions for internally assessed components of VCE, VCAL and VET courses and internal assessments for years 10 - 12

- Applying for special consideration for externally assessed VCE examinations, and communication with parents in regards to these applications

3.4.4 Additional Education Needs Coordinator (Bayview):

The *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* will act as the initial point of reference for families, teachers and students in regards to the provision of additional learning supports. The *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator's* role will include, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring an appropriate level of support is provided to students each year, according to their needs
- Creating, reviewing and updating *Educational Support Plans* for identified students requiring support
- Communicating with students and parents throughout the year in regards to students' needs and progress
- Supporting the *Differentiation Leading Teacher* to ensure *Student Support Group* meetings are organised for students who require this support
- Initiating decisions regarding modification of assessment conditions for internally assessed assessments for years 7 - 9
- Working with the *Transition Coordinator* to ensure that new year 7 students with an *Additional Educational Need* are identified and supported in their transition to high school

3.4.5 Homegroup Teacher:

The Homegroup Teacher's role will include, but is not limited to:

- Providing day-to-day pastoral support
- Communicating with classroom teachers regarding the needs and progress of students
- Being an integral part of the *Student Support Group* (where appropriate)
- Acting as the first point of contact for parents regarding pastoral issues

3.4.6 Classroom teacher:

The Classroom Teacher's role will include, but is not limited to:

- Being the contact for parent concerns regarding student achievement
- Modifying or differentiating curriculum and classroom environments in line with information in the student's *Educational Support Plan* and *Individual Learning Plan(s)*
- Communicating with the *Additional Education Needs Coordinator* regarding individual student progress on a regular basis
- Completing the section of the *Individual Learning Plan* pertaining to their subject

As with all students, any student with an *Additional Educational Need* will also be supported by the *Student Welfare Coordinators*, *Student Management Leaders* and the *Student Engagement and Wellbeing Leading Teachers*.

4. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

4.1 Identifying students with 'Additional Educational Needs':

Students are referred by one of the following means:

- Department of Education and Training assessment
- Transition information from primary schools
- Metacognition testing
- Visiting Teacher referral*
- Teacher referral*
- Parent referral*

*Referrals will act as a prompt for the possibility of testing to be investigated but do not guarantee that the student will be considered to have an *Additional Educational Need*.

Students who are funded under the *Program for Students with Disabilities* will receive a higher level of targeted support for their learning.

Students who are identified as having a diagnosed learning difficulty (by an external provider), but are not funded under the *Program for Students with Disabilities* will receive support according to their need, as identified by the student, teachers and parents/guardians.

4.2 Differentiation

Differentiation involves changes to the delivery of the core curriculum to allow all students to reach their full potential in that curriculum area. It is expected that work within classes is appropriately differentiated to cater for the needs of a wide range of interests and abilities.

Students with *Additional Educational Needs* will normally be assessed against the same standards as other students in their class but may receive differentiated support to reach their full potential through adjustments to process, content, product or learning environment.

Differentiation support offered may include, but is not limited to:

- Extension of time to complete work
- Instruction or content broken up into smaller pieces for delivery
- Reduction in the amount of work given
- Work or instructions presented differently
- Scaffolded supports to assist with accessing assessment; e.g. page of helpful notes

4.3 Special Assessment Considerations

Some students may require special conditions in which to sit assessed tasks in order to give them equal opportunity to demonstrate their understanding and skills. Special provisions which may be provided include:

- Use of a laptop computer
- Use of a scribe
- Additional time
- A note taker during reading time
- A clarifier
- A separate room
- Rest breaks

At the VCE level, the school will grant special considerations for internally assessed work in line with the guidelines published by the *Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)* and will apply these as far as possible in internal assessment. Special consideration for *Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)* exams will be applied for by the Pasco Campus *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator*, and will be implemented according to advice from the VCAA.

Special consideration at years 7 – 10 will be implemented in line with the expected allowances at VCE level.

4.4 Modified Programs

Students who are identified as working two or more years below the expected level will be provided with an *Individual Learning Plan* which may incorporate modified learning activities and assessment tasks.

4.5 Exemption from core curriculum subjects

All students will be supported to access the subjects of their choice. Under exceptional circumstances a student may be given an exemption from a subject which may be deemed particularly problematic for the student given their individual circumstances. Valid reasons for the removal include, but are not limited to, physical disability, learning impairment and emotional stressors.

A student will be identified as needing to be withdrawn from a core curriculum subject by a referral to the *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* or the *Student Welfare Coordinator*. The decision to exempt a student from a core curriculum subject will be made by the *Student Support Group* in consultation with specialist support staff as appropriate. In making the decision consideration will be given to how the time will be utilised by the student to work towards previously identified educational goals.

4.6 Reporting

Where a student has followed a *modified program* this will be indicated on their end of semester reports by an asterisk next to their achievement level. The result for assessment tasks will indicate how well the student performed on their modified tasks, rather than how well they performed compared to the standard program requirements.

4.7 External support

It is expected that parents will provide additional support for student learning and consider suggestions from the school for student development. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Tutoring
- Educational Assessment
- Organisational support
- Regular communication with the school as to student progress, concerns etc.

5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by School Council in December 2019, in line with our three-year review cycle.

6. DEFINITIONS AND REFERENCES

6.1 Definitions:

6.1.1 Education Support Plans (ESPs)

All students with a diagnosed *Additional Educational Need* will have an *Education Support Plan* produced and distributed to teachers that includes:

- Background information
- Student strengths
- Student difficulties
- Suggested strategies for supporting student learning
- Necessary modifications to environment, curriculum tasks, or assessment
- Student personal statement of needs
- Academic and social goals

Education Support Plans will be updated by the *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* at the beginning of each school year, and reviewed at the end of each school year, following feedback from the previous year's teachers, parents, and the student themselves.

6.1.2 Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)

An *Individual Learning Plan* is a working document used to outline the educational goals, teaching and learning strategies, and/or curriculum adjustments for a student. This plan is developed by the classroom teacher for their subject, in consultation with others, including but not limited to, the *Differentiation Leading Teacher*, *parents/guardians*, other *subject teachers*, the *Additional Educational Needs Coordinator* and the *student*.

A literacy and/or numeracy *Individual Learning Plan* will be developed for students who received DET PSD funding. These will be reviewed on a regular basis. *Individual Learning Plans* may be developed in other subjects, dependent on individual student needs.

All students who are funded under the *Program for Students with Disabilities* will have an *Individual Learning Plan* developed for core subjects, and any additional subjects as necessary. This *Individual Learning Plan* will include short-term SMART goals, expected learning outcomes, and will outline additional at-home supports.

Students who are not funded under the *Program for Students with Disabilities*, but are identified as being 2 or more years below the expected level in literacy and/or numeracy for their age and year level will have an *Individual Learning Plan* developed for English and/or Maths. This document will outline possible teaching and learning strategies, curriculum adjustments, and/or short and long term learning goals. These documents, while being developed for English and Maths, may also be referred to by teachers of other subjects.

6.1.3 Student Support Group (SSG)

A *Student Support Group* is a consultative group, formed to provide support for individual students who are deemed of significant need, in order to ensure that their learning needs are being catered for. This group is instrumental in developing *Individual Learning Plans* and making decisions about the short and long term goals for the student. The *Student Support Group* may be comprised of one or more of the following:

- The student
- Student's parents/guardians
- Differentiation Leading Teacher

- AEN coordinator
- Student welfare coordinator
- Homegroup teacher
- Subject teacher
- External professionals (case worker, tutor, visiting teacher, etc.)

All students who are funded under the DET PSD will have a *Student Support Group* formed to support them, and this group will meet once each term to discuss the student's needs and monitor progress.

Other students may have a *Student Support Group* formed to support them, as deemed necessary by the school.

6.2 References:

Information about the Disability Standards for Education and other relevant guidelines can be found via the below websites:

- <http://www.education.gov.au/disability-standards-education>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/disabilities.aspx>
- <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/quick-guide-australian-discrimination-laws>

**Correct as at 26/10/16*

7. CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

1. Review of the existing policy by the Additional Educational Needs Coordinators; updated to new template format
2. Feedback sought from staff
3. Extensive discussion, consultation & collaboration between Additional Educational Needs Coordinators, Assistant Campus Principals, Differentiation Leading Teachers, and Student Wellbeing Coordinators.
4. Additional Educational Needs students consulted as to what they feel is necessary to support their learning
5. Final draft completed by the Additional Educational Needs Coordinators & presented to School Council

Evaluation & Review:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on: 6 December 2016.

The next review will be in 2019.

Appendices:

1. Literacy ILP template
2. Numeracy Individual Learning Plan template
3. AEN Individual Learning Plan template
4. Education Support Plan template
5. Notification of modification form
6. Notification of subject withdrawal form
7. Student Support Group minutes template