Skills

ICE **E-tec**

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Disability Action Plan:
A pathway for achieving equity

Whakatauki

Naku te rourou, nau te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi

With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive"

By working together we will achieve our goals.

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Introduction

Our Skills Group Vision Statement is "It's our goal to grow people." We think that this vision, together with our organisation culture and commitment to our learners, sits well alongside the TEC's Ōritetanga Learner Success Framework.

This is our first Disability Action Plan. Working through the Kia Ōrite Toolkit has not only given us the opportunity for reviewing our systems, policies and procedures that relate to disabled learners' accessibility and support but has given us a deeper insight into how to create a barrier free and inclusive learning and working environment across our organization.

Skills Group continues to go through significant change and is in an ongoing process of integrating the systems and processes of more than one PTE. In developing this Plan, we have been mindful of these changes and attempted to reflect the range of programmes and modes of delivery and locations across the different PTEs.

Our Trades-based PTEs do not attract many learners that have immediately identifiable physical disabilities although it is not clear if this includes learners with low vision or hearing loss because at the moment, we don't collect this data. In addition, "one of the biggest challenges is that neurodiverse conditions go undiagnosed or unsupported, particularly in early years which can lead to challenges for these learners in tertiary learning." (Quote from Gap Analysis Questionnaire)

It's our goal to offer equitable and inclusive services to all learners and provide an opportunity for disabled learners to access and participate in education and training that accommodates their different needs. Our DAP will be the foundation on which to build a robust pathway to achieve equity and inclusiveness for our disabled learners. This will increase diversity, and engagement of learners that study with us, and reflect our values and vision for learner success.

Definitions

"Disability is in society not in me"
(Consultation comments, The New Zealand Disability Strategy)

"One in five New Zealanders has a long-term impairment". The New Zealand Disability Strategy states that a disability may be "physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, learning or other impairments".

"Disability is the process which happens 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".

(The New Zealand Disability Strategy)

Developing our DAP

Skills Group established an initial working group which formed the foundations of our Disability Advisory Group. Membership includes Māori and Pasifika participation, staff with lived experience of disability, learning support staff and because learner feedback is mainly around Neurodiverse differences, we are seeking broader membership. As the development of workplans continues the membership of this group will grow accordingly.

The Kia Ōrite Toolkit has been and will continue to be, our main source of guidance as we go forward with our plan. The self-assessment tools enabled us to conduct a Gap Analysis of practices and the key areas identified for improvement are listed below.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We acknowledge Te Tiriti of Waitangi and give effect to three key principles:

- **Manākitanga - Participation** – engagement in learning programmes is accessible, non-discriminatory, and inclusive for learners and their whanau, hapu and local iwi
- **Kaitiakitanga - Protection** – our learners are protected under the Human Rights Act 1993, the Health & Disability Commissioner Act 2003 and reflects New Zealand's obligations to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008)
- **Kotahitanga - Partnership** – our Māori learners are regarded as equitable stakeholders. Avenues for consultation and participation in decisions affecting our Māori disabled learners are established.

To ensure that the ongoing development and implementation of the plan upholds these principles and in the spirit of Tino Rangatiratanga, our Māori cultural advisor and engagement teams will walk the journey with us through membership in the Advisory Group/s – leading or co-leading some of the learner representative groups (Māori learners and staff).

Gap Analysis Key Findings
- Staff Training – building awareness and capability
- Policy review – policies and processes to be more consistent across PTEs
- Policies and procedures need to be more inclusive of disabled learners, their whanau and visitors to our sites
- Wider understanding and adoption of principles of Universal Design in Education (UDE) and Learning (UDL) for planning and flexible arrangements
- Improved data collection and reporting.

Objectives and Outcomes

In creating our Plan, we have endeavored to embed key outcomes from the Achieve 10-point Plan into outcome areas and workstreams that we can assign to relevant teams. To ensure required components are included, we included the five key components stated in TEC's: "Disability Action Plans - A guide for the tertiary education sector" listed below.

- Clear evidence of use of the Kia Orite Toolkit and the best practice standards within.
- Goals and Targets
- Evaluation Strategies
- Allocation of Responsibility

- Communication of Policies and Programmes.

(See Kia Ōrite Toolkit and https://www.achieve.org.nz/kia-orite-toolkit/ten-point-plan/)

Goals and Targets (Internal action plan)

Internally we will be using the completed Kia Ōrite Self-Assessment Tools to guide our work. Working groups will be established for each Workstream and they will be responsible for developing their workstream plan including targets and measures against stated milestones. Regular reporting to senior management and Governance will ensure top-down monitoring.

Benefits of increased diversity

The implementation of the Disability Action Plan allows for the inclusion of a more diverse community to contribute to the overall culture of Skills Group and the communities we serve. Statistics from June 2020 outlined in the TEC document, Disability Action Plans: *A Guide for the Tertiary Education Sector*, state that 48.2% of young disabled people (15-24 years) were not in employment, education or training, compared with 10.6% for non-disabled youth. Skills Consulting Group recognises that our youth are our greatest asset, and this statistic is a graphic representation of a natural resource of talented youth that is not being given the opportunity to contribute to society. Through the use of the Kia Ōrite Tool Kit we have been able to ensure that we have created an equitable and accessible pathway for disabled students to engage with their learning and participate alongside other learners to develop their potential for a successful future.

Workstream One: Our learners		
Vision: Our learners are engaged, well supported, and feel part of the wider learning whanau. They have access to their own space and korero mai/Talanoa opportunities, appropriate learning spaces and resources and have opportunities to share their experiences within the concept of Ako[1]		
Outcome	**Actions**	**Role responsibility**
Learner recruitment processes and materials, special initiatives and events are inclusive and target a wide audience including people with disabilities. Marketing and Sales teams participate in professional development and apply principles of UDL in communications and planning of recruitment events	• Recruitment messages and images include people with disabilities and impairments. • Promotional materials are made available and accessible in different formats including on-line content. • Course information contains clear guidelines about facilities and accessibility to learning environments and learning materials.	Manager PTE Operations/Sales Team/Enrolment Marketing Advisory Groups advise
Systems and processes support disabled learners to show their potential and achieve success from enrolment through to a clear pathway to further education and/or employment.	• Enrolment procedures are respectful, and mana enhancing and focus on the pathway to learner success. They give space to learners to 　　• share their aspirations (regarding their learning experiences and goals) 　　• share their learning needs. 　　• offer alternative pathways if expectations of courses don't fit with the reality of the programme and workplace e.g., physical demands of the Barbering course require long periods of standing in one place even if stools are available. • Induction procedures:	As above

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[1] The concept of Ako in te ao Māori means both to teach and to learn – both the learner and teacher learn from each other e.g.; new knowledge and understanding can grow from shared learning experiences.

Physical demands – expectations vs reality - working with the tutors around learning needs and/or disability.	- Learner support information and procedures are explained and accessible through various formats e.g., student handbook, on-site induction, and on-line programmes? - support staff are identified and how to access them is explained. - tutors introduced. - information regarding independent advocacy groups is accessible. - where specific sites have people with specific disability expertise these people are identified • Complaints procedure for sites is published in the Codes of Practice - ensure all are accessible on the relevant PTE's Website • Ensure policy and procedures also specifically include opportunities for disabled students to make a complaint e.g., procedures in one learner handbook only cover assessment.	Quality Team & PTE Operations
Learners feel welcome, comfortable and have their own spaces to "be themselves"	Inclusive spaces and learning environments are created for learners that: - Are culturally inclusive. - Enable disabled learners to meet to discuss their concerns and be themselves. - Enable Māori and Pasifika to each have their own spaces to discuss their concerns. - Offers a whanau environment where learners feel welcome, included, comfortable, safe, and valued as part the wider learner community.	Site Managers Advisory Groups

Workstream Two: Delivery and Quality: Good practices for inclusivity and accessibility

Outcome	Actions	Role responsibility
Build learner partnerships. "Not about us without us"	Establish learner groups and/or network to consult with disabled learners to: • support programme design and resources • consult with on inclusive practices and policies • enhance learner spaces and environments. • feedback regarding staff professional development opportunities • feedback regarding internal and external support services.	D.A.P. Advisory Group Leads
The Principles of Universal Design in Education (UDL) are applied to programme design and delivery. .	UDL ensures flexible and reasonable arrangements can be made for a diverse range of disabilities & types of support in place and apply to: - planning and delivery - off-site learning events - workplace (on-job learning) - assistive technologies - in class learning strategies - alternatives or support arrangements to exams and assessments - other ways of learning - different ways of presenting resources and learning materials so they are easy to understand regardless of experience, knowledge, and language skills. - online resources that are accessible and intuitive to use - online learning that offers different ways to access material e.g., colour filters, ability to change fonts, text to speech and speech to text. - other learning supports provided as discussed with individual learners.	All teams – *Include Digital & Technology Teams in terms of Assistive Technologies*
Planning for renovations or reorganisation of learning spaces takes the needs of disabled learners into account.	Buildings and learning spaces meet code of practice requirements (NZQA) and building requirements. Audits for "NZS 4121:2001 Design for Access and Mobility: Buildings and Associated Facilities" are conducted followed by development of plans to achieve recommended changes and/or improvements. Review policy for disabled learners, e.g., individual evacuation plans	Property Team

Workstream Three: People and culture: building awareness and capability of staff		
Outcome	**Actions**	**Role responsibility**
Staff demonstrate equity and inclusive practices – an embedded approach across the organisation is implemented.	Develop system-wide training and resources to build the 'disability confidence' of all staff through providing: • easily accessible information, resources and materials that provide support and guidance for staff • opportunities for staff, especially teaching staff and those providing specific services to share information (internal community of practice) • professional development - a range of professional development opportunities including comprehensive induction of new staff, ongoing in-house training programmes and external workshops.	People & Culture Team
Staff are familiar with the principles of Universal Design in Education	Plan in-house awareness training for those not already familiar with UDL	
Communications Plan is developed in conjunction with Marketing "Whole of organisation" approach to building disability confidence and inclusive practices.	Communications Plan delivers information across the organisation in various forms to: • Build awareness and understanding • Engage with teams across the organisation about training needs and programmes, disability action plan objectives and on-going work. • Promote professional development and capability initiatives. • Share information and resources.	

Workstream Four: Whole of organisation approach – Learner centric systems (Policies and procedures)		
Outcome	**Actions**	**Role responsibility**
Our planning, policies and procedures give clarity and guidance to achieving equity and inclusivity.	Review existing policies and procedures to ensure they are inclusive and do not inadvertently cause prejudice, discriminate or put-up unnecessary barriers for disabled learners. Develop required policies that will support achievement of objectives listed within the DAP and to ensure Skills Group meets commitments and requirements under the Human Rights Act 1993. Staff recruitment policies reflect our commitment to taking responsibility for practicing equity by meeting the best practice standards outlined in the Kia Orite Toolkit. **Consultation with disabled learners** Campus Managers ensure each site has a disabled representative/s learner on the learner Disability Advisory Group: - Working closely with learner support staff to identify appropriate ways to identify and invite learner participation. Māori and Pasifika engagement teams will establish learner representation groups. Adequate data required for above.	Quality Team
Learner and visitor access and safety *(See also workstream 2)* Accessibility gaps are identified and a monitored plan for improvement is established.	Identify accessibility gaps and develop a plan for improvements is applied across all sites that includes processes for: • Emergency evacuation – e.g., personal evacuation plans. • Ensure each site has specific procedures with clear guidelines (relevant to that site) for emergency evacuation with contingencies for e.g., disabled learners if lifts are out of action, use of stairs for people who are visually impaired. • All other health and safety procedures consider needs of disabled learners. Plan is monitored by Quality Team	Property Team Quality Team (Compliance Manager)

Barriers to environment, services, facilities are improved to meet code requirements where systems are improved or removed.	Processes are established to ensure equitable access to services, facilities, events are established.	Manager PTE Operations
Data systems and information collection procedures inform decision making, planning, design, participation, retention, and achievement of disabled learners.	Enhance disability data collection and reporting systems across sites. Ensure systems and processes (including enrolment procedures) can adequately collect and report relevant data. Policies include correct procedures for data handling. Statistical data to be included in monthly Board reports. Staff and learners can access relevant information where appropriate. Data systems will be able to provide information on support measures. Compare disabled learner participation and outcomes. Provide data on Māori disabled learners' and outcomes. Provide data on disabled Pasifika learner outcomes.	Digital & Technology Team

Workstream Five: Leadership and Governance and systems for comprehensive review of DAP		
Outcome	**Actions**	**Role responsibility**
Leadership and Governance have oversight of Disability Action Plan Review through systemic review processes.	Regular reporting to Senior Leadership Team and Board via monthly reports Quarterly review of plans Annual review using "review, reflect, response" cycle recommended in Kia Ōrite Toolkit to include feedback from Working Groups, Disability Advisory Group, and learner representative groups.	Senior Leadership Team

Milestones

Milestone one:	January 2024	Work Stream working groups are established with terms of reference, goals and outcomes confirmed.
Milestone two:	March 2024	Working Groups confirm implementation plans for their Work Streams with timelines and due dates.
Milestone three:	June 2024	First report due to Skills Executive team
Milestone four:	September 2024	Review implementation plans for potential adjustments needed.