



To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this response on behalf of Hume Valley School (HVS) regarding the 'inquiry into access to TAFE' for learners with a disability. Hume Valley School is based in Broadmeadows and caters for students diagnosed with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. At HVS, several staff members hold the TAE401116 qualification, allowing for the delivery of six Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects onsite. Additionally, HVS have established relationships with KANGAN TAFE, 'Water 2 All' and 'Northpoint', who offer our students School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATS) and/or additional VET enrolment options.

Students at HVS have benefitted both socially and economically through their participation in TAFE, SBATs and/or VET programs. The hands-on projects that our students have engaged in, such as; constructing a chicken coop (Certificate II in Horticulture) and performing and operating stagecraft elements in a school play (Certificate II in Creative Industries), have resulted in students succeeding collaboratively. These, and similar activities, have contributed to building positive relationships amongst students and boosting self-esteem. Students participating in SBATS are financially compensated for their work in a kitchen (Certificate II in Food Processing) and Warehousing (Certificate II in Warehouse Operations). Staff have noticed an increase in student confidence when given an opportunity to undertake a paid apprenticeship. We have one student who is linked to TAFE through the 'HeadStart' program, which has provided him with a viable post-school career pathway.

HVS have not experienced any major issues in accessing TAFE programs for our students. We work with several RTOs, all of whom have been accommodating in providing reasonable adjustments for our students. Local RTOs, including; KANGAN, Melbourne Polytechnic and Victoria University attend a yearly careers expo in our local area to assist students and parents/carers in identifying post-school pathways for students interested in attending TAFE.

A barrier in maximising VET's learning experiences for our school is that Certificate I subjects are not currently funded. This makes it difficult for staff who run these programs to provide engaging hands-on projects. HVS enrol students into Certificate I units when an individual's language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills require it. An additional barrier for our school, in engaging in the 'HeadStart' program, is that all eligible VET certificate levels for this program are at level three and above. As all of our students present with an intellectual disability, completing a certificate at this level for most is not achievable.

Sincerely,

Dan Hawkins

Learning Specialist/VCAL VET teacher, Hume Valley School