


<b>Policy and Procedure</b>		 <b>BENCHMARK COLLEGE</b>	
<b>Student Support and Progression Policy and Procedures</b>			
<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Endorsed by: Continuous Improvement and Management Committee</b>	<b>Published: May 2024</b>
			<b>Review Date: May 2026</b>

## PURPOSE

Benchmark College (BNE) is committed to ensuring that all students are provided with adequate levels of support whilst undertaking their studies, and to ensure they are treated fairly, equitably and the support services for learning programs are compliant with Standards for RTOs (2015), relevant legislative and Government requirements such as VET Student Loans (VSL) requirements.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the framework for the support services available to students wishing to undertake or currently studying in a course at Benchmark College. Benchmark College aims to ensure students are provided with support that is responsive, sufficient, and tailored to their individual needs for the successful completion of their course.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to student's wishing to enrol into a Benchmark College training program, as well as those who are currently undertaking a course with Benchmark College and any staff member who will get involved with student support and progression. This staff may include operations manager, training administrators, trainers and assessors, business development managers, and student services officers.

## DEFINITIONS


**AQF qualification** means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.

**Reasonable Adjustment** is a legislative term that, for VET, refers to a measure or action taken by an education provider to enable learners with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as learners without disability.

**Access and equity** means policies and approaches aimed at ensuring that VET is responsive to the individual needs of clients whose age, gender, cultural or ethnic background, disability, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location may present a barrier to access, participation and the achievement of suitable outcomes.

**ACSF** means the Australian Core Skills Framework.

**Competency** means the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of

<b>Policy and Procedure</b>		 <b>BENCHMARK COLLEGE</b>	
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			<b>Review Date: May 2026</b>

performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

**LLN** means language, literacy and numeracy which is defined as an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function in the workplace and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential.

**Literacy** means an individual's ability to read and write in English.

**VET Student Loan (VSL) Common Definitions:**

**Student** means an enrolled learner that has agreed to use the services provided by Benchmark.

**VET** means vocational education and training.

**Approved courses** are courses delivered only by an approved course provider that has been approved to offer that particular approved course.

**CAN** means the Commonwealth Assistance Notice which is issued after the Census date and includes information about the student's enrolment, any HELP debt incurred, or Student contribution amounts paid to date and any loan fee incurred.


**Census Day** is the day the student incurs financial liability for the unit of study. Students may cancel their enrolment by the census day without incurring tuition fees (or a HELP or VET Student Loans debt) for the course or the part of the course.

**CHESSN** is the Student ID issued as part of the Student's Commonwealth Assessment Notice (CAN).

**Covered fees** are the amount of the course tuition fees to be covered by a VET Student Loan and is set out on the Student's VET Student Loans Statement of Covered Fees.

**Course loan cap** means the total amount of loan an eligible student may access for a particular course.

**Fee periods** are the tuition fees for the course which are proportionately distributed across at

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<b>Student Support and Progression Policy and Procedures</b>			
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			<b>Review Date: May 2026</b>

least three sequential fee periods. Each fee period contains at least one Census Day. Therefore, there are at least three census days/three units over the course.

**Gap fees** are the difference between the covered fees and the total tuition fee for a course.

**Genuine student** is one that has been determined by the RTO as having demonstrated they are reasonably engaged in the course and have completed the student progression requirements.

**Provider fee** limit is the maximum dollar amount for VET Student Loans that can be paid to an approved course provider for a particular period of time and/or for a particular approved course(s).

**Tuition fees** are the total fees for the course (including the covered fees plus any gap fee).


**POLICY**

Benchmark College’s student support procedures are in place to ensure students with identified needs are able to be provided with additional support, either from the College or referred to an external party as necessary. As individual’s needs may be extensive and will vary based on individual circumstances, this policy provides guidelines for the College staff to follow.

Student support may cover a wide range of areas, depending on student’s needs. These may include learning, literacy, language and/ or Numeracy, English as a second language, communication skills, computer skills, financial assistance, medical and health services, mental health services, academic support assistance, welfare services, etc.

Benchmark College does not charge students when making a referral to an external provider. To achieve this, Benchmark College:

- Provides current and accurate product and services information that enables prospective students to make informed decisions.
- Provides advice to the prospective student about the product or service appropriate to meeting their needs, taking into account the individual’s needs and existing skills and competencies.

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- Informs prospective students about the training and assessment and support services available.
- Informs students about their rights and responsibilities.
- Within qualification and industry requirements, encourages the enrolment of all eligible students to available educational opportunities regardless of age, religion, gender, cultural, ethnic background, impairment, sexuality, language skills, literacy or numeracy level, unemployment, imprisonment or remote location.
- Objectively screens students to identify eligibility requirements, special needs and opportunities for recognition.
- Assesses language, literacy and numeracy levels (this may include external referral) to ensure prospective students have the necessary skills to meet qualification requirements. Students will be provided language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) support based upon the LLN assessment outcomes in ACSF areas that are lower than that of the qualification requirements. Strategies will vary depending on the LLN assessment results.
- BMC will determine the need for reasonable adjustment, assistance, support and/or referral. Depending on individual circumstances, students will be provided study support from their trainer and assessor based on the individual needs of students.


## **PROCEDURE**

There will be times when Benchmark College staff are contacted by potential clients (including employers and job active providers) for information pertaining to available support services available for a student's individual needs. Staff will, throughout these interactions, establish a positive relationship that is client focused.

Guided by the following stages but based on individual circumstances, Benchmark staff will follow the provision of support services.

### ***Student Enrollment***

Ensure students are aware of the availability of VET Student Loans during the enrollment process. Provide students with detailed information about their course, including key dates, assessment requirements, and available support services.

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<b>Student Support and Progression Policy and Procedures</b>			
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***Student Support List of Services***

The range of Benchmark non-academic support services include, but are not limited to:

- Equipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for Students with disabilities in accordance with Benchmark’s commitment to access and equity for all Students (refer to LLN and Other Learner Needs policy and procedure).
- Financial support services.
- Domestic violence support services.
- Mental health support services.
- Parents’ support services, and
- Any other services that Benchmark considers necessary to support the Student to achieve competency, through identification and mutual agreement by Benchmark and the Student.

**The majority of these non-academic services** are offered through referrals to external expert agencies. All Students are made aware of the range of academic and non-academic support available to them through Benchmark’s Student Support [External List](#), which is published in the website and Student Handbook.

***Additional Support for Learning, Training and Assessment***

- Issue a mutually agreed Course Outline or Training Plan which establishes clear target dates for when unit assessments need to be completed and submitted to the Trainer/Assessor against scheduled unit completion dates for all qualifications.
- For a valid reason, i.e. sickness, sudden unemployment, loss of a family member – a Student is able to apply to an extension to submit their assessments.
- For a valid reason, i.e. sickness, sudden unemployment, loss of a family member – a Student is able to apply to deferred for up to 6 months.

If a Student does not communicate with Benchmark and is absent from their course requirement, the Trainer/Assessor will try by reasonable means available to them, i.e. e-mail, telephone, to contact a Student to ascertain why a Student’s studies have not continued (but only through a communication mode agreed by the Student).

***Student Information about Progression Requirements***

Should a Student be falling behind this policy position, the Trainer/Assessor will meet with the Student and create/update the Student Support and Progression Plan to support the student to make up any activities that have yet to be undertaken.

***Unsatisfactory Student Progression***

Students will be considered to be making unsatisfactory course progression if they:

- Are not prompt and punctual for classroom

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- Have not participated in 100% of training and assessment activities and
- submitted assessment activities by the due dates, and/or
- Have not actively engaged in the learning or assessment activities as determined by their trainer and assessor, and/or
- Fail to achieve competency in the same unit over three attempts, or
- Do not complete their program of learning within the maximum course
- duration as specified in the course information provided in the Course
- Outline or Training Plan.

***Deferral of Studies***

In instances where it is determined that the Student was considering deferral due to learning challenges, they will be encouraged to continue with their studies and additional support will be put into place, negotiated through the development/updating of the Student’s Individual Learning Plan.

***VET Student Loans (VSL) – Additional Requirements***

Through the issuing of the VSL Fee Notice to each Student, Benchmark advises that the Student is required during the course to communicate his or her agreement that the Secretary continue to use the VET Student Loan to pay tuition fees for the course as part of their course progression.


A Student who is engaging with the course and who completes and submits their Progression Form as part of their progression requirements is considered as a genuine student. This is relevant, as the Secretary does not need to pay a loan amount for a student who is not genuine.

***Compliance and Reporting***

Loan Application and Management: Ensure all VET Student Loan applications are completed accurately and submitted on time. Maintain accurate records of student enrollments, progression, and loan usage.

***Feedback and Recordkeeping***

Implement a feedback mechanism for students to provide input on the support services provided. Regularly review and improve student support services based on feedback and performance data. For recordkeeping Benchmark College will maintain detailed records of all support services provided, student progression data, and compliance activities.

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## REFERENCES

Source	Document Title
Internal	Student Handbook
	Plan/Training Plan
	Pre-Enrolment (Literacy, Language & Numeracy) Quiz
	Language Literacy and Numeracy Policy
	Approved LLN Assessment for VET Student Loans applicants
	VET Student Loans (VSL) – Student Entry Procedure
	Withdrawal and Deferment Policy and Procedures
	Recognition Policy and Procedures
External	Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
	Smart and Skilled Operating Guidelines 2023-2024
	Smart and Skilled Contract Terms and Conditions 2023
	VET Student Loans Act 2016
	VET Student Loans Rules 2016
	Student Identifiers Act 2014
	Equal Opportunity Act 2010
	Freedom of Information Act 1982
	Privacy Act 1988