Name: Language, Literacy and Numeracy Policy

Policy Sponsor: Director

## Introduction:

This policy sets out the policy of WA School of Pathology on Language Literacy and Numeracy and associated activities for the information of employees and participants.

## Scope:

This policy is binding on all employees and participants.

## Compliance Requirements:

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) Standard 1 Clauses 1.2 and 1.7 and Standard 5 Clauses 5.1 and 5.2

## Policy:

WA School of Pathology employees are responsible for obtaining enrolment details, in full, as outlined on the Enrolment Form and ensuring that information pertaining to individual learning requirements is provided to participants prior to enrolment for vocational education and training.

All courses at WA School of Pathology are delivered in English. It is essential that the student has language, literacy and numeracy skills sufficient to approach training and assessment at the level of competency reflected in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification and detailed in the Training Package from which their course of study is drawn.

Language, literacy and numeracy skills cannot be taken as “demonstrated” just because the student participates in work or completes an application form. Language, literacy and numeracy skills may underpin many tasks but will not necessarily reflect a student’s ability.

WA School of Pathology endeavours to ensure its training design supports learners, by allowing flexibility within delivery and assessment (under guidance of the training package), employing strategies such as:

* Use of demonstration of tasks in a simulated environment
* Verbal explanations - Questions and answers
* Use of diagrams/charts
* Decreasing reliance on written forms and text
* Incorporating actual workplace materials, or modelling tasks on familiar workplace activities
* Use of toolboxes

Workplace and competency based training draws strength from the knowledge that people learn most effectively when they can relate what they have learnt to their workplace and life situations.

* Language, Literacy and Numeracy are important aspects of vocational training.
* Language, Literacy & Numeracy assessments are undertaken where necessary to ensure students are given every opportunity for success in their training.
* The level of Language, Literacy & Numeracy skills possessed by individual students will impact on their capacity to achieve the competencies in their training programs.

**Definitions**

* ***Language*** is simply the mechanism we use to communicate with other people in a range of situations. We use language to communicate verbally and in writing. Language is made up of grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and the non-verbal messages we communicate with our bodies.
* ***Literacy*** is the ability to read printed material, symbols and signs and to write effectively so we can be understood in a range of work and social settings. Literacy involves speaking, listening, reading, writing and critical thinking. It includes the cultural knowledge to recognise and use language appropriate to the situation.
* ***Numeracy*** in the workplace is the ability to use and understand numbers, graphs, charts, tables, diagrams, shapes and measurement. It is about being able to make the mathematical calculations required to satisfactorily complete a work task.

**Rationale**

There are a number of things that can get in the way of effective communication in business & industry, and therefore, impact on the success of workplace & competency based training:

* In some technical areas, different terminology may be used from office to office, industry to industry, state to state
* People may find themselves working in locations where they have difficulty understanding those they interact with
* People may find themselves having difficulty speaking and understanding spoken English or reading or writing in English
* They may have difficulty completing basic mathematical calculations

**Student Confidentiality**

Students may not want to discuss any language, literacy or numeracy problems they have. All Trainers must be sensitive to this. If they haven’t identified a problem and you have, you will have to consider whether you will address this directly or indirectly with them.

If they have told you about their language, literacy and numeracy ability, make sure they know this information will be treated confidentially. This is an important step in building a trusting relationship with the student so they feel comfortable to learn from you.

Any written documentation on particular students should be kept in their personal file where access to it is limited.

**Why difficulties occur**

A person may experience difficulty with Language, Literacy or Numeracy for any number of reasons:

* They may come from a non-English speaking country or culture
* They may have highly developed skills in their first language, but not in English
* They may be able to read English better than they can speak it
* They may have limited reading or writing skill
* A person born in an English speaking country will most likely speak English well and may be OK at reading, but may have difficulty with writing
* Some people are more comfortable with speaking rather than reading or writing. For example, some famous actors prefer to have scripts given to them on audio-tape, rather than to have to read them
* Some people may have a sight or hearing disability
* They may have a specific learning disability or intellectual disability
* They may have missed out on basic education or skills training
* They may come from diverse cultural traditions and be unfamiliar with western approaches to education and training

**Language, Literacy & Numeracy Assessment**

A preliminary assessment of Language, Literacy & Numeracy skills will assist trainers to identify any additional support that may be required for the successful achievement of competencies by the student or may indicate if alternative training is required.

All students embarking on a training program are required to adopt Language, Literacy & Numeracy skills specific to the task or occupation in which they are employed. Trainers should provide clear instructions and ample opportunities for practice when reading, writing, oral or numeracy skills are required as part of the competency being assessed.

**Initial Assessment of students**

An initial assessment of the skill level of a particular student will provide an indicator of additional training requirements. Additional professional assistance may be necessary to properly ascertain requirements.

This initial assessment could include any or all of the following:

* Discussions with the student about prior education & experience
* An assessment of literacy and oral skills
* Questionnaire
* Records of previous skills, education & training
* A combination of the above.

The initial assessment, in essence, is an observational analysis undertaken during the sign-up process.

All students are required to complete the Enrolment Form. This includes statistical information required by various Government agencies and the information collected is mandatory.

A staff member from WA School of Pathology should observe the student as they step through the completion of the form and, by simply observing how the student is able to complete the form, make an initial determination of the ability of the student with regards to LLN skill levels.

If the student

* Does not understand the staff members explanation
* Has difficulty understanding the questions on the enrolment form, or
* Is not able to complete the form on their own
* The need for additional analysis or support may be indicated – this should be communicated to the Director for further action.

The Director will, in consultation with the trainer/assessor, determine what, if any, further action will be appropriate in the circumstances to ensure the success of the training outcomes for all stakeholders.

Those students with insufficient skill levels in Language, Literacy & Numeracy may have to be referred to alternative training in order to achieve the level of competency required.

**Communicating with people with language difficulties:**

* Speak slowly and clearly and use simple complete sentences
* Use active voice
* Avoid speaking ‘broken ‘English or talking down to learners
* Stick to the topic - don’t add irrelevant words or talk about unrelated topics
* Demonstrate tasks wherever possible
* Use non-verbal cues such as hand movements, facial and body gestures (smiling, nodding your head, pointing) to emphasise meaning
* Repeat instructions calmly and clearly until you are sure the student can do the task
* Tell students about English language and literacy support and further training opportunities available
* Do not shout - remember, raising your voice does not add meaning
* Repeat and summarise information frequently
* Use key words and short sentences to compile written summaries for future reference
* Explain workplace terms in everyday language

**Developing training materials:**

Any written workplace training materials should:

* Use simple language
* Remove unnecessary words
* Avoid jargon
* Use concrete words
* Avoid sexist words
* Use short sentences
* Have short paragraphs
* Use lots of white space
* Have lots of headings and sub-headings
* Use dot points or numbers
* Avoid using capital letters
* Be explained by the trainer, and
* Supported with a variety of learning resources

Any instructions given by a workplace trainer should:

* Use simple, familiar words
* Avoid jargon
* Use short sentences
* Have a clear order of information
* Follow the same order as the steps in the task
* Keep to the point, and
* Be easy to hear

## Supporting documentation

[Enrolment Application](http://intranet.acts.local/IDAT/Forms%20and%20Templates/Operations/IDAT%20FORM-OPS-009%20Enrolment%20Form.docx)

 [Language, Literacy and Numeracy Test](http://intranet.acts.local/IDAT/Forms%20and%20Templates/Operations/IDAT%20FORM-OPS-010%20Language%2C%20Literacy%20and%20Numeracy%20Test.docx)