Core Skills and LLN Support Policy

Purpose & Legislative Background

According to clause 1.7, Standard 1 of Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, Mid-City College will provide support in terms of the core skills. Core skills are critical to almost all areas of work. This is particularly true in many vocations where language, literacy and numeracy skills influence the performance of workplace tasks such as comprehending written work instructions and producing written documents. The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) describes each of the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication, and numeracy. Students non familiar with the ACSF are recommended to study the information available at the following two sites:

i. https://www.education.gov.au/australian-core-skills-framework
ii. www.precisionconsultancy.com.au/acs_framework

Research has indicated that many students do not have the language, literacy, and numeracy skills they need to effectively participate in vocational education and training. The increasing importance of core skills such as communication in the workplace highlights the need for underpinning language, literacy, and numeracy skills.

To support this approach Mid-City College will:

- Assess a student's core skills during their Orientation Process to ensure they have adequate skills to complete the training.
- Support students during their study with training and assessment materials and strategies that are easily understood and suitable to the level of the workplace skills being delivered.
- Provide clear information to students about the detail of the core skills assistance available.
- Refer students to the external language, literacy and numeracy support services that are beyond the support available within Mid-City College and where this level of support is assessed as necessary; and
- Negotiate an extension of time and other support arrangements to assist students to complete training programs if necessary.

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Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff of Mid-City College. For all learners, LLN is key underpinning skills that will support their vocational learning, the development of their employability skills and their workplace communication skills whatever level of course or training they are doing (The Crux of the Matter, DETT, 2011).

Policy

The following procedure is to be followed to assess a student's core skills:

- LLN Core Skills Indicator Assessment. Each student who enrols at Mid-City College is required to complete the Robot LLN Test prior to the commencement of their studies. To conduct this assessment under the direct supervision of Mid-City College staff, it is scheduled during the Orientation which is usually a week prior to the commencement of the course. The purpose of this assessment is to establish the background, motivation, and general abilities of the student to determine what support Mid-City College may provide. The assessment is not intended to cause anxiety but to determine where the student has specific language and literacy deficits and to determine what support is required to undertake Mid-City College training. The ROBOT LLN Assessment is conducted on campus and is an online testing tool.

- About ROBOT LLN: LLN Robot is an online system that combines ACSF testing, Course profiling and LLN Support into one easy to use package.

- The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) is a tool that assists both specialist and non-specialist English language, literacy and numeracy practitioners describe an individual's performance in the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication, and numeracy.

  It provides a consistent national approach to identifying and developing the core skills in three diverse contexts; personal and community; workplace and employment; and education and training. In particular, it offers:

  − shared concepts and language for identifying, describing, and discussing the core skills

  − a systematic approach to benchmarking, monitoring, and reporting on core skills performance.

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The framework has broad application and can be used to:

− assess and benchmark an individual's core skills performance

− describe core skills relevant to the workplace and employment

− map curricula

− tailor approaches to teaching and learning

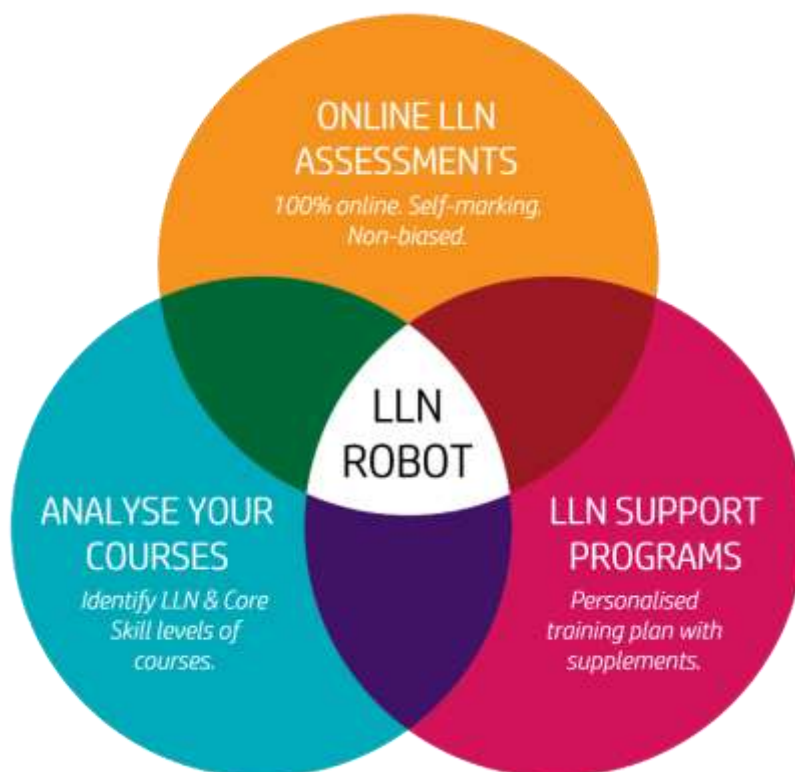− inform decisions regarding funding and referrals.

It is also the key quality measure for the Australian Government's Skills for Education and Employment Program.

- For students, an internal English placement test and Pre-Training Review are the tools used to assess the core skills.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

SUPPORT IS EASY WITH LLN ROBOT

- Use the included online LLN Quiz to test learners' LLN levels.
- LLN Robot analyses the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) levels of the courses at Mid-City College.
- The system compares learner results with the ACSF levels of the courses.
- The Robot LLN system generates individualised LLN Training Programs & Supplements for learners.
- Mid-City College will maintain a register i.e., LLN Support Register to record all outcomes of learners.
- This is a centralised Register and is easily accessible by all trainers and admin staff.

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Benchmarking an individual's core skills performance

The framework can be used to identify and describe an individual's performance in any of the core skills at a point in time. Its specificity makes it possible to identify a person's areas of strength and need with some precision so that training can be targeted to areas of need and an individual's progress monitored over time. The framework can also be used to develop core skills profiles of learner cohorts.

Mapping core skills requirements

The framework can be used to map the core skills requirements of any education and training course or unit to clarify and articulate core skills expectations, priorities, and gaps. This facilitates the identification of similarities and differences between core skills requirements and expectations of performance within and across courses, disciplines, and sectors.

Tailoring approaches to teaching and learning

Following the mapping of course requirements and materials, and identification of learner strengths and weaknesses, the framework can be used to:

- tailor curriculum, materials, and methodologies to learner needs

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- design and rate core skills assessment instruments
- evaluate the potential usefulness of assessment tasks by identifying the framework's levels and Performance Features being assessed
- develop self-evaluation tools that increase learner engagement and ownership
- assist teachers/trainers to provide specific feedback on performance.

Supporting students with language, literacy, and numeracy deficits

After the commencement of the course, if it is determined that a student does have deficiencies with core skills, Mid-City College is to adopt strategies that enable the student to progress in the desired training program. The following strategies are to be considered and will be informed by the level of language, literacy or numeracy deficit determined during the assessment:

- Negotiate a training program with the student that recognises that additional time will be required to appropriately support the student to complete the training.
- Obtain a strong commitment from the student that they will provide personal effort that is in addition to that normally required to undertake the training program.
- If agreed to by the student, engage with the student's employer to negotiate the additional time and effort required to appropriately support the student during the training program.
- Provide the student with a list of the words and terms which are highly relevant to the workplace skills and knowledge being delivered within the training program. This list should be practised with the student to get them comfortable with identifying the words and their meaning. This list should be expanded over time and acts as a "vocational vocabulary" and will focus the student on small steps of achievement.
- Program sessions where learning information that would usually be delivered to the student via their reading is presented to the student verbally and is supported by questions and answers.
- Arrange to regularly engage via teleconference with the student to monitor their progress and adjust the support strategies.

Referring the student for language, literacy, and numeracy assistance

Where it is determined that a student has core skills that are beyond the support available within Mid-City College, the student should be referred for dedicated language, literacy, and numeracy training. This training is available through most public training providers. These courses have been designed to provide students with the opportunity to gain specific

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language, literacy and numeracy skills required in a vocational or work environment, which meet the requirements to enter a range of vocational qualifications and gain language, literacy, and numeracy related employability skills.

Deciding to refer the student

The decision to refer a student to another training provider for language, literacy and numeracy training will be based on the level of assessed core skills deficit and the student's motivation to improve their abilities.

As a general guide:

- If the student does not currently possess the basic skills to perform training and development tasks in the workplace, they should be referred for assistance which should occur prior to commencement of the course at Mid-City College.
- If the student's skills are adequate for the workplace but will hinder their participation in training, they should not be referred. Instead, Mid-City College is to design and implement suitable support services to enable their training and assessment.

Mid-City College shall keep the updated Register to record the ongoing review to assess their competence in the core skills.