

# Department for Innovation and Skills



## Learner Support Services

Guide for non-government RTOs receiving LSS  
November 2021



Government  
of South Australia

Department for  
Innovation and Skills

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## Using this Guide

This information guide (Guide) is for RTOs who are receiving Learner Support Services (LSS), providing an overview of the LSS case management service delivered by Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS) contracted LSS Providers.

The Guide provides essential information for RTOs on Learner Support Services. It is intended that RTO Managers and staff become familiar with the content as it provides critical information about conditions of access for RTOs, student eligibility and referral and the types and range of services that are provided.

The content is intended to promote overall understanding of LSS for RTOs referring their students to LSS.

It is intended that this guide complements the following resources:

- [Learner Support Services fact sheet](#)
- [Fact Sheet – Personal and Learning Supports for students – For RTOs](#)
- [Information Pack for Training Providers on Personal and Learning Supports for School Students](#)

There are also several resources on the DIS provider website, including a series of webinars – that introduce [Learner Support Services](#) and provide more about [how LSS can benefit your RTO and your students](#). The LSS page on the Skills Provider website also addresses the provision of [LSS for school enrolled students](#) (scroll down to the section called Personal and Learning Supports for School Students).

## What is Learner Support Services?

Learner Support Services (LSS) is an equity, participation and retention initiative funded by the Department of Innovation and Skills (DIS) with the aim of improving the outcomes of accredited vocational education and training for students with complex needs. LSS supports the broader Government agenda of ensuring that people are in the best position to successfully complete their training and move into higher qualifications and/or a job and is distinguished by its model of support which provides a ‘wrap-around-service’ for participants.

The purpose of LSS is to support students who have barriers to learning, support retention in training and assist students with complex support needs to complete their qualifications and transition successfully to employment or further study through the provision of learner case management.

Two key features of LSS are:

- the provision of a consistent support person who provides and/or coordinates the supports a student needs within the RTO they are studying with, and



- a support person who will liaise, advocate and build collaborative partnerships with external agencies with the aim of ensuring students access the supports available in the community.

LSS provided during training enables Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to give students access to supports over and above the provisions expected by ASQA. LSS is not intended to replace the student support provision by RTOs expected by ASQA, but to enhance it. LSS provided after training for up to 12 weeks supports students during transition to further training or employment.

### **LSS Support Types**

LSS addresses complex issues that may impact on living, learning and transition and provides:

- In-class and study skills support
- Personal support
- Support during vocational placement and employment transitions
- Support following training for up to 12 weeks
- External referral and liaison (with government and non-government service agencies)
- Internal liaison and advocacy (with trainers and other RTO staff)

Support needs that students may present with under LSS are categorised into the domains of “Living, Learning and Transitions”. Supports provided can address one or more needs across any or all three domains. The focus of all support provided is to enable the student to continue with and complete their study and to move successfully onto either further training or employment.

LSS Case Managers provide support in each domain as follows:

**Living** – Case managers provide support by offering information, guidance, and skills development through one-on-one personal support meetings. Case managers will also refer and work with internal supports and external agencies (for example GPs, food services, community legal services, housing services, etc.)

**Learning** – Case managers provide support by working in classroom with students, in one-on-one or group settings, reviewing class materials and suggesting ways to approach work assignments. Case managers assist in suggesting reasonable adjustments to be made for students with disabilities, addressing issues in the classroom or on campus and in resolving student-staff issues. Case managers may also refer and/or liaise with internal supports and external agencies.

**Transition** – Case managers assist students with Employment Service Provider and Centrelink issues. They also assist with guidance and planning, helping with vocational placements, mentoring students with their post-course options, and preparing for job interviews. Case managers assist with adjusting to workplace environments and offer skills development to students to manage workplace expectations.



## **In-training support and post-course transition support**

LSS can be delivered to students during their training and for up to 12 weeks post course. Students are eligible for post-course transition support for up to 12 months on exiting from their training. Generally, post course support is provided to students who were already receiving LSS while in study.

## **Student Eligibility**

Students undertaking a course on the Subsidised Training List (STL), whether Fee-For-Service (FFS) or government subsidised, who are facing significant barriers to completing their training, who are falling behind or at risk of withdrawing from training are the focus of LSS services.

School enrolled students that have been through the VETRO process and are enrolled in a subsidised course for school students are also eligible for LSS.

LSS is also provided to participants of DIS funded training projects and for students undertaking DIS subsidised skill sets and other micro-credentials.

To determine whether LSS is required during training, in addition to the eligibility of the course they are studying, students will be assessed based on the overall complexity of the issues they present with. This could take place during the initial upfront assessment of need, as part of the support needs assessment or at any time during the course of the student's enrolment.

## **RTO Access to LSS Services**

RTOs have existing obligations under the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Standards for RTOs to assess student support needs and provide supports to enable student progression. LSS is provided as an additional service by DIS to enhance these supports and provide services to students with complex needs impacting on their training.

See the [Fact Sheet – Personal and Learning Supports for students – For RTOs](#) with more detail on the expectations DIS has of RTOs in providing Personal and Learning Supports for Students.

## **LSS Service Agreement**

All FAA RTOs must enter into a Service Agreement with an LSS provider as part of the compliance requirements of the UAN.

The Service Agreement lays out the roles of the LSS provider and of the RTO receiving LSS supports for their students and aims to have in place a process where both parties work together to ensure ongoing communication and sharing of information that enables both the LSS provider and the RTO staff to provide support for the students that is coordinated and complimentary. The Agreement also stipulates the need for the receiving RTO to complete an Organisational Self-Assessment (described in the next section).



## **Organisational Self- Assessment**

As part of the development of an LSS service agreement, RTOs are required to demonstrate that they are providing a reasonable level of RTO support to students.

This is demonstrated through the completion and submission of an Organisational Self-Assessment. The Self- Assessment must be reviewed and approved by DIS to enable the completion of the LSS Service Agreement. A copy of the self -assessment and any feedback from DIS will also be provided to the chosen LSS provider.

See the Useful Links column on the right hand side of the [LSS Page](#) for the guide to completing the Organisational Self Assessment and the template with prompt questions to complete. See [Spotlight Presentation on Assessing your Student Supports](#) for more background information and guidance.

Once an RTO has an LSS Service Agreement in place they can refer students to LSS. Students should be referred when they require supports beyond those the RTO would be expected to provide. Students enrolled with RTOs who have an LSS Service Agreement can also self-refer by directly contacting the LSS provider.

The RTO should invite the LSS provider to deliver an information session to their students or otherwise promote the availability of the service and which LSS provider students can contact. This can be negotiated as part of the development of the LSS Service Agreement.

## **LSS and the Upfront Assessment of Need (UAN)**

RTOs have a first opportunity to identify the need for a referral to LSS as an outcome of the support needs assessment that forms part of the Upfront Assessment of Need process. Referral to LSS as early as possible will mean the student can start receiving supports straight away and the LSS case manager can work with the student to plan ahead. More information about the UAN process can be found on the [Upfront Assessment of Need page](#) on the Skills Provider website.

School students can access LSS like other VET students once they have been through the VET Readiness Orientation (VETRO) process and enrolled in the VET course. VETRO is like the UAN but for school enrolled students. More information on VETRO can be found [Training School Students](#) page on the Skills Provider website.

LSS providers and their contact details can be found on the LSS Fact Sheet on the [Learner Support Services](#) page on the Skills Provider website.

## **LSS Services, inclusions and exclusions**

LSS is fee-free to the student and fee-free to the enrolling RTO. LSS provides a broad range of support services but does not provide services that are reasonably expected to be provided by the RTO or other government services. LSS also does not provide clinical case management or health services. See next page for a list of what is funded and what isn't under LSS.



# Learner Support Services

## FUNDED VS NOT FUNDED

### FUNDED

### NOT FUNDED

Liaison with RTO staff and referral and liaison with external agencies

Emotional and practical support to address personal, social and family issues

One-on-one or group study skills support

Support in the classroom with comprehension, assisting with managing own behaviour, assistance with interacting with others

External referral to & liaison with career management and development services

Support during vocational placements & up to 12-weeks post course with managing new employment expectations or transition to further study



Living



Learning



Transition

Clinical case management, Clinical counselling, Health services

Student supports that should be reasonably provided by the RTO as required by ASQA

Language, literacy and numeracy training

Learning supports that should be reasonably provided by the RTO

Course fees

Support that should be reasonably provided by employment services agencies

Course counselling and work placement supports that should reasonably be provided by the RTO

