

Concurrent Session J
Wednesday 2 September
11.10am – 12.00noon



Session 6

Clear from the Start: Defining When Adjustment are Considered Reasonable Under the Disability Standards for Education

Kai Jensen, Rick Boffa

RMIT University

Rick Boffa has worked across Commonwealth, State, not for profit and most recently education sectors in a career spanning over 25 years. Rick's primary responsibilities in his current role are to manage the University's Disability Liaison Unit, provide systemic disability policy advice to the University with the aim to create a more inclusive learning community, and support University legal services in representing the University in disability legal matters.

Dr Kai Jensen has worked in five Australian and New Zealand tertiary institutions since 1993. His current role at RMIT involves responsibility for institutional academic policies, for managing admissions, credit and student assessment, and for managing curriculum configuration. Kai was a co-founder of the ATEM institutional policy network, and is an enthusiast for professional development and staff wellbeing initiatives.

Australian disability legislation intersects with the student experience at many points. Recent draft updates to the Disability Standards for Education mandate institutions' responsibility to define the inherent requirements of academic programs, to delineate more clearly what accommodations are 'reasonable'. RMIT University is currently in the process of defining program inherent requirements, and this paper provides a snapshot of this work in progress. The University has also recently clarified the distinction between accommodation for disability support, and special assessment consideration for unexpected adverse circumstances such as brief illnesses. Work is under way to define the process to be followed when a student enrolls in a program for which it becomes apparent that they may not meet the inherent requirements on the basis of disability. The presentation and subsequent discussion will explore this challenging and very human part of university management.