

7 December 2023

Attention: University of Southern Queensland

RE: Application for Registered Prior Learning for Joanne Keune

Dear Assessor,

For the past 3 months Ms. Joanne Keune has been engaged by QPASTT for delivering communication and coaching workshops for young people between the ages of 15 years to 25 years in the youth leadership program *Youth Voice*.

QPASTT is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation with no political or religious affiliations providing culturally responsive services to promote the health and wellbeing of people in Australia who have sought safety from persecution, torture and war related trauma. QPASTT has been providing services to torture and trauma survivors in Queensland since 1995 and we welcome all people regardless of their ethnicity, culture, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, language or religious beliefs.

Ms. Keune ran 11 workshops, which occurred on Friday afternoons from 4pm until 5:30 pm. An average of 25 young people would attend the workshops, who arrived to Australia as refugees or are children from refugee backgrounds, as well as young people from multicultural and Anglo Australian backgrounds as well. Ms. Keune showed great empathy for the young people and their stories that they chose to share. Ms Keune treated the young people with respect and maintained an environment for the young people to listen to one another.

In the course of the workshops, Ms Keune was able to obtain greater cultural understanding as many young people came from diverse cultural backgrounds, and support their adaptation to Australian practices to enhance their future employment prospects. For example, in her first class Ms. Keune indicated that eye contact is the number one priority towards building trust with an audience when public speaking. A young woman immediately expressed that in her African culture this was not permissible. Women do not look people in the eyes. Ms. Keune then encouraged the group to discuss the difference between the cultural backgrounds and the practice in Australia. It was discussed that if people went for a job interview in Australia and if they did not look the interviewer in the eyes, they might find it difficult to achieve the job. The group came back and stated that they decided that they must learn to look people in the eyes while living and working in Australia.

The activities Ms Keune prepared were well received by the young people. Many young people showed they enjoyed the workshops while simultaneously becoming passionate in the speed debating. Ms. Keune taught tangible skills to the young people, including gesture, eye contact and speech delivery. There were often language miscommunications and misunderstandings due to

English being a second language for the students, but Ms. Keune dealt with these issues very professionally. Ms. Keune was very positive and gave excellent positive feedback to all the students, who were very afraid of public speaking. Such encouragement demonstrated an increase in confidence and willingness to share in front of a group.

We enjoyed the reflective exercises where students were filmed and then reviewed their speech to provide feedback regarding how they could improve their delivery. Once the feedback was received, we were able to see the skill development that occurred within each young person in the workshop.

We are currently exploring an extension to this program to have Ms. Keune come back and work with the students on developing a workshop to build cultural understanding and connection between young people within schools in 2024 as a means to combat racism and vilification.

Sincerely,



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