Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm that Australian College of Skills & Education has a strong commitment to meeting the high-quality standards expected by our clients in the delivery of the training and assessment services that we supply to them. Our quality management system takes the form of this manual and the associated operational forms and is based on the requirements of the VET Quality Framework which comprises:

- The Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015
- The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- The Data Provision Requirements
- The Fit and Proper Person Requirements, and
- The Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements

Our primary objectives are:

- To provide quality training and assessment services within our scope of registration.
- To utilise our Quality Management System as described within this manual as the primary tool in achieving best practice outcomes across our entire operation.
- To ensure continuous improvement of our training and assessment systems and customer service requirements.
- To fully comply with all relevant Commonwealth and State Legislative and Regulatory requirements for the operation of Registered Training Organisations (RTO).

In the implementation of this policy we will focus on the needs of our business to consistently meet the ongoing requirements of our customers' and our statutory obligations. Our quality management system will also provide us with mechanisms to detect system shortfalls and add to continuous improvement. The Quality Policy describes the mechanisms by which these improvements are achieved and how we remain compliant with the VET Quality Framework.

We define our stakeholders as but not limited to, students both current and potential, members of staff, employer groups, enterprises, government agencies and bodies, professional bodies and associations, other learning institutions, industry training advisory bodies and Industry Skills Councils. The RTO Manager communicates with the CEO, who has the defined responsibility and authority to ensure that ACSE cooperates with the relevant authorities including ASQA:

- In the conduct of audits and the monitoring of its operations
- By providing accurate and timely data relevant to measures of its performance
- By providing information about significant changes to its operations
- In the retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of records consistent with the registering authorities' requirements

We have a designated external Accountant, who communicates with the CEO, who has the defined responsibility and authority to:

- Ensure that we fully comply with our financial management policies;
- Ensure that all students fees paid in advance are protected
- Ensure that the ACSE refund policy is fair
- Provide when required fully audited financial reports for ACSE operations

Continuous Improvement Policy

ACSE is committed to constantly improving the way in which our operations occur and our compliance with the VET Quality Framework. Through this process ACSE will achieve greater quality customer service, improved industry satisfaction and remain abreast of current and future demands of the VET sector.

ACSEs approach to quality encompasses all its operations including training and assessment services, student services, financial operations, facilities, staff development and Workplace Health and Safety.

ACSE will operate a Quality Management System across all its operations, endorsed by SAI Global to Quality ISO9001 Standards.

ACSE quality system is based on adherence to the following principles:

- A commitment by all staff to continuous improvement of all facets of business and training operations;
- Input and engagement from all staff, students and industry, in identifying and assisting in the implementation of quality improvements;
- Use of client, staff and industry feedback as the basis for identifying and prioritising improvement opportunities.
- To achieve the process of continuous improvement ACSE acknowledges that Opportunities for Continuous Improvement (OCI) can be identified from various sources including:
- Formal and ad hoc feedback from students, staff and industry;
- Complaints from student, staff and industry or other third parties and stakeholders;
- By undertaking self-assessment audits against the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 and the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- By undertaking internal Assessment Validation sessions;
- By attending internal and external professional development workshops

Sources of Continuous Improvement Opportunities

Feedback and evaluations:
Students, staff, industry and stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback about the quality of the ACSE programs, facilities and resources.

- Students are encouraged to provide both verbal and written feedback throughout their training via electronic surveys embedded on the ACSE website at http://acse.edu.au/continuous-feedback/
- Students are asked to complete the AQTF Learner Questionnaire, providing quality indicator data http://acse.edu.au/aqtf-learner-questionnaire/
- Trainers and assessors are encouraged to provide feedback during staff meetings, on an ad hoc basis as well as through formal feedback at the end of a course.
- Administration staff are encouraged to provide feedback to the Management during regular staff meetings and they are encouraged to submit weekly continuous improvement items to the RTO Manager.
- Where applicable, data sourced from the AQTF Employer Questionnaire and Internal Feedback Survey http://acse.edu.au/aqtf-employer-questionnaire/
- Industry contacts are actively encouraged to provide validation and feedback on training operations, including training materials, content and assessment.

External Audit reports

ACSE uses audit reports and audit report information and news from external bodies such as ASQA, as a source of continuous improvement and makes changes based upon areas identified in the reports.

Record Keeping

A *Continuous Improvement Register* is maintained and includes items directly related to continuous improvement. Records of all continuous improvement activity shall be maintained in electronic format after the continuous improvement action has been completed to allow review by management, for the purposes of internal audit and for review by external auditors.

Internal Audit Policy

ACSE is fully committed to ensuring its compliance with the VET Quality Framework. This is maintained by conducting internal self-assessment auditing at least bi-annually and acting on OCI or areas of non-compliance which may be identified.

When conducting the internal self-assessment audit, the auditor will be a dedicated Compliance staff member or external compliance specialist. RTO Management outside the roles highlighted may be present or observe during audit, or ask questions of the auditor, but are not to conduct the audit. This ensures where possible that an accurate audit is conducted and outcomes are as robust as possible without any hint of bias occurring. The person conducting the audit is to be given full and free access and is not to be placed under any form of pressure or duress to indicate an outcome.

The auditor will use the processes outlined below to ensure that policies and procedures have been circulated, understood and implemented consistently throughout ACSE and that these policies and procedures are fully compliant:

- Examination of all documents and systems that consist of policies and procedures, all handbooks or manuals, relevant components of the business plan, trainer/assessor qualifications
- Examination of records of actual training conducted
- Sample of student files to check assessment records and data entry
- Analysing physical resources for delivery and assessment required by the relevant National Training Package, and analysing training package materials, including assessment tools
- Holding interviews as required with administration staff, trainers and students
- Observing processes such as assessment and learning activities
- Checking requirements for simulated work environments or work based assessment and delivery
- Reviewing of processes with management
- Professional development (VET and Industry)
- Continuous improvement

At the completion of auditing a report will be generated for distribution to the CEO and subsequently to staff. This report will make a series of recommendations on any non-compliance found and the required rectifications. This report will be signed off by the Director after review and implementation.

Where improvement actions eliminate a potential risk as defined under the risk management process, the risk matrix will be updated accordingly.

Risk Management Policy

Risk Management

The practice of systematically identifying and evaluating any threats to the organisation; establishing priorities for action and making decisions about which risk control measures need to be implemented.

Where reasonably possible, we identify and control all possible and potential risks associated with our operation as a Registered Training Organisation and business. Identification and analysis of risks will be completed in accordance with the Risk Management Procedure, which includes populating and maintaining a *Risk Assessment Matrix.* Risk Management is a process in its own right but is also a major component of the overall concept of Continuous Improvement and to meet compliance requirements.

We recognise the need to prioritise the treatment of risk, to concentrate on those risks that have a greater likelihood of occurring and/or more severe consequences when they do. All of our risk management processes are reviewed at regular staff meetings as required and all staff are encouraged to have input into the process at any time. Risk Management at ACSE is considered as a 'live' process and should be continually examined, tested and reviewed.

This is to ensure that the risk management model, including the risk matrix is kept up to date and those new areas of risk identified by staff are included in a timely manner and that the team is totally involved within the entire risk management process. At each of the monthly management meetings a portion of the identified risks are reviewed and reassessed to ensure that the risks are continuously managed.
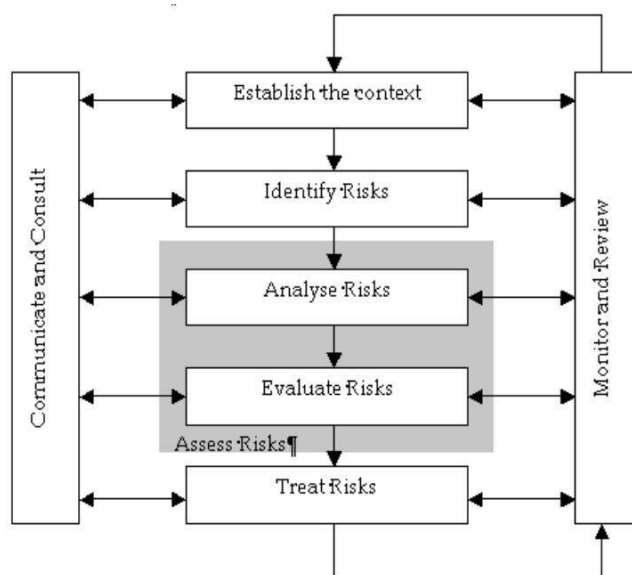
The risks are reviewed based upon their category of risk, as detailed in the matrix below.

All Extreme Risks are reviewed every three months, High Risks every four months, moderate risks every six months and low risks annually, thus over the course of the year, the Extreme Risk are reviewed four (4) times, the High Risks three (3) times, Moderate Risks twice and Low Risks once.

Our response to risk:

- o **Extreme risk** - all possible action is taken to avoid and insure against these risks and if identified routinely, this category is acted against within 24 hours.
- o **High risk** – all possible action is taken to avoid and ensure against these risks and if identified routinely, this category is acted against with 72 hours.
- o **Medium risk** - accountability and responsibility for effective management of these risks is delegated to staff at an appropriate level, along with a timeline for checking and review.
- o **Low risk** - these risks are managed in the course of routine procedures, with regular review and reporting through management processes.

Assessment Validation Policy

ACSE ensures that it reviews, compares and evaluates its assessment practices, tools and evidence on a regular basis to achieve a set standard, so that the training outcomes are consistent and that assessment is valid, reliable, fair and flexible. Where necessary ACSE will redefine, clarify and modify its existing assessment practice.

ACSE will conduct validation meetings at least twice a year, or at any other time as required. All training package on scope are open to systematic review and in line with Clause 1.10, each training package will be reviewed at least once every five years, or at any other time as required. ACSE will also ensure that 50% of its training packages are reviewed within the first three years of each five-year cycle.

Validation of assessments will also occur whenever there are changes in assessment as the result of changes to the Training Package or feedback from trainers or employers, or prior to contextualisation taking place for a particular cohort or student.

To ensure that the validation process will be accurate and reliable, an external consultant may be engaged to take part in and provide appraisal for the validation and to provide final validation recommendations. They will be engaged either as part of a panel approach to the process or they will conduct the validation independently by themselves.

Prior to the commencement of a validation session, all participants will be supplied with copies of the assessment tools to be validated, copies of the related units of competency and a copy of the *'Assessment Validation Checklist'*. This form will be filled out by all participants and later used to assist in the outcomes report of the validation meeting. Representatives from industry are also encouraged where possible to participate and can be invited to the session or materials can be provided to them independently. If industry representatives are involved they are to be provided with a copy of *'Industry Consultation of the TAS and Assessment Tools'* form.

The validation process will include one or more reviewers who are not involved in the delivery and assessment of the training package, but hold relevant industry and vocational competencies; this can either comprise other ACSE staff or an external consultant (s). This ensures transparency, accuracy and a non-biased approach to the validation. This is where independent industry subject matter experts are one of the preferred options for validation.

In addition, feedback on assessment tasks will be sought regularly from industry. ACSE have a wide network of industry partners, including many who provide work placement and work experience for students. The validation process shall determine whether or not the assessment procedures and materials currently in use are, valid, reliable, fair and flexible in their application and whether they are considered to be suitable in light of all possible circumstances including reasonable adjustment requirements.

All OCI that are identified from within the validation process will be actioned as per the CI Policy outlined previously. The data from the validation will be captured on the *'Assessment Validation Checklist'* and these will be compiled and scanned into the Shared Drive. The RTO Manager will notify all staff of any changes to assessment practices or materials arising from the validation process.

All those who participate in the validation process will receive a Certificate of Attendance and have the workshop clearly marked on their individual staff VET professional development record. The validation meetings can take place as prescribed twice a year in their own right or as part of an internal professional development workshop for staff which is conducted twice a year.

Procedure for validation meeting

- o Assessment Validation meetings are scheduled to occur twice a year
- o Ongoing assessment validation occurs in response to feedback or changes in Training Packages
- o The RTO Manager liaises with the CEO, to decide what assessments will be put forward for validation
- o All relevant materials for validation are prepared and sent to all attending. If industry representatives are conducting the validation independently or attending, they also need to be given the 'Industry *Consultation of the TAS and Assessment Tools'* located at *C:\RTO File Structure\Quality and Compliance\Continuous Improvement\Contact with Industry.*
- o Validation is conducted on selected assessment tools using the *Assessment Validation Checklist* located at *C:\RTO File Structure\Quality and Compliance\Continuous Improvement\Assessment Validation*.
- o All improvement recommendations are recorded
- o All recommendations are submitted for consideration by the RTO Manager in consultation with the Director
- o All completed validation forms are to be filed appropriately at *C:\RTO File Structure\Quality and Compliance\Continuous Improvement\Assessment Validation\Completed Validation.*

Selecting tools/ evidence to be validated include the following steps:

- o Identify the qualification/ unit to be validated
- o Identify the staff/contractors assessing that qualification
- o Identify assessment/assessment tools used for the qualification/unit
- o Locate samples of completed assessments if available
- o Make copies of the selected assessment tools/ evidence/ units of competence/ checklists for all attending the workshop
- o Assessors complete validation checklists and provide recommendations during the workshop session.

Client Feedback Policy

ACSE has defined its stakeholders as but not limited to students both current and potential, members of staff, employer groups, enterprises, various government agencies and bodies, professional bodies and associations, other learning institutions, industry training advisory bodies and Industry Skills Councils or SSO.

ACSE conduct various types of feedback gathering activities on a regular basis. The feedback activity is directly linked to continuous improvement activities and is a direct result of the capturing of data and feedback from all identified stakeholders during the course of normal operations.

Feedback gathering activities can be initiated by any members of staff and is monitored by the RTO Manager. The feedback gathering process includes but is not limited to:

- Regular informal monitoring and communications (emails, phone, social media)
- Gaining feedback from all identified stakeholders at semi - regular intervals including during training programs
- Random feedback gathered from time to time from the various stakeholders.
- Feedback from moderation, validation and professional development activities
- Student feedback received through the enrolment process
- Information from the complaints and appeals process
- Annual learner questionnaire feedback

Feedback is collated and tabled at regular meetings. All areas identified as potential risks will be added to the risk assessment matrix and a mitigation strategy will be created as per the requirements of the risk assessment policy.

Training and Assessment Strategy Policy

ACSE identify, negotiate, plan and implement the appropriate training and assessment strategies to meet the needs of each of its clients for all qualifications currently on its scope of registration.

Each training and assessment strategy will be required to identify the proposed target groups, learning and assessment modes and strategies, the assessment validation processes to be utilised and the pathways available for further training options. They will be developed in full consultation with the relevant enterprises and industries.

ACSE will review, compare and evaluate its current assessment processes, tools and evidence by way of validation meetings with a range of assessors who are delivering the same competency standards.

ACSE will document any action taken to improve the quality and consistency of the assessment and the relevant assessment tools.

ACSE will ensure that whilst developing, adapting or delivering training and or assessment products and services:

- All methods used to identify learning needs, and methods for designing training and assessment materials are fully documented;
- The requirements of the relevant National Training Package or accredited course curriculum are met;
- Steps are taken to manage the transition from a superseded training product on scope within 1 year of publication on the national register. This includes ensuring all students training has been completed and qualifications issued or where that is not possible, transferring them to another program which is current. This also includes the management of AQF qualifications that are no longer current but have not been superseded and ensuring that all training and assessment in this category is completed within two years of the change of status on the national register.
- Core and elective units, as appropriate, are identified;
- Customisation meets the requirements specified in the relevant Training Package or, for accredited courses, meets the ACSE customisation policy;
- Language, literacy and numeracy requirements develop the learning capacity of the individual and are consistent with the essential requirements for workplace performance specified in the relevant units of competency or outcomes of accredited courses;

ACSE will ensure that it has access to the staff, facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials required to provide the training and/or assessment services within its scope of registration.

Access and Equity and Discrimination Policy

This policy applies to standard 5 of subsection 185(1) of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011. Strategies we have put in place to adhere to the principles of Access and Equity (In compliance also with Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation and Regulatory requirements) and to maximise outcomes for our clients are as follows:

- 5.1 In the ACSE enrolment form details of any special requirements the student may need are captured. All potential students will have an interview/enrolment session prior to finalising enrolment.

- 5.2 ACSE will address data from enrolment forms and evaluation sheets to inform continuous improvement of training. ACSE maintain an open dialogue with industry to keep current with present best practice. Assessment procedures will reflect the needs of the student and current industry requirements.

- 5.3 ACSE inform our Students and Staff about all aspects of the training, the assessment process and the support that we offer them and industry. This includes:
  - Trainee selection, enrolment and orientation procedures
  - Course content and vocational outcomes
  - All information pertaining to fees and charges including refunds and exceptions are given to all students *before* enrolment takes place.
  - Provision for LLN support (students are referred to appropriate wrap around support as required)
  - Flexible learning and assessment procedures and placement requirements
  - Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer arrangements
  - Appeals and complaints procedures
  - Staff responsibilities for access and equity

- 5.4 ACSE engages industry to ensure the delivery and assessment of effective and current work place skills training. ACSE adhere to the principle that courses must be grounded in and responsive to industry needs. Assessment is tailored and contextualised for industry and student as required.

- 5.5 ACSE assessment aligns with the individual needs of learners and the contexts they are employed in or industry they wish to work in.

Student Services

ACSE is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) providing nationally recognised accredited training programs.

To maintain our standards it is practice that we complete program reviews and client satisfaction surveys on the completion of any training delivered and we also request client feedback on their experience with our organisation.

Confidentiality of your Information

As staff members of ACSE, either as contractors, casuals or full time members, the integrity and confidentiality of your personal private information is paramount. We will not share or sell personal private information with a third party and at all times will securely store all private personal data. For full details of our procedures and processes for confidential information, see our "RTO Privacy Policy". A hard copy will be provided as part of staff induction, which must be read as a condition of employment and an electronic copy is available on the website at http://acse.edu.au/

Support Services: At ACSE we continually request feedback from our trainees to ensure that we are providing a quality service that meet individual training needs. We obtain this information through in class or on the job observation or through direct conversation with the trainee. This is an ongoing strategy and forms part of our student service. We also provide feedback forms at intervals of training delivery, normally at the mid way point and end point of each program. Any support provided or referral suggested in this process is documented in each participants training file on the SMS. Staff support services are outlined in the policy at the end of this manual.

Qualified Staff

All Trainers and Assessors are appropriately qualified, have extensive industry experience and hold TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

Change of student information

It is the students' responsibility to inform ACSE of any changes to your personal details such as name, address, telephone phone numbers or other personal details.

Student feedback

As part of our commitment to the student and their progression, ACSE will provide a feedback opportunity during training on the quality of training and progress. The form will ask about experiences with staff, management and the learning process in general. We will ask how we can improve our services to clients.

Discrimination Policy

In compliance with Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation and Regulatory requirements regarding discrimination, ACSE expects all staff and trainees will receive equal treatment regardless of:

- Sex
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin
- Physical, intellectual or psychological disabilities
- Religious or political beliefs
- De facto spouse, pregnancy, a parent or childless
- Age
- In or out of work
- Member of a union or not
- Lawful sexual activity or sexual orientation
- Physical features
- Personal association
- Imprisonment
- Language, literacy or numeracy skills

At ACSE we require all staff and trainees to uphold their legal responsibilities to treat each other fairly and are expected to do so as a condition of their employment with us.

Misconduct and Discipline

ACSE is required under Australian law to ensure we provide a workplace that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination (including victimization and bullying).
Any breach of harassment / anti-discrimination policy will be considered a serious offence and immediate action will be taken.
Inappropriate behavior may be defined as:

- Obstructing or interfering with resources, facilities or equipment
- Offensive and/or inappropriate conduct (verbal and/or physical) that is defined as sexual harassment, sexual or otherwise, or is discriminatory on grounds of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference or religious or political belief
- Intimidating or attempting to intimidate a person
- Willfully, recklessly or negligently engaging in conduct which may cause bodily injury or damage to property
- Copying or attempting to copy any copyright material, including computer software, without the permission of ACSE
- Plagiarizing the work of any other person (i.e. copying another person's work and stating that it is your own)
- Stealing

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may result in failure to achieve competency. It is important that participants declare sources from which they have derived material and ideas, if not their own.

Discipline

The nature of the disciplinary action will be determined by the nature of the complaint /misconduct reported.

Student disciplinary procedure

The Discipline Policy and Procedure document is made available to all students and is incorporated in the Learner Handbook.

- All discipline issues will be handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution and any appeals in regards to this adhere to the Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure.
- All parties will have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the Discipline procedure.
- Students will be provided with details of external authorities they may approach, if required.
- All Discipline issues will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.

Responding to a disciplinary problem: Student disciplinary problems may be managed through an informal phase or a formal phase or both the informal and the formal phases may be necessary. The procedure may be implemented at any stage.

Penalties and disciplinary measures may include:
- Recovery of costs to the extent of any damage caused
- A reprimand
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Failure to achieve competency
- Repeat assessment
- Reversal of results

Expectations of Participants

Students will need to understand these expectations prior to enrolment. Ensure that students have read the Student Handbook to familiarise themselves with the points below:

- Students are expected to attend all scheduled training to successfully complete their course. Attendance means attending a face to face class, logging into e-learning (when available), and attending work placement and work experience sessions.
- When training is conducted within the workplace, students are required to wear clean, neat appropriate clothing, including any personal protection equipment required by WHS legislation or Codes of Practice.
- Enclosed footwear is to be worn at all times while on ACSE premises and at third party venues.
- Maintain a high standard of presentation at all times and behave accordingly.
- Produce a Doctor's Certificate for sick days.
- Advise the facilitator if they will be unable to attend study for a particular day. Absenteeism may result in Units not being completed or competencies not being achieved. Excessive absenteeism may result in removal from the program.
- If students are unable to attend off-the-job training or structured training sessions/ workshops, they must contact the workplace and ACSE administration.
- Advise their trainer of any concern they may have regarding progress throughout the training program.
- Advise ACSE of any changes in personal details by email or in writing.
- Students must keep training areas and facilities tidy at all times. No food is to be taken into classrooms, and smoking is not permitted on ACSE premises. Mobile phones must be switched off or placed in silent mode during class and are not to be accessed during training time.
- Consumption, or being under the influence of alcohol or elicit substances during training will not be tolerated and will result in the student being asked to leave the premises. Continued abuse of this policy may result in the student being removed from the training program.
- Student behaviour must not disrupt or threaten other students or staff. Abusive or threatening behaviour or physical violence may result in instant expulsion from the training program. Students must treat all individuals with respect and dignity and conduct themselves in a manner that will provide a safe and rewarding learning environment for all.

RTO Privacy Policy

ACSE in its operation as a RTO, has a Privacy Policy aligned with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) which came into effect on 12 March 2014.

ACSE complies with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) and subsequently in accordance with the thirteen APP's outlined in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012, which prescribe and mandate the way organisations must collect, manage, use, secure, disclose and dispose of personal and sensitive information.

ACSE is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information and we treat any information collected and retained with the respect and importance it deserves. We will be honest and transparent in relation to the way we manage your information.

Our Privacy Policy explains how we handle your personal information, including how it is used and potentially disclosed, importantly how it is stored and secured and additionally how you can access and update your personal information.

This policy only applies to our databases and files and does not cover any State, Territory or Commonwealth Government database or file. You are advised to contact the relevant government agency for a copy of their privacy policy.

Why we collect personal information?

We collect personal information in order to provide clients with access to our training and associated services, and so we can better understand how we can improve our provision of services now and into the future. We collect personal information from staff members and prospective staff members, in order to fulfil normal conditions of employment, including character and reference checking and to meet state based licensing requirements and national regulatory compliance guidelines. Additionally, a large component of what we do as an RTO, requires us to collect personal information for mandatory statistical data as prescribed by government regulators.

To be clear though, people have the right not to provide us with personal information if they so choose, but if they decline to provide personal information, unfortunately we may not be able to:

- provide the product or service requested,
- enter into a business relationship with; or
- provide people with employment.

ACSE will only collect personal information that is required for the purposes of employment or education, or in meeting government reporting requirements and it will only be used for the specific purposes for which it was collected.

What types of information do we collect in general?

So we can provide our range of services, we may have to collect personal information deemed necessary for us to supply people with the service they have requested or to provide employment opportunities for prospective staff.

The information we collect is defined under the current legislation as *personal* and *sensitive,* and information collected by us may fall into both categories. The following specific guidelines as defined in the Privacy Act are as follows:

- o *Personal information*: "information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable: (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not."

- o *Sensitive information*: "(a) information or an opinion about an individual's: (i) racial or ethnic origin, or (ii) political opinions, or (iii) membership of a political association, or (iv) religious beliefs or affiliations, or (v) philosophical beliefs, or (vi) membership of a professional or trade association, or (vii) membership of a trade union, or (viii) sexual preferences or practices, or (ix) criminal record, that is also personal information; or (b) health information about an individual; or (c) genetic information about an individual that is not otherwise health information; or (d) biometric information that is to be used for the purposes of automated biometric verification or biometric identification; or (e) biometric templates".

In general terms, information collected will include:

- Solicited information: contact information such as name, organisation, position, address, telephone, and email, employment and educational histories, referees reports, date of birth and marital status.
- Information collected by ACSE which may be regarded as sensitive:

- 'Disability' and 'long-term impairment status' (health); and 'indigenous status', 'language spoken at home', 'proficiency in spoken English', 'country of birth' (implies ethnic/racial origin). This information is specified in NCVER statistical data elements and is collected for national data reporting requirements.
- 'Dietary requirements' (health-related) may be collected for event catering purposes only.
- Biographical information, which may contain information on 'affiliations' and 'membership of a professional or trade association' are obtained from key note speakers for event marketing purposes and for training consultation involved with service delivery for us.
- 'Health and work injury information' relating to the impact on students as a client using our services or on potential staff and our ability to provide a service without breaching a Duty of Care.

No sensitive information will be collected without a person's express consent.

What information do we collect using technology?

We will not collect any additional personal information other than for the purpose of ensuring we can deliver our services to a client and information will only be collected in a fair and lawful manner.

If we receive personal information indirectly (unsolicited) from a party other than a student or staff member, we will make a determination on whether the information needs to be retained in order to provide our services as previously explained, or whether the information can lawfully be destroyed or de-identified.

Use and disclosure of personal information

We will make every effort to ensure that personal information remains confidential and secure and is only used for the primary purposes outlined in this document and only for any secondary purposes that people have been made aware of and have agreed to.

ACSE will not disclose, reveal, sell, share or pass personal sensitive information onto a third party, without express permission. ACSE does not sell its mailing lists to third parties for marketing purposes.

In some specific instances however, information **will** need to be passed to a third party, these include:

- o Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- o Department of Education
- o Department of Social Services
- o Department of Industry (State Training Services NSW)
- o ACT Government, Education and Training
- o The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
- o State based licensing authorities
- o Previous employers for the purpose of reference checking

Only personal information required to comply with Federal or State based legislation for our scope of operation or Commonwealth contractual obligations, will be passed to these third parties and at no time will we disclose any personal information to overseas recipients.

If required to do so, we may disclose personal information to law enforcement authorities when required or authorised under an Australian law or a court/tribunal order, or where it is reasonable to do so if there has been a threat to life or we believe a criminal act or unlawful activity has been committed. We may also disclose information if a permitted health condition exists or a health condition eventuates that may require emergency medical care.

Direct Marketing

ACSE does not sell its mailing lists to third parties for marketing purposes and will not use information for the purposes of direct marketing unless a person has given their permission for this to occur. We may use client testimonials on our website but they will not identify an individual by name unless express permission has been given.

ACSE will send out newsletters and corporate event information to existing and previous clients and to businesses aligned with our company. Anybody receiving information from us in error or who does not wish to receive such information, can contact us on 0420745215 and request to have their name removed from our mailing lists.

Government related identifiers

ACSE does not adopt or disclose a government related identifier of an individual as its own identifier, unless we are authorised by law and prescribed by regulations to do so.

In the course of our provision of services as an RTO, we may use a government related identifier, for example, ACSE uses contracted training staff who operate as sole traders and we will collect an Australian Business Number (ABN) for the purpose of contracting services.

We may also need to collect government related identifiers, such as a Medicare Card number, passport details or a driver's licence in order to fulfil our obligations under Federal Law in the conduct of our operations as an RTO.

Management of personal information and its 'Quality'

ACSE endeavours to ensure personal information is accurate, up to date, complete and relevant. We will as a matter of course, routinely update personal information in our Student Management system.

We invite previous clients to keep their contact details up to date by requesting this through our online email contact at info@acse.edu.au and internal policy prescribes that anytime we contact a former client, we will ask if personal information is up to date and accurate. ACSE does not charge a fee for accessing or correcting personal data.

Retention and disposal of information and information security

Personal information is held at ACSE in both electronic and paper format. We take all reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure. ACSE will adopt a paperless working environment by scanning all student data (new and existing), into our Student Management System.

Specifically, information is retained:

- o In our Student Management System, which hosts data externally with a third party and is secured in alignment with Commonwealth standards. The system is encrypted accordingly and secured with personalised user account passwords.
- o For a period of time in hard copy archive, secured on site in locked cabinets.
- o Periodically on ACSE systems and databases which are secured with individual user account passwords and user access privileges.
- o On hard copy backup drives, which are retained in the event of system failure or loss. All backup copies of these drives are held securely on site.
- o ACSE adopts a clear desk policy at close of business for documents containing personal information.
- o Paper documents containing personal information which need to be destroyed will be sent for secure destruction with a commercial contractor.

We will retain personal information for as long as we are required to do so to conduct business activities in line with Commonwealth legislation or other legal requirements. This may include the retention of some personal information for up to 30 years. As soon as personal information or components of it are no longer required, and it is lawful to do so, ACSE will take all reasonable steps to destroy and/or de-identify the information.

Complaints

Complaints are outlined in detail in our separate Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Summary

This policy relates to the operation of ACSE both as a business and an RTO. A copy of this policy is also available on our website at http://acse.edu.au/privacy-policy/

Further information on legislation and the APP's please navigate to:

http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-act/privacy-law-reform

Work Health and Safety Policy (WHS)

ACSE recognise and are committed under Federal legislation and the Work Health and Safety ACT 2011 to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for its staff, students, and other visitors. ACSE believe that a well-managed health and safety program is an integral part of good management practice. Staff have an obligation to ensure that they are thoroughly familiar with the WHS Policy and Procedure Manual and its content. It is a condition of employment that the policy be carefully read and understood. A copy of the policy will be provided as part of staff induction, will be available electronically on request and a hardcopy will be placed in Trainer Folders on hand at third party training venues for access by staff and students.

ACSE WHS

In fulfilling its responsibilities, ACSE will:

- Comply with all statutory legislation and approved codes of practice relating to WHS.

- Set short and long term goals and specific responsibilities in the management of WHS.

- Develop, maintain and review WHS policies, procedures and guidelines.

- Ensure all managers understand and take responsibility for the WHS process in each area.

- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that staff are aware of safe work practices, emergency procedures and any risks to health and safety in their work environment.

- Consult with WHS Representative (if applicable) on issues relating to health and safety. ACSE will ensure that management and staff have practical knowledge of and take responsibility for:

   1. Hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control.
   2. Health and safety legislation, regulations and recognised standards.
   3. Specific health and safety issues within the workplace.
   4. Investigation of all injuries, near misses and accidents.
   5. Regularly monitor and review the implementation of and compliance with WHS policies.

ACSE is committed to providing:

• Safe equipment and safe work procedures including safe electrical equipment, appropriate resources and Personal Protective Equipment as required.
• Safe facilities for the welfare of staff and students such as hygienic kitchen and rest areas, washrooms and first aid kits.

Staff Responsibilities and Involvement in WHS

The WHS Act 2011 places obligations on employees to have a Duty of Care toward their own health and the health and that of others in the workplace. ACSE encourages and supports staff involvement and communication on WHS matters. Staff will receive information, instruction and training (where required) on WHS matters.

All staff are expected to:

   o Practice safe working habits.

- Report unsafe working conditions, equipment or any other potential hazards immediately to the RTO Manager.

- Maintain their immediate work area, including training areas, by practicing good housekeeping.

- Take care of others.

- Co-operate with ACSE in meeting the requirements of the WHS Act.

- Ensure the health and safety of students and visitors is a high priority.

ACSE has a commitment to providing training on a yearly basis for all staff in safe work practices. All staff will be trained in the principles of WHS management together with the appropriate hazard controls that are relevant to their area.

Such training and information will include:

- A legislative overview relevant to the workplace (including employer responsibility).

- Hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control.

- Incident and accident investigation.

- Emergency Response.

ACSE recognises that hazards in the workplace are not just physical but can also exist in the way the organisation functions and the way in which its work is organised. Occupational stress is a major concern and one that ACSE aims to minimise through sound management practice. Staff and Management are encouraged to identify and manage potential stress risks.

Smoke Free Workplace

ACSE is smoke free in all public and individual work areas, including:

1. Public areas, visitor reception areas.
2. All third-party sites used for training and work placement. Smoking is only allowed in:
   - Designated areas.

A no smoking policy aims to provide a healthy workplace for employees, clients and visitors. It also promotes and supports healthy choices in the workplace.

Office and Training Venue Safety

All work performed in offices at ACSE and third party training venues will be conducted using safe work practices. Office and administrative areas will adopt best practice WHS approaches to ensure a safe work environment.

Safe Work Practices at ACSE and Third Party training venues

- Guard the sharp edges of furniture to prevent personal injury.

o Practice good housekeeping. Keep floors free of items that might pose a trip hazard. Keep waste cans out of the way; do not overfill them.

o Prevent slipping accidents by cleaning up spills immediately.

o Report all defects such as loose tiles, broken steps, railings and doors immediately to the management

o Keep razor blades, tacks, and other sharp objects in closed containers.

o Use the proper tool for the job at hand (e.g. a staple remover to remove staples).

o Do not overload electrical outlets. Do not plug a multiple outlet strip-- an extension cord with multiple electrical receptacles--into a second multiple outlet strip.

o Report immediately, any damaged electrical cords, broken switches, loose connections, or bare wires.

o Unplug any office machine that you suspect is faulty. Have it inspected by the appropriate repair personnel and tag it as 'Out of Service' till that occurs or replace it.

o Avoid overloading the top drawers of filing cabinets to avoid the possible tipping of the cabinet when drawers are opened. Cabinets should be placed where their use will not interfere with office traffic patterns.

o Keep file and desk drawers closed when not in use to help prevent tripping accidents.

o Be sure to use proper manual handling techniques.

o Use only safety step stools or ladders for climbing.

o Be careful with flammable liquids. They should be kept and used in a ventilated area, away from excessive heat or ignition sources and stored in accordance with the MSDS.

o Office doors shall be free of obstructions at all times.

o If it is necessary to run a cable or electrical cord across the floor, a cable cover must be used to protect the wiring and prevent tripping.

o Do not cover air vents or obstruct airflow. Do not place furniture, equipment, or materials in locations that will interfere with air movement around thermostats.

o Report any observed pest control problems to the management

Workplace Violence

o Violence in the workplace (including training facilities) is totally unacceptable.

o All students and staff have the right to feel safe and to participate in programs and services in a non-threatening environment.

o A student who is violent will be asked to leave the workplace immediately. The incident may require making a report to the Police, if the act of violence amounts to a criminal offence.

o A staff member who is violent or abusive will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in this manual.

o   Any behaviour, which constitutes a crime may be subject to legal proceedings.

First Aid

ACSE recognise that in accordance with WHS legislation, it has a responsibility to provide first aid assistance to staff and students that sustain an injury while on ACSE premises (including third party venues).

To achieve these responsibilities, ACSE shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, provide services such as:

• Trained and certificated first aiders

• First aid supplies

First Aid Kit

A First Aid Kit is kept at the ACSE business premises and management is responsible for ensuring it remains stocked and up to date. For the hire of third party training venues, training staff will be provided with a portable first aid kit that meets Code of Practice standards. All First Aid kit contents must be replenished as soon as possible after use and monthly inventory checks should be made and recorded to determine if the contents are as listed and have not deteriorated.

All first aid injuries and treatments must be recorded and reported immediately to the RTO Manager or First Aid delegate.

Environmentally Sustainable Workplace

Sustaining the environment means organising ways of minimising environmental damage. This includes minimising the use of non-renewable energy and resources. ACSE staff are encouraged to become actively involved sustainability practices by limiting the use of resources such as paper, electricity and plastic in the workplace. Care should be taken that products used at ACSE are, wherever possible, environmentally friendly.

Chemical cleaners and insecticides should be avoided. Plastic containers and bags should be used sparingly.

ACSE will recycle all glass, plastic and paper waste where possible. Staff are encouraged to re-use and recycle as many resources as possible.

ACSE will, wherever possible, purchase products with high recycle content.

ACSE will conserve energy through:

• Checking energy ratings before buying new equipment.

• Turning off lights, office equipment when not in use.

Fire Emergency

All staff must know the location of fire extinguishers and fire blankets and be familiar with the fire alarm system (where applicable to venue). The first person to observe a fire should:

1)   Immediately sound the fire alarm by activating nearest fire alarm pull station.

2)   Call 000.

3)   If possible, use available fire extinguishers to extinguish or contain the fire.

4)   Immediately evacuate area should initial fire fighting attempts fail.

General Emergency Guidelines

In the event of an emergency situation these two guidelines are as follows:

- •   Assess Risk to Yourself and Others
- •   Think before acting

Protect Yourself and Others

1. If necessary, remove yourself and others from the area.
2. Immediately remove any contaminated clothing and wash any part of body contaminated by chemicals. Do not spread the contamination to clean areas.
3. Attend to anyone injured.
4. Close off area to personnel (e.g. close doors, post warnings).
5. Turn off any potential ignition sources.
6. Cover spilled powders with suitable liquids to reduce dust.

Copies of the Incident Form are available electronically on the ACSE server and hard copies will be placed in all Trainer Folders located on site at third party venues.

Assessment Procedure

The Learner Guides and Assessment Tools sets out the competencies to be achieved through a mixture of classroom and work-based learning. Practical workshops and workplace activities with self, peer, supervisor and trainer assessment are a part of our learning strategy to keep the content of courses relevant and current to industry.

Delivery of all assessment is the responsibility of the trainer. Students must demonstrate the appropriate skills and underpinning theoretical knowledge for all criteria to achieve competency in an element. All elements must be achieved to complete a competency.

The National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 established the Australian Skills Qualification Authority (ASQA) that sets national standards which endeavour to ensure nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's VET system. The Standards for RTO's 2015 continue to prescribe the compliance requirements in regard to assessment rules and principles.

Work based Learning

Definitions of work-based learning:
1.   learning for work
2.   learning at work
3.   learning from work

Work Based Learning reflects a range of learning activities that are embedded in our vocational training and education programmes and take place in a workplace. The purpose of the experience is multi-faceted. This covers:

- experiences with clear objectives and outcomes related to improving application of theory to practice
- enhancing core and key competencies related to industry areas
- improving employability
- consolidating learning

Competency Based Assessment

In competency-based assessment, skills and knowledge are assessed against specific criteria as set out in competency standards or training packages. Competency based assessment is evidence based and when determining whether a student is competent the assessors decision must be based on the evidence provided on at least two occasions.

- **Evidence Guide:** Provides guidelines of what must be considered for assessment. It may contain any of the following
- **Critical Aspects of Evidence:** what evidence is needed to prove that the student can do the job. All items in this section must be covered.
- **Underpinning Skills and Knowledge**: the skills and knowledge that the student needs to perform the job.
- **Resource requirements**: the resources that are required to conduct the assessment.
- **Consistency in performance**: describes how the evidence should be collected to ensure that the requirements of the job are consistently achieved.
- **Context for Assessment**: states where assessment should take place. This may be off-the-job, on-the-job, simulated workplace, on and/or off-the-job.
- **Evidence gathering methods:** provides some examples of how you can gather evidence.

The key features of competency-based assessment include the following:

- that industry is actively involved in the assessment processes and discussion relevant to industry occurs with the trainee and the facilitator
- that the requirements and criteria for competence and assessment are stated up front, including assessment methods, volume of assessment and timeframe and are outlined to the student clearly.
- that the procedures for making and recording the decision are clear.
- that detailed feedback is provided to the student during and after the assessment process.
- that the person conducting the assessment is qualified accordingly and as mandated.

Competency standards in a Training Package describe the skills and knowledge needed to perform particular work. They outline the standard of performance required by industry, the conditions under which the task is to be performed and the evidence that is required to have been observed on at least two occasions to deem a person as competent in that job. Typical competency standards contain the following sections:

- **Unit Title**: A title that describes the broad areas of competency, which make up a job.
- **Description:** This is a short description of the purpose of the unit. Sometimes linkages to other units are outlined as well to provide examples of other units of competency that can be assessed together (holistic assessment).
- **Elements of Competency**: Describes the skills that an employee has to have to complete the job.
- **Performance Criteria:** These are statements that describe the level, context or standard of performance required for the job.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment will be conducted within a holistic framework across competencies including: case studies; workbooks/sheets; direct observation of practical demonstration; video self-evaluation; reflective journal; project and written report, presentation and group work presentation. This process will allow assessment across competencies and across cluster units. Assessment tasks will be aligned to national competencies from the relevant Training Packages.

Methods of Assessment

Methods may include a combination or any of the following:

- Case Study
- Direct Observation
- Personal Statement/ Resume
- Practical Demonstration
- Presentations
- Reports – written and/or oral
- Questioning
- Scenarios
- Simulations
- Third Party Observation
- Third Party Report
- Training Record
- Work Based Portfolio
- Work Based Project
- Work Related Portfolio
- Written Question and Answer Sheets

Qualifications and Certification

Students who successfully complete all the required units from their course will be issued with a nationally recognised qualification and testamur. Students who do not complete the full requirements of the course will be issued with a Statement of Attainment for the individual units successfully completed.

Before signing these documents the relevant competencies must be double-checked for completion by the assessor and the RTO Manager.

This information is stored in our Student Management System, Truss. The relevant delegate will cross check to ensure that all competencies have been completed and that the core and elective competencies match the requirements of the qualification. All certification is to carry the signature of the CEO, this is not to be electronic and must be a manual signature. This is to help protect against fraudulent issuance of qualifications and statements of attainment.

This certification will specify the qualification name, code and individual competencies completed. All qualification and statement of attainment templates will contain all other markings and data to ensure compliance with the relevant standards and conditions of issuance and use of logos.

The certification will be sent to students at their nominated addresses within 14 days of course completion (on condition of receipt of full payment of fees). Certification can also be picked up from the ACSE main business

office earlier, should all fees have been paid. On occasion ACSE will organise a collective graduation ceremony where all students will be provided with their qualification on the final day of the program; again this will only take place where all competencies have been completed and signed off and all student fees have been settled.

Student Records

Student may gain access to all student records retained on file upon request, including personal private information.

Data and Records Management

Students' qualifications and statements of attainment records will be stored for a minimum of 30 years. Other student data including assessment items, course administration information, records of assessment and trainer validation, will be stored as required by prescribed periods under legislation. Completed assessment items will be stored at a minimum for 6 months and then can be returned to the student. Students should be encouraged to photocopy all completed assessment prior to handing it in. ACSE will adopt the policy that all completed student data that is received; including all items mentioned above, will be scanned and kept electronically for an indefinite period or till such time as a student may ask that it be removed or disposed of. Student and other data will be stored:

> o   In electronic format on our cloud based Student Management System (SMS), which complies with national standards for electronic security and encryption and can only be accessed by authorized ACSE staff through use of a unique password.
> o   Temporarily under lock and key at the ACSE business premises, until data can be scanned routinely into the SMS, at which time hardcopy will be sent for secure destruction with a commercial contractor.

Student may gain access to study records or other personal information on request by contacting ACSE on **1300212169** , by email at info@acse.edu.au or in writing to:

ACSE Compliance
22 Granada Place,
Oakhurst NSW
2761

In the event ACSE ceases trading as an RTO, all stored student information will be transferred to the national regulator, ASQA. Students with ACSE are required to:

- Ensure that all the information provided is accurate.
- Notify ACSE of any changes to contact details.

Staff with ACSE are required to:

- Check personal private information for students is accurate and up to date when they speak with a student. Should a student call the office or write asking to verify information or access their personal private information, ACSE staff are to verify their identity against information already on file i.e. ask them their mobile phone number, address or date of birth. Once their identity has been established, first check that their contact details are still up to date and ask them if they are still happy for their information to be kept on out database.

Fees & Charges (Student Fees and Payments)

Prior to enrolment in a program, ACSE will provide students with all information regarding student and other associated information.

The fee structure and additional fee information is clearly outlined in the Student Handbook and the Student Handbook must be read as a pre-condition for enrolment and signing an Enrolment Form. It is clear in the enrolment form that students must read the handbook and by signing the Enrolment Form they are agreeing they have read the handbook and understand the fee information and Refund Policy.

Fees

For all fee for service accredited programs that do not attract government funding subsidies, ACSE requires a minimum deposit of a $300 per individual student, paid 5 days prior to course commencement.

Following course commencement, ACSE may require payment of additional fees in scheduled payments in advance from the student, attributable to tuition or other services yet to be delivered to the student, that do not exceed $1500 at any given time in advance.

Course Transfer or Deferral: Once a client has commenced training and they wish to defer training or a client wishes to transfer to another program after completing enrolment, a Transfer or Deferral Fee of $100 will be charged.

RPL Fee: For clients wishing to lodge an application for RPL, a $400 non-refundable upfront payment will be charged and is required prior to the process commencing. This covers the cost of initial interview, issuing of RPL kit and instructions for evidence gathering, an assessment of returned evidence, follow up interview if required and notification of result. As this process can be lengthy and detailed, the $400 upfront payment does not guarantee a successful RPL outcome, it is used cover costs associated with the process to that point and will be deducted from any remaining tuition fee should RPL be granted.

For all Units of Competency which are then granted as RPL, the candidate will be required to pay 50% of the normal unit cost for the program applied for. Unit costs will be explained in full upon enquiry.

These fees will be required to be paid by either a payment plan (if remaining fees are over $1500), or in full (if the remaining fees are below $1500) for tuition and other services yet to be delivered. The schedule for payment of remaining fees will be determined when signing a payment plan with administration, but will normally coincide with a second payment a third of the way through the training and any remaining payment at two thirds of the way through training.

If the full course or accredited workshop fees are below $1000, the full fee will be required 7 days prior to course commencement.

ACSE course fees are a set price and include materials. Students will not be required to purchase additional training materials or learning aids. For higher level qualifications at Certificate IV and above, ACSE staff may recommend textbooks or literature to purchase as future reference material. Courses include tea and coffee daily, but in most instances students will need to provide their own lunch each day.

Any fees paid for any program with ACSE will only be refunded in line with our *'Refund Policy'* and once an Enrolment Form is signed by a student, that signature constitutes acceptance to pay all associated program fees. For students under the age of 18, a signature from a Parent or Guardian will be required additionally.

Equipment and Resource Replacement Fees: Any equipment or resources provided to the client as a loan for the duration of the course, which are lost or found to be willfully damaged by the client, will be paid for by the client at market replacement cost. This includes any willful damage to property within training room premises i.e. computers or IT equipment.

Refund and Cancellation Policy

Cancellation prior to course or program commencing: Once enrolment into a program has been processed i.e. a student has completed the enrolment form and made the initial payment, the following will apply:

- The client must inform ACSE at least 9 days prior to course commencement that they wish to have their enrolment cancelled. If this occurs a refund in full will be given. Should the client inform ACSE less than 9 days prior of their wish to cancel, ACSE will retain 25% of the amount paid to cover administration and planning costs and refund the balance.

- Self-discipline needed to study effectively
- Stress or anxiety normally associated with examinations, required assessment tasks or any aspect of course work. Some students who have not been in a learning environment for a long time will experience anxiety or learning phobias and our training staff will discuss this on the first day of your training and will attempt to give you every assistance possible and provide options to assist you.
- Clash of appointments or last minute routine appointments.
- **Cancellation of course or program by ACSE:** ACSE reserves the right to cancel or terminate a course. This is only a safeguard aimed at ensuring the best possible outcomes for our clients and the safety and their safety and well being.

Should ACSE cancel a course for any reason, students enrolled at the time ACSE announces the cancellation will be entitled to a full refund. ACSE acknowledge it has a responsibility to protect the fees paid by students in advance of their training and assessment services being delivered.

Withdrawal due to extenuating circumstances: In the case of a student who withdraws from a course due to extenuating circumstances, the student may have their fees transferred as credit to another future program depending on availability. In the event the student does not wish to have fees transferred as credit, ACSE will refund 70% of the total amount paid.

Extenuating circumstances can be defined as follows:

- beyond the student's control (could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against); and
- sufficiently grave to have caused considerable disruption to the student's capacity to study effectively or to complete requirements.

Circumstances which can be deemed as extenuating include:

- administrative problems - such as the late arrival of teaching materials, texts, enrolment errors or delays
- legal commitments - jury duty or court appearance
- medical reasons
- family/personal reason

The following circumstances will not be considered extenuating:

Where possible, should a course be cancelled, ACSE guarantees to make all reasonable attempts to complete your program by transferring you to a similar or equivalent program either with ACSE or another RTO.

Price Structure for Accredited Training

Prices are inclusive of GST and are available on our website at Tuition Fees.

Student Fees Collected in Advance

ACSE is very clear in its policies that it does not collect more than $1500 from students in advance of any training conducted.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning means a process that assesses an individual's formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of a VET qualification. It is a process of gathering evidence which the student supplies and having it measured against pre-determined performance standards.

To prepare for RPL the student should indicate their decision to apply for recognition as soon as possible during or prior to the enrolment process. Once they have expressed a decision to apply, provide them with an RPL pack and explain the processes involved to them and the associated fees. Record the issue of the RPL pack as a record against their student file in the Student Management System; be sure to record the date issued and the date they are required to have the evidence returned and the date for a follow up interview.

Following is an outline of how to prepare for RPL:

In consultation with the trainer they should:

- Decide which qualification and which unit(s) they would like to have recognised
- Provide an Evidence Portfolio as per guidelines in the RPL Kit
- Seek peer assessment
- Be prepared to demonstrate their skills and knowledge

Evidence for recognition of prior learning may include:

- Performance, demonstration, or skills test/assessment
- Workplace observation
- Oral presentation
- Portfolio, logbook, task book, projects or assignments
- Written presentation
- Interview and questions
- Simulations

Candidates should initially self-assess against the performance criteria and critical aspects of evidence for each unit. RPL candidates must document their claim for competency in sufficient detail to enable the assessor to make clear judgments. If you require further information to make a decision as the assessor, you must ask for more evidence and prescribe what you need and give advice on how the candidate can provide it.

Credit Transfer and National Recognition

Recognition can also include the opportunity for Credit Transfer (CT) for previous study and must also be accompanied by evidence of currency in the study area. This is where students may have completed a formal accredited unit (s) from another qualification, and that unit (s) is also included in the new course they are studying. An RTO like ACSE can simply sight evidence they have completed the common unit and that it is current and equivalent and automatically award it to the candidate.

Nationally recognised Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other RTO are recognised by ACSE.

In order to apply for CT the student should complete the following steps:

- Complete a 'Credit Transfer Form'
- Attach a certified copy of the transcript from the RTO that issued the qualification and highlight the units they wish to have applied to their current enrolment
- Submit completed 'Credit Transfer Form' and transcript

The trainer and assessor is to:

- Review and confirm eligibility for CT
- Inform the candidate of the CT application and the outcome
- Scan all data to the students record in the Student Management System and record 'CT' against the unit outcome in VETtrak.

ACSE participants are made aware of opportunities for recognition on both the Enrolment Form and in the Student Handbook.

Note: Only original Certificates or Statement of Attainments or certified copies will be accepted for RPL/CT applications and staff are to check for the authenticity of qualifications with the issuing body.

Staff Training and Development Policy

All training staff employed by ACSE will have their vocational education and training qualifications checked for veracity with the issuing authority. They will be required to bring a certified copy of their qualifications to any interview process and these will be scanned and stored by ACSE. This forms part of our ongoing policy to protect against fraudulent claims and ensure the quality and professional standing of our training staff.

Goals and Guidelines

Staff training and development is part of assuring best quality service delivery and is at the core of who we are at ACSE. Staff are evaluated by trainees, by management and by our organisation through our validation and moderation processes. The data collected will inform continuous improvement in the delivery of training and assessment, and contribute to maintaining the relevance, validity and transparency of our training.

Staff are our greatest resource and we encourage the efficiencies and satisfactions afforded by team building, mentoring, supervision and professional development opportunities.

Staff have access to relevant internal and external training in order to fulfil the following:

- To improve the skills of staff in the tasks they are currently performing.

- To ensure currency with industry and professional practice and meet compliance requirements in this area.

- To allow staff to broaden their knowledge and competence beyond the job they are currently performing with a view to career advancement.

- To provide opportunities for staff to meet other professionals thus promoting support, networking and information exchange.

- To demonstrate to staff members that their contribution is valued.

All staff will have access to opportunities for training and development. Staff training and development needs will be identified through the supervision/support and performance appraisal processes within the organisation in addition to self-identified needs.

Training and Development Requirements

Training staff have obligations under legislation to maintain certain standards in order to continue practising as VET professionals. ACSE requires that training staff:

- Maintain industry competence by demonstrating they are members of at least one peak body associated with the field which they work in or deliver training for.
- Can demonstrate that they have attended at least two industry related events in a training calendar year. This can include seminars, workshops, webinars and or training events or evidence of paid membership of an industry peak body, valid for the training calendar year.
- Maintain VET competence by demonstrating they have attended at least two VET related professional development events in the training calendar year. This can include state based VET seminars, ASQA workshops, webinars or seminars or evidence of paid membership of peak VET bodies, valid for a training calendar year.
- Register themselves to receive regular updates from peak industry and VET bodies. This can include registering for relevant Industry Skills Council newsletters, ASQA newsletters, NCVER newsletters and state based educational bodies among others.

Complaints and Appeals Policy (Combined Grievance Procedure)

Definitions

This Complaints and Appeals Procedure is ACSEs Combined Grievance Procedure. For purposes of audit and to remain compliant with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015* and the *VET Guidelines 2015*, ACSE needs to make reference to a policy for 'Complaints and Appeals'', herein taken to be our Combined Grievance Policy.

Outline

A complaint or grievance would generally be directed at ACSE for:

Academic Matters including:
- Student progress
- Assessment
- Course awards
- Training or administrative staff performance or conduct
- Suspension or removal from training

Non-academic matters including:
- o Retention or release of personal information
- o Harassment or bullying
- o Discrimination
- o Vilification
- o Financial Matters
- o Penalties
- o General administration

This policy applies equally irrespective of the location of the incident or the campus at which the grievance has occurred, or the students' place of residence or their mode of study. The policy will apply to all current and prospective students across the board.

Complaint and Grievance Process

Informal Management

Initially complaints should be discussed informally with the staff or trainers involved and the student lodging the grievance or where it concerns staff, between the staff member (s) involved and a relevant manager. Where possible disputes are managed and resolved informally and as expediently as possible. Confidential file notes will be recorded in the Student Management System against the parties involved and will be kept for at least 5 years. Staff members or students can be accompanied and assisted by a third party, being a friend or advocate to any relevant meetings during either the formal or informal grievance processes.

Formal Complaint – Stage One

If the complaint cannot be managed informally, then in the *first instance,* the student or staff member, or other third party, can submit a formal *Complaint* form. The form is available on the website at http://acse.edu.au/downloads/ or from administrative staff at reception. The form is to be addressed to the RTO Manager, who will handle all complaints once they progress to this stage. The person making the complaint will be advised in writing by the RTO Manager that their complaint has been received; this will be done as soon as possible but not more than 48 hours after receipt.

For the matters listed below, the RTO Manager will act to address the complaint immediately:

- o Sexual misconduct or sexually inappropriate behaviour from staff or students
- o Comments and language involving inappropriate racist overtones
- o Physical abuse
- o Any matter that could be considered criminal in nature i.e. theft
- o Plagiarism or cheating
- o Bullying or harassment

The letter will advise that the RTO Manager will make an assessment of the complaint, its nature and circumstances and the complainant has the opportunity to organise a time to come and meet with the RTO Manager. The complainant is entitled to be assisted and accompanied by a third party, being a friend or advocate, to any relevant meeting. If the complainant does not wish to take part in a meeting then the RTO Manager will make an assessment of the grievance and determine an outcome. Whether the complainant attends a meeting or not, a written notice advising of the outcome will be provided within 10 business days.

Stage Two – Internal Review (Appeal)

If the complaint process is unable to resolve the grievance and the complainant is not happy they have the ability to lodge an Appeal. The Appeal can be lodged using the 'Appeal Form', available on the website at http://acse.edu.au/downloads/ or from administrative staff at reception. The Appeal will be

heard by an Independant Senior Office of ACSE being the CEO, and they will conduct an internal review in the *second instance.*

Again to reinforce, students or prospective students can be assisted and accompanied by a third party, being a friend or advocate to any relevant meetings with the CEO during the Appeals process or at any other meeting deemed relevant.

The person lodging the appeal will be advised in writing by the CEO that their appeal has been received; this will be done as soon as possible but not more than 48hours after receipt. The determination will be fair and equitable, complete and unambiguous with no decision being made until the person making the appeal has had the opportunity to make their case and provide their story. The process and any consideration and determination, will not victimise or discriminate against any student, prospective or otherwise. The person making the appeal will be provided with a written outcome on the internal review including the rationale for the decision. If the person is satisfied with the resolution, agreed actions will be implemented and the complaint or appeal will be closed. If for some reason the RTO requires more than 60 days to address the appeal and conduct the review we will notify the parties involved in writing providing justification.

Students also have the opportunity to lodge a complaint about the services provided by ACSE through the National VET Regulator, ASQA. This can be done by going to
http://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/complaints.html

Address for Complaints and Appeals

Complaints or Appeals should be lodged on the relevant Complaint or Appeal Form located on the ACSE website at http://acse.edu.au/downloads/ or available in hardcopy from the ACSE administration staff. Once complete the forms should be sent by post to:

RTO Manager
ACSE
22 Granada Place, Oakhurst, NSW, 2761
Phone: 1300 212 169

Record Keeping

A record of all complaints handled under this procedure and their outcomes will be scanned and maintained in electronic format. A copy of any Complaint or Appeal Form will also be scanned and stored. These records will be treated with the utmost confidence and privacy and details will not be discussed or disseminated, other than among the parties involved.

Access to these files and or the provision of a copy of the information after the process has been completed, can only be made in writing to the Director and only after the identity of the person requesting information has been established.

Ratification, Review and Recommendation

ACSE agrees to be bound by the recommendations arising from the external review of the appeal and initial complaint and the Director will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within 30 days of receipt of the recommendations.

ACSE administrative staff and trainers have to read the Policy and Procedure and Trainers Manuals as a condition of employment and sign documents to that effect. Both policy documents contain this information so there is no ambiguity about it being conveyed to staff. On induction and bi-annually at staff validation and moderation sessions, the process is reviewed and demonstrated.

Publication

This combined Students Complaints and Appeals Policy (Academic and Non-academic) will be made available to students and prospective students through publication on our website http://www.acse.edu.au/downloads/ and in the Student Handbook.

Approval

This Policy and Procedure was agreed to and ratified by the ACSE CEO on 30/9/2016.

Legislation applicable to ACSE

As an RTO, ACSE is required to operate within a prescribed legal and regulatory framework, both State and Federally. The national regulator ASQA, prescribes and administers legislative tools that ACSE must comply with.

ACSE will adhere to the requirements of ASQA and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2011A00012 and acts and regulations found at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/. These can also include the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and the Standards for RTO's 2015.

ACSE is bound by Legislation, Regulations and potentially contracts with departments of the States and Territories of Australia:

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- Western Australia
- Australia Capital Territory
- Northern Territory

Access and Equity

ACSE commits to access and equity across the organisation. Australian federal and state legislation makes it unlawful for organisations to discriminate against people because of their age, gender, race, marital status, sexuality, or physical or intellectual disability.

The following legislation underpins all matters related to access and equity at ACSE:

Federal laws

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011

State and Territory laws

- Australian Capital Territory Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 (NT)
- Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
- Victoria Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (VIC)
- Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)

Staff at ACSE are informed of any updated or pertinent changes to legislation at scheduled staff meetings.

Enrolment policies and procedures

ACSE staff interview (phone or face to face as appropriate) prospective students to ascertain whether we are able to meet their training needs. In this conversation we address:

- what training is appropriate to their needs/careers and
- any other needs the student may have, e.g. language literacy and numeracy, disabilities or any other barriers to learning

Should students wish to proceed and enrol into a course of study with ACSE they will come to a face to face enrolment or a group information session. During this session we are able to ascertain any further needs the prospective student may have. This is part of our strategy to meet our clients' needs and this information will be recorded, discussed and actioned by the training staff.

The prospective student will then complete a 'Skills Assessment' questionnaire, designed around the Australian
Core Skills Framework level for the program they wish to enrol in. The questionnaire will allow us to assess their LLN levels and ability to complete the training program. It will allow us to conduct referral to third party services for support if required. Students will be informed immediately of their ability to enrol or not in a course of study and if unsuccessful, be told why and given options for support.

The student will then be required to read the Student Handbook and sign the Enrolment Form. If required for state based funding arrangements and contractual requirements, staff may be required to visually sight

identification or proof of residency and take copies. Ensure that all originals are handed back to the student immediately and photocopies are kept in a course or student folder which is secure and kept away from other non staff.

Students are then required to make payment arrangements with ACSE staff as per the guidelines in the Student Handbook and this Manual. Students are to be given an invoice for payment received and an enrolment advice which provides course dates and timings and any requirements for the first day of training.

Transitioning from superseded training packages and VET accredited courses

Our policy is to deliver only currently endorsed Training Packages. ACSE is committed to ensuring that it transitions from superseded Training Packages and VET accredited courses in the required timeframe, to ensure that clients are receiving a valid and current qualification. ACSE policy will be to use as little period of the 12-month transition or teach out period as required before making transitions.

A regular regime for monitoring Industry Skills Council, ASQA, TGA and the Student Management System bulletins for information relating to training package and VET accredited course updates, has been put in place at ACSE.

The RTO Manager is to ensure that the following approaches take place for superseded training packages and VET accredited courses.

1. Ensure that Truss SMS is running regular updates from the National Register (Training.gov.au) to pick up updates. Truss should be set to automatically run updates and this will normally occur daily. As a redundancy, the RTO Manager is to ensure that at least monthly a 'manual' scan is run in Truss. At the same time the RTO Manager is to manually check the qualifications on scope and the relevant UOC in Truss against the listing on TGA. Any changes that have not been picked up are to be updated in the SMS and if changes are significant i.e. no direct equivalence or a completely new UOC or Qualification, then training staff need to notified. Changes are to be tabled at the next Quality and Compliance meeting and a date is to be set for the TAS to be adjusted and to roll out the superseded items and roll in the new package or course.

2. Ensure that subscriptions to relevant ISC or SSO bulletins and newsletters are up to date and active. At the same time as actioning (1) above, the RTO Manager is to manually check the ISC or SSO websites at least monthly for information relating to package and qualification updates. As per (1) above, if changes are noted that have been missed previously then changes are to be tabled at the next Quality and Compliance meeting and a date is to be set for the TAS to be adjusted and to roll out the superseded items and roll in the new package or course. If the ISC/SSO broadcast and forecast a change with some lead time, then the RTO Manager is to table the changes at the next Quality and Compliance meeting and planning is to occur.

3. Ensure that ASQA newsletter subscriptions are up to date to receive information about handling transitions and compliance. As per (1) above at the same time, a manual check of the ASQA news section is to take place.

4. Ensure that TGA newsletter subscriptions are up to date for information relating to changes. As per (1) above at the same time, a manual check of the TGA news section is to take place.

5. Ensure that the SMS newsletter subscription is up to date to receive information. As per (1) above at the same time, a manual check of the SMS news section is to take place.

6. Ensure that a monthly compliance day takes place to validate points 1-5 above.

7. Ensure that ACSE policy remains to transition to new training packages and VET accredited courses in the minimum time possible. This includes early submission for addition to scope with ASQA where required, early planning for the purchase of learning materials and resources where required. ACSE will adopt the policy of transitioning to new packages and course within 6 months as a maximum. Where possible and once the necessary industry validation and consultation has taken place, it will be done as soon as feasible.

8.   Ensure that ACSE does not knowingly enrol students in superseded packages or courses, this includes where possible, even if the qualifications and courses in question are still within 12 month teach out.

Glossary and Definitions

RPL Recognition of Prior Learning

RTO Registered Training

Organisation **VET** Vocational

Education and Training **NVR**

National VET Regulator

NCVER National Centre for Vocational Education Research

AQTF the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is the national set of standards which assures nationally consistent, high-quality training and assessment services for the clients of Australia's vocational education and training system.

AVETMISS the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) for VET Providers is a national data standard that ensures the consistent and accurate capture and reporting of VET information about students.

Definitions

Accreditation:

Accreditation means the process of formal recognition of a course by the State or Territory course accrediting body in line with the AQTF Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies.

Appeal:

A process whereby a student being assessed may dispute the outcome of an assessment and seek reassessment.

Audit:

Audit means a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence to determine whether the activities and related outcomes of a training organisation comply with National Standards.

Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF):

Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) means the nationally agreed recognition arrangements for the vocational education and training sector.

Competency:

The specification of knowledge and skill and the application of that knowledge and skill to the standards of performance required in the workplace.

Competency-based training is training which develops the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to achieve competency standards.

Competency standard is an industry-determined specification of performance which sets out the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to operate effectively in employment. Competency standards are made up of units of competency, which are themselves made up of elements of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables, and an evidence guide. Competency standards are an endorsed component of a training package.

Customisation:

Customisation is the addition of specific industry or enterprise information to endorsed national competency standards to reflect the work of a particular industry or workplace or to improve the standards' relevance to industry.

Internal audit: Internal audit means audits conducted by or on behalf of the organisation itself for internal purposes.

Nationally recognised training: Nationally recognised training means training and assessment, delivered by a Registered Training Organisation, which meets the requirements specified in national industry/enterprise Training Packages or accredited courses where no relevant Training Package exists.

Qualification:

Qualification means the formal certification issued by an RTO under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Registration:

Registration means the process of formal approval and recognition of a training organisation by a State or Territory Registering Body.

Registered Training Organisation (RTO):

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) means a training organisation registered in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework, within a defined scope of registration.

Risk management:

Risk management means the systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the tasks of identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating and monitoring risk.

Scope of Registration:

Scope of Registration means the defined scope for which a training organisation is registered that identifies the particular services and products that can be provided.

Workplace assessment is the gathering and judging of evidence during normal work activities in order to determine whether a required standard has been achieved. Workplace assessment usually involves observation of work in progress, checking the product(s) of a work activity, and receiving oral responses to questions posed while work is in progress.

Workplace training is training undertaken in the workplace, usually on-the-job, including on-the-job training under normal operational conditions, and on-site training, which is conducted away from the work process (e.g. in a training room).

Responsibilities (and Continuous Improvement Policies)

General

The Responsibilities of all ACSE staff are summarised below. The responsibilities listed cover all areas of the business with responsibilities applicable to all policies.

CEO

The CEO is responsible for overall Business Management and Development. The CEO is assisted in this role by the RTO Manager.

The responsibilities are divided into 3 main areas:

1. Business Administration

2. Financial Administration

3. RTO Administration Responsible for:
   o Business development
   o Marketing and sales
   o Research and development projects
   o New product commercialization
   o Personnel
   o Operations projects
   o Operations services
   o Compliance with the VET Quality Framework

Business Administration Accountabilities (CEO, RTO Manager)

The Business Administration Accountability Holders are responsible for the administration of general business policy and procedures, including:

   o Development and maintenance of policies and procedures across the business (with the exception of the areas of Finance and RTO status).
   o Secure storage of hard copy and electronic data and the backup of electronic data.
   o Retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of student data consistent with legislative requirements.
   o Retention, archiving, retrieval and transfer of all other records consistent with contractual and legal requirements and the requirements of ASQA and other registering bodies.
   o Compliance with external reporting requirements such as Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS).
   o Safeguarding any confidential information obtained by the RTO or individuals or organizations acting on behalf of the RTO.
   o Ensuring that, except where required by law or as required under the Standards for Registered Training Organizations, information is not disclosed to a third party without written consent of the client or customer.
   o Ensuring clients and customers have access to their personal records.
   o Data entry of student and client information including personal and course information.
   o Maintenance of student records.

Finance Administration Accountability Holder (CEO, Accountant)

This accountability holder is responsible for financial policy and procedures, including;

   o Development and maintenance of policies and procedures for financial activity.

- o Compliance with financial management policies and procedures.
- o Monitoring and reporting on compliance with the financial management policies and procedures and reviewing these as a basis for improvement.
- o Providing, when requested by ASQA and other relevant registering bodies with financial documents as required.
- o Ensuring the company accounts are certified annually by our Certified Practicing Accountant, and on request providing the reports to auditors.
- o Ensuring company accounts if requested by ASQA and by other relevant registering bodies are audited by a Certified Practicing Accountant, and on request providing the audited report to the relevant registering bodies.

RTO Administration Accountability Holder (CEO, RTO Manager, Administration Coordinator)

- o The RTO Administration Accountability Holders are responsible for administration of the RTO policies and procedures and for compliance with registration as an RTO.
- o Training administration.
- o Compliance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.
- o Operational control of training and assessing staff.
- o Ensuring the RTO provides access to all areas, records (including internal audit reports) and staff as required by the registering bodies for the purpose of audits.
- o Ensuring the CEO is active in compliance with registration and is actively informed and informs on all training and RTO Management operations.
- o Ensure application for scope and registration matters is timely and accurate.
- o Ensure AVETMISS and Quality Indicator data is submitted in a timely manner and by required date.
- o Providing details upon request to all registering bodies of all operations within the scope of registration including operations interstate.
- o Notifying the Federal and relevant State/Territory registering bodies of major changes to the RTO in the areas of registration and compliance including, RTO systems and business owner profiles, change of address, financial difficulties and transfer of client and customer records.
- o Compliance with Commonwealth and State/Territory legislation and regulations.
- o Recognition of qualifications issued by other RTOs.
- o Access, equity and client/customer service.
- o The competence of RTO staff and their development.
- o RTO assessment processes.
- o Learning and assessment strategies.
- o Issuing of AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment and supervising quality maintenance of the Student Management System and conducting spot audits as required.
- o Advertising and marketing related to the scope of registration as an RTO.