

Whites Hill State College



VET Student Handbook

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	3
AQF qualifications	4
1. Student selection, enrolment and induction/orientation procedures	5
2. Qualification or accredited course information	5
3. Marketing and advertising of course information	5
4. Legislative requirements	6
5. Fees and charges, including refund policy	6
6. Student services	7
7. Student support, welfare and guidance services	7
8. Provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance	7
9. Access and equity policy and procedure	8
10. Flexible learning and assessment procedures	10
11. Competency based assessment	10
12. Student access to accurate records policy and procedures	11
13. Confidentiality procedure	12
14. Employer contributing to learner’s training and assessment	12
15. Complaints and appeals procedures	12
16. Recognition arrangements for RPL	14
17. Recognition of AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by another RTO and credit transfer	15
18. Certification and issuing qualifications	16
19. Qualification and accredited course guarantee	17

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to enrol in a nationally recognised vocational course.

This handbook has been written to provide students with important information about the vocational education and training (VET) qualifications offered at Whites Hill State College as well as your rights and responsibilities as a VET student.

Students should take the time to study this handbook carefully and ask their Trainer and Assessor if they are unsure of any details. Students should keep this handbook (or note the intranet location of this document) for reference throughout their enrolment. The contents of this handbook in many instances represents the key points of various VET policies and procedures developed by this RTO. A copy of the RTO's VET policies and procedures can be obtained via the RTO Manager.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

All of the VET courses offered by this RTO lead to nationally recognised qualifications – a certificate (if all of the requirements of the qualification are completed) or a statement of attainment (for those parts that are successfully completed where the full qualification is not completed). This certificate/statement of attainment will be recognised in all eight states/territories in Australia. This is because Australia has a national qualifications framework called the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). There are 14 different types of qualifications that can be obtained. These are shown in the following diagram.

AQF QUALIFICATIONS



Source: Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013

Your Trainer and Assessor will provide you with information about your VET qualification/s including an overview of the specific units of competency/modules in each, assessment requirements, vocational outcomes, etc.

The following qualification available for completion at this RTO are listed on the Enrolment Agreement that you will be provided with and can also be viewed in the Subject Selection Handbook.

1. Student selection, enrolment and induction/orientation procedures

Students enrolled in the VET courses at this RTO participate in the same enrolment and selection processes as other students at the RTO. Where numbers are limited for VET subjects, selection will be based on interview and/or on the order in which enrolments were received.

Whites Hill State College will provide each student with information about the training, assessment and support services they will receive, and about their rights and obligations (through the VET student induction session) before enrolment on the Student Data Capture System (SDCS).

The RTO Manager and associated Trainers and Assessors will induct all VET students with this handbook.

2. Qualification or accredited course information

Information pertaining to your qualification or accredited course can be sourced from course documentation provided by your Trainer and Assessor, subject specific information included in the Senior subject selection handbook (or similar document), through the VET student handbook and on the RTO website or intranet (if applicable).

Information available to students regarding course information will include:

- Qualification or VET accredited course code and title
- Packaging rule information as per the specified Training Package or VET Accredited course
- Units of competency (code and title) to be delivered
- Entry requirements
- Fees and charges
- Course outcomes and pathways
- Work experience requirements (where applicable)
- Licensing requirements (where applicable)
- Third party or off-campus arrangements (where applicable)

3. Marketing and advertising of course information

The RTO will ensure that its marketing and advertising of AQF qualifications to prospective students is ethical, accurate and consistent with its scope of registration. In the provision of information, no false or misleading comparisons are drawn with any other training organisation or training product.

The RTO will not advertise or market in any way VET accredited courses, qualifications or units of competency that are not on the scope of registration.

Whites Hill State College will ensure it will have the appropriate human and physical resources to deliver and assess any course currently on the RTO's scope of registration. If the RTO loses access to these resources, the RTO will provide students with alternative opportunities to complete the course and the related qualification.

4. Legislative requirements

The RTO will observe all Australian, state and territory laws governing Vocational Education and Training. The RTO will also meet all legislative requirements of the:

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)
- [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011](#)
- [Copyright Act 1968 \(2006\)](#)
- [Education \(Work Experience\) Act 1996](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Anti-discrimination Act 1991](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(2014\)](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)

If students require any further information, please see the RTO Manager.

5. Fees and charges, including refund policy

The RTO does not charge students fees for VET services. Levies are only collected for consumable costs or other additional services such as the issuing of a replacement qualification testamur. Any fees and charges that do occur for additional services will be made known to students prior to enrolment.

Students who enrol past the commencement of the calendar year will be charged student levies at a pro-rata basis for the duration of the year. Students who leave a VET course before completion may be able to claim a refund for part of the course consumables (levy).

Fees for VET Courses provided by external training providers will be charged as per the third party arrangements with that provider.

Matters regarding payment of fees or refund of fees will be managed by the Business Services Manager in accordance with the principles contained in the general fee policy of the school (not specific to VET).

6. Student services

Whites Hill State College will establish the needs of their students, and deliver services to meet their individual needs where applicable. All students at this RTO will have involvement with some or all of the following processes, designed to establish their educational and support needs:

- SET plans
- subject selection processes
- career guidance services

The provision of educational services will be monitored to ensure the RTO continues to cater for student needs through review of student senior education and training (SET) plans, as needed. The RTO will also ensure that all students receive the services detailed in their agreement with the RTO.

The RTO will continually improve student services by collecting, analysing and acting on any relevant data collection through students providing valuable feedback to the RTO through informal and formal processes i.e. through individual student assessment feedback, course evaluation feedback, quality indicators — student engagement surveys and school-generated surveys (where applicable).

7. Student support, welfare and guidance services

Students have access to a wide range of support, welfare and guidance services at this RTO, including:

- Principal
- Head of School - Secondary
- RTO Manager
- Vet Coordinator
- Head of Department
- Trainers and Assessors
- Career Counsellor/Guidance Officer
- Learning Support Teachers

8. Provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance

If you are undertaking a VET subject, which has units of competency from a training package, you will find that basic literacy/numeracy elements have been incorporated. This should help you learn these basic literacy/numeracy components more readily, as they are being delivered and assessed in the

context of an industry vocational area of your choice. If you still feel you need additional language, literacy or numeracy support, please seek further advice from the RTO Manager.

9. Access and equity policy and procedure

The access and equity guidelines at Whites Hill State College are designed to remove any barriers so that all students have the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge and experience through access to VET subjects.

This RTO is inclusive of all students regardless of sex, race, impairment or any other factor. Any matter relating to access and equity will be referred to the RTO Manager, as the designated Access and Equity Officer.

Whites Hill State College has written access and equity policies documents generally as a school (not specific to VET) and all staff are aware of these. Staff and students may contact the Access and Equity Officer, who is the RTO Manager, for information and/or support about the policy.

Access and equity guidelines will be implemented through the following strategies:

- The curriculum, while limited by the available human and physical resources, will provide for a choice of VET subject/s for all students
- Links with other providers, such as other RTOs will be considered where additional resources are required.
- Access to school-based apprenticeships and traineeships may be available to students
- Where possible, students will be provided with the opportunity to gain a full Certificate at AQF levels I, or II or III (where applicable)
- Access to industry specific VET programs will be available to all students regardless of sex, gender or race.
- If the RTO loses access to either physical and or human resources, the RTO will provide students with alternative opportunities to complete the course and the related qualification.

Discrimination occurs if a person treats someone differently on the basis of an attribute or characteristic such as gender, sexuality, race, pregnancy, physical or intellectual impairment, age, etc. This RTO strives to meet the needs of each student through incorporating access and equity principles and practices which acknowledge the right of all students to equality of opportunity without discrimination.

For example, the following principles apply:

1. VET curriculum areas will be adequately resourced, with teachers with the appropriate qualifications, in order to ensure students have quality outcomes.
2. VET training and assessment will be in line with industry standards to ensure quality outcomes for students. As well, a variety of training/assessment methods will be used to cater for the ways in which students learn. Students with learning difficulties or impairment will participate with an initial and annual panel meeting with their parent/guardian and relevant RTO staff to ensure that the training and assessment provided meets their needs.
3. All students will be actively encouraged to participate in VET qualifications, irrespective of background/cultural differences.
4. Prior to participating in structured work placement, students will be provided with an induction programme that will equip them with the knowledge to recognise harassment/discrimination should it occur and to ensure they have the strategies to deal with anything like this. Appropriate support will be provided to ensure students are successful in their work placement.
5. Literacy/numeracy is integrated throughout all VET qualifications, as well as being delivered separately through your English/literacy and Maths/numeracy programme.
6. This RTO will openly value all students, irrespective of background/culture/other differences and all students will be made to feel valued through the delivery of appropriate training/assessment methods and support structures.
7. Any complaints in relation to discrimination/harassment will be treated seriously, in line with the RTO's Complaints and appeals policy.

10. Flexible learning and assessment procedures

The following represent the basic VET assessment principles of this RTO. They are designed to promote fairness and equity in assessment.

- All VET students at this RTO will be fully informed of the VET assessment procedures and requirements and will have the right to appeal.
- Students will be given clear and timely information on assessment.
- Information given to students, on the assessment cover sheet, will include:
 - advice about the assessment methods
 - assessment procedures
 - the criteria against which they will be assessed
 - when and how they will receive feedback.
- Students will sight their profile sheet of results in each VET subject on at least two occasions throughout a two year course.
- The assessment approach chosen will cater for the language, literacy and numeracy needs of students.
- Any special geographic, financial or social needs of students will be considered in the development and conduction of the assessment.
- Reasonable adjustment will be made to the assessment strategy to ensure equity for all students, while maintaining the integrity of the assessment outcomes.
- Opportunities for feedback and review of all aspects of assessment will be provided to students.
- A clearly documented mechanism for appeal against assessment processes and decisions is available to students and is publicly available in this handbook which is stored on the intranet.

Your Trainer and Assessor will provide you with a thorough overview of the assessment requirements for your individual VET course. The following information, however, represents some general information about the VET assessment process adopted at Whites Hill State College.

11. Competency based assessment

In order to be successful in gaining competency, students must demonstrate consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. Students must be able to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

In most subjects assessment tasks are completed a number of times throughout the year. Results for each assessment item will be marked on a student profile sheet (or similar document) using terms such as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory, or working towards competence. This assists students to become competent as their skills improve.

Final records of assessment of competencies will be awarded as either:

- **C** for Competent
- **NYC** for Not Yet Competent

Assessment methods

Each Trainer and Assessor will maintain a student profile (or similar document) for each student and on completion of the program of study an exit level will be awarded, based on the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

Elements of competency will be assessed and recorded once the Trainer and Assessor is satisfied that a student has demonstrated consistent competency in an element or unit of competency. Students may also receive assessment if they apply for and meet the requirements for, RPL.

A master record detailing students' achievements of the units of competency is maintained at the RTO on the Student Data Capture System (SDCS).

This will record all elements and units of competency achieved. This will be held by the RTO and will be issued to the student once they complete the program of study or upon exit (in line with the QCAA SDCS data entry timelines).

12. Student access to accurate records policy and procedures

Whites Hill State College is committed to regularly providing student with information regarding their participation and progress.

The Trainers and Assessors must maintain accurate and current records of each student's progress towards and achievement of competencies.

Trainer and Assessors will provide access to a student's own records at least once each semester, or on request by the student. Students may also be given access to "for checking" SDCS printouts. Students

will also have access to information regarding any unit achieved through their own online learning account.

13. Confidentiality procedure

Information about a student, except as required by law or as required under the [VET Quality Framework](#), is not disclosed without the student's written permission and that of their parent or guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age. The RTO will ensure that have consent from each student.

14. Employer contributing to learner's training and assessment

Wherever possible the RTO will place students in workplaces that provide experience in the competencies included in their VET qualifications. This RTO does not use assessment by work placement supervisors. Students on work placements may record their activities in a workplace experience logbook (or similar document). The work placement organiser/teacher will seek the cooperation of the workplace supervisor in the sign-off on the accuracy of the student's entries in the log. This logbook (or similar document) may be used by the assessor to support judgments of competency. Students at this RTO will be placed in workplaces where it forms a mandatory requirement of the Training Package or Accredited course.

15. Complaints and appeals procedures

Complaints and appeals are managed by the RTO in a fair, efficient and effective manner. The RTO will create an environment where learner's views are valued. This policy and procedure will be made publicly to the College community by being made available on the RTO's intranet and in materials provided to learners on commencement of enrolment.

Whites Hill State College ensures that all formal complaints and appeals will be heard and adhere to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness at every stage of the complaint and appeal process. Resolutions will be reached within **60 calendar days** where possible. In the case of the time frame being longer than this, the RTO will communicate with the complainant/appellant why the process is taking longer and an estimated timeframe for resolution as well as being kept informed regarding ongoing progress.

Details of all formal complaints and appeals will be securely maintained in a Register of Complaints and Appeals and will take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of recurrence.

Informal complaint

The initial stage of any complaint or appeal shall be for the complainant/appellant to communicate directly with any member of staff who will make a decision (if possible) and record the outcome of the complaint, or forward the relevant information to the appropriate person for action.

Learners dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal complaint may then communicate the complaint to the Head of Department, who will make a decision in regards to proceeding with a formal complaint or appeal process.

Learners dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal complaint or appeal may initiate a 'formal complaint or appeal' with the RTO Manager

Formal complaint or appeal

If a formal complaint is made, it will follow the below procedure:

- All formal complaints may be made to any member of staff who will document and record the complaint. This may be on a [Complaint and Appeals Form](#), or any other written form that includes the relevant information:
 - The Complainant is entitled to receive support from a third party throughout the process and if this is the case then this needs to be recorded on the written complaint;
 - The information must be signed and dated, and then witnessed by the staff member receiving the complaint (sign and date);
- All complaints are then forwarded to the RTO Manager (unless the complaint is about the RTO Manager, in which case it will be forwarded to the CEO);
- On receipt of a formal complaint the RTO Manager shall record the complaints in the secure register, reply in writing to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, then inform the CEO;
- The RTO Manager and the CEO will meet to discuss the complaint and speak with any relevant staff or third parties involved, including when such staff or third parties are the subject of a complaint. They will then either make a decision or convene an independent panel to hear the complaint; this shall be the "Complaint and Appeal Committee" and will consist of members who have not been involved in the issue to this point. It will include the CEO, a member of staff and a representative of the School community;
- Processes must follow the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness at every stage (these are clearly explained in this fact sheet <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/NaturalJusticeandProcedur.pdf>);
- When a decision is reached this will be communicated in writing to the complainant/appellant within 60 calendar days of the complaint being received as well as being recorded on the secure Complaints and Appeals Register;
- If the decision will take longer than 60 calendar days the complainant will be notified in writing of the reasons why a decision has not been reached and provide regular updates regarding the progress of the matter;
- The complainant shall be given an opportunity to present their case to the committee and may be accompanied by one other person as support or as representation;

- The relevant staff member, third party or other learner shall be given an opportunity to present their case to the committee and may be accompanied by one other person as support or as representation;
- The Complaint and Appeal Committee will make a decision on the complaint;
- The Complaint and Appeal Committee will communicate its decision on the complaint to all parties in writing and this will be recorded in the secure Complaints and Appeals Register;
- If the complainant is still not satisfied, the CEO will appoint an independent third party (outside the RTO) to mediate with costs being communicated to all parties prior to commencement;
- If the complainant is still not satisfied, the CEO will refer them to the QCAA website for further information about making complaints (www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3141.html);
- After the complaint is finalised the RTO Manager will organise a meeting of relevant parties to review the decision and outcome and evaluate the policies, procedures and strategies of the RTO in order to take appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of reoccurrence.

16. Recognition arrangements for RPL

All VET students have access to a procedure that gives Recognition of Prior Learning. RPL is an assessment process that assesses an individual's level of knowledge and skills against individual or multiple units of competencies.

All applications for RPL will be responded to once a written application has been received. The RTO Manager will keep an RPL register which documents all RPL applications and their outcomes. Once the evidence has been provided to the RTO to assess RPL, the student will be notified of the decision. Students may have access to reassessment on appeal.

Recognition of prior learning procedure

At the commencement of the school year a Student Induction will be conducted by the RTO Manager and/or Trainer and Assessor and included in this process will be information about Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and will be further documented in the Student Handbook. Students who join a VET qualification as a late enrolment will be taken through the induction process by the RTO Manager.

Students will be informed about:

- What RPL is;
- All students will have access to, and be offered RPL;
- The application forms used for RPL and the types of evidence that could be presented;

- The process that will be followed for RPL; and
- Appealing assessment decisions for RPL.

A VET student seeking RPL will be provided with a copy of a RPL application form by their relevant Trainer and Assessor along with receiving support and assistance to interpret the documentation and compile the evidence required.

Once the student has submitted the required evidence the Trainer and Assessor will examine the evidence provided and make an assessment judgement. If there are gaps the Trainer and Assessor will inform the student of the gaps and the required training and assessment that will need to be undertaking to address these gaps. The Trainer and Assessor will clearly document the assessment decision using the qualification specific documentation that is to be retained in accordance with the Retention of Student Records Procedure.

The Trainer and Assessor must inform the RTO Manager of the application and result and the RTO Manager will record this in the RPL Application Register.

17. Recognition of AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by another RTO and credit transfer

At the commencement of the school year a Student Induction will be conducted by the RTO Manager and/or Trainer and Assessor and included in this process will be information about credit transfer and will be further documented in the Student Handbook. Students who join a VET qualification as a late enrolment will be taken through the induction process by the RTO Manager.

Students will be informed about:

- What credit transfer is;
- What documents need to be provided for credit transfer; and
- The process of obtaining credit transfer.

All students who are entitled to credit transfer from units of competency they have achieved within the RTO (ie. through qualifications completed in year 10 or across qualifications being undertaken at the same time) will be awarded credit transfer automatically by the RTO. These instances will be identified by the RTO Manager and the SDCS Operator and the student and relevant Trainer and Assessor will be informed by the RTO Manager. In order to achieve this, the RTO Manager and SDCS Operator will identify all units of competency across the RTO that are offered in multiple courses and where students will be awarded credit transfer.

When students transfer in from other schools that are an RTO and the student has undertaken VET at the other school credit transfer will only be granted upon the student providing a Statement of Attainment or Record of Results issued by the previous RTO (a Form S1 is not sufficient). It will be the responsibility of the student to obtain this and credit transfer will not be granted until the documented evidence has been provided. The documentation is to be provided to the RTO Manager or SDCS Operator directly. A copy of the Statement of Attainment/Record of Results will be provided to the Trainer and Assessor to store a copy with the student profile/portfolio as evidence. The SDCS Operator will update SDCS accordingly.

When students have undertaken qualifications through other non-school RTOs credit transfer will be granted when the student provides the RTO Manager or SDCS Operator with a copy of the Statement of Attainment or Record of Results. This will be recorded on SDCS by the SDCS Operator and a copy of the documentation given to the Trainer and Assessor for storing as evidence on the student profile/portfolio.

18. Certification and issuing qualifications

The RTO must issue to students whom it has assessed as competent in accordance with the requirements of the Training package or VET accredited course, a VET qualification or VET statement of attainment (as appropriate) that meets the requirements of the Standards for RTOs 2015.

The RTO will ensure that through the implementation of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy:

- Students will receive the certification documentation to which they are entitled
- AQF qualifications are correctly identified in certification documentation
- AQF qualifications are protected against fraudulent issuance
- A clear distinction can be made between AQF qualifications and non-AQF qualifications
- Certification documentation is used consistently across the RTO, and
- Students and parents/caregivers are confident that the qualifications they have been awarded are part of Australia's national qualifications framework – the AQF
- The RTO will establish anti-fraud mechanisms by including the RTO's own logo each document issued to ensure there is no fraudulent reproduction or use of credentials.

Replacement of certification documentation

The RTO maintains a Register of Certification Documents Issued for 30 years from the date of issue. This allows learners to request a reissue of their documentation at a later date. The RTO ensures that this is stored in an accessible format with both electronic and hard copy records kept securely. The process for a learner, or former learner, to request a reissue of their documentation is as follows:

- All requests for a replacement qualification or statement of attainment must be in writing (email is acceptable) from the learner to the RTO Manager;
- The request will be forwarded to the RTO to coordinate who may request the SDCS Operator to print the certification documentation;
- The RTO will access the archived records/Register of Certification Documentation Issued to access the required information for the replacement document, or contact QCAA for a reissue;
- The replacement will identify that it is a re-issued version as well as follow all requirements for printing and issuing qualifications and statements of attainment as outlined in the checklist for certification documentation; and
- The replacement will be issued with 30 working days of receipt of the written request.

19. Qualification and accredited course guarantee

The RTO gives a guarantee to the student that the RTO will complete the training once the student has started student in their chosen qualification or accredited course. Students who enter a course after the start date have the opportunity to negotiate a package of units that will lead to a statement of attainment only. This adjustment will be reflected in the Enrolment Agreement form which will be signed by both the student and parent/guardian.

In the event of losing a specialist trainer, and the RTO being unable to obtain a suitable replacement, the RTO will arrange for agreed training and assessment to be completed through another RTO if this is possible (fees may be incurred).

Prior to the transfer to another RTO, affected students will be formally notified of the arrangements, and agreement to those arrangements, including any refund of fees will be obtained.

If an external transfer is not possible, the RTO will gain a written agreement for a subject/course transfer within the RTO from the student and parent/guardian.

The Senior Subject Selection Form (or similar document), as well as any Subject Transfer Form (or similar document) used by the RTO will include a disclaimer stating that by *'signing the form, they agree to all of the policies and procedures related to VET that are outlined in all RTO documentation pertaining to VET'*.

When an enrolment form is received, the form is checked to ensure it has been signed by both the student and their parent/guardian.

