AUSTRALIAN SKILLS GROUP

VET STUDENT LOANS
ENABLED COURSES

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026

‘SKILLING TOMORROW’S WORKFORCE TODAY’

RTO 32519

Contents

1. VET Student Loans Approved Courses ____ *5*
2. VET Student Loans Explained ____ *5*
2.1 Eligibility Requirements 6
2.2 Engagement / Progression Requirements 8
2.3 How to Apply 9
2.4 VET Student Loan Amounts & Fees 9
2.5 Census Day: 10
2.6 Additional VET Student Loans Information 11
3. Withdrawal/ Deferral/ Cancellation ____ *11*
3.1 Withdrawal 11
3.2 Deferral of Studies 12
3.3 Cancellation of Enrolment After Census Date by ASG 12
4. Refunds ____ *13*
4.1 Students Eligible for VET Student Loan assistance 13
4.2 Students Not Eligible for VET STUDENT LOANS assistance 13
4.3 Payment of Refunds 14
4.4 Payment of Refunds 14
5. Review Procedure for Re-crediting a HELP balance ____ *14*
5.1 Special Circumstances 15
5.2 The procedure for the re-crediting of a HELP balance is as follows: 16
5.3 Review of a decision 16
5.4 Re-crediting a FEE Help Balance by the Secretary 18
5.5 Publication 19
6. Complaints, Appeal and Grievances ____ *19*
6.1 Application 19
6.2 Definitions 20
6.3 Academic 20
6.4 Non-Academic 20
6.5 Informal grievance 20
6.6 Formal grievance 21
6.7 Before an Issue Becomes a Formal Grievance 21
6.8 Appeals 21
6.9 Assessment Appeals 21

6.10 Procedure 22
6.10.1 Stage 1 – Formal Grievance 23
6.10.2 Stage 2 – Internal Appeal 24
6.10.3 Stage 3 – External Appeal 24
6.11 Further Action 25
6.12 Enrolment Status 26
6.13 Record Keeping 27
6.14 Procedural Fairness / Natural Justice 27
7. Fairness and Equal Benefit Policy 27
7.1 Overview 27
7.2 Fair Treatment 28
7.3 Equal Benefits and Opportunities 28
7.4 Pre-enrolment Information 29
7.5 Application, Selection and Admission 29
7.6 Acceptance 32
8. Privacy and Records Policy 32
8.1 Obligation 32
8.2 Disclosure 33
8.3 Privacy Notice 34
8.4 Consent 35
8.5 Review and Access 35
8.6 Storage and Security of Personal Information 35
8.7 VET personal information: 36
8.8 Privacy Complaints and Advice 36
9. Access and Equity 37
10. Academic Matters 37
10.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 37
10.2 Applying for RPL 38
10.3 Credit Transfer (CT) 38
10.4 Academic progress 39
10.5 Assessment Appeal Process 39
10.6 Counselling Support 39
10.7 Language literacy and Numeracy 39
10.8 Transition 40
11. Student Matters 40
11.1 Legislation 40

11.2 Occupational Health Safety and Welfare 41
11.3 COVID 41
11.4 Alcohol and other drugs 42
11.5 Academic record keeping 42
11.6 Personal details record keeping 42
11.7 Housekeeping 42
11.8 Student Code of Conduct 43
11.8.1 PART A: Student Obligations & Responsibilities 43
11.8.2 PART B: ASG Responsibilities 45
11.8.3 PART C: ASG Misconduct Policy 47

1. VET Student Loans Approved Courses

Australian Skills Group offer the following course which is eligible for VET Student Loans assistance.

- **MEM50119 Diploma of Engineering – Advanced Trade**

2. VET Student Loans Explained

VET STUDENT LOANS is a loan scheme for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector that is part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). VET STUDENT LOANS assists eligible students undertaking identified VET courses of study. It allows them to borrow funds from the Commonwealth up to their FEE-HELP limit to help pay for all or part of their tuition fees.

Students who access VET STUDENT LOANS assistance:

- Will incur a loan from the Australian Commonwealth Government who will, on the student's behalf, pay their tuition fees to their approved VET Provider.
- Will have the loan as a personal debt until it is repaid to the Commonwealth, and
- Until the debt/loan is repaid, may have their take-home (after tax) wage or salary and borrowing capacity reduced;
- May wish to seek independent financial advice before applying for the loan.

The amount of a VET Student Loan for a course is capped. The loan may not be sufficient to cover all the tuition fees for a course. At ASG, there is a gap fee to cover the difference between the fees that are covered by the VSL and the tuition fees for the course. You may also have to pay up-front to re-enrol in a unit of competency or unit of study if you did not achieve a satisfactory outcome.
Your VET Student Loan becomes part of your VET Student Loan debt (VETSL debt) and must be paid back at the relevant repayment rate when your repayment income is above the compulsory repayment threshold. The compulsory repayment threshold is adjusted each year and is **$67,000** for the **2025-26 financial year**.
Refer to Information for VET Student Loans students - Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government (dewr.gov.au) for more information.

2.1 Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a VET Student Loan a student must:

Citizenship:

- be an Australian Citizen; **or**
- be a qualifying New Zealand Special Category (SCV) holder who meets long term residency requirements and:
    - has been usually resident in Australia for at least 10 years; and
    - was a dependent child when he or she was first usually resident in Australia; and
    - has been in Australia for periods totaling 8 years during the previous 10 years; and
    - has been in Australia for periods totaling 18 months during the previous 2 years;

  or

  be a permanent humanitarian visa holder who is usually resident in Australia and will be in Australia for the duration of the unit of study in which they are seeking VET STUDENT LOANS assistance.

  or

  be a Pacific Engagement visa holder who is usually resident in Australia.

NOTE: Holders of other permanent visas and temporary visas are NOT eligible for a VET Student Loan.

AND

- Provides ASG with information and documents to be able to verify/confirm the students identity, date of birth and to establish they meet the eligibility requirements for a VET Student Loan;
- Is a full fee-paying student enrolled on or before the census day in an eligible unit of study through an approved VET provider in an approved course and remains enrolled in the unit of study at the end of the census day;
- If the student is under 18 years of age:
    - A responsible parent of the student must sign the ASG enrolment application, VSL Parental Consent Form and VSL Checklist; or
    - The student must have received youth allowance (within the meaning of the Social Security Act 1991) on the basis they are independent
- Meets the Tax File Number requirements;
- Has not exceeded the HELP limit and has a HELP balance of more than $0;

- Has a Unique Student Identifier or is otherwise exempt;
- Has read the VET Student Loans Information booklet;
- Has given the required documents to ASG and completed the eCAF application form by 1159 AEST on or before the first census date no less than two business days after enrolling;
- Has met the course entry requirements and is academically suited to the course where either:
    - you can provide your Senior Secondary Certificate of Education that has been awarded to you by an agency or authority of a State or Territory for your completion of year 12, **OR**
    - you can provide your International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) diploma, **OR**
    - you have been assessed using an approved assessment tool as displaying competence at, or above, Exit Level 3 in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ASCF) in both reading and numeracy and where ASG reasonably believes that you display that competence; OR
    - you can provide evidence of successful completion of a qualification that has been delivered in English and:
        - was at level 4 or above in the Australian Qualifications Framework, or at a level in a framework that preceded the AQF that is equivalent to level 4 in the AQF, OR
        - has been assessed by a federal, state or territory government agency which assesses overseas qualifications as equivalent or comparable to:
            - A qualification at level 4 or above in the Australian Qualifications Framework, OR
            - A qualification at a level in a framework that
- Should academic suitability be determined using the approved LLN assessment tool (LLN Robot), this will be undertaken by the student online at the ASG training facility and ASG will inform the student in writing of their result within 24 hours. The approved tool used by ASG is the LLN Robot and ASG are obligated to report the results:
    - To the student as soon as practicable after the assessment; and
    - To the Secretary in the form, manner and by the time requested by the Secretary
- Undergo a competency conversation with the ASG Operations Manager to determine course suitability and confirm academic competence. This takes place at the pre-course information session.
- Must be undertaking the course primarily at the campus of an approved provider in Australia.

IMPORTANT NOTE: students must meet all the Requirements listed above to qualify for a VET Student Loan. VET Student Loans will not be approved for students who do not meet eligibility requirements.

- https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans/resources/student-obligations

2.2 Engagement / Progression Requirements

To continue to have access to a VSL, the Department need to be assured that you are a genuine student, progressing through your course. You are required to:

- Log-in online two to three times during the year and acknowledge that you accept the loan you will receive for the course – you will receive an email invitation from ***ecafsystem@education.gov.au/VETStudentLoans@dewr.gov.au*** to your nominated email address asking you to confirm your engagement. Failure to do this could result in your VET Student Loan assistance being cancelled;
- You will also be required to demonstrate that you are progressing throughout your course.
- The Department may contact you to verify your enrolment in the course;
- It is important that you notify Australian Skills Group as soon as possible of any change to your contact details. The Change of Contact Details form is available on request from student administration.

ASG will trigger the email progression form and students have 2 weeks to submit their responses. Students are required to indicate if they:

- are continuing their studies
- have recommenced their studies after having previously deferred or withdrawn from the course (including the date of return)
- have completed their course and received their qualification
- have withdrawn or deferred from their studies
- never commenced the course.

2.3 How to Apply

Applying for a VET Student loan is separate from your course application with Australian Skills Group and VET STUDENT LOANS can only be accessed through approved VET providers when studying an approved course.

As an approved VET Student Loans provider, Australian Skills Group is required to collect and verify a range of documentation and information to determine your Identity, Date of Birth and eligibility for the VET Student Loans program.

On review of the required documentation Australian Skills Group will advise you if you are eligible and if so, will provide your enrolment information electronically to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations through the eCAF system. You will then receive an auto-generated email from the eCAF system providing details on how to submit a Request for a VET Student Loan (electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form – eCAF). This is your formal application for a VET Student Loan. The online system provides students with a secure and easily accessible way to complete the application form (eCAF) for VET Student Loans. You must be enrolled in an eligible course and **apply on or before 23:59 AEST on or before the first census day** for the unit/s of study you have enrolled in.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations may contact you to confirm enrolment and that you wish to use a VET Student Loan.

If your contact details change you need to update them with both Australian Skills Group and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

2.4 VET Student Loan Amounts & Fees

Students have the option to pay for their tuition/course fees:

- As they become due (ASG do not collect more than $1,500 in advance so fees will be proportioned across the fee period);
- Using a VET Student Loan;
- Using a combination of both.

Over a student's lifetime a loan limit is applied, regardless of whether it is used under VET STUDENT LOANS for VET studies, or FEE-HELP for higher education studies. The **2025-2026**

FEE-HELP loan limit is $129,883 for most students. These amounts are indexed on 1 June each year.
The tuition fees for VET Student Loan approved courses are capped by the Government. The maximum amount of assistance provided for a VET Student Loan will be at the course capped level. Also, the amount of the loan cannot be greater than the student's remaining HELP balance.

A loan fee of 20% applies to VET Student Loan; the HELP limit does not include the loan fee. The amount of the VETSL debt is the amount of the VET Student Loans provided for a part of a course, plus the

VET Student Loan fee covers tuition fees only. It does not cover accommodation, general living expenses or course materials. Australian Skills Group set the tuition fee for all units of study that make up their VET Student Loan enabled courses.

Tuition fees will be apportioned across 3 sequential fee periods and each fee period will contain at least one census day..

Resit Fees

Where a student fails a unit or part of a course and are required to repeat the unit at a later date, resit fees of $450 per unit apply.

2.5 Census Day:

A date by which enrolment may be cancelled by the student without incurring tuition fees (or a VET Student Loans debt) for the course, or part of the course.
If a student withdraws on or before the census day for a course or part of a course the student will not incur a VETSL debt for the course or part of the course and will receive a refund for any tuition fees already paid for the course or part of the course.
To cancel their enrolment in a course, or part of the course, the student should advise ASG in writing in on or before the census day and in accordance with the **Course Withdrawal Deferral Cancellation procedure.**

2.6 Additional VET Student Loans Information

Additional information on VET STUDENT LOANS is found in the VET STUDENT LOANS Information Booklet provided to you pre-enrolment. This is also available from Student Administration; or visit www.studyassist.gov.au.

Fees Other than Tuition Fees:

Fees other than tuition fees that may apply to your enrolment include:

- Supplementary assessment – once Free of Charge, then $50;
- Replacement of study guides or program learning materials - $5 per document;
- Reissue of Award - $50 or Statement of Attainment - $30 (must be requested in writing);
- Printing/photocopying – 10 cents a copy;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - $450 per unit.

Additional Costs (not supplied by ASG):

- Stationery – pens, paper;
- PPE clothing – high viz shirt, safety boots, long trouser.

3. Withdrawal/ Deferral/ Cancellation

3.1 Withdrawal

Students who wish to withdraw from a VET unit of study or VET course of study must do so ***in writing***.

The VET STUDENT LOAN Enabled Course Withdrawal Form can be used for this purpose and is available on request from Student Administration or Email a letter of intention to withdraw which should include:

- Confirmation of whether withdrawal is from the course, or from a unit of study;
- The name of the course or unit of study;
- Student ID

Where **withdrawal is on or before the census day**, the student **will not incur a VETSL debt** and any fees paid up-front will be refunded. Where **withdrawal is after the census day** the student **will incur the VETSL debt** for the fee period. If 'special circumstances' are determined, you can

apply to have your HELP balance re-credited. Please refer to the Student Review Procedures for Re-Crediting a Fee- Help Balance on page 14 of this Handbook.

Withdrawal from an approved course before a census date will not involve financial, administrative or any other barrier to withdrawal.

As withdrawal discontinues your enrolment in the course or unit of study, should you subsequently wish to complete these you are required to re-enrol and must do so in writing.

Subsequent re-enrolment in a unit of study may not be covered by a VSL depending on the course cap and how much HELP balance you have remaining.

ASG will generate an eCAF Progression Form to your email which you must complete to advise DEWR that you are no longer accessing a VET Student Loan.

3.2 Deferral of Studies

Where you decide to **defer your studies** after a VSL has been approved you must request an eCAF **Progression form** be emailed to you from the ASG Administration team. Completing this notifies the Secretary that you no longer need access to a VSL, at this time. When you are ready to resume your studies request another eCAF Progression form, advise the date you will return/require VSL access. The Progression forms are sent to you via email. Please ensure your contact details are up-to-date.

3.3 Cancellation of Enrolment After Census Date by ASG

ASG will only cancel your enrolment in a course of study after the census day has passed in the following circumstances:

- You have been deemed ‘at risk’ of non-progression and have undergone the intervention process without successful improvement;
- You have not confirmed course progression and continued access to the use of a VSL, in accordance with VSL requirements;
- Your behaviour has been deemed unacceptable in accordance with the Code of Conduct and you have been counselled accordingly.

Where ASG finds it necessary to cancel a student's enrolment after the Census Day for the Unit of Study, ASG will:

- Provide the student written notification of the proposed cancellation;
- Provide at least 28 days for the student to initiate a grievance (refer to Grievance Procedure) before the cancellation takes final effect;
- Ensure that cancellation will only take effect after the grievance procedure has been completed;
- Set out the circumstances in which tuition fees will, or will not, be refunded.

4. Refunds

4.1 Students approved for VET Student Loan assistance

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study **prior to the census day** for that VET unit

of study:

- 100% of tuition fees paid for that unit will be refunded to the student; and
- the student will not incur a VET STUDENT LOANS debt.

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study **after census day f**or that VET unit of study:

- no refund is applicable; and/or
- the student will incur a VET STUDENT LOANS debt

4.2 Students not using /not eligible for VET STUDENT LOANS assistance

This section applies to students who are permanent residents (who are not permanent humanitarian visa holders who are resident in Australia for the duration of the VET unit of study) and New Zealand citizens enrolled in a VET STUDENT LOANS enabled course.

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study on or before the census date for that unit of study:

- 100% of any tuition fees paid for that unit will be refunded to the student

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study after census date for that unit of study:

- no refund of fees paid will apply

4.3 Payment of Refunds

Refunds will be paid within 28 days of the census day of the VET unit of study to which the withdrawal applies.

4.4 Payment of Refunds

A student who withdraws after the census day for a VET unit of study may apply for special consideration in line with the Student Review Procedures for Re-crediting a HELP balance.

5. Review Procedure for Re-crediting a HELP balance

Australian Skills Group will:

- Set a census date for each VET unit of study that is no earlier than 20% of the way through the VET unit of study;
- Ensure that all students are informed of the census dates for each VET unit of study pre-enrolment;
- Ensure that all students are informed of the review procedures for the re-crediting of a FEE-HELP balance under Part 6 of the Act;
- Ensure that all students are informed they may apply to have their HELP Balance recredited under section 68 of the Act because of special circumstances;
- Ensure that all students are informed they may apply to the Secretary for their HELP Balance to be re-credited under section 71 of the Act;
- Treat all students fairly, equitably and without victimisation or discrimination should they make an application to re-credit a HELP balance or seek a review or a reconsideration or access ASG's grievance procedure.

If a student who has requested VET STUDENT LOANS assistance withdraws from a VET unit of study on or before the census date for that VET unit of study, the student will not incur a VET STUDENT LOAN debt for that VET unit of study.

If a student who has requested VET Student Loans assistance withdraws from a VET unit of study after the census date for that VET unit of study, the student will incur a VET STUDENT LOANS debt for that VET unit of study.

A student who has incurred a VET STUDENT LOANS debt for a VET unit of study may apply to have their HELP balance re-credited for the affected VET units of study in accordance with the following procedure.

5.1 Special Circumstances

In accordance with section 68 of the Act. a student who withdraws from a VET unit of study after census date or has been unable to successfully complete a VET unit of study and believes this was due to special circumstances then the student may apply to ASG to have their HELP balance re-credited for the affected VET units of study.

Australian Skills Group will re-credit the student's HELP balance if it is satisfied that special circumstances apply that:

- are beyond the student's control; and
- did not make their full impact on the student until on or after the census date for the course, or part of course; and
- made it impracticable for the student to complete the requirements of the course or part of the course during the student's enrolment in the course, or part of the course.

Australian Skills Group will be satisfied that a student's circumstances are beyond the student's control if a situation occurs that a reasonable person would consider is not due to the person's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible. The situation must be unusual, uncommon or abnormal.

Each application will be examined and determined on its merits by considering a student's claim together with independent supporting documentation substantiating the claim.

Initial applications for the re-crediting of a student's HELP balance are to be made, in writing, to the Chief Operating Officer. The contact details for the Chief Operating Officer are:

Mr David Eley

Phone 07 3889 8233

Email davide@asg.edu.au

5.2 The procedure for the re-crediting of a HELP balance is as follows:

(a) when a student withdraws from a VET unit of study, Australian Skills Group shall confirm the withdrawal by giving notice to the student in writing stating the date and time at which the withdrawal has taken effect;

(b) when a student fails to meet the requirements of a VET unit of study, Australian Skills Group shall confirm the failure by giving notice to the student in writing of the final result for that VET unit of study after results for the VET unit of study have been properly approved;

(c) Under Section 68 of the Act the student may apply to ASG to have their HELP balance re-credited under special circumstances. The student must apply in writing using the Application to re-credit a VSL HELP balance form within **12 months** after the census day for the course, or part of the course concerned, This form is available from Administration or by emailing info@asg.edu.au.

(d) Australian Skills Group may exercise its discretion to waive this requirement if in its opinion it was not possible for the application to be made before the end of the 12 month period;

(e) ASG shall acknowledge receipt of the Application to Re-credit a VSL HELP Balance within 10 days and if required, request any additional supporting evidence;

(f) If the requested additional supporting evidence is not received by ASG within 20 days, the application will be denied;

(g) If the application is successful, Australian Skills Group will re-credit the student's HELP balance with an amount equal to the amount of VET Student Loans assistance that the student has received for the affected VET units of study and the student's VET Student Loan debt for those VET units of study will be removed;

(f) The VET Student Loan Administrator shall advise the student of the outcome of the application within 14 days stating the reasons for the decision;

(g) The VET Student Loan Administrator shall also advise the student of their rights for a review of the decision if they are not satisfied with its outcome.

5.3 Review of a decision

If a student is not satisfied with the decision made by the VET Student Loans Administrator in relation to re-crediting their HELP balance they may request a review of the decision.

There is no charge for re-considerations or review of decisions, other than review by the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART).

The review shall be carried out by the Review Officer who is senior to the original decision maker. Any such request must be submitted to the Review Officer in writing and:

(a) must be lodged within 28 days of receiving notice of the original decision, unless the Review Officer allows a longer period;
and
(b) must specify the reasons for making the request
(c) may not be reviewed if it falls out of the 28-day timeframe.

The contact details for the Review Officer are:

Mr Paul Scaysbrook
Chief Executive Officer
Phone (07) 3889 8233
Email pauls@asg.edu.au

The Review Officer shall acknowledge receipt of an application for a review of the refusal to re-credit a HELP balance in writing and inform the applicant that if the Review Officer has not advised the applicant of a decision within 45 days of having received the application for review, the Review Officer is taken to have confirmed the original decision. This notice shall also advise the applicant that they have the right to apply to the Administrative Review Tribunal for a review of the decision and will provide the contact details of the closest Administrative Review Tribunal Registry and the approximate costs of lodging an appeal.

The Review Officer shall:

(a) seek all relevant information from the person who made the original decision;
(b) review the case within 45 days and advise the student of the decision in writing giving the reasons for the reviewer's decision.

The Review Officer may:

(a) confirm the original decision; or
(b) vary the original decision; or
(c) set the original decision aside and substitute a new decision

The Review Officer will give written notice of the decision setting out the reasons for the decision. The applicant shall also be advised in the decision of the right to apply to the Administrative Review Tribunal for a review of the decision; and be provided with the contact details of the closest Administrative Review Tribunal Registry and the approximate costs of lodging an appeal.

Where a student is unsatisfied with the reviewed decision they may apply to the Administrative Review Tribunal for consideration of Australian Skills Group's decision to refuse to re-credit their HELP balance.

The student may supply additional information to the Administrative Review Tribunal which they did not previously supply to Australian Skills Group either in the original application or the request for review.

The Secretary or the Secretary's delegate will be the respondent for the cases that are brought before the ART. Upon the Secretary's receipt of a notification from the ART, they will notify Australian Skills Group that an appeal has been lodged. Upon receipt of this notification from the Secretary, the Review Officer will provide copies of all the documents they hold that are relevant to the appeal within five (5) business days.

Where the appeal to the ART is successful, the HELP balance will be re-credited by ASG and the ATO adjusts the student's tax records to reflect remission of the debt.

At all times the student has access to ASG's Grievance procedure.

5.4 Re-crediting a FEE Help Balance by the Secretary

Under Section 71 of the Act a student may also apply to the Secretary to have their HELP balance re-credited because:

- ASG or a person acting on behalf of ASG, engaged in unacceptable conduct in relation to the student's application for VSL, or
- ASG failed to comply with the Act or an instrument under the Act and the failure has adversely affected the student.

Applications to the Secretary for re-crediting under section 71 of the Act must be made within 5 years after the census day for the course, or part of the course, concerned, or within that period as extended by the Secretary.

The student may also apply to the Secretary to have their HELP balance recredited in relation to special circumstances if ASG:

- Is unable to act or is being wound up or has been dissolved; or
- Has failed to act and the Secretary is satisfied that the failure is unreasonable.

5.5 Publication

The *Student Review Procedures for Re-crediting a HELP balance* will be published in the VET STUDENT LOANS Student Handbook and on Australian Skills Group's website (http://www.asg.edu.au).

6. Complaints, Appeal and Grievances

Australian Skills Group is committed to developing and maintaining a transparent, effective, fair and equitable complaints and appeals handling system where complaints and appeals are recorded, acknowledged and which is easily accessible to all complainants, where the focus is on positive outcomes with undue blame and investigation and minimal expense. It will ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaint and appeal process; and that the policy is publicly available.

6.1 Application

This policy applies to all complainants including ***current, prospective and existing students*** undertaking study or training in courses offered by Australian Skills Group including:

- Fee For Service students;
- Students funded through state government funded programs
- Trainees under a government Training Contract. (Trainees in a Training Contract will also need to seek advice from the relevant government department in their state about their rights and responsibilities);
- Individuals enrolled in a VET Student Loans approved course who are, or would be, entitled to VET Student Loans assistance;
- Individuals enrolled in a VET Student Loans approved course who are not eligible for VET Student Loans assistance;

This policy also applies to Industry representatives, employers, Australian Skills Group staff and contractors, and any other stakeholder, including third parties providing services on ASG's behalf.

6.2 Definitions

A grievance can be defined as an individual's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the services and activities provided by Australian Skills Group, and/or third parties providing services on its behalf, including both academic and non- academic matters such as, but not limited to:

6.3 Academic

- The quality of service/training provided by ASG or any third parties providing such services on its behalf;
- Student progress, assessment, curriculum, awards in any VET course or unit of study;
- Dissatisfaction with the assessment process or result.

6.4 Non-Academic

- The conduct of ASG and/or any of its staff and/or or any third parties providing services on ASG's behalf;
- Issues such as the handling of personal information and access to personal records;
- The enrolment, induction/orientation process;
- Grievances resulting from decisions made by Australian Skills Group;
- The way someone has been treated such as harassment, vilification, discrimination;
- Issues with financial matters including fines, penalties, fees;
- Exclusion from events and facilities;
- The conduct of another learner.

6.5 Informal grievance

A complaint is considered to be informal when it is made verbally. It is also considered to be informal when it is made in writing and addressed to the person against whom the complaint is being made unless a signed copy of that letter is also sent to the Chief Operating Officer. An informal complaint will be referred to an appropriate
person to assist the effective and rapid resolution. Resolution of a complaint is to be achieved as quickly as possible, at the local level and with a minimum number of people involved.

6.6 Formal grievance

A formal complaint is made by forwarding a signed written complaint to the Chief Operating Officer of Australian Skills Group within three months of the incident.

All parties have a right to confidentiality and privacy, subject to necessary legal responsibilities and the complaint will be forwarded to the most appropriate person (as determined by the Chief Operating Officer) to assist the effective and rapid resolution of any complaint.
At all times, parties to the complaint may be accompanied by an advocate of their choosing. Each party will have an opportunity to formally present their case should they wish to do so.

6.7 Before an Issue Becomes a Formal Grievance

Complainants are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the trainer or staff member involved in the action(s) in order that the issue may be resolved quickly and effectively. There are also staff available to assist the resolution of issues at this level. Complainants may raise an informal grievance by contacting the Chief Operating Officer if required either in person or by phoning (07) 3889 8233.

Where the informal discussion has not found a suitable resolution or the circumstances do not allow this a formal complaint should be lodged.

6.8 Appeals

An appeal is an application made by a student to have a decision reviewed where that decision relates to a matter affecting their studies or life as a student.

Students have the right to appeal any decision or assessment decision made by Australian Skills Group or third party acting on its behalf.

6.9 Assessment Appeals

Although the Grievance Procedure is available for this purpose, students are encouraged to do the following should they not be satisfied with an assessment decision:

- Approach your trainer /assessor informally to discuss your concerns;
- If you are not satisfied or do not feel comfortable, a meeting can be arranged with the Chief Operating Officer;

- If you are not satisfied or do not feel comfortable, a meeting can be arranged with the Chief Operating Officer;
- The Chief Operating Officer will have the work re-assessed by an independent or impartial qualified trainer/assessor;
- You will be notified of the outcome in writing within 10 working days from the date of the appeal;
- Where the appeal is successful the results will be amended;
- Where the appeal is not upheld the Chief Operating Officer will advise the student in writing with reasons for the decision.

You have the right to use the Formal Grievance process if preferred. A formal letter must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the academic result.

In handling a complaint, whether formal or informal, confidentiality will be maintained to protect all parties involved in the complaint under the principles of natural justice.

6.10 Procedure

This procedure can be used by all complainants to **submit a grievance of an academic or non-academic nature** and at all times **Australian Skills Group** will take steps to ensure that:

- All formal complaints received by Australian Skills Group will be acknowledged in writing and finalized as soon as practicable;
- The complainant and any respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against;
- The complainant has an opportunity to formally present their case;
- That each party to a grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person/third party at any relevant meeting;
- The complainant will be provided with a written statement of the outcome of the complaint and of any appeals, including reasons for the outcome;
- A full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if so requested by the complainant or respondent;
- The complainant is given appropriate access to records, whilst maintaining confidentiality;
- Where the internal or external grievance handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the complainant, Australian Skills Group will immediately implement any

decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the complainant of the outcome;

- Where ASG considers more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant will be informed by ASG in writing, with reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and provide regular updates on the progress of the matter;
- There is no cost to the complainant to access this grievance procedure;
- The complainant has the right to withdraw the complaint at any stage.

6.10.1 Stage 1 – Formal Grievance

Formal grievances must be submitted in writing or on a Complaints and Appeals Form; and should be marked to the attention of the Chief Operating Officer as follows:
Chief Operating Officer
Australian Skills Group
PO BOX 7244
Brendale QLD4500

These forms can be requested from Student Administration or by emailing info@asg.edu.au

- Receipt of the grievance will be acknowledged in writing within 2 business days;
- The grievance handling process will commence within 5 working days of receipt of the formal grievance, including confirming the required outcome of the complaint with the complainant, if required;
- All reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable. Should the Chief Operating Officer consider that resolution will take longer than 60 calendar days from date of receipt, the complainant will be informed with reasons why, in writing, and kept up to date with progress;
- Such clarification may be sought by written or verbal request or by a face-to-face interview with the complainant. When such clarification occurs in a face-to-face interview the complainant or respondent may ask for a third party to accompany them;
- The Chief Operating Officer, or their nominee, will endeavour to address/resolve the grievance within 10 working days of receipt and will provide a written report of the outcome with reasons for the decision/s to the complainant. This will include the steps taken to address the grievance and advice on the complainants right to appeal any decision within 20 working days;

- Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome the resolution will be implemented and the complaint/appeal closed;
- Australian Skills Group will review the complaint and a Continuous Improvement Notice raised for action where required.

6.10.2 Stage 2 – Internal Appeal

- If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome decision of their formal grievance they may lodge an appeal with the Chief Executive Officer (who is senior to the original decision maker) within 20 working days of receiving notification of the outcome decision;
- The Chief Executive Officer will appoint an appropriate person to consult with the complainant and other relevant parties within 5 working days of receipt of the notification of appeal;
- Where possible the review should take the form of face-to-face interviews. The complainant or the respondent may ask another person to accompany them to these interviews, at that party's cost;
- Following the consultation, the Chief Executive Officer will provide a written report to the complainant advising them of the steps taken as part of the review and the appeals outcome, including the reasons for the decision, within 10 working days of hearing the appeal;
- The report will further advise the complainant of their right to the external appeals process, within 20 working days, including how to have the decision reviewed, if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal;
- Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome the internal appeal, any resolution will be implemented, and the complaint/appeal closed;
- Australian Skills Group will review the complaint and a Continuous Improvement Notice raised for action where required.

6.10.3 Stage 3 – External Appeal

- There is no cost to students to access the external appeals process;
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal appeal, they may lodge an external appeal to an independent Arbitrator appointed to conduct such an appeal within 20 working days of receiving notice of the outcome of their appeal;
- Contact details of an independent arbitrator are:

  Mr Craig McKenzie

  Ph: 07 3881 2908

- Complainants who wish to lodge an external appeal must complete and lodge the required external appeal form/documentation which is available by contacting the Independent Arbitrator;
- The Independent Arbitrator will advise Australian Skills Group of the external review application made by the complainant. Both the Complainant and the ASG will be requested to provide documents in support of the application within 14 days of receipt of notification of the external appeal;
- Where required each party to the review may be accompanied or assisted by another person at the review, at that party's cost;
- The Independent Arbitrator will then consider the documents and make a written determination, with reasons for the decisions/recommendations, which will be sent to both parties;
- Turnaround time for an appeal is 4-6 weeks of lodgement;
- Australian Skills Group agrees to be bound by the Independent Arbitrator's recommendations, and the GM Assurance and Regulation will ensure that such recommendations are implemented within 14 days of receipt of the report from the Independent Arbitrator;
- Where the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the external appeal, the resolution will be implemented, and the complaint/appeal closed;
- Australian Skills Group will review the complaint and a Continuous Improvement Notice raised for action where required.

6.11 Further Action

If a grievance remains unresolved after the external appeal, the complainant will be advised they may refer the matter to external authorities that could further assist them. Such review may consider the way in which the process was handled rather than judgement on the determination that was made.

Depending on the nature of the complaint this may include but is not limited to:

The Queensland Training Ombudsman

The Office of the Queensland Training Ombudsman offers a free, confidential and independent service to review and resolve enquiries and complaints from anyone in the VET system including students, RTOs, apprentices, trainees, employers and other stakeholders.

More information can be found at:
https://trainingombudsman.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/QTO-DL-Brochure_web-Feb-2020.pdf
or by calling 1800 773 048

Commonwealth Ombudsman – VET Student Loans

The VET Student Loans Ombudsman (VSLO) acts as the external dispute resolution body to conduct investigations and make recommendations relating to VET Student Loans assistance and compliance by VET providers with their legislative requirements.

More information about the VSLO and the matters that fall within their scope of work visit the Commonwealth Ombudsman website:
https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints/vet-student-loan-complaints
Australian Skills Group will:

- Comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and
- Fully cooperate with the Commonwealth Ombudsman

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) - Australian Skills Group's registering and governing body.

If your complaint is related to a potential breach of the Standards for RTOs 2015, you have gone through ASG's internal complaints process and your complaint has not been resolved you may contact the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and completing their online complaints form.

https://www.asqa.gov.au/students/complaints

At no time does this procedure replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under other policies or under statute or any other law. Nothing in this procedure limits the rights of individuals to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection Laws. Neither does this procedure circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

6.12 Enrolment Status

Where a current student chooses to utilise this process their enrolment status will be maintained whilst the grievance handling and appeals process is ongoing.

6.13 Record Keeping

A written record of all grievances handled under this procedure and their outcomes shall be maintained for a period of 7 years to allow all parties to the grievance appropriate access to these records. These records will be maintained in accordance with VET Regulatory requirements under the Australian Skills Group Records Management procedure.
Complainants will have access to their records.

6.14 Procedural Fairness / Natural Justice

Natural justice principles will be used to ensure procedural fairness.

All parties will be given the opportunity to present their case, be fully informed about allegations and decisions made and have the right to be represented by another person.

In addition, the decision maker must have no personal interest, beyond the scope of their role in this process and must be unbiased. If the decision maker cannot meet these requirements they must immediately withdraw from the process.

Whether a complaint is formal or informal, steps will be taken to ensure that neither party is victimised or disadvantaged as a result of a complaint being made. The Nominee appointed to manage a formal complaint will be responsible for ensuring that no victimisation occurs.

7. Fairness and Equal Benefit Policy

7.1 Overview

Australian Skills Group supports equal opportunity and is committed to providing all students and potential students with a working and learning environment which values diversity, respects differences and provides an environment that is safe, healthy, positive, supportive and free from all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination. Australian Skills Group applies access and equity principles throughout all its policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of all students in its courses and to assist students achieve their desired outcomes (refer to Access and Equity Policy at www.asg.edu.au.

7.2 Fair Treatment

Australian Skills Group has a fair treatment belief and this policy ensures that those who interact (prospective students, students, staff and visitors) with Australian Skills Group are treated fairly.

Specific information is detailed in, yet not limited to, the following Australian Skills Group wide policies and procedures:

- Access and Equity;
- Student Code of Conduct;
- Australian Skills Group Code of Practice;
- Enrolment Procedure (including Pre-enrolment);
- Privacy and Records Policy.

All related policy and procedures are available on the Australian Skills Group website www.asg.edu.au and in the Student Handbook.

7.3 Equal Benefits and Opportunities

Australian Skills Group ensures that all policies and procedures are based on merit for making decisions about:

- The selection, from among persons who are, or would be entitled to VET STUDENT LOANS assistance under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who seek to enrol with

  Australian Skills Group in a vet unit of study that meets the course requirements under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act; and

- The treatment of students who are or would be entitled to VET STUDENT LOANS assistance under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act undertaking a VET course of study.

Potential students seeking to enrol in a VET STUDENT LOANS unit(s) of study, regardless of their background, circumstances or eligibility for funding will be assessed for entry to study through the same published entry requirements and through the same process as for all students (Enrolment Procedure) decisions about the selection and treatment of students.

The above undertakings do not prevent Australian Skills Group taking into account, in making such decisions, educational disadvantage that a student may have experienced.

Entry requirements are detailed on the relevant course brochure available on the ASG website.

7.4 Pre-enrolment Information

Australian Skills Group ensure that prior to enrolment prospective students receive adequate information regarding the course, training, assessment, services and Commonwealth assistance provided to enable them to make an informed decision about the suitability of the course and Australian Skills Group as a provider in meeting their individual needs. This information is contained in the Pre-Enrolment Terms and Conditions and also provided in the Pre-enrolment induction sessions which form part of the enrolment process and includes details on:

- Student selection, enrolment and induction procedures;
- Course information, including educational and vocational outcomes;
- Fees and charges, including refund Policy;
- VET STUDENT LOANS assistance (where applicable);
- Provision for language, numeracy and literacy assistance;
- Student support services;
- Welfare and guidance services;
- Flexible learning and assessment procedures;
- Grievance procedure;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) arrangements and credit transfer;
- Disclosure of personal information requirements.

7.5 Application, Selection and Admission

Australian Skills Group student selection (enrolment) procedure is an open, fair and transparent where students will be selected on merit based on the published criteria. Australian Skills Group will ensure that throughout the process of selection and admission, applicants are treated fairly, courteously and in a timely manner.

Eligible students who seek to enrol in a VET STUDENT LOANS enabled course with Australian Skills Group must complete an Enrolment Application form and are requested to have a personal

interview. This interview helps ASG determine that the student is academically suited to the course; and that the prospective student understands the environment of the College and study requirements along with the other details associated with VET STUDENT LOANS enabled courses. If you are under 18 years:

- A responsible parent of the student must sign the ASG enrolment application form, VSL Parental Consent Form and VSL Checklist; or
- The student must have received youth allowance (within the meaning of the Social Security Act 1991) on the basis they are independent within the meaning of Part 2.11 of the Act).

In order for ASG to be assured that the student is academically suited to the course the following requirements must be met:

- The student must meet all prescribed course entry requirements determined by the relevant Training Package ***and*** ASG***;***

  The student must also provide:

- a copy of their Senior Secondary Certificate of Education that has been awarded by an Australian agency or authority of a state or territory for the completion of year 12; **or**
- a copy of their International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB) diploma; **or**
- evidence of successful completion of an AQF qualification delivered in English and that:
    - was at Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) level 4 or higher; or a framework that preceded the AQF that is equivalent to level 4 in the AQF; **and**
    - has been assessed by a federal, state or territory government agency which assesses overseas qualifications as equivalent or comparable to:
        - a qualification at level 4 or above in the AQF; or
        - a qualification at a level in a framework that preceded the AQF that is equivalent level 4 in the AQF

  or
- Undertake an approved LLN assessment tool as displaying competence at, or above, Exit level 3 in the Australian Core Skills framework (ACSF) in both reading and numeracy and where ASG reasonably believes that the individual displays that competence

The approved LLN assessment tool used will be LLN Robot.

The process of assessing competence will be conducted with honesty and integrity and will be invigilated in person by an ASG assessor.

The LLN Robot assessment is undertaken online at ASG and will be completed by the student after the pre-course information session and after eligibility requirements have been determined as met.

On completion the result is generated by the LLN system and must be reported:

- to the student as soon as practicable after the assessment; and
- to the Secretary in the form, manner and by the time requested by the Secretary

ASG will also conduct a competency conversation with all students who achieve Exit Level 3 or above to be assured they display that level of competence.

ASG must retain the LLN assessment result for a period of 5 years.

If required, any re-sit must be after a period of at least 3 months, after targeted learning and assessment has taken place and these results will also be retained for a period of 5 years after enrolment.

Please Note: A VET Student Loan will not be approved for students who do not meet eligibility requirements.

*Australian Skills Group use a Commonwealth Government approved Literacy & Numeracy testing tool – LLN Robot. This is completed by the student at ASG online pre-enrolment and is then electronically marked by the system. ASG will provide a copy of the report to the student within 24 hours of completion of the test. Applicants who do not meet the entry requirements will be advised of the reason why they have not been offered a place in the course, their right to appeal the decision and information on how to access our appeals process. It is a requirement that this process be conducted with honesty and integrity.

ASG are also required to:

- report the results of the assessment of competence to the student as soon as practicable after the assessment; and
- report the results of the assessment of competence to the Secretary in the form, manner and by the time requested by the Secretary; and
- retain the results for a period of 5 years after enrolment; and

- ensure any required resits occur after a period of at least 3 months, after targeted learning and improvement has taken place; and retain these results for a period of 5 years after enrolment.

7.6 Acceptance

Applicants accept the offer of a place in the course by signing and returning a copy of the offer letter as directed. Once the applicant's enrolment is finalised and they are sent a Confirmation of Enrolment letter with details about the course and arrangements for student orientation/induction. Students can indicate they are interested in VET STUDENT LOANS assistance my checking the tick box on the Enrolment Application Form.

8. Privacy and Records Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide details on how Australian Skills Group complies in obtaining recording and storing personal information obtained for the purposes of VET Student Loans assistance and repayment of loans as required by legislation; and to ensure that full and accurate record of all activities and decisions at ASG are created, managed and retained or disposed of appropriately, and in accordance with relevant legislation. This will enable ASG to achieve information accessibility and business enhancement while ensuring that it protects the rights and interests of stakeholders.

8.1 Obligation

Australian Skills Group has an obligation under the ***Privacy Act 1988*** and Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles from Schedule 1 of the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012 when it handles personal information obtained for the purposes of VET Student Loans assistance and the repayment of loans under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA Schedule 1A c123)

Australian Skills Group and its officers, employees and those who perform services by or on behalf of

Australian Skills Group, must ensure that:

- Personal information is collected only for the purpose directly related to the student's course and VET Student Loans application; this will include the Commonwealth government, the USI Registrar; and Tuition Assurance providers;

- Suitable storage arrangements, including appropriate filing procedures, are in place;
- Suitable security arrangements exist for all records containing personal information;
- Access to a student's own personal information will be held by the provider is made
- available to the student at no charge;
- Records are accurate, up-to-date, complete and not misleading;
- Where a record is found to be inaccurate, the correction is made;
- Where a student requests that a record be amended because it is inaccurate but the record is found to be accurate, the details of the request for amendment are noted on the record;
- The personal information is only to be used for the purposes for which it was collected;
- Personal information is only disclosed as below.

The Australian Privacy Principles may be obtained from:

http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-act/australian-privacy-principles

8.2 Disclosure

Australian Skills Group will not disclose a student's personal information to a person, body or agency

(other than the individual concerned) unless:

- The individual concerned is reasonably likely to have been aware that the information of that kind is usually passed to that person, body or agency;
- The individual concerned has consented to the disclosure;
- Australian Skills Group believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the student or of another person;
- The disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
- The disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue.

Australian Skills Group may collect and hold personal information, such as, but not limited to, names of individuals, addresses, telephone numbers, facsimile numbers, e-mail addresses, titles, professional affiliations and academic records.

These details are collected for the purpose of Australian Skills Group providing services to customers and clients, and the selling and marketing of our products and extended range of services.

Where possible, Australian Skills Group will collect the information directly from the individual. Australian Skills Group acknowledges that there is no obligation for an individual to provide it with personal information. However, if an individual chooses not to provide Australian Skills Group with personal details, it may not be able to provide the individual with a full range of services.

8.3 Privacy Notice

Under the Data Provision Requirements 2012, Australian Skills Group is required to collect personal information about you and to disclose that personal information to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER).

Your personal information (including the personal information contained on this enrolment form and your training activity data) may be used or disclosed by Australian Skills Group for statistical, regulatory and research purposes. Australian Skills group may disclose your personal information for these purposes to third parties, including:

- School – if you are a secondary student undertaking VET, including a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship;
- Employer – if you are enrolled in training paid by your employer;
- Commonwealth and State or Territory government departments and authorised agencies;
- NCVER;
- Organisations conducting student surveys; and
- Researchers.

Personal information disclosed to NCVER may be used or disclosed for the following purposes:

- Issuing a VET Statement of Attainment or VET Qualification, and populating Authenticated VET Transcripts;
- Facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys;
- Understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information; and
- Administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.

You may receive an NCVER student survey which may be administered by an NCVER employee, agent or third party contractor. You may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the VET Data Policy and all NCVER policies and protocols.

8.4 Consent

Students must give informed consent to their information being provided to the Australian Government. Australian Skills Group is required to obtain the student's consent to provide personal information to the government departments; the Request for VET STUDENT LOANS assistance eCAF form asks for the student's consent to provide information which will satisfy this requirement; consent to the provision of personal information for the Unique Student Identifier scheme is obtained on the Student Enrolment Form.

The student is also required to complete a Release of Personal Information to a Third Party form for the release of results, Awards or Statement of Attainments to a nominated person other than themselves.

8.5 Review and Access

An individual may request access to or obtain a copy of their personal records/information or for their personal information to be amended so that it is accurate.

Individuals are able to access their own records by requesting it on the Personal Record Request Form available from Student Administration.

There is no charge for an individual to access personal information that Australian Skills Group holds about hem; however a fee may be charged to make copies.

If an individual considers their personal information to be incorrect, incomplete, out of date or misleading, they can request that the information be amended. Where a record is found to be inaccurate, a correction will be made. Where an individual requests that a record be amended because it is inaccurate, the details of the request for amendment will be noted on the record.

8.6 Storage and Security of Personal Information

Australian Skills Group will ensure that a student's personal information is protected by such security safeguards as it is reasonable in the circumstances to take, against loss, against unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure and against other misuse.

Australian Skills Group will ensure that is it is necessary for a student's personal information to be given to a person in connection with the provision of a service to Australian Skills group, everything reasonable within the power of Australian Skills Group will be done to prevent unauthorised use or disclosure of that personal information.

Australian Skills Group will not use a student's personal information without taking reasonable steps to ensure that. Having regard to the purpose for which the information is proposed to be used, the information is accurate, up to date and complete.
Australian Skills Group will not use a student's personal information except for a purpose to which the information is relevant and provided for on the enrolment application form.

8.7 VET personal information:

- Is information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can be reasonably ascertained from the information or opinion; and
- Obtained or created by an employee of Australian Skills Group (which included a person
    - who performs devices for on behalf of Australian Skills Group) for the purposes of VET FEE- HELP assistance and repayment of HELP loans under HESA (HESA Schedule 1A c172)

It is an offence under HESA for Australian Skills Group (and its employees) to disclose, copy or record VET personal information that was not made for the purposes it was intended.

HESA provides for a penalty of 2 years imprisonment (HESA Schedule 1A c173). A person commits an offence if they cause any intentional access to or modification of VET personal information that is held in a computer with restricted access by or on behalf of Australian Skills Group , and they knew that access or modification was unauthorised (HESA Schedule 1A c178).

8.8 Privacy Complaints and Advice

Privacy complaints about beaches of personal information by Australian Skills Group (including its officers, employees and those who perform services on or behalf of Australian Skills Group) will be addressed using the Australian Skills Group Grievance Procedure. Details of this procedure can be found on the Australian Skills Group website.

9. Access and Equity

ASG Management and staff provide assistance to all clients to identify and achieve their desired outcomes. ASG is commitment to providing training and assessment services to all clients regardless of race, religion, sex, socio-economics status, disability, language, literacy or numeracy.

If you have something that needs to be discussed regarding a special need make a time to meet with the Student Guidance Officer. ASG will address specific needs as they are identified. ASG will adapt assessment material and training where needed to address specific needs. Students need to inform ASG staff as soon as possible so that modifications can be made. Where a specific need is identified it will be dealt immediately.

Refer to the Access and Equity Policy on our website for more information www.asg.edu.au

10. Academic Matters

10.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

During your lifetime, you have gained valuable knowledge and developed many skills. You may have previously worked either full or part time or in a voluntary capacity. This work may have involved some training (either formal or informal). You may also have attended other training courses.

Your current knowledge and skills may be relevant to the course you are wishing to enroll in. Each unit you study is made up of various elements and competency outcomes. Each one consists of a range of performance criteria. If you can provide evidence that you have the relevant skills and knowledge, you may be able to use this to gain recognition for all or part of a course. This is known as recognition of prior learning (RPL).
When you apply for RPL, your knowledge and skills are measured against the equivalent unit(s) in

the relevant course. If you are successful, you will be assessed as having already completed those units in your course. This may enable you to complete your studies in less time and at less cost.

10.2 Applying for RPL

The application for RPL is an assessment just like any other assessment you may undergo while you are a student with ASG. It is, therefore, not to be taken lightly. However, if you look at the ***advantages*** in undertaking this process, the time may be well spent.

You are able to apply for RPL for one unit or several units of competencies using the RPL process. You must be able to support your application with documentary evidence. If you believe that you already have competencies in the course you apply for, contact Student Registrar for an RPL application.

- What are the implications for tuition fees?

Students who are successful in obtaining RPL will have their tuition fees adjusted on a nominal hour basis depending on the subject length. RPL fees are in accordance with the table of schedule fees.

10.3 Credit Transfer (CT)

Credit transfer involves assessing a previously completed course or subjects to see if it provides equivalent learning or competency outcomes to those required within your current course of study. The purpose of Credit Transfer is to make it easier for students to move between courses and institutions. This gives people more opportunities to fulfil their potential and respond to changing employment needs. It means a student can gain credit for previous study and complete current qualifications more quickly.

Credit transfer allows students to count relevant, successfully completed studies at TAFE institutes, accredited private providers, professional organisations or enterprises and universities toward their current course of qualifications.

To apply for Credit Transfer for units of competency, submit a certified copy of qualification or statement of attainment when enrolling.

10.4 Academic progress

ASG will monitor your academic progress to ensure you achieve your desired course outcomes. Attendance in class and submission of all required assessments is essential to achieve success. Hard copy of progress reports will be sent to you on the completion of each term/stage.

You will receive feedback from you trainer on all assessment material completed and marked.

It is important that if you miss classes and or assessments you attend scheduled tutorial session - if you do not progress satisfactorily you may be unable to continue to the next semester.

10.5 Assessment Appeal Process

All students have the right to appeal should they not be satisfied with the assessment decision. This can be dealt with as follows:

- Approach your trainer /assessor informally to discuss your concerns;
- If you are not satisfied or do not feel comfortable, a meeting can be arranged with the
- General Manager Operations;
- The Chief Operating Officer will have the work re-assessed by a different qualified trainer/assessor;
- You will be notified of the outcome in writing.

10.6 Counselling Support

ASG is committed to provide all the support that students need to complete the training and assessment successfully. In the event that you feel you need support with the training or other issues that you are dealing with that could be making your studies difficult speak with your trainer or make an appointment to see the Education Office. Australian Skills Group is able to provide you with a list of suitable counselling services available.

10.7 Language literacy and Numeracy

ASG recognizes the diverse learning experiences of individuals, and that language, literacy and numeracy abilities are not the same for all. In order that ASG can be assured your LLN abilities are suitable for your chosen course, it is an entry requirement that you demonstrate Australian Core Skills Framework competence at Exit Level 3.

If during your course you require additional assistance speak with your trainer in the first instance or make an appointment to see the Education Support Officer. We can support your individual learning needs through our own specialised staff or by referral to other organisations. External organisations may charge fees for their services which must be paid by the student.

10.8 Transition

Where a training product becomes superseded on the National Register, ASG will advise all students enrolled in the superseded qualification or unit of competency of their options to either complete or transition to the new qualification or unit. This may include the requirement to complete gap assessments or additional units.

11. Student Matters

11.1 Legislation

Students and staff both have a responsibility to adhere to relevant legislation and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Legislation that must be adhered to includes:

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- VET Student Loans Act 2016
- Standards for RTOs 2015
- Unique Student Identifiers Act 2014
- Data Provisions Act 2012
- Privacy Act 1988
- Work Health and Safety Act
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Act 1994
- Sex Discrimination Act 1994
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Copyright Act 1968
- Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Act 2000

Your responsibilities and rights under these Acts are explained during your Orientation program.

11.2 Occupational Health Safety and Welfare

Australian Skills Group is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff, contractors, students and volunteers while working for or participating in activities and courses.

All students have the responsibility to:

- Protect their own health and safety and to avoid adversely affecting the health and safety of any other person;
- Not willfully or recklessly interfere or misuse anything provided by Australian Skills Group in the interest of health, safety or welfare;
- Co-operate with health and safety directives given by staff;
- Ensure that they are not, by the consumption of drugs and alcohol, in such a state as to endanger their own health and safety or the health and safety of another person.

If you have a personal health condition that may become acute while attending your course, please advise us before commencement of enrolment. All information will be treated in confidence and is only needed so that appropriate support or treatment can be provided should an emergency arise.

Should you be involved in any accident during training which results in personal injury and/or damage to equipment or facilities, please notify the educator immediately.

QLD Electrical Safety Regulations prohibit charging and storing electrical vehicles in Class 9b buildings (approved education facilities). Regulation includes electric bikes and scooters.

Consequently, electric vehicles, bikes and scooters must be stored / parked outside of the ASG facility.

11.3 COVID

Students are requird to wash their hands when transferring from the workshop to the classroom and vice versa and maintain safe hygiene practices. Students that have tested positive must undertake self-isolation and not attend classes. ASG will arrange for missed classes to be rescheduled at a later date.

11.4 Alcohol and other drugs

Australian Skills Group is committed to providing a worksite and learning environment which is free from any kind of substance abuse. To maintain this, students and staff are not to indulge in the consumption of alcohol and/or illegal drugs during business/college hours, including break times,
on or off site.

11.5 Academic record keeping

ASG maintains comprehensive records of each student's involvement with ASG, including class attendance, academic results, personal details and financial records. To assist in the resolution of any dispute each student is encouraged to maintain their own similar records.

11.6 Personal details record keeping

It is the student's responsibility to keep ASG informed of their contact details. If, at any stage while you are enrolled, your personal contact details change, you are obliged to inform ASG. A Contact Details Update Form is available from Student Services which should be completed as soon as practicable. This allows ASG to send any communication to you in an efficient manner.

11.7 Housekeeping

You are expected to comply with the following conditions:

- **NO smoking or vaping** is permitted in the building, including the lift, toilets, stairways and any entrance or exits of the building;
- mobile phones MUST be switched off in classrooms. When you need to be contacted, eg.
    - 'on call', 'sick children', phones need to be left at Reception where they will alert you as
    - necessary
- no eating or drinking is allowed in the lecture rooms - water is the exception;
- the student common area is available for breaks. Snack, drink and coffee machines are located in the area with the microwaves and a refrigerator for your use. Please keep the student common area neat and tidy for consideration of fellow students;
- you are required to assume responsibility for your property e.g. bag, books, mobile phones,

- personal clothing items etc. Items should be clearly marked for easy identification. Australian Skills Group accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen articles. This applies in all venues used for your program, both on and off site.

- It is essential you 'sign-in' and 'sign-out' each day.

11.8 Student Code of Conduct

ASG is committed to providing a fulfilling and rewarding learning experience that enables students to achieve their full potential. This commitment is underpinned by an expectation that all students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with ASG values and guiding principles to maintain our strong commitment to relevant and realistic training.

All students at enrolment must sign this document and accept their shared responsibility for maintaining a safe, harmonious and tolerant environment in which to study and work. ASG is committed to the pursuit of excellence in training.

This Code sets out the ASG expectations of students with respect to their training and personal conduct and outlines the ASG's responsibilities to students.

The codes primary objectives are:

- An obligation to act with integrity in academic work, to ensure that all training work is conducted ethically and safely;
- An obligation to observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of ASG and its students;
- An obligation to use and care for resources in a lawful and appropriate manner, and to not diminish ASG's reputation in the carrying out of training and other associated function activities and or related clients.

11.8.1 PART A: Student Obligations & Responsibilities

Students have an obligation to inform themselves of the ASG's rules and policies affecting them. Students must ensure their contact details in are up to date and that they regularly read the student notice board for information relating to ASG's activities.

Students are required to enter and exit the building and or classrooms as instructed by any member of ASG's staff and be aware that ASG is a live function and playhouse venue that regularly has existing and prospective clients as well as members of the public visiting the venue. In exercising their obligations, ASG students are expected to accept the following responsibilities to:

- Conduct themselves honestly and in compliance with ASG policy;
- Not engage in plagiarism or other training misconduct;
- Plagiarism is - inclusion of written material that is not your words. Using other peoples words in your assignments;
- Conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the proper functioning of the Institute, which is dedicated to the pursuit of training excellence;
- Actively participate in the learning process;
- Attend scheduled classes, training activities and submit assessment tasks on time, unless unforeseen or exceptional circumstances arise;
- Behave ethically, avoiding any action or behaviour that would unfairly disadvantage or
- Advantage either themselves or another student;
- Ensure their training activities are conducted safely and do not place others at risk of harm, including abiding by all ethics requirements in relation to the industry.
- Be familiar with the programs and resources available to assist them in conducting their
- studies and research appropriately;
- Not behave in any way which impairs the reasonable freedom of other persons to pursue their studies, work or research or to participate in the activities of the Institute.

Equity and respect

Students are expected to:

- Treat all ASG staff, other students, and visitors to the ASG with courtesy, tolerance and respect. This extends to staff in venues off-campus, supervisors and others involved in workplace placements;
- Respect the rights of others to be treated equitably, free from all forms of unlawful
  - discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment
- Respect the rights of others to express views and not engage in behaviour that is obscene, dangerous or could reasonably be considered to be offensive to others;
- Not engage in behaviour that is unlawful, discriminatory, harassing, or bullying;
- Not engage in behaviour that is perceived to be threatening or intimidating or causes any person to fear for their personal safety or well-being;

- Not behave in a way that disrupts or interferes with any formal or training activity of the
  - Institute or any event conducted by ASG.

ASG resources and reputation

Students are expected to:

- Use and care for all ASG's resources, such as buildings, equipment and grounds, information and communication technology resources, in a lawful and ethical manner, mindful of the need for resources to be shared by all members of the Institute;
- Ensure their actions or inactions as a student do not harm, or bring into disrepute, ASG's;
- reputation or good standing;
- Not engage in behaviour that is detrimental to ASG's property;
- Not participate in any college activity, while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs;
- Not use, possess or supply any prohibited drug, substance or weapon;
- Not misuse computing or communications facilities in a manner which is unlawful or which will be detrimental to the rights and properties of others.

11.8.2 PART B: ASG Responsibilities

Australian Skills Group acknowledge their obligations towards students and take responsibility for:

- Providing quality training and assessment services in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015;
- The issuance of all AQF certification and documentation within required timelines, where the student successfully completes or withdraws from their course unless fees are outstanding (– User Choice courses excepted);
- Providing a safe and healthy learning environment where the learning experiences will be challenging and stimulating;
- Employing highly skilled trainers that can deliver current industry skills and practices;
- Ensuring that students be treated with respect and courtesy by ASG staff and fellow students, in an environment free from harassment including that based on gender, ethnicity, age, disability or background;
- Ensuring that each learner is fully informed about what is expected of them in each area of study;

- The provision of fair, timely and useful feedback on a student's performance and progress;
- Encouraging students to have a say about the value, relevance and effectiveness of their academic programs and the teaching they experience;
- Informing students about how their views are taken into consideration in enhancing the teaching and content of programs;
- The provision of effective support from both academic and administration staff when needed;
- Providing the quality training facilities, equipment and resources necessary for the achievement of learning goals;
- Giving access to clear and direct administrative guidelines and procedures;
- Making available access to adequate procedures for dealing with grievances;
- The provision of all legal entitlements, in terms of confidentiality, processing and access to personal files;
- Maintaining the rights of the student as a consumer;
- Expect legal entitlements, in terms of confidentiality, processing and access to personal files.

11.8.3 PART C: ASG Misconduct Policy

CONSEQUENCES FOR MISCONDUCT

ASG‘s student code of conduct policy is used in conjunction with and related directly to ASG’s other policies. Copies of ASG’s policy documents are available on request from administration or the ASG website www.asg.edu.au

ASG policies and practices are designed in such a way that the students develop positive social values, resulting in appropriate quality behavior. The Student Code of Conduct Policy is informed by a commitment to strong principles and ethics which serves to reinforce and further the Institute’s brand and reputation.

The ASG aims to promote a sense of responsibility amongst its students and recognizes that mistakes will occur. Inappropriate behavior is not tolerated but students must also be permitted to repair harm caused by any such actions and they should have an opportunity for personal growth and be provided with strategies with which to deal with such situations in the future.
On the occasion that a student fails to meet ASG’s expectations this will inevitably result in consequences. Typically, consequences may range in severity depending on the nature of the behavior. Ongoing and repeated behaviors that cause concern to ASG will have a cumulative effect on the level of consequence that will be given.

Where continued inappropriate behavior occurs, suspensions or withdrawal may result. ASG reserves the right to refuse entry to ask to leave or reject any person that behaves in a manner that breaches policy.

ASG will exercise our lawful right without prejudice to call authorities and peruse action should it be deemed necessary.