

# ARETHUSA COLLEGE



## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

### *Student Handbook*

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# 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 Arethusa 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 VET Quality Manual outlining 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.

## **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.

Arethusa 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 in the QCAA Student Management Portal.

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, through the VET student handbook and on the RTO website.

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.

Arethusa 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 Finance Manager or delegate in accordance with the principles contained in the general fee policy of the college (not specific to VET).

## **6. Student services**

Arethusa College will establish the needs of their students, and deliver services to meet their individual needs where applicable. All students at this RTO will be involved 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
- Deputy Principal
- RTO Manager
- Heads of Sectors
- Trainers and Assessors
- Careers Counsellor
- Teachers
- Pathways Officers
- Educational Support Officers
- Social Workers
- Student Counsellors
- Youth Workers

## **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 or the Trainer and Assessor.

## **9. Access and equity policy and procedure**

The access and equity guidelines at Arethusa 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 sexuality, 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.

Arethusa College has written access and equity policy 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 policies.

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 sexuality, 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 planning 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 guidance will be provided to support a successful 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 delivery 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 Arethusa 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 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

A master record detailing students' achievement in units of competency is maintained at the RTO on the QCAA Student Management portal.

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.

## **12. Student access to accurate records policy and procedures**

Arethusa 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 will be encouraged to regularly access their online learning account. Students can also request this information through their Trainer and Assessor.

### **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 student's views are valued. Complaints arise when a student is dissatisfied with an aspect of the RTO's services, and requires action to be taken to resolve the matter. Appeals arise when a student is not satisfied with a decision that the RTO has made. Appeals can relate to assessment decisions, but they can also relate to other decisions. Students with either a complaint or an appeal will have access to a complaint and/or appeal process. All complaints or appeals will be heard and decided within 60 calendar days of receipt of the complaint by the RTO.

The RTO Manager will keep a Register of Complaints which documents all complaints and their resolution. Any substantiated complaints will be reviewed as part of the continuous improvement procedure.

## ***Complaint***

The initial stage of any complaint shall be for the complainant to communicate directly with the Trainer and Assessor OR Deputy Head of Pathways who will make a decision and record the outcome of the complaint.

Learners dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint to the Trainer and Assessor may then communicate the complaint to the Head of Pathways, who will make a decision in regards to proceeding with a complaint or appeal process.

Learners dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint may initiate an appeal' with the RTO Manager.

## ***Complaint or appeal***

All complaints will follow the below procedure:

- All complaints or appeals will be in writing addressed to the CEO/Executive Principal and submitted to the RTO Manager.
- On receipt of a complaint or appeal the RTO Manager shall reply in writing to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, then inform the CEO/Executive Principal.
- The RTO Manager and the CEO/Executive Principal will meet to discuss the complaint or appeal and either decide 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/Executive Principal, a member of staff and a representative of the School/Community.
- When a decision is reached this will be communicated in writing to the complainant/appellant within 60 calendar days of the complaint or appeal being received as well as being recorded on the Complaints and Appeals Register.
- If the decision will take longer than 60 calendar days the complainant/appellant 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/appellant 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 decide 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 Complaints and Appeals Register.

- If the complainant/appellant is still not satisfied, the CEO/Executive Principal will appoint an independent third party (outside the RTO) to mediate with costs being communicated to all parties prior to commencement.
- If the complainant/appellant is still not satisfied, the CEO/Executive Principal will refer them to the QCAA website for further information about making complaints.
- After the complaint or appeal 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). 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 or the Trainer and Assessor.

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 undertaken 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 or the Trainer and Assessor.

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 Data Capture Officer and the student and relevant Trainer and Assessor will be informed by the RTO Manager. In order to achieve this, the RTO Manager and Data Capture Officer 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. 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 Data Capture Officer 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 Data Administration Officer will update QCAA Student Management Portal accordingly.

When students have undertaken qualifications through other non-school RTOs credit transfer will be granted when the student provides the RTO Manager or Data Administration Officer with a copy of the Statement of Attainment or Record of Results. This will be recorded on QCAA Student Management Portal by the Data Administration Officer 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 within 20 days of completion.
- 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.
- 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 on 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 Data Administration Officer 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.
- 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.
- 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 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.