



Student Policies

RELEASE RECORD

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Company Overview

ACOD (Australasian College of Optical Dispensing) is a registered training organisation (RTO), specialising in the training of Optical Dispensers in Australia, through the successful delivery and assessment of the Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing. Our value proposition is to offer flexible, comprehensive courses to potential optical dispensers in Australia. The course will be offered in a blended delivery mode, with much of the theory being covered with online resources, whilst the practical components of the course will be covered and assessed in the ACOD training room. Another facet of ACOD will be to offer courses in business administration. These courses will be purely offered via their online medium.

Our key point of difference is our primary focus on delivering an exceptional experience for enterprises and students; leading to measurable, proven and sustainable return on investment. Our focus on participant experience strongly leverages our educational, student focused services.

Our purpose

ACOD's main purpose of operation is to provide quality, evidence based training courses in the optical dispensing and business sectors.

Our Vision

To be the leader in optical dispensing training in Australia and New Zealand.

Our Values

Commitment to Excellence: We provide exceptional programs with enthusiasm that aim to exceed Industry and student's expectations.

Code of Practice

Thank you for choosing ACOD as your training organisation. Our Code of Practice is an important document, outlining and summarising a range of ACOD policies and procedures. ACOD is committed to providing:

“quality outcomes to industry and individuals through education and related services”

To achieve this goal, ACOD is focused on the following goals:

- exceeding client expectations at every opportunity
- marketing only cost-effective, high quality products and services
- linking all services to business systems and individual needs
- investing in people in our, and other businesses
- supporting innovation, originality and efficient use of resources

Access & Equity Arrangements

ACOD is committed to complying with Commonwealth and State legislation and policies regarding access, equity and cultural diversity. ACOD strives to maximise opportunities for access, participation and outcomes for all clients within the vocational education, training and employment system. ACOD ensures the provision of access and equity services to clients as an integral part of all services and will undertake to identify and, where possible, remove barriers that prevent people from accessing and participating in our courses.

Enrolment & Induction Arrangements

An enrolment session is conducted with all participants, prior to enrolment, into a course by an ACOD Consultant. The purpose of your enrolment session is to deliver a quality client service and ensure that all information and your needs are determined before the commencement of the program. You will receive the following materials in this enrolment session:

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- Training and Assessment Plan
 - ACOD Code of Practice
 - Recognition Materials
 - Training Materials
 - Assessment Requirements

The ACOD Consultant completing the enrolment process will ensure all paperwork is completed, including the Negotiated Course Arrangements and training and assessment plan.

Guarantee

As a Registered Training Organisation, ACOD guarantees to complete training and / or assessment once the participant has commenced study in their chosen qualification or course. For any reason if services cannot be completed by ACOD, this guarantee includes the placement of the participant at another suitable RTO for completion.

User Choice Arrangements

As a Registered Training Organisation, ACOD is required to provide clients with a statement of their rights under User Choice. That is, that you and your Employer are able to negotiate a range of program services, including the:

- selection, content and sequencing of modules and/or units of competency;
- timing, location and mode of delivery;
- trainer/facilitator;
- conduct of assessments; and
- how the training is evaluated.

ACOD clearly outlines to our clients the options that are available, including information on any additional charges for customisation or additional training above that required for qualification outcome. When the training program outline

is being prepared for traineeships/apprenticeships, ACOD provides clients with a full list of elective options available for all stages within the course or Training package.

Training & Assessment Arrangements

Competency Based Training (CBT) and Assessment is a flexible form of training that aims to produce a workforce with the knowledge and skills which industry requires. Under CBT, we have competency standards. The concept of competency focuses on what is expected of an employee in the workplace rather than on the learning process, and embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments. Competency is a broad concept that includes all aspects of work performance and not only narrow task skills. Each unit of competency describes the work performed in the workplace. Clients undertaking training and assessment receive a competent result when successful workplace performance is demonstrated.

Clients may request access to personal records at any time. Requests to view personal records should be made in writing. ACOD management permit access to records only by clients, on request, and ACOD team.

Our team need to access your records to update planning of your training or assessment program, to record training undertaken and assessment outcomes, qualifications and related data, and to gather information for reporting purposes.

It is an assessment requirement that evidence submitted by participants in any assessment should be *copies only*, and that all participants should retain copies of all work.

ACOD accepts no loss, liability or responsibility for the loss of assessment work. Participants are also advised that ACOD does not return assessment work / portfolios submitted – samples of participant assessment work will be kept on file for audit purposes.

General assessment preference is to receive all assessment work clearly marked, handed to your assessor or via email as the ideal method – if in hard copy in unbound unit batches.

Fees and Refunds Arrangements

All fees and charges levied on clients enrolling in courses offered are clearly outlined to clients before they enrol, as are flexible payment plans available for training programs, and the cancellation/refund arrangements applicable.

ACOD guarantees that no additional charges will be imposed during the period covered by the course being undertaken.

Where fees are paid in advance of services rendered, clients are entitled to a 100% refund of course fees paid, if ACOD is notified before service delivery commences. ACOD guarantees to ensure that all fees paid in advance are maintained in cash assets until services are delivered, ensuring that refunds are available if required.

Refunds may also be sought and negotiated on an individual basis with ACOD, where delivery has commenced. In this instance a percentage of client fees will be refunded, dependent on the percentage of the service provided. Enrolment fees paid by clients for any program cover administrative components of service provision and are non-refundable.

All ACOD course fees are designed to minimise the impact of fees and charges on the client, through flexible payment plans, dependent on program type.

AQF Recognition Arrangements

ACOD recognises all Certificates and Statements of Attainment issued by any other registered training organisation as valid credentials. Your Qualification or Statement of Attainment issued by ACOD will be recognised Australia wide under these arrangements.

Recognition and Credit Transfer Arrangements

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) allows clients to receive recognition and credit for the knowledge and skills they have, no matter how and where they were attained, including overseas.

Credit transfer arrangements allow for clients to receive credit for units of competency they may have already completed. Credit transfer involves qualified consultants aligning units of competency already completed in previous credentials with qualifications currently being undertaken.

Please refer to our RPL Information Flyer for further information.

Client Welfare, Support, Safety and Special Needs

Arrangements

ACOD embraces the responsibility of ensuring that all clients are supported in acquiring the knowledge and skills sought through their training and assessment program.

All ACOD Consultants are aware of and know how to use available company or external resources, or be able to confidently refer clients to appropriate tutoring and community support services.

All clients with identified Literacy, Language & Numeracy, or other special needs, are encouraged to discuss their needs and customisation requirements with their Consultant, who may access extra support and modify course materials as appropriate.

Students under 18 years of age require the co-signature of a parent or guardian on the Training and Assessment plan commencement declaration, and the State Training Contract (if a traineeship).

Students under 18 years of age are encouraged to seek support from their Workplace supervisor, ACOD Learning & Development consultant or support services such as Kids Help Line Ph: 1800 55 1800, Life Line Ph: 131 114, Youth

Help Line Ph: 1300 13 17 19, should they, at anytime feel unsafe or uncomfortable in a given situation.

Program Evaluations

ACOD is committed to ensuring quality delivery and assessment of all training. The formal evaluation process is a major strategy in the continual improvement of all service provision. All program training and assessment services are evaluated on a periodical basis, with all participants receiving opportunities to complete questionnaires and provide feedback on ACOD's services.

Complaints Arrangements

At ACOD our clients and employees are the most important asset. Management sets direction and guidelines, yet the running of the company greatly depends on the contribution and feedback from staff and clients. In a positive and open environment, people feel they can contribute and grow, and this is the climate we strive to create at ACOD. Sometimes there are hurdles to overcome, but everything can be resolved as long as an intention exists to solve the matter in a positive fashion. The following problem resolution framework has therefore been implemented for all stakeholders raising a complaint, issue or disciplinary problem, with a desire to resolve matters as positive adults:

All employees and clients are invited to discuss matters with their first point of contact (consultant/supervisor) openly and positively.

If the complaint or issue cannot be resolved efficiently and professionally, the employee or client demonstrating positive intentions to solve the matter may contact ACOD Management directly to discuss options to resolve an issue.

During the course of the resolution, both parties may seek guidance and/or support from a peer, or trade association, union representative, New Apprenticeship Centre or State Training Authority.

All stages of problem resolution process must be documented using an Opportunity/Issue Report and notes provided to all parties involved, including the outcomes of the complaint/issue and reasons for the decisions made.

ACOD confirms its commitment to investigate and act on any complaint or issue raised, and also to take appropriate action in any case where complaints are substantiated.

Appeals

ACOD also provides clients with a formal appeals process, which draws on a commitment to all parties understanding their rights and responsibilities in the assessment process.

If you object to actions taken or decisions made by ACOD consultants in conducting assessment services, you have the right to lodge an appeal. You also have the right to lodge an appeal against competency decisions made if:

- you believe that the outcome is invalid
- you feel that the process was invalid, inappropriate or unfair

Before making a formal appeal, you are required to discuss the matter with the relevant consultant in an effort to reach an agreement. Your consultant will undertake to reassess the decision that has been made.

If you are still unhappy, you must lodge a formal appeal in writing to ACOD management.

Upon receiving a formal appeal, ACOD will appoint a third party consultant to try to resolve the issue. Any decision recommended by the third party is not binding to either party.

If you are still unhappy, ACOD will appoint another registered training organisation to review the appeal. This registered training organisation will:

- uphold the appeal
- reject the appeal

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- recommend further evidence gathering by either party

If you are still unhappy, you have a right of appeal to your relevant State Training Authority (STA) in each state and territory. All stages of the appeals process must be documented using an Opportunity/Issue Report and notes provided to all parties involved, including the outcomes of the appeal and reasons for the decisions made.

ACOD confirms its commitment to investigate and act on any appeal raised, and also to take appropriate action in any case where appeals are substantiated.

ACOD Alcohol and other Drug Awareness

ACOD is committed to supporting the prevention and minimisation of drug and alcohol problems in the community.

In line with this commitment, ACOD provides awareness through information and training to its employees and to participants on:

- provision of key contacts for information and advice on the above
- the impact on health, workplaces, resources, families and communities of drug and alcohol abuse
- strategies to assist people in minimisation of harm from drug and alcohol use and abuse
- provision of key contacts for information and advice on the above.

Comprehensive awareness and other information is also available at the Australia Government website:

www.australia.gov.au/drugs

ACOD Participant Privacy and Confidentiality

ACOD undertakes to comply with the Privacy Act 1998 and all information privacy principles in the provision of all services to clients.

Private and confidential information includes company documentation and operations, financial and payroll information and all client and company records.

All ACOD staff members undergo Privacy training as a component of the ACOD induction training and sign a declaration that they will keep and maintain all information private and confidential as appropriate within and external to ACOD premises. ACOD Privacy Protection Principles are:

Principle 1 - Collection

ACOD will only collect personal information that is necessary for one or more of its functions or activities. ACOD will only collect personal information by lawful and fair means and not in an unreasonably intrusive way.

ACOD Client Handbook will be used to disseminate information about Personal Information and Privacy to all clients.

Principle 2 - Use & Disclosure

ACOD will only use or disclose personal information about an individual when the individual has consented to the use or disclosure

Principle 3 - Data Quality

ACOD will take reasonable steps to make sure that the personal information it collects, uses or discloses is accurate, complete and up-to-date.

Principle 4 - Data Security

ACOD will take reasonable steps to protect the personal information it holds from misuse and loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

ACOD will take reasonable steps to destroy or permanently de-identify personal information if it is no longer needed for any purpose for which the information may be used.

Principle 5 - Openness

ACOD, through its client handbook, clearly expresses information to clients on its management of personal information. On request by an individual, ACOD will take reasonable steps to let the individual know, generally, what sort of personal

information it holds, for what purposes, and how it collects, uses, and discloses that information.

Principle 6 - Access and Correction

Personal information held by ACOD about an individual, will be provided to the individual on request by the individual, in a form or manner suitable to the individual's reasonable needs.

Principle 7 - Identifiers

ACOD will not adopt as its own identifier of an individual, an identifier of the individual that has been assigned by any other organisation or service provider.

Principle 8 – Anonymity

It is not legal or practicable for ACOD to provide any type of program or services without requiring client identification.

Principle 9 - Transborder Data Flows

ACOD will not transfer personal information about an individual to any other location other than ACOD company offices.

Principle 10 - Sensitive Information

ACOD will not collect Sensitive Information about an individual unless:

- i. the individual has consented; or
- ii. the collection is required by law.

Principle 11 - Privacy of Network Communications

When installing, operating, or maintaining its computer network, ACOD will take whatever measures are practicable, or are required by law, to ensure the privacy of communications passing over its network.

Principle 12 - New Services and Developments

ACOD will consider the privacy impact of new business processes and services before they are introduced.

Principle 13 - Compliance Audit

As part of its continuous improvement process, ACOD will maintain an internal audit program to ensure its Privacy Protection Principles and policies remain appropriate and that ACOD operates in compliance with those Principles and policies.

Client Evidence Collection – Privacy

As a registered training organisation, ACOD needs to sight and collect a range of evidence in order to deem candidates competent in their courses. In some cases, this requires the sighting of confidential client information / details / records / processes in order to confirm competency.

While ACOD is bound by the Privacy Act, and all records are secure and confidential, wherever possible, ACOD will utilise non confidential forms of evidence for assessment purposes, or will request ‘mock’ or ‘example’ documentation, rather than actual client information.

If there are Privacy concerns for your client’s information or records, you should discuss these concerns with your ACOD consultant and identify alternative sources of evidence to complete your course program.

Employability Skills Summaries

ACOD students and employers should be advised that *Employability Skills Summaries* for training package qualifications delivered by ACOD can be downloaded from <http://employabilityskills.training.com.au>

Further Information

ACOD: 0416 095 263

ASQA 1300 701 801

www.asqa.gov.au

www.training.gov.au

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

The following Policies and Procedures with regard to health, safety and the environment apply to all ACOD training personnel and students engaged in training activities of the designated site.

Duty of care

Duty of care is a legal responsibility, requiring all training personnel and students to act responsibly and work in accordance with the safety requirements set by regulations and by ACOD. All staff and students must take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others and cooperate with designated site training personnel in their efforts to comply with health and safety requirements. All related accidents and injuries must be reported to the manager or designated site manager immediately.

ACOD's operations and services comply with all legislative requirements and the organisation strives to continuously improve WH & S performance on an ongoing basis. ACOD's responsibility to all training personnel and students is to:

1. Provide a safe and well maintained work area;
2. Implement new WH & S requirements when introduced as well as monitoring and improving existing procedures; and
3. Provide effective support and rehabilitation for staff who are injured whilst at work.

ACOD staff should ensure:

- Work and training areas are clean, tidy and free of obstruction at all times; and
- Centre WH & S Policy is adhered to.

Policy

ACOD supports and undertakes to comply with relevant Workplace Health and Safety Legislation and as such designated sites must have a Workplace Health and Safety Policy. ACOD management and all training personnel take responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work and training environment and will ensure that business is conducted in an environmentally

sound manner. In implementing the Code of Practice detailed in the Work Health and Safety Act, designated sites will take all reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of staff and students at each site.

ACOD supports a specific preventive strategy for control of health and safety issues in the workplace comprising:

- Detection and assessment of problems through training personnel and team meetings; and
- Monitoring the effectiveness of changes implemented.

In fulfilling the objectives of this Policy, management is committed to regular consultation with staff and students to ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly along with health and safety issues.

A summary of the relevant Worker's Compensation Act will be displayed in the designated site and will contain the designated site's details, including the name and address of the designated site's insurer and the details of the rehabilitation policy. ACOD training personnel will be made aware of their responsibility to comply with Work Health and Safety Standards, regulations and relevant Codes of Practice through induction and ongoing training.

Emergency/Evacuation Procedures

Students will be made aware of all emergency and evacuation procedures at the first training session.

Anti-discrimination Policy

ACOD strives to abide by all Commonwealth and State legislation regarding Harassment, Anti-discrimination, Victimisation and bullying in the workplace, including the Disability Education Standards (2005). Harassment consists of any unwanted and unsolicited words or actions, which cause any form of offence, embarrassment or discomfort to others, and also include implications or threats of embarrassing offensive words or actions. Harassment may be physical, sexual, emotional, intellectual or financial, but whatever its nature or origin and no matter who the perpetrators/s or victim/s may be, it will not under any circumstances be tolerated within ACOD.

ACOD fully and actively supports the rights of all personnel and students to work and train in an environment free from harassment. All forms of discrimination and sexual harassment are considered to be totally unacceptable.

ACOD is committed to the principles and requirements of the Equal Opportunity Act and the Sex Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) and to ensuring that any and all matters relating to harassment are dealt with speedily, sensitively, equitably, confidentially and according to proper process. ACOD affirms the importance and contribution of a harassment free environment to effective work and training. It also acknowledges the detrimental effect such harassment can have on a person's physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing.

Physical Harassment

Physical harassment may be defined as any form of touching, cuddling, fondling, kissing, pushing, tugging, hitting, kicking or any other form of physical contact which is unwanted, unwelcome, unsolicited and causes any form of pain, discomfort or embarrassment to the person receiving the physical contact.

Whilst some people may welcome some such forms of attention, it should be realized that not all people do so and to impose your desire to touch or be touched upon others is wrong. No matter how innocent or well intended your physical contact with others may be, if it is unwelcome then it is harassment. It may also be interpreted as sexual harassment or assault and the victim would be entitled to take appropriate legal action. The golden rule is, if in doubt, DON'T.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may be defined as any form of contact of a sexually explicit or suggestive nature, especially where such contact occurs in the regions of genital, buttocks, thighs, breasts or anywhere considered to be a 'private area'. It also includes exhibitionism, (such as 'flashing' or displaying oneself) requests for sexually explicit or suggestive acts or favours and displays of sexually explicit or suggestive material, (such as 'pin-ups' – any or all which may cause any form of discomfort or embarrassment to any other person or people). It also includes sexually explicit or implicit language and jokes, and displays of sexually explicit or implicit photographs and /or writings.

It is totally irrelevant whether or not the perpetrator/s of such harassment is/are of the same sex as the victim/s and is especially objectionable if performed accompanied by threats, bribes or inducements.

The administration of alcohol or any other drug accompanied by any other form of duress including offers or advancement or promotion or threats being excluded from advancement of promotions.

Emotional Harassment

Emotional harassment may possibly also be broadly defined or referred to as 'Emotional Blackmail'. It usually takes the form of statements such as "if you really liked me you wouldn't..." or "If you really cared you'd...". These issues have no place within the work environment.

Intellectual Harassment

Intellectual harassment is probably the least easy to define, yet is probably one of the most prevalent forms of harassment in force. Broadly speaking it occurs whenever anyone says something like “You Idiot” or “ You fool, don’t you know anything?” etc. It is also prevalent among people who wish to justify an action or a mode of dress with “...but everyone’s... (wearing it or doing it)”. It also occurs in its most insidious form when people challenge other people’s religious convictions and lure, cajole or coerce them into joining religious groups which are far removed from whatever established principles are already in force. In common terminology, it’s ‘the put down’, but however it is regarded, it is a challenge to one self-esteem or self worth.

Financial Harassment

Financial harassment occurs when someone has pressure put upon them to feel obliged to commit themselves to part with money when they cannot afford to, or do not wish to do so. It can take the form of pressure to join a club, buy a raffle ticket to support a cause or an organization, join a religious group, commit a percentage of ones income to something, make a bet or any number of other things. It is usually accompanied by some other form of harassment such as emotional or intellectual harassment and is probably all the more insidious for this. Everyone has the right to control their own finances as much as any other aspect of their lives, and this form of harassment will be tolerated no more than any other.

Discrimination, Victimisation and Bullying

Discrimination consists of any form of bestowing or withholding of any form of employment, service or favours on the grounds of a person’s gender, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, family commitments, (such as caring for children who are ill or have form of disability etc.), age, social status, sexual orientation or preferences, race, colour, religion, stature, (e.g. Unusually tall, short, obese, thin, stooped etc.) or any form of disability, except where such difference would constitute a normal part of their employment. For example, it

could include people in wheelchairs not being able to perform rescue or firefighting tasks, or profoundly deaf people not being able to answer phones etc. Victimisation and bullying includes any of the harassment or abusive situations as described above. ACOD will not tolerate discrimination, victimization or bullying in any form.

Problem Resolution

Disciplinary action will be taken against any person who displays sexual harassment against any individual. Discipline may involve a warning, counseling, demotion or dismissal depending on the circumstances.

ACOD recognises that:

- It is the responsibility of the CEO, in cooperation with Management and personnel, to take all reasonable steps to ensure personnel and students are not subject to harassment;
- A safe and respectful environment encompasses principles and practices of both mutual care and a taking of responsibility for supporting individuals within the organisation;
- For policies on harassment to be effective, they must be properly made known to all members of the organisation together with the processes and procedures involved in implementation of policies;
- It is the right of personnel and Students to utilise diverse structures including, for example, Equal Opportunities, Commission, Unions, etc.

Even though the CEO, Management and personnel will make every effort to prevent harassment, incidents may occur which require action in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in this document.

Principles in dealing with cases of harassment:

- Rapid response;
- Assurance of confidentiality for all parties;
- Encouragement of and assistance in a self-help approach to resolution while ensuring that all avenues of action are made accessible;
- Empowerment of a person who has been subject to harassment;
- Respectful dealing of both complainant and respondent;

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- An emphasis on an educative, non-punitive approach;
 - Provision of information to all parties in relation to their rights and obligations;
 - Established processes for resolving the incident;
 - Monitoring of any resolution agreement to ensure that: the complainant is not further disadvantaged; and
 - Assurance that the respondent has been respectfully and justly dealt with.
 - Both parties have civil rights of appeal to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

In the case of dismissal personnel or students may choose to utilise wrongful dismissal proceedings.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs Policy

The use of any and all banned substances within ACOD offices is strictly prohibited. We enforce a strict drug free environment at all times. The use of drugs can create unnecessary risks and creates a threat to fellow employees. It is impossible for an employee to carry out the position of their job responsibly and safely whilst under the influence of drugs.

Any employee using drugs can cause serious damage to the companies' reputation and perception in the marketplace and industry. Any use of drugs whilst at work or acting as a representative of ACOD will not be tolerated.

It is therefore strictly prohibited to manufacture, distribute, possess, sell or use a controlled substance at ACOD, or whilst employed by or representing the company on or off the premises. Any offence may result in immediate dismissal and may lead to possible prosecution.

ACOD is a non-smoking environment. Smoking in any form is strictly prohibited on the premises. Smokers will be asked to take any breaks off the premises. This policy is to protect the health and safety of all employees at ACOD.

It is a policy of ACOD that alcohol is not to be consumed on the premises unless you are attending an official function where drinks have been supplied. Alcohol may seriously affect an employee's performance and therefore it is company policy that no employees consume alcohol during work hours.

Being in the workplace whilst under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs may be cause for disciplinary action and in some cases termination.

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Privacy relates to many areas including the right not to be observed, listened to or reported upon without consent and not to be the focus of uninvited public attention. Privacy can be applied to the physical environment and possessions, physical and bodily needs, personal relationships and personal information and needs.

Confidential information is collected as part of the assessment process. In assessing customer needs and agreeing on services, information is gained about health, families and other social relationships, personal interests, skills and behaviour patterns and financial affairs.

Information relating to staff including their skills, work history, and police record is collected.

Confidentiality relates specifically to the protection of information concerning customers, staff and the organisation.

- Management will ensure that processes are in place to ensure that customer; staff and organisation information remains confidential and secure.
- Management will, as part of the induction process, ensure that staff are trained appropriately.
- Customers and staff have the right to request access to their records.
- An individual has the right to request their health information be made available to another health service provider.
- Staff will follow the protocols relating to the disclosure and distribution of personal information and accessing of personal records.
- Staff who infringe this policy will proceed to disciplinary procedures.
- Personal information is maintained accurately and is up-to-date.

Procedure

- Customers and staff are informed of their right to confidentiality and how confidentiality is observed.

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- Customers are requested to sign a Consent Form, which specifies that they understand that information is to be shared with other service providers.
 - The Privacy and Confidentiality policy of the organisation, including access to health information will be made available to anyone who may request it.
 - Information is not released to any third party without the consent of the customer. Any information regarding customers is released only to those who have a legitimate interest or need for the information as part of their role in service provision.
 - Only information relevant to service provision will be sought.

Security

- Customer and staff records are stored in a locked secure cabinet with restricted access.
- Access to electronic records relating to customers and staff is controlled and restricted by password and the IT systems manager. Authorisation is granted on a 'needs to know basis'.
- All working notes pertaining to customers that do not need to be kept permanently are shredded.
- Notes recorded on the computer are protected by a password and are subject to the same requirements as written notes. Screens in public access areas are turned away so they are difficult to read and screen savers are implemented.
- Internet access is restricted to organisation business only. No organisation, customer or staff information is to be released without the express permission of the Chief Executive Officer.
- The transference of data via email or fax is secured by minimising the data communicated. The data will be accompanied by identification of the communication source and its authenticity, and a clear confidentiality statement to the recipient in relation to the data and its source.
- Records taken out of the organisation for workplace visits, will at all times be secured in a locked bag, and kept from public view.
- Archiving of electronic and hard copy files will be facilitated in accordance with the Health Privacy Principles

Responsibilities

Staff will ensure that confidentiality is observed in work practice at all times. All staff who handle files are responsible for ensuring that the files are properly stored and that no file containing confidential information is left where there is unrestricted access. The Privacy Officer will ensure that the organisation complies with National Privacy Principles and Guidelines.

References

The Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)

Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)

Commonwealth Privacy Act 1998

Freedom of Information Act 1082

Problem Resolution Policy

ACOD is committed to prompt and fair resolution of all disputes of any nature, which may arise in the workplace. This policy governs all aspects of employment dispute resolution, including all legal claims that the employee may have against the company, up to and including discharge, and any claims of discrimination based upon race, color, sex, disability, religion, national origin, age or any other protected attribute, or any claims arising under any federal, state, local law or any common law. This dispute resolution procedure is a condition of employment with ACOD.

Employees should promptly discuss any problems or concerns that are related to their work in any way with their immediate supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is the cause of the problem or if the employee feels uncomfortable discussing the matter with the supervisor, issues may be raised initially with the CEO. Whenever issues are raised, both the company and the employee will undertake make a good faith effort to resolve the matter by openly discussing the matter and attempting to reach a resolution. If resolution is not achieved, the issue may be referred to the President who will conduct such investigation, as she deems appropriate and meet with the employee in a sincere effort to discuss, analyze and resolve the matter. If a mutual resolution is not reached, the President may issue a determination on the issue, which shall be final unless the employee invokes mediation under this procedure.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the President's decision and the claim involves a material aspect of the employment or an allegation of violation of any law, the employee can request that the matter be submitted to mediation. The parties shall jointly designate a mediator, or if the parties cannot agree, the employer can request that a mediator be designated from any one of three or more certified mediation organizations located in the metropolitan area that the employee designates. The cost of the mediation shall be borne equally by the company and the employee, unless the parties agree otherwise. The company and the

employer are obligated to make a good faith effort to resolve the issue through mediation.

If the matter is not resolved in mediation, either party may request that the matter be referred to arbitration by making a written request of the other party within sixty days of the conclusion of mediation. If the parties do not mutually designate an arbitrator, one will be selected under the rules and regulations of the American Arbitration Association for the arbitration of employment disputes. Upon the employee's request, an arbitration hearing will be held under Arbitration rules. The decision of the Arbitrator will be final and binding upon both parties. Any court having jurisdiction may enter judgment upon the arbitration award. The cost of the arbitration will be borne equally by the parties, unless otherwise directed by the arbitrator in the award.

Customer Services Standards

ACOD training and assessment services will meet strict customer service standards to maintain compliance with VET Quality Framework requirements and to maintain an exceptional standard of customer service. The following customer service standards will be followed in the delivery and assessment of both accredited and non-accredited training programs:

Australian Apprenticeship Centre (ACC) Liaison

ACOD will advise selected ACC's within ten (10) working days of first contact with an employer that a training contract needs to be completed.

Training Plan

1. ACOD will contact the employer and participant customers within ten (10) working days of receiving notice of a training contract being in place.
2. A training plan will be devised for each customer and qualification being undertaken, prior to the commencement of the delivery of structured training and assessment.
3. When the training plan is being prepared, customers will be provided with a full list of elective options available for all stages of the qualification.
4. The training plan will be reviewed with the participant periodically to ensure its continuing relevance to the needs of the participant.
5. In the first month of the program, jointly with the employer if applicable, trainers will develop and record on the training plan a preliminary training and assessment schedule.
6. Trainers will facilitate increased customer (& employer) responsibility for quality outcomes by developing and documenting an initial training and assessment plan with the customer (& employers).

Training and Assessment Delivery

- Provide the participant with initial course materials and documentation within ten (10) working days of signing the training plan.
- Deliver the training and assessment services in accordance with the training plan through the appropriate mode as identified in that plan.
- Where applicable, assist employers to access appropriate materials to record achievements of the participant in the workplace.
- Monitor the programs of the participant throughout the program including assessing the needs of the participant for additional support. For example, the need for any additional literacy, numeracy, or study skills support, and how this will be provided.
- Review progress of the participant at regular intervals, including at commencement and at least once more before completion of any program or calendar year.
- Provide additional support or apply for tutorial support funding if necessary.
- All ACOD training and assessment services will be conducted in a safe and accessible environment.
- If at any stage prior to commencing delivery of the structural training and assessment, ACOD is unable to deliver the structured training and assessment identified in the training plan, it will;
- Assist the customer to identify an alternative RTO
- Manage the transfer of that customer to the new RTO with all appropriate records
- In accordance with the fees and charges policy, refund any fees paid
- In the case of customers under a training contract, notify the relevant STA that it will no longer be providing training relating to that particular qualification outcome and provide information showing which customers have been transferred to other RTO's.
- Ensure that trainees are provided with access to structured training and assessment for a minimum of three (3) hours per week averaged over three (3) months, where applicable.

Amendments to the Training Plan

- ACOD routinely negotiates amendments to the Training and Assessment Plan approach with all customers. Where major amendments occur (e.g. delivery mode / change of unit selection):
- An amended training plan is prepared in negotiation with the customer and
- All parties' sign off a new declaration on the amended training plan to confirm agreement.

Distance and Online Delivery Methods

ACOD provides a structured framework and learning pathways for participants involved in distance, self-paced and online delivery methods. A turn-a-round policy of 'within 24 hours' is in place for all customer queries, whether verbal or written format, will all staff striving to meet this target.

An assessment turn-a-round policy of 'within 14 days' is also in place for the assessment and return of assignments, recognition portfolios and other client documentation, to ensure that customers receive accurate and timely information and feedback as they complete their course. All ACOD distance learners have access to email and phone contact with facilitators, and structured discussion board areas, with which to meet and discuss course materials and issues with trainers and other customers.

Communications with State Training Authorities and ASQA

ACOD management maintains communications with ASQA on an ongoing basis for all RTO changes including key management changes. ACOD management in each region maintain communication with state training authorities to maintain accurate management contact and other details. ACOD maintains appropriate contact and advice to state training authorities in various jurisdictions on all traineeship and apprenticeship information. This includes;

- Use of STA website data systems and reporting,
- Submission of training plans and other documentation as required in particular jurisdictions,

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- Advice and reporting on traineeship issues and employer issues as these arise, and
 - Immediate notification of critical events, including notification of the death of a trainee.

ACOD CEO ensures that ACOD complies with the VET quality framework and ASQA standards. This applies to all of the operations within ACOD's scope of registration, as listed on the national register. ACOD co-operates with the national VET regulator:

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

Reporting of Traineeship / Employer Issues

Each state jurisdiction has a requirement for the reporting of traineeship / trainee employer issues in cases where issues are hampering the effective implementation of the traineeship program. Minimum compliance requirements include availability for onsite visits at least quarterly, provision of release time for study and support for on-the-job training. Where an employer/traineeship process is in danger of breach of a minimum compliance requirement, ACOD staff;

1. Must support the trainee and employer to understand their obligations,
2. Must undertake and document numerous support actions as appropriate to ensure that the compliance requirement is met, and
3. Must communicate with ACOD management any issues and concerns

Immediately once an employer / traineeship process has experienced a breach of a minimum compliance requirement, ACOD staff,

- Must advise the trainee and employer that the compliance requirements are not being met; and

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- Must communicate with ACOD management of the compliance breach, for immediate reporting to the relevant state training authority for action as per the relevant process in each jurisdiction.

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

Evidence

Evidence must be matched with the performance criteria outlined in each element within a unit of competency in a Training Package or the module learning outcomes of a Training Program.

Some examples of evidence may include:

- Current Certificates or Academic Transcripts;
- Current peer assessment/outline of skills;
- Documentation of training courses or seminars attended;
- A Video demonstration of competency;
- A lesson/ session plan;
- Course or training program developed;
- Peer evaluations or statements;
- Examples of material produced relevant to competencies;
- Examples of material produced as a part of life experience; and
- Completed appropriate RPL assessment tool.

Steps involved with RPL

Group or Individual session - Confirm the requirements for addressing the performance criteria or meeting learning outcomes. Students will be informed of:

- Application procedures;
- Process;
- Time lines;
- Support available; and
- Complaints & Appeals Procedure.

Students must compile a portfolio of materials (self-assessment) that contains written evidence which must be:

- Valid;
- Authentic;
- Sufficient;

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- Current; and
 - Reliable.

Verbal evidence will also be sought. Interviews - The Assessor will evaluate the Portfolio of Evidence supplied by the student. An interview will then be held to further evaluate the student's level of competency through their demonstrated skills. Following are the possible outcomes resulting from an evaluation of the Student's Portfolio of Evidence:

- Status granted;
- Attend selected and/or agreed training sessions as defined by a Skills Development Strategy designed in accordance with the Student's specific needs;
- Unit of Competency achieved; or
- Issuance of Qualifications or Statements of Attainment.

Feedback will be provided to the student in a timely manner concerning the outcome of the assessment of their application for RPL.

Certificates - When a student has successfully demonstrated competence the student will be deemed competent in the required Units of Competency.

Certification includes:

- A Statement of Attainment – Formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO that a person has achieved part of an AQF qualification; or one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed Training Package; or
- A Qualification – Formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO that a person has satisfied all requirements of the units of competency that comprise an AQF qualification.

Once a Student has been recognised as competent, the trainer must submit:

- A signed copy of their Record of Competency; and
- A Notification of Eligibility for a Qualification Form.

Complaints and Appeals Policy

This policy applies to complaints generated by learners or customers of ACOD. A complaint may be about anything done, or not done (including assessment), by management, personnel or other students of ACOD, which the complainant feels has been unfair or unjust. The complaint may also be about but not limited to, discrimination, harassment, or any other decision or behaviour, which is thought to be unfair, unjust or upsetting.

Policy

ACOD has a positive attitude towards complaints. Complaints give us the opportunity to develop the quality of our services and accordingly, ACOD Complaints Policy complies with the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2015. Students are encouraged to complain when they are dissatisfied and/or would like to see further improvement in training and service delivery.

A complaint may be lodged in person or by telephone, electronically or by letter. A verbal complaint may subsequently need to be made in writing to enable a full investigation. Those with special needs, such as people with limited English language or literacy skills and those with a disability will not be disadvantaged in the complaints process. The complaints process will be free of charge.

Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the outcome of the complaints will be recorded and registered in the complaints register. Complaints will be acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable. ACOD aim to resolve all complaints within 30 days. If the complaint or appeal requires more than 30 calendar days to process and finalise ACOD will;

- Inform the complainant or appellant in writing, including reasons why more than 30 calendar days are required and
 - Regularly update the complainant or appellant on the progress of the matter
- Complaints will be used to inform ACOD's continuous improvement processes.

Principles

The following principles underpin the process for responding to complaints about VET quality.

- Principle 1 – Equitable: Complaints are considered in a transparent, objective and unbiased manner. The complaints-handling process incorporates the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- Principle 2 – Accessible: Information about the complaints-handling process and the means to lodge a complaint is readily accessible and available on ASQA website www.asqa.gov.au
- Principle 3 – Comprehensive: The relevant circumstances and information surrounding a complaint are investigated to the level warranted by the severity of the complaint.
- Principle 4 – Responsive: Timeframes for investigating and resolving complaints will be set and monitored.
- Principle 5 – Accountable: There is appropriate national monitoring of complaints through regular reporting of complaints received and actions taken. The complaints-handling process is reviewed regularly.
- Principle 6 – Confidential: Confidentiality is maintained and anonymity preserved where requested. Complainants will be informed where this may limit the extent to which a complaint can be investigated.

Procedure

All personnel will be equipped to respond to complaints constructively. The process for making a complaint is simple and usually involves:

- Talking to a trainer or assessor;
- Talking to the manager;
- Writing a letter; and/or
- Providing feedback on an evaluation form.

Appeal Process

If a person making a complaint is unsatisfied with the response from the ACOD trainer they may approach ACOD management with the written complaint for

advice as to an appropriate way forward. The CEO or delegate of ACOD will advise whether it would be appropriate for ACOD to take any action or whether the complaint should be referred to a relevant external body – e.g. the Ombudsman, a professional body such as the Australian Association of Social Workers or the Anti-Discrimination Board.

Steps to Complain

- Approach the person concerned
- Make every attempt to solve the problem with the person involved. If the matter remains unresolved,
- Approach the ACOD manager

The ACOD manager is responsible for investigating a complaint or appeal and recommending the appropriate response or action. If the complaint is about a specific individual, the ACOD manager's response will include:

1. Informing the person about whom the complaint is made and seeking their views and perspective;
2. Giving consideration to the use of a mediator; and
3. Informing the complainant/appellant of the outcome of the complaint in a timely manner.

ACOD will conduct separate interviews with both the person making the complaint and the person the complaint is about.

The manager will investigate the matter, which will include an opportunity for the student to personally address the problem and report back to the student in a timely manner. Each complaint or appeal and its outcome will be recorded in writing and registered. Regardless of the outcome, all parties are to be notified of the outcome within 30 days.

Mediation

A mediator can be provided by the Australian Mediation Association. ACOD agrees to pay the cost of one mediation session of up to two hours. Should the

matter require further mediation, it will be at the cost of the complainant or appellant.

If agreement is not reached you may:

- Refer your complaint to the Ombudsman in your State or Territory:

ACT: www.ombudsman.act.gov.au

NSW: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

NT: www.omb-hcsc.nt.gov.au

TAS: www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au

WA: www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au

QLD: www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au

VIC: www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au

SA: www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au

Alternatively, the complainant or appellant can refer the matter to ASQA www.asqa.gov.au. The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector. ASQA regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.

Student Refund Policy

ACOD offer fair and reasonable refund arrangements for all students undertaking training in the organisation.

The following procedure applies where students are undertaking assessment for a qualification:

- Conduct information interview with assessor, group orientation or online.
- Complete application form for enrolment.
- Fee is paid and student issued with a date stamped receipt as proof of receipt of monies.
- If withdrawing from the process a refund less 10% administration fee will be given up to two weeks after receipt of payment. All material issued must be returned.
- A time log will be kept for each student.
- If a student should withdraw from the training course under special circumstances, a partial or full refund may be made, based on notice given and costs already incurred by ACOD.
- Should a student be asked to withdraw from the training program a partial or full refund may be made, based on notice given and costs already incurred by ACOD.

Communication Policy

Relevant Standards: Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
2015: Standard 5.4

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are notified in the case of the ACOD or a Partner ceasing to operate, in accordance with Standard 5.4. The policy applies to the ACOD, Delivery Partners and all students who may be affected.

Responsibility

- The Director of Education is responsible for this policy.
- The Education Program Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy and is responsible for the day-to-day management of this policy.
- The Education Compliance Manager is responsible for the maintenance of this policy.

Policy

Standard 5.4 states:

Where there are any changes to agreed services, the RTO advises the learner as soon as practicable, including in relation to any new third party arrangements or a change in ownership or changes to existing third party arrangements.

If ACOD and / or its Partner organisation ceases operations or no longer delivers any part of the agreed training program, ACOD and its Partner organisation will support students by sourcing another training provider suitably placed to deliver the program and easily accessible by you. If a suitable provider cannot be sourced and the training program transferred, a refund for the training which has not been delivered will be provided. All parties will be notified within 30 days of the

change taking place. As documented in the Student Handbook under Program Guarantee and in the Refund Policy.

In the event where ACOD and / or its Partner organisation are unable to provide students with continued training, ACOD's partner (whom student payment was made to) will provide a refund for training, which has not been delivered. ACOD will make every effort to place students with another partner and / or organisation to complete their training.

Procedures

Significant changes affecting the operations and/or agreements between ACOD and its partners, the regulators and students currently engaged in the program will be advised in writing within 30 days of the change taking place. The changes include, but are not limited to:

- Changes to Partnering arrangements; they have commenced or ceased.
- Changes to ownership
- Cessation of operations
- Other changes which will affect course delivery.

If ACOD and / or its Partner organisation ceases operations or no longer delivers any part of the agreed training program, ACOD and / or its Partner organisation will support you by sourcing another training provider suitably placed to deliver the program and easily accessible by you. If a suitable provider cannot be sourced and the training program transferred, a refund for the training which has not been delivered will be provided.

Plagiarism Policy

ACOD is committed to academic integrity and to proactively educating and supporting students to prevent breaches of academic integrity from occurring. Breaches of academic integrity will be dealt with severely.

Plagiarism is a serious matter under ACOD Discipline Regulations. This Policy addresses student related considerations of plagiarism and details identification, classification, reporting, record keeping and the appeals process. It also includes information and advice to students regarding the detection and avoidance of plagiarism.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity requires a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (Center for Academic Integrity, 1999) in all aspects of academic work.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct, whether inadvertent or deliberate, includes the failure to comply with the Regulations, policies and procedures determining the conduct of candidates during assessment including plagiarism and cheating; falsification or misrepresentation of academic records; and other actions that are judged to be acts of academic misconduct

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a specific form of academic misconduct relating to the unacknowledged use of someone else's work in a piece of assessment

Process Overview

- A member of teaching staff who becomes aware that a student may have breached academic integrity by plagiarising must decide whether to pursue the allegation based on an informed and comprehensive review of the available evidence.
- If the above review supports the possibility of a breach of academic integrity, the member of teaching staff is to discuss their concerns with who will

investigate the student's academic history (including academic performance and previous incidences of plagiarism recorded in the student's Faculty and Student 1 files).

- If the MD agrees that there may be a breach of academic integrity, the member of teaching staff will meet with the student to discuss the allegation.
- If the member of teaching staff is satisfied that the incident is an outcome of poor scholarship, the member of teaching staff will report this to the MD and the member of teaching staff will decide on the appropriate response according to the Guidelines attached to this Policy.
- If the member of teaching staff remains concerned that a breach of academic integrity has occurred, the member of teaching staff will collate all relevant evidence and submit a report to the Faculty MD. If the MD determines that a charge of academic misconduct should be made against the student, the student will be given formal notification of the allegations and charge.
- The Faculty Discipline Committee will hear the charge and will, via the MD, recommend to the Executive Dean of Faculty a penalty or recommend referral to ACOD Disciplinary Board.

Notice of a Charge of Academic Misconduct

The notice of the charge of academic misconduct must include: the subject or award in which the misconduct is alleged to have occurred; the applicable definition of misconduct in Schedule B - Student Code of Conduct which applies; a copy of the relevant Regulations; a brief outline of the alleged facts; who will be determining the case; and details of where and when the case will be heard. It is important that the student is fully aware of the allegations so that they can prepare for the hearing.

The Discipline Regulations stipulate the time limits within which the student must be notified of a charge and when the case must be decided. Time limits must be observed. The student must be given a reasonable opportunity to appear before the Committee.

Faculty Discipline Committee Hearing

The Faculty Discipline Committee will review all of the available evidence, will seek an interview with the student and, at its discretion, interview others who may have information relating to the case. Another person not being a legal representative may accompany the student. The Faculty Discipline Committee will make a recommendation to the Faculty Decision-maker on findings of fact and in relation to which penalty, if any, should apply.

Faculty Decision

The Faculty Decision-maker will consider the Faculty Discipline Committee recommendation and determine whether the student has committed academic misconduct. If the student is found to have committed academic misconduct, the Decision-maker will also decide, in accordance with Clause 12 of the Discipline Regulations, the penalty which shall apply. The decision and penalty must be notified to the student in writing and include information on the student's right of appeal.

Record keeping.

The Faculty will complete and centrally record all documentation as set out in the Plagiarism Guidelines.

Appeals

The student may appeal a decision regarding the finding of academic misconduct and/or the penalty imposed. Appeals arising from a decision by the Faculty Decision-maker are heard by ACOD Disciplinary Board in accordance with the ACOD Discipline Regulations. Appeals arising from decisions of ACOD Disciplinary Board are heard by ACOD Discipline Appeals Committee in accordance with the ACOD Discipline Regulations.

HOW PLAGIARISM IS DETECTED

Teaching staff manually verifying the originality of work submitted for assessment has traditionally detected plagiarism. This can arise through the detailed knowledge by teaching staff of the subject and related literature. Cases can also

be detected through other means such as unexpected increases in grades achieved by the student and inconsistencies in the style of the work including variations in the use of or ability with the language.

Teaching staff may also make use of electronic methods of detection such as Turn-it-in's web-based plagiarism prevention software. In some classes students are able to submit a draft paper to Turn-it-in to check for inadvertent plagiarism. Individual subject outlines will inform students whether there is a requirement for assessments to be submitted through Turn-it-in and whether students' assessments will be added to the assessment database in Turn-it-in.

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

Where a student is using the work of another person to inform words and/or ideas (whether that work be online, printed or conversation), due recognition must be given to the original author. Style guides are available from the Library and Faculties which provide detailed advice regarding how references must be cited. Complete compliance with discipline-based style guides is mandatory. Students can avoid plagiarism, for example, by giving due acknowledgement to:

- The original author of an idea;
- Collaboration with other students; and
- Previous work submitted by the student.

Plagiarism includes both the use of another's words and ideas. Direct quotes must be accurately cited through in-text and end-text referencing. Writing another's ideas in a student's own words and/or changing the order of the clauses and/or words is an act of plagiarism unless the author of the original is accurately cited. See the Student Learning Support website.

If a student is unsure whether their actions constitute plagiarism, they must check with a member of Faculty staff.

STAFF AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic staff will:

- Inform all commencing students of appropriate referencing techniques in their fields of study and provide clear examples of what is acceptable.

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- Clearly explain academic expectations and what constitutes plagiarism to students in subject outlines.
 - Set realistic assessment loads and vary assignments and questions from semester to semester.
 - Set appropriate conditions for group work and make clear the distinction between group work and individual work.
 - Cultivate with students a climate of mutual respect for original work.

Students will:

- Act with academic integrity.
- Submit only work which properly acknowledges the ideas or words of others and which is otherwise their own work.
- Avoid lending original work to others for any reason.
- Be clear about assessment guidelines.
- Be clear about the appropriate referencing and assessment practices in their field of study.
- Discourage others from plagiarising.
- Be aware that teaching staff using manual means and Turn-it-in software significantly increases the likelihood of plagiarism being detected.

