



Australian Centre for Advanced Studies



Australian Centre for Advanced Studies CLIENT HANDBOOK

Revision 1.2

Contact Us

ACAS

PO Box 14, Parkwood 6153

Phone 0412 855050

Email results@acas.edu.au

Web www.acas.edu.au



Client Handbook

Welcome to ACAS (Australian Centre for Advanced Studies)

Thank you for choosing ACAS as your registered training provider and allowing us to play a role in your learning journey. You will be enrolled in one of our many colleges so will need to ensure that you are familiar with their policies and procedures. If you have any concerns, please feel welcome to contact us at the ACAS office.

We pride ourselves on professional, flexible learning. In partnership with your local college we are striving to provide you with the best experience possible to attain your learning goals.

We hope you are looking forward to your learning and making a lot of new friends along the way. We are here to help you make the most of your learning. Good luck.

I look forward to hearing of your achievements and providing support where I can. I trust you will enjoy your time with us and wish you every success in your learning.

Randy Salmond
Principal
Australian Centre for Advanced Studies

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Section 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with a quick reference about training programs, policies and processes, roles and responsibilities guiding you through your learning experience with ACAS.

ACAS

Thank you for considering training with ACAS.

ACAS is registered training organisation (RTO) registered with the Vet Regulator.

ACAS aims to deliver high quality, innovative and engaging training that is relevant to clients, employers and industry. Our commitment to continuous improvement means we are constantly developing and improving new resources, processes and facilitation methods to remain ahead in technology and industry standards.

ACAS has training locations in:

- Most states in Australia and most of our training programs are embedded within industry work places. Because of this many of our courses are only available to individuals that are members of organisations that are working in the industry area that the training is going to take place. If you need more information about this please feel free to contact us.

As an RTO, ACAS is bound to comply with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (SRTOs) 2015. Training Services provided to clients follow policies and processes developed to meet the VET Quality Framework and SRTOs 2015.

Service Commitment

ACAS is committed to providing quality training and assessment services to its learners.

We aim to:

- Provide training and assessment services that meet industry needs and trends;
- Deliver high quality, innovative and engaging training;
- Maintain a person-centred approach;
- Foster relationships with our clients, supporting them through their career;
- Provide flexible industry specific learning opportunities;
- Provide a supportive, facilitative and open learning environment;
- Ensure all training is delivered by qualified trainer and assessors with the necessary skills and experience;
- Ensure all training is continually monitored and improved;
- Maintain a healthy and effective learning environment for clients;
- Produce competent and confident workers that benefit the community and industry.

Training Programs

ACAS delivers a range of accredited training programs, which we conduct as customised training for clients and industry. Our holistic approach ensures clients' needs are met. Accredited programs have been approved by State and /or Commonwealth Government.

ACAS conducts training courses at various venues to: suit client needs, course type, and learning styles. The following client etiquette guidelines will help foster a healthy learning environment for all clients.

Section 2 CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assessment

All assessments must be submitted by the due date. If you are having difficulty completing an assessment, you should discuss it with your trainer/assessor well in advance of the due date. This way the trainer/assessor may be able to offer support or grant additional time. Please note there may be conditions or penalties to gaining an extension.

Assessment malpractice

Assessment malpractice includes: cheating, collusion and plagiarism.

ACAS regards the integrity of assessment as critical to its professional responsibilities as an RTO and therefore strives to ensure the assessment processes are not compromised. ACAS has policies and procedures in place for dealing with assessment malpractice.

- **Cheating -**
All assessments must be 100% your own work. Cheating or the use of another person's work and submitting as your own is cheating and will not be tolerated.
- **Collusion -**
Collusion is the presentation of work, which is the result in whole or in part of unauthorised collaboration with another person or persons. It is your responsibility to ensure that other clients do not have opportunity to copy your work.
- **Plagiarism -**
Copying from a published work (including the internet), without referencing, will not be tolerated. This includes presentation of work which has been copied in whole or in part from another person's work or from any other source such as the Internet, published books, and periodicals. This includes systematic re-wording or changing key nouns and verbs.
You must follow referencing guidelines if you take another person's idea, and put it into your own words.

Attendance

Attendance for training sessions and ensuring that your work placement is attended as required for industry standard is crucial if you are to complete your training requirements.

Client attendance in class is important to successful completion of learning and assessment outcomes. Clients are expected to be in attendance for all training sessions.

If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to catch up on any work missed.

Punctuality

As a courtesy to other learners and the trainer/assessor, all clients must be punctual throughout the training day, including returning from breaks. Punctuality shows respect and is essential to avoid disruption to other clients and the trainer/assessor.

Behaviour

Clients are expected to behave appropriately in a mature and professional manner at all times. All clients are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour during training and assessment. Misconduct will not be tolerated.

Misconduct includes -

- Any offensive conduct or unlawful activity (e.g. Theft, fraud, violence, assault);
- Interfering with another person's property;
- Removing, damaging or mistreating property or equipment;
- Cheating/plagiarism;
- Interfering with another person's ability to learn through disruptions during training;
- Breach of confidentiality;
- Inappropriate language;
- Serious negligence, including WHS non-compliance;
- Discrimination, harassment, intimidation or victimisation;
- Being affected by drugs or alcohol and being unfit to participate in learning activities.

Respect for others

It is expected that the behaviour of all persons in the learning environment ensure a positive learning experience. Respect for other clients and the trainer/assessor is expected.

ACAS and member college staff retain the right at all times to remove disruptive clients from the training environment.

- You will be expected to treat staff and fellow clients with respect and observe any client etiquette requirements which appear in this handbook or requested during the course by a trainer/assessor.
- Inappropriate language and actions will not be tolerated.
- Harassment, bullying and intimidation of staff or fellow learners will not be tolerated.
- Treat facilities and equipment with due care and respect.
- You are required to respect the rights of others and treat others in a manner which is fair and non-discriminatory.

Change of Personal Details

Clients are required to ensure their personal details recorded with ACAS are up-to-date at all times. Should your circumstances or details change please update your record through your client login account.

Disciplinary Processes

ACAS and member college staff may implement client discipline processes should a client be found to be acting inappropriately, due to misconduct or assessment malpractice.

Any breaches of discipline will result in the person being given a 'verbal warning'.

Further disciplinary processes may include:

- The client being asked to justify why they should continue to participate in the learning group;
- Suspension from the training room;
- Expulsion from the training room; or
- Expulsion from the Training course.

Dress & Hygiene Requirements

Clients are to be well presented and appropriately dressed during all training. Dress requirements include:

- Neat, comfortable clothing in the classroom environment;
- Appropriate work attire, including personal protective clothing (PPE) for training in workplace or simulated environments;
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times;
- Since you will be working in close proximity with others, care with your personal hygiene (clothing, hair, deodorant etc) is requested.

Duty of Care

Under Workplace Health and Safety legislation, clients have a duty of care to maintain a safe environment for both themselves and their fellow clients.

- Should you be involved in an accident which results in personal injury and/or damage to equipment or facilities, notify your trainer/assessor immediately.
- If you have a personal health condition which may become critical while attending training, please advise us before commencing the course. All information will be treated in strict confidence and is only needed so ACAS and member college staff can provide support or treatment should an emergency arise.
- Emergency procedures and exit plans must be followed.

You have a duty to:

- Protect your own health and safety and to avoid adversely affecting the health and safety of any other person;
- Not wilfully or recklessly interfere or misuse anything provided by ACAS or the member colleges in the interests of health, safety and welfare;
- Cooperate with health and safety directives given by ACAS staff;
- Ensure that you are not affected by the consumption of drugs or alcohol.

Evaluation and Feedback

ACAS values all feedback from clients as it assists us to continuously improve the products and services we offer. Clients are encouraged to provide us with feedback, both positive and constructive.

ACAS has developed some feedback forms for you to provide feedback.

Thank you in advance for your comments.

Learner Support services

ACAS understands that there may be times when personal issues may affect your ability to undertake your training. ACAS and the member colleges have identified a number of support services for clients who have special needs, or require additional support and assistance to undertake or complete their learning.

Mentoring & Guidance

ACAS and the member colleges are keen to help clients with guidance on course content, as well as effective learning and study strategies.

Centrelink

Centrelink may be able to assist you in payment for your training. Payments are in many instances in accordance to asset tests and may also be determined based on the number of hours undertaken. These may include:

- Youth allowance
- Austudy payment
- Newstart allowance
- ABSTUDY
- CentrePay

You should discuss your own personal circumstances and opportunities with your local Centre link office.

Language, Literacy Numeracy

Discuss with us your options for further language literacy and numeracy development. As most of ACAS' courses are held within the work environment. It is common that clients usually hold employment/ volunteers positions that require higher level of Language, Literacy and numeracy levels than is required by our courses. If students are currently struggling with Language, Literacy Numeracy skills in their work environment, they are encouraged to discuss the issues with ACAS and member college staff.

Reading Writing Hotline

<http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au/>

1300 655 506

Adult Migrant Education

<https://www.education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0>

Public Libraries

Making the Most of your Training

It is very important to make the most of your training opportunity. Please note it is your responsibility to do this. To optimize your own learning and successful completion, undertake to do the following:

- Attend all training sessions and complete all required reading and learning activities;
- Prepare well in advance of each training session;
- Be a willing participant;
- Work with fellow learners;
- Respect other people's opinions;
- Ensure you have a clear understanding of the assessment requirements;
- Take responsibility for the quality of evidence that you submit to the Assessor;
- Keep track of your progress;
- Complete and submit all assessment on time, tasks using clear and concise language;
- Be willing to contact your trainer/assessor if you do not understand the training activity or assessment task.

Section 3 COURSE INFORMATION

Accredited Training Programs

Accredited programs are competency based which means that training and assessment focus on the development and recognition of a person's ability to apply relevant knowledge and skills to perform workplace tasks to a specified standard.

The specific skills and knowledge required for a particular workplace activities are set out in Units of Competency which can be grouped together to formulate the completion of a nationally recognised qualification. Nationally recognised qualifications are outlined in Training Packages. These can be viewed at www.training.gov.au.

Each qualification has a list of employability skills which describe the non-technical skills and competencies that are important for effective and successful participation in the workforce. For each qualification there are specific employability skills listed under the following headings:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Initiative and enterprise
- Planning and organizing
- Self-management
- Learning
- Technology.

These employability skills will be part of the assessment requirements of a nationally accredited course.

Competency

It is important to note that the rules and requirements of a Unit of Competency and a qualification are applied to all clients regardless of where they are, or the mode of training delivery provided. You could be a full time client in a classroom or the workplace, or you could be applying for recognition of the skills and knowledge currently held.

Each Unit of Competency is made up of the following:

- Elements;
- Performance criteria;
- Required knowledge and skills;
- A range of variables;
- Critical aspects of evidence;
- Any pre or co requisites (if applicable).

To be deemed Competent in any Unit of Competency you must be able to provide evidence of the required skills and knowledge to complete work tasks to the standard that is required in the workplace. Skills need to be demonstrated in a range of situations and environments (which could include simulated applications in a learning environment) over a period of time.

Evidence

Evidence is the material proof that you have performed the specified competency or task to the required standard. Your evidence requirements will be determined by the Unit of Competency, employability skill requirements, industry expectations, Government regulations, and your qualifications and current experience. Evidence can take many forms and you will be required to present more than just one piece of evidence.

Assessment tools that we will provide to you set out the exact requirements for evidence for each unit/module.

Examples of evidence could include one or more of the following:

- Specific assessments tasks set by your Assessor
- Observation reports
- Certificates and awards
- Examples of work completed or special projects
- Current licenses
- Position descriptions and performance reviews
- Third party reports
- Question responses
- Tests

Your evidence must also demonstrate the following:

- That you can do the job or task to the required standard
- Understand why the job should be done in a particular way
- Handle unexpected issues or problems
- Work with others 'in a team'
- Do more than one thing at a time, e.g. perform the task and be aware of the occupational health and safety requirements
- Know the workplace rules and procedures

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of your learning if you wish to complete successfully and gain certification. The assessment process will be explained at orientation and throughout your program. Assessors will also be available to you if you have any questions.

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgement on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standards expected in the workplace and as expressed in relevant competency standards.

Throughout the training program you will be assessed to see if you have gained the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the qualification. Your trainer/assessor is required to ensure that the assessment tasks you undertake meet the national principles of assessment and rules of evidence (see below for more information).

Various assessments tasks /activities may be involved including, but not limited to:

- Observation of performance;
- Assignments;
- Written activities;
- written / oral questioning;
- oral presentations;
- workplace performance
- projects
- case studies;
- role plays/ simulations;
- demonstration of skills;
- online assessments;
- portfolio of evidence.

Certification will only be given to clients who successfully complete all assessment requirements for a course.

ACAS is required to meet stringent quality requirements in the conduct of all assessments.

The ACAS and the member colleges have carefully constructed and developed assessment resources to meet these quality requirements, as well as be user friendly to clients. In most cases these assessments have been modified to better suit the work environment they are being applied. The base assessment will still be core to the evidence required to be successfully competent.

Principles of Assessment

Assessments will be conducted in accordance with the following principles of assessment.

Valid	Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment against the unit/s of competency and the associated assessment requirement covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance; • Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application; • Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and • Judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessments requirements.
Reliable	Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.
Flexible	Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting the learner’s needs; • Assessing competencies held by the Learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and • Drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.
Fair	The individual learner’[s needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary

Rules of Evidence and Assessment

ACAS is required to ensure that all evidence provided by clients, as proof of their competency, meets the following “rules of evidence”.

Valid	The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.
Sufficient	The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner’s competency.
Authentic	The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner’s own work.
Current	The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.

Course Assessment

There will be assessment tasks set for each course regardless of the learning mode. Assessment activities and expectations will be explained to clients, and are outlined within learner / assessment resources.

Many courses require assessment to be completed after the course, as workplace performance is essential in competency based learning.

Submission of Assessments

- Clients are entitled to one resubmit assessments. If the re-submissions are still deemed NYC, clients may be offered the opportunity to re-submit at a fee. No further re-submits are allowed. Clients must re-enrol in the course again, paying the full course fee of the day.
- We endeavour to assess all assessments within 10 working days of receipt.

Assessment Results

Results of assessment are provided to clients as soon as is practical. These results are available through your trainer / assessor. Assessment results are confidential at all times and will not be given to any other party unless a written request signed by the client is received in advance.

Reasonable adjustments

Clients with disabilities are encouraged to discuss with ACAS and the member colleges any 'reasonable adjustments' to learning and assessment processes which they consider would be necessary or assist them in the performance of their studies.

Careful consideration will be given to any requests for reasonable adjustment of this nature, and, where reasonably practicable, such adjustments will be made. There may however be circumstances where it will not be reasonable or reasonably practicable for the ACAS and member colleges to accommodate or where other adjustment may be more appropriate. Reasonable adjustments cannot compromise the integrity of competency based training and assessment.

Extensions for Assessment

It is expected that all assessment tasks are handed in on the due date. Should you require additional time to complete an assessment you must communicate with your assessor and apply for an extension.

Certificates

Types of Certification

In general, four types of certificates are issued by ACAS. Certificates can only be awarded by ACAS in accordance with our approved qualification scope.

- **Qualification** – issued under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) for nationally recognised training. Full qualifications can only be issued once the client has been deemed competent across all the relevant units of competency making up the qualification.
- **Record of Results** – accompanies a qualification issued under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) for nationally recognised training. This document supplements the qualification listing all units of competency achieved for the qualification.
- **Statement of Attainment (SOA)** – issued under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) for nationally recognised training. Issued when a client is deemed competent in a unit or a cluster of units of competency. Minimum achievement for a SOA is one unit of competency. You can request a SOA at any time during your training.

Certificates can be distributed to students via their Trainers and or workplaces where these workplaces are coordinating the training. Certificates can be posted to clients at their nominated postal address as shown in their client login account on request either by the student or the member college. The onus is on the client to ensure their address details are correct.

Duplicate or replacement copies of certificates incur a fee.

Course Delivery

ACAS ensures the following resources are in place:

- Trainer/assessors and Assessors with appropriate qualifications, and experience;
- Course materials appropriate to the methods of delivery and assessment requirements;
- All necessary copyright authorisations;
- Appropriate equipment and facilities.

Training and assessment methods used by ACAS meet specific quality requirements and are chosen to best suit the unit of competency, while giving consideration to the learning style of the client. The provision of training is usually on the job but also includes a blended approach of on and off-the-job methods.

A number of delivery methods will be used throughout the training to help you achieve the necessary skills. Learning is a partnership that involves participation from all involved.

Delivery methods may include, but are not limited to:

- workplace based training
- Practical demonstrations
- audio/visual presentations
- group participation/ discussions
- trainer/facilitator instruction
- practical activities
- self-paced activities
- individual projects
- case studies

Language, Literacy and Numeracy

Each Training Package sets a minimum requirement in language, literacy and numeracy skills of participants, with which the ACAS must abide.

ACAS makes appropriate concessions for language, literacy and numeracy issues of clients where these concessions do not compromise the requirements of the relevant Training Package and the integrity, equity and fairness of assessment.

Where there are entry requirements for courses, and the client is already working within the work environment that they will be training in, it will be excepted that the client has the required entry level for the course. When ever the client is not already working within the industry then a separate Language, Literacy and Numeracy assessment will need to take place.

Advice is given to all clients on appropriate actions if there is a need to update literacy and numeracy skills.

Recognition

Recognition is the collective term and includes:

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL);
- Recognition of current competency (RCC);
- Credit transfer (CT); and
- Mutual Recognition (MR).

All clients have the opportunity to apply for recognition. This means that you can submit evidence for a Unit(s) of Competency and have it assessed by a qualified Assessor without completing the training.

ACAS believes that no learner should be required to undertake a unit of competency for which they are already able to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of the performance outcomes, as stated in the endorsed training package or nationally recognised course.

ACAS aims to maximise the recognition of a learner's prior skills and knowledge whilst at all times maintaining the integrity and standards of the defined learning outcomes of the specific qualification or course of study. Clients who consider they already possess the competencies identified in all or part of any course/qualification offered by ACAS may seek recognition.

If you think you have the necessary knowledge and skills to match a Unit(s) of Competency or a qualification at the required standard you need to contact our <Position 3> on <Phone Number> who will provide the information you need to complete an application.

Recognition Process

Recognition is a method of assessing if you have evidence of competency for a particular unit of competency that you are enrolled in. It is important to remember that Recognition is an **assessment process** not an assumption of competence.

Recognition is the determination, on an individual basis, of the competencies obtained by a client through:

- previous formal training
- work experience, and/or
- life experience.

Recognition therefore determines the subsequent advanced standing to which the client is entitled in relation to a course/qualification. The main focus of Recognition is what has been learned rather than how, where or when it was learned. Recognition focuses on both the demonstration of competence and the currency of that competence to industry standards.

It is important to note, the onus is on the client to document and present evidence to justify a claim for recognition and present their case to the satisfaction of the Assessor.

Any documents that you provide to support your claim of competency must be the originals rather than copies. Your original documents will be photocopied and handed back to you. It is also expected that any evidence submitted is your own and if any part of the work is the work of others, that this is formally acknowledged and advised.

Recognition Decision

Regardless of the type of evidence that you submit, Assessors must be confident that the evidence meets the following criteria:

- Full requirements of the Unit of Competency(s);
- Any Regulatory requirements;
- Authenticity - That it is your own evidence and can be authenticated;
- That you can perform the competency consistently and reliably;
- Is at the standard expected in industry and set out in the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF);
- Sufficiency - There is sufficient evidence to make a judgment.

ACAS is committed to ensuring that all judgments made by Assessors against the same competency standards are consistent. Your Assessor will examine the evidence that you present and then make a judgment on that evidence which will be either:

- Competent (C) - you have been deemed competent against all the requirements of the Unit/s of Competency
- Not Yet Competent (NYC) - you have not yet demonstrated competency to all requirements.

Your assessor will advise you what you can do if you receive a NYC for your assessment task. If you are deemed NYC in your initial assessment, you are allowed a second attempt. However, if you are deemed NYC in the second attempt, you will be required to re-enrol. Please talk to your assessor if you have any concerns.

For further information on Recognition, please see ACAS' Recognition policy.

Mutual Recognition

ACAS recognises the AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). This is commonly referred to as Mutual Recognition or Credit Transfer. Mutual recognition is applicable when a Statement of Attainment or qualification provided by a client has the same national competency codes as those that form part of the training and assessment program within which the client is enrolled or is intending to enrol. Clients are required to formally apply for Mutual Recognition. With Mutual Recognition client's are not required to undertake learning in the unit/s again, the client is exempt.

Special Needs

Clients intending to enrol for training with the ACAS are requested to advise us if they have any physical or other impairment (e.g. English language, literacy or numeracy difficulties, dyslexia, etc) which may adversely affect their ability to successfully undertake training and assessment, prior to enrolment. If the students enrolment process for some reason does not pick this up, it is still the students responsibility to inform ACAS or the member college of any learning impairment that may effect the clients ability to complete the course in a timely manner.

Clients with disabilities or impairments are encouraged to discuss with the Principal of ACAS or the course controller, any 'special needs' and/or 'reasonable adjustments' to the study environment which they consider are necessary or would assist them in the performance of their studies.

The Principal, in collaboration with the client and the member colleges, will assess the potential for the client to successfully complete the training which may include flexible delivery options to optimise the ease and benefit of the client's learning.

Trainer and Assessors

All Trainers and Assessors are qualified in training and assessment and the vocational area which they are delivering. They have practical experience and maintain their currency in industry.

Section 4 POLICIES

Access and Equity

ACAS is committed to promoting, encouraging and valuing equity and diversity with respect to its clients and to providing them with a positive learning environment to achieve success. ACAS will ensure services offered are provided in a fair and equitable manner to all clients, free from bias.

ACAS abides by equal opportunity principles, providing access to the benefits of training and assessment to all clients regardless of gender, sex, pregnancy, race, marital status, sexuality, age, family/carer responsibilities, culture, linguistic background, disability, political conviction or religious belief. We also do not discriminate against workplaces who for any of these reasons may have policies that may exclude certain individuals based on their workplace requirements.

All clients have equitable access to training resources and facilities, support services and information, trainer and assessors, learning and assessment materials and opportunities.

For further information, see ACAS Access & Equity Policy.

Appeals

ACAS ensures that clients have access to a fair and equitable process for appeals against assessment decisions. An appeals and reassessment process is an integral part of all training and assessment pathways leading to a nationally recognised qualification or Statement of Attainment under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

- Clients have the right to lodge an appeal against an assessment decision if they feel they were unfairly treated during an assessment, and/or where they feel the assessment decision is incorrect and they have grounds for an appeal.
- The principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the appeal process.
- The appeals policy is publicly available, via ACAS website.
- The appellant can provide detail of their appeal either verbally and/or in writing.
- All appeals must be lodged within 7 calendar days of the date of the assessment result notification to the client.
- If the appeals process fails to resolve the appeal or the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the matter will be referred to an independent third party for review, at the request of the appellant. All costs incurred for the third party review will be advised to the appellant.
- Every appeal is heard by a suitably qualified independent assessor or panel, who will be asked to make an independent assessment of the application.
- All appeals are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.
- ACAS may charge a fee for the appeals process where an external assessor is engaged. Should this be the case, all costs incurred will be advised to the appellant.
- If the appeal will take in excess of 60 calendar days to finalise ACAS will inform the appellant in writing providing the reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. The appellant will also be provided with regular updates on the progress of the appeal.
- ACAS strives to deal with appeal issues as soon as they emerge, in order to avoid further disruption or the need for a formal complaint process.
- All appeals will be handled 'In-Confidence' and will not affect or bias the progress of the participant in any current or future training.

Grounds for Appeal

Valid grounds for an appeal against an assessment decision (where the trainee feels the assessment decision is incorrect) could include the following:

- The judgement as to whether competency has been achieved and demonstrated was made incorrectly,
- The judgement was not made in accordance with the Assessment Plan.
- Alleged bias of the assessor;
- Alleged lack of competence of the assessor;

- Alleged wrong information from the assessor regarding the assessment process;
- Alleged inappropriate assessment process for the particular competency;
- Faulty or inappropriate equipment; and/or
- Inappropriate conditions.

Appeal Outcomes

Appeal outcomes may include:

- a) Appeal is upheld; in this event the following options will be available:
 - i. The original assessment will be re-assessed, potentially by another assessor.
 - ii. Appropriate recognition will be granted.
 - iii. A new assessment shall be conducted/arranged.
- b) Appeal is rejected/ not upheld; in accordance with <NOVACORE> assessment policy the client will be required to:
 - i. undertake further training or experience prior to further assessment; or
 - ii. re-submit further evidence; or
 - iii. submit/undertake a new assessment

For further information, see ACAS Appeals Policy.

Client Enrolment

Enrolments in a training programs need to be coordinated through the individual course controllers. See enrolment information as listed on the individual course information and enrolment document. Many of our courses are only available to clients who are working or volunteering within specific programs or organisations. Enrolment processes are coordinated by the sponsor organisation. For further information on enrolment processes for specific courses feel free to contact the course controller or the ACAS principal.

Enrolments must be received no later than 24 hours prior to the course commencement. Enrolment forms should be returned with payment. Enrolments will be considered tentative until payment has been received.

Enrolment Confirmation

All clients will have their enrolments confirmed by the course controller.

Client Induction

Induction for all new clients will happen either before or during the first training session of each course and is the responsibility of the course controller.

Client Records

ACAS and/or the member college will maintain an individual client file for every client who undertakes any form of training and assessment. This file contains records regarding your personal details provided to us, any training and assessment undertaken and completed. This file is available to you.

In accordance with Privacy laws and confidentiality requirements, your file is kept in a locked cupboard or on a secure electronic data base. Only those ACAS personnel who need to have access to your file for training and assessment purposes can access it. Where personnel information is collected by a member college on behalf of ACAS then that member college will also maintain the clients information in accordance with Privacy laws and confidentiality requirements

No other person/client can and will have access to your personal client file without your prior written permission. If you would like access to your personal records simply contact Principal or your course controller.

Complaints

ACAS has a fair and equitable process for dealing with client complaints.

All clients have the right to express a concern or problem they may be experiencing when undergoing training. The following is an outline of the Complaints Policy.

Principles

- Complaints are treated seriously and dealt with promptly, impartially, sensitively and confidentially.
- Complaints will be resolved on an individual case basis, as they arise.
- All clients have the right to express a concern or problem and/or lodge a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the training and assessment services that they have been provided (including through a third party) or the behavioural conduct of another learner.
- All complaints are acknowledged in writing and finalised as soon as practicable.
- The complaint resolution procedure is based on the understanding that no action will be taken without consulting the complainant and respondent, using a process of discussion, cooperation and conciliation.
- The rights of the complainant and respondent will be acknowledged and protected throughout the complaint resolution process, including the conduct of separate interviews initially.
- In the interest of confidentiality, the number of people involved in the resolution process will be kept to a minimum.
- Final decisions will be made by the Director ACAS or an independent party to the complaint.
- The complaint resolution procedure emphasises mediation and education while acknowledging that in some instances formal procedures and disciplinary action may be required.
- If the complaints process fails to resolve the complaint or the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint the matter will be referred to an independent third party for review, at the request of the complainant. All costs incurred for the third party review will be advised to the complainant.
- If the complaint will take in excess of 60 calendar days to finalise, ACAS will inform the complainant in writing providing the reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. The complainant will also be provided with regular updates on the progress of the complaint.
- Victimisation of complainants, respondents or anyone one else involved in the complaint resolution process will not be tolerated.
- All complaints will be handled as Staff-In-Confidence and will not affect or bias the progress of the client in any current or future training. The rights of the complainant and respondent will be acknowledged and protected throughout the complaint resolution process.

Lodging a Complaint

Should you wish to lodge a complaint, a formal or informal approach should be made by the client to the trainer /assessor/DIRECTOR.

The client completes a Complaints Form to commence the process.

For further information, see ACAS Complaints Policy.

Course Fees

ACAS has developed a fair and equitable process for determining course fees, refunds and payment options.

Flexible Payment Options

ACAS and the member colleges accepts various methods of payment for course fees.

Initial course fees are payable in advance and enrolments are considered tentative until payment is received. At no stage will ACAS or the member colleges pre-charge more than \$1400.00 for any course. If a student decides to prepay fees in excess of this amount for a course, then ACAS and the member colleges will take steps to ensure that excess course fees can be returned in the event that a refund is required. Students are not required to prepay more than \$1400.00 for any course fees and at the commencement of the course regardless if the student attends the first training session or not the client is responsible for fees up to \$1400.00.

Qualification Enrolments

Fees for qualification program may be paid via a payment arrangement in advance. As full qualification payments are discounted, this payment method incurs a surcharge.

Cancellation & Transfers

Enrolment cancellation / withdrawal / deferral / amendment

Clients who wish to withdraw/cancel/defer/amend their course are required to complete a Course Withdrawal Amend form.

Client Transfers

- a) **Transfer to another “Course date”** – Clients are able to transfer to another course date, providing they make a request in writing a minimum of one week in advance.
The transfer is subject to course availability.
- b) **Transfer to another “Course”** – Should a client wish to transfer to another course, they need to make the request in writing a minimum of one week in advance.
The transfer is subject to course availability.
- c) **Transfer to another “Delivery mode”** – Should a client, enrolled in a course, wish to transfer to another “delivery mode” for the same course they are able to do so providing they make a request in writing a minimum of one week in advance. An administration fee is applicable for all transfers to another course delivery mode.
The transfer is subject to course availability.
Should a student wish to transfer to another delivery mode and does not provide written notice at least one week in advance, the student forfeits the full course fee.
- d) **Transfer to another “Client”** – Prior arrangement no later than one week prior to the course. An administration fee is applicable for all transfers to another client.

RTO Cancellation of courses

ACAS and the member colleges reserves the right to cancel a course if insufficient enrolments are received prior to course commencement. Clients already booked in these courses will be notified. If a course is cancelled, a full refund of all monies paid by a client for the course will be made within seven (7) days.

Equal Opportunity

ACAS is committed to equal opportunity policies and principles, as they affect clients and employees to ensure the elimination of discrimination and harassment.

Rights and Responsibilities

ACAS has a legal and moral obligation to provide equal opportunity in employment and a learning environment free from harassment for employees, contractors and clients.

ACS is committed to providing an environment which recognises and respects the diversity of employees, contractors and clients. ACAS is committed to providing a work and study environment free from harassment, vilification and bullying and supports the rights of all employees, contractors and clients to work and study in a safe and healthy environment free from such behaviour.

ACAS will:

- Ensure that employees, contractors and clients understand that these types of actions and behaviour will not be tolerated in the work/study environment.
- Request that any behaviour which could be considered harassment, vilification or bullying cease immediately.

All employees, contractors and clients have a role to play in eliminating harassment, vilification and bullying by not encouraging or showing support for harassment, vilification or bullying aimed at work or study colleagues. This can be achieved by:

- Refusing to join in with these types of actions and behaviours.
- Supporting the person in saying no to these behaviours.
- Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint.

If an employee, contractor or client feels harassed, vilified or bullied, the employee, contractor or client is encouraged to inform the person where the behaviour is unacceptable. If the employee, contractor or client feels unable to approach the person, or if the behaviour continues following their request that the behaviour cease, the Principal should be contacted.

As a client of ACAS, you have the responsibility to:

- Act to prevent harassment, discrimination and victimization against others;
- Respect differences among other staff, clients and contractors, such as cultural and social diversity;
- Treat people fairly, without discrimination, harassment or victimization;
- Refuse to join in with these behaviours;
- Supporting the person in saying no to these behaviours;
- Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint.

Discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone or a group unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group. ACAS is committed to not discriminate against a person or a group because of their age, gender, pregnancy, disability (includes, past, present or possible future disability), race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality, marital status.

Harassment, Vilification and Bullying

All employees, contractors and clients have an equal opportunity to work and study. ACS will not tolerate behaviour which is of a harassing, vilifying or bullying nature.

It is against the law for employees, contractors and clients to be harassed during the course of their work or study because of their sex, pregnancy, race (including colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or religious background), marital status, disability, sexuality, HIV/AIDS status or transgender. Federal anti-discrimination legislation applies to staff, contractors and clients.

Harassment

In general, harassment is behaviour which is unwanted and that humiliates, offends or intimidates a person, and occurs because of a person's:

- Race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or national identity.
- Gender
- Pregnancy.
- Marital status.
- Disability (including physical, intellectual and/or behavioural/psychiatric disability; past, current or future disability; actual or presumed disability).
- Age.

Harassment can occur when power is used incorrectly.

Examples of harassment include:

- Intrusive or inappropriate questions or comments about a person's private life.
- Unwanted written, telephone or electronic messages.
- Promises or threats to a person.
- Physical violence or the threat of physical violence or coercion.

Vilification

Vilification is the public act of a person which incites hatred towards, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of, a person or group of persons on the grounds of race, religion, gender, or social status.

Bullying

Bullying behaviour can refer to the actions or behaviours of a person to another that intimidates, degrades or humiliates the person. It may include verbal abuse, behaviour intended to punish such as isolation, exclusion from workplace activities and "ganging up". Repeated "put-downs", aggression, threats and poorly managed conflicts of opinion may be part of bullying behaviour. It can occur between people such as managers and employees or contractors, co-workers and clients.

Sexual Harassment

ACAS will not tolerate sexual harassment in the learning or work environment.

ACAS deplores all form of sexual harassment and seeks to ensure that the work and study environment is free from such harassment. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all persons.

Sexual harassment is unlawful. The harasser may be held liable for unlawful actions and be required to pay damages. All employees, contractors and clients have the right to work and study in an environment free from sexual harassment.

Forms of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may take many forms. Often people do not realise that their behaviour constitutes sexual harassment, but they must be aware that behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not necessarily be acceptable to another. Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature by one person to another at work or in a work-related setting. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks.
- Lewd comments about appearance.
- Unnecessary body contact.
- Displays of sexually offensive materials, for example, calendars or posters.
- Requests for sexual favours.
- Speculation about a person's private life and sexual activities.
- Threatened or actual sexual violence.
- Threat of dismissal, loss of opportunity and so on, for refusal of sexual favours.
- Behaviour and appearance that is insensitive to the religious and social beliefs and identities of others.

Complaints

All complaints regarding equal opportunity matters are treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.

Privacy

ACAS abides by the Privacy Act and respects clients, staff and trainer/assessors' right to privacy.

As an RTO, ACAS is obliged to maintain effective administrative and records management systems. This involves the collection and retention of personal information from clients in secure client records. All staff must be scrupulous in using client information only for the purposes for which it was gathered. All clients have access to their own records at all times.

ACAS collects information from clients upon initial enquiry in order to send course information, and is collected at enrolment and during the provision of the training and assessment services. ACAS may use personal information to advise clients of upcoming events and training course, for marketing and research purposes. In addition feedback on services provided through surveys is collected. This feedback assists us improve the quality of the services and training and is treated confidentially.

ACAS will only disclose information to other parties, as required by law, or as otherwise allowed under the Privacy Act 1988.

For further information, see ACAS Privacy Policy.

Refund Policy

Payment of all refunds, to clients who are entitled to a refund, are in accordance with the following refund policy.

ACS will strive to maintain its highly competitive fee structure, as well as its fair and equitable refund policy.

- a) Payment of all refunds is made within one week (seven days) of application for refund.
- b) With regard to all withdrawals, ACS will firstly encourage a client to enrol on another course date, prior to processing refund applications.
- c) Written notification of withdrawal from a training program must be provided by a client to apply for a refund for a course. This may be via letter, email or the completion of the refund form.
- d) There is no refund applicable where a client has commenced their course/unit.
- e) There is no refund to participants who do not obtain their qualification after assessment.

- f) There is no refund for recognition of prior learning assessments after enrolment, where Recognition resources and services have been supplied to the client.
- g) ACAS does not accept liability for loss or damage suffered in the event of withdrawal from a course by a client.
- h) ACAS and the member colleges provides a full refund to all clients, should there be a need for ACAS and the member college to cancel a course. In the first instance ACAS will (where possible) provide an opportunity for the client to attend another scheduled course.
- i) If ACAS or a member college cancels a course, clients do not have to apply for a refund, ACAS will ensure that the member college will process the refunds automatically.
- j) Refunds for cancellation of enrolments in individual courses are granted on a sliding scale:.

Reason for Refund	Notification requirements	Refund
Client withdraws	In writing, eight (8) calendar days or more prior to the course commencement	100% of the course fee (paid by the client)
Client withdraws	In writing, within seven (7) calendar days prior to the course commencement.	75% of the full course fee (regardless of how much the Client has already paid)
Client withdraws	In writing, less than 24 hours prior to course commencement.	Up to \$1400.00 of paid fee may be retained.
Client withdrawn from the course by ACAS or member college	After course commencement, due to inappropriate behaviour	Nil Refund
Course cancelled by ACAS or member college		100% of the course fee (paid by the client)
A fee equal to 25 % of the full fee is charged where cancellations occur within seven (7) days before commencement of an enrolled course or assessment		
Fees are refunded in full where the client submits in writing reason for withdrawal, eight (8) days or more prior to commencement of an enrolled course or assessment		

- k) Refunds for cancellation of enrolments in full qualifications are subject to the following refund formula.

Fee Type	Description	Fee \$\$
Enrolment cancellation fee	RTO administrative processes for processing of enrolment, reporting and other administrative actions related to cancellation	\$150.00 per qualification
Unit Fee – Commenced	For all individual units commenced/attended/completed from within the qualification /Accredited course	Full Unit fee payable by the client Nil Refund
Unit Fee – Not Commenced	For all individual units NOT commenced/attended/completed from within the qualification /Accredited course	Full Unit fee paid by the client is Refunded

Commencement dates

- ** Please note commencement for correspondence courses is the date that the training materials were posted to the client.
- Commencement for online clients is the date that online access is provided to an individual client for a particular course.
- Commencement date for a classroom based learning mode is the first day of the course.

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)

ACAS is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning and work environment. The safety of our clients and staff is of primary importance in all activities and operations of our organisation. We are committed to implementing, maintaining and continuously improving work health and safety in all of our facilities and operations.

ACAS encourages all persons to regard accident prevention and safety as a collective and individual responsibility.

ACAS recognises its responsibility under the Workplace Health and Safety and related regulations. The DIRECTOR has responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of staff, clients, contractors and visitors. This includes:

- Provide and maintain safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- Provide, monitor and maintain systems for safe use, handling, storage and transportation of plant, equipment and substances.
- Maintain the workplace in a safe and healthy condition.
- Provide adequate facilities to protect the welfare of all employees.
- Provide information, training and supervision for all staff and contractors, helping them to integrate WHS into their work areas and roles.
- Provide information, where relevant, to clients, allowing them to learn in a safe manner.
- Check WHS system compliance via ongoing auditing.
- Integrate continuous improvement into WHS performance.

Duty of Care

ACAS is committed to taking practicable steps to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work and learning environment for all staff, clients, and contractors. Specific responsibilities are shown below.

ACAS Management:

- Are responsible for the effective implementation and regular review of this WHS policy.
- Must observe, implement and fulfil responsibilities under legislation that applies to WHS and endeavour to comply with relevant standards and codes of practice.
- Must ensure that the agreed procedures for regular consultation between management and staff are followed.
- Monitors the WHS management policies and procedures. Outcomes of WHS monitoring are used to help maintain appropriate risk controls. The effectiveness of these risk controls and this monitoring and review process is linked to ACAS Continuous Improvement processes
- Are responsible for ensuring that a WHS management system is implemented.

Staff, contractors, clients and visitors:

- Have a duty of themselves and others.
- Have a responsibility to cooperate with all WHS processes.
- Have a responsibility to comply with relevant ACAS WHS management system policies and procedures.
- Must not bypass or misuse systems or equipment provided for WHS purposes.
- Must report any unsafe conditions which come to their attention to the Principal.

Accidents, Injuries and Near Misses

All incidents and near misses are required to be reported immediately. See your trainer/assessor or administration personnel to report any issues.

ACAS will ensure that the injured person receives appropriate first aid and/or medical treatment as soon as possible and will conduct an investigation to reasonably prevent a recurrence.

ACS is also committed to ensuring that injury management activities commence as soon as possible after injury and that every effort is made to provide suitable and meaningful duties consistent with the nature of the injury or illness, after seeking appropriate medical judgement.

Clients and employees are expected to take care to prevent work-related injuries to themselves and to others.

Investigating incidents and accidents

The Principal is responsible for investigating incidents and accidents.

Following the report of an incident (near miss) or accident (and after first aid and other injury management processes have been implemented), the Principal will immediately undertake an investigation.

The process for investigations may include.

- Interview all people involved in the accident or incident and witnesses.
- Use the risk management approach to help understand the underlying hazards that caused the incident or accident and whether controls failed, were insufficient or were absent.
- Listen to recommendations of people involved in the incident or accident about what is required to prevent such incidents or accidents in the future.
- Analyse results of investigation and document recommended courses of action for evaluation by the DIRECTOR.

Once action is approved, communicates outcomes and planned actions.



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