



Australian College
of Professionals

Smart & Skilled Information Guide 2021

- Fee Administration Policy
- Consumer Protection Policy

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Smart and Skilled Eligibility

Before students can commence their subsidised Training, the Australian College of Professionals (the College) must first determine their eligibility.

A student's eligibility is dependent on four factors:

- Are you 15 years or older?
- Are you no longer at school?
- Are you living or working in NSW?
- Are you an Australian Citizen, Australian permanent resident, Australian permanent humanitarian visa holder or a New Zealand citizen?

If students can answer 'Yes' to all four questions, then they may be eligible to enrol in a government subsidised course, through the Australian College of Professionals, which is an approved Smart and Skilled Provider.

The above criteria also apply to students wishing to enrol as a trainee, provided that the following criteria is also met:

- No formal qualifications above a Certificate III
- employed full time for under three months or part time for under six months.

Eligibility for a government-subsidised Smart and Skilled course depends on your previous qualifications:

- You can enrol in subsidised training at Certificate IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma level, depending on the availability of funding for these courses. Having completed a Certificate IV or higher-level qualification does not affect eligibility.

You can check your own eligibility on the Smart and Skilled website, which can be found at <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/are-you-eligible>

Please note that eligibility is also dependent on the student's location. Currently ACOP is only able to offer this government funded training in NSW. If your employment or residential status change throughout the duration of your government funded program, the funding allocated may be cancelled by the Smart & Skilled program management.

Eligibility Evidence

Before students can enrol into a course, they will be required to supply evidence to support their eligibility. This evidence can be in the form of:

- Australian birth certificate or passport; OR
- A Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status (CERS); OR
- Humanitarian Visa or visa noting asylum or refugee status; OR
- Live or work in NSW declaration; OR
- Previous highest level qualification declaration; OR
- Year 10 completion or equivalent declaration (if under 17); OR
- Postcode declaration
- Commonwealth or NSW Government issued document providing evidence of living location. E.g. driver licence OR an employer issued document confirming employment in NSW.

If students are unable to provide any/some of the above, they are welcome to contact the College at any time during business hours for further information and assistance.

A summary of evidence required and whether it must be sighted or retained is at Appendix 1.

Fee Exemptions and Concessions

Fee exemptions and concessions may be available to some Enrolled Students. Documentary evidence must be received and approved by the College before any exemption or concession can be granted.

Fee Exemptions

Enrolled Students that may be eligible for a fee exemption includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with a disability. Refer also to the information on Fee Free Scholarships on page 12 of this document.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students:

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students must prove their status and eligibility for an exemption through descent, self-identification and community identification. Students will need to declare their status and be able to provide documentary evidence of community identification to the College if required.

Students with a disability:

Students that wish to seek a fee exemption on the basis of disability will need to provide:

- A letter from Centrelink confirming receipt of the Disability Support Pension. This letter should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN); or
- A current Disability Pensioner Concession Card that shows the CRN; or
- A current Centrelink income statement for the Disability Support Pension, which clearly shows that income is for the disability pension and also shows the CRN; or
- Any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and confirms receipt of the Disability Support Pension; or
- Documentary evidence of support needs due to the student's disability. The evidence must be a letter or statement from:
 - A medical practitioner; or
 - An appropriate government agency such as Veteran's Affairs or a TAFE NSW teacher consultant (for students with a disability), a school counsellor or special education coordinator, Centrelink, a Disability Service Provider, or a Job Capacity Assessor; or
 - A specialist and allied health professional (including a rehabilitation counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, or occupational therapist).

Dependent Child / Spouse / Partner

An individual who is seeking an exemption as a dependent child, spouse or partner of someone who is receiving a Commonwealth Disability pension must provide documentary evidence that Centrelink recognises the individual as a dependent. The evidence should clearly show the CRN of the Disability Pension Recipient.

An exception to this rule is for a student with an acquired disability. A person seeking an exemption from this rule will need to provide evidence from a medical practitioner that their disability was acquired after achieving their post-school Certificate IV or higher qualification. The person will also need to provide documentary evidence that the new qualification for which they are enrolling is necessary as part of a rehabilitation program.

Such evidence can include a letter or statement from:

- A medical practitioner; or
- An appropriate government agency or TAFE NSW teacher or consultant for students with a disability, a school counsellor or special education coordinator, Centrelink, a Disability Service Provider, or a Job Capacity Assessor; or
- A specialist allied health professional (including a rehabilitation, counsellor, psychologist, speech pathologist, or occupational therapist).

Refugees and Asylum Seekers:

An individual who provides a visa that demonstrates that they have been granted refugee or asylum seeker status, will be eligible for a fee exemption through the Smart and Skilled program. Once the College verifies an applicant's visa status, they will be given written advice as to their eligibility for a fee exemption. This fee-exemption program is only available for qualifications up to a Certificate IV level qualification that is identified on the NSW Skills List.

Skilling for Recovery

Skilling for Recovery is part of a matched funding commitment of almost \$320 million between the NSW and Australian governments under the JobTrainer Fund. Skilling for Recovery is a key component of the State's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

It includes an additional 100,000 fee-free full and part qualification training places to reskill, retrain and redeploy the workforce to industries where there are skills shortages and emerging employment opportunities. Skilling for Recovery will help job seekers retrain or up-skill to enhance their credentials and support school leavers to enter the workforce for the first time.

To be eligible for fee-free training under Skilling for Recovery, a student must:

- meet the eligibility criteria for Smart and Skilled training; and be
- youth aged 17-24 years; or
- Commonwealth Benefit Recipient; or
- unemployed (Not a Commonwealth Benefit Recipient); or
- employed expected to become unemployed.

Concessions (Exemptions)

The list of specified Commonwealth benefits and allowances for a concession is:

- Age Pension
- Carer Payment
- Family Tax Benefit Part A (maximum rate)

- Veterans' Affairs Pensions
- Widow Allowance
- Austudy
- Disability Support Pension
- Farm Household Allowance
- Parenting Payment (Single)
- Special Benefit
- Veterans' Children Education Scheme
- Youth Allowance
- Jobseeker

N.B.: There are no concessions for Diploma level qualifications.

- A NSW Apprentice on a JobSeeker Payment or a NSW Apprentice who is the dependant of a person receiving a JobSeeker Payment is not eligible for a concession fee.
- A NSW New Entrant Trainee on a JobSeeker Payment or a NSW New Entrant who is the dependant of a person receiving a JobSeeker Payment is not eligible for a concession fee.

The Carer Payment is a specific benefit paid by the Commonwealth Government; this category does not include the Carer Allowance or Carer Adjustment Payment. Enrolled Students who wish to obtain the concession, must provide at least one of the following proof of eligibility:

- A letter from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) confirming receipt of the benefit. The letter should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN); or
- A current concession card that shows the CRN; or
- A current Centrelink income statement that clearly shows the benefit or allowance category and the CRN; or
- Any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category; or
- For people applying for Austudy or Newstart allowance, an approval letter from Centrelink that shows the CRN and indicates that commencement date of their benefit is within two weeks of their enrolment or two weeks within the date of the first class attendance or participation in training.

An individual who is seeking a concession as a dependent child, spouse or partner of someone who is receiving a specified Commonwealth benefit or allowance must provide documentary evidence that Centrelink recognises the individual as the dependent. The evidence should clearly show the CRN of the benefit or welfare recipient.

Some students eligible for a concession fee may also be eligible for a Fee-Free Scholarship. Students must first meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility rules for the relevant program as well as be aged between 15 and 30 (inclusive) at the start date for training and be undertaking a full qualification under Smart and Skilled.

Evidence to support eligibility for fee exemption, concession, fee free scholarship or any other fee waivers

The College must sight or retain certain evidence that supports a student's eligibility to fee free training or a concession fee.

A summary of evidence required and whether it must be sighted or retained is at Appendix 1.

Where evidence is not retained, a record must be kept of what evidence was sighted, when it was sighted and by whom.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RPL is a form of assessment that acknowledges the full range of an individual's skills and knowledge, irrespective of how they have been acquired. RPL involves matching what an individual already knows and can do (their competencies) with learning outcomes of accredited training courses. Recognition of Prior Learning may award credits in a course.

The competencies may have been gained in a variety of ways:

- **Work experience:** this includes both work that is paid and unpaid.
- **Education:** this includes courses undertaken at school or college in Australia or overseas etc.

The question is whether the knowledge and skills gained meet the assessment criteria of the relevant course. If the skills already obtained meet that criteria, then the course participant may not need to undertake that component of the course.

What are the advantages of Recognition of Prior Learning?

Some advantages to the course participant, employers and training providers are:

- It can shorten the length of time taken to complete the course;
- Course participants receive recognised training at a level appropriate to their needs;
- It may reduce the cost of training;
- It will provide a better use of resources through saved instructing time and instructing resources.

Who can conduct Recognition of Prior Learning Assessments?

An assessor who is registered to assess in the particular industry must carry out an assessment for Recognition of Prior Learning. The Australian College of Professionals has a number of accredited and experienced assessors who can carry out these assessments.

How to Gain Recognition of Prior Learning

There are a number of criteria required in the process of gaining Recognition for Prior Learning. These criteria are:

- **Authenticity** Can the applicant demonstrate the skills required to be utilised in the industry for which recognition is sought? The application must be accompanied by the relevant evidence.
- **Currency** Are the skills currently used in the workforce in the industry in which the recognition is sought?
- **Quality** Do the skills confirm with the required standards?
- **Transferability** Can the skills be utilised in the industry for which recognition is sought?

The process for gaining Recognition for Prior Learning involves the following steps:

- **Information** Speak to your Trainer or one of the College Assessors about the standards of competence required for successful assessment in your selected course.
- **Self-assessment** Review the Unit of Competencies on the course brochure and if you believe that you have the skills, knowledge or prior training in any of these areas, you need to gather evidence as per below.
- **Evidence** Obtain the necessary third-party evidence to support your application, which will establish that you have attained the required competence. It is essential that you speak to your Trainer, an Assessor or the Operations Manager for information regarding the documentation that will be required. This will save you unnecessary costs in obtaining the information or documentation that is not necessary.
- **Post assessment** The course participant is provided with the result of the application and, if unsuccessful, given advice on what action is necessary to attain the required standards of competence.
- **Appeal** If the course participant has been unsuccessful in the application, an appeal may be lodged in accordance with the appeal process.
- **Records** A written record is kept of the result of the application.

Credit Transfer

The Australian College of Professionals recognises the Australian Quality Framework qualifications and Transcript of Academic Record and Statements of Attainment issued by any other RTO. This process of national recognition will result in an outcome of 'Credit Transfer' being awarded for that specific Unit of Competency.

Any qualifications already obtained will be taken into account when determining the appropriate training or assessment required.

Deferring Students

Should Enrolled Students wish to defer their Subsidised Training they may do so for up to 12 months from the date of notice to the College. Deferral is dependent on the Students' initial expiry date.

The College will advise the students of the Fee implications of deferring their training in accordance with the Fee Administration Policy.

Students that do not recommence their training within 12 months will be reported as a "discontinuing student" as per the below paragraph.

Should a student choose to defer their studies, they must notify the College in writing via email to enquiries@acop.edu.au

Discontinuing Students

A student who wishes to recommence training after having discontinued their training, will be treated as a new student and the Notification of Enrolment Process must be carried out.

Should a student choose to discontinue their studies, they must notify the College in writing via email to enquiries@acop.edu.au

Fee Refunds

Withdrawal without Penalty

If a student withdraws from their course before the commencement of any in-class workshops, before any learner materials have been issued to them or before any online course access has been provided, they will be eligible to have their course fees refunded to them with no penalty. Should students withdraw **after** they have attended training, **after** they have received learner materials or **after** they have been provided online course access - no course fees will be refunded.

Refunds for Deferring Students

Should Enrolled Students wish to defer their Subsidised Training, they may do so for up to 12 months from the date of notice to the College. There will be no fee refund for deferring students.

Students that do not recommence their training within 12 months will be reported as a “discontinuing student” as per the below paragraph and no fee refund will apply.

Refunds for Discontinuing Students

Students that have deferred their training and choose not to recommence after the 12-month period, will be withdrawn from the program and no fee refund will apply.

Partial refunds for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and/or Credit Transfer (CT) granted

Students that have applied for RPL or CT for part of their qualification, will be eligible for a reduced course fee. All RPL and CT should be approved **before** commencement of the program, to ensure that the student is correctly billed for the reduced course fee.

Further RPL and CT cannot be applied for once the course program has commenced, therefore no partial refund will apply.

Refunds for students withdrawn from the program, not of their own accord

Should the College close or is no longer able to provide training for Smart and Skilled, the student will be provided with a Statement of Attainment for the Units of Competency successfully completed and refunded the remaining course fees. In the event of such a situation, students will also be referred to an alternative Registered Training Organisation that provide the same qualification training.

Refunds for students that withdraw from the course, but have completed the requirements for a lower level qualification

Students that withdraw from their course, but have completed the Units required for a lower level qualification, will be issued with a Statement of Attainment, listing the Units of Competency successfully completed. No refund will apply.

Transferring Students

A student undertaking a Smart and Skilled qualification may withdraw from a qualification with a Smart and Skilled Provider and transfer to another Smart and Skilled Provider to complete their qualification because:

1. they choose to of their own accord – there is no refund of fees already paid unless at the approval of the College Director in extenuating circumstances
2. the College ceases trading – as per above policy, the fees relevant to the non-completed Units will be refunded to the student
3. the College's Smart and Skilled contract has been terminated - as per above policy, the fees relevant to the non-completed Units will be refunded to the student
4. the student is transitioning from a superseded qualification – no additional fees are required

Validation of Student Eligibility and Fee

The College will provide each student with an individualised quote. The quoted fee will be validated from the Provider Calculator.

A Student Fee Estimator is available on the Course Finder search on the Smart and Skilled website. Students can refer to this website to check their eligibility and estimate their fee for NSW Skills List qualifications. Please note that this will be an estimate only and the final student fee will be calculated through the Provider Calculator.

Levying of Student Fees

The College will determine the payment arrangements for student fees and the students will be made aware of these arrangements prior to enrolment.

All fees must be paid for by the student by the time they complete their training. An Academic Transcript or Statement of Attainment will not be issued to a student if there are any outstanding fees owing to the College.

Payment of Fees

Students are advised of all costs prior to enrolling in a course. Once payment has been received, students will be issued with an official tax receipt. Students should retain this receipt for their records.

The initial payment required is \$1,500. Once received, ACOP will issue training materials for the first module. The remaining modules will be issued on receipt of the outstanding balance of payment.

If a student chooses to attend a face-to-face course at the College there is no extra course fee, however if you wish to cancel or transfer your in-class enrolment with less than 24 hours' notice to the College, you will be charged an administration fee of \$250. Any waiver of this fee will be at the sole discretion of the College Principal and will be based upon the individual circumstances of the student making the request.

If a student enrolls into a face-to-face training module, and is then unable to attend all sessions within that module, they may be required to complete additional assessment tasks that would have been included in the face-to-face sessions. If a student requests to attend a portion of a training module for which they have been absent, at a later date, a fee of \$200 per day (or part of a day) will be incurred.

Fee Protection Mechanisms

As per the requirements for each training program offered by the Australian College of Professionals, course participants are not required to pay more than \$1,500 prior to the commencement of any training program. In cases where the fees for the program exceed \$1,500, the remainder of the fees will be collected by the College from the course participant, throughout the duration of the training program. Each program has specific requirements and the details of these are included in the Course Information Brochures which are forwarded to all potential students and they are also accessible on the College website.

No additional payments over the initial \$1,500 will be required until the course participants have commenced the training program and have completed a proportion of the program equal to the percentage of the course that has already been paid.

All applications for a refund will be dealt with on their merits. In cases of extreme hardship or for other compassionate reasons, a full refund may be granted. This is totally at the discretion of the College Principal.

Fee Administration Policy

The Fee Administration Policy sets out the requirements for the application and management of student fees under the following Smart and Skilled programs:

- Smart and Skilled Entitlement Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Full Qualifications
- Smart and Skilled Targeted Priorities Prevocational and Part Qualifications

Charging Fees

There are five categories of student fees. The College will charge the student the relevant fee set by the NSW Government. This fee will be determined when the College enters the student data into the Smart and Skilled Provider Calculator.

Fee Categories

1. Standard Student – First Qualification
2. Standard Student – Subsequent Qualification
3. Traineeship (for qualifications offered as part of a traineeship pathway)
4. Concession
5. Exemption
6. Fee Free Scholarship

Standard Student – First Qualification

The Standard Student – First Qualification fee applies to students who do not already hold a post-school qualification from any tertiary sector. Qualifications include vocational and higher education qualifications achieved in Australia or overseas at any time previously.

Qualifications not deemed to be post-school qualifications are qualifications achieved:

- While at school as part of an individual's secondary education
- Prior to turning 17

The following qualifications have also been determined not to be classified as post-school qualifications:

- Certificate I level qualifications
- Smart and Skilled Entitlement Foundation Skills
- Any other foundation skills qualification that is aimed at developing foundation skills as identified in the "National Foundation Skills Strategy" (up to and including Certificate III), including:
 - English language, literacy and numeracy (such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, digital literacy and use of mathematical ideas)
 - Employability skills (such as collaboration, problem solving, self-management, learning and information and communication technology skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life)

- Certificate IV NSW Tertiary Preparation Certificate.

Students who hold any of the above qualifications will pay the First Qualification Fee to the College.

The First Qualification fee also applies to fees for 15 – 17 year olds regardless of any previous qualification.

Standard Student – Subsequent Qualification Fee

Standard Student – Subsequent Qualification Fee applies to students who already hold a previous post-school qualification from any tertiary sector. This category includes vocational and higher education qualifications achieved in Australia or overseas at any time previously.

Where a student completes a Smart and Skilled qualification and enrolls in another Smart and Skilled qualification (except an apprenticeship or traineeship), the student will be charged the Standard Student – Subsequent Qualification fee for the subsequent qualification.

Traineeship fees

Under the NSW Government Fee Free Traineeship Initiative, NSW trainees that commence their training on or after 1 January 2020 may be eligible for fee-free training.

Fee-Free Scholarships

Students commencing training after 1 January 2016, may be eligible for a Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarship. To be eligible for this Scholarship, individuals must first meet the Smart and Skilled eligibility rules for the relevant program. In addition, individuals must be:

- Aged between 15 and 30 (inclusive) at the start date for training
- Eligible for a concession fee (i.e. a Commonwealth welfare recipient)
- Undertaking a full qualification under Smart and Skilled

Individuals are eligible for one scholarship per financial year, and a maximum of two scholarships over four financial years (ending 30 June 2020).

Fee-free scholarships are a category of “Fee Exemption”, meaning that Fee-Free Scholarship recipients are exempt from paying student fees.

Domestic and Family Violence

People who have experienced or are experiencing domestic and family violence or their dependants must have a letter of recommendation from a domestic and family violence service refugee of other support agency.

Out-of-Home Care

There are two types of Out-of-Home Care:

1. Statutory Care

Where the Children’s Court has made a Care Order placing the child or young person in the parental responsibility of the Minister for Family and Community Services.

2. Supported Care

Where the Secretary of Family and Community Services forms the opinion that the child or young person is in need of care and protection.

If you meet this eligibility criteria please contact your ACOP representative for further information of required evidence.

Social Housing

NSW Social Housing include tenants of:

- Public housing (owned and managed by the Government)
- Community housing (owned and/or managed by community housing providers)
- Aboriginal housing (owned and/or managed by the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) and Aboriginal Community Housing Providers)
- Crisis accommodation/support accommodation (Specialist Homelessness Services)
- Private rental assistance managed by Housing NSW (for example: rental bond loans, tenancy guarantees, tenancy facilitation and private rental brokerage)

If you meet this eligibility criteria, please contact your ACOP representative for further information of required evidence.

Additional Costs to Students

Course fees quoted to student by the College are specifically to cover the cost of the training fees. Should there be any additional costs, the College will advise the student at the time of enrolment.

Recovery of Outstanding Fees

It is an expectation that students will pay their fees within the nominated timeframe provided by the College. If there are outstanding fees, the College will take the following action for the recovery of these fees.

1. The student will be provided with a reminder notice within 14 days of the fees being noted as “overdue”
2. If the outstanding fees are not paid within 7 days of the reminder notice, the student will be contacted personally to discuss options – notes of this contact will be maintained in the student file. These options will include
 - a. Payment plan
 - b. Further recovery action
3. If the student does not choose to pay the outstanding fees or accept a payment plan, the invoice will be referred to an external debt recovery agency to commence collection services. The cost incurred for this recovery will be added to the outstanding invoice amount to be met by the student.
4. No Academic Transcript or Statement of Attainment will be issued to students until all outstanding fees have been paid.

Consumer Protection Policy

Under Smart & Skilled funding arrangements, the College has implemented policies and procedures for dealing with participant's complaints, grievances and appeals in a constructive and timely manner. These policies and procedures fall in line with ASQA requirements and the NSW Quality Framework.

For complete documentation regarding student procedures please see Australian College of Professionals' Participant Handbook.

Consumer Protection Strategy

The Consumer Protection Strategy ensures students receive training consistent with the national VET regulator's requirements (the Australian Skills Quality Authority) and requirements for training providers regarding Smart and Skilled contract.

The strategy covers:

- Students rights and obligations
- Students protection obligations of training providers
- Explanation of the measures the NSW Department of Industry has implemented to protect the rights of students of Smart and Skilled training
- Complaints handling and dispute resolution process
- Lists of other agencies to assist in complaints handling process

The full Consumer Protection Strategy can be downloaded from training.nsw.gov.au

Student Rights

Students enrolled in a training program with the Australian College of Professionals are to be made aware of their student rights and obligations.

All students have the right to:

- expect that the education and training they receive will be of a quality consistent with ASQA regulations and Smart and Skilled Contract requirements
- be informed about personal information that is collected about them and the right to review and correct that information
- have access to the College's consumer protection complaints system
- have all disputes handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution and a written outcome will be given to the client.
- have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the complaints and appeals procedure
- be provided with details of external authorities they may approach, if required
- have all complaints or appeals managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible
- be informed that the Australian College of Professionals will attempt to resolve any complaints fairly and equitably
- raise any matters of concern relating to training delivery and assessment, the quality of the teaching, client amenities, discrimination, sexual harassment and other issues that may arise.
- be informed that the Australian College of Professionals will encourage the parties to approach a complaint with an open view and to attempt to resolve problems

through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation, we acknowledge the need for an appropriate external and independent agent to mediate between the parties.

- be informed that nothing in this procedure inhibits the client's rights to pursue other legal remedies. Clients are entitled to resolve any dispute by exercising their rights to other legal remedies. Clients wishing to take this course of action are advised to contact a solicitor
- The College has an obligation to provide quality training and support to all students. The College will ensure that all students are informed about their subsidised training entitlements, their fees and responsibilities and obligations.

Student Obligations

All students have obligations, including but not limited, to:

- providing accurate information to the College
- behaving in a responsible and ethical manner.

Consumer Protection Measures

The Smart and Skilled website smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au provides information on:

- consumer protection
- training provider obligations, minimum standards and grievance procedures
- the escalation of complaints and Smart and Skilled's dispute resolution process

You will also find a link to an online form for making an enquiry or complaint, or giving feedback.

Procedures for Dealing with Complaints and Appeals

Step 1: Student discusses complaint with training provider

A student can discuss their complaint with the College. (If Training Services NSW receives a complaint, they will ask if the student has lodged their complaint with the College and if the College responded.)

The first point of contact for complaints and appeals at the College is the Training Manager, Megan Gravas, who deals with all consumer protection issues. She can be contacted at the College on 1300 88 48 10 or alternatively via email on enquiries@acop.edu.au

The Australian College of Professionals has implemented policies and procedures for dealing with student's complaints, grievances and appeals in a constructive and timely manner. The policies and procedures ensure that:

- each complaint and appeal and its outcome is recorded in writing;
- each complaint and appeal can be heard by an independent person or panel; and
- each complainant and appellant:
 - has an opportunity to formally present his or her case; and
 - is given a written statement of the complaint or appeal outcome, including reasons for the decision.

All complaints and appeals are in the first instance referred to the College Principal for her information and attention. Any appeal made by a student against any training and assessment process or outcome, must be lodged with the College within 4 months of that decision or outcome.

All complaints and appeals are treated with the utmost confidentiality. There will be no discrimination against any person who makes a complaint or appeal.

The Principal shall mediate in an endeavour to resolve the complaint or appeal in the first instance.

If the complaint or appeal cannot be resolved internally then the matter is to be referred to a mutually agreeable independent body for resolution. The Australian College of Professionals will refer complaints for mediation to the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre and the cost of this will be met by the College. The decision of the independent review officer shall be binding on both parties.

When a student appeals a decision by Australian College of Professionals, the Admin and Compliance Manager must appoint, at no expense to the student, an independent external arbiter to conduct the appeal and propose a resolution. The independent, external arbiter must be acceptable to both parties. The student is also entitled to nominate a person of their choice to be a second person to conduct the appeal and propose a resolution (at no cost to Australian College of Professionals).

Step 2: Student contacts Training Services NSW

If the student does not feel that the complaint was resolved with the College or by the external arbiter, they can contact Training Services NSW by:

- Email: smartandskilled.enquiries@industry.nsw.gov.au
- Phone on 13 28 11
- In person at a Training Services NSW centre

The Smart and Skilled customer support centre can provide:

- information and advice on your rights
- support with your complaint or dispute, including:
 - a process for progressing any unresolved complaint
 - referrals to other agencies that can help with specific complaints within their scope
 - a mediation service to help you resolve your complaint with the training provider.

Step 3: Training Services NSW offers dispute assistance

Training Services NSW will ask the student a series of questions to understand their complaint. A Training Services NSW officer will investigate the complaint and will attempt to resolve the matter through information and mediation.

The officer will contact the College and the student to help them to resolve the matter.

A resolution of any complaint or dispute is not guaranteed. The officer will inform the consumer and provider when they believe Training Services NSW has done all it can to assist the parties. Then it is up to the parties to seek a more formal process to resolve their dispute.

Repeat Attempts to Complete a Unit of Competency

Students are provided with the initial and then two (2) following attempts to gain competency in any given module or unit of training. Trainer support will be provided throughout this process at no additional cost. During this support process, students will also be offered the opportunity to attend an in-class workshop (if available) at no additional cost. If a student is found Not Yet Competent after submitting an assessment task on three (3) occasions, they will be offered the option to attend an in-class workshop, have an individual tutorial or have further Trainer Support. Each of these options will incur a fee after a third unsuccessful attempt.

Wellbeing of under 18 year olds

The College will report any concerns about the safety, welfare and well-being of students protected under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012, to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services and Justice in accordance with the legislative requirements.

All ACOP trainer and assessors have completed child-related screening and have been approved to work with children under the age of 18.

Student Support and Assistance throughout the Program

All Enrolled Students will have access to trainer support for the duration of their course. Support is available to students via phone or email. Students are encouraged to make use of the trainer support available to them, as repeat attempts to complete a unit of competency may incur additional charges as per below. For in-class course assistance, students must contact the College for further information.

Support Services

If a student requires additional support in terms of language, literacy or numeracy, that cannot be addressed by the College, due to the specialised nature of their need, the student will be referred to an external service provider. The point of referral will be the student's local TAFE college.

Declaration of Understanding

All Enrolled Students are required to complete a Declaration of Understanding, which is supplied with this Information Package. Please read the document carefully. You are required to sign the document and return the following page to the College.

An additional copy of the declaration page is included in this document, for you to print and return.

A copy of the signed page will be placed on your individual file.

Appendix 1: Proof of eligibility – Acceptable evidence

Requirement		Evidence	Evidence requirements
Proof of Identity:			
1.	Proof of identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USI. <p>The Provider must ensure validity of the USI. The Department will also check validity with the USI Registry.</p>	Valid USI at enrolment
Smart and skilled eligibility:			
2.	Living or working in NSW	<p>Living in NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any Commonwealth or NSW Government issued document providing evidence of living location, or <p>If the student does not live in NSW, Working in NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> employer-issued document confirming employment in NSW. 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
3.	Citizenship: Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen and permanent Australian resident	<p>Australian citizen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian birth certificate; or Australian Passport; or Certificate of Australian Citizenship (Naturalisation Certificate); or Green Medicare Card. <p>New Zealand citizen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Zealand birth certificate; or New Zealand Passport; or Green Medicare Card. <p>Permanent Australian resident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status (CERS), which confirms status as an Australian permanent resident; or use the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) facility to confirm status as Australian permanent resident and check passport; or Green Medicare Card. 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
4.	Humanitarian visa holder (Refugee or asylum seeker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant visa documentation; or ImmiCard (where appropriate) <p>If the student holds a Bridging Visa, the student must provide a document from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection acknowledging that the bridging visa is linked to an application for a humanitarian visa. For additional information, refer to Appendix 6: Refugees and asylum seekers.</p>	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
5.	Home schooled students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of current certificate of home schooling registration, which clearly indicates the period of time for which the student will be home schooled 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
6.	Date of birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USI data 	USI checks date of birth
7.	Registration as NSW apprentice or new entrant trainee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Contract identifier (TCID) number 	Department system check against details of approved or registered Training Contract stored in the Department's database
8.	Previous qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department's system may check against Smart and Skilled records and/or USI academic transcript records. 	Student declaration/signature at enrolment
9.	Year 10 completion or equivalent (if under 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that student has met school leaving age requirement 	Student declaration/signature at enrolment
10.	Postcode for Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander on borders	N/A	Student declaration/signature at enrolment

Concession fee eligibility:			
11.	Concession Fee: Commonwealth Government Benefit Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a letter from the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) confirming receipt of the benefit. The letter should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) and the benefit or allowance category; or a current concession card that shows the CRN and clearly shows the benefit or allowance category; or a current Centrelink income statement that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category; or any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and the benefit or allowance category; or documentary evidence from the Department of Veterans' Affairs stating their pension/benefits status; or for people applying for Austudy or Youth Allowance, an approval letter from Centrelink that shows the CRN and indicates that commencement date of their benefit is within two weeks of their enrolment or two weeks within the date of the first class attendance or participation in training 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
12.	Concession Fee: Dependant of Commonwealth Government Benefit Recipient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dependant child, spouse or partner of someone who is receiving a specified Commonwealth Government benefit or allowance, must provide documentary evidence that Centrelink recognises the student as the dependant <p>The evidence must clearly show the CRN of the benefit or Commonwealth Government benefit recipient.</p>	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
Exemptions, waivers and fee-free training eligibility:			
13.	Fee Exemption: Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	N/A	Student declaration/signature
14.	Fee Exemption: Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a letter from Centrelink confirming receipt of the Disability Support Pension. The letter should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN); or a current Disability Pensioner Concession Card that shows the CRN; or a current Centrelink income statement for the Disability Support Pension, which clearly shows that income is for the disability pension and also shows the CRN; or any other evidence that clearly shows the CRN and confirms receipt of the Disability Support Pension; or documentary evidence of support demonstrating a clear additional need as a result of the student's disability. This evidence must be a letter or statement from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a medical practitioner; or an appropriate government agency such as Veteran's Affairs or a TAFE NSW teacher consultant (for a student with a disability), a school counsellor or special education coordinator, Centrelink, a Disability Service Provider, or a Job Capacity Assessor; or a specialist allied health professional (including a rehabilitation counsellor, psychologist, speech pathologist, or occupational therapist). 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider

15	Fee Exemption: Dependant of a person with a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentary evidence that Centrelink recognises the student as a dependant child, spouse or partner of someone who is receiving a Commonwealth Government Disability Support Pension. <p>The evidence should clearly show the Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) of the Disability Support Pension recipient.</p>	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
16	Fee Waiver: Refugee or Asylum Seeker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per requirement 4 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
17	Fee-free training - Fee-free Scholarship (Concession eligible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per requirement 11 or 12, Concession Fee A concession student who meets the requirements for Social housing status will be given priority. 	Student declaration/signature at enrolment
18	Fee-free training - Fee-Free Scholarship (Out-of-Home Care eligible)	<p>For a student currently in out-of-home care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the Children's Court Care Order, or A copy of the 'Confirmation of Placement' letter, or A letter from Family and Community Services or the Out-of-Home Care Designated Agency verifying that the student is in statutory or supported care, or Any other evidence which clearly shows that the student is in out-of-home care. <p>For a student previously in out-of-home care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the expired Children's Court Care Order, or A copy of the 'leaving care' letter from the Minister for Family and Community Services, or A letter from Family and Community Services verifying the student was previously in statutory or supported care, or Any other evidence which clearly shows that the student was previously in out-of-home care. 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
19	Fee-free training - Fee-Free Scholarship (Domestic and Family Violence eligible)	<p>A letter of recommendation is required from a domestic and family violence service, refuge or other support agency such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Aid NSW through their Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services, or Organisations who provide Integrated Domestic Family Violence Services, or Organisations who provide <i>Staying Home, Leaving Violence</i> services, or Organisations who deliver Specialist Homelessness Services (i.e. refuges and crisis accommodation), or Domestic Violence NSW, or Any other organisation which clearly shows that the student is or has been previously receiving support services for domestic and family violence (for example a non-government organisation or charity that is self-funded). 	Evidence sighted or collected by Provider
20	Fee-free training - Entitlement Foundation Skills	N/A	Student enrolment in the Program
21	Fee-free training - Fee-free Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of commencement of Smart and Skilled training must be 1 July 2018 or later <p>For additional information, refer to Appendix 7: Fee-free Apprenticeships</p>	Student declaration/signature at enrolment

22.	Fee-free training – Fee-free Traineeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date of commencement of Smart and Skilled training must be 1 January 2020 or later <p>For additional information, refer to Appendix 8: Fee-free Traineeships</p>	Student declaration/signature at enrolment
23.	Fee-free training – Skilling for Recovery Initiative	<p>For evidence requirements, refer to Appendix 9: Skilling for Recovery Initiative</p>	Student declaration/signature at enrolment
Loading to Provider: Evidence Requirements			
24.	Needs Loading: Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student that meets eligibility/evidence requirements for a fee exemption based on being an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander will automatically attract a loading (as per requirement 13) 	
25.	Needs Loading: Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student that meets eligibility/evidence requirements for a fee exemption based on Disability will automatically attract a loading (as per requirement 14). <p>Dependants of a recipient of a Disability Support Pension do not attract a loading.</p>	
26.	Needs: Long-term unemployed – over 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter from Employment Service Provider is required 	
27.	Location Loading: Residential address – regional or remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per requirement 2 	

NOTE:

- All evidence must be able to be verified by the Provider. At the Department's discretion, the Department may request a copy of the evidence or proof that the evidence has been sighted.
- Where evidence is sighted but not kept, a record that confirms sighting of the evidence and a description of the evidence, must be maintained by the Provider. The record must be dated and signed by a person authorised by the Provider. The name of the signatory and their position should also be captured.
- Where the evidence provided by the student is a copy of the original, the copy must be certified by a person who is on the list of approved witnesses who can verify documents. A list of which is available at the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department website at: www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Pages/Statutorydeclarationsignatorylist.aspx
- If a student declares their status in relation to a disability, concession or long-term unemployment or identify as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander at a point in time **after** enrolment, the Provider must:
 - sight or collect the relevant evidence within 28 days of being notified by the student, and
 - abide by the **Declaring Student Status after Enrolment Policy (Version 2.0)**, located in the Support Documents section of STS Online.

DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING FORM

I, Armin Marth
(First, middle and last name)

of 38 Alliot Mews, Edmondson Park NSW 2174
(current residential address)

with date of birth 25 / 04 / 1989

declare that:

- ◆ I have read and understood the Australian College of Professionals' Smart & Skilled Information Guide – including the Consumer Protection Policy and Fee Administration Policy
- ◆ I have been offered access to learning support
- ◆ I have been provided with a course information outline relating to the course in which I have enrolled
- ◆ I have been advised of the accreditation status of the course
- ◆ I have been advised of the qualification I will be entitled to receive on successful completion of the course
- ◆ I understand the College procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals
- ◆ I understand my rights and obligations as a course participant
- ◆ I have read and understood the Smart & Skilled Information Guide, Fee Policy AND Consumer Protection Policy provided to me by the College
- ◆ I understand that the first point of contact for a complaint is the Australian College of Professionals and that I may direct my complaint to Smart & Skilled only if not resolved by both parties – being myself and the Australian College of Professionals.
- ◆ I understand and agree that, under the *Data Provision Requirements 2012*, Data Provision Requirements 2012, the Australian College of Professionals is required to collect personal information about me and to disclose that personal information to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER).

My personal information (including the personal information contained on this enrolment form), may be used or disclosed by the Australian College of Professionals for statistical, administrative, regulatory and research purposes. The Australian College of Professionals may disclose my personal information for these purposes to:

- Commonwealth and State or Territory government departments and authorised agencies; and
- NCVER.

Personal information that has been disclosed to NCVER may be used or disclosed by NCVER for the following purposes:

- populate authenticated VET transcripts;
- facilitate statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage;
- pre-populate RTO student enrolment forms;
- understand how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information; and
- administer VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.

I may receive a student survey which may be administered by a government department or NCVER employee, agent or third party contractor or other authorised agencies. Please note you may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose my personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the National VET Data Policy and all NCVER policies and protocols (including those published on NCVER's website at www.ncver.edu.au).

I declare that the information I have provided to the best of my knowledge is true and correct.

I consent to the collection, use and disclosure of my Personal Information in the manner outlined above.

Note: If the student is under 18 years of age at the time of giving consent, then the consent of the student's guardian is required.

Print Full Name: Armin Marth

Signature: A Marth Date: 24 / 01 / 2025

Guardian's Details (if required)

Print Full Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

TRAINEESHIP ONLY

Organisation: _____

Employers Full Name: _____

Employer's Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING FORM

I, Armin Marth

(First, middle and last name)

of 38 Alliot Mews, Edmondson Park NSW 2174

(current residential address)

with date of birth 25 / 04 / 1989

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Guardian's Details (if required)

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TRAINEESHIP ONLY

Organisation: _____

Employers Full Name: _____

Employer's Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____