



PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK CONTENTS

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Welcome

to the Australian College of Professionals

Dear Course Participant,

Welcome to the Australian College of Professionals. Thank you for choosing our College to assist you in this, the training and assessment phases of your career.

All courses offered by the College are developed in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

To ensure that applicants are provided with the most up-to-date information concerning the services provided by Registered Training Organisations, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has determined that a number of matters must be brought to the attention of a course participant at the time of application. The Registering Body, ASQA, has set out the rules that govern a Registered Training Organisation as a number of Standards. A number of those Standards have been included in this Introduction for your information.

Your instructors and assessors are experienced, highly qualified and accredited both practically and theoretically in their chosen field of expertise. Please do not hesitate to approach them with any concerns you may have about your course or the associated assessment tasks.

I trust that your learning experience with the Australian College of Professionals is positive, and that your learning and career objectives are furthered through your experience with our College.

Again, welcome to our College and I trust that you will have an enjoyable learning experience whilst you are enrolled in our training programmes. We look forward to assisting you in every way possible.

Roslyn Sullivan, PhD

Director and College Principal

Ph.D. (Education); B.A. (Hons) Psychology & Education; Diploma of Education;
Diploma of Training & Assessment; Licensed Real Estate Agent; Accredited Auctioneer; J.P.

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONALS -

The Australian College of Professionals is a Registered Training Organisation, which commenced trading in December 2003 and was created for the purpose of providing the most efficient and cost effective training to our clients.

The College has been created in conformity with the Standards for the Registered Training Organisation as prescribed by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

The College consists of a dedicated team of instructors, assessors and administration staff. Our instructors and assessors consist of people with extensive experience in the areas in which they train and assess. Should you have any problems or queries, please do not hesitate to contact a team member who will assist you.

ABSENTEEISM -

Course participants who are unable to attend scheduled lessons or assessment activities must contact the receptionist or nominated instructor or assessor before the scheduled time. Alternative arrangements will be made for the session to be undertaken at a different time, or additional materials and/or assessments may be provided by the instructor.

ACCESS AND EQUITY AND CLIENT SERVICE -

One of our major aims is to ensure that the training, assessment and qualifications provided to course participants do not in any way discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, creed, religion, sex or physical or intellectual disabilities.

The Australian College of Professionals will ensure that all endeavours are made to assist you to undertake any course provided by the Australian College of Professionals. All courses will be structured where possible to meet your particular needs.

ADVERTISING -

When the Australian College of Professionals advertises courses, the advertisement will detail the name of the course, qualification outcome and details of accreditation. All advertisements will comply with relevant legislative requirements for equal opportunity and access and equity, as well as the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.

Participants responding to advertisements should note the course name and date included in the advertisement.

The College has a website that provides all details of dates, venues, course outlines and outcomes for each training event being offered.

AMENITIES FOR COURSE PARTICIPANTS –

Amenities are provided for the comfort of course participants. These include where appropriate:

- Light refreshment facilities
- Photocopying facilities (authorisation required)
- Telephone facilities (authorisation required)
- Counselling and referral facilities
- Toilet facilities
- Disabled access (at most venues – some require pre-arrangement)

Course participants are required to properly use these facilities. Damage to any facility should be immediately reported to an instructor, assessor or the College Principal.

ASSESSMENTS -

You will be granted the right to appeal the result of any assessment. In the first instance you are requested to further discuss the assessment with your assessor. If this action does not resolve the issue then the Principal and the Operations Manager will review the assessment program and result. If appropriate, the Principal will arrange a further assessment either on the original assessment program or on a program the Principal considers more appropriate.

If you are still not satisfied with the result of the assessment, the matter will be referred to ASQA for determination. The governing body will then appoint an independent person to review the assessment program and result. The decision of the independent review officer shall be binding on both parties.

In all cases a written record of the outcome of the appeal will be supplied to all parties. A copy will be placed with the appeals records for future review when considering the Australian College of Professionals policies and strategies regarding matters arising from the appeal.

Appeals will be dealt with promptly. When appeals are dealt with internally, this will occur within seven (7) days of receipt of the appeal. When dealt with by an external authority, all endeavours will be made to ensure that the appeal is resolved as expediently as possible.

ASSESSMENT POLICY AND APPEALS -

Assessments are conducted for all courses delivered by the Australian College of Professionals. Your instructor will outline the assessment procedure and requirements for your course at the induction to the course. If you require further information please speak to your instructor or the Course Co-ordinator.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a training course or assessment you may appeal the decision. The appeal process will be provided to students as part of the complaint process. If you require any further information please speak to your instructor, the Operations Manager or the Principal.

If you have any other complaint or grievance please immediately bring it to the notice of one of the following personnel:

- your instructor,
- your assessor,
- the Operations Manager, or
- the College Principal

All complaints or appeals are dealt with in the strictest confidence and there will be no reprisals for any person raising any issue. The management of the Australian College of Professionals is extremely anxious to ensure that all courses and assessments are conducted in a proper manner.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS -

Because of the flexible delivery options available, some subjects involve projects, assignments and a range of other learning and assessment activities. Instructors will provide written project and assignment outlines as required for these activities. Instructors will also indicate the due dates for projects and the completion of other activities. If you have any difficulty meeting these time constraints, please speak to your instructors.

Course participants are encouraged to plan their study activities to ensure that projects are completed on time. If you are having any difficulty please immediately discuss the problem with your instructor or assessor.

ATTENDANCE -

Course participants are required to attend courses as advised in the course material or as requested by the instructor or assessor. Frequent absence or lateness may result in non-achievement of some assessments and not attaining the required qualification.

CODE OF PRACTICE –

A Code of Practice has been developed and endorsed by the staff and management of the Australian College of Professionals. It provides a framework for the delivery of training and assessment. A copy of the Code of Practice is retained by the Operations Manager and can be accessed at a suitable time by contacting that officer during business hours.

COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING –

Accredited courses delivered by the Australian College of Professionals are competency based, which means that training is delivered, based on the nationally recognised Units of Competency developed by the relevant industry.

Assessments are conducted against these Units of Competency. When a course participant can demonstrate competency or show that they can demonstrate their understanding or ability, they can be assessed as competent. If a course participant is not successful on the first attempt, they are provided with written feedback as to the problem areas and arrangements are made for a further assessment.

COMPLIANCE WITH COMMONWEALTH, STATE AND TERRITORY LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS -

We are required to ensure compliance with Commonwealth, State/Territory legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to our operations.

This requirement will include, but is not be limited to the following legislation:

Commonwealth Legislation:

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Privacy Act And National Privacy Principles (2001)
- Skilling Australia's Workforce Bill 2005
- Skilling Australia's Workforce (Repeal and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2005.

State Based Legislation

- Vocational Education and Training Act 2005
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001 NSW
- NSW Anti-discrimination Act (1977)
- Workers Compensation Regulation 2003
- Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Regulation 2002
- Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act (1986)
- WorkCover Legislation Amendment Act (1996 No. 120)
- Dangerous Goods (General) Regulation 1999
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (as amended 2002)
- Copyright Act, 1879. 42 Vic No 20 (modified 2006)
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998.
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001

Legislation can be viewed online at www.austlii.edu.au and www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

Our College is associated with its parent company, Leverage Australia, which is a legal firm. One of the many benefits of this association is that the legal entity provides advice and practical support from a legal perspective to its staff and course participants in relation to up-to-date course content and current case law.

All College staff have been fully informed of the requirements of relevant legislation and the need to comply with its requirements. You will be given advice on these requirements during the course. Should you have any questions concerning this area please speak to your instructor or assessor.

One of our major goals is to ensure that all clients are able to participate in a safe and harassment free environment. Immediate action will be taken to rectify any breach of the relevant legislation.

COUNSELLING FOR COURSE PARTICIPANTS –

Course participants requiring assistance or counselling related to their studies should first speak to their instructor or assessor who will arrange for a referral to the appropriate staff member.

COURSE INSTRUCTORS AND ASSESSORS -

Course instructors and assessors are selected against strict criteria, which ensure that they possess the highest qualifications for delivering the course materials and conducting the assessment in your chosen course.

The instructors and assessors of the Australian College of Professionals are required to participate in an ongoing skills development program to ensure that they are up-to-date with the latest technical and practical knowledge in the area in which they are training or assessing.

All instructors and assessors are required to have training and assessor qualifications to the minimum level of Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

COURSE OUTLINE -

A course outline has been developed for all accredited courses delivered by the Australian College of Professionals. This will have been delivered to you on application to undertake a course.

COURSE PARTICIPANT RECORDS –

Course participants are required to provide information of any change in the information provided at the time of registration. This is to ensure that all records are correct and that any contact details for the course participant or appropriate persons in emergencies are accurate.

Course participants may access their personnel files during business hours by making arrangements with the College Operations Manager. Personnel records may not be removed from the premises and can only be viewed in the presence of the Operations Manager or their delegate.

COURSE PARTICIPANT SELECTION -

Course participants are not accepted into a training or assessment course until all required forms have been properly completed and returned to the instructor, assessor or College Principal.

All successful applicants will receive an acknowledgement verifying the course to be undertaken, commencing date and other relevant information.

EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF RECORDS -

The College will maintain enrolments and participation records for each course participant. This information will be retained in a separate confidential file for each course participant.

The information will include your:

- commencement date
- participation in each phase of the course
- completion date and qualification obtained.

If you fail to complete the course or pass assessment, the reasons for such failure with the instructor, assessor or Principal's comments will also be recorded.

Your records will contain details of fees paid and refunds given. Appropriate receipts will be supplied for all money paid to the Australian College of Professionals.

On application to your instructor/assessor or the Principal, you will be granted free access to your current records during normal business hours. If you seek access to archived records, you will be required to pay a retrieval fee.

EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES -

All fees paid in advance are deposited into a separate fees account and retained in that account until the appropriate service has been provided.

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.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

- There are no refunds for cancellations less than 24 hours prior to commencement of the training.
- For cancellations less than fourteen (14) days prior to the training course, the College will transfer your enrolment to another date but no refund will apply.

- For cancellations more than fourteen (14) days prior to the training course, an administration fee of 20% of the course fee will apply.
- For course transfers less than 24 hours prior to the commencement of the training, an administration fee of 50% of the course fee will apply.

ENROLMENT -

All course participants are required to complete an enrolment form, which has been supplied to the applicant upon enquiry or can be accessed through the College website. The form must be completed prior to commencing a training or assessment course. The documents should be returned to the instructor, assessor or Operations Manager. This information is used to create the personnel file for the course participant and a copy will be placed with that file.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS AND EQUITY –

The Australian College of Professionals has developed policies to ensure access and equality and client services. We have also developed policies to guard against discrimination and harassment.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES –

There are many reasons for the full or partial evacuation of the premises.

These reasons may include:

- Fire
- Medical Emergency
- Bomb Threat
- External Emergency.

During the induction, the evacuation procedures will be explained. Should you be advised to evacuate the premises, please do so in accordance with these procedures. Always obey the directions of the instructors and the safety wardens.

FEEDBACK –

On the completion of each training or assessment course, course participants are asked to complete an evaluation form. This is not a compulsory part of the course. However, feedback to course participants is an invaluable resource in maintaining the standard and quality of our training and assessment courses.

The College Principal in consultation with the instructors and assessors, reviews this material. The inclusion of a course participant's name is optional.

INDUCTIONS -

At the commencement of the first session, participants will complete a course induction. The induction will be conducted either by an instructor or the operations Manager. The induction will include:

- An overview of the training facilities
- Discussion on participant handbook content
- Introduction to relevant instructors and assessors
- Discussion of course outline including any particular requirements
- Outline of assessment requirements for the course
- Information relating to Recognition of Prior Learning
- Supply of relevant material and advise on any additional material required

Participants are encouraged to take the opportunity during the induction to raise any questions they may have regarding the course or any other particular concern.

If for any reason you are unable to attend the induction, please advise the instructor or the College Principal in order that the induction can be conducted at another convenient time.

LEARNING MATERIAL –

The Australian College of Professionals undertakes to provide a wide range of current and relevant learning and training material and resources that maintain industry standards and operation.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY SUPPORT –

The Australian College of Professionals can arrange access to specialist support for course participants who require additional support with literacy, numeracy and study skills. Course participants should initially discuss these requirements with the instructor or Operations Manager. The College seeks to ensure that course participants obtain the best possible support to help them complete their studies whilst maintaining the strictest confidence.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICIES –

The Australian College of Professionals undertakes to provide a safe learning environment that conforms with the State and Commonwealth legislative requirements.

Course participants are reminded to observe safe work practices when completing training activities on the premises of the Australian College of Professionals or in premises hired by the College.

When moving or lifting any equipment, course participants should observe standard workplace principles for safety. If in doubt, always seek advice from an instructor or another College staff member.

Course participants are required to report to an instructor, assessor or the Operations Manager any damaged or faulty equipment or any other dangerous situation.

Any injuries received by any person are to be immediately reported to an instructor, assessor or the Operations Manager.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY –

The Australian College of Professionals is firmly committed to providing a healthy and safe workplace for all employees, contractors and visitors. The management team of the College considers Occupational Health and Safety an integral part of the business. As a business, the College is committed to the reduction and control of accidents that can result in injury to employees, contractors and visitors. This will be achieved by the development, implementation and maintenance of Occupational Health and Safety systems, procedures and standards in line with the Health and Family Services Guidelines.

The Australian College of Professionals shall recognise and work within the bounds of all relevant State Occupational Health and Safety Workers Compensation regulations. In order to minimise work related injuries and illness, the College will provide safe work facilities, equipment, resources and the training necessary to assist in maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

If an employee sustains a work related injury or illness, the College will make every effort to provide a suitable occupational rehabilitation program. This practice assists in a speedy recovery and minimises the time lost from work.

Occupational Health and Safety is both an individual and shared responsibility in which everyone employed by the College must ensure their jobs are performed safely. The College aims to safely match a person to a task with the use of regular health screenings.

The management team of the Australian College of Professionals are responsible for:

- Integrating occupational health and safety into all aspects of the workplace;
- Promoting communication about occupational health and safety as a normal component of all aspects of work;
- Planning, developing, implementing and monitoring a workplace health and safety program;
- Taking effective action to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

The employees of the Australian College of Professionals are responsible for:

- Working in a safe and healthy manner;
- Encouraging others to work in a safe and healthy manner and discouraging others from working in an unsafe manner;
- Cooperating with, supporting and promoting workplace health and safety;
- Reporting or rectifying any unsafe conditions that come to their attention;
- Observing safe work practices, using safety equipment and clothing, if and when appropriate.

The College's Occupational Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:

- Endeavouring to reach consensus through the process of joint consultation;
- Working with others with responsibilities for managing workplace health and safety.

The success of this policy depends upon the commitment of all team members towards maintaining a safe and healthy workplace throughout all Company operations.

PAYMENT OF FEES -

Course participants are advised of all costs prior to enrolling in a course. On the payment of fees, course participants will be issued with an official receipt. Course participants should retain this receipt.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS -

The Australian College of Professionals has implemented policies and procedures for dealing with participant'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.

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.

In appropriate cases, the matter can be referred to ASQA.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) –

What is Recognition of Prior Learning?

Recognition of Prior Learning (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.

Recognition of Prior Learning 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;

What Fees apply for Recognition of Prior Learning?

The Australian College of Professionals charges course participants a fee for undertaking the Recognition of Prior Learning process. These fees are calculated on a small portion of the cost of the training that the participant would have needed to attend. Details of these fees can be found on the College website or from any of the College team.

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 assessors who can carry out these assessments.

How to Gain Recognition for 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 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 conform 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 instructor or the Operations Manager about the standards of competence required for successful assessment in your selected course.
- **Self-assessment** Use the Self-Assessment Checklist provided with your training materials to ascertain if you possess the required competencies.
- **Evidence** Obtain the necessary evidence to support your application, which will establish that you have attained the required competence. It is essential that you speak to your instructor or the Operations Manager for information regarding the documentation that will be required. This will save you unnecessary costs in obtaining information or documentation that is not necessary.
- **Post assessment:** The course participant is provided with the result of the application and, if unsuccessful, given advise 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.

RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS ISSUED BY OTHER REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS -

We recognise the Australian Quality Framework qualifications and Transcript of Academic Record and Statements of Attainment issued by any other Registered Training Organisation.

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

SELF-PACED LEARNING -

Where a training or assessment course includes a component of self paced learning, all course participants will be given ready access to assessors and instructors to assist them with their research and study requirements.

SMOKING -

The Australian College of Professionals conducts a smoke free environment. Any course participant wishing to smoke must do so outside the confines of the building and all training facilities utilised by the College.

STUDY RESOURCES -

The Australian College of Professionals maintains a comprehensive range of study resources to assist course participants in their studies. Some of this material may be borrowed for study purposes. The loan of this material must be arranged through your instructor, assessor or the Operations Manager. Any material borrowed must be recorded in the Equipment Loan Register and signed for by the course participant and authorised by the instructor, assessor, Operations Manager or College Principal.

Course participants may be required to pay the replacement cost for any loss or damage to borrowed equipment or materials.

THE ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES OF QUALIFICATION -

Qualification certificates are issued at the successful completion of a training or assessment program. Prior to the issue of any certificate, the College Principal will examine all relevant documentation and approve the issue of the certificate.

The Australian College of Professionals can only issue Australian Qualification Framework qualifications and Statements of Attainment that meet the requirements of the AQF Implementation Handbook and the endorsed Training Packages and accredited course within the scope of its registration.

If you destroy or misplace your transcript, statement or certificate issued by the College upon the completion of your training program, you will be charged a nominal fee for the re-print of the required document. This fee is set out on the College website.

TRAINING DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENTS -

The delivery of all training and assessments by the Australian College of Professionals complies with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations.

Each training or assessment course has specific resource requirements. The College has procedures in place to ensure that all necessary resources are available prior to the commencement of a training course or assessment.

Accredited training is conducted against competency standards and course outlines required by the relevant industry. Course participants are advised of the units of competence required for each module of their course. Lesson notes are available for all training courses.

Course programs and study material is continuously reviewed and revised through industry consultation. This ensures that the course participant has access to the most up-to-date technical and practical information for the relevant industry.

Training can be delivered through workshops, lectures or on a one-on-one basis. Self-paced material and technology is also utilised. This range of learning allows the College to develop study and assessment programs that best suit the needs of each course participant.

DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING -

All course participants are required to complete a Declaration of Understanding, which is supplied with this Handbook. Please read the document carefully. You are required to sign the document and return it to your instructor or the Operations Manager. A copy of the signed page will be placed on your individual file.

DECLARATION OF UNDERSTANDING FORM

Course title: _____

Commencement date: _____

Induction date: _____

Course commencement date: _____

I, _____

declare that:

- ◆ I have read and understand the Australian College of Professionals' Participant Handbook
- ◆ I understand my obligations and responsibilities as a course participant
- ◆ I have been offered access to learning support
- ◆ I have been provided with a course 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 cancellation and refund policy

Signed: _____

Dated: _____