



**Australian College  
of Community Services**

# Student Handbook

473 Annerley Rd. Annerley, Queensland 4103

GPO BOX 590, Brisbane, Queensland 4001

Phone: 1300 833 328

Fax: 07 3112 4399

Email: [assessment@accs.edu.au](mailto:assessment@accs.edu.au)

Website: [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

# Contents

Welcome.....	3
Access and Equity.....	4
Certificate and Qualifications.....	4
Change of Address Details.....	4
Client Support.....	4
Code of Practice.....	5
Communication with ACCS.....	5
Complaints and Appeals.....	5
Copyright.....	6
National Recognition.....	6
Course Delivery.....	6
Course Extension Policy.....	7
Course Information.....	7
Disclaimer.....	7
Discrimination.....	7
Enrolment.....	8
Feedback.....	8
Fees, and Charges .....	8
Grading of Assessments.....	9
Training and Assessment Strategies .....	9
Language, Literacy and Numeracy.....	10
Laws and Legislation .....	10
Management and Administration.....	10
Marketing.....	11
Nationally Accredited Training.....	11
Plagiarism.....	11
Privacy and Confidentiality.....	12
Recognition of Prior Learning.....	12
Refunds.....	12
Guarantee to Clients.....	12
Staff Responsibilities.....	13
Student Responsibilities.....	13
Study Plan.....	14
Support Services.....	14
Submission of Assessment Materials.....	14
Trainer Qualifications.....	15
Workplace Health and Safety.....	15
Student Handbook Acknowledgment.....	16
Unique Student Identifier.....	16

# Welcome

On behalf of all staff at the Australian College of Community Services (ACCS) we send you a warm welcome and thank you for choosing the Australian College of Community Services for your professional development

As an adult learner it is important for you to be given information about your selected course, and to understand what your rights and responsibilities are whilst studying with us at ACCS (Australian College of Community Services).

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that will be useful to you as a student, and we invite you to read through this handbook and then ask any unanswered questions as needed.

We are committed to providing high quality community services education and creating a relevant and enjoyable adult learning experience for you.

**Our vision** is to enable learners to achieve their chosen career goals by providing flexible access to training and to provide excellence in training and support to assist you on your path to career satisfaction.

## **Our goals:**

- ✓ To provide training that is accessible for everyone
- ✓ Develop course content and material that is accurate, informative, interesting , relevant and compliant
- ✓ Allow learners to choose their learning pathway
- ✓ Make training enjoyable and supportive to ensure we encourage a thirst for knowledge

This handbook will provide you with information about ACCS, the services we provide, how to complete your enrolment and your responsibilities as a student including submission of assessment material.

If you need further information, please call us on: 1300 833 328 or 07 3620 8871, or email [info@accs.edu.au](mailto:info@accs.edu.au)

We also welcome feedback from our students so that we can improve our services.

Once again, welcome! We look forward to working with you.

## Access and Equity

ACCS is committed to applying Access and Equity principles within all services that are provided to students, the community, employers and other clients.

Training services will be offered, regardless of students' cultural background, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, location or age. You have the right to learn in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to be treated in an equitable and considerate manner at all times.

ACCS supports and encourages people of all abilities to participate in training programs. The complete Access and Equity Policy is available on the ACCS website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

## Certificates and Qualifications

On successful completion of your course or unit/s you will be issued with a nationally recognised Certificate or Statement of Attainment within 28 days. If you have completed a qualification your certificate will be accompanied by an Academic Record or Transcript stating the units of competency achieved including the names and codes of those units. If you successfully complete one or more units of competency rather than the whole qualification, you will be issued with a Statement of Attainment with a list of the units, that:

- Meets the AQF requirements;
- Identifies the RTO by its national provider number from the Training.gov.au; and
- Includes the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo in accordance with the current conditions of use.<sup>1</sup>

## Change of Address Details

You must advise ACCS if your address changes after you have enrolled.

## Client Support

### We offer support in:

- ✓ Assessment options including recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- ✓ Options in delivery modes
- ✓ Guidance on career paths
- ✓ One on one trainer support
- ✓ Assistance and support during course enrolment
- ✓ Training needs analysis
- ✓ We cater for people with disabilities and special needs, including Language, Literacy and Numeracy

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<sup>1</sup> National Recognised Training Logo Specification, ASQA 2012

## Code of Practice

As a Registered Training Organisation ACCS operates within the conditions and standards set down by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and the regulating body the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC).

All ACCS staff recognises the rights of learners and provides information, advice and support that are consistent with our Code of Practice. If, at any time, you feel that any staff member is not abiding by our Code of Practice then report your complaints or grievance to your supervisor / trainer or anyone in our organisation, or complete our complaints and appeals form. The Code of Practice is available to download from the ACCS Website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

## Communicating with ACCS

- ✓ Office hours are from 8.30 am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. However you are able to leave telephone messages, send faxes or emails at any time.
- ✓ All letters including faxed letters will be answered within 10 business days of receipt. All emails will be answered within 24-48 business hours of receipt. These response times are contingent upon receipt of all information required to deal with the enquiry. If the matter is more complex and requires additional time to provide a satisfactory response, you will be notified within the above time limits and given an estimated time of completion.
- ✓ If you leave a telephone message during office hours, we will endeavour to return your call on the same day. If you leave a message for a specific staff member, that staff member may be off site training and not available. In these cases, you will be contacted as soon as possible.

## Complaints and Appeals

ACCS has a Customer Complaints and Appeals Procedure to help resolve any issues you may have in relation to your training, for example if you are not happy with any part of the service or program or you wish to appeal an assessment decision, you may have your situation reviewed through these procedures which are available on the ACCS Website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

It is our aim to assist all students to resolve disputes and settle grievances, and receive a fair hearing and outcome.

If you have a concern, your first approach is to discuss this with your trainer. Your trainer should note your concerns and assist you to resolve them. If you are unable to approach your trainer because the problem is between you and them or because the problem is of a personal nature, we encourage you to speak with the CEO/College Manager.

If at any stage you wish to proceed with a formal (written) complaint or appeal, you may do so by completing a Complaint Form or Appeal Form available to download from the ACCS Website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au) . All concerns are handled in the strictest of confidence. Lodging a complaint or appeal will not affect your ability to continue studying or obtain other services that you are eligible to receive from us.

## Copyright

Written permission to use Intellectual Property must be gained from the property owner prior to citing in assessment responses any more than 10% or one chapter (whichever is the greater) of a published work, including work published on the internet. Any reasonable use of excerpts from existing works will include acknowledgment of its origin.

## National Recognition (Direct Credit Transfer)

Direct Credit transfer is the recognition of learning achieved through formal education and training. Under the VET Quality Framework, qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO are to be accepted and recognised by all other RTOs. If you can produce the original or a certified copy of a qualification or Statement of Attainment that is less than five years old for one or more units of competency from an Australian RTO, you will be granted a credit transfer for those unit/s and will not be required to complete further assessments for that unit/s.

## Course Delivery

ACCS training ensures that training and assessment occurs in accordance with the State and Federal training guidelines and the requirements of the course. Information outlining the Performance Criteria for the units of competency is downloadable from [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au)

### **Delivery methods and activities may include:**

(but are not limited to)

- ✓ Online Delivery
- ✓ Face to face classes
- ✓ Distance Delivery
- ✓ Practical activities
- ✓ Interview questions
- ✓ Additional projects which can be completed at your own pace
- ✓ Completion of third party reports by supervisors
- ✓ Workplace simulated situations and or role plays
- ✓ Self-paced learning
- ✓ Research

Our trainers select a range of delivery methods to provide the best learning experience and outcomes for students. If you have any concerns about the delivery of your course please discuss this with your trainer.

## Course Extension Policy

ACCS is not obliged under any circumstances to extend the period of a student's enrolment if the student has not completed the course in the allocated time. Once the allocated time for a given course has ended the student will no longer be given access to the course material unless a formal extension is granted. The application for Extension Form is available to download from the ACCS Website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

Extensions can only be granted due to compassionate or compelling circumstances that are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- ✓ Bereavement, for example, death of close family members such as parents or grandparents (Where possible a death certificate should be provided);
- ✓ Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on the student's studies; or a traumatic experience which could include:
  - involvement in, or witnessing a serious accident; witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime where this experience has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)

## Course Information

**All ACCS training staff will be available to discuss the following:**

- ✓ The skills and knowledge you need to be able to demonstrate during and at the end of your training
- ✓ Curriculum content
- ✓ Assessment materials
- ✓ Methods of assessment
- ✓ Student responsibilities
- ✓ Course duration and study time required
- ✓ Resubmission of materials recorded as 'Not Yet Competent'

## Disclaimer

All material and information on the ACCS website is provided in good faith and is believed to be accurate and current as at the date of publication. ACCS will not be liable for any damages whatsoever whether in an action in contract, negligence or other tort, arising out of or in connection with access to the website or the information and material contained in it.

## Discrimination

ACCS is committed to complying with State and Federal anti-discrimination laws, and will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination or harassment by ACCS staff of any students, based on their sex, pregnancy, marital status, and race including colour, ethnic background, national identity, religion, homosexuality, disability or age etc.

Harassment includes any form of behaviour that a person does not want, finds offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

## Enrolment

Our enrolment process requires you to complete an enrolment form, pre-enrolment questionnaire and provide all relevant information to ensure we provide training to suit your needs. All information collected is kept confidential and subject to our Privacy Policy. The enrolment form and pre-enrolment questionnaire can be emailed to you or downloaded from our website [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

Before and during enrolment we will provide access to our schedule of fees & charges, and our student handbook to ensure all learners are aware and understand the information contained within. We welcome questions at any time relating to our fees, the student handbook, code of conduct and training/assessment requirements.

## Feedback (Quality Assurance)

We are continuously working to improve the quality of our training services at ACCS, and we welcome feedback from students as this can guide us with our continuous improvement policy.

Evaluation forms will be provided during and after your training and we hope that you take the opportunity to complete these forms with genuine and comprehensive feedback on your experience of our service. Any comments you provide as part of this process are totally confidential and are used for statistical purposes and improving the quality of our service to our students. The Evaluation Form is also available to download from the ACCS Website [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

## Fees, and Charges Refunds

Payment for the first five units of competency for external students is due at the time of submitting your enrolment. However in some circumstances students can apply for a monthly payment plan by speaking directly with ACCS College Manager.

### Payment methods:-

- ✓ debit card
- ✓ credit card
- ✓ electronic transfer of funds
- ✓ cheque
- ✓ money order

Once payment has been received your enrolment will be confirmed in writing and you will either be sent your online portal access details or hardcopy of your Learning and Assessment materials, depending on your choice of delivery method.

If you submit your payment with your enrolment and then cancel your enrolment due to extenuating circumstances an administrative fee may be applicable (refer Schedule of Fees & Charges document). If you enrol for flexible delivery and during your studies decide to apply for RPL (see p12) an additional fee may apply.

Payment for on campus training is required two weeks prior to the commencement of the training.

(For detailed information relevant to fees, charges and refunds, refer to Schedule of Fees & Charges document)

## Grading of assessments

### Competency Based

Result	Description	Explanation
C	Competent	Student assessed & competency achieved.
NYC	Not Yet Competent	Student has engaged in learning activity but has not yet demonstrated competency

### RPL / Credit Transfer

Result	Description	Explanation
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning	Student has been granted an exemption through a recognition of prior learning process
CT	Credit Transfer	Student has been granted an exemption through a process of credit transfer

## Training and Assessment Strategies

ACCS will develop and implement strategies for training delivery and assessment for each Training Package Qualification and accredited course within our scope of registration.

These strategies will reflect our commitment to providing flexible, customised services that are based around each student's individual needs.

### As such these strategies will:

- ✓ Be developed in consultation with industry
- ✓ Identify proposed target groups, delivery and assessment modes and strategies, assessment validation processes and pathways for further education

ACCS assessment strategies will be validated for each program by reviewing, comparing and evaluating the assessment processes, tools and evidence contributing to judgments made by at least one other assessor against the same competency standard. Validation and moderation documents will be used for this process, with a documented register of outcomes.

Each unit of competence comprises a number of elements and performance criteria. The unit of competence is a skill or knowledge identified in a Training Package. To achieve competence students must demonstrate their skills and knowledge to Industry Standards in every unit and element.

## Language, Literacy, and Numeracy (LLN)

ACCS recognises that at times language and literacy problems may restrict a person from achieving the competencies required for a particular course. ACCS will make every effort to assess a prospective student's ability to carry out all the learning tasks and required assessments before enrolment.

ACCS will provide individual assistance where possible to learners who have literacy and numeracy skill needs. Referrals will be provided to specialist literacy and numeracy assistance agencies where appropriate.

## Laws and Legislation

**ACCS complies with all relevant Commonwealth, State & Territory laws including but not limited to:**

- ✓ Access and Equity principles
- ✓ Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- ✓ Apprenticeship and traineeship regulations
- ✓ Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000
- ✓ Complaints, Grievances and Appeals
- ✓ Equal Opportunity Acts 2000
- ✓ Fair Trading Act 1989
- ✓ Information Privacy Act 2009
- ✓ National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011
- ✓ The Copyright Act 1968
- ✓ VET legislative requirements
- ✓ Vocational Education and Training Act 2000
- ✓ Vocational Education, Employment & Training Act 2000
- ✓ Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- ✓ Workplace Relations Act 1997

## Management and Administration

ACCS has policies, procedures and management strategies, which ensure sound financial and administrative practices. Management guarantees the organization's sound financial position and safeguards student fees. Our refund policy is fair and equitable. Student records are managed securely and confidentially and are available for student perusal on request.

## Marketing

ACCS ensures marketing of vocational education and training products complies with the VET quality framework, and is done with integrity, accuracy and professionalism, making every endeavour to avoid vague and ambiguous statements. In the provision of information, no false or misleading comparisons will be drawn with any other provider or course.

ACCS will not state or imply that courses other than those on the Scope of Registration are recognised by State Training Authorities.

## Nationally Accredited Training

All nationally accredited courses outline the skills and knowledge you need to be able to demonstrate during and at the end of your training. These are referred to as competencies. Competency-based training aims to develop skills and knowledge to enable you to perform tasks to the standard expected in your chosen industry or sector.

Competency is determined through competency-based assessment where evidence is gathered and judged throughout the training process in order to decide whether a person has achieved the standard set by the relevant industry or sector. Assessments are recorded as 'Competent' or 'Not Yet Competent' (refer to Grading of Assessments on page 9). If you do not achieve the specified standard the first time, you can receive further support and have another opportunity to demonstrate your competence.

ACCS is authorised to deliver the following accredited training courses under their Scope of Registration:

- ✓ Certificate IV in Mental Health
- ✓ Certificate IV in Telephone Counselling Skills

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking another person or organisation's intellectual property and using it as if it were one's own work. This includes copying word for word, written, spoken or audio medium without referencing the source.

Penalties for Plagiarism may include awarding of a "not yet competent" grade, suspension from the course, and exclusion from ACCS. To avoid penalties students are required to ensure all work submitted for assessment is their own work and referenced if applicable.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

In line with relevant State and Commonwealth legislation, ACCS is committed to protecting your privacy and your personal information. Enrolment forms, training schedules and records of assessment are filed and securely stored. State and Federal government agencies may use the information gathered for statistical, reporting and or funding purposes.

Except where required by law we will not disclose your private or personal information in any way other than the purposes stated without your consent.

If at any stage your personal details change throughout the course of your training, please inform your trainer so that your details can be amended.

You can have access to your records at any time. You will be required to show photo ID for proof of identity and if you require documentation to be sent to you, an administrative fee and postage may apply.

## Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning, or RPL, is an assessment that acknowledges the skills, knowledge and abilities acquired through the student's previous training, work or life experiences. In order to grant RPL, the assessor must collect enough evidence to be satisfied that the candidate is competent across all elements according to the performance criteria listed in the training package

(Training Package details are available on the Government website [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au))

The evidence gathered may take a variety of forms and could include certification/s, professional development, references from past employers, third party supervisor reports, CV, work samples etc.

An application for RPL does not guarantee you will receive any credit toward a unit. If a gap in skills, knowledge or ability is identified, additional work in the form of written assessments, interview questions and or simulated role plays may be required.

## Refunds

Yes - If you give notice to cancel your enrolment after your enrolment has been processed and before you have been given materials or online access you will be entitled to a refund of fees paid, minus a fee of \$50 fee to cover administrative costs.

If you have purchased hardcopy learning and assessment materials and these materials have been delivered to you and you subsequently cancel your enrolment, no automatic refund will apply after a 2 month period. Less than 2 months a refund may be appropriate under exceptional circumstances.

If you are enrolled in a number of units, and any of these units are not completed due to Australian College of Community Services being unable to continue the provision of this service Australian College of Community Services will give a full refund for units not completed.

ACCS reserves the right to cancel a course due to unforeseen circumstances, for example if student numbers are insufficient. Should this occur, any fees paid will be refunded in full. In such cases, ACCS's liability will be limited to the amount of fees already paid.

### **Our Guarantee to Clients**

If for any reason Australian College of Community Services is unable to fulfil its service agreement with a student, Australian College of Community Services must issue a full refund for any services not provided. The basis for determining "services not provided" is to be based on the units of competency completed by the student and which can be issued in a statement of attainment at the time the service is terminated.

(For detailed information relevant to fees, charges and refunds, refer to Schedule of Fees & Charges document)

### **Staff Responsibilities**

All ACCS staff are inducted in their responsibilities for your access and equity principles. All staff are required to act in accordance with the ACCS Code of Practice and all learners are made aware of their rights and responsibilities. All learners have the same access to courses offered irrespective of gender, culture, linguistic background, race, or disability.

### **Student Responsibilities**

**As a student you will be required to take responsibility for:**

- ✓ Reading all relevant course materials and training information
- ✓ Advising your trainer if you are seeking recognition for prior learning(RPL)
- ✓ Monitoring your progress by self-assessing your skills and knowledge against the competency standards in your qualification
- ✓ Attending classroom training sessions as required
- ✓ Meeting with your Trainer/Course Coordinator to review progress
- ✓ Indicating whether you are requiring alternative assessment dates
- ✓ Handing in all assessment tasks and activities as per the requirements outlined in this handbook on page 14.
- ✓ Ensuring all work submitted is your own, is not plagiarised or written by a third party
- ✓ Discussing any concerns regarding the training course, session activities and your ability to complete your study
- ✓ Advising ACCS if you require any special equipment or support for the training course
- ✓ Advising ACCS of change of address or change of circumstances that will impact your ability to continue or complete your study
- ✓ Participating in course evaluation and providing feedback

## Study Plan

ACCS will collaborate with all students to develop a Personal Study Plan. This is provided to assist students in incorporating external study into their busy lifestyle.

Each student is invited to discuss with their trainer/assessor when they realistically expect to achieve expected completion dates for each unit of competency, and the expected completion date for the full course (usually within 12 months for Certificate IV qualifications).

Future adjustments can be made to the Personal Study Plan if a student's circumstances change.

## Support Services

ACCS offers appropriate learning support for students with a disability and support for students who are not making planned progress. A review of your progress will be held to discuss possible options and additional support to assist you in meeting assessment deadlines. If your work is affected by illness or other critical events you may apply in writing for special consideration.

If you require additional support, please contact your course trainer or coordinator.

## Submission of Assessment Materials *(via hardcopy or email)*

Assessments electronically submitted must be sent to [assessment@accs.edu.au](mailto:assessment@accs.edu.au) only, and not to a specific trainer. **It is imperative that if you submit assessments via surface mail you keep a hard copy on your files.** ACCS strongly suggests you use only registered mail or Express Post to ensure you receive a receipt from Australia Post.

All submitted assessments are to include a cover page with the following details:-

Student Name:	<i>Bill Smith</i>
Date of submission:	<i>15<sup>th</sup> June 2013</i>
Unit Code:	<i>CHCMH404A</i>
Unit Title:	<i>Conduct Assessment and planning as part of the recovery process</i>

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this assessment task is my own work, all sources have been properly acknowledged, and the assessment task contains no plagiarism.

*Please Circle: Yes/No*

**All subsequent pages are to include the following details:-**

Assessment Activity Number:	3
PART:	A
Question Number:	2
Question:	<i>Briefly describe how you can gain access to this information</i>
Answer:	

\*\* Templates for the above tables are available upon request and can be downloaded from the ACCS Website, [www.accs.edu.au](http://www.accs.edu.au)

## **Trainer Qualifications**

**All trainers have:**

- ✓ Demonstrated achievement of at least Certificate IV in Training & Assessment Competency Standards or their equivalent;
- ✓ Demonstrated competencies at least to the level of those being delivered
- ✓ Industry experience that is relevant to the training that they are involved in delivering

## **Workplace and Health and Safety Policy**

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy at ACCS aims to protect students and others at our training venues from work-caused injury and ill health and complies with all relevant safety legislation.

Students must take care of their own health and safety and that of their fellow students to the extent of their capability. This means they must follow all risk management safety rules, procedures and instructions established by ACCS and not endanger the health and safety of themselves or others.

## Unique Student Identifier

It is now a requirement of an RTO to obtain a 'Unique Student Identifier' for every individual student.

This new regulation which will significantly benefit students in the following way:-

- a) A USI will help keep your [training records and results](#) together in an online account controlled by you.
- b) Each time you enrol to study with a new [training organisation](#), your USI will be used to store your training records and results.
- c) By having a USI you will be able to access your training records and results (*or transcript*) whenever you need them. For example, for a new employer or when you enrol at a new training organisation.
- d) Your USI can be accessed online from your computer, tablet or smart phone

**Two different options are available in the creation of your own Unique Student Identifier (USI):**

- **OPTION 1.** Go to the website <https://portal.usi.gov.au/student/TermsAndConditions?ReturnUrl=%252fstudent%252f> to register and obtain your own USI number. Once you have completed this, you need to advise us of the number, so that we can include this in your student record, OR...
- **OPTION 2.** We can generate a number for you. The USI government website will send you an email (*or sms, or phone call if requested*) advising you of your number.

## Student Handbook Acknowledgement

By accepting this Student Handbook, a lawful binding agreement shall arise between yourself and the Australian College of Community Services (ACCS), which shall be governed by the state and federal laws of Australia. And by accepting this agreement you agree to pay the course fees for the course that you have chosen under this agreement.

Once course fees have been received the Australian College of Community Services agrees to:

- ✓ Enrol you in the course you have chosen and confirm this via email
- ✓ Provide appropriate Learning and Assessment materials in hardcopy format or online
- ✓ Provide online access username and password(if applicable)
- ✓ Assess your assignments
- ✓ Answer all queries about your course in a timely manner.

By signing this page and submitting it with your enrolment, you acknowledge that you have read and understand this Student Handbook.

<b>Student Name:</b>	
<b>Student Signature:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

**\*\* Page 3 of your enrolment form contains an extract of this page. Please sign and date the extract and send it to: [info@accs.edu.au](mailto:info@accs.edu.au), together with pages 1 and 2 of your enrolment form.**