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Contents

Introduction.....	3
About Connect Skills Institute.....	3
Our Services.....	3
Our mission.....	4
Our objectives.....	4
Finding Us.....	4
Parking.....	4
Public Transport.....	4
Lunch Options.....	4
Our Trainers.....	4
Our expectation of you.....	5
Unique Student Identifier.....	5
Your safety.....	5
Your equity.....	6
Your privacy.....	7
Fees Payable.....	7
Leaner cancelation & refund.....	8
Statutory cooling off period.....	9
Our Guarantee to Clients.....	9
Changes to terms and conditions.....	9
Access to your records.....	10
Continuous improvement.....	10
Assessment.....	11
Re-assessment.....	11
Issuing Qualifications and Statements of Attainment.....	12
Language, literacy & numeracy skills.....	12
Making complaints & appeals.....	12
Recognition of your existing skills & knowledge.....	17
Legislative and Regulatory Responsibilities.....	17
Third Party Providers.....	20
Cheating & RTO cancelling student active enrolment with the RTO.....	20
Communicating with the RTO.....	21
Post enrolment communication.....	22
Inbound / outbound calls to Connect Skills Institute.....	22
Government Departments & LLN test prior to course / qualification commencement.....	22

Introduction

This student handbook is designed to provide you with information about the services provided by Connect Skills Institute and our approach to providing you a safe, fair and supported environment to participate in training and assessment. This handbook does not provide you with specific information about a particular course offered by Connect Skills Institute. This information is contained in the Course Brochure which is supplied separately.

About Connect Skills Institute

Connect Skills Institute is a Registered Training Organisation (Code:31474) Registered training provider since 2007. Our mission is to provide quality education using both technology and the use of industry experienced practitioners.

Our web address is: www.connectskills.edu.au

Link to the regulators website of our approval <http://training.gov.au/Organisation/Details/31474>

Connect Skills Institute is responsible under its registration with the Australian Skills Quality Authority for the quality of the training and assessment being delivered on your chosen course and is also responsible for the issuance of any AQF certificate that may result based on your achievement of the course requirements.

Our Services

Connect Skills Institute provides training and assessment services in support of the following nationally endorsed training products:

- Certificate III in Property Service (Operations)
- Certificate IV Property Service (Operations)
- Certificate IV Property Services (Real Estate)
- CPD Training
- TLILIC2001A Licence to operate forklift truck
- CPCCOHS1001A Work safely in the construction industry
- CPCCLRG4001A Licence to perform rigging advanced level
- CPCCLSF4001A Licence to erect, alter and dismantle scaffolding advanced level
- CPCCLTC4001A - Licence to operate a tower crane
- CPCCLTC4002A - Licence to operate a self-erecting tower crane
- TLILIC0012A - Licence to operate a vehicle loading crane (capacity 10 metre tonnes and above)
- TLILIC3007A - Licence to operate a portal boom crane
- TLILIC4009A - Licence to operate a slewing mobile crane (up to 60 tonnes)
- TLILIC4010A - Licence to operate a slewing mobile crane (up to 100 tonnes)
- TLILIC4011A - Licence to operate a slewing mobile crane (over 100 tonnes)
- SITHGAM201 - Provide responsible gambling services
- SITHFAB201 - Provide responsible service of alcohol
- CHC30113 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
- CHC50113 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care
- TAE40110 - Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- TAE50111 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care
- HLTAID 001 - Provide cardio pulmonary Resuscitation
- HLTAID 002 - Provide Basic Emergency Life Support
- HLTAID 003 – Provide First Aid

- HLTAID 004 Provide Emergency First Aid Response in and education and care setting

and assessment services which are founded on industry needs and expectations.

Our mission

Connect Skills Institute mission is to deliver quality training assessment that meets the needs of learners and industry.

Our objectives

In recognition of this mission, our objectives are:

- **People.** We strive to attract, recruit and retain talented, competent and committed trainers. We promote excellent performance through leadership and professional development.
- **Safety & equality.** We are committed to providing an environment which is safe, equitable and which promotes a confident and productive training and assessment environment.
- **Integrity & ethics.** We conduct ourselves in accordance with shared and agreed standards of behaviour which holds ethical conduct and integrity as our highest priorities.
- **Quality committed.** We aspire to deliver consistent, high quality services and apply quality systems which support training and assessment excellence.
- **Learner Focused.** We thrive on providing training and assessment that is learner focused and which supports lifelong learning. We respect our learners and strive to attract them time after time through high quality training and assessment experiences.
- **Industry engagement.** We recognise the value of industry engagement as the driving force in shaping our training and assessment strategies. We deliver training

Finding Us

We are located at:

1B, 75 Old Pittwater Road Brookvale NSW 2100.

Parking

Whilst you are attending our site by vehicle, there is normally street parking (not metred) available 7 days per week.

Public Transport

We are a very short walk from Westfield Warringah shopping centre. Out the front of the centre is a large bus interchange.

Lunch Options

If you are looking to buy lunch whilst you are at our premises we have a large number of eateries available in the nearby Westfield Warringah Shopping centre. We are located very centrally around take away shops, cafes if you did not want to walk over to the shopping centre.

Our Industry Mentors (trainers)

Our mentors are qualified, dedicated professionals who have current industry experience. Their industry experience is continually updated by participating in professional development activities, therefore giving our learners the best practical industry experience.

At Connect Skills Institute we deliver nationally accredited qualification via training online or workshop styles (face to face) When you study with Connect Skills Institute, your mentor will be always there to assist you throughout your course/ qualification. You can either attend a classroom training environment, or receive job visits and even phone or email your Trainer Assessor for advice which means you get the support you need when you need it.

Connect Skills Institute mentors are all professionally qualified trainers and have personal industry and job role experience. Our mentors deliver their training in a way that learners will enjoy.

Our expectation of you

Connect Skills Institute expects you:

- To contribute to learning in a harmonious and positive manner irrespective of gender, race, sexual preference, political affiliation, marital status, disability or religious belief.
- To comply with the rules and regulations of Connect Skills Institute.
- To be honest and respectful, which includes not falsifying work or information and not conducting yourself in any way that may cause injury or offence to others?
- To be responsible for your own learning and development by participating actively and positively and by ensuring that you maintain progress with learning modules.
- To monitor your own progress by ensuring that assessment deadlines are observed.
- To utilise facilities and Connect Skills Institute publications with respect and to honour our copyrights and prevent our publication from being distributed to unauthorised persons.
- To respect other learners and Connect Skills Institute staff members and their right to privacy and confidentiality.

Unique Student Identifier

If you're studying nationally recognised training in Australia from 1 January 2015, you will be required to have a Unique Student Identifier (USI). Your USI links to an online account that contains all your training records

and results (transcript) that you have completed from 1 January 2015 onwards. Your results from 2015 will be available in your USI account in 2016.

When applying for a job or enrolling in further study, you will often need to provide your training records and results (transcript). One of the main benefits of the USI is the ability to provide learners with easy access to their training records and results (transcript) throughout their life. You can access your USI account online from your computer, tablet or smart phone anytime. Fact sheets –available to download [Student Information for the USI](#)

It's free and easy to [create your own USI](#) and will only take a few minutes of your time. Alternatively, we can create your USI on your behalf. To do this we will need some additional identification information from you such as your driver's licence number.

Your safety

Connect Skills Institute is committed to providing you a safe environment in which to participate in training and assessment. We are aware under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 of our responsibilities to maintain a safe environment.

The following guidelines are provided as a basis for safe practice in the training environment:

- Know and observe details of emergency response and evacuation plans;
- Do not undertake activities which may cause injury to self or others;
- Be responsible for your own actions;
- No smoking at the training and assessment facilities or offices;
- Report all potential hazards, accidents and near misses to the RTO staff;
- No consumption of alcohol within training and assessment facilities or

during the conduct of training and assessment;

- Keep training and assessment areas neat and tidy at all times;
- Seek assistance if you volunteer to lift items e.g. move furniture in a training area; and
- Observe hygiene standards particularly in eating and bathroom areas.

Electrical equipment

- Electrical equipment that is not working should be reported to Connect Skills Institute staff.
- Electrical work should only be performed by appropriately licensed or trained personnel. Learners, trainers and assessors should not undertake any task related to fixing electrical equipment such as lighting or electrical training aids.

Fire safety

- Connect Skills Institute will undertake to communicate the procedures involved in evacuation and the location of fire equipment to learners at each facility for each training and assessment event; and to users of the office at least twice each year.
- All users of a training and assessment facility need to be familiar with the location of all EXITS and fire extinguishers. Users will consult available maps to determine location.
- It is the user's responsibility to understand fire drill procedures displayed around the premises.
- Users are asked to attend any sessions on fire safety procedures and the use of fire safety devices.

First aid

- Provision for first aid facilities are available where training is delivered.
- All accidents must be reported to staff.
- The accident and any aid administered must be recorded by staff involved, in the injury register.

Lifting

- Learners, trainers and assessors are encouraged not to lift anything related to the training and assessment provided by Connect Skills Institute unless they do so voluntarily and taking all responsibility for any injury caused.
- Never attempt to lift anything that is beyond your capacity.
- Always bend the knees and keep the back straight when picking up items.
- If you have experienced back problems in the past do not attempt to lift heavy objects at all. Ask someone else to do it for you.

Work & study areas

- Always ensure that all work areas are clean and clear of clutter so as to avoid the danger of accident by tripping or falling over.
- Place all rubbish in the bins provided.
- Ensure that bench spaces are left clean and tidy.
- Do not sit or climb on any desks or tables.

Your equity

Connect Skills Institute is committed to ensuring that the training and assessment environment is free from discrimination and

harassment. All Connect Skills Institute staff members (including contractors) are aware that discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In the event that discrimination and harassment is found to have occurred disciplinary action will be taken against any staff member who breaches this policy. Suspected criminal behaviour will be reported to police authorities immediately. Learners should expect fair and friendly behaviour from Connect Skills Institute staff members and we apply complaint handling procedures advocated by the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).

Learners who feel that they have been discriminated against or harassed should report this information to a staff member of Connect Skills Institute that they feel they can trust. This will initiate a complaints handling procedure which will be fair and transparent and will protect your rights as a complainant. Alternatively, if a learner wishes to report an instance of discrimination or harassment to an agency external to Connect Skills Institute, they are advised to contact the HREOC Complaints Info-line on 1300 656 419.

Your privacy

Connect Skills Institute takes the privacy of learners very seriously and complies with all legislative requirements. These include the Privacy Act 1988 and Australian Privacy Principles (effective from 12th March 2014).

Here's what you need to know:

- Connect Skills Institute will retain personal information about you relating to your enrolment with us. This includes your personal details, your ethnicity and individual needs, your education background. We will also retain records of you training activity and are required to do this in accordance with the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.
- Your personal information is retained within our hard copy filing system and our computer systems. Your information is collected via the enrolment form and through your completion of administrative related forms and based on your training outcomes. Hard copy files are secured in lockable filing cabinets which are monitored throughout the day and secured in the evening. Electronic data retained on our computer systems is protected via virus protection software and firewall protection. Our data is backed up continuously to our server which is secure.
- Connect Skills Institute is required by the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 to securely retain your personal details for a period of 30 years from the date your enrolment has completed. The purpose of this is to enable your participation in accredited training to be recorded for future reference and to allow you to obtain a record of your outcome if required.
- In some cases we are required by law to make learner information available to Government agencies such as the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research or the Australian Skills Quality Authority. In all other cases Connect Skills Institute will seek the written permission of the learner for such disclosure. Connect Skills Institute will not disclose your information to any person or organisation unless we have written instructions from you to do so. If you require your records to be accessed by persons such as your parents, you need to authorise this access otherwise this access will be denied.
- You have the right to access information that Connect Skills Institute is retaining that relates to you. Further instructions are provided on how to access records

within the section titled “Access to your records”.

- If you have concerns about how Connect Skills Institute is managing your personal information, we encourage you to inform our staff and discuss your concerns. You are also encouraged to make a complaint directly to us using our internal complaint handling arrangements outlined in this handbook. Under the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) you also have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) about the handling of your personal information. You can find more information about making a privacy complaint at the website of the OAIC located at: <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints>.

Fees payable

Fees are payable when a learner enrolls into a course or qualification. The initial fee payment must be paid prior to commencing training. Invoice from Connect Skills Institute will be generated at the time of enrolling into a course /qualification. Connect Skills Institute may discontinue training if fees are not paid as required. For a full list of current fees and charges please request a copy of Connect Skills Institute schedule of fees and charges or go to our website and click on the tab called student support and see the online version.

Learner cancellation

Learners who cancel their enrolment part way through a training program must notify Connect Skills Institute in writing via email or letter at the soonest opportunity. Learners who cancel their enrolment after a training program has commenced will not be entitled to a refund of fees. Learners are

advised to consider alternative options such as requesting to suspend their enrolment and re-commencing in another scheduled training program.

Replacement of text & training workbooks

Learners who require replacement of issued text or training workbooks will be liable for additional charges to cover the cost of replacement. For a full list of replacement charges please refer to Connect Skills Institute schedule of fees and charges.

Refunds

Learners, who give notice to cancel their enrolment **10 business days** or more prior to the commencement of a program, will be entitled to a full refund of fees paid (except when you enrol online or distance learning there is no refund at all once access has been given to the course material. This policy complies with the Australian Consumer Law required statutory cooling off period for the sale of goods and services. It is a requirement under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations that an RTO must allow the minimum statutory cooling off period applicable for the jurisdiction in which they operate. Australian Consumer Law introduced in 2010 has made this consumer protection consistent in all States and Territories.

Learners who give notice to cancel their enrolment **9 business days** or less prior to the commencement of a program will be entitled to a 75% refund of fees paid (excluding online). The amount retained (25%) by Connect Skills Institute is required to cover the costs of staff and resources which will have already been committed based on the learners initial intention to undertake the training.

Learners who cancel their enrolment after a training program has commenced will not be entitled to a refund of fees.

Where a learner has purchased a text or training workbooks and subsequently cancels, Connect Skills Institute will not refund monies for the text.

Payment method

Connect Skills Institute accepts payment for fees using:

- Credit Card
- Electronic Funds Transfer (account details available on request)
- Cheque (made payable to Connect Skills Institute)
- We do not accept any form of cash payments at the institute.

Substitutions

Requests for substitutions are to be made in writing and can be made at any time up to 2 working days before the program commencement date.

Transfers

Requests for transfers to alternate programs can be arranged if Connect Skills Institute is advised in writing more than 10 working days prior to the program commencement date and there is availability on the selected program. One transfer will be accepted without charge where Connect Skills Institute has been notified in writing at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled commencement date. All subsequent transfers will attract an administration charge of \$55.00 (incl. GST).

Statutory cooling off period

The Standards for Registered Training Organisations require Connect Skills Institute to inform persons considering

enrolment of their right to a statutory cooling off period. A statutory cooling off period (which is 10 days) is a period of time provided to a consumer to allow them to withdraw from a consumer agreement, where that agreement was established through unsolicited marketing or sales tactics. These include tactic such as door-to-door sales and telemarketing. A statutory cooling off period allows a consumer to withdraw from a sales agreement within 10 days of having received a sale contract without penalty.

For refund option in other circumstances, learners must refer to the above refund policy.

Our Guarantee to Clients

If Connect Skills Institute cancels or ceases to provide training, Connect Skills Institute must issue a full refund for any services not yet provided. The basis for determining “services not yet provided” is to be based on the units of competency completed by the learner and which can be issued in a statement of attainment at the time the service is ceased.

As an example: A learner enrolled in a course of 10 units of competency and paid \$1,500.00 up front as the total course fee. The course was cancelled due to the trainer falling ill and the learner at that time had completed 4 of the 10 units. The learner’s enrolment would be finalised and the learner would receive a Statement of Attainment for the 4 completed units. The learner would also receive a refund of \$900.00 which represents that value of the training not delivered.

Changes to terms and conditions

Connect Skills Institute reserves the right to amend the conditions of the learner’s enrolment at any time. If amendments are made that effect the learner’s enrolment the learner will be informed 7 days prior to changes taking effect.

Access to your records

You are entitled to have access to your records. These records include your:

- learner file,
- learning and assessment record,
- administrative records,
- AQF certificates including a reissuance of a statement of attainment or qualification which has been previously issued.

You may require these records to monitor your progress with training or simply to go back and confirm something in a previous training module. Whilst these records will be retained by Connect Skills Institute, you are welcome to have access anytime just ask your trainer and it will be organised immediately.

You can access hard copy records and reports from our learner management system, but only relating to you personally. You can request this access using the Learner Records Request Form. Access to requested records during a work day will be arranged as soon as possible and definitely within 24 hours. Learners should note that these records cannot be taken away unless a copy is requested. Where photocopies are requested, Connect Skills Institute reserves the right to charge a one-off photocopy fee of \$10.00. There is no cost to simply view records at our office.

In the case of accessing a reissuance of a previously issued Statement of Attainment or Qualification certificate, if you have lost or misplaced your AQF certificate you may obtain a reissued certificate from Connect Skills Institute. To obtain this you must complete the Learner Records Request Form and return this to student services manager. The cost of \$50.00 will apply for each issued AQF certificate. These monies must be paid in advance. Reissued AQF certificates will be an exact duplicate of the original with the exception of small wording at the bottom of

the document which identifies the certificate as reissued. AQF certificates may only be collected in person or can be posted via registered post. A learner may also nominate another person to collect the certificate, however these persons must be notified to Connect Skills Institute beforehand and the person must provide photo ID to validate their identity.

Continuous improvement

Connect Skills Institute is committed to the continuous improvement of our training and assessment services, learner services and management systems. Central to this commitment is our approach to continuous improvement and the procedures we apply to achieve systematic and sustained improvement.

Suggesting improvements

The primary method of reporting opportunities for improvement by learners is via the continuous improvement reporting procedure. This procedure allows any person to raise a Continuous Improvement Report for consideration by the Continuous Improvement Committee. Often these reports will be generated after an opportunity for improvement has been identified by a staff member or learner. The Continuous Improvement Report template is available on request. Learners are encouraged to provide feedback to Connect Skills Institute so we can improve our services in the future.

Learner satisfaction survey

At the completion of your training program, you will be issued with a Learner Satisfaction Survey. This is a nationally consistent survey tool which is designed to collect feedback from learners about their experience with an RTO and in undertaking nationally recognised training. Your completion and return of this survey is important to Connect Skills Institute for our ongoing improvement of services and to enable us to report this information to our

registering authority. Your assistance in gathering this survey data is greatly appreciated.

Assessment

At Connect Skills Institute assessment is conducted using a combination of Written Knowledge Assessment, Research Tasks, Case Studies, short answer, quiz, Work Log Book, Supervisor Feedback and Workplace Observation.

The following provides a brief explanation of the primary assessment methods:

- **Written Knowledge Assessment:** The learner is required to provide a written response to a range of questions relating to required knowledge of the units of competency. These would generally be short answer response activities and may include other questioning methods including multiple-choice.
- **Research Tasks:** The learner is required to undertake research within their own workplace and the available reference material and provide a written response to each question. These assessment activities are usually short to medium answer response activities. The responses provided by the learner will largely be specific to their workplace.
- **Case Study Response:** The learner is required to provide a written response to a situation presented in a case study scenario. This will usually require the learner to consider carefully the situation presented, undertake some research to inform their response and then to propose their recommended actions.
- **Workplace Log book:** The learner is required to record details of their work activity completed during the work placement. These details are recorded against specified tasks which are predesigned for the learner to complete. This forms an important part of the assessment evidence as it often includes critical evidence that is otherwise difficult for the assessor to observe.
- **Supervisor Feedback:** The assessor will periodically engage with workplace supervisors to seek their feedback about the learner's performance. This is undertaken as an interview with a duration of approximately 15 to 20 minutes. This interview can be undertaken over the phone or face to face. Feedback from a supervisor is recorded into the assessment record.
- **Workplace Observation:** The learner will be observed performing specific tasks in their day-to-day work activities. The assessor will attend the workplace and observe the learner performing tasks relevant to the units of competency being assessed. The learner will be briefed on these observation activities in events and is required to make arrangements to undertake these activities when the assessor is in attendance at the workplace.
- **Quiz:** : The learner is required to pick from a selected options, generally true or false, Yes No style options.

Re-assessment

Learners who are assessed as not yet competent are to be provided with detailed verbal and written feedback to assist them to identify the gaps in their knowledge and skills to be addressed through further training. These learners are to be provided with additional training and learning support to target their specific gaps in knowledge and/or skills and prepare them for additional assessment.

It is the policy of Connect Skills Institute to provide three opportunities for additional training and re-assessment at no additional cost to the learner or employer. Learners who require additional training and re-assessment after they have exhausted their three opportunities will be required to pay a fee for additional training and re-assessment. Please refer to the current fee schedule to identify the re-assessment fee.

Learner's requiring additional learning support are to be brought to the attention of Connect Skills Institute management so the progress of the learner can be monitored closely and additional support services can be applied well before it becomes necessary to impose an additional fee for re-assessment. Where learners repeatedly do not demonstrate competence following significant learning and assessment support, a learner's enrolment can be determined through mutual agreement.

Issuing Qualifications and Statements of Attainment

Connect Skills Institute will issue all AQF certification documentation (Qualifications and Statements of Attainment) to a learner within 30 calendar days of the learner being assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product if the training program in which the learner is enrolled is complete, and providing all agreed fees the learner owes to Connect Skills Institute have been paid. **Be aware the RTO will not advance any qualification or statement of attainment for any reasons under any circumstances. This is a direct breach of clause 3.1 of the ASQA standards.**

Language, literacy & numeracy skills

Language, literacy and numeracy skills are critical to almost all areas of work. This is particularly true in many vocations where language, literacy and numeracy skills influence the performance of workplace tasks such as measuring, weighing and comprehending written work instructions.

To support this approach Connect Skills Institute will:

- Assess a learner's language, literacy and numeracy skills during their enrolment to ensure they have adequate skills to complete the training;
- Support learners during their study with training and assessment materials and

strategies that are easily understood and suitable to the level of the workplace skills being delivered;

- Provide clear information to learners about the details of the language, literacy and numeracy assistance available. Connect Skills Institute generally recommend the LLN training courses provided by TAFE. These institutes have specialist teachers to support the learner's development.
- Refer learners to external language, literacy and numeracy support services that are beyond the support available within Connect Skills Institute and where this level of support is assessed as necessary; and
- Negotiate an extension of time to complete training programs if necessary.

Making complaints & appeals

Connect Skills Institute is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaints and appeals process that includes access to an independent external body if required. To make a complaint or an appeal, you are requested to complete one of the following forms:

- Complaint Form
- Request for Appeal of a Decision

These forms are available via our website at the following address:

- www.connectskills.edu.au

Once you have completed the required form you are requested to submit this to the Office Manager either in hard copy or electronically via the following contact details:

- 1B, 75 Old Pittwater Road Brookvale NSW 2100 or complaints@connectskills.edu.au or alang@connectskills.edu.au

If you are having any difficulty accessing the required form or submitting to us, please contact us at the following number:

PH: 1800 669 872 (business hours)

What is a complaint?

A complaint is negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by Connect Skills Institute in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by learners and/or employers.

What is an appeal?

An appeal is an application by a learner for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be submitted to Connect Skills Institute within **28 days** of the learner being informed of the assessment decision or finding.

Early resolution of complaints & appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time, as they occur between the persons involved, where possible. Sometimes, it will not be possible and in these cases you are encouraged to come forward and inform us of your concerns with the confidence that you will be treated fairly.

Complaint and appeals handling

Connect Skills Institute applies the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- Written records of all complaints / appeals are to be kept by Connect Skills

Institute including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. Connect Skills Institute will maintain complaints / appeals register to be used to record the details of the complaint / appeal and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the handling process. Records relating to complaint / appeal handling are stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.

- A person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each person may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint / appeal is to commence within seven (7) working days of the lodgement of the complaint / appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is to be provided a written response to the complaint / appeal, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the person within fourteen (14) days of the lodgement of the complaint / appeal.
- Complaints / appeals must be resolved to a final outcome within sixty (60) days of the complaint / appeal being initially received. Where Connect Skills Institute Chief Executive Officer considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint /

appeal, the CEO must inform the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required. As a benchmark, Connect Skills Institute will attempt to resolve complaints / appeals as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve a complaint / appeal within thirty (30) days is considered acceptable and in the best interest of Connect Skills Institute and the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal. A person making a complaint or seeking an appeal should also be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the complaint / appeal handling. Updates should be provided to the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal at a minimum of four (4) weekly intervals.

- Connect Skills Institute shall maintain the enrolment of the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal during the handling process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint / appeal handling process that find in the favour of the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints / appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Connect Skills Institute representative will disclose information to any person without the permission of Connect Skills Institute Chief Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only to be made after the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal has given permission for this to occur. This permission should be given using the Information Release Form.

- Complaints / appeals are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the handling process. This means that the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally the decision must be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations.
- Further guidance on principles of natural justice and procedural fairness can be accessed at the following link: [Principles of Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness](#)

Review by an independent person

Connect Skills Institute provides the opportunity for the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal who is not satisfied with the outcomes of the complaints and appeals handling process to seek a review by an independent person. In these circumstances Connect Skills Institute Chief Executive Officer will advise of an appropriate party independent of Connect Skills Institute to review the complaint (and its subsequent handling) and provide advice to Connect Skills Institute in regards to the recommended outcomes.

Where Connect Skills Institute appoints or engages an appropriate independent person to review a complaint / appeal, Connect Skills Institute will meet the full cost to facilitate the independent review. Where the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal

objects to this appointment and requests to engage a person or organisation they nominate to undertake the review, Connect Skills Institute will not pay the cost in engaging this person and undertaking the review. This cost will be paid by the learner.

Following an independent review, advice received from the independent person is to be accepted by Connect Skills Institute as final, advised to the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal in writing and implemented without prejudice.

Unresolved Complaints and Appeals

Where the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by Connect Skills Institute, they have the opportunity for a body that is external to Connect Skills Institute to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal completion of complaint or appeals process.

Learners who are not satisfied with the process applied by Connect Skills Institute may refer their grievance to the following external agencies:

- In relation to consumer protection issues, these may be referred to the Office of Fair Trading.
- In relation to the delivery of training and assessment services, these may be referred to the National Training Complaints Service via the following phone number: 13 38 73.

Recognition of your existing skills & knowledge

In accordance with the requirements of the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations, Connect Skills Institute provides the opportunity for learners to apply to have prior learning recognised toward a qualification or units of competence for which they are enrolled.

What is recognition?

Recognition involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. Recognition assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a unit of competence, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, recognition encourages an individual to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes. This has benefits for the individual and industry. Most importantly, it should be noted that recognition is just another form of assessment.

Recognition guidelines

The following guidelines are to be followed when an application for recognition is received:

- Any learner is entitled to apply for recognition in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Learners may not apply for recognition for units of competence or a qualification which are not included in Connect Skills Institute scope of registration.
- Whilst learners may apply for recognition at any time, it is expected that after a student enrolls they supply all RPL evidence within 14 days to the RTO for preliminary review. You are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the learner down a more efficient path to competence.
- Upon the RTO obtaining your RPL evidence they will review and reply with in 7 working days if it meets the requirements.

- Learners who are currently enrolled in a training program are eligible to apply for recognition in that program at no additional charge.
- Assessment via recognition is to apply the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.
- Recognition may only be awarded for whole units of competence.

Forms of evidence for recognition

Recognition acknowledges that workplace skills and knowledge may be gained through a variety of ways including both formal and informal learning or through work-based or life experience.

Like assessment, recognition is a process whereby evidence is collected and a judgement is made by an assessor or assessment team. The judgement is made on evidence provided by candidates of the skills and knowledge that they have previously learnt through work, study, life and other experiences, and that they are currently using. It also includes evidence to confirm a candidate's ability to adapt prior learning or current competence to the context of the intended workplace or industry.

Forms of evidence toward recognition may include:

- Work records;
- Records of workplace training;
- Assessments of current skills;
- Assessments of current knowledge;
- Third party reports from current and previous supervisors or managers;
- Evidence of relevant unpaid or volunteer experience;
- Examples of work products;
- Observation by an assessor in the workplace;

- Performance appraisal; or
- Duty statements.

Many of these forms of evidence would not be sufficient on their own. When combined together, with a number of evidence items, the candidate will start to provide a strong case for competence. Connect Skills Institute reserves the right to require candidates to undertake practical assessment activities of skills and knowledge in order to satisfy itself of a candidate's current competence.

What is national recognition?

National recognition is the recognition of learning achieved through formal education and training. Under the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations, qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO are to be accepted and recognised by all other RTOs. National recognition allows a learner to be awarded a unit of competency/module based on successful completion of the unit which has been previously awarded.

Evidence requirements

If you are seeking national recognition you are required to present your statement of attainment or qualification for examination to Connect Skills Institute. These documents will provide the detail of what units of competence you have been previously issued. You must provide satisfactory evidence that the statement of attainment or qualification is authentic, is yours and that it has been issued by an Australian RTO. Statements of attainment or qualifications should be in the correct format as outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework. You are required to submit copies only which are certified as a true copies of the original.

National recognition guidelines

The following guidelines are to be followed in relation to national recognition:

- Any learner is entitled to apply for national recognition in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Learners may not apply for national recognition for units of competence or qualification which are not included in Connect Skills Institute scope of registration.
- Whilst learners may apply for national recognition at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the learner down a more efficient path to competence.
- The learner does not incur any fees for national recognition and Connect Skills Institute does not receive any funding when national recognition is granted.
- National recognition may only be awarded for whole units of competence. Where a mapping guide identifies a partial credit, this will not be considered for national recognition and applicants will be advised to seek recognition.

Legislative and Regulatory Responsibilities

Connect Skills Institute is required to operate in accordance with the law. This means we comply with the requirements of legislative and regulatory requirements. The following legislation is a list of the Acts that Connect Skills Institute has recognised it has compliance responsibilities to. They also represent obligations to you as a learner whilst training with Connect Skills Institute.

During your day-to-day work and when participating in training, you will need to be

aware of the relevant legislation that may impact on your conduct and behaviour.

Copies of State and Federal legislation can be found on the Internet at www.australia.gov.au/state-legislation (State) and www.comlaw.gov.au (Federal).

The following is a summary of the legislation that will generally apply to your day-to-day work and training.

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

The main object of this Act is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. The WHS Act protects workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work or from particular types of substances or plant.

The WHS Act covers workers by providing a nationally uniform work health and safety laws. This includes employees, contractors, sub-contractors, outworkers, trainees, work experience learners, volunteers and employers who perform work.

The WHS Act also provides protection for the general public so that their health and safety is not placed at risk by work activities.

Section 29 of the WHS Act requires that any person at a workplace, including customers and visitors, must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

They must also cooperate with any actions taken by the person conducting business or undertaking to comply with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation.

Privacy Act 1988

The Privacy Act is supported by the Australian Privacy Principles which came into effect on 12th March 2014. The object of Australian Privacy Principles is to ensure businesses and government agencies manage personal information in an open and transparent way.

Review the section within this handbook that relates to privacy protection. It provides you with information about:

- the kinds of personal information that the entity collects and holds;
- how the entity collects and holds personal information;
- the purposes for which the entity collects, holds, uses and discloses personal information;
- how an individual may access personal information about the individual that is held by the entity and seek the correction of such information;
- how an individual may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how the entity will deal with such a complaint; and
- whether the entity is likely to disclose personal information to overseas recipients.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Sect 5 - Disability Discrimination

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a person (discriminator) discriminates against another person (aggrieved person) on the grounds of a disability of the aggrieved person if, because of the aggrieved person's disability, the discriminator treats or proposes to treat the aggrieved person less favourably than, in circumstances that are the same or are not materially different, the discriminator treats or would treat a person without the disability.

For the purposes of subsection (1), circumstances in which a person treats or

would treat another person with a disability are not materially different because of the fact that different accommodation or services may be required by the person with a disability.

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Objects The objects of this Act are:

- to give effect to certain provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; and
- to eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy in the areas of work, accommodation, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services, the disposal of land, the activities of clubs and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- to eliminate, so far as possible, discrimination involving dismissal of employees on the ground of family responsibilities; and
- to eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination involving sexual harassment in the workplace, in educational institutions and in other areas of public activity; and
- to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle of the equality of men and women.

Age Discrimination Act 2004

The objects of this Act are:

- to eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of age in the areas of work, education, access to premises, the provision of goods, services and facilities, accommodation, the disposal of land, the administration of Commonwealth laws

and programs and requests for information; and

- to ensure, as far as practicable, that everyone has the same rights to equality before the law, regardless of age, as the rest of the community; and
- to allow appropriate benefits and other assistance to be given to people of a certain age, particularly younger and older persons, in recognition of their particular circumstances; and
- to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that people of all ages have the same fundamental rights; and
- to respond to demographic change by:
 - removing barriers to older people participating in society, particularly in the workforce; and
 - changing negative stereotypes about older people.

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

This Act gives effect to Australia's obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Its major objectives are to:

- promote equality before the law for all persons, regardless of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin, and
- make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

Copyright Act 1968

Copyright is a type of property that is founded on a person's creative skill and labour. It is designed to prevent the unauthorised use by others of a work, that is, the original form in which an idea or information has been expressed by the creator.

Copyright is not a tangible thing. It is made up of a bundle of exclusive economic rights to do certain acts with an original work or other copyright subject-matter. These rights include the right to copy, publish, communicate (eg. broadcast, make available online) and publicly perform the copyright material.

There is no general exception that allows a work to be reproduced without infringing copyright. Where a part of a work is copied, the issue is whether a substantial part of that work has been reproduced and thus an infringement has occurred. However, there is a 10% rule which applies in relation to fair dealing copying for the purposes of research or study. A reasonable portion of a work may be copied for that purpose, and a reasonable portion is deemed to be 10% of a book of more than 10 pages or 10% of the words of a work in electronic form.

Fair Work Act 2009

The main objectives of this Act are to provide a balanced framework for cooperative and productive workplace relations that promote national economic prosperity and social inclusion for all Australians by:

Providing workplace relations laws that are fair to working Australians, are flexible for businesses, promote productivity and economic growth for Australia's future economic prosperity and take into account Australia's international labour obligations;

Ensuring a guaranteed safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum terms and conditions through the National Employment Standards, modern awards and national minimum wage orders;

Enabling fairness and representation at work and the prevention of discrimination by recognising the right to freedom of association and the right to be represented, protecting against unfair treatment and discrimination, providing accessible and effective procedures to resolve grievances

and disputes and providing effective compliance mechanisms.

National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

This legislation provides that basis for the regulation of Registered Training Organisations in Australia. The legislation provides the basis for the establishment of the National VET Regulator who are the registration authority for RTOs. A core component of this legislation is that it defines the condition for the registration of an RTO which include:

- compliance with the VET Quality Framework
- satisfying Fit and Proper Person Requirements
- satisfying the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
- notifying National VET Regulator of important changes
- cooperating with National VET Regulator
- compliance with directions given by the National VET Regulator

Third Party Providers

From time to time Connect Skills Institute may engage third party providers. Some providers are solely for marketing and prospecting purposes of new students. Others assist in the training and assessment of courses, qualifications, licences. In the event you are unhappy with something in relation to our Third Party Providers please contact the RTO and ask to speak with the CEO straight away.

Students Cheating

If any student is caught cheating, copying, recording answers of any form the student

will automatically have their enrolment terminated. As a result of your actions you are not entitled to any form of refund.

RTO Cancelling enrolled students

Connect Skills Institute reserves the right to cancel any student enrolment, without being obligated to give any refund for an of the following reasons

- the student has been caught cheating
- the student been caught copying or has identical answers to that of a previous or current student
- The student can not justify how they became to have their written answers
- undertaking assessments, agreements, arrangements which would constitute a student not independently completing their individual assessments
- Asking for answers booklets
- Offering a bribe, deal, offer, concept, benefit to any Connect Skills employees, contractor, agents, third party providers to obtain “answers of any format”

Communicating with the RTO

It is a crime to use a phone or the internet to threaten, harass or seriously offend somebody for any reason and this includes communicating with Connect Skills Institute.

An example of a student who would be in breach of this is if the student sends consistent emails ongoing text messages when Connect Skills Institute has replied to your original communication.

The RTO is not obligated to action your request when you want it. learners need to be aware they are not the only learner and requests are actioned based on priority and the order they come into the RTO.

Leavers found sending ongoing abusive, rude, threatening emails, text messages, phone calls will simply have their enrolment with the RTO cancelled. If your enrolment is cancelled on this basis, you are not entitled to any form of refund.

If you have a concern or request as a student it is expected that you will send 1 written request via a communication method of your choice. Detail everything in 1 email, and the RTO will reply.

It's the RTO policy that your written request will be responded to within 24 hours. (excluding weekends and public holidays)

Should you not receive a response within 24 hours and only then send a further 2nd written request.

All requests must be sent in a written format to the RTO.

If you don't like the response given to you you are entitled to lodge an official complaint. Please contact the RTO by a written form of communication method and request the official complaints form be emailed or posted to you. Alternatively this can be downloaded from the connect skills website.

Text messages are not the platform to lodge a formal complaint. You must submit your complaint in writing via email, written letter, online complaint lodgement.

We do offer the service of being able to contact mentors outside of normal business hours. However, it is at the discretion of the mentors and the RTO when they reply. In some instances they may reply straight away others may take several hours, others may wait until the next business working day to reply. Keep in mind you are not the only student who may be making contact, your question may need clarity of management.

As a policy we tell all students that communication as a whole can take 24-hour turn around. If it's quicker fantastic however

the policy of this RTO is 24 hours (on a business day excluding public holidays) to reply to written communication. This does not mean your request or question is resolved but actioned.

Student Interviews

Every student who enrolls into a course or qualification with Connect Skills Institute is required to take part in an interview. The interview is not intended to cause anxiety but to establish training options in which the student can feel supported and self-determining in completing the training. The interview is simply a tool in which Connect Skills Institute can identify the most appropriate learning and assessment strategies for you to complete the course / qualification. Upon this taking place a personalised learning plan can be developed to meet your needs and requirements

Post Enrolment Student Communication

Connect Skills Institute has a policy of staying in regular contact with all learners. This may be in the form of emails, letters, text messages or a combination of all of the above. This is for the purpose of providing appropriate support services to enable learners to progress through their course or qualification.

Inbound/ outbound Phone calls to the RTO

Connect Skills Institute records all incoming and outgoing calls for quality improvement and compliance purposes.

External Government Departments

Connect Skills Institute takes no responsibility if any government agency refuses to process your licence or registration. Each licencing regulator has their own state based eligibility

requirements. All connect Skills Institute provides is the educational aspects to meet the requirements not your eligibility aspects. Connect Skills Institute recommends prior to any enrolment that you ensure you actually meet the eligibility requirements prior to commencing your course or qualification with Connect Skills Institute.

Language Literacy, Numeracy commencement test

All new student of Connect Skills Institute will be obligated to take part in a compulsory Language Literacy Numeracy test prior to commencing any course or qualification. Connect Skills Institute has an obligation to ensure each learner has the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise required to successfully undertake this course or qualification. As the learner you won't be able to start your course/qualification without completing the LLN test first