

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome

Thank you for choosing Essential Skills Training & Recruitment (ESTR). We look forward to assisting you in developing your knowledge and skills in your chosen field.

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment is committed to providing high quality vocational education and training. We specialise in training for the community services sector, delivered by our passionate and dedicated trainers.

In this handbook you will find information about our policies and training and assessment procedures. If you have questions about any aspect of your training, please call or email our office and we will assist you with your enquiry.

We hope that you find your training experience positive and rewarding.

Julie Fletcher, Director.

“Supporting communities through education”

Contact Details

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Connect with us



Code of Practice

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment is committed to operating within the principles of the **Australian Quality Framework (AQF)** and the **Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)**.

This includes a commitment to recognise the training qualifications issued by other registered training organisations (RTOs) and the development and dissemination of policies and procedures covering the following areas:

- Essential Skills Training & Recruitment will meet all legislative requirements of State and Federal Governments in conducting training and assessment functions.
- The specific requirements of the **Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)** will be adhered to under the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations.
- Work health, safety and welfare requirements shall be in accordance with the Duty of Care Provisions of the **NSW WHS Act 2011**.
- Child protection requirements shall be in accordance with the **Children and Young Persons (care and protection) Act 1998**.
- Privacy requirements shall be in accordance with the **Privacy Act 1988**.
- Training and assessment will be delivered in accordance with the **National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011**, **Disability Discrimination Act 1992** and the **Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001**.

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment shall take measures to provide resources and an environment that ensures training venues and assessment activities are safe and without risk to the health and safety of all. You have the right to learn in a safe environment.

Harassment, bullying or victimisation will not be tolerated under any circumstances. This includes the use of social media. If you are found to be undertaking in any harassment or bullying activities, you may be asked to leave the program. Please inform us of any such circumstances should they arise.



NATIONALLY RECOGNISED
TRAINING

Scope of Registration

Nationally Endorsed Qualifications

BSB30415 Certificate III in Business Administration
BSB40515 Certificate IV in Business Administration
BSB42015 Certificate IV in Leadership and Management
BSB42618 Certificate IV in New Small Business
BSB51918 Diploma of Leadership and Management
BSB61015 Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management
CHC32015 Certificate III in Community Services
CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support
CHC42015 Certificate IV in Community Services
CHC43015 Certificate IV in Ageing Support
CHC43115 Certificate IV in Disability
CHC43415 Certificate IV in Leisure and Health
CHC52015 Diploma of Community Services
HLT33215 Certificate III in Health Support Services
HLT43015 Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance
SIT30916 Certificate III in Catering Operations

Accredited Courses

10735NAT Course in Disability First Aid

Participant Responsibilities

There are a number of obligations you have during your time in this program.

- Be well informed about your program requirements
- Accept responsibility for your own learning
- Attend workshops, (if scheduled for you)
- Submit assessments on time
- Keep copies of all your training documents and assessments
- Provide honest feedback to us, for the purpose of our continuous improvement process. You will be asked to complete surveys during and/or at the completion of your program

Student Services

Essential Skills is committed to supporting you to gain your qualification. Our team will provide individual attention to assist you in overcoming any barriers that might affect your progress. We encourage you to contact our office or your trainer if you need assistance at any time.

Our services include;

- Training plan development to reflect the requirements of your organisation and your job role.
- Language and literacy support: language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills are assessed on enrolment so that students needing assistance can be identified. The LLN requirements differ for the various qualifications. Where support is required, students will be either; supported by ESTR or referred to their employer or specialist service for assistance. Wherever possible, students will be supported to continue with their program while accessing the LLN support. If external services are required, this will be at the cost of the student/employer.
- Disability support; if you have a disability, we will do our best to support you and to ensure our facilities can cater for your needs. Reasonable adjustment for assessment will be discussed on an individual basis.
- Access to trainers and administration staff by phone, email or by appointment between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday.
- Job search assistance; if you are completing your training in the hope of securing employment on completion, we can assist in this area with training around interview techniques and resume/cover letter writing.
- Vocational placement; if you are undertaking a classroom-based program we will organise an unpaid work experience placement with one of our local community services organisations.

Student Records

As a student you have the right to see your student file which contains all the records pertaining to your enrolment. To access your records, we need a written request accompanied by 2 forms of identification.

Please note; statistical information is requested from the Government for legislative purposes each year and if you are a trainee your employer will also have access to relevant information regarding your training progress.

Student Portal Access

Each student will be given access to your own Student Portal. The portal will allow you to check on your progress and academic results, and to ensure your personal information is up-to-date.

You will be issued with your unique login details once your enrolment has been finalised.

Credit Transfer (CT)

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment recognises qualifications and statements of attainment issued by other RTOs. Credit Transfer recognises matching or equivalent unit codes completed in prior nationally endorsed qualifications. If you have completed units that are similar or that have been superseded and are not recognised as equivalent, then that evidence can be used toward Recognition of prior learning.

You will need to complete the application and submit a certified copy of the document for it to be processed. We ask that you apply for credit upon enrolment to ensure you do not complete the units again as part of your qualification. Credit Transfer if granted, can reduce the duration of the course and cost involved. This will be discussed with the student on a case by case basis.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a form of assessment that assesses the skills, knowledge and experience that you already have. Previous training, formal and informal, work experiences and non-employment experiences such as community work, can be assessed. Your skills and knowledge will be matched against the program in which you are enrolled.

You should make your application for RPL following your enrolment, but you can apply at any time.

Recognition of Prior Learning if granted, can reduce the duration of the course and cost involved. This will be discussed with the student on a case by case basis.

If you wish to apply for credit transfer, or recognition of prior learning, please contact our office and ask for an application, or you can download one from our website.

Access and Equity

You will be given your own student ID number at confirmation of enrolment. This ID number needs to be quoted in all correspondence and when calling the office.

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment provides all participants with a fair and reasonable opportunity to attend and complete their chosen programs.

- Equity principles are implemented through the fair allocation of resources and the right to equality of opportunity.
- Participants are given opportunities to participate in vocational education training programs by the provision of client orientated services, which address specific needs.
- We ensure implementation of non-discriminatory client procedures which encourage fair access for all clients, wishing to participate in our training programs.

Privacy

Collecting and handling client information is a necessary part of conducting an RTO's business. Essential Skills Training and Recruitment will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)** and the **Data Provision Act 2012**.

All personal information and training activity data will be regarded as confidential and will only be released to legitimate third parties only (*as we are required to under the Data Provision Act 2012*) including;

- School – if you are a secondary student undertaking VET, including a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship
- Employer – if you are enrolled in training paid by your employer
- Nominated Apprenticeship Centre - if I'm undertaking my qualification under traineeship arrangements
- Australian Quality Skills Authority (ASQA)
- Commonwealth and State or Territory government departments and authorised agencies, particularly those that support or fund the training
- National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER)
- Organisations conducting student surveys and researchers.

Under the **Data Provision Act 2012**, Essential Skills Training and Recruitment is required to disclose personal information about you to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER).

Personal information disclosed to NCVER may be used or disclosed for the following purposes;

- Issuing a VET Statement of Attainment or VET Qualification, and populating Authenticated VET Transcripts;
- Facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys;
- Understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information; and
- Administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.

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

You may receive an NCVER student survey which may be administered by an NCVER employee, agent or third-party contractor. You may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

There is the possibility that you may be contacted by the Department (or person's authorised by the department) for audit, review and investigation purposes.

You may also receive an invitation to;

- a) participate in the department's annual student outcome survey;
- b) participate in a department endorsed project

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

If you are enrolled into any nationally recognised accredited training with Essential Skills Training and Recruitment you will be required to provide us with your Unique Student Identifier (USI).

A Unique Student Identifier (USI) is a government issued reference number made up of numbers and letters. This gives students access to their USI account where they can see all of their training results from all providers, including all completed training units and qualifications from the 1st January 2015. The USI will make it easier for students to find and collate their VET achievements into a single authenticated transcript. It will also ensure that students' VET records are not lost.

You can apply for a USI by going to www.usi.gov.au and following the prompts or you can ask ESTR to apply on your behalf. If you would like ESTR to apply on your behalf, you will be required to complete the USI privacy statement and supply us with identification. Contact our office for a copy of the application form.

All students will be required to supply ESTR with their USI before their certificate or Statement of Attainment can be issued. Essential Skills Training and Recruitment will collect your USI as part of the enrolment process to avoid any delays with the issuing of your certificate or Statement of Attainment

Changing Name

If you amend your name mid-way through your course, you should also change your name on your USI account and inform us of the name change.

This will need to be done before we can update your name in our student management system and issue any qualifications in your new name. Please note that Essential Skills Training and Recruitment is required to re-verify your USI in your new name and may ask for supporting documentation as proof of your official name change e.g. certified copy of a marriage certificate etc.

Permissions for ESTR to view your USI Transcripts

You can give Essential Skills Training and Recruitment access to your previous training records from 2015 onwards by giving us permission in your USI portal. Whilst this is optional it is particularly helpful if you are seeking recognition of prior learning/ credit transfer or demonstrating pre-requisites when undertaking further training. To give us permission;

- Log into your USI portal
- Click on 'Provide your USI'
- Search for Essential Skills Training and Recruitment. Our RTO ID is 91729
- Tick which permissions you would like to give us access to. It is recommended you select view transcript and view details
- Set the length of time we can access this information in the expiry date box and then click 'Save'.

Victorian Student Identifier (VSN)

Since 2009, the Victorian Student Number (VSN) is a nine-digit student identification number that is assigned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to all Victorian based students in government and non-government schools, and students up to the age of 25 in Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions.

Victorian based students under the age of 25 should have a VSN and will need to provide it to ESTR on enrolment. If you do not know your VSN you can contact the Victorian Student Number Operations Team by email with photo identification that states your full name, date of birth and mention the name of the school you last attended to obtain it. victorian.student.register@edumail.vic.gov.au

Training and Assessment

In competency-based training, you are assessed on whether you can apply the skills and do the tasks listed for the units of competency that you are studying. You must be able to demonstrate and provide evidence that match the requirements. The assessment tasks have been designed to assess you against each element and the performance criteria included for that unit.

Assessments will be marked as;

- **C – Competent** (achieved all learning outcomes for that unit) or
- **FER – Further Evidence Required** (resubmission, further evidence needed)

Competency involves all aspects of performance including:

- performing at a required level
- demonstrating understanding
- managing different tasks within a job
- problem-solving skills and transferring knowledge to new situations
- working with others and communication
- fulfilling responsibilities and expectations of a workplace

We are committed to ensuring that assessment is valid, reliable, flexible and fair.

If there are any changes to legislation, business ownership or operations which will have an effect on training or our ability to deliver the nominated training you will be notified as soon as possible.

Learning and Assessment Materials

You will be provided with learning materials or online units for the relevant unit of competency. These resources contain learning and assessment activities that can be completed in the classroom or independently, under the guidance of your trainer and assessor. Assessment can occur at different stages throughout your program;

progressively during classroom and independent learning activities; during site visits (where relevant); and as the final assessment.

There are many strategies that assessors will use to assess competence, including: practical demonstration of skills and knowledge in a workplace or simulated environment; questioning (verbal and written); third party reports; case studies; workplace projects; presentations and group work.

Assessment Cover-Sheets

These will be supplied with your assessment where relevant. Please ensure this sheet is completed, signed & attached to your assessment task when your work is submitted. If you need a replacement, please contact the office as one can be easily emailed to you.

Due Dates for Assessments

On enrolment you will be asked to agree in writing with submission dates for your assessment tasks. If for any reason you cannot submit your work on or before this agreed date, you must contact the office via email or by phone to apply for an extension.

Assessment Answering Guide

- The assessment cover page should be signed and attached to the front of your assessment.
- All assessment tasks should be completed on the provided document and submitted as a complete document (*unless otherwise stated*).
If you require more space to write your answers than what has been provided, please attach any additional pieces of paper to your assessment and ensure that they are clearly labelled with your full name, the question number and the unit code & title.
- Your assessment should be stapled together and placed in a single plastic sleeve.
- All pages of your assessment should be labelled with your full name in the header.
- Please write clearly as assessors need to understand your writing to be able to assess your work
- Read the questions carefully and answer all parts of the question.
- Do not answer questions with one word unless it is specifically required.
- Ensure any other specific documents requested to be attached to your assessment task are submitted with your assessment and are clearly labelled with your full name, the question number, and the unit code & title.

Working in Groups

Students must submit their own written assessments; working in groups is only permitted if outlined in the assessment task. Photocopies of another student's work being submitted as a group assessment is not accepted! This causes issues around the authenticity of your work and knowledge about that particular subject.

Plagiarism

'Plagiarism' is submitting someone else's work as your own, without recognising the source of the information. This includes copying someone else's assessment task or copying information from another source. You can use reference material for your assessments, but you need to put it into your own words and reference the source of the information.

Penalties may apply in the event that plagiarism is discovered. This can include a verbal or written warning. You will be asked to resubmit your assessment and if further plagiarism is found, further action will be taken. This can include being removed from the course.

Submitting Assessment Tasks

You can submit your assessment task at the workshop or send it in to the office. You **MUST** keep a copy; if it goes missing in the mail and you have not kept a copy, you must understand that we cannot assess something that we do not have.

Send completed assessment tasks, **with coversheet attached** to:

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment
PO Box 984 HAMILTON NSW 2303 or
info@essentialskills.com.au

Acknowledgement of Assessment Submission

If you submit your assessments by post, you will be notified by email that we have received your assessment task. Should you not receive confirmation within one week of posting your work, please call the office to check if it has arrived. If you do not have access to email, please advise us of this and we will text or phone confirmation of arrival.

Notification of Results

Your actual assessment task will not be returned to you. Please allow 3-4 weeks for your assessment to be marked. You will receive via email or post, an assessment results document. If you are given a result of FER, you will be given feedback on what is still required for you to demonstrate your competence. Trainers and assessors will be happy to advise you on what you need to do to gather the evidence or provide further learning activities to support your learning. You will be allowed three attempts to achieve competence in any individual assessment.

Issuance of Certificates

Essential Skills Training and Recruitment is responsible for the quality of training and assessment provided in compliance with the Australian Skills Quality Authority Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

2015, and for the issuing of the Qualifications and Statement of Attainments associated with this program (Excluding First Aid Certificates, which we use an external provider for). Any changes to these arrangements will be communicated to you.

On successful completion of your final unit of competency your student file will be audited to ensure all the necessary evidence and information has been collected to enable the issuance of your Certificate or Statement of Attainment. Once the audit is complete and all information is collected your Certificate or Statement of Attainment will be issued and posted to your home address. All fees associated with your qualifications must be paid before certificates are issued. Please allow up to 30 days for this process to occur and ensure you keep your contact details with ESTR current. ESTR does not issue interim statements of results or transcripts to students. Records of certificates issued by ESTR will be stored for 30 years.

If you lose your Certificate or Statement of Attainment and require it to be reproduced there will be \$20 fee associated with this that must be paid before the certificate is released.

Assessment Appeals

Any student dissatisfied with an assessment decision has the opportunity to submit an appeal. Before making a written appeal, we ask that you first contact your assessor in an attempt to understand the decision.

If you are still not happy, you are entitled to lodge an Appeals form. This form will be emailed or posted to you on request. The form needs to be received by us within 14 days of the initial notification of the assessment result.

Once a written appeal is received, the senior manager will work with the management team to try to resolve the issue. You will be issued a written response within 7 days of your appeal being received. If you are still not satisfied it will be escalated to the CEO and another registered provider may be asked to arbitrate and reassess if necessary or you can lodge a complaint with ASQA.

You have the right to have a support person involved at all times during an appeals process. If you are still not satisfied, another registered provider will be asked to arbitrate and reassess you if necessary.

If you feel that no satisfactory solution is reached, you can appeal to ASQA.

An appeal can be resolved by any of the following means:

- No further action;
- Reassessment by the original assessor;
- Reassessment by another assessor.

Work Experience

Some qualifications require a mandatory work placement to;

- Strengthen the individual's experience in the workplace to support future, expectations of performance in the workforce,

- Develop practice skills and application of knowledge within the workplace, promoting stronger embedding of learning,
- Provide exposure to real workplace situations and circumstances which cannot be replicated in a learning environment or simulation.

Reference: Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council CHC Implementation Guide Version 3.0 December 2015.

Students who are not currently employed in a relevant workplace, or in the specific role related to the qualification will need to complete a work experience placement undertaking the specific tasks and roles related to their course, under the supervision of an experienced supervisor, for the specified amount of hours of the qualification. Essential Skills Training and Recruitment can organise a placement for you. Please note that this placement is unpaid.

Criminal Record Checks (CRC)

Any student undertaking a full-time or recruitment/pre-vocational program with ESTR where an unpaid work experience placement is a course requirement must also complete and pass a **Criminal Record Check (CRC)** prior to commencing their work experience placement.

The CRC will be processed by Essential Skills Training and Recruitment through PharmacyID. PharmacyID has been designed and developed by The PRM Group, one of Australia's most trusted identity verification businesses. The PRM Group is accredited by the Commonwealth Government to provide National Police Check (NPC) services for companies, government and private individuals. There will be **no additional costs** to students undertaking a full-time or recruitment/pre-vocational program with ESTR for this.

As the nature of the involves work with aged and vulnerable people, the CRC type must specifically be the Aged/Children/Disabled/Vulnerable National Criminal Record Check.

Applicable students will be issued with an email link to PharmacyID to go online, complete the CRC application and enter the details of their identity documents themselves. This is ESTR's preferred method.

If an applicable student does not have access to the internet and/or cannot submit their CRC application online for some reason, they can complete the paper-based Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check Application and Informed Consent Form and present originals of four (4) forms of identification for an authorised ESTR Administration Officer to manually process the application on their behalf. ESTR will advise the student on the forms of ID that can be accepted if a paper-based application is being submitted.

Please note that while we endeavor to have police checks processed prior to the work experience period, there is no timeframe on when the clearance will be processed and can delay your work experience placement.

Working with Children's Checks (WWCC)

Any student undertaking a full-time or recruitment/pre-vocational program with ESTR where an unpaid work experience placement is a course requirement and this placement involves working with children under the age of 18, (e.g. Disability services, schools, hospitals or similar workplaces) will also need to pass a **Working with Children's Check (WWCC)** **BEFORE** you can commence your work experience.

This is your responsibility to acquire, ESTR cannot do it on your behalf. ESTR will supply a fact sheet with all the information you need to apply and submit your application.

You can apply for a 'volunteer worker' check that is at no cost for your work experience placement, however please note that if you gain employment in the sector you will need to reapply for a 'paid worker' which incurs a cost and will be at your own expense.

It is your responsibility to ensure your Working with Children's check is processed and cleared prior to commencing work experience.

It is also a legal requirement and your responsibility to ensure your personal details are current with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian Working with Children's Check. Any changes to personal details, including any name or address changes, must be updated within three months of the change. Penalties apply for people who don't update. Details can be updated by going to www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au and following the links.

Students should consent for ESTR to pass on a copy of their CRC and/or WWCC to the host employer for their HR records by signing the Information Disclosure section of the Full Time and Prevocational Program Application Form on enrolment. If consent is not obtained, it could jeopardise the students work experience placement.

Please also note that if your Criminal Record Check and/or Working with Children's Check returns with any disclosable outcomes, you may be asked to leave the course and no refunds will be given. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Roles and Responsibilities for Work Experience

Conducting a successful work experience placement is a collaborative process between the RTO, the student and host employer. Outlined below are the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Essential Skills Training and Recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise the work placement with the student and host employer• Ensure all necessary student work placement checks have been obtained e.g. Criminal Record Checks, Working with Children's Checks and First Aid Certificates (if applicable)• Ensures the Work Experience Agreement has been signed by the student host employer and each party is aware of their roles and responsibilities• Arrange for ESTR work experience shirts, badges and logbooks to be issued to students prior to their work experience placement• Keep in contact with the student and host employer during the work placement period• Ensure the RTO has adequate insurance coverage for the students undertaking work placement• Ensure the students are clear on their code of conduct and responsibilities during the work placement period• Conduct at least 1 site visit with the students during their placement period if assessment is required in the workplace• Debrief students and the host employer at the end of the placement

Student

- Ensure all pre-placement checks have been obtained
- If under the age of 18, obtain consent from a parent or guardian
- Act in a professional and courteous manner at all times and respect the rights of other people in the workplace
- Follow the policies and procedures of the host workplace
- Keep information about the host employer and residents/clients confidential
- Proactively seek to develop skills and knowledge during the placement to ensure readiness for workplace assessments
- Complete the student logbook and any other documentation required
- Attend the total amount of specified hours of work experience
- Be well groomed, clean and tidy in appearance. Wear full length black pants, Essential Skills Training and Recruitment (ESTR) work experience shirt and badge, and closed in shoes with non - slip tread
- Return the work experience shirt to ESTR at the end of the work experience placement
- Provide own transport or use public transport to get to work placement
- Be able to work varying shifts set by the host employer
- Be aware that a work experience arrangement may be terminated at any time at the discretion of Essential Skills Training and Recruitment or the host employer
- Notify the host employer and ESTR if unable to attend any scheduled shift prior to commencing time and make suitable arrangements to make up the missed time
- Not handle medication of any type while on work experience
- Not use lifting equipment unsupervised
- Work under supervision at all times – be allocated a shift buddy
- Not make decisions about client care and management
- Participate in a debriefing session at the end of the work placement period

Host Employer

- Host the student for the duration of their work placement
- Be aware of their obligations under Fair Work Australia in relation to students on work placement – factsheet hyperlinked below
- <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/fact-sheets/unpaid-work/student-placements>
- Give the student an introduction and induction on the organisations policies and procedures and facilities
- Take responsibility for the direction of the student during the placement
- Provide the opportunity for the student to develop their knowledge and skills under the supervision of an experienced supervisor
- Ensure students are aware of their roster times in advance and have contact details for a supervisor should they be unable to attend a shift
- Contact Essential Skills Training and Recruitment as soon as any issues arise
- Provide a safe workplace, free from bullying and verbal, physical, racial and sexual abuse

- Fill in the relevant sections of the student's logbook including signing off on the hours worked to verify that the completion of the required tasks is to a standard considered acceptable within that workplace.
- Participate in debriefing sessions with the RTO on completion of the placement

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is neat, clean, inoffensive and safe at all times and in a manner, that would be expected in the workplace when attending workshops.

Clothing that is likely to offend others in terms of its lack of decency, modesty, cleanliness, or because of slogans, cartoons, or any symbol or graphic worn to provoke, intimidate, condemn or ridicule others it not acceptable.

Students are required to wear footwear as appropriate to the training environment, enclosed footwear is recommended for WHS purposes. Bare feet, thongs and slippers are not acceptable forms of footwear.

Work experience: Whilst on work experience students must ensure they are well presented at all times. Students are to wear black pants, black enclosed shoes and the specified shirt as directed by ESTR. Some jewellery is a safety hazard e.g. hoop earrings and this must be considered when preparing for work experience in community services.

Workshops

Students who are to attend workshops are required to;

- attend all scheduled workshops
- arrive on time and stay for the duration of the session
- sign the attendance sheet on arrival
- notify the office if they will not be attending or will be arriving late
- notify trainer if they must leave early
- return from scheduled breaks on time
- participate in classroom activities
- only smoke in the venue's designated areas
- not undertake training or work experience if they are intoxicated or under the effects of illegal drugs
- not to consume alcohol whilst in attendance of training with ESTR, this includes breaks
- be respectful to all participants and trainer
- bring required learning materials to class
- adhere to the dress code

Online Training

ESTR provides a quality online learning environment using the aXcelerate eLearning Portal for selected qualifications. Students will access their resources and submit their assessments through the portal. Login details will be given to students on enrolment.

Listed below are the recommended minimum requirements for a student to successfully complete a course online;

- Computer with Windows 7 or higher or Mobile device
- Internet connection
- Latest version of Google Chrome
- Adobe PDF Reader 10 or above to open and use downloadable learning resources. If students haven't got this plug-in they can download and install the latest free version from Adobe®
- Microsoft Office 2007 or higher, or similar word processing program to create, open and view resources
- Zoom Video Conferencing software. This can be downloaded for free from www.zoom.us
- Basic digital literacy skills

Online student progress is monitored on a monthly basis. Students who have not logged on within 2 months of the course commencement date and that do not re-engage after our attempts at contact will be deemed to have withdrawn from the course.

Zoom

Students completing their course online or by distance can also have face to face contact with their trainer via Zoom Video Conferencing. This technology works much the same as Skype. Students can be based anywhere and log in at a pre-scheduled time to chat or receive student support with their trainer.

Timeframes for Completion

Please note that some programs have specific timeframes for completion, particularly those that are subsidised funding. You will be made aware of this on enrolment. By taking a place in the course, you are committing to completing it within the designated timeframe. If you are unable to make the deadline you must discuss this with your trainer as soon as possible.

Disciplinary Procedures and Dismissal

Should a student be acting with disregard to the safety of others or be displaying inappropriate behaviour contrary to the policies and procedures of *Essential Skills Training & Recruitment*, disciplinary procedures may be initiated. This can range from a verbal warning to termination from the course, depending on the severity of the action.

Program participants are expected to display a high level of personal responsibility for their learning process and for their interaction with other participants and our staff members. ESTR will not tolerate under any circumstances harassment, bullying or victimisation of students, employers or staff involved in your training program. This includes the use of social media.

Fees and Charges

Fees will vary depending on whether you are enrolling in a subsidised course, or whether you are paying fee-for-service (non-subsidised training).

Smart and Skilled (NSW)

If you are NOT in NSW and/or NOT ELIGIBLE for a subsidy or exemption from course fees, please skip the following sections related to Smart and Skilled, Concessions, Exemptions, Notification of Enrolment.

Smart and Skilled is a reform of the NSW Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. It's helping people in NSW get the skills they need to find a job and advance their careers.

State Training Services, in the NSW Department of Industry, is responsible for Smart and Skilled and leads policy, planning, funding, regulation and advice on VET and employment in NSW.

For more information visit their website; <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/>

Eligibility for Smart and Skilled

This training is subsidised by the NSW Government. To be eligible for a Smart and Skilled funded program with Essential Skills Training & Recruitment you must meet the following requirements;

- Australian citizen, permanent resident, humanitarian visa holder, or New Zealand citizen, and
- aged 15 years or older, and
- left school, and
- live or work in New South Wales

Smart and Skilled Fee Information

The price of Smart and Skilled qualifications is a set price for the full qualification.

A Student Fee Estimator is available on the Course Finder search on the Smart and Skilled website <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/> that individuals can use to check their eligibility and estimate their fee for NSW Skills List qualifications. This will be an estimate only, and the final student fee will be calculated through the provider calculator.

Recognition or Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT) granted can reduce the cost of your qualification. For more information on what is RPL or CT and how to apply please see refer to the relevant section of this handbook.

For a fee estimate or more information on the concessions and Fee exemptions available under Smart and Skilled, visit the Smart and Skilled website; <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/>

You can also access the Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy on the following link;
https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/smartandskilled/contract/fee_administration_policy_2017.pdf

Smart and Skilled Concessions

Under Smart and Skilled there are concessions available for students who are in receipt of a commonwealth benefit or allowance. Eligible benefits include;

• Age Pension	• Austudy	• Carer Payment *	• Disability Support Pension
• Farm Household Allowance	• Family Tax Benefit A (maximum rate)	• Newstart Allowance	• Parenting Payment (single)
• Special Benefit	• Sickness Allowance	• Veterans' Children Education Scheme	• Veterans' Affairs Pensions
• Widow B Pension	• Widow Allowance	• Wife Pension	• Youth Allowance

Source: Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy. NSW Department of Industry Version 1.1

You will be required to provide proof of your receipt of the benefit by one of the following means;

- Letter from the Department of Human Services confirming receipt of the benefit. The letter must clearly show your Customer Reference Number (CRN).
- A current Concession Card that shows your CRN
- A current Centrelink income statement that shows the benefit or allowance category and the CRN
- Or any other evidence that shows the benefit or allowance category and the CRN

Please note; The Carer Payment is a specific payment paid by the Commonwealth Government; this category does not include the Carer Allowance or Carer Adjustment Payment.

Smart and Skilled Fee Exemptions

Fee Exemptions are available for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students and students with a disability. You must also provide evidence for these exemptions;

- Prove you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (through descent, self-identification or community identification)
- Provide proof of a disability support pension or documentary evidence from an appropriate medical professional is required.

Smart and Skilled Notification of Enrolment Process

Before you can commence a Smart and Skilled funded program you must verify your eligibility with State Training Services through the notification of enrolment process. This will involve you;

- Reading the information in this student handbook
- Completing the Consent to Use and Disclosure of Personal Information form

- Obtain and/or supply us with your Unique Student Identifier (USI)
- Completing the Recognition of Prior Learning/Credit Transfer application (if applicable)
- Completing the Essential Skills Training & Recruitment Enrolment Form
- Completing the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- Having Essential Skills Training & Recruitment provide you will a smart and skilled fee using the provider calculator – Quote ID
- Completing the Pre-enrolment Checklist

On receipt of this information Essential Skills Training & Recruitment will calculate your fees based on your information provided and generate a notification of enrolment report. You will be issued with a Student Commitment ID which will register your place with State Training Services.

Skills First Victoria

Skills First is a reform of the Victoria State Government with the purpose of ensuring that Victoria's training system delivers high quality training that leads learners to real jobs.

The Victoria State Government, Department of Education and Training is responsible for Skills First and leads policy, planning, funding, regulation and advice on VET and employment in Victoria.

For more information visit their website; <https://www.education.vic.gov.au>

Eligibility for Skills First Victoria

This training is subsidised with Victorian and Commonwealth Government Funding. To be eligible for a Skills First funded program with Essential Skills Training & Recruitment you must meet the following requirements;

- A Victorian Employee of a National Enterprise with which ESTR has a legally binding agreement, and be enrolling in training arranged by that National Enterprise;
 - Be physically present in the state of Victoria at all times whilst undertaking training and assessment;
 - Either:
 - an Australian citizen;
 - a holder of a permanent visa; or
 - a New Zealand citizen; **and**
 - Either:
 - Under 20 years of age as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training and enrolling in nationally recognised training; or
 - Over 20 years of age as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training and;
 - enrolling in nationally recognised training in a Foundation Skills List course;
 - enrolling in nationally recognised training as an Apprentice (not Trainee); or
 - enrolling in training in the Victorian Certificate of Education or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Intermediate or Senior);
- or

- enrolling in nationally recognised training in a course that is at a higher qualification level than the highest qualification held at the time of the scheduled commencement of training.
- In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements listed above;
 - You can only commence or be undertaking a maximum of two (2) courses subsidised through the Skills First Program in a calendar year;
 - You can only commence a maximum of two (2) government subsidised courses at the same level within the AQF in your lifetime;
 - You can only commence a maximum of two (2) government subsidised accredited courses with the title 'Course in...' in your lifetime;
 - You are not eligible if you are still attending secondary school (excluding school-based Apprentice/Trainee);

The impact of Skills First Government subsidised training

Where you access Skills First funding, it may have an impact on your entitlement or eligibility for any future program support. The impact is;

- If the course is a Certificate III or higher qualification, you will no longer be eligible for a subsidised training place once you have completed the qualification, or you may pay a higher fee for any future courses.
- You may however access subsidies for subsequent apprenticeships, traineeships or a higher-level qualification program.

Skills First Victoria Concessions

If you meet the eligibility criteria for the Victorian Government subsidised course, you may also be entitled to a concession on your tuition fee. Concession fees are available to students who;

- Self-identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- Are studying qualifications up to and including Certificate IV and prior to the commencement of training:
 - Hold a valid;
 - Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth;
 - Pensioner Concession Card; or
 - Veteran's Gold Card; or
 - An alternative card or concession eligibility criterion approved by the Minister;
 - A dependant spouse or dependant child of one of the above card holders;
 - Asylum Seeker or trafficked person.

Any applications for fee concessions must be accompanied with documentation that supports your eligibility for such concessions.

Fee and Refund Policy

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment is aware of its contractual responsibilities with regard to the fee and refund administration requirements. To ensure compliance with the requirements we have put the following procedures in place:

- All information regarding fees to be paid by student will be supplied individually on enrolment. This will be in the form a Notification of Enrolment document for NSW Government subsidised training, Statement of Fees for VIC Government subsidised training, or a Fee Confirmation Letter for Fee-for-Service students.
- All ESTR customers will be required to pay the administration fee of \$500 on enrolment to cover administrative and resource costs, if course fees are below \$500 then full payment will be required on enrolment.
- Fees will be invoiced in the following payment structure unless alternative arrangements are negotiated on enrolment;

Employers	If course fees are under \$1,000 the full fee will be invoiced on enrolment. Fees over \$1,000 will be invoiced at 50% on enrolment and 50% half way through the course.
Individual Students	Students enrolling in Certificate III or Certificate IV level qualifications will be invoiced over 3 payments, with the \$500 administration fee being invoiced on enrolment. 50% of the fee remaining will be invoiced on commencement and the final 50% will be invoiced half way through the course. Students enrolling in Diploma or Advanced Diploma level qualifications will be invoiced over 5 payments, with the \$500 administration fee being invoiced on enrolment. The fee remaining will be invoiced over 4 instalments over the first 10 months of the course. If required a payment plan can be arranged to assist students to pay fees over the duration of the program through DebitSuccess. Refer to Payment Plans below.

- Agreed dates for payments will be finalised with the employer/student at the time of confirmation of enrolment.
- All fees collected will be retained by Essential Skills Training & Recruitment.
- Essential Skills Training & Recruitment will not accept more than \$1,000 prior to the commencement of training. Following commencement, fees paid in advance will not total more than \$1,500. This is to ensure fee protection for students.
- Where applicable the employer will pay the fee for certain Traineeships.
- Students will be entitled to 3 attempts to complete a unit of competency without additional cost. Any further attempts will incur a charge which will be at the discretion of the Essential Skills Training & Recruitment.
- Fees will be adjusted to reflect any RPL or CT granted.

Refunds Policy

- If formal notice of a withdrawal of **at least 3 days before commencement** of training, ESTR will refund any fees paid in advance.
- If given formal notice a withdrawal **within 3 days of the commencement of training and receipt of materials**. ESTR will refund fees paid in advance less;
 - the admin fee of \$500 for full qualifications
 - 20% of the total course fee for skills sets, single units or non-accredited training.
 - Or the client may choose for the money paid to be held in credit for future programs less the admin fee.
- Under normal circumstances, no refunds will be given after the commencement of a program, unless the client can provide a medical certificate or show extreme hardship. In these cases, fees will be refunded on a *pro-rata* basis or reduced to cover our costs for course materials, postage etc.
- Full or part refund of fees may be given in the following exceptional circumstances;
 - Fees have been overpaid
 - The course has been cancelled by ESTR
 - The CEO determines that the client would be unreasonably disadvantaged if they were not granted a refund e.g. serious misadventure and unable to continue with enrolment.
 - Partial refunds of fees paid will be issued where recognition of prior learning and/or credit transfer have been granted for NSW Smart and Skilled funded enrolments after enrolment.
- To apply for a refund, please contact our office for a 'Refund Request Form'. If a client is dissatisfied with a refund decision, they can submit a formal complaint, which will be reviewed by the CEO. A reply in writing will be provided.

Payment Plans

Payment plans are available. This is to be discussed with Essential Skills Training and Recruitment on enrolment.

If the participant would like to pay their course fees off in weekly or fortnightly instalments so that the payments are smaller and more manageable, a direct debit payment plan will be arranged through a **third-party provider called Debitsuccess Pty Ltd** (ABN 32 095 551 581). Debitsuccess is a wholly owned subsidiary of TSG Holdings (AUST) No.2 Pty Ltd ABN 89 608 821 281 and a related company of Transaction Services Holdings Limited ARBN 125 664 860 ('TSHL').

Through Debitsuccess, the course payments will be direct debited from a bank account or credit card according to the agreed frequency until all course fees are paid.

Please note, there will be an **additional cost of \$12 administration fee** related to this service **and an additional 4.4% (including GST) on top of the course fees**, to be paid directly to DebitSuccess for their services. This additional fee is spread out over the term of the students contract. Students will be made aware of this prior to entering into this arrangement.

This administration fee and other fees that may be charged by Debitsuccess are outlined in the table below.

Fee	Amount	When Payable
Administration	\$12.00	Once only when Product is first established
Additional Fees	4.4% of the course fees	Fee is included in your weekly/fortnightly payment plan
Reversal	Up to \$15	On the Dishonour of a payment
Debt Collection*	\$50 plus 25% of full outstanding balance. For example, if your outstanding balance was \$200, the Debt Cancellation Fee owing, in addition to the outstanding contract balance of \$200, will be \$100 (comprising \$50 plus 25% of the remaining balance (i.e. 25% of \$200).	On cancellation of the product due to your failure to pay the required amounts under your customer/membership contract resulting in the referral of your account to Debt Collection.

* The Debt Collection fee will only be charged if Debitsuccess provides Debt Collection Services to the business providing goods or services to you. If this is the case, the terms relating to Debt Collection Services set out in your customer/membership agreement will also apply.

Recovery of Outstanding Student Fees

Once an invoice is issued, you will receive automatic reminder emails from Xero (the accounting software Essential Skills Training and Recruitment uses for financial management) days 1, 7, 14 & 21 after the invoice is issued. If payment is not received within 21 days, the Essential Skills Training and Recruitment Finance Officer will contact you for payment. If payment is still not received after 90 days, it is passed on to the debt collection services to follow up.

Additional Costs

- If a replacement textbook is required by any student, the student will be required to pay for the cost of the replacement book which is between \$15 - \$120 (depending on the qualification).
- If external support services are required, this is the expense of the student/employer. E.g. Interpreter
- If a replacement Certificate or Statement of Attainment is required to be reproduced there will be \$20 fee associated with this that must be paid before the certificate is released.
- If you are working in the community services sector and require a Working with Children's check, this will be at your own expense. Approximately \$80
- If you sign up to a direct debit payment plan through Debitsuccess, an additional \$12 administration fee will be charged.

Subcontracting Arrangements

If Essential Skills Training & Recruitment has any subcontracting arrangements in place for the delivery of your training and assessment you be informed prior to enrolment. Essential Skills Training and Recruitment currently does not have any subcontracting arrangements in place.

Complaints

Any client dissatisfied with any program or activity related to the provision of training and assessment services has the right to submit a complaint. A form will be emailed or posted to you on request. All complaints will be actioned within 7 days of receipt.

Once a written complaint is received the senior manager will review the complaint and contact you to try to resolve the issue. If you are still unhappy it will be escalated to the CEO who will contact, you to discuss further options for resolution. The outcome shall be communicated in writing to the person making the complaint.

If you feel that no satisfactory solution has been reached, you can refer the complaint to an external body such as ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority). Any fees associated with an external appeal will be at the complainants' expense.

Resolution may be by any of the following:

- No further action
- Written/verbal apology
- Refund of any money paid
- Provision of the same course at no cost
- Provision of the same course with another provider at no cost

Consumer Protection Policy

Essential Skills Training & Recruitment is committed to upholding the consumer rights of the students studying with us.

- Every attempt will be made to resolve student's complaints as per the Essential Skills Training & Recruitment complaints procedure.
- The Essential Skills Training & Recruitment CEO is the dedicated Consumer Protection Officer and will be available for students to handle all complaints.

Consumer Protection Officer CEO – Leisa Harrison P: (02) 4961 0016 E: info@essentialskills.com.au

You can also contact the Smart and Skilled Customer Support Centre if you need advice;
<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/> P: 1300 772 104

Deferral or Withdrawal from Training

Leaving the Program

If you are on a traineeship and resign from your current employment in some cases you may still be able to proceed with your program. Contact the office to discuss your options if you still would like to complete your course. If you are cannot continue with the program for any reason, you must inform us as soon as possible.

Deferral

If for any reason you wish to defer your enrolment, please discuss this with your trainer as a first step. Your trainer can discuss any additional support requirements you may have. In all instances we will endeavour to implement processes that will support you to continue with your training.

If you do decide to defer you can only do so for a **maximum of 12 months**, after this time you will not be entitled to continue with your course and refunds are not provided. You will be required to provide you intentions to defer in writing.

Withdrawal

If you decide to withdraw from a course, we ask that you discuss the reasons for doing so with your trainer. They may discuss any support requirements that can be implemented to allow you to continue your training.

If you still decide to withdraw then the following applies:

- You must give formal written notice of the date and reasons for your withdrawal.
- You will not be refunded any fees paid and any **outstanding fees are still payable by you** in line with the Fee and Refund Policy.
- You will be given the results of any assessments submitted to date and issued a Statement of Attainment for units assessed as competent within 21 days of notice of discontinuation.
- Your Training Plan will be updated, and you will be given a copy.

Student Inactivity

Essential Skills Training and Recruitment periodically reviews the progress of all enrolled students. You will be contacted regularly by phone or email to see how you are progressing with your studies and will be provided with a student progress report every 6 months. If it is found that you are not making sufficient progress, a trainer will contact you to discuss why with the intention of assisting you to get back on track. If you are on a traineeship, or your course has been paid and organised by your employer, they will also be informed.

If we have made repeated attempts to contact you, and we do not get a response from you within 6 weeks we will automatically withdraw you.



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