



Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors

Student Handbook

www.aipc.net.au

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors

Student Handbook



April 2026

RTO Provider Name: The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors Pty Ltd
RTO Code: 0670

The information and policies contained within this “Student Handbook” were current on the date of printing. The information and policies contained within this document are subject to change.

It is therefore recommended that students periodically refer to the Institute’s website at www.aipc.net.au for a current version of the handbook.

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Welcome

Thank you for becoming a student with the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Institute on behalf of our team of Managers, Administrators, Assessors and Education Advisers.

All of the materials that you will need to complete your course are available to you through AIPC's online learning portal: My.AIPC. My.AIPC also includes helpful information and resources to engage in and progress your course.

The qualifications provided by the Institute are Nationally Recognised. Course Outlines are provided on our website www.aipc.net.au allowing you to choose which qualification suits your future career aspirations and provides you with further information regarding practical assessment and work placement requirements.

We find that students decide to study in the community services field for a variety of reasons, and have chosen to undertake their studies with AIPC due to the flexible and self-paced nature of our courses. While such flexibility is beneficial to fitting your studies around your lifestyle and commitments, it is recommended you set yourself a study plan and timeline to help you keep making progress through your course. You may also find along the way that you will cover content and information that may challenge your beliefs, thoughts and values, and lead to your own self-reflection. This is a normal part of learning in the community services field, and it is important to value and appreciate this process.

Best wishes to you as you commence your studies. Of course, if you have any questions regarding the Institute or your course, please contact your local Student Support Centre.

Yours faithfully,

Sandra Poletto
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors

About the Institute

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors was launched in early 1992 after almost three years of research and development. Many people over the years had asked the question of how one becomes a counsellor, and it was this question, reinforced by an obvious gap in education, which resulted in the first of the Institute's unique courses being developed.

There were many people interested in studying counselling who were either unable or unwilling to complete a degree at university and therefore, the need for a practical alternative was obvious. At the same time the demand for a widely available professional service was growing. There was a distinct need for a course which could be completed in a reasonable time, which most people could afford, which had real value of application, high academic and applied content, and which suited a high demand and growing industry.

Since that time the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors has grown to become a leading provider of vocational education in Australia offering Nationally Recognised Training programs in the counselling and community services sectors. Institute courses are offered through a network of Student Support Centres throughout Australia. Each Student Support Centre is overseen by a manager who is responsible for general administration and the wellbeing of students within a given area.

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) (Provider Number 0670) and a private provider. The Institute is managed by a Management Team which reports to and works with the Directors.

Institute courses have been developed on the basis of progressive assessment and self-paced learning. Upon acceptance of your enrolment with the Institute you will have received a comprehensive study package including introductory information, Student Handbook, and access to your Study Guides and Assessment Books through your online learning portal My.AIPC, which incorporate all the information you need for each unit. Each resource is designed to make your external studies as comfortable as possible.

Should you require assistance with your studies, do not hesitate to contact an Education Adviser on 1300 139 239. For all administrative enquiries, please contact your local Student Support Centre. The personalised service offered by the Institute ensures that your queries will be attended to as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Contacting Us

Head Office

Locked Bag 15, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
Level 2, Transport House
230 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
Telephone: (07) 3112 2000

Internet

www.aipc.net.au

Study Assistance Line

Telephone: 1300 139 239 or +61 7 3112 2000
(Students calling internationally, please add the international call prefix and country code 61 before the above numbers)

Brisbane

Manager: Rob Henderson
brisstudentsupport@aicpc.net.au
Level 2, Transport House
230 Brunswick Street, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006
Telephone: (07) 3843 2772

Regional Queensland

Manager: Rob Henderson
qldinfo@aicpc.net.au
Office 2, 100 King St, Buderim QLD 4556
Telephone: (07) 5476 5200

Gold Coast & Northern Rivers

Manager: Lisa Hansen-Burns
goldcoast@aicpc.net.au
Level 2, 121 Scarborough St, Southport QLD 4215
Telephone: (07) 5636 8271

NSW & ACT / Global

Manager: Jacqui Harris
sydney@aicpc.net.au
Suite 1, Level 5, 31-39 Macquarie St, Parramatta NSW 2150
Telephone: (02) 9687 9688

Victoria / Tasmania

Manager: Nidhi Chopra
aipcvic@aicpc.net.au
Level 2, 368 Elizabeth St, Melbourne VIC 3000
Telephone: (03) 9614 7472

South Australia / Northern Territory

Manager: Jacqui Mudrovcic
aipcsa@aicpc.net.au
Level 1/2, 131-139 Currie Street, Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 8297 5111

Western Australia / Singapore

Manager: Jacqui Mudrovcic
perth@aicpc.net.au
170 Wellington St, East Perth WA 6004
Telephone: (08) 9277 3972

Studying with the Institute

Communication

All students can register on our website to receive our '**Institute Inbrief**' newsletter. This e-newsletter is emailed to you each fortnight containing powerful strategies for personal development, the latest industry news and much more. Visit our web page at www.aipc.net.au to register and receive Australia's most popular electronic counselling magazine.

For all student study assistance queries, please call our **Study Assistance Line** on 1300 139 239 or email the Institute at tutor@aipc.net.au; please refer to the next section regarding Study Assistance for further information. Alternatively, if you have a query relating to your enrolment, study progress or payments, please contact your local Student Support Centre.

Any student who changes their contact details or email address should notify the Institute within 14 days by updating your details in the 'My Account' section of the Student Portal <https://my.aipc.net.au>. If you have not previously provided us with a Unique Student Identifier (USI), you will also be able to add it here. Once submitted, this field will be locked. Your assigned branch will be notified of any updates you make.

Please note that, due to compliance requirements, any changes to your name must be processed through your local branch and supported by certified copies of official documentation.

Study Assistance

When you need help or assistance with any of your units or learning material, Education Advisers are readily available to help you on the Institute's **Study Assistance Line**. Study assistance is available to students throughout Australia for the cost of a local call by telephoning 1300 139 239. The Study Assistance Line is open from 9am to 5pm (EST), Monday to Friday. You can access an Online Education Adviser by selecting "Contacts" from the main menus in the Students section of the site or emailing tutor@aipc.net.au.

My.AIPC makes it easier to progress through your course via our interactive student portal. You can submit your assessment online and course information is regularly updated ensuring you are studying the latest and most relevant information. Your marked assessments with helpful feedback are uploaded back to you. You can also access video resources for your course. Log in details for My.AIPC are emailed to you upon your enrolment. Visit <https://my.aipc.net.au> to log in and explore your online learning options.

Worrying about a problem that can easily be resolved is not productive. Please phone or email for assistance (not results) should it be required. Remember we are here to help and support you throughout your course.

Practical Components

Some courses include practical components, with various options available for completion.

You have the option to record your skills and upload via the link on My.AIPC, or to have a private assessor assess your skills in person or online via Skype or Zoom.

Online and/or in-person workshops give you the opportunity to practice and demonstrate the practical skills that you learn throughout the course, under the supervision of a qualified and experienced assessor. Please refer to your Seminar Timetable for a schedule of seminar topics, dates, times and locations. If you would like to take one of these options, there are specific guidelines that you will need to follow. Upon application for your practical, you will be provided with complete and easy to follow details and instructions. Please contact your local Student Support Centre for further information.

As each of these practicals is based upon the application of a part of the course theory, each practical has unit pre-requisites that need to be completed prior to commencement of the practical assessment. It is advisable that the practical components are completed progressively through your course to ensure the relevant skills and knowledge gained through your assessment book can be put into practice through the practical assessment.

Students who are required to pay for practical components must complete payment prior to selecting their practical method. A secure Stripe payment form will appear once 'Select Practical' is clicked in the student portal. Payments can be made via credit or debit card. Your branch will be notified once payment has been successfully completed. For further information, please contact your local branch in the first instance.

Work Placement

Some courses require completion of a work placement. While you are able to choose where you would like to complete your work placement, the Institute must review and approve the suitability of the placement in line with your course requirements.

Once you have selected a suitable agency, you are required to submit the workplace details via the Workplace Nomination Form, available on My.AIPC. If you are experiencing difficulty securing a placement, we can provide assistance in identifying appropriate organisations.

The Work Placement Officer will liaise with your nominated agency to ensure that appropriate supervision is in place, that you will have sufficient opportunities to participate in relevant workplace activities, and that your supervisor understands the requirements you must meet during your placement. Formal approval must be granted by the Work Placement Officer before you can commence your work placement. To contact AIPC's Work Placement Officer, please email placements@aipc.net.au.

While we provide guidance on the recommended stage of your course to commence placement, the specific arrangement of hours, days, and times is negotiated between you and the agency. This allows you to structure your placement in a way that accommodates your existing work, family, and lifestyle commitments.

Getting Started

Studying externally offers many benefits. Some of the advantages of studying externally include being able to study when you have the time, studying from home rather than attending classes, and being able to adjust your study to suit your lifestyle and other commitments.

Study Time

At times, studying externally may result in difficulty in motivating yourself. It is important that you set regular study times for yourself and try to keep to your program. Try to work for periods of approximately two hours at a time with a short break after you have been working for about 70 minutes. Adjust this '2 hour' guideline to suit the study of a section of your Study Guide, as it is important that you do not break for long periods of time (more than an hour) when studying a particular topic. If you do have a break for a longer time part way through a topic, it is a good idea to revise what you have read before you continue.

Study Techniques

There are some very simple things that you can do to make study a more pleasurable and rewarding experience. Following is a list of study suggestions, and practical advice on writing assessment.

- Choose a quiet, uncluttered place to study. Set up a study area and always do your study in this area. Do not use this area for other activities. This way you condition your mind that when in this area you study.
- Set a regular study time and stick to it. e.g., 7-9pm Monday to Friday and 10 hours over the weekend. Adjust this two-hour guideline to suit the study of a particular section. If you have a long break, revise what you have read before you continue.
- Set specific study goals. The course outline you receive when you commence your studies with the Institute lists recommended due dates for assessment. Mark these dates on a calendar and treat them as study goals. Place the calendar in a prominent place in your home study area and refer to it on a regular basis.
- If there are competing demands, keep sight of your end goal.
- Break up your study goals into smaller parts that can be realistically achieved within a study period. Perhaps study of a section, or part of a section.
- Write down and summarise main points from your readings and texts on a page or file card. This is also useful for later units or general revision.
- Record main points on audio and play the recording back when doing other things, such as cleaning or driving, to reinforce your learning.
- Download the Study Skills guide on My.AIPC for further helpful hints.

Assessment Procedures

Unit questions are designed to allow you to express your understanding of the theory and its application to community services issues. Whilst assessment is not a test of your grammar or spelling ability, care in these areas will make your work easier for the marker to read and understand.

Each unit in your course has a Study Guide, a Book of Readings and an Assessment Book. The Study Guides contain the information, readings and assessment activities for each unit and you complete the assessment activities in the Assessment Book. After downloading a Unit's Study Guide and Assessment Book from My.AIPC, complete the questions in the Assessment Book and upload through My.AIPC for marking. Please undertake each Study Guide in numerical order. Once you submit an Assessment Book you must wait for its return before submitting a subsequent one.

Begin study of each unit by starting at Section One of the corresponding Study Guide. Read the questions, information, and activities carefully and highlight the key points. Your Study Guide will also direct you to where you will find the theoretical information that you will need to refer to. In most cases the information has been supplied to you as a part of the readings at the back of your Study

Guide. Refer to the Reading section specified and read the relevant parts of the text. Complete the respective assessment activities in the Assessment Book. Avoid copying blocks of the text and make notes on the main points before attempting to write your answer. Work your way through the Study Guide and Assessment Book until you have completed all sections.

In addition to the completion of an Assessment Book for each unit, some units also contain a practical assessment designed to give you the opportunity to apply the theory in practice. Practical components can be completed by either attending a seminar, demonstrating your skills by recording and uploading a Youtube/Vimeo link, or having a private assessor assess your skills via Skype or Zoom.

Your work will be graded as either 'Competent' or 'Not Yet Competent'. In instances where a grade of 'Not Yet Competent' is given, the unit will be returned to you with comments from the examiner who will recommend how to improve the unit. You may then resubmit the amended unit for grading. If after several attempts Competency is not achieved, then it may be necessary to be interviewed by an Institute Education Adviser. Please note that you may find some sections of the Study Guides challenging, so don't feel too despondent if you receive a 'Not Yet Competent'. It is common for many students to find parts of the course challenging: identifying these areas and having the opportunity to clarify these issues is important to assist you with later work in the course and also the overall development of your knowledge and skills.

Submitting a Unit

When all of the questions and activities for each section of an Assessment Book have been completed, your Assessment Book can be submitted to the Institute for assessment. Use the following as a checklist before submitting each unit:

- Have all questions and activities been completed and filled in?
- Is your name and student number typed inside your Assessment Book?
- Is your name and student number written clearly on all attachments such as essays and forms etc?
- Have you made a copy of all of your work?

Submit your completed units via your online student portal My.AIPC at my.aipc.net.au/login

Whilst we do our best to have your units marked and returned to you as quickly as possible, you may need to allow up to fifteen (15) days for their return.

Study Queries

Following are some common questions asked by students, as well as some suggested answers. If you have any further questions, please call for assistance.

Q. Do I have to answer questions in a particular number of words?

A. The approximate amount you need to write to respond to a question successfully is indicated at the end of each question. It is important to stick to this word count, so you learn how to summarise and consolidate in your own words the information you are learning.

Q. Can I send in more than one Assessment Book at a time?

A. No. Some units have a pre-requisite. Unless the pre-requisite has been successfully completed and marked as being "Competent" the proceeding unit cannot be assessed.

Q. Can I have multiple units made available at once?

A. No. Units will automatically release once you have uploaded your current Assessment Book.

Q. What does it mean if I am assessed as "Not Yet Competent" or "NYC" for an Assessment Book?

A. "Not Yet Competent" or "NYC" means that your work is incomplete or that you have not included some important information or adequately demonstrated your understanding of the information. In this case you should follow the examiner's recommendations for improvement. There are no penalties for a grade of Not Yet Competent. If you are not sure why you have been requested to resubmit a unit, please contact an Education Adviser. Please send your original unit attempt in with the re-submitted unit.

Q. What does it mean if my assessment book is returned unmarked?

A. There are a few reasons why an assessment book may be returned unmarked. Part of the assessment could be missing or in the wrong place (e.g., no signed declaration, resubmission not in the proper box); the wrong assessment book has been uploaded, or the marker has identified lengthy or plagiarised answers. The exact reason will be included in the email notification. All you need to do is review your assessment book for completeness and correctness, and then upload again.

Ways to Stay in Touch

Here at the Institute, we have developed a number of electronic facilities that are beneficial for students to access during their studies:

Institute *InBrief* eZine

AIPC's fortnightly ezine is Australia's most popular electronic counselling newsletter. Regularly delivering informative and useful articles on counselling, the latest industry news, and what's happening at the Institute, *Inbrief* is an easy way for readers and students to keep in contact with the Institute. Subscribe to the eZine at www.aipc.net.au/eZine.

The AIPC Article Library

This easy-to-access online library contains articles featured in the Institute's various publications. Apart from a wide range of articles from several counselling areas, you can also take advantage of the practical format which allows YOU to be automatically notified of every new publication straight to your PC or laptop. Access the AIPC Article Library at www.aipc.net.au/articles.

AIPC on Facebook

AIPC's Facebook group has updates and links to useful information and resources. You can join AIPC's Facebook group at: www.facebook.com/groups/aipcvet/ which is an excellent way to stay in touch with AIPC and meet fellow students. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/aipcvet/ today to check out our latest updates and news.

Practices, Policies and Procedures

The following information has been prepared to guide you whilst you are a student with the Institute. To allow for effective communication between the Institute and yourself, we have included the following practices, procedures and policies that you should be aware of during your studies.

Should you have any queries about the following, please contact your local Student Support Centre.

Code of Practice

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors advises that it:

- has adopted policies and management practices which will maintain high professional standards in the marketing and delivery of its courses, and which will safeguard the interests and welfare of course participants.
- markets courses with integrity, accurately and in a professional manner and supplies to participants information that includes:
 - procedures and criteria regarding courses and seminars,
 - award to be issued on completion or part completion,
 - competencies to be achieved to obtain the award,
 - a copy of the Course Cancellation policy,
 - assessment procedures,
 - recognition of qualifications issued by other RTOs,
 - how to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning,
 - complaints procedures,
 - appeal procedures,
 - behaviour and conduct expectations,
 - counselling, education and support services, and assistance available.
- guarantees that the recruitment of students will be conducted in an ethical and responsible manner and consistent with the requirements of the curriculum.
- issues the qualification completed and recognises qualifications issued by other RTOs.
- complies with relevant laws and Commonwealth and State legislation; and regulatory requirements including, but not limited to, the areas of: Education and Training, Work Health and Safety, Privacy, Anti-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity, Child Protection, and Working with Children.
- is aware that registered training providers who do not meet the obligations of this Code or supporting regulatory requirements, where applicable, may have their registrations as training providers withdrawn.
- will honour all guarantees outlined in the Code of Practice

Student Rights and Obligations

Successful learning is achieved within an environment of mutual respect between students and their educators.

Students have the right to:

- Receive a course experience, and learning and assessment materials, that comply with industry and regulatory requirements.
- Receive the study support services detailed on the Institute's website and included in the marketing of the course.
- Participate in assessments that enable the competencies of the course to be achieved and to be assessed in environments free from discrimination and harassment.
- Receive appropriate feedback on their work.
- Submit complaints and appeals as per the Complaints Policy and Appeals Policy.
- Obtain a refund in the event the services/course are not provided or made available by the Institute, or in accord with the Course Cancellation Policy if the student withdraws from their course.

- Receive their Certificate and Statement of Academic Record upon completion of the course requirements and finalisation of fees, or obtain a statement of attainment (for units fully completed and finalisation of fees) upon withdrawal from the course.

Upon acceptance into their course, students are obligated to:

- Abide by the terms outlined in the Student Agreement and the policies included in the Student Handbook (publicly available on the Institute's website).
- Maintain up-to-date payment of their fees and make a concerted effort to commence, progress and complete their course.
- Participate in and complete all required assessments for the course.
- Seek assistance with their studies through the study support services advertised on the Institute's website and outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Seek advice from their Study Support Centre or Study Assistance Line as needed to assist with progress of their course.

Student Agreement

Upon enrolment into your nominated course, you have signed an Application Form. The Application Form includes the following Student Agreement statement:

By enrolling in a course with the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors (AIPC), you agree to the following terms and conditions, whether you have read the terms and conditions or not.

Upon submission of my enrolment, payment (or part thereof) of my tuition, and acceptance into the course by AIPC, AIPC will send me, or make available to me, the course material for my course. I understand that access to my course material is progressive, based on my progress through the course. I understand my rights and obligations as a student as outlined in the Student Handbook and this Student Agreement, that these may be updated from time to time and I will remain bound by the terms including any varied terms. The information I have provided in my course application is truthful and will be viewed by AIPC and/or its nominee only, in accordance with AIPC's Privacy Notice. I accept the decision of AIPC regarding my initial application for enrolment and my ongoing enrolment as final.

I acknowledge and understand that AIPC incurs initial and ongoing costs associated with my enrolment, whether I progress academically in my course or not. I agree to AIPC's Course Cancellation Policy and agree that should I cancel from the course within 30 days of my enrolment, then I will receive a full refund of monies paid to AIPC in respect of my course enrolment. I understand that if I cancel from the course more than 30 days after my enrolment, but prior to three months after my enrolment date then I am liable for 50% of the total cost of the course. I further agree that if I discontinue my course three months or more after the date of my initial enrolment, I will be liable for the full cost of the course, irrespective of whether I have paid that due amount in tuition at the date of my cancellation, and irrespective of my academic progress in the course at the date of cancellation.

I acknowledge and understand that I have a maximum of five (5) years from the date of enrolment to complete my AIPC course. At the conclusion of the five-year period, my enrolment will be deemed concluded and a Statement of Attainment will be issued for any units completed.

I understand that should I wish to cancel my course at any time, I must submit my request to cancel by email to the nominated email address in the Course Cancellation Policy, outlined in the Student Handbook. I further agree that should my tuition fees become two or more months in arrears I am immediately liable for the full cost of my course enrolment.

I acknowledge that I need to have access to a modern computer to undertake my studies, and the system should have a minimum of the following specifications:

- Windows 11 or later operating system
- Licensed version of Microsoft Office 2013 or later software programs

- *Internet connection with a minimum of 1.5Mbps upload and download speeds.*

All Books, Workbooks, Readings, Assessments, Logos, Concepts, Videos, Documents and Recordings that are made available to me or received by me from AIPC are protected by copyright and I agree that I will not sell, reproduce, copy, loan or otherwise make available any item to any other person or institution.

AIPC courses and programs are subject to changing accreditation and academic standards, and in particular AIPC's courses that are subject to the jurisdiction of the 'National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011.' I acknowledge that the course or program I am enrolled in may change from time to time due to academic and/or accreditation requirements and as a consequence of such changes there may be changes to the structure and or curriculum of the course.

I understand that whilst my course does not have fixed semesters or assessment due dates (self-paced), it is my responsibility to reasonably progress in my course and complete my course within five (5) years of the start date. If for whatever reason my course curriculum changes, I will endeavor to complete the course within the teach out period. If I am unable to complete the course within the teach out period, and my period of enrolment exceeds the period in which I would be due a refund or the maximum time limit for the course (five years), I understand that I am ineligible for any refund.

I understand that personal information provided by me will be used to either obtain and/or validate a Unique Student Identifier for me which is required to issue my certificate for the qualification and enables AIPC to report my progress and completion of the course. I also confirm that the personal information I have provided is true and correct and understand that the information will be reported to government authorities as required under RTO reporting arrangements. I acknowledge that if I have advised that I require assistance with Language, Literacy or Numeracy or that I have a disability or special need and require additional learning support, an AIPC Educational Adviser will contact me for an assessment and discussion of my requirements.

I acknowledge that the relationship between AIPC and myself shall not constitute a relationship of partnership or joint venture or any other relationship where AIPC or agent of AIPC can be held responsible in any way for any actions or words made by me.

Any usage of the Marks and the Name Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors, AIPC and any other goodwill established thereby shall ensure to the exclusive benefit of the owner of the Marks and Name. I will follow the policies of AIPC unless approval to do otherwise is received in writing. I will at all times respect the good name of AIPC and will maintain the highest possible standards of confidentiality, ethics and behaviour in all relevant practices concerning my clients and AIPC, and will at no time take any action or utter any words which might in any way damage AIPC or its Agents.

Privacy Notice

Why we collect your personal information

As a registered training organisation (RTO), we collect your personal information so we can process and manage your enrolment in a vocational education and training (VET) course with us. We are unable to finalise your enrolment until we receive this information.

How we use your personal information

We use your personal information to enable us to deliver VET courses to you, and otherwise, as needed, to comply with our obligations as an RTO.

How we disclose your personal information

We are required by law (under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth) (NVETR Act)) to disclose the personal information we collect about you to the National VET Data Collection kept by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER). The NCVER is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics about the Australian VET sector.

We are also authorised by law (under the NVETR Act) to disclose your personal information to the relevant state or territory training authority.

How the NCVER and other bodies handle your personal information

The NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the law, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the NVETR Act. Your personal information may be used and disclosed by NCVER for purposes that include populating authenticated VET transcripts; administration of VET; facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage; and understanding the VET market.

The NCVER is authorised to disclose information to the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE), Commonwealth authorities, State and Territory authorities (other than registered training organisations) that deal with matters relating to VET and VET regulators for the purposes of those bodies, including to enable:

- administration of VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation
- facilitation of statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage
- understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information.

The NCVER may also disclose personal information to persons engaged by NCVER to conduct research on NCVER's behalf.

The NCVER does not intend to disclose your personal information to any overseas recipients.

For more information about how the NCVER will handle your personal information please refer to the NCVER's Privacy Policy at www.ncver.edu.au/privacy.

If you would like to seek access to or correct your information, in the first instance, please contact your RTO using the contact details listed below.

DESE is authorised by law, including the Privacy Act and the NVETR Act, to collect, use and disclose your personal information to fulfil specified functions and activities. For more information about how the DESE will handle your personal information, please refer to the DESE VET Privacy Notice at <https://www.dese.gov.au/national-vet-data/vet-privacy-notice>.

Surveys

You may receive a student survey which may be run by a government department or an NCVER employee, agent, third-party contractor or another authorised agency. Please note you may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

Contact information

At any time, you may contact the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors to:

- request access to your personal information
- correct your personal information
- make a complaint about how your personal information has been handled
- ask a question about this Privacy Notice

Please email admin@aipc.net.au or phone 1800 657 667

VET Data Use Statement

Under the Data Provision Requirements 2012 and National VET Data Policy (which includes the [National VET Provider Collection Data Requirements Policy](#) at Part B), Registered Training Organisations are required to collect and submit data compliant with AVETMISS for the National VET Provider Collection for all Nationally

Recognised Training. This data is held by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER), and may be used and disclosed for purposes that include:

- *populating authenticated VET transcripts*
- *administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation*
- *facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage*
- *understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information.*

NCVER is authorised by the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (NVETR Act) to disclose to the following bodies, personal information collected in accordance with the Data Provision Requirements or any equivalent requirements in a non-referring State (Victoria or Western Australia), for the purposes of that body:

- *a VET regulator (the Australian Skills, Quality Authority, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority or the Training Accreditation Council Western Australia)*
- *the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment*
- *another Commonwealth authority*
- *a state or territory authority (other than a registered training organisation) that deals with or has responsibility for matters relating to VET.*

NCVER may also disclose personal information to persons engaged by NCVER to conduct research on NCVER's behalf.

Access and Equity Policy

Policy Statement:

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors acknowledges the diverse nature of its student population and aims to meet the educational needs of all students, irrespective of their background. The Institute will endeavour to meet the individual needs of students through the integration of access and equity principles. The Institute will endeavour to ensure that equity principles for all students are implemented through the fair allocation of resources and the right to equality of opportunity without discrimination. The Institute will make reasonable adjustments to training delivery and assessment to increase opportunities for students to participate in their training programs delivered within the vocational education and training system. The Institute will endeavour to provide training programs that consider the needs of all people within the community. The Institute's Education Advisers, under the direction of the Training Manager, are responsible for implementing the assurances provided in this Policy.

Students who would like to discuss their individual study and assessment needs should contact an Institute Education Adviser on the Study Assistance Line 1300 139 239 or write to tutor@aipc.net.au. The Institute may request that a student supply evidence of the nature and extent of their disability or special needs.

Special needs, options and preferences of each individual student will be discussed during an interview and a plan for delivery of training and assessment prepared based on the student's individual needs. Alternatively, students may wish to contact a relevant organisation themselves. Students can obtain details of relevant organisations by calling our Study Assistance Line on 1300 139 239.

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors expresses its commitment to student access and equity by:

1. Ensuring access and equity issues are considered during resource and curriculum development.
2. The establishment of non-discriminatory student selection procedures that encourage fair access for members of under-represented groups.
3. Encouraging reasonable adjustments to training delivery and assessment that will support and assist students with a disability or other special requirements to participate fully in the course without disadvantage.

4. Ensuring that all students have physical access to education facilities in the region in which they are enrolled.
5. Presenting learning materials in a manner that embraces cultural diversity.
6. Providing students with a variety of options for demonstrating how they meet the required competencies.
7. Ensuring that there is a self-paced learning option to cater for students with varying time requirements.
8. Providing opportunities for re-assessment of Not Yet Competent assessment.

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors demonstrates its commitment by:

1. Interviewing students who express a special need in training delivery and assessment, discussing individual needs, options and preferences and preparing a customised plan for delivery of training and assessment.
2. Making reasonable adjustments to the way in which learning materials are supplied to students including learning materials supplied in alternative formats such as on computer disk, etc.
3. Making reasonable adjustments to the way in which the course is assessed by having provision for oral rather than written questioning and alternative assessment modalities such as audio and videotaped answers. The Institute also makes provision for alternative means of assessing the practical components of the course. Students in rural or isolated areas or students with a disability or other special needs have a choice in the way the practical element of their course is assessed. These options include, but are not necessarily limited to: being assessed in their local area under the supervision of an Institute approved private assessor, conducted in a major city through the Institute's practical workshops, or via a video presentation. The Institute will negotiate other reasonable assessment options available for trainees with a disability or other special needs if necessary.
4. Making Learning Materials available for external study in a written or on-line format that enables students' access to the information, regardless of their location.
5. Providing all students ongoing access to support services, including access to the 1300 Institute Study Assistance Line & Web Knowledge Base.
6. Providing additional support and opportunities for re-assessment for students assessed as Not Yet Competent.
7. Utilising a broad student selection criteria.
8. Ensuring that staff is appropriately informed and aware of access and equity issues.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assistance

Policy:

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors has a process in place to identify students with language, literacy or numeracy difficulties. Language, literacy and numeracy assessment is available for students. Should a student be assessed as requiring assistance with a language, literacy or numeracy difficulty that prevents the successful completion of their course, they will be:

- a) **Referred to an outside agency that is able to provide assessment in language, literacy and/or numeracy.** An Education Adviser will provide individual case advice, depending on the student's circumstances, regarding their ability to defer study of their course with the Institute and/or re-entry into the course.
- b) **Encouraged to access Institute study support services.**
- c) **Provided with reasonable adjustments to training/assessment to allow the successful completion of the student's training, as deemed applicable by the Institute.** Should a student require assistance with a language, literacy or numeracy difficulty that prevents their successful completion of their course, they should contact the study assistance team on 1300 139 239 and speak with an Education Adviser.

Procedures:

The Institute has a process in place to identify students with language, literacy or numeracy difficulties. Students with difficulties may be self-identified or identified by Institute staff.

Self-Identification:

- a) Enrolment Application Forms require all students to identify whether they will require assistance with language, literacy or numeracy. (Branch will notify the Education Team. Education Team will notify the relevant Education Adviser who will add the student to the LLN spreadsheet).
- b) Under the Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) section of the Student Handbook, students who require assistance with LLN are requested to contact the Study Assistance Team on 1300 139 239 and speak with an Education Adviser.
- c) The Education Adviser will assess the students' needs on a case by case basis. Any reasonable adjustments will be discussed and negotiated with the student, the branch and the Training Manager. The Education Adviser will create an additional support plan and a case folder for that student if required.
- d) The Education Adviser will review the students' progress regularly, discuss any changes or updates with relevant parties, and update any documentation as required.

Institute Identified:

- a) Student may be flagged by a marker, the branch or any member of the Education Team. If after conducting an assessment of a student's work, a marker is concerned about a student's language, literacy or numeracy ability they will bring their concerns to the attention of the Education Team.
- b) If students are institute identified, an Education Adviser will review the student's work. If after reviewing the student's work it is apparent the student requires additional support or reasonable adjustments to be made, the Education Adviser will negotiate this with the student, the branch and the Training Manager if required. The Education Adviser will create an additional support plan and a case folder for that student if required.
- c) The Education Adviser will review the students' progress regularly, discuss any changes or updates with relevant parties, and update any documentation as required.

If a language, literacy or numeracy concern is identified, the student will undergo a Language, Literacy and Numeracy assessment:

- a) Should the assessment indicate that the students' current language, literacy or numeracy level is not sufficient to carry out the tasks required the Institute will arrange for the student to undertake a Core Skills Profile for Adults assessment (CSPA). During this time, the Institute will allow for the student's studies to be deferred until this has been completed. Upon a satisfactory level of language, literacy and numeracy being reached, the student is integrated back into their course under the guidance of the Education Adviser.
- b) If the level is assessed to be sufficient, the student will continue on with their course work. In this instance the student will be encouraged to access Institute study support services such as the Study Assistance Line. As deemed applicable by the Institute, reasonable adjustments to training/assessment which will allow the student's successful completion of their training will be made. Adjustments will be made in consultation with the student and all other relevant parties.
- c) The student's progress will be monitored and any processes will updated or adjusted as required. Documentation will be altered to reflect these changes, and all relevant persons will be notified of any changes as required.

Privacy and Personal Information Policy and Procedures

Overview

In the course of its business, The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors Pty Ltd (“the Institute”) may collect information from students or persons seeking to enrol with the Institute, either electronically or in hard copy format, including information that personally identifies individual users. The Institute may also record various communications between individuals and the Institute.

In collecting personal information the Institute will comply with the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) set out in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* as amended by the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*.

Collection and use of personal information

The Institute will only collect personal information from individuals by fair and lawful means which is necessary for the functions of the Institute. The Institute will only collect sensitive information with the consent of the individual and if that information is reasonably necessary for the functions of the Institute.

The information requested from individuals by the Institute will only be used to provide you with the educational service you require to successfully complete your course; obtain feedback from you about the course, service and facilities we have provided; advise you of upcoming seminars, tutorials and relevant events; administer and manage your course, including billing and collecting debts; further develop and improve our business and educational systems; inform you about new products and services that we may introduce from time to time; assess an individual’s entitlement to FEE HELP assistance and to allocate a Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN); and to report to government agencies as required by law. If an individual chooses not to give the Institute certain information then the Institute may be unable to enrol that person in a course or supply them with appropriate information.

Your personal information will be held by the Institute for a period up to 30 years.

Disclosure of personal information

For the purposes set out above, we may disclose your personal information to the following organisations:

- Service providers who assist with managing the services we provide to you including information technology, educational services, marketing and debt recovery.
- Licensees that provide educational services and qualifications under the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors Pty Ltd banner.
- Government and regulatory authorities during audit of the service we provide to you or information reporting requirements.
- Organisations involved in the transfer/sale of all or part of our assets or business.

Personal information about students studying with the Institute may be shared with the Australian Government and designated authorities, including the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the Commonwealth Department with responsibility for administering the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, and the Tuition Assurance Scheme manager (ACPET).

The Institute will not disclose an individual’s personal information to another person or organisation unless:

- a) the individual concerned is reasonably likely to have been aware, or made aware that information of that kind is usually passed to that person or organisation;
- b) the individual concerned has given written consent to the disclosure;

- c) the Institute believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or of another person;
- d) the disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
- e) the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue.

Where personal information is disclosed for the purposes of enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the purpose of the protection of the public revenue, the Institute shall include in the record containing that information a note of the disclosure.

Any person or organisation that collects information on behalf of the Institute or to whom personal information is disclosed as described in this procedure will be required to not use or disclose the information for a purpose other than the purpose for which the information was collected by them or supplied to them.

Security and integrity of personal information

The Institute is committed to ensuring the confidentiality, security and integrity of the personal information it collects, uses and discloses.

The Institute will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any personal information collected is relevant to the purpose for which it was collected, is accurate, up to date and complete.

The Institute will store securely all records containing personal information and take all reasonable security measures to protect personal information it holds from misuse, interference, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Where the Institute has no further use for personal information for any purpose disclosed by the Institute, or is no longer required to maintain that personal information, all reasonable steps will be taken to destroy or de-identify the information.

Right to access and correct records

Individuals have the right to access or obtain a copy of the personal information that the Institute holds about them. Requests to access or obtain a copy of personal information must be made in writing. There is no charge for an individual to access personal information that the Institute holds about them; however the Institute may charge a fee to make a copy. Individuals will be advised of how they may access or obtain a copy of their personal information and any applicable fees within 10 days of receiving their written request. Where it is reasonable to do so, access to the information will be provided in the manner requested by the individual.

If an individual considers their personal information to be incorrect, incomplete, out of date or misleading, they can request that the information be amended. Where a record is found to be inaccurate, a correction will be made as soon as practical. Where an individual requests that a record be amended because it is inaccurate but the record is found to be accurate, the details of the request for amendment will be noted on the record. There is no charge for making a request to correct personal information.

Written requests for access to, to obtain a copy of, or correct personal information held by the Institute should be sent to feedback@aipc.net.au.

Complaints about an alleged breach of the APPs

Where an individual believes that the Institute has breached a Privacy Principle in relation to that individual, they may lodge a complaint using the Institute's grievance handling procedures which enables students and prospective students to lodge grievances of a non-academic nature, including grievances about handling of personal information and access to personal records.

Publication

These *Privacy and Personal Information Procedures* will be made available to students and persons seeking to enrol with the Institute by publication on the Institute's website: <http://www.aipc.net.au/>. Alternatively, a copy of this policy may be requested by contacting the Institute using the contact details provided above.

In order to ensure that students have given their informed consent for their personal information to be disclosed to certain third parties as outlined in this procedure, the Institute will advise students on enrolment about these procedures and where they are located.

Total Costs and Fees

Prior to the commencement of a course, all students are advised of total costs and fees as outlined on the Application Form and website www.aipc.net.au current at the time.

Course Cancellation Policy

In instances where a student wishes to be prematurely released from their contractual obligation to the Institute, they must in the first instance place a request to withdraw from their course in writing addressed to the Manager of their enrolling Student Support Centre. Verbal requests for course withdrawal will not be accepted. The severance balance of a student account will be determined in accordance with the Institute policy agreed to upon enrolment.

The Institute policy states that:

"I acknowledge and understand the initial and ongoing costs incurred by AIPC in respect to my enrolment, whether I progress academically in my course or not. I agree to AIPC's Course Cancellation Policy and agree that should I cancel from the course within 30 days of my enrolment, then I will receive my money back. I understand that if I cancel from the course more than 30 days after my enrolment but prior to three months after my enrolment, I am liable for 50% of the full cost of the course. I further agree that if I discontinue my course three months or more after my initial enrolment, I will be liable for the full cost of the course, irrespective of whether I have paid that due amount in tuition to the date of my cancellation, and irrespective of my academic progress in the course at the date of cancellation.

I further understand that should I wish to discontinue with my chosen course, I must submit my request in writing and return all course materials including the course texts, Study Guides, readings and any other items bearing the name of the Institute before my cancellation is processed. I further agree and understand that should my student fees become two or more months in arrears I am immediately liable for the full cost of my course enrolment."

Fees for Additional Items

While all fees to complete the courses are disclosed on the respective Application Form, and all learning materials to successfully complete the program are provided and included in the course fees, there are some optional items and services that students may need to pay additional charges for, from time-to-time, during their course of study:

1. Private tutorials (optional) with educational staff: \$40/hour
2. Replacement certificate or Statement of Attainment: \$50/item
3. Recognition of Prior Learning assessment: \$250.

Students requiring reissued or replacement documentation will be able to submit requests through the my.AIPC portal by selecting 'Document Requests' from the dashboard.

Some courses also require the completion of HLTAID011 – Provide First Aid or HLTAID012 - Provide First Aid in an education and care setting. This is to be completed through an appropriate external First Aid

Training provider at the student's own cost. A certified Statement of Attainment is then provided to AIPC, for allocation of Credit Transfer for that unit.

Teachout of Courses

The Institute is obligated to keep its courses up to date with industry and educational requirements. If updating of a course leads to a new version of the course being released, students enrolled in the current course will be advised of a timeframe in which the current course will be taught out.

This timeframe is usually within 12 months of the new course becoming available or from expiry of the accreditation of the current course. Students will be advised of the teachout date of the course in writing.

In the event of not completing their course before the teachout date, students will be able to transition to the new course and receive RPL towards units in the new course for components already completed in their current course.

A nominal transition fee will apply comprised of the difference in course price between the current and new course, and a nominal administrative fee to process the transition.

Protection of Student Fees Paid in Advance

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors is committed to protecting student fees paid in advance, and has a Bank Guarantee in place to cover students who pay their own course fees in advance. In the event that AIPC is unable to continue offering its courses, the requirements of this Bank Guarantee will be instigated by the Board of Directors.

Student Change of Address and Transfers

Any student who changes their residential, mailing or email address should notify the Institute in writing of their new address within 14 days of address change.

The courses offered by AIPC are offered externally, allowing students to complete studies from any location. Any student whose residential address changes from one Student Support Centre trading area to another will continue to be enrolled by their original Student Support Centre.

Regardless of their enrolling Student Support Centre, students will be eligible to attend seminars and tutorials and utilise local facilities at the Student Support Centre closest to where they reside.

Competencies to be Achieved

As outlined on the Course Outline and in the Study Guides and Assessment Books for the course undertaken.

Qualification to be Granted

To obtain your qualification, a student must be assessed as being competent in all areas of the course. Should a student not complete a course, a Statement of Attainment will be granted for all units in which a student has obtained competency.

Upon successful completion of all course requirements, a Certificate and Statement of Academic Record will be issued by Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors.

Re-issuing Certificates and Statements of Attainment

In the event of loss, damage, destruction or a change of name, students are able to request a reprint of their Certificate, Academic Record and/or Statement of Attainment by completing the 'Request to Re-issue Certificate/Statement of Academic Record/Statement of Attainment' Form.

Students requiring reissued or replacement documentation will be able to submit requests through the my.AIPC portal by selecting 'Document Requests' from the dashboard. In the case of a change of name, students are required to provide a certified copy (by a Justice of the Peace or Commissioner of Declarations) of the marriage certificate or deed poll.

A fee of \$50/item applies to re-issuing Certificates, Statements of Academic Record and Statements of Attainment.

Recognition of Prior Learning

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors allows students to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The RPL process enables students to apply for exemption from completing one or more single units from their course. RPL recognises that students may be competent in particular areas prior to beginning their qualification due to relevant life and work experiences and education. Students who have completed or partially completed a relevant course, who have been working within a community services, youth work or financial counselling environment for a number of years, or who have experience or qualifications gained overseas, are able to apply for recognition of this prior learning or experience. Exemption can be applied for one or more course units. A fee of \$250 applies to each RPL application.

Students who have completed similar units to those listed in their Course Outline are welcome to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning for the units.

Further details of the Recognition of Prior Learning process and a Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Application Kit can be obtained by contacting your Student Support Centre.

To apply for Recognition of Prior Learning, complete the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Application Kit and forward to the Institute along with certified documentation of your evidence of prior learning.

Mutual Recognition (Credit Transfer) of Qualifications

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors recognises the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by any other training organisations. If students have completed any of the units of competency listed in the Course Outline, you are able to apply to transfer competency of that unit/s towards the Diploma qualification.

If similar units to those listed in the Course Outline have previously been completed, you are able to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning for the respective units.

Further details of the Mutual Recognition and Recognition of Prior Learning processes and a Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Application Kit can be obtained from the "Students" section of the Institute's Web Page at www.aipc.net.au or by contacting your Student Support Centre.

To apply for mutual recognition, complete the Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Application Kit and forward to the Institute along with certified copies of your results of these units. There is no fee for Credit Transfer applications.

Articulation and Advanced Standing

Articulation is a predetermined pathway between courses of study, for example direct entry into a higher education or University course from a vocational course that has "Nationally Recognised Training" status. Advanced Standing, also commonly known as Credit Transfer, refers to credit towards another course on the basis of having completed previous study of an equivalent subject or unit.

Articulation and Advanced Standing with other AIPC Courses

Articulation and Advanced Standing arrangements are currently in place with the Institute's own Bachelor of Counselling and Bachelor of Social Work.

Further information about these Institute courses can be obtained from your Student Support Centre.

Complaints Policy

A complaint is defined as a person's expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the Institute's services and activities, or the conduct of Institute staff or students.

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors strives to deal with complaints as soon as they emerge in order to avoid further disruption or the need for a formal complaint. To ensure quick resolution, students should lodge their complaint within 28 days of the occurrence.

Stage One – Informal Complaints

If a student has a complaint about any aspect of service provided, or the conduct of staff or students, they are encouraged to contact their Student Support Centre Staff immediately, and in the first instance, to resolve the issue. However, it is not mandatory for students to raise their complaint informally.

Stage Two – Formal Complaints

To raise a formal complaint, students can write to their Branch Manager using the relevant email address listed on page 4 in this Handbook.

The student should provide a copy of any information they have available to them in relation to the situation when submitting their complaint.

Receipt of the complaint is acknowledged in writing within 7 calendar days, and the Branch Manager, or their representative (independent to the situation), reviews the information submitted by the student and the information used to make the original decision.

All complaints will be finalised as soon as practicable and the decision notified in writing to the student, and any respondents, from the Branch Manager within 28 calendar days of receipt.

For more complex matters, if the Institute requires more than 28 calendar days to process and finalise the complaint, the student will be informed in writing inclusive of reasoning with the student updated regularly as to progress of the matter.

Stage Three – Internal Review

If the student is not satisfied that the issue has been resolved, they may wish to write to the Head of VET and Operations, setting out the issues of concern at feedback@aipc.net.au.

Receipt of the complaint is acknowledged in writing within 7 calendar days and is then investigated by the Head of VET and Operations or their representative (independent to the situation).

During all stages of the complaints process, the Institute will ensure that:

- principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are followed.
- the student and any respondent are not victimised or discriminated against.
- the student and any respondent have an opportunity to present their information, and each party to a grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person if any meetings are required.
- decisions made in response to complaints are based on logical evidence and free from bias.
- a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if requested by the complainant or a respondent.

- where a decision is made that supports the student's complaint, the Institute will implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

All complaints will be finalised as soon as practicable and decisions notified in writing to the student, and any respondents within 28 calendar days of receipt.

For more complex matters, if the Institute requires more than 28 calendar days to process and finalise the complaint, the student will be informed in writing inclusive of reasoning with the student updated regularly as to progress of the matter.

The student will be advised of their right to appeal the decision as per the Appeal Policy or to an external mediator if they are not satisfied with the outcome of this process.

Stage Four - External Review Process

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint process, they may lodge an external review of the decision to the Resolution Institute, an association offering dispute resolution services, within 20 working days of receiving notice of the outcome of their complaint.

Contact Details for the Resolution Institute:

Level 1, 13-15 Bridge Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 1800 651 650 Fax: (02) 9251 3733

Email: infoaus@resolution.institute

Website: www.resolution.institute

Complainants who wish to lodge an external appeal can contact the Resolution Institute and request details of a suitable Mediator. The Resolution Institute have a free referral service to a Mediator and the Mediator will charge a fee for the first four hours of their services, with an hourly rate applying thereafter. 50% of the fee will be borne by the Institute and 50% by the student.

The Institute agrees to participate in good faith in the mediation process. Any reasonable recommendations will be implemented within 30 days of receipt of the report from the external Mediator.

If the complaint still remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, the student may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as the Anti-Discrimination Commission, Office of Fair Trading or other bodies as appropriate.

Appeal Policy

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors provides an avenue for students to appeal decisions made by the Institute, including the awarding of course and unit results.

During all stages of the Appeal process, the Institute will ensure that:

- principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are followed.
- the student and any respondent are not be victimised or discriminated against.
- the student and any respondent have an opportunity to present their information, and each party may be accompanied and assisted by a support person if any meetings are required.
- decisions made in response to complaints are based on logical evidence and free from bias.
- a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if requested by the complainant or a respondent.
- where a decision is made that supports the student's complaint, the Institute will implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome.

Stage One – Informal Review

In the first instance, students are encouraged to contact the Education Team at tutor@aipc.net.au or 1300 139 239 to request additional information about their result. However, it is not mandatory for students to raise their complaint informally.

Stage Two - Appeal of Assessment Results

Students are able to appeal against their assessment results within 28 days from issue of the result. The appeal querying the result should be forwarded in writing with a copy of the completed assessment including the assessor's comments to the Training Manager at coordinator@aipc.net.au

Upon receipt, the Training Manager (independent to the original assessment decision) will review the result and notify the student in writing of the outcome, including reasons for the decision, within 14 days of receipt of the assessment appeal.

Stage Three – Internal Review

If the student is not satisfied that the issue has been resolved, they may wish to write a letter to the Head of VET, setting out the issues of concern at feedback@aipc.net.au.

Receipt of the complaint is acknowledged in writing within 7 calendar days and is then investigated by the Head of VET or their representative (independent to the situation).

During all stages of the complaints process, the Institute will ensure that:

- principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are followed.
- the student and any respondent are not victimised or discriminated against.
- the student and any respondent have an opportunity to present their information, and each party to a grievance may be accompanied and assisted by a support person if any meetings are required.
- decisions made in response to complaints are based on logical evidence and free from bias.
- a full explanation in writing for decisions and actions taken as part of the process will be provided if requested by the complainant or a respondent.
- where a decision is made that supports the student's complaint, the Institute will implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative action required and advise the student of the outcome.

All complaints will be finalised as soon as practicable and decisions notified in writing to the student, and any respondents, from the Head of VET within 28 calendar days of receipt.

For more complex matters, if the Institute requires more than 28 calendar days to process and finalise the complaint, the student will be informed in writing inclusive of reasoning with the student updated regularly as to progress of the matter.

The student will be advised of their right to appeal the decision as per the Appeal Policy or to an external mediator if they are not satisfied with the outcome of this process.

Stage Four - External Review Process

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint process, they may lodge an external review of the decision to the Resolution Institute, an association offering dispute resolution services, within 20 working days of receiving notice of the outcome of their complaint.

Contact Details for the Resolution Institute:

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Complainants who wish to lodge an external appeal can contact the Resolution Institute and request details of a suitable Mediator. The Resolution Institute have a free referral service to a Mediator and the Mediator will charge a fee for the first four hours of their services, with an hourly rate applying thereafter. 50% of the fee will be borne by the Institute and 50% by the student.

The Institute agrees to participate in good faith in the mediation process. Any reasonable recommendations will be implemented within 30 days of receipt of the report from the external Mediator.

If the complaint still remains unresolved after the external dispute resolution process, the student may decide to refer the matter to an external agency such as the Anti-Discrimination Commission, Office of Fair Trading or other bodies as appropriate.

Student Conduct Policy

The Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors is a professional educational institute. AIPC staff are required to provide a high level of educational and administrative service to all enquirers and students. To maintain the integrity of this service, students also have obligations, including:

- Treating all AIPC staff with respect and courtesy at all times including during telephone conversations, at seminars and tutorials, in the AIPC branches and training rooms, and via web or email communication.
- Complying with all reasonable instructions and requests made by AIPC staff. This incorporates participating willingly and positively in all lessons, role plays, activities, discussions and assessments.
- Abiding by all Institute Policies as detailed on the Institute website (www.aipc.net.au) and in the Student Handbook.
- Acting in a polite and professional manner at all times in the areas of language, conduct and behaviour.
- Being punctual in attendance at training and assessment functions (tutorials, seminars or appointments).
- Conducting themselves in a safe manner at all times.
- Not being discriminatory or harassing in any way with AIPC staff and students.

Students, who are found to be in breach of any of the above obligations, or any other action as deemed inappropriate by Institute management, will be advised in writing of their breach and of the expected level of behaviour and conduct in all future communications and dealings with the Institute. If, at the time of the breach, the student is in attendance at a tutorial, seminar or AIPC branch, the student may, after a verbal warning, be asked to leave the premises with this being at the discretion of the presenter or Branch Manager.

In cases of serious misconduct or repeated breaches of this Student Conduct Policy, the student's course enrolment may be discontinued. If at any time, the student is not satisfied with the Institute's approach or decision regarding the student's conduct, a written complaint can be lodged with the Institute's Executive Committee as per the Institute's Complaints Policy.

The Institute's Student Conduct Policy is in place to protect the interests and safety of all students, and to enable AIPC staff to provide a high level of service to all students. If a student has a concern about the conduct of another student under this Student Conduct Policy, the student is to refer to the Complaints Policy to lodge a complaint in accord with that Policy.

Practical Cancellation Policy

If you can no longer make your practical, please understand we would have already booked our assessor for their time and in the case of same day cancellation, will still need to pay them for your booking. Therefore - if it is 24-hour notice or less that is being given to cancel (not including the weekend period), you will be 50% liable for the assessor/practical fee (which is a cost of \$70).

For clarity:

*If your practical is on a Monday, please advise us by no later than close of business FRIDAY (as no one is here over the weekend)

*If your practical is on any other weekday, please advise us no later than a full day before / 24 hours

*If you are attending a group practical on a Saturday, please advise us no later than close of business THURSDAY

*If you are attending a group practical on a weekday, please advise us no later than a full day before / 24 hours

Note - This applies to all in-branch/in-person as well as Zoom pracs booked in.

To avoid the cancellation fee, a medical certificate may be requested if cancelling within 24 hours (as per policy).

Discretion will be applied in exceptional circumstances.

Learning Materials

The Institute supplies all course study materials with the only exceptions being for those units that contain elements requiring the student to undertake their own research in order to facilitate learning. Learning materials are accessed by logging into My.AIPC at <http://my.aipc.net.au> and downloading the study guide, readings and assessment book for the current unit you are completing.

The Institute provides regular webinars for students to complement their learning. Students can access the webinar schedule by logging into My.AIPC at <http://my.aipc.net.au>. In addition to these webinars, students are provided with Instructional Video's on relevant topics throughout their studies that students can access at any time via My.AIPC.

Issuing of Learning Materials

Students are eligible to receive the learning materials for subsequent study when:

The pre-requisite Study Guide/s (as outlined above) have been successfully completed and marked Competent, and Course fee payments are up to date and no more than 30 days past due.

Undertaking Work Placements

Some courses require the completion of a work placement. The work placement is a compulsory component of the course and involves the student undertaking work experience in a relevant community agency or organisation. Work placements assist students with the transition from theory to practical application of their skills and knowledge and are an essential part of the learning process.

Accessing Agencies and Organisations

Students are able to source their own suitable agency; however, the Institute is able to assist with this process and will provide contact details of any organisations previously utilised for work placement to the student. The Institute needs to provide approval of the organisation as suitable for the student's placement prior to the placement being undertaken and provides information to the agency on what is required to be demonstrated during the student's placement. To contact AIPC's Work Placement Officer, please email placements@aicpc.net.au.

Responsibilities of the Student during the Work Placement

When undertaking the work placement, students are expected to:

- abide by all workplace policies and procedures
- be present for the working hours agreed to prior to commencing the placement or as approved by the organisation subsequent to the placement beginning
- conduct themselves in a safe, ethical and professional manner at all times
- maintain confidentiality at all times
- only perform duties in accordance with the directions provided by the organisation's placement supervisor or other appropriate staff member
- advise the placement supervisor or Institute staff member if difficulty occurs during the placement
- where appropriate, comply with undergoing a Criminal History Check, the 'Working with Children Check', and/or any other specific requirements of the workplace.

Responsibilities of the Community Agency during the Work Placement

The community agency is to provide a suitable and safe working environment which will allow the student to actively participate in the workplace to the level required in order to successfully complete assessment requirements for the work placement. The community agency is to provide a suitably qualified staff member who is responsible for supervising the student in the workplace and liaising with the Institute. The Institute will supply a copy of the Certificate of Currency for Voluntary Workers Accident Cover to the community agency. Students undertaking work placements are covered under this Policy. All of these requirements will be advised and disclosed to the community agency by the Institute prior to the work placement occurring.

Dispute Resolution

If a problem arises for a student or the community agency during the work placement, the following process should be followed:

1. A meeting (face to face, or over the phone for placements occurring outside of the Brisbane area) occurs between the student, the organisation's Agency Supervisor and the Institute's representative. The objective of the meeting is to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome for all parties. Students can email their branch for further information on this process.
2. In the event of the dispute continuing or a satisfactory outcome not occurring, the matter is to be referred to the Training Manager (coordinator@aipc.net.au) for the appropriate action to take in order to resolve the situation with all parties.
3. If the grievance continues, the following options are available to students:
 - The student can submit a complaint to the Institute's Head of VET at feedback@aipc.net.au or the Resolution Institute as per the Complaints Policy, the Anti-Discrimination Commission or Australian Human Rights Commission, or
 - An alternative agency workplace may need to be arranged for the placement.

Facilities and Equipment

Students will require:

- access to a computer and internet
- appropriate study facilities i.e., table, chair, and adequate lighting
- access to a video camera, tripod or other recording equipment is necessary for those students choosing to complete the practical seminar components by the recording of skills option.

Counselling and Support Services

Students can access personal counselling through AIPC's clinical division, Australian Counselling Service (ACS). ACS counsellors are in the advanced stages of their higher education training. Appointments can be booked through the ACS website at: www.acscounselling.com.au.

Students can also visit the Australian Counselling Association website <https://www.theaca.net.au/find-registered-counsellor.php> where they will be provided with the names and contact details of counsellors in their locality.

Plagiarism, Copying, and the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The course assessment is designed to allow students to express their own understanding of the relevant theory and its application to counselling issues. In order to be marked as “Competent” on a piece of assessment, a student must be able to demonstrate their own understanding of the topic by presenting the assessment in their own words and incorporating their own ideas.

Copying sentences and blocks of text directly from readings, textbooks, or other documents does not demonstrate a student’s own understanding of the topic. Such practices will be regarded as plagiarism unless the source is appropriately acknowledged.

Copying the work of another student and collaborating with another student during the completion of assessment also does not demonstrate a student’s own understanding of the topic. Students are not to submit assessment that is the same as another student’s (past or present) or has been developed in collaboration with another student. Such occurrences will be regarded as copying.

The ability to develop and demonstrate personal comprehension and effective communications skills are transferrable skills that are fundamental to the helping profession. As such, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the purpose of assisting with or completing assessments will be regarded as plagiarism.

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of any review and, if plagiarism, copying, or the use of AI is evident, will be required to re-submit assessments. A repeat occurrence of plagiarism, copying, or the use of AI may lead to the student’s enrolment in the course being cancelled. All instances of plagiarism, copying, or the use of AI will be resolved to the Institute’s satisfaction.

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