ACS Student Handbook

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

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Table of Contents

Welcome

Welcome to ACS, the professional association for Australia's Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) sector. We're about developing, recognising and maintaining professionalism within the ICT sector across Australia.

While studying with ACS, you are an ACS student member. Your ACS student membership provides you with access to a wide range of learning resources including the ACS Learning Accelerator. You can also attend online and face-to-face ACS events offered across Australia. These events provide you with opportunities to learn about the ICT sector and develop networks with existing and new ICT professionals.

The purpose of the ACS Student Handbook is to inform you of your rights and responsibilities as a student with ACS. The latest version of this handbook is available on the ACS website on our Registered Training Organisation (RTO) page. You will also find the ACS Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure on the same page. Still on the ACS website, but in a different location is the ACS Privacy Policy, located here: https://www.acs.org.au/privacy-policy.html. All other policies and procedures referred to in your ACS Student Handbook are available with your course materials in the ACS Learning Management System, Canvas.

VET Quality Framework

ACS is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Provider Number: 40184. As an RTO, ACS is part of Australia's VET Quality Framework. The VET Quality Framework is a set of regulations that impose minimum education related standards. This also means the qualification you receive is recognised across Australia. As an RTO, we oversee the delivery of your studies.

For more information about Australia's VET Quality Framework, visit https://www.asqa.gov.au/about/asqa/key-legislation/vet-quality-framework

ACS Student Code of Conduct

The ACS Student Code of Conduct has been developed for you to understand your obligations as a student with ACS. It states minimum standards for how you will conduct yourself professionally and personally while studying with ACS. You are required to get to know these standards and agree to meet them when you enrol in your course.

To view the *ACS Student Code of Conduct,* go to the Policies and Procedures button on the home page of your course.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)

LLN is an assessment you take before enrolment. The LLN assessment is also identified as the Pre-Training Review. The purpose of the LLN assessment is for your trainer to understand your levels of language, literacy and numeracy skills. The results of your LLN assessment help inform your suitability for the course and determine the support you will be provided with throughout your learning and assessment journey.

It's not like other tests where you pass or fail, it's a test that helps us identify where you are up to in your learning journey. In the event the support you require to successfully complete the course is extensive, ACS will recommend an alternative course of action.

ACS recognises your language, literacy and numeracy levels need to match or exceed your course requirements.

No matter where you are up to in your LLN journey, ACS recommends you take advantage of some online resources available such as the reading and writing hotline: http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

Students undertaking nationally recognised training need a USI. Once you have one, it's yours for life. If you have lost yours or if you need to create one, visit usi.gov.au.

Your USI gives you hassle-free and reliable online access to your VET transcripts. This is particularly helpful if you are applying for a credit transfer or some form of RPL.

If you would like ACS to create or retrieve your USI for you, an administration fee is charged. If you create or retrieve your USI yourself, it's free!

Enrolment

Once you have enrolled, you will be provided with a confirmation of enrolment notification and information relating to your timetable and orientation.

Fees

Students are provided with course fee information from ACS prior to enrolment.

Final student results are released only when all fees have been paid.

Refunds

ACS offers a full refund of all course fees within 30 calendar days of commencement of the course.

ACS may offer full or partial refunds on compassionate grounds after 30 calendar days of commencement of the course. Full or partial refunds on compassionate grounds are granted at the discretion of ACS..

To apply for a refund any time, complete the *Application for Course Discontinuation & Refund* form located in the Policies and Procedures section of the home page of your course and email the completed form to ACS at education@acs.org.au .

When ACS receives your completed Application for Course Discontinuation and Refund form, you will be automatically withdrawn from the course you are studying and future payments related to your course are not required.

ACS does not offer refunds for incomplete or unsatisfactory course work or due to any form of academic misconduct, including plagiarism.

Refunds granted are paid to your nominated account within 30 calendar days.

Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning

ACS recognises units of competency issued by other RTOs. If you have previously completed one or more of the units of competency that form part of your course, email your transcript to education@acs.org.au. Also, let your trainer know in case there are some special arrangements that can be made for you.

RPL recognises your previous learning and experiences related to the course you are about to undertake. If you decide to apply for RPL, talk to your trainer first. ACS recognises that each RPL application is unique. You will be provided with guidelines that include:

- providing an up to date resume

- linking your skills, knowledge and experiences to course requirements
- providing evidence in the form of:
    o referees from current and/or recent work colleagues
    o previous academic work and results
    o relevant certifications
    o participating in an investigative interview with a trained assessor
- full or partial recognition of a course may be granted.

If you decide to apply for RPL, the onus is on you, the student to provide sufficient evidence and link the evidence you supply to course requirements. The role of ACS is to verify the evidence you supply. ACS does not guarantee RPL so talk to your trainer first to discuss the viability of your RPL application.

To view the full *Credit Transfer and RPL Policy and Procedure*, go to the Policies and Procedures button on the home page of your course.

Mode of Delivery

ACS offers online training and assessment using the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). This includes:

- real-time virtual classes
- presenting your work virtually
- watching others present their work virtually
- self-paced online learning modules
- collaboration with other students using Canvas discussion boards
- project-based assessment tasks
- communicating with your trainer outside real-time virtual class time.

Get to know Canvas by clicking on the Orientation button of the home page of your course.

Student Induction

Student induction information in located on the home page of your course. It includes:

- a welcome to ACS message
- information about your course
- minimum resources required
- online learning support
- navigating Canvas LMS support
- an introduction to ACS and some of your ACS member benefits
- access to all policies and procedures mentioned in this ACS Student Handbook
- an introduction to Australia's Digital Pulse
- an overview of the ICT sector.

This is self-paced. You are expected to be familiar with this information before your first real-time virtual class.

Check your timetable to see:

- when real-time virtual classes commence

- how often real-time virtual classes occur

- the duration of each real-time virtual class.

ACS recommends you attend all scheduled real-time virtual classes.

If you are having trouble accessing your course, contact ACS Education by calling 1800 671 003 or emailing education@acs.org.au

Assessment

Assessment is a value judgement made by your trainer as to whether you meet pre-determined standards within a course. Throughout your course of study, your trainer will collect and record evidence of your learning in a range of formats.

Your ACS course is made up of modules. Within each module there are a range of assessments. You are required to successfully complete all assessment tasks of one module before moving on to the next module. The assessment tasks within each module are advised at the beginning of each module.

Assessment tasks come in a range of formats. Examples of assessment tasks include:

- individual assignments

- group assignments

- quizzes

- completion of activities

- participation in class activities

- presentations

- contributions to discussions.

Most assessment tasks are linked to a rubric in Canvas. Each rubric consists of an assessment-specific set of criteria. Aligned with each is criterion is guidance on how to pass or earn a higher grade. It is important to note that all criteria need to be met for every assessment task in order to pass. Rubrics are located at the end of the assessment task.

It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the rubric prior to commencing the associated assessment task.

If you are not sure about what is required of an assessment, or if you do not recall the learning associated with the assessment task, it is important to reach out to your trainer. Your trainer will be able to clarify what is required and support you throughout the assessment process.

Assessments are evidence-based, meaning you will always produce something tangible. They provide unique opportunities for you to start building or adding to your professional portfolio.

Results

You are required to meet all criteria to pass an assessment task. You are required to pass all assessment tasks to successfully complete a module. To successfully complete an assessment task your trainer will deem you as competent. This is represented by the letter C. If you did not complete an assessment task to a

satisfactory standard or you missed a submission deadline, your trainer will deem you not yet competent, or NYC. Try not to be alarmed if you receive an NYC result because help is on its way. Your trainer will provide specific feedback as to why you did not meet the minimum standard required and will support you prior to your resubmission. It is important to let your trainer know if you do not understand or if you do not recall the associated learning in the work covered to date. Remember, your trainer is there to help.

ACS dord not guarantee you will successfully complete any assessment task.

If you do not submit an assessment task and have not arranged for an extension with your trainer, you will be deemed not yet competent (NYC) for that task. You will need to negotiate submission with your trainer.

The highest grade you can earn for a resubmission is competent (C).

To view the full *Assessment Policy and Procedure*, go to the Policies and Procedures button on the home page of your course.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is a very serious offence. It means you are presenting someone else's work as your own. This may or may not be intentional. It could represent an entire assignment, or just part of it. Academic misconduct is a serious offence and could result in you being removed from your course without results.

Academic misconduct includes:

- not contributing to group assessments
- not clearly referencing your work
- not identifying the source of your information
- using another person's words without quotation marks or italics.

This is not a complete list. Academic misconduct also applies to visuals such as graphs, screenshots, videos and photos. To avoid being challenged on the source of your material and having to prove it is your own work, always, always, always reference your work and identify your source if you are referring to someone else's ideas, words or visuals.

To view the full *Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure*, go to the Policies and Procedures button on the home page of your course.

Student Surveys

You will be requested to complete surveys during and at the conclusion of your studies at ACS. The information you provide is used by ACS to improve current and future student experiences.

Privacy

ACS is committed to protecting your privacy and personal information.

ACS collects and handles your information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles, regulated by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

You can find a copy of the ACS Privacy Policy on our website at https://www.acs.org.au/privacy-policy.html.

If you have any questions about privacy at ACS, contact our ACS Privacy Officer at: privacy.officer@acs.org.au or call 02 9299 3666.

Student Support

Your first point of contact for any form of support is your trainer. Your trainer can help you with:

- completing activities throughout the course
- helping you form a group for an activity or assessment
- clarifying any instructions linked to an activity or assessment
- how your assessment will be graded
- what you need to do to pass the course
- extension of assessment deadlines.

This is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure about anything, ask your trainer first and ask early.

If you are required to re-sit any assessment, your trainer will first provide you with specific feedback as to why you need to make a re-attempt. This is common practice when learning something new, so remember, resits are an important part of everyone's learning journey.

If you have already sought support from your trainer but feel like you need more or different support contact ACS directly via email at education@acs.org.au or call our ACS Education Team on 1800 671 003.

Complaints and Appeals

ACS takes a preventative approach when it comes to complaints and appeals. As a student with ACS, you are provided with high levels of administrative, academic and ICT industry support. There may, however, be times when you do not feel supported. Should this occur, talk to your trainer first; there may be something that was not communicated to you in a timely manner or it may be something else that can be resolved without you having to issue a formal complaint or appeal.

In the event your complaint or appeal was resolved early, ACS encourages you share your experience with us by emailing education@acs.org.au . This provides us with the opportunity to look at how we may be able to improve our processes for the benefit of current and future students.

ACS has a *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure* for when a resolution appears far away or unlikely.

To view the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*, go to the Policies and Procedures button on the home page of your course.