

Establishing Eligibility & Suitability and Meeting Individual Needs Policy & Procedure



Purpose

To ensure VFA Learning maintains open, fair and transparent procedures for making decisions about the selection of students, its practices are founded on the published clearly-defined entry requirements and students are selected on merit based on those requirements, on an individual case by case basis. This policy provides information for domestic students (which include Australian citizens and permanent residents, including permanent humanitarian visa holders) and international students (pending ASQA approval in 2017) about admission to VET courses of study offered by VFA Learning.

Policy

VFA Learning will ensure that all applicants seeking admission will be treated fairly and equitably in accordance with its *Access and Equity and Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits & Opportunities Policy*. Throughout the process of application, selection and enrolment, all applicants are treated courteously and with respect. All applicants, including those who are eligible for funding under government loan schemes or programmes are advised of this during the application process. Applicants are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by their eligibility for any loan scheme or programme.

Entry criteria and application procedures are published in VFA Learning's brochures and on its website. These admission requirements do not present unreasonable barriers to access.

VFA Learning consistently applies procedures for verifying applicants' credentials and the granting of Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer, in accordance with its *Recognition of AQF Qualifications and Recognition of Prior Learning Policies & Procedures*. This ensures that students entering a VET course of study have an adequate basis of knowledge and skills to successfully undertake the studies proposed.

Offers are for admission to a specific VET course of study, and may be made on a conditional basis; if the applicant does not fulfil the condition(s), he/she may not enter the VET course of study. These conditions may include English ability and/or achievement of an academic requirement where evidence of attainment was not available at the time of application. In cases where the applicant is assessed as not being eligible to enter the VET course of choice, a review of alternative VET courses of study occurs and, where possible, the applicant is advised of any he/she is eligible and suitable to consider.

Records are retained of the application and enrolment procedure for each applicant/student in both VFA Learning's Student Management System and on the student files.

Students may access their individual records in accordance with VFA Learning's *Privacy and Student Records Management Policy and Procedure* about any decision made by VFA Learning in relation to their application, suitability and eligibility to undertake a course of study at VFA Learning.

1. *Suitability and Eligibility of Students*

1.1. VFA Learning is committed to only selecting and enrolling genuine students in all its courses, regardless of the funding arrangement. This is interpreted into VFA Learning's stringent application, selection and enrolment policies and procedures which ensure that the applicant and their parent/guardian, in the case of applicants under 18 years of age:

- has full knowledge of the course requirements, costs and duration
- meets all pre-requirements
- confirms the direct matching of the applicant's preferred course to their career aspirations, both in the immediate and longer term, which may identify that the applicant is interested in a pathway enrolment into this course as a means towards a higher education qualification
- commit to actively engaging in the training program.

1.2. To determine their suitability, all applicants are asked to share their experiences in relation to:

- Has the applicant access to a computer and internet?
- Has the applicant worked in that sector previously?
- What is the highest level of study achieved by the applicant?
- What previous course studies has the applicant completed?
- Does the applicant have any special needs? If yes, what does VFA Learning need to do in order to support this applicant?
- Does the applicant have suitable Literacy and Numeracy skills for the course they are choosing?
- Does the course the applicant is choosing to study have any pre-requisites? If so, has the applicant completed them? Or, what is the strategy for the applicant to complete the pre-requisites prior to the course?

1.3. This is undertaken both verbally through the Application Interview as well as formally and in writing in questions constructed within each of the mandated applicant pre-training reviews – VFA Learning has in place a customised Student *Pre-Training Review* for each course it delivers. Students will be notified of their results as soon as practicable after their assessment.

Results of the students competence in reading and numeracy will be reported to the Secretary in the form, manner and by the time requested by the Secretary.

- 1.4. These reviews were prepared with the support of an external LLN and foundation skills expert consultant to ensure that they all align to the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) at each level of study. Each unit has been reviewed and aligned to the ASCF (refer to *ASCF Mapping*). Refer to *VFA Learning Pre-Training Reviews for each qualification*. To ensure fairness and consistency in marking, VFA Learning has in place *Assessor Guides* which support each Pre-Training Review and which provide model answers (refer to *Pre-Training Review Assessor Guides*).
- 1.5. VFA Learning also abides by the eligibility and suitability requirements of each of its funding arrangements and ensures that all staff involved in the selection, application and enrolment of students are trained as well as meet all professional requirements.
- 1.6. VFA Learning provides no bonuses, commissions or benefits to any staff member that has a connection, whether directly or indirectly, with the number of students who are identified as suitable and eligible and enrol in a VFA Learning course.
- 1.7. VFA Learning does not charge for any application, enrolment nor suitability assessment processes.

2. *Meeting Individual Learner's Needs*

- 2.1. VFA Learning is committed to ensuring that its practices are as inclusive as possible and do not unreasonably prevent any individual from accessing its training courses. VFA Learning is committed to full access for all eligible students for all its programs and does not discriminate on any grounds. VFA Learning has strategies in place to ensure that any student who require any form of reasonable adjustment is accommodated within their learning and assessment environment.
- 2.2. If the applicant cannot successfully complete the *Pre-Training Review* assessment, then VFA Learning will, in discussion with the Academy Manager, determine whether the student is likely to progress with additional learning support.
- 2.3. In addition, and in line with VFA Learning's *Access & Equity Policy*, students whom self-identify with a disability at any part of the application, enrolment or during training, are also supported by the Academic Manager to actively engage through identification and putting in place mechanisms that will support their participation in the course.
- 2.4. VFA Learning offers a range of support strategies at no cost to the students, which include:
 - 1:1 tuition during and post the classroom based training by a student support officer
 - 1:1 support in planning assessments
 - study support including attending VFA Learning group study sessions
 - reasonable adjustments to enable any student, especially those with a disability, to participate.

- 2.5. The applicant is advised of the outcome and where the Academy Manager professionally is of the view that the student is likely to benefit from enrolling in this course with additional support which may include reasonable adjustments, an *Individual Learning Plan* is completed in liaison with the applicant. A copy of the Plan is provided to the student. The Plan includes the required action to be taken to assist the student to be able to complete the course and the student's trainer/assessor is fully briefed. The Plan has the provision to schedule and document the monitoring of the LLN areas of concern and to assist in the ongoing review that the support is sufficient and enabling the student to progress.
- 2.6. Students who do not feel that the requirements of the *Individual Learning Plan* have met their expectations, are entitled to discuss their concerns in the first instance with their trainer and the Academy Manager and if their concerns are not sufficiently addressed, lodge an appeal in accordance with VFA Learning's *Grievance, Complaints & Appeals Policy & Procedure*.
- 2.7. Should VFA Learning determine that the student is not academically ready, it will refer the student to an alternative course, which may be with another training provider.

3. *VET Student Loan Program*

Eligibility Requirements: Consideration for Enrolment and VET Student Loan Application

- 3.1. The student must be:
 - (a) an Australian citizen; or
 - (b) the holder of a permanent humanitarian visa who is usually resident in Australia; or
 - (c) a qualifying New Zealand citizen whereby a qualifying New Zealand citizen is a New Zealand citizen who:
 - (a) holds a special category visa; and
 - (b) has been usually resident in Australia for at least 10 years; and
 - (c) was a dependent child when he or she was first usually resident in Australia; and
 - (d) has been in Australia for periods totalling 8 years during the previous 10 years; and
 - (e) has been in Australia for periods totalling 18 months during the previous 2 years.
- 3.2. The student must:
 - (a) be enrolled in the course; and
 - (b) have provided the course provider with any information and documents required;
 - (c) meet any other requirements set out in the rules.
- 3.3. The student must be undertaking the course primarily at a campus in Australia.
- 3.4. Proof of residency may include, but not limited to, the following:

- Australian academic transcript (including VET transcripts) dated when the applicant was a minor;
 - School reports or Certificates;
 - enrolment papers from when the applicant was a minor;
 - Australian proof of age card from when the applicant was a minor;
 - Australian Student ID card or concession card;
 - stamped Passport;
 - Payslips or payment summaries form when the applicant was a minor;
 - completed Certificate of Application for a Tax File number from the ATO Commissioner, Tax File Number advice or notification of assessment of income tax dated from when the applicant was a minor;
 - if necessary, applicants can also obtain copies of their international movement records from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship by lodging a Request for International Movement Records form (available from www.border.gov.au)
- 3.5. VFA Learning should be satisfied that the applicant meets the citizenship criteria and has provided evidence of the eligibility criteria. In cases where evidence is not conclusive, VFA Learning will verify the information to ensure applicants meet the necessary requirements.
- 3.6. Should an applicant not meet both the VET Support Loan Program eligibility and suitability criteria, the application will not be progressed and the applicant will be informed that a Loan cannot be approved. Alternative tuition fee funding options will be explored with the applicant, which may include fee-for-service.
- 3.7. VFA Learning will ensure the student has provided relevant documents however will not be required to verify NZ student documentation. If, VFA Learning becomes aware of potentially fraudulent activity, it will contact the Department of Immigration to determine what action should be taken. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection has confirmed that NZ citizens who gain permanent residency (PR) would lose their SCV status. Therefore, if a student loses their SCV status for any reason, they would become ineligible for HELP for all Unit of Study with census dates after the date their SCV status is lost. Therefore, VFA Learning advises their NZ students of their obligations to inform VFA Learning of any changes in citizenship or visa status. VFA Learning commits to act on this information as soon as they become aware, and will not continue to allow the individual to access the VET Student Loan if they are ineligible.

Academic Suitability

- 3.8. Prospective VFA Learning applicants who are seeking to enrol into approved qualifications will be required to successfully complete the following entry requirements to demonstrate that they are academically suited to complete the course they are applying for. Applicant must satisfy one of the following requirements:

- VFA Learning obtains a copy of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education that has been awarded to the applicant by an agency or authority of a State or Territory for the applicant's completion of year 12 **or**
- the applicant provides a copy of a Certificate IV or above level qualification, undertaken in English **or**
- the applicant is assessed as displaying competence at or above Exit Level 3 in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) in both reading and numeracy, using the ACER assessment tool **and** VFA Learning reasonably believes that the applicant displays that competence, which is recorded in writing on the Application Form by the VFA Learning representative

3.9. In conjunction with the Student Application procedure, prospective VFA Learning students who have not completed or are unable to provide evidence of Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (completion of year 12) OR cannot provide evidence of studying a Certificate IV or above AQF qualification undertaken in English, are required to be assessed as displaying competence at or above Exit Level 3 in the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) in both reading and numeracy; and VFA Learning reasonably believes that the student displays that competence.

3.10. The ACER Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA) testing tool used by VFA Learning is an approved testing tool. CSPA is an online assessment of foundation skills that assesses and reports on learner's skills instantly with reports on candidate performance available immediately after completion of the assessments for use as evidence of competency.

3.11. Evidence of the reading and numeracy reports is retained on a student's file for 5 years.

3.12. VFA Learning representatives will ensure that this process will be conducted with honesty and integrity.

4. *Skills First Program (Vic)*

The Skills First Program is an entitlement to government subsidised training in Victoria.

4.1 Eligibility Requirements

In order to be an Eligible Individual in respect of any training, an individual must be:

- a. either:
- an Australian citizen;
 - a holder of a permanent visa; or
 - a New Zealand citizen;

- b. enrolling and commencing training in a course or qualification provided by the Training Provider between the Commencement Date and 31 December 2017 inclusive; and
- c. either:
 - under 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training;
 - over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training in a Foundation Skills List course;
 - over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training as an Apprentice (not Trainee);
 - over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in training in the Victorian Certificate of Education or the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (Intermediate or Senior); or
 - over 20 years of age (as at 1 January in the year of commencement of training) and enrolling in nationally recognised training in a course that is at a higher qualification level than the highest qualification held at the time of the scheduled commencement of training.

In addition to meeting the requirements above, an individual is only eligible to:

- commence a maximum of two courses subsidised through the Skills First Program in a calendar year. Where an individual is enrolled in a course(s) that is scheduled to commence at a later date in that calendar year, this course(s) must be counted for the purpose of this clause when assessing eligibility;
- undertake a maximum of two courses subsidised through the Skills First Program at any one time;
- commence a maximum of two government subsidised courses at the same level within the AQF in their lifetime; and
- commence a maximum of two government subsidised accredited courses with the title 'Course in...' in their lifetime.

4.2 Eligibility Exclusions

Subject to Clause 2.5 of Schedule 1 of the Skills First funding contract (2017), an individual is not eligible for training subsidised through the *Skills First* Program under this VET Funding Contract if the individual is:

- a student enrolled in a school (excluding a school based Apprentice/Trainee). This includes:
 - any government, non-government, independent or Catholic school; or
 - a student registered for home schooling in Victoria.

Government schools are responsible for funding these opportunities for VET within the school curriculum through their Student Resource Package (SRP) allocation, including

targeted VET in schools funding. Non-government schools make similar decisions for students on the basis of the resources available to them;

- within the meaning of the *Corrections Act 1986 (Vic)*, a prisoner held at a prison, including:
 - Hopkins Correctional Centre (Ararat);
 - Barwon Prison;
 - Beechworth Correctional Centre;
 - Dame Phyllis Frost Centre;
 - Dhurringile Prison;
 - Langi Kal Kal Prison;
 - Loddon Prison;
 - Marngoneet Correctional Centre;
 - Tarrengower Prison;
 - Metropolitan Remand Centre;
 - Melbourne Assessment Prison;

 - Fulham Correctional Centre; or

 - Port Phillip Prison;
- a person who is detained under the *Mental Health Act 1986 (Vic)*, or the *Crimes (Mental Impairment and Unfitness to be Tried) Act 1997 (Vic)* or the *Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic)* at the Thomas Embling Hospital; or
- a person who is detained (other than on weekend detention) under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* or the *Sentencing Act 1991 (Vic)* or who is held on remand in one or more of the following youth justice facilities:
 - Malmsbury Juvenile Justice Centre;
 - Parkville Youth Residential Centre; or
 - Melbourne Youth Justice Centre.
- The exclusions described do not apply to young people on community based orders made under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* or individuals held in Judy Lazarus Transition Centre who, subject to otherwise complying with the requirements in this Clause 2, may be eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program as they are able to physically access training outside of a custodial setting without supervision.

4.3 Additional Apprentice/Trainee Eligibility Requirements

- If the Training Provider is to deliver training to eligible Apprentices and/or Trainees through an Approved Training Scheme, then i to be eligible for training subsidised through the Skills First Program under the VET Funding Contract as an Apprentice or Trainee and thereby be an Eligible Individual for the purposes of this VET Funding Contract, the individual must be:

- employed in Victoria in either a full time or part time capacity under an award or registered agreement;
 - undertaking an Approved Training Scheme;
 - a signatory to a Training Contract with their employer which is registered with the VRQA;
 - a signatory, jointly with the employer and the Training Provider, to a Training Plan; and
 - involved in paid work and Structured Training: Workplace-based or Structured Training: Off-the job.
- Whether an individual is an Apprentice or a Trainee depends on how the qualification they are undertaking is designated in the relevant Approved Training Scheme. Information on current Approved Training Schemes can be found at:

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/apprtrain/Pages/schemes.aspx>

4.4 Exceptions to the *Skills First* Program eligibility criteria under particular arrangements

- Individuals referred to training under the particular arrangements set out at Section 2 of the Guidelines about Student Eligibility and Supporting Evidence may not be required to meet particular aspects of the eligibility criteria detailed in Clause 2 of this Schedule 1.
- To be considered an Eligible Individual for the purpose of this Schedule 1, individuals undertaking training under the following arrangements must present the relevant referral form or letter (as described in the relevant clause of this Schedule 1) to the Training Provider prior to enrolment:
 - Asylum Seeker VET Program, as described in Clause 17 of this Schedule 1;
 - Young People Transitioning from Care Initiative, as described in Clause 19 of this Schedule 1 (if relevant to the Training Provider);
 - access to the *Skills First* Program for retrenched employees, as described in Clause 20 of this Schedule 1; and
 - Automotive Supply Chain Training Initiative, as described in Clause 21 of this Schedule 1.

5. *International Students*

5.1. This policy is applicable to all international students enquiring and enrolling into qualifications and courses registered on CRICOS with VFA Learning.

- 5.2. VFA Learning ensures that the students are placed in a class appropriate to their current language proficiency level, learning goals and learning needs and consistent with their written agreement.
- 5.3. Although RTO may make an offer for a course to a prospective student under the age of 18, the student needs to complete 18 years of age before they enrol in the course.
- 5.4. VFA Learning commits to:
- not knowingly enrolling a student wishing to transfer from another provider before the student has completed six months of his or her principal course except in circumstances outlined in Standard 7. These restrictions also apply to courses taken before the principal course in a package of courses;
 - not actively recruit a student where this clearly conflicts with its obligations under Standard 7;
 - not knowingly enrolling a student prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course except in certain circumstances;
 - having documented procedures for assessing applicants' English proficiency and qualifications and implement these procedures.
- 5.5. At the time of enrolment, VFA Learning will ensure that:
- that students are placed in a class appropriate to their current language proficiency level, learning goals and learning needs and consistent with their written agreement.
 - students' special learning needs are identified as early as possible and arrangements are put in place to address these needs.

Related Documents

POLICY & PROCEDURE Access and Equity

POLICY & PROCEDURE Fair Treatment and Equal Benefits and Opportunity

POLICY & PROCEDURE Application & Student Enrolment

POLICY & PROCEDURE Recognition of AQF Qualifications

POLICY & PROCEDURE Recognition of Prior Learning

POLICY & PROCEDURE Grievance, Complaints & Appeals

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT Student Handbook

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ASCF Mapping

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS Pre-Training Reviews x each qualification

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS Pre-Training Review Assessor Guide x each qualification

FORM Application & Enrolment Form

TEMPLATE Individual Learning Plan

Responsible Officer

Establishing Eligibility & Suitability Policy & Procedure v3

Page 10 of 11

The responsible officer for the implementation and training for this Policy and Procedure is the Manager, Contract and Compliance.

Publishing details

Document Name	Fair Treatment & Equal Benefits and Opportunity Policy & Procedure
Approved by	Manager, Contracts and Compliance
Date of Approval	20 January 2017
Student Experience Framework Stage	Sowing the Seed
Student Experience Framework Step	Establish Eligibility and Suitability
Version	2
Summary of content (new) or amendments (revised)	Updates eligibility requirements for both 2017 Skills First and the 2017 VET Student Loans Program
Next Review Date	20 January 2018