



Student Handbook

enquiries@sdstraining.edu.au | <http://sdstraining.edu.au>

WELCOME.

Congratulations on choosing SDS Training as your training provider for your professional development – you're in good hands.

SDS Training is an Australian Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that operates under the National VET Framework and is regulated by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). We deliver qualifications from the Australian National Training Packages.

We pride ourselves in offering professional, flexible learning that is based on up-to-date practices and skills needed in the workplace and community.

We are committed to providing you with the best experience possible to obtain new skills and qualifications that will further your career.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that will be useful to you as a student. The handbook focuses on processes to support you to achieve your goals.

If you need more information or clarification on anything in this handbook, contact us at enquiries@sdstraining.edu.au or visit the website <http://sdstraining.edu.au>

Contents

About the <i>Student Handbook</i>	5
About SDS Training	5
Why do people choose SDS Training?	5
Contact information.....	6
Code of practice	6
Our mission	7
Our objectives	7
Student code of behaviour	8
Your safety	9
Access, equity & privacy	10
Access to your records.....	10
Your privacy	10
Course selection, recruitment and enrolment	11
Training and assessment.....	11
Rules of evidence	13
Certificate 3 Guarantee.....	13
User Choice Program	14
Enrolment	14
Unique student identifier	16
Consumer Rights.....	17
Cessation of Training.....	17
Fees and charges.....	17
Refund policy	17
Payment methods.....	18
Language, literacy & numeracy support.....	18

Recognition of prior learning	18
Forms of evidence.....	19
Credit transfer.....	20
Credit transfer guidelines	20
Records	20
Complaints & appeals	21
Complaints & appeals handling	22
External complaints or appeals.....	22
Issuing certificates	22
Continuous improvement of services.....	23
Learner satisfaction survey	23
Legislative requirements.....	23
Complaints and Appeals Form	26

About the *Student Handbook*

The *Student Handbook* is designed to provide you with important information about the services SDS Training delivers, and our commitment to providing you a safe, fair and supportive environment to participate in training and assessment. The handbook does not provide you with specific information about a particular course offered by SDS Training; this information is in the Booking Confirmation/Course Fact Sheet supplied separately.

This handbook contains information that you will need to know, so please read it thoroughly.

About SDS Training

Welcome to SDS Training (RTO 32505).

SDS Training is a nationally recognised training organisation registered in Queensland through the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). ASQA regulates course and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met. SDS Training operates within the VET Quality Framework. This framework comprises:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015;
- Fit and proper person requirements;
- Financial viability risk assessment requirements;
- Data provision requirements; and
- Australian Qualifications Framework.

Under this arrangement, Strategic Health Services Pty Ltd t/a SDS Training offers Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications or statements of attainment from endorsed training packages and accredited courses.

The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* provides the legislative requirements for this system.

SDS Training evolved from the need for a holistic provider of personnel services for both employee and employer. We understand the demands and rigors of today's workforce – experienced trainers, excellent facilities and professional support services are our recipe for success. We continue to establish long-term partnerships by delivering tangible outcomes in the field and the boardroom. We aim to ensure the workplace environment is safe and productive.

Why do people choose SDS Training?

- Cost effective, integrated personnel solutions from 'one-point' of contact;
- Commitment to best practice, zero harm and continuous improvement;
- Passionate, highly skilled and experienced staff;
- Nationally recognised training (RTO 32505);
- Flexible delivery options: classroom, on-site and distance, or a combination;

- Ability to combine organisational requirements within national training and assessment;
- Reputation built upon 'quality of product';
- Targeted, measurable outcomes for individual and employer; and
- Our ability to design, develop and deliver customised training solutions.

Contact information

Address: 185 Nerada Road TINANA QLD 4650

Postal address: PO Box 4034 TINANA QLD 4650

Phone: (07) 4122 1231

Fax: (07) 4122 1466

Email: enquiries@sdstraining.edu.au

Website: <http://.sdstraining.edu.au>

Code of practice

At SDS Training, we aim to deliver best practice in training and assessment services, with strict adherence to the national standards for vocational education. To do so, we ensure the following are achieved to ensure the integrity of our code of practice.

- Complying with all relevant state and federal legislation, including the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001*, *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*, and the principles of access and equity;
- Complying with the NVR legislation; Australian Qualifications Framework 2011; Data Provision Requirements 2011; Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements 2011; Fit and proper persons requirements, 2011; Standards for NVR registered training organisations, 2011;
- Behaving in a professional and ethical manner, with honesty, due care and diligence, and being accountable for our actions; and
- Avoiding practices and activities which may bring Registered Training Organisation services into disrepute.

SDS training is committed to ensuring customer satisfaction. This is demonstrated by SDS:

- Treating all students with respect and dignity;
- Providing assistance to help students achieve their desired outcome;
- Tailoring assistance to aid students in different circumstances and from different backgrounds;
- Providing high-quality facilities and materials to assist in student learning;
- Respecting our students' privacy, while accurately recording and securely storing student records for their future reference;
- Providing flexibility in our training and assessment delivery to cater for individual student needs; and
- Encouraging students to give feedback, without fear of prejudice, to support our continuous improvement endeavours.

In short, the following are central to our code of practice:

- Adhering to legislative requirements;
- Providing literacy, language and numeracy support;
- Using ethical marketing and advertising practice; and
- Access, Equity and Privacy.

The following policies and practices assist our students in their studies and create a fair and accountable system of learning:

- Assessment criteria;
- Qualifications Issuance Policy;
- Complaints and appeals;
- Recognised prior learning/credit transfers;
- Continuous improvement policy;
- Training and Assessment Policy;
- Fees and charges;
- Discrimination and Harassment Policy;
- Privacy Policy; and
- Child Protection Policy.

Our mission

To deliver quality training and assessment that meets the needs of students and industry.

Our objectives

In recognition of the mission, our objectives are:

- **People:** We strive to attract, recruit and retain talented, competent and committed people. We promote performance through leadership and professional development.

- **Safety and equality:** We are committed to providing a safe and equitable environment that promotes a confident and productive training and assessment environment.
- **Integrity and ethics:** We conduct ourselves in accordance with shared and agreed standards of behaviour that upholds ethical conduct and integrity as our highest priorities.
- **Quality committed:** We aspire to deliver consistent, high-quality services to our clients and potential future clients, and apply quality systems that support training and assessment excellence.
- **Learner centred:** We thrive on providing training and assessment that is learner-centred and supports lifelong learning. We respect our clients and strive to attract them time after time through high-quality training and assessment experiences.
- **Industry engagement:** We recognise the value of industry engagement as the driving force in shaping our training and assessment strategies. We deliver training and assessment services that are founded on industry needs and expectations.

Student code of behaviour

SDS Training expects you to:

- Contribute to learning in a harmonious and positive manner irrespective of gender, race, sexual preference, political affiliation, marital status, disability or religious belief;
- Comply with the rules and regulations of SDS Training;
- Be honest and respectful – this includes not falsifying work or information and not conducting yourself in any way that may cause injury or offence to others;
- Be responsible for your own learning and development by participating actively and positively and by ensuring that you maintain progress with learning modules;
- Utilise facilities and SDS Training publications with respect, and to honour our copyrights, preventing our publications from being distributed to unauthorised persons; and
- Respect other students and SDS Training staff members and their right to privacy and confidentiality.

Classroom Policies:

- Be on time for class and sign the attendance sheet upon entering the training room of a morning;
- Mobile phones are to be turned off or placed in silent mode while in the training room;
- Your trainer will advise you at commencement of training when your breaks will be. Smokers please utilise these breaks to cause as little disruption to your learning and the learning of others; and
- Keep noise to a minimum so as to not distract other students.

Distance Education/Online Policies

- You will need to take responsibility for completing your training and assessment and doing so within timeframes agreed to with SDS Training.
- If you need clarification on information in your Learner Guide or an Assessment Question make sure you contact SDS Training.
- Submit work that is your own and not copied from another person or source of information.

Your safety

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* outlines the requirements of an RTO in establishing and maintaining workplace health and safety standards. The requirements of an RTO as specified in the aforementioned Act are to:

- Secure the health, safety and welfare of employees and other persons at work;
- Eliminate at the source, risks to health, safety or welfare of employees and other persons at work;
- Ensure the health and safety of members of the public is not placed at risk by the conduct of employers and self employed persons; and
- Provide for the involvement of employees, employers and organisations representing those persons, in the formulation and implementation of health, safety and welfare standards.

SDS Training is committed to providing you a safe environment in which to participate in training and assessment. The following guidelines are provided as a basis for safe practice in the training environment:

- Know and observe details of emergency response and evacuation plans;
- Do not undertake activities that may cause injury to self or others;
- Be responsible for your own actions;
- Smoke only in the designated areas at SDS Training;
- Report all potential hazards, accidents and near misses to SDS Training staff;
- There is to be no consumption of alcohol within training and assessment facilities or during the conduct of training and assessment;
- Keep training and assessment areas neat and tidy at all times;
- Seek assistance if you volunteer to lift items e.g. move furniture in a training area;
- Observe hygiene standards, particularly in eating and bathroom areas;
- Electrical equipment that is not working should be reported to SDS Training staff;
- SDS Training will undertake to communicate the procedures involved in evacuation and the location of fire equipment to students at each facility for each training and assessment event (see Appendix A for site map);
- All users of a training and assessment facility need to be familiar with the location of all exits and fire extinguishers. Users should consult available maps to determine location;
- Users are asked to attend any sessions on fire safety procedures and the use of fire safety devices;
- All accidents must be reported to staff;

- The accident and any aid administered must be recorded by staff involved;
- Students, trainers and assessors are encouraged not to lift anything related to the training and assessment provided by SDS Training unless they do so voluntarily and taking all responsibility for any injury caused;
- Never attempt to lift anything that is beyond your capacity;
- Always bend your knees and keep your back straight when picking up items; and
- If you have experienced back problems in the past do not attempt to lift heavy objects at all. Ask someone else to do it for you.

Access, equity & privacy

SDS Training is committed to ensuring that the training and assessment environment is free from discrimination and harassment. We are committed to providing all students, and potential students, with a working and learning environment that values diversity and provides an environment that is safe, positive and supportive.

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

Students who feel that they have been discriminated against or harassed should report this information to a staff member of SDS Training they feel they can trust. This will initiate a complaints-handling procedure, which will be fair and transparent, and will protect your rights as a complainant. Alternatively, if a student wishes to report an instance of discrimination or harassment to an agency external to SDS Training, they are advised to contact the Australian Human Rights Commission on (02) 9284 9600.

Access to your records

You are entitled to have access to your student file and learning and assessment records upon request. You may require these to monitor your progress with training, or simply to go back and confirm something in a previous training module. While these records will be retained by SDS Training, you are welcome to have access any time, as well as request a copy.

Your privacy

SDS Training takes the privacy of students very seriously and complies with all legislative requirements. Student information is only shared with affiliated external agencies, such as registering authorities, to meet compliance requirements as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). All information shared is kept in the strictest confidence by both parties and is available on request. In some cases, we are required by law to make student information available to

others such as the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research. In all other cases, SDS Training will seek the written permission of the student for such disclosure.

In collecting your information, SDS Training will comply with all legal requirement stipulated in the Privacy Act 1988, the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 and relevant state legislation. This means we will:

- Inform you of the purpose for which the information is collected;
- Only use the personal information that you provide to us in relation to your study with us;
- Ensure your personal information is securely handled and stored; and
- Inform you of any organisation and the type of organisation to which we disclose personal information.
- We will not disclose your personal information to another person or organisation unless:
 - We have made you aware that information of that kind is usually passed to that person or organisation;
 - You have given written consent;
 - We believe the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to your life or health or that of another person;
 - The disclosure is required or authorised by or under law; or
 - 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.

Course selection, recruitment and enrolment

Any recruitment undertaken by SDS Training or third-party providers will be ethical and according to the requirements of the training package. SDS Training complies with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation at all times.

Due to the nature of the program, there may be pre-requisites prior to commencing the program. These may include:

- Particular language, literacy and numeracy requirements;
- Health and safety requirements; and
- Units of competency/prior training requirements.

All potential students should contact SDS Training to check for any pre-requisites that are required to commence a particular training program.

Training and assessment

SDS Training's, training and assessment strategies will adhere to the following principles:

- Training strategies are developed for each qualification and will be delivered and assessed accordingly;

- All training programs will require the development of a training and assessment strategy for full and partial completion of a qualification;
- Each training and assessment strategy will be developed in consultation with industry representatives, trainers, assessors and key stakeholders;
- Training and assessment strategies will reflect the requirements of the relevant training package and will identify target groups; and
- Training and assessment strategies will be validated bi-annually through the internal review procedures

To ensure quality outcomes, assessment should be:

- Fair;
- Flexible;
- Valid; and
- Reliable.

Fair

Fairness in assessment requires consideration of the individual student's needs and characteristics, and any reasonable adjustments that need to be applied to take account of them. It requires clear communication between the assessor and the student to ensure that the student is fully informed about, understands and is able to participate in the assessment process, and agrees that the process is appropriate. It also includes an opportunity for the person being assessed to challenge the result of the assessment and to be re-assessed if necessary.

Flexible

To be flexible, assessment should reflect the student's needs; provide for recognition of competencies no matter how, where or when they have been acquired; draw on a range of methods appropriate to the context, competency and the student; and support continuous development.

Valid

Assessment is valid when the process is sound and assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that:

- Assessment against the units of competency must cover the broad range of skills;
- Knowledge that is essential to competent performance;
- Assessment of knowledge and skills must be integrated with their practical application; and
- Judgement of competence must be based on sufficient evidence (that is, evidence gathered on several occasions and in a range of contexts using different assessment methods). The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

Reliable

Reliability refers to the degree to which evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and results in consistent assessment outcomes. Reliability requires the assessor to have the essential competencies in assessment and relevant vocational competencies (or to assess in conjunction with someone who has the vocational competencies). It can only be

achieved when assessors share a common interpretation of the assessment requirements of the unit(s) being assessed.

Rules of evidence

These are closely related to the principles of assessment and provide guidance on the collection of evidence to ensure that it is:

- Valid;
- Sufficient;
- Authentic; and
- Current.

Valid

Assessment is valid when the process is sound and assesses what it claims to assess. Validity requires that:

- Assessment against the units of competency must cover the broad range of skills;
- Knowledge assessed is essential to competent performance;
- Assessment of knowledge and skills must be integrated with their practical application; and
- Judgement of competence must be based on sufficient evidence. The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

Sufficient

Sufficiency relates to the quality and quantity of evidence assessed. It requires collection of enough appropriate evidence to ensure that all aspects of competency have been satisfied and that competency can be demonstrated repeatedly. Supplementary sources of evidence may be necessary. The specific evidence requirements of each unit of competency provide advice on sufficiency.

Authentic

To accept evidence as authentic, an assessor must be assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the student's own work.

Current

In assessment, currency relates to the age of the evidence presented by a student to demonstrate that they are still competent. Competency requires demonstration of current performance, so the evidence collected must be from either the present or the very recent past.

Reassessment

In the event a student wishes for their assessment to be reassessed or to resubmit, they must contact their relevant SDS Training provider to discuss their options.

Certificate 3 Guarantee

The Certificate 3 Guarantee is funded by the Queensland Government and supports eligible individuals to complete their first post-school certificate III qualification. It also supports school students in accessing training, as well as Queensland's Year 12 graduates to transition to employment by providing fee-free training in high-priority qualifications.

The Certificate 3 Guarantee is targeted at certificate III qualifications because they are considered the entry-level qualification most often needed to gain employment in many industry sectors.

Does the Certificate 3 Guarantee cover all training costs?

Individuals are expected to contribute to the cost of their training through a co-contribution fee. The amount of out of pocket expense for students through the co-contribution fee will vary from course to course.

A person can only access the Certificate 3 Guarantee once, so it is important that you carefully consider your training options.

User Choice Program

The User Choice Program is a government-subsidised program that provides a public funding contribution towards the cost of training and assessment.

To be eligible for a government contribution towards the costs of training, an apprentice or trainee must have entered into a training contract for a qualification that is funded by DET and be registered in DET's registration system DELTA.

The government contribution for a User Choice funding contribution is detailed in the apprentice or trainee's letter of registration from DET, and is subject to student eligibility and their selection of an eligible PQS as their SRTO.

Does the User Choice Program cover all training costs?

Funding priority levels: The funding priorities under the User Choice program are:

- Priority One (100 percent subsidised) qualifications are those which lead to occupations deemed to be critical priorities in Queensland;
- Priority Two (87.5 percent subsidised) qualifications are those which lead to occupations not deemed critical in Queensland but considered as high priorities;
- Priority Three (75 percent subsidised) qualifications are those which lead to occupations not deemed critical in Queensland but considered as medium priorities.

The User Choice funding priorities are determined from national and state data in conjunction with industry input, and are reviewed annually. For more information, visit www.training.qld.gov.au/training/incentives/userchoice

Enrolment

The below procedure will occur for enrolment into an SDS Training course:

- Training and assessment involved in the relevant training program will be explained to you;
- Any individual needs and circumstances will be discussed and assessed by the SDS Training staff member taking the booking;
- An enrolment form must be completed;

- A minimum of two forms of identification are required (driver's licence and Medicare card). Should any of these not be available, alternative identification must be approved by an SDS Training staff member prior to course;
- A *Student Handbook* will be provided to the student, or it can be downloaded at <http://sdstraining.edu.au> ; and
- Opportunities for RPL and credit transfer will be discussed.

Upon completion of the enrolment form, the below will be determined:

- The student meets the pre-requisite requirements for the training program (if applicable);
- The student's language, literacy and numeracy skill levels are adequate to meet the requirements of their desired training program; and
- The student has a need for reasonable adjustment assessed at the point of enrolment to allow training programs to be suitably adjusted.

The student will be issued with a quote or invoice for applicable tuition fees, confirmation of enrolment and details of when training is scheduled to commence.

Student support services identified during the enrolment phase will be negotiated with the student and put in place before the commencement of the training program.

Training and assessment materials applicable to the enrolled training program are to be sent to the student. Alternatively, these materials may be issued on the first day of training. Training and assessment materials will not be issued to students before all applicable tuition fees have been received. Any arrangement contrary to this should be approved by the chief executive officer.

Self-paced study

It is the expectation of SDS Training that in addition to face to face training you will complete a component of self-paced study. This could include the preparation of information prior to class, review of material covered in class, or research in to the industry, legislation or job opportunities relevant to your field of study.

There are benefits to this blended approach to study. Self-paced study allows the trainee to review content to learn more effectively in that they have additional time to absorb and apply knowledge. It allows the trainee to work at their own speed and develop knowledge in their own environment.

It is the expectation of SDS Training that for every one hour of face to face training a trainee will complete an additional four hours of self-paced study.

General Study

It is very important to make the most of your training opportunity. Please note it is your responsibility to do this. To optimize your own learning and successful completion, undertake to do the following:

On –site Study

- Attend the classes and complete all required reading and learning activities
- Prepare well in advance of each workshop
- Be a willing participant
- Work with fellow clients
- Respect other people’s opinions
- Ensure you have a clear understanding of the assessment requirements
- Take responsibility for the quality of evidence that you submit to the Assessor
- Keep track of your progress
- Complete and submit all assessment tasks using clear and concise language on time
- Be willing to contact your trainer if you do not understand the training activity or assessment task

Online Study

- Watch webinars and read Learner Guide information if training online.
- Ensure you have a clear understanding of what you are learning
- Ensure you have a clear understanding of the assessment requirements
- Contact SDS Training if you do not understand the training material or assessment requirements
- Only submit work that is your own
- Submit work in a timely manner

Unique student identifier

If you are a new, or continuing student undertaking nationally recognised training, you will need a Unique Student Identifier (USI), in order to receive your qualification or statement of attainment. If you do not have a USI, you will not receive your qualification or statement of attainment.

Your USI will give you access to an online record of training you have done since January 1, 2015, which enables you to be able to produce a comprehensive transcript of your training.

The USI is obtained online – there are no associated costs to obtain it and it will only take a few minutes of your time. Alternatively, we can create your USI on your behalf. To enable us to do this, we will require some additional identification information from you such as your driver’s licence number. The ID that you provide for this purpose will be destroyed once we have used it for this purpose. If you would like to create your own USI please visit: <http://www.usi.gov.au/Students/Pages/default.aspx>

Consumer Rights

We encourage our trainees to understand their rights as a consumer. For further information please follow this link <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights/consumer-rights-complaints-and-scams/buying-products-and-services/guarantees-warranties-refunds/when-you-can-get-a-refund>.

Cessation of Training

If SDS Training, or a third party training on behalf of SDS Training, closes or ceases to deliver any part of the training product that you have enrolled in, your training arrangement is protected.

If you have been receiving training/assessment from a third party delivering on behalf of SDS Training and the third party ceases delivering training/assessment for any reason your training/assessment will continue directly under SDS Training.

If you are receiving training/assessment from SDS Training and SDS Training closes or ceases to deliver the training product you have enrolled in, SDS Training will transfer student records confirming training/assessment completed to the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), who will be able to advise you on the best steps to take to complete your training/assessment.

Fees and charges

Course fees are payable when the student has received notification of enrolment. Fees must be paid in full within seven days of receiving an invoice from SDS Training or prior to commencement of course, whichever occurs first. SDS Training may discontinue training if fees are not paid as required.

Refund policy

The below refund policy applies to students who cancel their enrolment:

- I. Cancellation with notice of six or more business days prior to course commencement – 100 per cent of total course fees refunded.
- II. Cancellation with notice of two to five business days prior to course commencement – 50 per cent of total course fees refunded.
- III. Cancellation with notice of one or less business days prior to course commencement – No refund of total course fees.

Requests for refunds will be processed and transacted at the end of each month in which the cancellation notification was received. Where a student has purchased a text or training workbooks and subsequently cancels, SDS Training will not refund monies for the text unless a written request for a refund is received and SDS Training is satisfied that the text is in as-new condition.

Payment methods

SDS Training accepts payment for fees using:

- Credit Card/EFTPOS
- Electronic Funds Transfer (account details included on invoice)
- Cash

Language, literacy & numeracy support

A language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) assessment is mandatory during the enrolment phase to ensure a student has the adequate knowledge and skills to complete the course. Should a student have deficiencies with language, literacy or numeracy skills, strategies will be adopted to support the student to progress in their desired training program. These strategies will be discussed with the student prior to commencing training.

Overall, SDS Training will:

- Support students during their study with training and assessment materials and strategies that are easily understood and suitable to the level of the workplace skills being delivered;
- Provide clear information to students about the detail of the language, literacy and numeracy assistance available;
- Refer students to external language, literacy and numeracy support services that are beyond the support available within SDS Training and where this level of support is assessed as necessary; and
- Negotiate an extension of time to complete training programs if necessary.

Any costs incurred for LLN support will be the responsibility of the client.

Recognition of prior learning

SDS Training provides the opportunity for students to apply to have prior learning recognised towards a qualification or units of competence for which they are enrolled.

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

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

- Any student is entitled to apply for RPL in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Students may not apply for RPL for units of competence or a qualification which are not included in SDS Training's scope of registration.
- While students may apply for RPL at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the student down a more efficient path to competence.
- Students who are currently enrolled in a training program are eligible to apply for RPL in that program at no additional charge.
- Assessment via RPL is to apply the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence.

Forms of evidence

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

Forms of evidence toward RPL may include:

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

Many of these forms of evidence would not be sufficient on their own. When combined together, with a number of evidence items, the candidate will start to provide a strong case for competence. SDS Training reserves the right to require candidates to undertake practical assessment activities of skills and knowledge in order to satisfy itself of a candidate's current competence. If candidates are deemed not yet competent, they will complete the required SDS Training course.

Credit transfer

Credit transfer allows a student to be awarded a unit of competency based on successful completion of the unit that has been previously awarded. If you are seeking credit you are required to present your statement of attainment or qualification for examination by SDS Training.

These documents will provide the detail of what units of competence the applicant has been previously issued. You must provide satisfactory evidence that the statement of attainment or qualification is yours and that it has been issued by an Australian RTO. Statements of attainment or qualifications should be in the correct format as outlined in the *Australian Qualifications Framework Implementation Handbook*. You are required to submit copies only that are certified as a true copies of the original.

Credit transfer guidelines

The following guidelines are to be followed in relation to credit transfers:

- Any student is entitled to apply for credit transfer in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- Students may not apply for credit transfer for units of competence that are not included in SDS Training's scope of registration.
- While students may apply for credit transfer at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the student down a more efficient path to competence.
- The student does not incur any fees for credit transfer and SDS Training does not receive any funding when credit transfer is granted.
- Credit transfer may only be awarded for whole units of competence. Where a mapping guide identifies a partial credit, this will not be considered for credit transfer and applicants will be advised to seek RPL.

Records

SDS Training has a clearly documented quality records management system in place to secure the accuracy, integrity and currency of records.

Upon enrolment, students' details will be entered into SDS Training's database system. This process initiates the establishment of the students' individual file, which is then used to record all future details pertaining to the client. The file is retained by SDS.

SDS is committed to maintaining the accuracy, integrity and currency of all student files, as well as ensuring appropriate security of all records to uphold confidentiality and protect student privacy.

Complete assessments

SDS trainers and assessors will maintain accurate and current records of each student's progress and achievement of competencies in the area of their study.

As students complete each competency, the trainer or assessor will check the achievements against the relevant qualification packaging rules and sign off on successfully completed competencies.

All details of full or partially completed competencies will be recorded and stored on the student's file.

Upon completion of all relevant competencies within a qualification, the student will be entitled to receive the full qualification. The certificate and academic record and/or statement of attainment will be produced and signed by SDS management.

Complaints & appeals

SDS Training is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaints and appeals process that includes access to an independent external body if necessary. Complaints are taken seriously at SDS Training. See Appendix B for a copy of the Complaints and Appeals Form.

An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be submitted to SDS Training within 28 days of the student being informed of the assessment decision or finding.

Complaints & appeals handling

SDS Training applies the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- A written record of all complaints and appeals will be kept by SDS Training including all details of lodgement, response and resolution;
- A complainant or person lodging an appeal will be provided an opportunity to formally present their case at no cost;
- The handling of a complaint or appeal will commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint/appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable;
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal will be provided a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome, within 21 days.

Complaints and appeals will be handled in the strictest of confidence. Decisions to release information to third parties are only to be done after the complainant or person lodging the appeal has given permission for this to occur. Complaints and appeals will be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement as a Continuous Improvement Report.

External complaints or appeals

An external complaint or appeal can be lodged with Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA): 1300 701 801 or by emailing complaintsteam@asqa.gov.au

Public-forum complaints

SDS Training acknowledges that individuals have the right to contribute content to public communications on websites, blogs and business or social networking platforms. Although the majority of feedback is expected to be of a positive nature, it is realistic to assume that social media pages provide a forum for some to express their negative feedback. SDS training will respond to any negative comments in an open, transparent and timely manner in accordance with our social media and complaints policy.

Issuing certificates

Certificates will be issued to a student upon the completion of the course and payment of all required fees. Certificates include:

- Statement of Attainment: issued to a student who has completed assessment requirements for part of a qualification;
- Certificate: issued to a student who has completed all assessment requirements for a qualification; and
- A statement of attendance may be issued for non-accredited training.

Certification documents can be re-issued to a trainee upon written request. Replacement certification will incur a fee of \$25.00.

Continuous improvement of services

SDS Training is committed to the continuous improvement of our training and assessment services, student services and management systems. The primary method of reporting opportunities for improvement by students is via the continuous improvement reporting procedure. This procedure allows any person to raise a Continuous Improvement Report for consideration by the Continuous Improvement Committee. The Continuous Improvement Report template is available on request. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to SDS Training so we can improve our services in the future.

Learner satisfaction survey

At the completion of your training program, you will be issued with a Learner or Employer Satisfaction Survey. This is a nationally recognised survey tool that is designed to collect feedback from students about their experience with an RTO and in undertaking nationally recognised training. Your completion and return of this survey is important to SDS Training for our ongoing improvement of services and to enable us to report this information to our registering authority. Your assistance in gathering this survey data is greatly appreciated.

Remember, this is your chance to have your say about the studies you have undertaken and improve the experience of future students. If you do not wish to partake in the survey, you can advise SDS Training that you do not wish to receive marketing material.

Legislative requirements

SDS Training is subject to legislation related to training and assessment, as well as general business practice. This legislation governs our obligations as an RTO, obligations to students, and relates to the industry in which training is conducted. The legislation includes (but is not limited to):

Commonwealth

- *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*
- *Legislative Instruments Act 2003*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Privacy Act 1988 and National Privacy Principles (2001)*
- *Workplace Relations Act 1996*

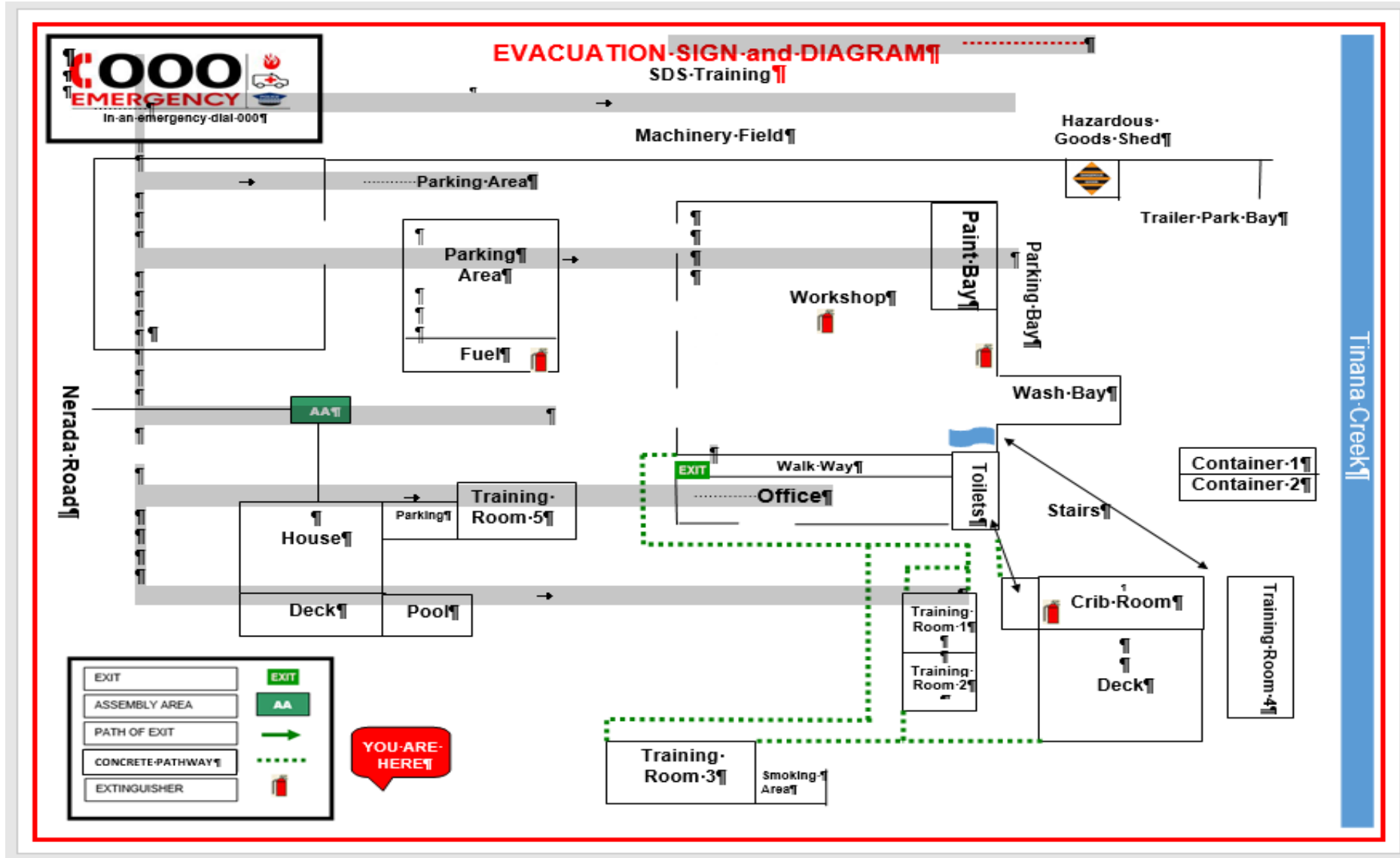
- *Skilling Australia's Workforce Act 2005*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Copyright Act 1968*
- *Trade Practices Act 1974*

Queensland:

- *Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000*
- *Vocational Education, Training and Employment Regulation 2000*
- *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Worker's Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*
- *Child Employment Act 2006*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Fair Trading Act 1989*

We regularly check our policies and procedures against legislation to ensure compliance with current requirements. Our staff are regularly updated on changes that impact on our operation.

Appendix A



Appendix B

Complaints and Appeals Form

Please indicate which category the complaint relates to:

Training Course		Site Facilities		Systems/Processes	
Equipment		Training Outcome		Other	

If other, please specify:

Date of occurrence:	
Location of occurrence:	
Reason for your submission:	
Occurrences leading up to this submission (if applicable):	
What outcomes are you seeking or expecting?	
Can we improve our system to avoid these situations in the future?	

Please provide your details below if you wish to be contacted about your complaint/appeal. All submissions are handled as strictly confidential. Matters that cannot be resolved at the time they occur will be referred to the CEO for review.

Full Name:			
Postal Address:			
Phone Number:		Email:	

Signed: _____ Date: _____