

**FORTRESS**  
LEARNING

# STUDENT HANDBOOK



Unlocking potential for brighter futures

RTO 31974

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## 1. Pre-Enrolment Information

### What we provide you with

Fortress Learning ensures that all prospective students seeking to enrol in a qualification/training product have access to clear and accurate information before enrolment, including making informed decisions about the training product and the RTO and being made aware of changes that affect them. The following information is easily accessible to VET students on the Fortress Learning website and within this Student Handbook and includes:

- All training product codes and titles, course durations, course mode(s) of delivery, course locations, course commencement dates (where not enrolled in an online course with rolling enrolment dates), workshop schedule, assessment requirements, whether any licencing or occupational licence requirements apply, and details of any third party arrangements
- The training support services, and well-being support services are available both from Fortress Learning and from external service

providers (where Fortress Learning cannot supply them) This information also outlines contact details and website links on how to access the listed services

- Any fees and costs payable by the VET student, including payment terms and conditions, refund policies and the availability of any relevant government training entitlements and subsidy arrangements
- The VET student's obligations or liabilities, including any obligations relating to work placements, external physical or human resources required within the course, equipment or IT, additional costs and processes associated with VET student withdrawal and obtaining a Unique Student Identifier
- The Transition Arrangements in place include information about how Training Package changes affect VET students, including the transition of superseded, deleted, or expired training products, and how Fortress Learning informs VET students of these as soon as practicable.

## 2. Enrolment and Course Commencement

### How the enrolment process works

The following process applies to enrolment and selection.

#### Step 1 – Contact Fortress Learning

- Phone: 1300 141 994
- Email: [admin@fortresslearning.com.au](mailto:admin@fortresslearning.com.au)
- Website: [fortresslearning.com](http://fortresslearning.com)
- Address: PO Box 1096, Maroochydore QLD 4558

## **Step 2 – Speak with a Course Advisor or access course information from the website**

We encourage all prospective students to speak with us before enrolment. This process is valuable in discussing your program requirements (including resources to be provided by the student), reviewing the learners' existing skills and knowledge and identifying any possible obstacles or barriers, as well as getting to know you and ensuring that the course you want to enrol fits your needs

## **Step 3 – Apply to Enrol on the website**

1. Once you have accessed all important pre enrolment information and you are ready to apply you will enrol directly on the website and you will be guided to pay your initial application fee and then accounts will raise an invoice.
2. As directed by the website page or the course advisor, when you apply to enrol, you will choose your payment method (upfront or payment plan) and you can then pay just the \$150 application fee (payment plan only) or up to \$1500 (upfront payment) This is then in line with Clause 7.3 of the Standards for RTOs
3. Upon notification of this first payment, Accounts will then email you the Invoice. This Invoice will outline the full cost of course - it will not take into account any credit transfer rebates at this time. Any Credit Transfer Rebates (\$225 per unit for Cert IV or \$350 for Diploma) will be confirmed and verified by the trainer during PLP development and after the administrative team have authenticated your Transcripts. At this time, accounts will then adjust your invoice and the remaining balance of fees will be reduced. Our Enrolments Team will also then reduce the number of months in your enrolment duration by the amount of Credits you have received

4. Upon sending of the Invoice, accounts also includes the link to complete what we call the **Pre Enrolment Survey** (this survey helps us—and you—decide whether our program is the right fit. By exploring your current skills, experiences, learning preferences, and support needs, we can tailor resources and teaching methods to your unique situation) and takes about 15 - 30 minutes to complete.
5. Once you have completed and submitted the Pre Enrolment Survey, our team will review the responses within 24/48 hours and reach out if any further information is needed. The following will then occur
6. **If Eligible to Enrol** - we will take the following actions depending on your responses:
  - *If applicable* - We will schedule a call with a trainer to develop your Personal Learning Plan which will confirm any possible RPL or Credit Transfer and credit rebates.
  - You will receive a link to enrol online and upon receipt of enrolment, your course will be activated and you will receive login instructions to get started.
  - Accounts will then adjust your invoice (where applicable and where credit rebates are provided) and inform you of these changes.
7. **If Not Eligible to Enrol** - we will take the following actions depending on your responses:
  - We will book a call with our course advisor to discuss your responses
  - If, upon further, a decision is made by Fortress Learning that you are not eligible to enrol, we will withdraw your application and send confirmation via email that this has occurred. You will then receive a refund of any fees paid

## **Step 4 - Course Activation and commencement**

1. Upon completion of your Online Enrolment Form, your Student Learner Portal is then activated and the enrolment period and course commencement begins.

2. You will receive an email called **Fortress Learning Create your Global Account** which will allow you to create your aXcelerate account and access your learner portal.
3. Our Enrolments Team will also send an SMS to let you know the Portal is now active and you will be directed to log in to your Portal after you have created your Global account.
2. Your 30-day cooling-off period then commences and during this time we encourage you to reach out to trainers to get a more detailed and indepth understanding of your unit specific learning and assessment activities, to our student support team to understand how to navigate the portal and we also recommend that in this first 30 days you take a really good look around the portal, downloading tasks, checking the length of the lessons and getting a clear understanding of the expectations of the course. We will also check in 2 weeks after activation to make sure you are logged in and progressing
3. If prior to the 30-day cooling-off period ending you decide that the course is not for you, you can withdraw with a full repayment of your initial fees paid (excluding the \$150 enrolment application fee)
4. If you decide to withdraw after the 30 day cooling off ends, no refund is payable and the full balance of fees must be paid.

## **Seeking RPL - Further information**

If completing one of our TAE Upgrade or VET Professionals Courses or seeking RPL in the full TAE40122 Cert IV TAE or TAE50122 Diploma Qualifications, please visit the RPL website page prior to applying as this allows you to check your eligibility for RPL and book an RPL consultation call.



*\*\*Please note, at the time of the request for a free PLP Consultation call, you will be required to first complete the Pre Enrolment Survey so we can capture some information about you before the call begins.*

## **The Unique RPL Consultation Call**

During your RPL Consultation Call, your Trainer will work with you to develop a Personal Learning Plan that outlines the RPL and/or Coursework assessment tasks that you will complete for each of your units in your Qualification. They will also assist you to package the units for your course to best reflect your skills and knowledge and experience. Your Plan will detail:

1. **The Units selected** - *Unique to each student we create a Gantt style chart that documents each unit of competency that forms your qualification, the assessment tasks you will complete and the timeframe for doing this across the entire enrolment duration*
2. **Costs** - *We also provide you with an idea of the cost as this can change based on different factor such as support packages selected and rebates from credit transfers and upfront or payment plan presences.*
3. **Next Steps** - *After your call is complete, your trainer will send you an email with your developed PLP and a link to commence the enrolment process.*

## **3. Access and Equity – Foundation Skill, LLND and Specialist Support Services**

### **Access and Equity**

*What do the terms “Access” and “Equity” mean?*

Access generally refers to the ability to enter training. Improving access might include improving physical access to a training venue or ensuring that selection criteria do not discriminate against clients.

Equity in this context means equal access to and potentially equal outcomes from training regardless of the individual's circumstances, background and identity.

Fortress Learning is committed to the principles of access and equity. Equity is about justice and fair dealing, not necessarily about treating all people the same way. Fortress Learning is of the firm belief that every individual regardless of personal history, present circumstances or any other factor that can commonly be considered as an inhibiting factor to self-development, should be provided the opportunity to improve their life through further education. Fortress Learning embraces multiculturalism and diversity in Australia and is pleased to contribute to quality education as a whole.

Access and equity issues are addressed during staff induction, meetings, and professional development activities. Access and equity are addressed within Fortress Learning's Code of Practice. The Code of Practice is openly communicated to all training participants and training and assessment staff.

Fortress Learning also endeavours to eliminate discrimination against persons on the grounds of:

- Sex
- Marital status or pregnancy
- Family responsibility or family status
- Race
- Religious or political conviction
- Impairment

- Age

In keeping with the principles of accessibility and equity, and in accordance with their responsibilities as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Fortress Learning is committed to ensuring that all students are supported in achieving their goals. Where barriers exist for students in relation to access, participation and learning outcomes, Fortress Learning will work with the student to ensure fair and equitable access and outcomes are achieved.

This Access and Equity Policy is available to students and potential students through the Student Handbook, available on our website.

## **Foundation Skills Assessment Procedure**

Potential students seeking to enrol with Fortress Learning may be required to complete a Foundation Skill Assessment Survey

This tool has been developed using

*ACSF (Australian Core Skills Framework) – A national framework that describes core skill levels in learning, reading, writing, oral communication, and numeracy. It is used to assess and develop adult learners' foundation skills in education, training, and workplaces.*

*CSWF (Core Skills for Work Framework) – A framework that outlines workplace-related skills, such as problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and self-management. It helps individuals understand and develop the non-technical skills needed for successful employment and career progression.*

DSF (Digital Skills Framework) – *A framework that maps out the essential digital skills required for work, study, and everyday life. It includes areas like using digital devices, online communication, data security, and problem-solving in digital environments.*

These frameworks have been used to create a tool that lets us test your core skills in the following areas

- Learning
- Digital literacy
- Oral communication
- Reading
- Writing
- Planning and organising
- Problem-solving
- Self-Management
- Initiative and Enterprise
- Numeracy
- Teamwork

Should any potential student identify a need for this assessment through completion of the **Fortress Learning Pre-Enrolment Training Needs Analysis Survey**, the enrolments team will include a link to the **Foundation Skill Assessment Survey** in the emailed review of your response.

The facilitator will analyse information received from this test. The facilitator will then contact students who are identified as requiring support in foundation skills and outline some strategies to apply.

Should the Foundation Skill Assessment identify large gaps in foundation skills, potential students will then be directed to discuss possible other course

options with the course advisor and a full refund of any application fees paid will be provided.

## **5. Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning**

### **What is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) takes into account previous studies you may have completed as well as life and work experiences. If these experiences are relevant, you may be granted RPL for some of the units that make up your course. This allows for fairer access to studies by ensuring you are not required to duplicate the learning you have already achieved.

Using the RPL procedure is not necessarily an easy way to get a qualification. It is not a matter of time served, or amount of experience, but the specific and relevant learning that is assessed according to the prescribed competency standards. Students need to be committed to supporting their case by locating and providing suitable evidence and documentation.

All applicants for RPL are encouraged to discuss this with their trainer prior to commencing the formal application process.

### **How RPL works**

Following the development of your Personal Learning Plan, Fortress Learning will provide you with the resources you will need to collect evidence of your current skills and experience.

### **Step 1 Check Your Eligibility**

To be eligible for RPL you will need to prove your current skills and experience align with the units of competency for your desired qualification.

This eligibility can be determined when completing the Pre Enrolment Survey or when attending the PLP call with your trainer – should RPL not be the best fit for you, your trainer will let you know and will assign coursework instead of PRL.

If you cannot provide this evidence or are still unsure if you are eligible for RPL, please contact us to discuss the pathway suitable for you.

## **Step 2 Book your RPL Personal Learning Plan call**

Contact us, 1300 141 994, for an obligation-free consultation with an expert trainer to discuss your RPL units.

### **Personal Learning Plan (PLP)**

Your trainer will work with you to develop a PLP outlining the RPL and/or coursework assessment tasks you will complete for each unit in your qualification. They will also assist you in packaging the units for your course best to reflect your skills, knowledge, and experience.

### **Costs**

We also give you an idea of the cost, as this can change based on different factors, such as rebates from credit transfers, and an upfront or payment plan choice.

## **Step 3 Enrol**

After your Unique RPL Personal Learning Plan Consultation., you will receive (via email) your developed Personal Learning Plan and a link to pay your \$150 deposit apply and enrol for your course.

A member from our Enrolment Team will then call you at the appointed time to walk you through completing your enrolment.

## **Step 4 Commence your RPL Journey**

Once your enrolment is complete, we will then activate your Learner Portal based on your plan and you will start completing your assigned assessment tasks as outlined in your Personal Learning Plan.

As you proceed through each Module in your Learning plan and complete full Units of Competency, these will be awarded as competent (via RPL or Competency achieved resulting) so you can chart your progress every step of the way, keeping track of your self-directed journey. We will also be on hand to assist you in managing your time and will check in at frequent intervals throughout your enrolment to help you stay motivated and on track.

Upon completion and assessment of your final module and assessment tasks, we will then initiate the graduation process where we will moderate your portfolio, deem the final awarding of units as complete and issue your qualification. This can happen within 3-5 business days of completion, so you will receive your new qualification.

## **Step 5 Graduate!**

You will then be certified to apply for that new job, receive that promotion you've been hoping for or simply know that you have a new nationally recognised qualification under your belt!

## **Verifying with a Workplace or Third Party Observers**

Some of the assessments in our TAE courses will require workplace or third-party observation

Fortress Learning will provide students with the Observation checklists and Third Party Report Templates to provide to Third Party Observers

In cases where RPL or workplace observation is significant, Fortress Learning may also request multiple observers / third parties be used and Fortress Learning will also verify with the Workplace Observer/Third Party to ensure authenticity.

It is very important that when completing any practical skill assessment via observation in the workplace or through completion of third-party reports that Third Party/Workplace Observers:

- Meets the observer suitability requirements ( outlined in each observation/Third Party Report template)
- Provide their contact phone number and email address for verification purposes
- Include detailed comments throughout the Observation/Third Party Reports to ensure the sufficiency of observation

If the above does not occur, the Observation checklist/Third Party Report will be returned as not satisfactory and you will be required to resubmit based on the feedback provided.

## **Student Responsibilities for Assessment**

Fortress Learning will not be held responsible for items of assessment that are submitted in any form until we actually receive them. For this reason, all



students are responsible for retaining a copy of all materials and items that are submitted.

Submitted items will be retained by Fortress Learning for a period of 6 months following graduation, after which time they will be destroyed. Original items submitted in Hard Copy are not returned; as above, students are advised to retain copies of all materials submitted.

Students approaching the end of their enrolment period, and who wish to receive feedback on completed assessment items, are advised to submit assessment not less than 4 business days prior to the final enrolment date (see below).

## **Assessing Students Whose Enrolment Period has Concluded**

Fortress Learning students are able to submit assessment items up until midnight of the last date of their Enrolment Period. However, submissions that are submitted within 4 business days of the expiry date are subject to the following process:

Fortress Learning students are able to submit assessment items up until midnight of the last date of their Enrolment Period. However, submissions that are reviewed following expiry will be subject to a pre-review of the portfolio's completeness.

During the pre-review, we will seek to identify any omissions or errors, which by themselves would deem it not possible for the Rule of Evidence: Sufficiency to be satisfied, and thus preventing a successful outcome to be awarded for that/those unit/s of competency.

Where there are no such omissions, the submission is assessed and feedback provided as per usual. Where such omissions do exist, no further assessment

will occur; feedback will be provided to the candidate that the portfolio was incomplete, thus deeming the outcome *Competency Not Achieved* or *RPL Not Granted*.

Further assessment, and associated feedback of a more detailed nature, will be provided only following the student signing up for a time extension.

ASQA can be contacted regarding records here:

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/students/student-record>

## 5. Direct Credit/Credit Transfer

### Credit Transfer

If you have completed study equivalent to any units from the qualification in which you are enrolled with Fortress Learning, then it might be possible to award a Credit Transfer. Your trainer will provide further advice about this.

### Credit Transfer Process

This process outlines the steps for Fortress Learning (RTO 31974) to authenticate previous TAE qualifications and other qualification transcripts submitted by applicants, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and RTO policies.

This process applies to all applicants seeking recognition of prior qualifications as part of their enrolment, credit transfer, or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications.

### Authentication Process

#### 1. Submission of Qualification Evidence

Applicants must submit one or more of the following documents:

- A certified copy of their qualification or transcript.
- An electronic copy of their qualification (PDF or scan).
- A USI transcript showing the completed qualification.

## **2. Verification Methods**

The following steps will be used to verify the authenticity of qualifications:

### **2.1 Direct Contact with the Issuing RTO**

- Verify the issuing RTO's registration status on [training.gov.au](http://training.gov.au) to confirm it was active at the time of issuance.
- Contact the issuing RTO via email or phone to verify the qualification details.
- If the RTO is no longer registered, check their historical registration records.

### **2.2 USI Transcript Verification**

- Request that the applicant provide access to their USI transcript.
- Review the transcript to confirm that the qualification was issued by a registered RTO.

### **2.3 Online Verification Systems**

- If the issuing RTO provides an online verification portal or QR code validation, use this method to confirm authenticity.

If doubts arise about a qualification's authenticity, we may request additional supporting documents, such as:

- Training/assessment records (e.g., competency reports, learner assessments).
- Employer references confirming the qualification was used in practice.

Fortress Learning will then review documents for potential signs of fraud, including:

- Incorrect or non-existent RTO details.
- Formatting or logo inconsistencies.
- Certificates issued after the RTO's registration expired.

## **Final Decision and Record-Keeping**

- If authentication is successful, we will record the verification outcome in the student's file.
- If authentication fails, inform the applicant in writing, outlining the reasons.
- Upon successful verification we will then award credit transfer in the LMS and rebate the amount for the unit from the remaining balance of fees in your invoice.

## **6. Fees & Payment Options**

### **Fees**

From the moment a student enrolls, Fortress Learning must put in place the resources needed to support that student through the program of study in which they have enrolled. As such, our costs and your fees are incurred regardless of the extent of student engagement.

Should a student wish to withdraw after our 30-day cooling-off period the balance of course fees is required to be paid in full no matter how far they advanced in their program. Students wishing to extend their enrolment duration beyond that in which they enrolled will be required to pay for that extension of time.

Fortress Learning has a range of flexible payment options as described below and per the individual course page.

We invite you to contact us directly to discuss any financial hardship or request for delayed/alternate payment options.

For further information, call Fortress Learning on 1300 141 994.

## **Upfront Payments**

- For all courses with fees exceeding \$1500 – a payment of \$1500 upfront will be taken with a balance payable at a later period as defined by the program in which you are enrolling.
- For all courses paid for by a third party/employer, the entire fee may be collected on enrolment.
- Full payment of fees is required before issuing any qualifications or statement of attainment.

## **Flexible Payment Options**

We offer flexible payment options for most of our courses. Details of those options are outlined on the relevant course detail page. Payment options are

available for fortnightly direct debits from credit cards or bank accounts (on request). The cancellation of direct debit arrangements will trigger the remaining balance to become due.

## **Application Fee**

All course fees include a \$150 application fee which is part of the deposit paid upon application. This is a non-refundable fee unless Fortress Learning's suitability assessment reveals non-compatibility with the IT requirements or that the student cannot meet the practical requirements. In these cases, the application fee and any other monies paid will be refunded in full.

If a student does not attend, reschedule or cancel their enrolment interview, the \$150 application fee is non-refundable and the student will need to complete another application to continue with their enrolment.

## **Additional Support Services**

The fees payable are for services as stated. Where service is requested that is not a standard component of a program in which a student has enrolled, it will be subject to additional fees. For example, if a student enrolls into a self-directed program with no additional trainer support and then requires support from a trainer, they will be able to purchase one on one time with the trainer as outlined in the course detail pages.

## **7. Extensions, Transfers, Deferments**

### **Extensions**

Paid extensions are available. These fees are subject to change without notice.

There is no guarantee that an extension request will be approved.

It is not possible to extend enrolment in a program:

1. that has been closed to new enrolments in the time since you commenced.
2. where more than 12 months have passed since the initial period ended. In this situation, students must re-enrol.

It may not possible to extend enrolment in a program:

1. for courses that are in a Transition/Teach-Out period may be limited or non-existent. If the program you are enrolling in is in a Transition/Teach-Out period, then you are encouraged to speak with Fortress Learning prior to enrolling to fully understand the implications of that.
2. if it is more than 18 months since your date of enrolment and you wish to extend your course. In this situation, you are required to first have a conversation with a Trainer. Student assessment documents are only retained for 6 months following exit from the course. If you expire and then extend beyond the 6 month period, any tasks that were submitted and led to partial completion of a Unit of Competency may need to be done again.
3. If you have enrolled for any of our Zoom Programs and have not completed ALL of the Virtual Classroom blocks.

For any students extending after a period of expiry, the full balance of course fees will be payable plus the extension fee for the extension timeframe requested.

Please contact us if you have any questions or need to speak with a Trainer.

Extension fees are available [here](#) and are subject to change from time to time.

## **Transfers**

Transferring from a face-to-face/Zoom program to a standard online program is not possible for students.

For online programs, where a student wishes to transfer from one program (Program A) to another (Program B), the fees are calculated as follows:

Program B Fee – Program A Fee + Transfer Admin Fee (\$150) + \$150 per unit completed (or for which any assessment has been reviewed) which cannot directly contribute to Program B. When transferring from a program where the fee is more than the new program refunds will not be applied.

Where a student (Student A) wishes to transfer their enrolment to another student (Student B), Student A must first Withdraw and then any Refund payable may be allocated upon their request to Student B, less a \$150 administration fee. Transfers of this kind are not permissible during a period of Extension.

In all situations, the duration of Program B is reduced by the time that has passed since enrolling in Program A.

## **Deferment Policy**

Deferment is not available for any programs that involve a face-to-face component.



Deferment may only be available for the Zoom Programs if ALL Zoom Blocks have been completed. Where deferment will lead to the enrolment period going past an intended end date of the program, students will be required to discuss this with their zoom trainers.

There is no guarantee that a deferment request will be approved.

It is not possible to defer enrolment in a program that has been closed to new enrolments in the time since you commenced. It is not possible to defer enrolment where the deferment will push the end date more than 6 months past the initial enrolment end date. In this situation, students must either extend or re-enrol, provided either is still possible.

In the event that the program in which you enrolled is still accepting new enrolments, you may seek to defer your program as follows.

Students seeking to pause their studies must make an explicit request for deferment using the Form available from their Learner Portal.

Students who are seeking deferment must have demonstrated progress proportionate to their duration up until the date of requesting the deferment or demonstrate compelling reasons for the absence of progress.

Students may suspend their studies for up to a 3 month period, and on not more than 2 occasions. In all cases, the period of deferment must not be more than 2 times the balance of time remaining in the student's course at the time of application (e.g. if a student has one month left in their period of enrolment, they may request not more than a 2-month deferment).

There is no fee for the initial deferment.

A second deferment incurs a \$45 administration fee.

Deferments will not be processed if the student has unmarked submissions showing in their Learner Portal. In this situation, the deferment will be delayed until all submissions have been marked or reviewed by an Assessor.

Course fees are still payable during the deferment period, and deferment is not available for students whose accounts are overdue.

The period of deferment has no bearing on refunds payable in the event of Withdrawal.

Deferment start and end dates cannot fall within Fortress's scheduled non-contact periods.

## **8. Withdrawals, Refunds**

### **Withdrawal & Refund Policy**

Fortress Learning is committed to working within a fair and transparent framework for the charging of fees, the provision of protection for fees paid in advance and the refund of payments where appropriate.

Students may request Withdrawal at any time during their period of enrolment. Should a student wish to withdraw after our 30-day cooling-off period, the balance of course fees is required to be paid in full no matter how far they advanced in their program. The reason for this is that we provide ALL

learning and assessment materials and IP materials at the commencement of the course.

## **Cooling-off Period**

A cooling-off period of 30 days applies for students enrolling in online programs (not applicable for face-to-face or Zoom programs). If within 30 days of enrolling, a student decides to withdraw from their program of study prior to submitting any items for review (with the exception of the Personal Learning Plan Survey), then no fee (except the application fee) will be charged, and the participant is entitled to a full refund of any monies paid less application fee.

People availing themselves of the Cooling Off period will not receive any credentials for any units completed prior to withdrawal. The cooling-off period will be calculated from the date that your learner portal is activated.

Should a student wish to withdraw after our 30-day cooling-off period, the balance of course fees is required to be paid in full no matter how far they advanced in their program.

Participants in Fortress Learning training programs can ask for a refund in the event of the following:

- Services are not provided e.g. cancellation, of course, the financial failure of the company.
- The fair and reasonable non-attendance of a student e.g. sickness, family emergency. Such matters will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the RTO Manager, with early notice of inability to engage in the program recommended (requests must be made with all relevant documentation prior to the last day of enrolment, although this does not guarantee such a request will be granted). Where a variation of the

Refund Policy is being sought on medical grounds, the date of the medical certificate is likely to be instrumental in determining the outcome along with any prior correspondence that pointed to the presence of a medical condition (eg, deferment due to illness, response to support calls, etc).

- Fortress Learning will negotiate a fair and reasonable level of refund in the event of other circumstances e.g. where disciplinary issues have led to a student being asked to withdraw from a program.

## **Withdrawal/Refund Process:**

To withdraw, a student must fill out a Fortress Learning Withdrawal Form which is available from the Learner Portal, or from the RTO on request. Once signed, submit to Fortress Learning. Because eligibility for a refund during our 30-day cooling-off period is determined based on the date of the business day on which the completed Withdrawal Form is received we encourage prompt completion and submission of the Form.

Fortress Learning will contact the student upon receipt of the withdrawal form to advise of any outstanding issues, such as completed units, or outstanding fees, and also any refunds payable within the 30-day cooling-off period.

Where a refund is payable, it will be paid within 21 days of receiving the completed Withdrawal Form.

### **For online programs:**

- If you withdraw within 30 days of your Learner Portal course start date, you will receive a full refund of any money paid, less the application fee of \$150, as per the conditions of the Cooling Off period.
- Beyond day 30, no refund will be issued, and the full fee is payable no matter how far the student advanced in their program.

## **For Face-to-Face and Zoom Programs:**

Due to the additional expenses and required number of participants associated with running face-to-face and Zoom programs, the following fees apply to withdrawal:

- If you withdraw 10–20 business days before the scheduled course start date, there is a Cancellation Fee equal to 20% of the Course Fee. This fee will be waived provided that the candidate re-books for a new scheduled course date (ie, it is not possible to “hold” the enrolment open until a future course that is yet to be advertised becomes available). This or any other waiver applies on only one occasion and only where their account is up to date and remains up to date.
- If you withdraw within 10 business days of the scheduled course start date, there is a Cancellation Fee equal to 50% of the Course Fee. This fee will be waived provided that the candidate re-books for a new scheduled course date (ie, it is not possible to “hold” the enrolment open until a future course that is yet to be advertised becomes available). This or any other waiver applies on only one occasion and only where their account is up to date and remains up to date.
- If you fail to attend or withdraw following commencement of the face-to-face or Zoom block component, no refund will be issued, and the full course fee is payable.
- If you withdraw following completion of the face-to-face or Zoom block component, no refund will be issued, and the full course fee is payable.

## **Hardship Claims**

Fortress Learning understands that sometimes students face challenges. Typically, a withdrawal or cancellation of your enrolment outside our cooling-off period results in the remaining balance of your account

becoming due. However, we recognise that there are times when you may experience genuine hardship beyond your control.

To assist our students in times of hardship, Fortress Learning does offer a Hardship Claim process for any student seeking to withdrawal and requesting a refund outside of the 30-day cooling off period.

## **Hardship Claim Process**

**Definition of Hardship:** *Hardship may include severe illness, unexpected job loss, family crises, or other significant and unforeseen circumstances. Claims based on vague or unsubstantiated reasons may be rejected.*

1. When withdrawing, if requesting for a refund outside of the cooling off period, we will invite you to submit a Hardship Claim. This involves
  - A written statement explaining your situation and why you believe a hardship claim is applicable (e.g., severe illness, unexpected job loss, family crises, or other significant and unforeseen circumstances). *Please note that reasons such as a change of career, lack of time, or motivation do not qualify as hardship.*
  - Supporting evidence for your claim, such as medical certificates, financial statements, or other relevant documents.
  - A timeline of events detailing the circumstances leading to the hardship and how they have impacted your ability to continue your course.

2. You must submit the claim within **30 days** of the hardship event or within **30 days** of becoming aware of the hardship unless extenuating circumstances apply.
3. You will receive a confirmation that your claim has been received and is under review.
4. Our Management team will then review all evidence including communication, timelines and supporting documentation provided by you as part of your claim.
5. The decision and any actions to be taken will then be communicated in writing within 30 days of the claim being received and reviewed.
  - If a refund or balance adjustment is approved, the necessary financial adjustments will be made.
  - If the claim is rejected, you will be informed the full outstanding balance of fees is payable as per the original enrolment terms.

## **Issuing Statements of Attainment following Withdrawal**

Upon request of the Withdrawal Form and upon receipt of a Statutory Declaration, a Statement of Attainment listing all units successfully completed will be issued provided any outstanding full course fees are paid.

## **Course Cancellations / Postponement**

Classroom training is reliant on minimum numbers being met for the course to proceed. Whilst every endeavour will be made to conduct all advertised courses, Fortress reserves the right to change or cancel timetables, class

locations, course offerings, trainers and other such details or circumstances beyond our control that affect enrolments. Every effort will be made to advise course participants of any changes promptly. Participants automatically receive a refund in this instance if they don't wish to transfer to another date.

## **Default of Payment**

The following process will apply if payments are not received by the due date of the invoice of the payment plan schedule.

Note that all administrative and recovery fees for dishonoured or overdue payments will be payable by the student.

- 3 days prior Due Date
  - Email reminder of upcoming Due Date for payment
- Day 0
  - Email reminder of Today's Due Date for payment
- Day 3
  - Email reminder of payment 3 days overdue
- Day 5
  - SMS reminder of payment 5 days overdue
- Day 7
  - Accounts Officer will call directly to follow up on overdue payment
- Day 10
  - Email reminder of overdue payment including advice of suspension of trainer support and assessment marking
- Day 14
  - Accounts Manager will call directly regarding overdue payments and inform the student of their pending suspension from the learner portal
- Day 15



- Suspension from the learner portal and learner portal access revoked
- Day 30
  - Cancellation of your enrolment
- Day 31 - 45
  - Give 2 weeks to allow payment
- Day 38
  - SMS reminder before sending to Debt Collector with a week to settle accounts
- Day 45
  - Referral of any overdue and outstanding amounts to debt collection agency, all fees (including debt collection fees) payable by the student
- Day 46
  - SMS to notify that the account is sent to Debt Collection

## **Replacement and Issue of Additional Documents**

Credentials will not be awarded until a student's complete fees are paid for the entire program in which they enrolled.

A fee of \$60 applies to the issuance of a hard copy of Credentials and/or Statements of Attainment. Proof of identity may be required.

Course fees include the issue of a single electronic credential for each Training Product in which they are enrolled. A fee of \$60 applies to issuing additional credentials, other than for the full product in which they are enrolled. Examples:

1. A student enrolled in the Cert IV TAE is halfway through their program. They request a Statement of Attainment for units completed thus far. They pay \$60 for that. Upon completing the whole Cert IV TAE, they are

issued a Graduation Certificate and Record of Results. They do not pay for that.

2. A student enrolls in the Dual Dip VET/TDD. They fulfil requirements for the Dip VET and request a Graduation Certificate and Record of Results. They do not pay for that. They then continue to complete the second Dip TDD, and on completion, they are issued a second Graduation Certificate and Record of Results. They do not pay for that.
3. A student withdraws prior to completing their qualification in full. They request a Statement of Attainment for the units that they did complete. They will receive that Statement of Attainment provided full course fees are paid.

## **Course Duration**

Course duration is calculated as the number of calendar months commencing from the date of course commencement. For calculation purposes, one month equals 30 days.

In event of extension following the expiry of the enrolment period, the extension period is calculated from the date of the recommencement date.

## **9. Complaints and Appeals**

### **Resolving Complaints**

Fortress Learning is committed to dealing with complaints and appeals in a timely and constructive way. Complaints and Appeals include, but are not restricted to, matters of concern to a student or staff member relating to training delivery and assessment including the quality of the training, student support, learning materials, discrimination and sexual harrassment.

**Natural Justice** is concerned with ensuring procedural fairness:

- Decisions and processes should be free from bias;
- All parties have the right to be heard;
- The respondent has a right to know of what s/he is accused;
- All parties are told the decision and the reasons for the decision.

As per the general directions from the regulator ([ASQA: Complaints about training providers](#)) Complaints refer to the quality of training delivered as well as the services and business practices of training providers.

## How to go about making a complaint

**Step 1:** If you have a complaint about your training provider, the first step is to submit feedback through their complaint process. Information about your [Fortress Learning's Complaint Process](#) is outlined below .

### Complaints Process

If you are wishing to make a complaint or an appeal concerning any aspect of a Fortress Learning course, or a course provided by a Third Party Partner of Fortress Learning, the student should refer to the following process:

**Step 1:** Attempt to informally resolve the issue with appropriate Fortress Learning staff.

**Step 2:** If unsuccessful they should lodge a formal complaint in writing and using the **Complaints & Appeals Form** that is available on request. It should be submitted to:

The Manager  
Fortress Learning  
PO Box 1096  
Maroochydore QLD 4558

Or via email to: [complaints@fortresslearning.edu.au](mailto:complaints@fortresslearning.edu.au)

Fortress Learning will seek to resolve all appeals and complaints within 60 days of its receipt, and where a longer period is likely to be required, Fortress Learning will conduct a thorough investigation for all communications relevant to the complaint and advise in writing the reasons for this.

No changes to an enrolment status are permitted to occur while a Complaint is being addressed. This includes graduation, extensions and deferrals.

**Step 3:** If, after following your RTO's internal procedures, you still believe the RTO is breaching or has breached its legal requirements, you can submit a complaint to ASQA by completing the online complaints process available from here: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/>

### **Please note**

ASQA can not **resolve** disputes between students and training providers. ASQA's regulatory functions allow them to collect, analyse, interpret, and disseminate information about vocational education and training. They do not have the legislative power to act as a student advocate.

If the complaint is specifically about fees/payments/refund, you should contact the consumer protection agency in your state or territory as they:

- can provide information about seeking a refund or a cancellation of your course fees

- can provide information about your rights and obligations
- may be able to help you negotiate with your training provider.
- A list of state and territory consumer protection agencies can be found on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman website](#).

## Assessment Appeals

Students have the right to make an appeal against the academic decisions made by Fortress Learning.

Appeals should be made within ten (10) working days of the original decision having been made.

An appeal against an assessment decision can be made on the following grounds:

- the student was not provided with a clear explanation of the assessment process;
- the student needs were not taken into consideration where appropriate;
- the assessment process did not meet the requirements of the training package;
- the student genuinely believes there has been an administrative error in the calculation of their assessment marks; or
- alleged bias or incompetence of the trainer.

## Assessment Appeals Process

This process applies to all students enrolled in courses delivered by Fortress Learning who wish to appeal an assessment outcome.

### 1. Informal Resolution (Optional but Recommended)

1. Before lodging a formal appeal, students are encouraged to:
  - Discuss their concerns with the assessor who made the decision.
  - Seek clarification on the assessment criteria and outcome.
  - Request feedback and reassessment if appropriate.
  - If the issue remains unresolved, proceed to a formal appeal.

## **2. Lodging a Formal Appeal**

If a student is not satisfied with the informal resolution, they may submit a formal appeal by following these steps:

### **2.1 Complete the Assessment Appeal Form**

- Obtain the Assessment Appeal Form from your Fortress Learning student portal.
- Provide the following details:
  - Student Name and ID
  - Course and Unit Name
  - Assessor's Name
  - Assessment Task and Decision Being Appealed
  - Reasons for Appeal (with supporting evidence, if applicable)

### **2.2 Submit the Appeal**

- The completed Assessment Appeal Form must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the assessment outcome.
- Submissions can be made via email, student portal, or in person to the Compliance Team.
- A confirmation email will be sent acknowledging receipt of the appeal.

## **3. Appeal Review Process**

Once the appeal is submitted:

- Our Training Manager will review the appeal for completeness.

- An independent assessor (not involved in the original assessment) will be assigned to reassess the student's work. The independent assessor will:
  - Review all evidence submitted.
  - Conduct an objective reassessment of the task.
  - Consult with the original assessor if required.

#### **4. Appeal Outcome Notification**

The student will be notified of the appeal outcome within 10 working days of submission. The possible outcomes include:

- **Original decision upheld** – no change to the assessment result.
- **Assessment outcome modified** – result adjusted based on review findings.
- **Reassessment opportunity granted** – student given another chance to complete the task.

#### **5. Further Escalation (If Unresolved) and record keeping**

If the student remains dissatisfied with the appeal outcome, they may:

- Request a review by Fortress Learning's RTO Manager.
- Lodge a complaint with ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority) if they believe the process was not handled fairly.

All appeals, reviews, and outcomes will be documented and stored securely. Records will be maintained in accordance with RTO compliance and confidentiality policies.

## **10. Student Code of Conduct**

### **Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures**

In striving to have a skilled, competent and caring workforce, unsatisfactory student performance and/or conduct will be addressed in a professional manner to ensure a fair and consistent process in line with natural justice.

Within the framework, Fortress Learning is committed to ensuring that inappropriate behaviour that may impair the integrity of the learning processes or the well being of individuals is appropriately managed.

**Fortress Learning students have a right to:**

- Be treated fairly and with respect
- Pursue their learning activities in a supportive and stimulating environment
- Learn in an environment free of discrimination and harassment
- Be assured of privacy of their personal information and records
- Lodge a complaint without fear of victimisation

**Fortress Learning Students have responsibilities to:**

- Treat other students and staff with respect and fairness
- Follow any reasonable direction from staff
- Not engage in plagiarism, collusion or cheating in assessment activities
- Submit assessment activities by the due date or seek approval to extend the due date, and retain a copy of all assessment materials that are submitted in the event that submitted items are not received by Fortress Learning
- Return company equipment and materials on time
- Observe normal safety practices

**Where Fortress Learning identifies that plagiarism, collusion or cheating (all defined further down) in assessment activities may have occurred among a group of 2 or more students, either concurrently or over a period of time:**

- The students so involved will be invited to resubmit anew all materials that they wish to be assessed. Students who choose to not submit anew their portfolio of assessment will have their most recent previous submissions used for the remainder of this process.



- Once all students involved have submitted anew all materials that they wish to be included in the assessment, these will be assessed by a single Assessor.
- Where one or more students have previously been awarded an outcome, that outcome will be subject to revision based on the findings of the re-assessment outlined above.
- If one or more students are dissatisfied with the outcome of the assessment, they may pursue the [Complaints & Appeals Process](#).
- If through this re-assessment, plagiarism, collusion or cheating in assessment activities is found to have occurred, then any outcomes that have previously been awarded will be revoked and/or credentials recalled and the steps below will be followed.

**Where a student breaches these guidelines or where a single incident is a serious breach of discipline, the following steps will be taken by Fortress Learning staff:**

- The student will be invited to participate in a Counselling interview or provided a written request to adopt a more courteous tone.
- If the student acknowledges the breach and indicates a willingness to address it, then the student will be issued a first written warning. If the student does not acknowledge the breach and/or is unwilling to address it, then the student's enrolment will be terminated.
- If the breach persists after the first warning, then the student will be issued a final written warning.
- If these repeated attempts to manage unsatisfactory student behaviour fail then the student's enrolment will be terminated.

Where student behaviour constitutes an attempt to threaten or otherwise coerce staff such as in relation to the integrity of assessment decisions, Fortress Learning reserves the right to immediately cancel that student's enrolment, with any refund to be calculated in line with the Withdrawal Policy or at the Manager's discretion.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own, without giving proper credit or attribution. It involves the unauthorised use or reproduction of someone else's intellectual property, such as text, ideas, images, or creative works, without acknowledging the original source. Plagiarism is considered a breach of Fortress Learning's academic and ethical standards, as it undermines the principles of honesty, integrity, and the proper attribution of intellectual contributions.

## **Cheating**

Cheating in assessment refers to the act of dishonestly gaining an unfair advantage in academic evaluations or examinations. It involves actions such as using unauthorised materials, getting assistance from others without permission, plagiarising someone else's work, or engaging in any form of deception to achieve a higher score or better results than one's actual knowledge or abilities would merit. Cheating undermines the integrity of the assessment process, diminishes the value of academic achievements, and violates the principles of fairness and authenticity.

## **Collusion**

Assessment collusion occurs when two or more individuals collaborate inappropriately on an assessment or assignment. This collaboration goes beyond acceptable levels of cooperation and involves a coordinated effort to produce work together in a manner that is not allowed by the assessment guidelines. Collusion may include sharing answers, jointly producing work meant to be done independently, or engaging in any form of unauthorised collaboration that compromises the individual assessment process. Like cheating, assessment collusion undermines the authenticity, fairness and integrity of the evaluation system.

## **Use of AI Tools**

Fortress Learning acknowledges and encourages the prevalent use of AI tools, including ChatGPT and Google Gemini (formerly Google Bard), in knowledge assessment activities and some assignments. We support the utilisation of AI as a research tool for all students. However, copying and pasting directly from AI tools is strictly prohibited and will be considered plagiarism.

When incorporating AI tools, students are required to cite their use of AI and, if requested, provide AI transcripts that demonstrate the content was not simply copied and pasted. This is to ensure academic integrity and originality in the assessment process.

## **11. Transition Arrangements**

### **What happens if training package has been updated whilst you are enrolled**

During the transition of training products (where a training package has been updated and students are still enrolled in the superseded qualification/ skill set or unit) Fortress Learning ensures that:

1. Where a training product on its scope of registration is superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed and the relevant AQF certification documentation is issued.
2. Should a learner not be able to complete their training within the allocated transition timeframe learners may be transferred into its replacement, within a period of one year from the date the replacement training product was released on the national register. This transfer may require additional fees to be paid and may require additional

training and assessment to be completed depending on the changes to the Qualification.

3. Where an AQF qualification is no longer current and has not been superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed (or if unable to complete the learner is withdrawn from study) and the relevant AQF certification documentation issued within a period of two years from the date the AQF qualification was removed or deleted from the national register.
4. Where a skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course or module is no longer current and has not been superseded, all learners' training and assessment is completed (or if unable to complete the learner is withdrawn from study) and the relevant AQF certification documentation issued within a period of one year from the date the skill set, unit of competency, accredited short course or module was removed or deleted from the national register
5. A new learner does not commence training and assessment in a training product that has been **removed or deleted** from the national register.

## 12. Student Support Services

### Student Health, Wellbeing and Support Services

Fortress Learning is aware of its responsibilities under the Standards for RTO's 2015 ( and its successor) to provide adequate protection for the health, safety and welfare of students enrolling into its courses. This includes adequate and appropriate support services in terms of academic mentoring and coaching services and strategies to assist students in overcoming potential barriers to their learning. Fortress Learning is committed to:

- Ensuring VET students have reasonable access to training support services, trainers and assessors and other staff to support their progress through the training product. This includes:
  - How it determines the training support services to be provided to each VET student and makes these available
  - Ensuring that VET students have reasonable access to trainers and assessors and other staff
  - Ensuring that VET students are informed about how and when they can access trainers and assessors and other staff
  - Ensuring that VET students receive timely responses to queries.
- Ensuring Reasonable adjustments are made to support VET students with disability to access and participate in training and assessment on an equal basis. This includes:
  - Providing reasonable adjustments to learning and assessment where appropriate
  - Where reasonable adjustments are not possible, the reasons why have been communicated to the VET student.
- Ensuring our online learning environment promotes and supports the diversity of VET students. This includes
  - Fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment for VET students
  - Fostering a culturally safe learning environment for First Nations people.
- Ensuring the wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort are identified and strategies are put in place to support these needs with the student (either prior to enrolment or during enrolment if identified after the training and assessment commences) This includes:
  - Identifying the wellbeing needs of the VET student cohort, as relevant to the training content, and appropriate wellbeing support services

- Advising VET students of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the well-being support services that are available.

## **Specialist Support Services**

Our Pre Enrolment Survey does outline some questions about physical or mental health conditions and learning support needs. It is important that students answers these truthfully if they can so that our team can contact you to assist.

As a private RTO, we are committed to supporting students with physical or mental health conditions or learning support needs to help them succeed in their studies. While we can provide reasonable adjustments and general support, we are not trained specialists in mental health, disability support, or medical care. If you require specialised assistance beyond our scope, we encourage you to seek support from qualified professionals or relevant services. If needed, we can help guide you to appropriate external resources.

A list of state specific and national specialist support services are available upon request.

## **13. Workplace Health and Safety**

### **Ensuring a Safe Learning Environment**

Fortress Learning is committed to establishing, maintaining and enforcing a safe system that focuses on:

- A safe work environment
- A risk management approach to safety
- Preventing injury/illness

- Complying with legislative requirements
- If, at any time during the Fortress Learning training program, you identify hazards in the workplace please notify your trainer immediately. Incident Report Forms are available from the RTO on request or can be downloaded from the Learner Portal as required. Trainers regularly review venues and assets to identify and mitigate risks. All hazards are reported and are addressed through the RTO's Risk Register and Action Plan.

## **14. Workplace Bullying and Harassment**

### **Creating a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment**

Fortress Learning aims to create a working environment that is free from harassment and where all members of staff are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. Workplace bullying and harassment can be seen as the repeated, less favourable treatment of a person by another that may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. This relates to actions by both staff and students. For example:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Non-verbal.

Students with complaints concerning bullying and/or harassment should refer to the steps outlined in the Complaints/Appeals Policy.

If these attempts to settle the grievance are unsuccessful then the student can refer the matter to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland on their statewide number 1300 130 670 or via TTY on 1300 130 670.

Where student behaviour is deemed to be offensive, either to another student or to staff, then Fortress Learning reserves the right to immediately cancel that student's enrolment, with any refund to be calculated in line with the Withdrawal Policy or at the Manager's discretion. Offensive behaviour includes such things as shouting, use of aggressive language or body language, making threats and use of threatening gestures and language, and swearing. Where such behaviour persists or is considered sufficiently serious, the involvement of the Police will be considered.

## **15. Anti-Discrimination**

### **Fortress Learning's Commitment to Anti-Discrimination**

Fortress Learning is committed to providing a safe caring environment where all employees have a right to work free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. Discrimination may be defined as unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups of individuals based on personal attributes, characteristics, idiosyncrasies or associations. Sexual harassment can be regarded as any form of unwelcome sexual attention that is offensive, intimidating or humiliating.

Racial harassment is defined by harassment on the basis of race, which can vary from relatively minor abuse to actual physical violence.

Students with complaints concerning Discrimination should refer to the steps outlined in the Grievance Policy.



If these attempts to settle the grievance are unsuccessful then the student can refer the matter to the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland on their statewide number 1300 130 670 or via TTY: [1300 130 670](tel:1300130670).

## 16. Data Information and Privacy

### Your privacy is important to us

As a registered training organisation, Fortress Learning is obliged to maintain effective administrative and records management systems. This involves the retention of student records. All staff must be scrupulous in using student information only for the purposes for which it was gathered. The following is based on the Company Privacy Policy, which is available on request.

Students must have access to their own training records at all times. Should it be deemed necessary, information about student records can only be divulged to a third party with the written consent of the student.

Students are able to access their records via Fortress Learning's Learning Portal. Once a student graduates they are able to access their records by emailing [enrolments@fortresslearning.com.au](mailto:enrolments@fortresslearning.com.au). Student submissions are destroyed 6 months following graduation and/or expiry.

If you have concerns about personal information held by Fortress Learning, you should contact the RTO Manager on 1300 141 994 or in writing to Manager, Fortress Learning, PO Box 1096, Maroochydore, QLD, 4558 – marked Private & Confidential.

If you still feel that your concerns have not been resolved, your complaint can be sent directly to the Commonwealth Privacy Commissioner, GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001

Phone: 1300 363 992 or TTY: 1800 620 241

Email: [privacy@privacy.gov.au](mailto:privacy@privacy.gov.au)

## Phone calls & Contact Information

Fortress Learning records all phone calls. This is for the purpose of monitoring service standards, and to enable training of staff. Recordings are not shared with any third party.

At any time, you may contact Fortress Learning 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

Phone: 1300 141 994

Email: [admin@fortresslearning.com.au](mailto:admin@fortresslearning.com.au)

Address: PO Box 1096, Maroochydore, QLD, 4558

## Authenticating evidence

Where a student submits for assessment by recognition records of study completed previously, Fortress Learning may contact the issuing organisation to authenticate these records. Similarly, where a student submits for

assessment by recognition of any third party statements, Fortress Learning may contact the author to authenticate those statements.

Any information provided by a student as part of their assessment within their program of study will only ever be used by Fortress Learning for the purposes of that student's program of study.

## **Disclosure of Information to National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER) and other parties**

### **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.

Enrolment will not proceed if personal information is not collected through the enrolment process.

### **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 NCVET and other bodies handle your personal information**

The NCVET will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the law, including the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) and the NVET Act. Your personal information may be used and disclosed by NCVET 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 NCVET 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 NCVET may also disclose personal information to persons engaged by NCVET to conduct research on NCVET's behalf.

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

For more information about how the NCVET will handle your personal information please refer to the NCVET's Privacy Policy at

<https://www.ncvet.edu.au/privacy>

If you would like to seek access to or correct your information, in the first instance, please contact Fortress Learning 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 NCVET employee, agent, third-party contractor or another authorised agency. Please note you may opt-out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

## 17. Computer and Other Resource Requirements

### Computer Requirements

Fortress Learning is aware that there are many versions of computer softwares and operating systems in use. Our assessment materials are developed using MS Word on a Windows platform. Effectively engaging with our online programs will require access to:

- a broadband internet connection
- Laptop or PC
- a video camera, either built into your device or a separate webcam
- a microphone, either built into your device or in the webcam

and the ability to:

- open web pages
- view embedded video and slideshows (eg, youtube, Slideshare)
- download and extract .zip folders
- open and download .pdf and .swf documents
- open, edit, save and upload documents created in .doc and .docx format

Fortress Learning wishes all prospective students to make an informed decision prior to enrolling.

## **Mac Users**

We are unable to attest to the reliability of our platform for Mac Users.

While the majority of people using Mac computers and applications are able to engage with the program without issues, it is the case that some Mac users do experience difficulties with some aspects of downloading, saving, converting and uploading files.

Mac Users who decide to enrol are encouraged to test all aspects of our online portals within the first week of their enrolment so that they can avail themselves of the 30-day Cooling Off Period if so required.

## **Other Resource Requirements**

Each program will require resources that are provided by the student. This will be discussed with you prior to enrolling.

## **18. Continuous Improvement**

### **Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

Fortress Learning is committed to the principle of continuous improvement. This is articulated in the Continuous Improvement Plan that is available on request. This Plan aims to support and strengthen compliance with Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations in a way that reflects the growth of Fortress Learning, encourages innovation and measures and monitors outcomes.

### **Ensuring Accurate and Up-to-Date Documentation**

Fortress Learning will ensure that all forms and documents used in the delivery of qualifications under their scope will be accurate and up to date. As significant changes or amendments are made to documents then old versions will be recalled and new ones circulated.

At least once a year a complete review of all documents will occur.

### **Fair and Valid Assessments**

Fortress Learning has a systematic way of ensuring that assessments undertaken are fair and reasonable and consistent with industry best practices. This is articulated in the Validation Strategy that is available upon request. Forms detailing validation processes are also available on request.

## **19. Issuing Qualifications**

### **Qualification and Statement of Attainment Policy**

Fortress Learning is committed to issuing qualifications and statements of attainment that are within its scope of registration.

A Statutory Declaration attesting to authenticity will be required from a student prior to awarding official certification for one or more units/qualifications.

Certificates will be issued in a timely manner and in accordance with the 30 calendar day period stipulated by [Clause 3.3 of The Standards for Registered Training Organisations](#).

We issue soft copies of certificates that contain unique QR codes for authenticity and verification purposes. Hard copy certificates can be requested for a fee of \$60.

Under no circumstances will a certificate of graduation be issued prior to full payment of any fees due.

## **20. Office Opening Hours and Non-Contact Time**

### **Office Hours**

Fortress Learning is open 9 am – 5 pm, Australian Eastern Standard Time, each business day. We are closed on Queensland Public Holidays.

### **Non-Contact Periods**

Our staff will not be available for certain periods during the year. These are usually for public holidays and for 2 weeks over the Christmas holiday period.

Our Trainers may also be unavailable at times due to annual and personal leave and professional development and administrative training duties that



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

take them away from facilitation (such as validation and moderation activities) .

Trainer non-contact periods will be published on the Learner Portal and all public holidays dates can be accessed from our website [here.](#)