

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Our Website: www.pca.edu.au

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) code: 2658

ABN: 18 137 174 540

Chief Executive Officer: Emily Xu

Principal: Dominic Buchta

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Index

Introduction	4
Our Mission	4
What is competency	4
Assessment and grading	5
Certification	6
Smart and Skilled NSW Government Funding	7
VET student Loans (VSL)	7
Student Rights and Responsibilities	8
Unique Student Identification Number (USI)	9
Withdrawal	9
Payment	12
Student Agreement	13
Attendance	14
Privacy	15
Vocational Education and Training (VET) Tuition	15
Assurance Policy	
Access to records	16
Training Safety	17
Referencing Style	17
Work placement and work experience	17
Student discipline	17
Misconduct	19
Access and equity	20
Complaints	21
Drugs and Alcohol	21
Student feedback	21



INTRODUCTION

Patrick's College Australia (PCA)

Welcome to Patrick's College Australia! We're proud of our long history of helping students to achieve their Vocational Education and career goals (we began back in 1923) and we look forward to helping you on your personal study journey.

Our accredited courses are nationally recognised, qualifications issued under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Patrick's College Australia is registered with the Australian Skills Qualification Authority (ASQA) and our RTO code is 2658.

This handbook has been created to help guide you through your learning experience with us and contains important information for you to acknowledge. Please take a few moments to read through the handbook and keep it handy for future reference.

Please Note: *The Course Structure and Units of Competency/Subjects can be downloaded from our website on each course's information page: www.pca.edu.au/Courses Should you have a further query regarding the Student Handbook please contact us: info@pca.edu.au or call us: 02 8252 9963*

OUR MISSION

To operate within an inclusive framework which acknowledges individual differences, supports students' individual needs, and nurtures the growth of the whole person in an atmosphere of pastoral care.

Social Values

PCA is committed to providing an atmosphere of pastoral care where students are mentored and encouraged to be the best version of themselves possible. This is achieved through professional development programs, and the student and staff culture.

For close to one hundred years, students have been guided by the following social values at PCA: The Dignity of Human Work, The Common Good, Solidarity, SEE – JUDGE – ACT Method

WHAT IS COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING?

Nationally Recognised Training is made up of units of competency -the knowledge and skill required to carry out an aspect of your job, or training at the level or standard required. If you are competent in a unit of study, it means:



- You can carry out the task correctly
- You understand what the task is about and why you need to do it that way
- You know what to do if something goes wrong while you're doing it
- You know how to apply what you've learned in one situation to another situation.

How is competency proved?

We ask you to answer set questions and to demonstrate a range of tasks and activities which we assess. Assessment is an important part of the learning process. It gives you feedback on your progress—letting you know your areas of accomplishment and pointing out if there are any parts of the learning process where you need to do some more work.

The outcome of the assessment of a competency is either Competent or Not Competent. If your assessor or trainer decides that you are Not Competent, they will explain the reason/s why and what is needed for you to be assessed as Competent. You will then have an opportunity to resubmit your assessment.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

For students undertaking a Vocational Education and Training qualification the grades are simply Competent or Not Competent –this is what will be on your academic transcript on completion of the course or any Statement of Attainment issued. Some courses may also use a grading scale out of 100%- this will be explained to you and is also available on our website under the course information page. Some of the ways you will be assessed in your course may include:

- Simulation exercises or role-plays
- Project outlines and explanation sheets
- Written questionnaires
- Verbal questionnaires
- Portfolios, for example collections of work samples by the student
- Product with supporting documentation or journal/logbook
- Workplace evidence reports
- Skype/videoconferencing

Re-assessment

If a student does not meet the requirements of assessment sufficiently, they will be graded as Not Competent. PCA trainers work with the student order to address deficiencies and to build their skill and knowledge in preparation for additional assessment. This will be undertaken within the scheduled training plan or may be completed under alternative arrangements agreed between the student and the assessor.

In some rare circumstances, students may find it difficult to develop the necessary skills and knowledge within the constraints of the scheduled training plan. When this occurs, arrangements may be agreed to that allows the student to undertake additional learning in their own time and return for additional assessment at a time suitable time for PCA. This may be during a period of reduced training activity or at a time when planned assessments are



occurring and it is convenient to facilitate the additional assessment of the student. As a general guide, assessors are to make alternative arrangements to provide opportunities for assessment within the constraints of available time and resources. In all circumstances, the assessment is to be a planned activity that is conducted in accordance with assessment procedures. In some cases, after alternative arrangements have been exhausted, it will be necessary to find a student Not Competent.

Trainers

Our nationally recognised, accredited qualifications and training are delivered via online/classroom and/or in the workplace. Your PCA trainer/assessor and administration staff will always be there to assist you throughout your course, whether that is in person, over the phone or by email, which means you always have the support when you need it. Our trainers and assessors are qualified, dedicated professionals who have current industry experience and qualifications in a range of industries. Their industry experience is continually updated by participating in professional development activities, giving our students the best practical, and up- to- date training experience.

Our trainers and staff all hold a current Working with Children Check which is a requirement for anyone in NSW working with people 17 years of age and under. For further information please visit: <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au>

CERTIFICATION ON COMPLETION

Once you have successfully completed your course with us, you will receive nationally recognised certification within 30 days of your completion date. **Please Note:** if work placement is part of course, we'll need to have all of your logbook and assessor forms signed off, and any other required workplace documents received before your certification can be processed. A Statement of Attainment is issued for any units of competency that have been successfully completed, if you do not complete a whole qualification. Your certification is posted to you, so please ensure we have your up- to- date address upon completion.

Please note: Tuition fees **MUST** be paid in full before the issuance of any certification is processed.

Replacement Certification

A replacement of your certification and transcript may be requested anytime via email: info@pca.edu.au or (02) 8252 9963. **Please note:** There is charge of \$25 for this service.

Replacement certification documents are posted to you, so please include your current postal address with your request.



SMART AND SKILLED GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Patrick's College Australia is an approved Smart and Skilled NSW provider, which means we can offer some qualifications at significantly reduced cost to eligible students. Please see our website for more information: www.pca.edu.au or visit the Smart and Skilled website: <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/> to check your eligibility.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING- STUDENT LOANS (VSL)

VET Student Loans (VSL) is a Commonwealth Government loan scheme which assists eligible students meet part of your tuition fees. VET Student Loans provide you with the option of:

- Taking out a government loan for maximum of \$5,000, and paying the remaining tuition fees while you study.
- You do not start paying back the loan until you start earning over \$51,00* a year and the Australian tax Office will then take payments amounts. *Please check this amount as it is subject to change- you check online at: <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/paying-back-my-loan/loan-repayment>
- While there is no interest charged for VSL, there is an additional 20% fee charged on top of each subject fee, which means the total of your loan debt can be more than the \$5000. Please contact the college for further information or you visit the government website, below for more information.

For further information on VET Student Loans please go to the Study Assist website: <http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/> PCA courses that are eligible for VET Student Loans assistance are **Diploma of Business and Diploma of Business Administration**.

VET Student Loans will not be approved for students who do not meet the eligibility requirements and applicants should be aware that a VET Student Loan gives rise to a HELP debt that continues to be a debt due to the Commonwealth unit it is paid. For detailed information regarding eligibility and the student entry procedure and policies relating to VET Student Loans, go to the "VET Student Loans" tab under the Studying at PCA tab on the PCA website at www.pca.edu.au or contact a Careers Advisor at PCA on info@pca.edu.au or call 02 8252 9963.



STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Right

As a student of PCA, you have the right to:

- Be treated fairly and with respect by all staff and other students without discrimination or intimidation
- Privacy, dignity and confidentiality
- Work and learn in a supportive environment without interference from others
- Quality provision of courses that recognise and appreciate individual needs and learning styles and contain no hidden costs
- Express and share ideas and to ask questions
- Make a complaint and/or appeal an assessment decision through appropriate channels
- Be protected from all forms of harassment
- Expect truth in advertising
- Know about policies and procedures that may affect you
- Receive your Certificate or Statement of Attainment within 30 days of completion
- A safe, clean learning environment.

Student Responsibilities

As a student of PCA, you have the responsibility to:

- Treat staff and other students with respect and fairness at all times
- Read the Student Handbook and your Course Information Booklet
- Refrain from swearing or behaving in any other way that could offend, embarrass or threaten others
- Treat the property of PCA, other students, staff and visitors with respect
- Provide your own course requirements, where notified
- Keep a copy of all assessment work that you submit
- Be punctual at the start of the day and also when returning from breaks
- Provide accurate information about yourself and advise the PCA of any changes as soon as possible
- Not use mobile phones or similar devices at any time during class
- Not engaging in plagiarism, collusion or cheating in any assessment task
- Submit all assessments by the due date, or request and extension PRIOR to the due date if there are exceptional circumstances
- Follow the safety procedures – as per the safety procedure and as notified by staff
- Ask for assistance if you are experiencing any problems, either in your studies or your home life, which could affect your learning



UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI)

From 1 January 2015 all students undertaking nationally recognised training delivered by a Registered Training Organisation need to have a Unique Student Identifier (USI).

A USI gives students access to their online USI account which is made up of ten numbers and letters. It will look something like this: 3AW88YH9U5.

A USI account will contain all of a student's nationally recognised training records and results from 1 January 2015 onwards.

PCA cannot enrol you or issue your Diploma/Certificate/Statement of Attainment if you have not supplied us with your USI.

If you do not have a USI please visit the government website and create one (it takes only a few moments) and submit it to the college.

If you have a USI already, but do not know what it is you can do this on the USI website using the retrieve USI option.

If you are unable to create a USI please email administration staff info@pca.edu.au so we can assist you do this (you will need to give us written permission in your email for us to access your details on the USI website).

WITHDRAWAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course, they **must** do so in writing. PCA's withdrawal policy and procedure is published on our website and is below:

There are two versions of withdrawal procedures and policies to be aware of at Patrick's College Australia:

***1: Students who enrolled with VSL (VET FEE Help Loan Scheme) assistance and:**

***2: Students who are enrolled and paying full fees.**

***1. Students Withdrawing who enrolled with VSL (VET Student Loan)**

Students who wish to withdraw from a VET unit of study or VET course of study **must do so in writing**. Please complete Withdrawal for VET STUDENT LOANS form and submit:

In Person: Please hand to Administration office on campus

Email: info@pca.edu.au

Post: Level 7/451 Pitt St Sydney NSW 2000

A student must notify the college in writing of their intent to withdraw BEFORE the census date otherwise they will still incur the VSL debt for that subject. Census dates are published on our website under each course, and are also in the Student Handbook for each course given to students prior to enrolment. (See back of this handbook for census dates in your course).

If student is withdrawing due to medical reasons a medical certificate or a doctor's note **MUST** be attached to the Withdrawal Form.



In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study *on or before the census date* for that unit of study:

- will not incur a debt for that unit. The student may still be incurring a debt for VSL if they had for example, completed the first unit and are now withdrawing from the second unit. The debt for the first unit will still stand-they just will not be charged further if they withdraw before the census date of the following unit.

In the event of a student withdrawing from a VET unit of study *after census date* for that unit of study they will:

- be liable for the full debt for that unit of study, and any other unit previously undertaken.
- only be eligible for a refund or reversal of their VET Student Loan under special circumstances.

Special Circumstances

- are listed in the VET Student Loan Information student booklet.

<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helpfulresources/pages/publications>

***2: Students who are withdrawing-enrolled paying full fees.**

Students who wish to withdraw their enrolment **must do so in writing**. If student is withdrawing due to medical reasons a medical certificate or a doctor's note **MUST** be attached to the Withdrawal Form. Please complete a Withdrawal Form available at the administration office or download from our website: www.pca.edu.au and submit:

In Person: Please hand to Administration office on campus

Email: info@pca.edu.au

Post: Level 7/451 Pitt St Sydney NSW 2000

A Student must notify the college in writing of their intent to withdraw BEFORE each census date, otherwise they will still incur the cost for that subject.

Census dates are published on our website for each course. A refund will only be considered if the student has fully paid for the unit or complete course fees in advance, and they are withdrawing **before** the census date for that unit.

In the event of a student withdrawing *before the census date*:

- they will not incur a debt for that unit. The student will not be refunded any money paid for previous units, only any money paid for the current unit if withdrawing before the census date.
- A refund will not apply for any completed units.

In the event of a student withdrawing *after census date*:

- the student will be liable for the full debt for that unit of study, and any other unit previously undertaken.
- Special circumstances will be looked at and actioned on a case- by- case basis.

The procedure for the re-crediting of a VSL FEE-HELP balance:



When a student withdraws from a VET unit of study, the college shall confirm the withdrawal by:

- giving notice to the student in writing stating the date at which the withdrawal has taken effect;

When a student fails to meet the requirements of a VET unit of study, the college shall confirm this by giving notice to the student in writing;

The student must apply in writing within 12 months from the date specified in the notice as the day of withdrawal or the date of receiving written notice of their failure to meet the requirements of a VET unit of study. Patrick's College Australia may exercise its discretion to waive this requirement if in its opinion it was not possible for the application to be made before the end of the 12-month period Patrick's College Australia will advise the student of the outcome of the application within 28 days stating the reasons for the decision; Patrick's College Australia will also advise the student of their rights for a review of the decision if they are not satisfied with its outcome. The college will consider the application and will agree to such requests if they are satisfied that there were special circumstances in the student's case. If the application is successful, the college will re-credit the student's VSL FEE-HELP balance with an amount equal to the amounts of VSL assistance that the student has received for the affected VET units of study and the student's VSL debt for those VET units of study will be removed.

Review of a decision

If a student is not satisfied with the decision made by Patrick's College Australia in relation to re crediting their VSL FEE-HELP balance they may request a review of the decision.

The review shall be carried out by the CEO. Any such request must be submitted to the college in writing and must be lodged within 28 days of receiving notice of the original decision, unless the Review Officer allows a longer period. The student must specify the reasons for making the request; and submit to the college:

In Person: CEO or administration office on campus

Post: Level 7/451 Pitt St Sydney NSW 2000 or **email to:** info@pca.edu.au

These Student Review Procedures for Re-crediting a FEE-HELP Balance are published on our website: www.pca.edu.au



PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES

PCA offer several different payment plans and can tailor a plan to suit. Payment options are selected on the enrolment form and confirmed with each student prior to commencement date. Payment options are also available on our website. Payments can be made via EFTPOS to our bank account:

Commonwealth Bank

Account name: Capital Education Group

BSB: 062 320

Account: 1140 1021

Or via credit/debit card over the phone: 02 8252 9963 (Mastercard and Visa only) Fee payments must be made on or before the due payment date on the payment plan (emailed to each student with their tailored plan option prior to course commencement date)

PCA will at all times seek to be sympathetic to, and understanding of, each individual student's financial circumstances. However, for PCA to do so, students must advise the staff if financial difficulties are being experienced.

Action to enforce settlement of a debt for outstanding fees and charges will be taken in respect of all current and former students who have failed to engage with PCA to find a solution to any outstanding debt, or who have failed to honour agreements to pay.

PCA will, at all times, use the student's official email address. It is the student's responsibility to check this regularly.

Students Experiencing Financial Difficulties

Students experiencing financial difficulties in paying any fees and charges must advise PCA at the earliest opportunity via an email to info@pca.edu.au setting out their financial circumstances.

Student Payment Obligations

Students must pay tuition fees on time. Details of instalment dates and acceptable payment methods are included on the website or in the case of a Smart and Skilled funded course attached to the Notification letter given to students on the enrolment day. VSL students are informed of the payment options and processes at their pre-course interview. All students can clarify any questions regarding payment plans by email or phoning administration.

Students who intend their fees to be paid on their behalf must provide evidence that their fees will be paid in full or part by a third party. In the event that the third party fails to pay, or unduly delays payment, the student becomes liable for the amount due. In this event, an invoice will be issued to the student.

In the event of a query or dispute in relation to the actual tuition and related fees invoiced (as opposed to the method of payment or payment difficulties), the student is to contact administration at info@pca.edu.au.

If payment is not received within 30 days, a first reminder letter will be sent requesting payment within 7 days.

If no response is received to this first reminder letter, a second reminder letter will be sent 14 days after the first reminder letter. This letter will seek immediate payment and advise that



debt recovery and or legal action may commence within 7 days unless full payment is received. Debt recovery action can also be triggered where a payment in accordance with an agreed instalment plan is not received.

Debt Recovery Steps

For debt recovery purposes, Day 1 is the day following the date on which a payment is due. For those who settle an invoice, standard terms are 30 days. In that case, Day 1 will be the 31st day following the invoice date. For those paying by instalments, Day 1 will be the day following the date on which an instalment was due for collection.

When a student's account is deemed to be in arrears, a \$50 charge will be applied to the account to cover additional administrative costs. Notification of this additional charge will be made in the first reminder email to the student.

Students paying by instalments will immediately forfeit the concession to continue paying by instalments, and their entire balance outstanding will become immediately due.

Where students are studying online and a n account is arrears, they will not have access to the online system until their account is up to date or fully paid.

Students whose accounts remain in arrears by Day 30 will be advised by email and letter, that their status as a student of PCA is being withdrawn pending full payment of the outstanding fees. The student will also be advised that PCA reserves the right to recover any unpaid sums due through collections agencies and/or by legal action. Any additional costs incurred as a consequence of such action will be charged to the student's account.

STUDENT AGREEMENT

When students enrol with PCA, they are asked to sign an agreement that states they have:

- Read and understood the policies and procedures
- Have provided accurate information
- Understand and agree to abide by their rights and responsibilities
- Given permission for information about their progress and their Certificate/Statement of Attainment (SOA) to be distributed by the employer (in employer sponsored courses only)
- Given permission for their photo to be used in our marketing/website (opt in only- if students do not wish to be photographed they must talk to their trainer or administration staff so we can note this)
- Have been given details the structure of the course including assessment methods, the fees and charges (if applicable), and the refund policy (if applicable).



STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Students are required to attend every training session of the course. However, PCA acknowledge there can be circumstances where it is necessary to miss a session, due to illness, or personal circumstance. If you cannot attend a session or class please notify the college as soon as possible, either by emailing or phoning your trainer, or the administration desk (02)8252 9963 or email: info@pca.edu.au

If you are absent for more than two days due to illness a medical certificate must be presented to your trainer on your return.

Depending on the time you have been absent, you may need to catch up any sessions missed and this will be discussed with your trainer on a case- by- case basis.

If you have planned leave before your enrolment which will be during the course duration please let us know as soon as possible. Again, you may have to make up time for the sessions missed, and this will be discussed with your trainer on a case- by- case basis.

Student Identification

All students are required to show photo identification on their enrolment. This can include: **driver's licence, student card, identity card** etc. as long as it shows a photograph and a signature. Your trainer will note the ID details and sign that he/she has sighted the information. *The copy of your identification will not be kept by PCA.*

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Support (LLN)

Language, literacy and numeracy skills are critical to almost all areas of work. This is particularly true in many vocations where language, literacy and numeracy skills influence the performance of workplace tasks such as measuring, weighing and comprehending written work instructions. To support this approach PCA will:

- Assess a student's language, literacy and numeracy skills during their enrolment to ensure they have adequate skills to complete the training;
- 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 details of the language, literacy and numeracy assistance available. PCA generally recommends the LLN training courses provided by TAFE. These institutes have specialist teachers to support the student's development.
- Refer students to external language, literacy and numeracy support services that are beyond the support available within PCA and where this level of support is assessed as necessary; and
- Negotiate an extension of time to complete training programs if necessary. If you experience any difficulty with LLN issues as you go through your course, please let your trainer know so they can provide any additional support you may need.



PRIVACY

Patrick's College Australia collects and stores personal information on our students and industry clients. PCA complies with the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth). Our Privacy policy is available on our website: www.pca.edu.au

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Tuition Assurance Policy

Patrick's College Australia complies with VET Tuition Assurance requirements. This is to protect students in the event we cease to provide a VET course of study in which a student is enrolled. These requirements are covered under Schedule 1A to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (the Act) and chapter 3 of the *VET Guidelines 2013 (the VET Guidelines)*. The meaning of 'ceasing to provide a VET course of study' is set out in the *VET Guidelines* which are available from: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2013L01509>.

In the event we cease to provide a VET course of study in which a student is enrolled, the student is entitled to a choice of:

a) an offer of a place in a similar VET course of study with a second provider without any requirement to pay the second provider any tuition fee for any replacement VET units (this is known as the 'VET Course Assurance Option')

OR

b) a refund of the student's up-front VET tuition fee payments and/or a re-crediting of any VET STUDENT LOAN balance for any VET unit of study in which the student is enrolled or commences, but does not complete because we cease to provide the VET course of study of which the unit forms part (this is known as the 'VET Tuition Fee Repayment Option').

We have met the VET tuition assurance requirements, as specified in the *VET Guidelines*, through current membership of the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA) Australian Student Tuition Assurance Scheme (the Scheme).

Contact details for ITECA (TAS Administrator) are:

Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA)

Website: www.iteca.edu.au

Email: nsw@iteca.edu.au

Phone Number: 1300 421 017

If we cease to provide a VET course of study, the TAS Administrator will send a student enrolled in the VET course of study a written VET Tuition Assurance Offer (the Offer) advising the student of the options available under the VET tuition assurance requirements.

The Offer will include directions that the student must follow in order to notify the TAS Administrator of the choice they have made for each affected VET unit.

The TAS Administrator will provide this Offer within twenty business days after it knows, or should know by reasonable enquiries that we have ceased to provide the VET course of study.



For the purposes of VET FEE-HELP, all courses offered by us, in accordance with the course requirements of clause 45 of Schedule 1A to the Act, are covered by the Scheme as part of our membership of the Scheme.

A student may choose either:

- a) the VET Course Assurance Option
- b) the VET Tuition Fee Repayment Option

These options are explained below.

The VET Course Assurance Option

Under the VET course assurance option, a student will be offered a place in a similar VET course of study by the TAS Administrator. If the student accepts this option, the TAS Administrator will make all necessary arrangements to ensure the student is able to enrol with the second provider in a similar VET course of study. This offered VET course will lead to the same or a comparable qualification without any requirement on the part of the student to pay the second provider any tuition fee for any replacement VET units (that is, units that the student had commenced but not completed because the VET course ceased to be offered). A student will receive full credit from the second provider for any VET units of study successfully completed with the first provider.

The second provider nominated by the TAS Administrator may have different tuition fees to the fees the student would have paid for VET units of study that were part of the VET course of study we ceased to provide but which the student had not yet started studying.

A student is not obliged to enrol in a VET course of study with a second provider offered by the TAS Administrator under the VET Course Assurance Option. However, if the student enrolls with any other VET provider there is no obligation on that VET provider to offer full credit transfer for the VET units of study completed with the first provider or to offer replacement VET unit/s free of charge.

Under the VET Tuition Fee Repayment Option, the TAS Administrator undertakes to pay the student the total of any up-front payments already paid by the student for any VET units of study the student has commenced but not completed because the VET course ceased to be offered. Students selecting this option will also have their FEE-HELP balance re-credited for the uncompleted VET units.

REQUESTING ACCESS TO RECORDS

Students who require access to their records can email administration: info@pca.edu.au

What records can be accessed?

- Electronic or paper copy records from your student file, including academic transcript and certification documents.
- Academic records from more than 30 years ago may not be available or could be incomplete, so please call the college, to enable us to advise you.
- Students who request electronic or paper copies of their academic transcript and certification will be charged a fee of \$25.00 payable over the phone via credit/debit card, Visa or Mastercard only, or by cheque/money order.



TRAINING SAFETY

PCA is committed to the proper management of work health and safety. We will provide a safe and healthy workplace for our staff, students, contractors and visitors by having a planned and systematic approach to the management of work health and safety. We will provide the necessary resources for the successful implementation of this policy and its supportive procedures. Work health and safety will be managed through PCA liaising with the close consultation with staff, students, contractors and visitors.

If you see something on campus, or at our training facilities that you think is unsafe or a hazard please report to your trainer or administration staff immediately. Our safety policy is available on our website for further information.

REFERENCING STYLE

The current acceptable referencing style for all PCA students is Harvard. For further information on the Harvard Referencing Style please Google Harvard Referencing examples, or ask your trainer.

WORK PLACEMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Some courses may include work placement. If this is a requirement of your course, you will be advised the number of hours and what type of workplace you will need. It may be your responsibility to find a suitable workplace, and if PCA do not arrange work placement for you, PCA will have to approve this workplace as being appropriate for the needs of the course. Any courses which have work placement involved will be discussed with you at your enrolment interview and we will ensure you are clear about how it will work in detail before your course commences.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

In cases of alleged behavioural misconduct, failure to comply with the student responsibilities, or academic misconduct, PCA may conduct a formal hearing. The student may attend the hearing. If the student declines to attend the hearing (or participate by other means) the hearing shall proceed in the absence of the student. The student may make a written submission to the hearing and/or be accompanied at the hearing by a companion.



The companion is present as a support to the accused student and is not able to act as an advocate or spokesperson for the student. In exceptional cases, for example a student with a disability that effects his or her communication, the Academic Manager may give permission for the companion to speak on behalf of the accused student. Neither the student nor any other person participating in the hearing is entitled to be legally represented.

The student may make submissions to the Academic Manager after the evidence has been given. The student's submissions may be oral or written. As an outcome of the hearing, PCA may take one of the following actions:

- Dismiss the complaint of academic or behavioural misconduct
- Provide the student with a written warning together with advice about what is acceptable academic conduct/behaviour
- Decide that the student is guilty of academic misconduct/misconduct and impose one of the listed penalties.

The student shall be informed in writing of the decision of PCA, together with reasons for the decision, within five (5) days of the finalisation of the case.

For **minor** cases of misconduct, the trainer, in consultation with the Academic Manager may decide on one or more of the following:

- Issue a formal warning
- The student is required to resubmit the piece of assessment by a specified date
- The student be required to undertake additional, equivalent assessment by a specified date
- The student may require counselling and/or be removed from the classroom for a period of time – suspension from class.

For **major** cases of misconduct PCA may impose one or more of the following penalties:

- The student may be required to undertake additional assessment in the course (the maximum passing mark will be Pass or 50%) – for academic misconduct
- The student may be recorded as Not Competent for the assessment – for academic misconduct
- The student may be withdrawn from the course with academic penalty
- The student be excluded from the course or the program for a specified period of time
- The student may be immediately removed from the class, and not be permitted to return until permitted by the Academic Manager

Before imposing a penalty for academic misconduct or behavioural misconduct, the student's file should be checked to determine whether the offence is a first or a subsequent offence.

A more severe penalty should be imposed for subsequent offences.

Where a penalty of exclusion is recommended the Academic Manager may decide that the following wording can be added to the student's academic record: "excluded on (date) for disciplinary reasons."



MISCONDUCT DEFINITIONS

Plagiarism

PCA defines plagiarism as a piece of writing or software or other work that has been copied from someone or somewhere else and is presented as being the student's own work. It can range from failure to use proper citations to cheating, and can be committed unintentionally or with planned deliberation.

Group work and legitimate cooperation do not *per se* constitute plagiarism, but students operating as a group must adhere to the instructions provided in their course outlines regarding collaboration in assessment items.

In the preparation of work submitted to meet course requirements, students must take great care to distinguish their own ideas and language from information derived from other sources. These include published primary and secondary materials, the Internet and information and opinions gained directly from other people.

Whenever ideas or facts are derived from a student's reading and research, that material must be cited properly. In general, students should provide references in the following circumstances:

- **Direct quotation:** whenever another author is quoted *verbatim* (i.e. word by word) by a phrase, a sentence or a paragraph, the words should be placed in single quotation marks and their source should be identified
- **Paraphrasing:** whenever another person's words are summed up in the student's own words, they should be identified through an appropriate reference, e.g. Tony Blair stated
- **Multiple summation:** similar to paraphrasing, it involves the summary of several authors' works into a single paragraph in the student's words, e.g. Tony Blair, George Bush and John Howard jointly declared
- **Statistics:** indicate the sources of any statistics used in an assignment or project, e.g. Bureau of Meteorology (2004)
- **Controversial facts:** acknowledge the source since it is not a commonly accepted historical fact, e.g. there is life on Mars (Cook,2005).

PCA will not accept work that has been plagiarised. It is the student's responsibility to learn the accepted forms of citation. Students who are unsure of the acceptable standards should speak with their trainer before beginning their research on assignments and projects.

Collusion

Collusion is a specific type of plagiarism that occurs when two or more students present joint work as if it is their own, independent work. As mentioned above, group work can be acceptable when it is sanctioned by the trainer, however, it is not acceptable for members of a group to submit identical answers to assignments or projects by simply copying the work done as a group. With the above exceptions, all assignments and projects must be submitted individually and the examiner is entitled to consider identical layout, identical mistakes, identical argument and identical presentation as evidence of collusion. Students are advised that their assessment items may be vetted for collusion using text comparison software.

Cheating

Students who are found guilty of cheating will be dealt with severely by PCA's authorities.



Collaboration in the completion of written assignments and projects is prohibited unless explicitly permitted in the course outline/assessment instructions. Students must acknowledge any collaboration and its extent in all submitted assessment. Students may not copy another student's assignment or project, computer program or parts of a program, or any part of another student's examination paper.

It is expected that all work submitted for a course will have been done solely for that course. A student may not submit the same or similar work to any other course without the prior written permission of the relevant Teacher/Trainer.

Failure to comply with this policy will lead to action being taken as per the Discipline Policy.

ACCESS AND EQUITY

Access

ensures that all students wishing enrol or have enrolled in our range of qualifications and training programs, can gain access to our courses through a fair and equitable pre-enrolment processes, entry requirements, and that all efforts will be made in to accommodate physical access to training venues.

Equity

PCA is committed to providing equivalent opportunities regardless of race, colour, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or preference, marital or parental status, age, religion, creed or political belief, mental or physical disability, or status.

PCA will treat fairly all of its students and persons seeking to enrol with PCA, taking into consideration any special learning needs, Recognition of prior learning (RPL) or Credit transfer (CT) where applicable.

Procedure

It is the policy of PCA to provide equal opportunity for all persons. PCA recognises that, by providing a learning environment and related support mechanisms which encourage all Students to achieve their personal best, regardless of their background and personal circumstances, it will foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to assist students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes.

Fair treatment

PCA will treat fairly all students and potential students. Please refer to our Policies and procedures on our website for further details.



COMPLAINTS

PCA is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaint handling process. If you have a grievance you wish to raise please discuss first with trainer or administration staff by contacting us on 02 8252 9963, coming directly to the administration office when on campus, or emailing us at: info@pca.edu.au

All complaints are handled with discretion and with an early resolution in mind. Please see our Policies and Procedures on our website for PCA's complaints handling policy and procedure.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

PCA provides a learning/training environment which aims to ensure the health, safety, respect and productivity of all students, therefore the use of alcohol and/or drugs is prohibited on campus. The use of drugs and alcohol may impair an individual's capacity to learn safely, efficiently, and without risk of injury or a threat to your wellbeing, or that of other parties. Our policy is that no student is to attend training programs while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Breaching this policy can result in removal from the training program.

Prescription Drugs and Medication

Although PCA's Drugs and Alcohol Policy does not prohibit the use of prescription pharmaceuticals, you should check with your doctor that your prescription does not impair your study performance and/or put you or others at risk.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student feedback is collected via Evaluation Forms sent via email to all students or handed out in class, and are submitted at the end of the course. Students are also welcome to submit feedback either verbally by contacting the administration office; in person, by phone or via email. All feedback is handled confidentially.

If you have a complaint or an appeal against an assessment decision, please follow the Complaints and Appeals procedure, which is also on our website.

If you need any further assistance at any time during your enrolment with us please feel free to contact us.

We appreciate your time reading this handbook and we hope you enjoy your enrolment with us.

Patrick's College Australia wish you every success in your studies, and future career path!