

Decode College

success through endeavour

International Student Handbook

Sydney Centre for Finance Studies Pty Ltd ACN 623 300 078 trading as Decode College

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We are separate from and not related to Decode International College Pty Ltd ACN 632 343 652

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WELCOME

Welcome students, we are happy to have you studying with us.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide you with all the information that you need to know about studying with Sydney Centre for Finance Studies trading as Decode College (Decode College).

The first part of this Handbook provides you with all the information you need to know about applying for a course, your visa and arriving in Australia, including important information such as working in Australia and your accommodation.

STUDYING THROUGH SYDNEY CENTRE FOR FINANCE STUDIES

Studying with Decode College offers you a great education and training experience to prepare you for further studies or a successful career. Our well-located campus provides a complete learning environment.

OUR OBLIGATION AS YOUR RTO AND CRICOS EDUCATION PROVIDER

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and CRICOS Education Provider registered with Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), we have an obligation to ensure the quality of the nationally recognised training and assessment we deliver. We must comply at all times with the Standards for RTOs 2015, which are part of the VET Quality Framework, as well as the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code).

To ensure compliance, we have developed comprehensive internal policies, procedures and systems that guide our compliant operations, and we must participate in audits with ASQA upon their request. In addition, we must ensure that any third parties that we work with who have any involvement in your training and assessment comply as well. This includes our training partners, marketing brokers and salespeople where applicable.

As the RTO, we have the responsibility to issue your AQF certification documents in line with our issuance policy as outlined in this Handbook.

If at any time you feel we have not met our obligations as an RTO, you have the right to make a complaint following our Complaints and Appeals Policy outlined further on in this Handbook.

Please note that all Decode College's policies, procedures and forms are available to you via your Learner App. A 'how-to' guide for using the Learner App is provided to you as part of your orientation. If you require another copy of the Learner App 'how-to' guide or require assistance, please email:

admin@decode.nsw.edu.au

CONTACT INFORMATION AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Decode College Main and Emergency Contact Details

Address: Suite 1A, 34 Macmahon Street, Hurstville, NSW 2220

T: +61 2 9121 6281

E: info@decode.nsw.edu.au

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Police, Fire, Ambulance – Dial 000

Department of Home Affairs (DHA)

Dial 131 881

9 Wentworth St. Parramatta NSW 2150

26 Lee St. Sydney NSW 2000

Local Medical Centres:

Sydney Medical Centre

580 George St, Sydney NSW 2000

www.sydmedicalcentre.com.au

(02) 9261 9200

Hurstville Medical Centre

185a Forest Road, Hurstville, NSW 2220

www.hurstvillecitymedical.com.au

+61 2 9580 7233

Transport:

<http://www.transportnsw.info/>

Local taxi companies: <http://www.rslcabs.com.au/sydney-suburbs/baulkham-hills-taxi/>

Airport taxi: <http://www.airportconnections.com.au/>

Public Facilities

NAB

252 Forest Road, Hurstville NSW 2220

www.nab.com.au

13 22 65

RediATM

225H Forest Road, Hurstville, NSW 2220

www.rediatm.com.au

1300 650 501

CommBank

Westfield Hurstville

1-3 Cross Street, Hurstville NSW 2220

www.commbank.com.au

13 22 21

COURSES PROVIDED BY DECODE COLLEGE

Decode College offers the following courses to international students:

- BSB51918 Diploma of Leadership and Management
- BSB50420 Diploma of Leadership and Management
- BSB61015 Advanced Diploma of Leadership and Management
- FNS50217 Diploma of Accounting
- FNS60217 Advanced Diploma of Accounting

SELECTION AND ENROLMENT

Decode College accepts applications from all students who meet the entry requirements published in the course information. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, but if a course is full, you will be offered a place in a course starting at a later date.

To apply to enrol in a course, you must complete an Enrolment Form for International Students, which is available through the web site or from reception or through your agent. If you are applying for a course that has entry requirements, you will also need to provide the necessary evidence, such as; verified copies of qualifications, forms of identification including your passport, schooling and evidence of English Language level (within the last 2 years), such as; IELTS or TOEFL.

If you are applying for Credit, you should indicate this on your enrolment and supply certified copies of your transcripts so we can assess your application for Credit. See the section on Credits in this Handbook.

Once you have completed your enrolment form and gathered all the necessary evidence, send it to info@decode.nsw.edu.au You will be contacted to let you know the status of your enrolment and to confirm your details.

If we require any further details from you, you may be required to attend an interview. Details of the interview will be provided at this stage.

Upon approval of your enrolment, you will be sent further information about the next steps, payment arrangements and how you can get started in your course.

EDUCATION AGENTS

Decode College uses education agents to assist us in recruiting students. We have agreements with all of our Education Agents that ensure that all agents act in an ethical and honest manner, in the best interests of our key target group, international students, and to ensure that the reputation of the Australian international education sector is upheld.

A list of the education agents with whom we have an agreement is included on our web site at: www.decode.nsw.edu.au/partners.

UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI)

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

A Unique Student Identifier (USI) is a reference number made up of numbers and letters that creates a lifetime record for an individual of all the nationally recognized training that has been completed. Under the Unique Student Identifiers Act 2014, all RTOs must ensure they have a valid USI for any student that enrolls in nationally recognised training from 2015. This means (unless you have an exemption issued by the USI registrar) that as a student you must either:

- Provide us with your USI, or
- Provide us with permission to access or create your USI on your behalf.

For information about exemptions for individuals, please review this webpage:

<https://www.usi.gov.au/training-organisations/training-organisation-requirements/exemptions-individuals/how-apply>

To create your USI, please visit: <http://www.usi.gov.au/Students/Pages/default.aspx> . If you have studied in Australia previously, you may already have a USI. To check if you have a USI, please visit <https://www.usi.gov.au/faqs/find-your-usi> .

Once you have obtained your USI, you should upload it to Decode College's Learner App for our records. A Learner App 'how-to' guide will be provided to you during orientation. If you require assistance using the Learner App, please email admin@decode.nsw.edu.au .

Decode College is unable to issue you qualification or statement of attainment unless we have your valid USI or a notice of exemption from the registrar.

CREDITS

A credit is formal recognition of the previous studies you have completed for the purpose of reducing the units or modules that you are required to complete in the course you are enrolled in with us.

Decode College can grant you credit towards your course for units of competency or modules that you have already completed with another RTO or authorised issuing organisation. We can also grant you Credit for subjects or units you have completed where equivalence can be established between the unit/ module in your course, and the subject or unit you have completed.

There is no charge to apply for Credit.

To apply, fill in the Credit Application Form and submit it as part of your enrolment. You can apply for Credit at any time; however, it is best you do this as part of your enrolment so that Credits are known upfront and you are not required to do any work that you otherwise may not have needed to do.

Make sure you attach certified copies of transcripts from your previous study. In some cases, we may ask for additional information about the subject or unit you previously studied so we can determine equivalence. Your Credit Application may be returned to you if you don't provide the required information.

In some cases, Credits may lead to a reduction in the course fees as there is less work involved in offering your course. This will be advised to you in writing.

You will be advised in writing of the outcome of your Credit Application.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process where skills and knowledge that you have gained through work and life experience and other unrecognised training can be formally recognised.

Decode College has a process that has been structured to minimise the time and cost to applicants and provides a supportive approach to students wishing to take up this option. You should ideally apply for RPL at the time of enrolment, but you may also apply up to 2 weeks into your course.

If you think RPL is a suitable option for you, the first step is to contact your trainer/assessor or our office and have a conversation about whether or not RPL might be suitable for you. Suitability is often determined on how much experience you have in a certain area, your work history and previous training. If RPL is determined as a possibility for you, you will be provided with a kit that will guide you in working through each unit to determine relevant skills and experience and identify whether you would be able to provide the required evidence.

A trainer/assessor will be available to assist you throughout this process.

To apply for RPL, you will need to fill in a part of the kit and return it with an RPL Application Form. Your application will then be assessed for suitability, and you will then be contacted by an assessor to progress the RPL process.

From here, usually, the RPL process involves gathering evidence to demonstrate skills, knowledge and experience, responding to questions, completing tasks and depending on the area, observation of your work skills in your workplace.

Fees are applicable for Recognition of Prior Learning, and you will be advised of these fees upon contacting us. For more information about submitting an application for RPL, contact the head office.

Reduction of Course Duration as a result of Credit or RPL

If Credit or RPL is granted after the acceptance of a place in a course or on commencement of studies and will affect the duration of studies, Decode College will provide you with a new Confirmation of Enrolment Letter (CoE) including the new duration.

VISAS

Once you receive your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment, you will need to apply for your visa. Information about applying for a visa can be found at:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud>

This document explains the process for application, evidence that you must provide (including a valid passport), information on student visa conditions, permission to work, Overseas Student Health Cover and charges associated with the visa application. You may wish to use a registered migration agent to assist you with the process of applying for a course to arrival at Decode College and including assistance with visas. Contact us for details of the education agents that we use.

Ensure that you allow enough time between lodging your application and the start of your course, as applying for a visa can be a lengthy process.

VISA CONDITIONS

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the cancellation of your visa. See more information at the following link:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud>

Conditions include (but are not limited to) that you must:

- Satisfy attendance and/or course progress requirements and maintain a valid enrolment for your chosen course of study.
- Only work if you have been given permission to do so as part of your visa grant.
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Notify your training provider of your Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within 7 days.
- Complete the course within the duration specified in the CoE.
- If you are a student visa holder under 18 years of age who is neither being accompanied nor staying with a relative who is at least 21 years of age, you must not change your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements without the written approval of your education provider.
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 months unless you are issued with a letter of release from the education provider to attend another institution.

ARRANGING TRAVEL AND DOCUMENTS TO BRING

Costs of travelling to Australia are not included in your course fees, and you will need to arrange and pay for your travel to Australia. You should plan to arrive in Sydney at least 2 weeks before your course orientation to give you time to settle in.

The nearest International Airport is Sydney International Airport.

You will need to prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia including:

- Valid passport including a valid student visa
- Your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)
- Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of documents such as your birth certificate, medical records and educational qualifications as advised by Decode College at the time of confirmation of enrolment.

If you are travelling with your family, you will need to include their documents as well. Keep all documents in your carry-on luggage. In case you lose the originals, make copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you.

ENTRY INTO AUSTRALIA

When you arrive in Australia, you will need to show your passport and incoming passenger card at a Customs and Immigration checkpoint. You may be asked questions about your stay before your passport is stamped and handed back

Once you have passed through the immigration checkpoint, you should collect your bags ensuring that you check your baggage and check that nothing is missing or damaged. If something is missing or you notice damage, go to the baggage counter and advise them of your problem. Staff at the baggage counter will help you to find missing baggage or lodge a claim for damage to your belongings.

Once you have your luggage, you will go through customs where your luggage may be checked. Australia has strict quarantine laws to stop people from bringing in certain food and plant items. You should declare any items that you are bringing in on the form given to you on the plane. If customs officers decide that the item you are bringing in are not safe, they will be confiscated and destroyed. If you fail to declare or dispose of any quarantine items or make a false declaration, you may receive a fine or be prosecuted. All international mail is also screened and checked by customs.

If you want further information, visit <https://www.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/passports-and-travel/customs-and-quarantine>

ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

Getting from Sydney airport to your accommodation

Train

Airport Link is a convenient way to reach the centre of Sydney. Trains run approximately every 10 minutes, and the journey to the city takes only 13 minutes. The international and domestic rail stations link directly to the City Circle line, which means most city destinations are within a short walk of stations. The rail stations also link to hundreds of other stations in greater Sydney.

You require an Opal Card to travel via Sydney's train, bus and ferry system. You can get an Adult or Child/Youth Opal Card from the Airport Train Station, Relay and WH Smith. Train Ticket fares and other details are available at <https://www.opal.com.au>

More details are available on:

<https://www.sydneyairport.com.au/airport-guide/arriving/international/transport-options-international#train-transport-options-parking-and-transport>

Taxis

Each terminal has its own sheltered taxi rank with supervisors on hand during peak times to ensure a smooth flow of taxis for travellers.

Taxi Rank Locations, Taxi Fares, and few Taxi companies are available on

<https://www.sydneyairport.com.au/airport-guide/arriving/international/transport-options-international#taxi-andrideshare-transport%20options-international-parking-and-transport>

The Sydney CBD is a short, 20 minutes ride away and will cost about \$45-\$55 one-way.

Arranging your finances

The currency of Australia is the Australian Dollar. Ideally, you should change your money into Australian dollars before you arrive, but if you haven't you will need to change some as soon as you arrive – you will usually be able to do this at the airport.

Once you have arrived in Sydney, you can exchange more money into Australian dollars at any bank or currency exchange. Note; however, that banks are not open on the weekend and while airport currency exchanges are generally open, the rate is usually not as good as with a bank.

You should not carry large sums of money with you, and it is best only to have the money that you will need for the first few days and then arrange to have the rest of the funds transferred to you in Australia.

The amount you will need to bring with you will depend on whether you have already paid for your accommodation before you arrive. Think about how much money you will need to last you for a couple of weeks.

Find out more about money matters by visiting <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/en/Living-in-Australia/Money-Matters>

ACCOMMODATION

It is best to book temporary accommodation before you arrive and look for long-term accommodation once you get to Australia. Temporary accommodation could be a hotel or hostel. Temporary accommodation can be found through:

<http://www.hostels.com/hostels/sydney/sydney-student-living/73573>
<https://www.yha.com.au/hostels/nsw/sydney-surrounds/sydney-central-backpackers-hostel/>

You can also stay with a family in their home. For more information, visit:

- [Oz Homestay](#)
- [Aussie Families Homestay Care](#),
- [Homestay Network](#)
- [Meridian Homestay Services](#)
- [Global Experience](#)
- [Australian Homestay Network](#)

There is a range of long-term accommodation options for international students.

Private rental

A private rental is where you sign a lease for a whole apartment or house. The lease will include the rent payable, the bond (a refundable amount once you leave the rental), the length and type of tenancy, and other conditions and rules.

Sharehouse

A sharehouse is when you share a private rental with friends or housemates. All tenants are listed on the lease and pay their own share of rent and bond.

Boarding or homestay

Boarding or homestay is when you rent a room in a home and live with the homeowners. This is a private agreement between you and the homeowner.

It is important to remember that as an international student, you have the same renting rights as local residents. Review the information below about renting and tenants rights.

It is important to remember that as an international student, you have the same renting rights as local residents. Review the information below about renting and tenants rights.

http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Youth/International_students.page#Renting

BRINGING YOUR FAMILY WITH YOU

If you intend to bring your family with you, they will also need to have a visa and be covered by health insurance. Family members include your partner (married or de facto) and your children under 18 years of

age. You will need to provide proof of your family relationships with official documents, including birth certificates and marriage certificates. For more details, visit <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud/brin>

Where you have dependent children that need to attend childcare or school, you should be aware of the following costs:

Typical childcare costs in Sydney are as follows

- Centre-based childcare \$70-\$192 per day
- Family day care \$7.50-\$16.80 per hour dependent on location and service
- Nannies \$17-\$25 per hour live in \$17-\$35 per hour live out (+agency fee)
- Au pairs (living in your home) \$200-\$300 per week (+agency fee)

Find out more at:

<https://www.careforkids.com.au/>

For school children, current costs range from AUD\$5200 for 2018 & 2019 year and provide costs for all school years as costs vary depending on the school year.

To find out more about application processes and costs go to:

<https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/e2b3c362-84b4-4388-8815-e644ee6f9e19/1/fees.pdf>

You should also be aware that the above costs for childcare and schooling are in addition to living costs as outlined in the section on living costs.

HEALTH

Emergencies

For emergencies, such as; fire, ambulance or police, phone 000. When you dial 000, you will be asked whether your emergency is related to fire, ambulance or police and why you want this assistance. You will also be asked for your name and address and telephone number.

Australian police protect people and properties, detect and prevent crime, and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics. The police can help you feel safe.

Fire

The fire brigade extinguishes fires, rescues people from fires in cars and buildings, and helps in situations where gas or chemicals become a danger. As soon as a fire starts, call 000 no matter how small or large the fire may be.

Ambulance

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention in an emergency and emergency transportation to hospital. To access an ambulance, call 000.

Medical assistance

Emergency medical treatment is available 24 hours a day at the emergency or casualty department of a public hospital, or at some medical centres. Public and private hospitals are listed in the White Pages telephone directory under 'Hospitals', and you can also find them by searching on the internet. If you need to go to hospital, remember to bring your health insurance card and any medicines you are currently taking. For anything other than an emergency, seek medical help from a general practitioner (GP) or local medical centre.

Overseas Student Health Cover

Australia has a special system of health cover for international students called "Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)". You will need to buy OSHC before you come to Australia to cover you from when you arrive. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) requires you to maintain OSHC for the duration of your time on a student visa in Australia.

You can choose to take out OSHC with a provider recommended by us, or with the Australian OSHC provider of your choice. There are five providers of OSHC in Australia. Visit these websites to find detailed information on what they cover and to decide which provider is right for you.

- Australian Health Management OSHC www.ahmoshc.com
- BUPA Australia www.overseasstudenthealth.com
- Medibank Private www.medibank.com.au/Client/StaticPages/OSHCHome.aspx
- OSHC Worldcare www.oshcworldcare.com.au
- NIB OSHC www.nib.com.au/home/newtonib/overseasstudents

Your OSHC will help you pay for any medical or hospital care you may need while you're studying in Australia, and it will contribute towards the cost of most prescription medicines, and an ambulance in an emergency.

For more information on what your OSHC insurance covers, as well as what to do if you need treatment, refer to the Department of Health and Ageing's (DoHA) [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

OSHC does not cover dental, optical or physiotherapy. If you want to be covered for these treatments, you will need to buy additional private health insurance, such as:

- Extra OSHC provided by some OSHC providers;
- International travel insurance; or
- General treatment cover with any Australian private health insurer. You can find a list of these providers and search for the one that suits you best at www.privatehealth.gov.au or www.iselect.com.au

LIVING COSTS IN AUSTRALIA

Migration regulations in Australia require international students to show evidence that they can contribute to the cost of living and studying in Australia. This helps to ensure students are better able to make the most of their studies and have a safe and enjoyable experience in Australia.

While international students are able to supplement their income with money earned through part-time work in Australia, the 'living costs' requirement helps to support the success of students in their studies by ensuring that they don't have to rely on such work to meet all their expenses.

Students must demonstrate that the funds they are relying upon to meet the costs of studying in Australia will be genuinely available to them during their stay in Australia.

The following web site includes information about average living costs in Australia:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/living-costs>

Carefully review the information at the web site link noting that the figures provided are averages only and that costs can vary significantly depending on where you live in Australia. You should be prepared in case your living costs are greater than the indicated figures.

BUDGETING

Once you've settled in, you should ideally work out a budget that covers costs including clothing, food, accommodation, transport and entertainment, travel costs and childcare, if applicable.

Costs associated with living in Australia are included at:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/living-costs>

It is important to be aware of how much money you spend and where you are spending it. Sticking to a budget will ensure you are on top of where your money goes.

Read more about budgeting at www.understandingmoney.gov.au

WORKING IN AUSTRALIA

Most student visa holders can work up to 40 hours a fortnight during term time and as many hours as you like during holidays. Before you undertake any paid work you need to make sure your visa allows you to work. Find out more at the <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud>

You should also visit the following website to find out more about working in Australia, including your employment rights and conditions.

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/working>

If you require any further information about your workplace rights and obligations, for example, resolving a workplace dispute, visit the Fair Work Ombudsman site at www.fairwork.gov.au

YOUR SAFETY

Australia is a safe country. However, it's always best to take precautions. Read the information at the following web site about personal safety tips:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/health-and-safety/personal>

You should also review the section in this Handbook about health and safety and remember to listen carefully to all of the information provided to you at your orientation.

If an incident occurs that has a significant impact on your well-being, please speak to us immediately at the contact numbers provided. An incident may be both physical or psychological.

SHOPPING

All Australian major town centres and capital cities shopping facilities with opening hours generally 9.00am to 5.30pm seven days a week, with late night shopping until 9.00pm on Thursdays or Fridays. Some supermarkets are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Mainstream grocery stores in Australia include Coles, Woolworths, Foodworks, IGA and Aldi. Major department stores in Australia include Myer and David Jones, Big W, Kmart and Target.

CLOTHING

While there are no set rules on clothing in Australia; however, many workplaces, restaurants, clubs and bars have a dress code. Australian people generally dress in modern clothing influenced by personal taste, status, place of work, lifestyle and location.

The cost of clothing in Australia can vary. There are a number of quality variety stores such as K-Mart and Big W where you can find low-cost clothing and shoes of all varieties. Department and specialty stores such as Myer and David Jones carry more expensive higher-end clothing labels.

For more information about the cost of living, visit the Study in Australia website at:

<http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia/living-costs>

COURSE INDUCTION

At the start of your course will be provided with an induction. The induction will provide you with specific details about your course requirements, important dates and will be an opportunity to meet your trainer and the other students in your course.

As an international student, you will also be provided with information on:

- details of internal and external support services available to assist in the transition into life and study in Australia. Such services include welfare services, accommodation services, academic and career advice, IT support, and student learning assistance, English language support and social inclusion activities.
- legal, emergency and health services.
- safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia.
- information on how to seek assistance for and report an incident that impacts significantly on your well-being, including critical incidents.
- facilities and resources.
- organisational policies and procedures including course progress, attendance monitoring, deferral, suspension and cancellation, course transfer and complaints and appeals.
- any student visa conditions relating to course progress and attendance.
- services overseas students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.

The induction will also provide you with important information about health and safety requirements including emergency evacuation procedures, critical incidents and incident reporting (see the section in this handbook on health and safety), as well as a range of other important matters relating to your rights and responsibilities as a student.

The induction also provides an opportunity for you to ask any questions you might have about studying with us. During this induction, we also make sure that we have all the required forms and paperwork filled in.

At your induction, you will receive your first set of learning materials so that you can start on your learning journey.

General housekeeping arrangements are also discussed, as stated in the section below.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Student Rights

All students have the right to:

- Be treated fairly and with respect by all students and staff.
- Learn in a supportive environment which is free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation.
- Learn in a healthy and safe environment where the risks to personal health and safety are minimised.
- Have their personal details and records kept private and secure according to our Privacy Policy.
- Access the information Decode College holds about them.
- Have their complaints and appeals dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution.
- Make appeals about procedural and assessment decisions.
- Receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.
- Be given clear and accurate information about their course, training and assessment arrangements and their progress.
- Access the support they need to participate in their training program effectively.
- Provide feedback to Decode College on the client services, training, assessment and support services they receive.
- Be informed of any changes to agreed services, and how it affects them as soon as practicable.

Student Responsibilities

All students, throughout their training and involvement with Decode College, are expected to:

- Treat all people with fairness and respect and not do anything that could offend, embarrass or threaten others.
- Not harass, victimise, discriminate against or disrupt others.
- Treat all others and their property with respect.
- Respect the opinions and backgrounds of others.
- Follow all safety policies and procedures as directed by staff.
- Report any perceived safety risks as they become known.
- Not bring into any premises being used for training purposes, any articles or items that may threaten the safety of self or others.
- Notify us if any of their personal or contact details change.
- Provide relevant and accurate information to Decode College in a timely manner.
- Approach their course with due personal commitment and integrity.
- Complete all assessment tasks, learning activities and assignments honestly and without plagiarism or infringing on copyright laws.
- Hand in all assessment tasks, assignments and other evidence of their work with a completed and signed cover sheet.
- Make regular contact with their Trainer/Assessor.
- Prepare appropriately for all assessment tasks, visits and training sessions.

- Notify Decode College if any difficulties arise as part of their involvement in the program.
- Notify Decode College if they are unable to attend a training session for any reason at least 12 hours prior to the commencement of the activity.
- Make payments for their training within agreed timeframes, where relevant.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The training and assessment offered by Decode College focus on providing you with knowledge and skills required to the standard of performance required in the workplace. This is known as competency-based training and assessment. Each of the components of your course is a “unit of competency”. Each unit of competency is linked to specific skills and knowledge required in the workplace.

Our course outlines include the details of how we deliver the training to you as well as the assessment methods that will be used to assess whether you have reached the required standard of performance.

Assessment methods vary from course to course but usually include written questions, projects, written assignments, and practical observations.

ATTENDANCE AND HOMEWORK REQUIREMENTS

It is an expectation that you attend every class so as not to fall behind. Please notify your trainer at least 30 minutes prior to class if you are unable to attend for some reason.

There will also be an expectation that you complete a certain amount of homework or directed self-study each week in order to finish learning and assessment tasks required for completion of your course. Your trainer will guide you on what to do during this time and how much is expected. This is also outlined in the course information.

Meeting attendance targets is important. If you do not meet 80% attendance, Decode College has an obligation to inform relevant authorities of your absenteeism. This can jeopardise your student visa status.

ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

At the beginning of each unit, your assessor will go through the arrangements for assessment with you, and you will be given all the details about the assessment requirements.

At this time you will:

- Be provided with detailed assessment instructions for each task/requirement, which includes the criteria that you’ll be assessed against.
- Be informed of relevant due dates or timing of assessments to be conducted

Your assessor will go through all of the arrangements with you, and you can ask them any questions you have.

Submitting your assessments

You must submit written assessment tasks with a completed and signed Assessment Task Cover Sheet. The cover sheet asks you to make a declaration that the work is your own. Written tasks will not be accepted without a signed cover sheet.

Assessments should be submitted directly to the trainer/assessor.

You must keep a copy of all tasks that you submit, as we are not able to return copies because we must keep them as evidence in your file.

Written work will generally be marked within 2 weeks of receipt. Your assessor will provide you with written feedback and confirm the outcome of the task on the Task Cover Sheet.

Assessment outcomes

Each assessment task will be given an outcome of either Satisfactory (S) or Not Satisfactory (NS). You must complete all tasks for a unit satisfactorily to achieve an overall outcome of Competent (C) for a unit. If one or more of your tasks are assessed as Not Satisfactory, you will be given an overall outcome for the unit of Not Yet Competent (NYC). You can have 2 further attempts to complete the task and achieve a satisfactory outcome. You will be given a timeframe for your resubmission and advised what you must include in your resubmission.

If, after the third attempt, you are still assessed as Not Satisfactory for a task, you will need to complete additional training and assessment to support you in achieving a Competent outcome. This will incur an additional fee for students as identified in the fees and charges information.

Reasonable adjustment in assessments

Some students may need modifications to assessments due to disability, illness or special considerations – this is called reasonable adjustment.

A reasonable adjustment can involve:

- Making training and assessment resources and methods more accessible, e.g. providing learner workbooks in an audio format or on different coloured paper.
- Adapting physical facilities, environment and/or equipment, e.g. setting up hearing loops.
- Making changes to the assessment arrangements, e.g. more time allowed for assessments.
- Making changes to the way evidence for assessment is gathered, e.g. written questions asked orally

Please speak to your assessor if you think that you may need an adjustment made. Note these adjustments are made at the discretion of your assessor based on your identified needs.

You should also use your Learner App to indicate whether you have a disability that may require assistance in your studies with Decode College. By entering this information into your Learner App, Decode College will be aware of your requirements and can reach out to you to discuss your needs.

Appealing assessment decisions

If you do not agree with any assessment decision, you can lodge an assessment appeal. Please refer to the Complaints and Appeals section in this handbook for information about how to lodge an appeal.

STUDENT PLAGIARISM, CHEATING AND COLLUSION

Decode College has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism, cheating and collusion. Students are expected to act with integrity at all times and only submit work that is their own or that has been appropriately referenced and includes acknowledgements of all resource materials used in preparing the work.

When you submit your assessments, you will be required to sign a declaration that the work provided is your own and that you have not cheated or plagiarised the work or colluded with any other student/s.

If you are found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded, you will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. If you are found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded, we will be required to take disciplinary action which is likely to require you to complete the assessment again.

SUPPORT SERVICES

We are committed to ensuring that you get all the support you need to be successful in your studies. You may not have studied for a while and or you might need help with study skills. You may also need assistance with skills such as reading, writing and maths.

The enrolment form you complete will help us to identify any support you need and depending on the course you are enrolling in, you may also be required to complete a test that assesses your language, literacy and numeracy skills. Based on the information you provide in your enrolment and/or the results of your language, literacy and numeracy test, we will contact you to discuss your support needs.

Your support needs can also be discussed during the induction to your course.

Services that we can offer to you include:

- One to one support from our trainers/assessors to assist you with your studies.
- One to one support from the RTO Manager relating to any student concerns.
- Referral to relevant external services such as English language support and counselling.

Contact us to discuss your support needs.

WELFARE SERVICES

We can also offer you a range of welfare services.

These services may include, through direct provision or referral, information/advice about: accommodation, counselling, crisis services, disabilities and equity issues, financial matters, legal issues, medical issues, mental health, peer mentoring, programs promoting social interaction, religious and spiritual matters, and stress management. It may also include advice on academic and study issues.

Internal welfare services will be provided at no additional cost to the student. However, where a student is referred to an external provider, the student will be responsible for meeting the costs of the provider. Decode College does not charge for such referrals to the provider

Contact the Director of Student Affairs for a confidential discussion on how we can support you. Email studentaffairs@decode.nsw.edu.au or call 0478 382 621.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

For students requiring additional support with their studies, work or life, Decode College provides the following referrals to community organisations who may be able to assist you. Please note that some of these services may attract a fee which is payable by you.

Reading and Writing Hotline

Telephone: 1300 655 506

Website: <http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au/>

The Hotline can provide you with information about:

- Classes close to you
- Help by mail or computer
- Teachers and other people who can help
- Websites and books that can help you to learn

Lifeline

Telephone: 13 11 14

Anyone can call Lifeline. The 13 11 14 service offers a counselling service that respects everyone's right to be heard, understood and cared for. They also provide information about other support services that are available in communities around Australia. If you feel that you might need telephone counselling, you can call about anything that might be troubling you.

Beyond Blue

Anyone can call Beyond Blue for immediate support with any problems or concerns.

Call 1300 22 4636 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Also, view the web site at www.beyondblue.com.au

Redfern Legal Centre

<http://rlc.org.au/our-services/international-students>

The Redfern Legal Centre gives free, confidential legal advice to international students living in New South Wales.

Tenant's Union of New South Wales

Website: <https://www.tenants.org.au/>

The Tenants Union of New South Wales offer support and services for tenants. The website offers information for renters including fact sheets and a list of free legal services for tenants. It is important to know your rights as a tenant in New South Wales.

Fair Work Australia

Telephone: 1300 799 675

Website: www.fwa.gov.au/index.cfm

Fair Work Australia is the national workplace relations tribunal. It is an independent body with the power to carry out a range of functions relating to minimum wages, employment conditions, termination of employment and other workplace matters.

Reach Out

Website: www.reachout.com.au

Reach Out is a web-based service that inspires young people to help themselves through tough times, and find ways to boost their own mental health and wellbeing. Their aim is to improve young people's mental health and wellbeing by building skills and providing information, support and referrals in ways they know work for young people.

MAINTAINING YOUR ENROLMENT AND COURSE PROGRESS

You must meet the course progress requirements in order to satisfy the conditions of your visa. These course progress requirements will be clearly explained to you during the orientation program.

Decode College will assist you in meeting course progress requirements by monitoring your progress and providing you with the relevant support at an early stage. Decode College uses a range of methods to monitor course progress including review of participation in tuition activities and assessment tasks. Where we consider you are at risk not meeting course progress requirements, we will issue you with a first warning letter

inviting you attend a meeting to discuss why you are not meeting course progress requirements and support that you required. We can provide you with a range of support from extra time to complete tasks or a reduced study load to study skills programs to meet course progress requirements. Agreed support would be documented in an Intervention Plan that both you and the RTO Manager will sign.

Following the provision of this support, if your progress is still unsatisfactory, you will be sent a second warning letter and again inviting you to a meeting to discuss why you are not still meeting satisfactory course progress requirements and to discuss new or revised support arrangements.

Where you continue not to meet course progress requirements, you will be reported to DHA for not meeting course progress requirements. DHA will make the final decision on whether your visa will be cancelled because of your unsatisfactory course progress.

You may appeal Decode College decision to report you to DHA. However, an appeal will only be considered if Decode College has not recorded or calculated the student's marks correctly, has not provided appropriate support as set out in this policy, has not implemented other policies such as assessment and feedback which could impact on the student's results or there are compassionate or compelling reasons which have contributed to the unsatisfactory progress. Circumstances that are considered to be compassionate or compelling include (but are not limited to):

- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes;
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies.
- A traumatic experience which has impacted on the student and which could include involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; and witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime. These cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports); or
- Where Decode College is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit.
- Where the student is unable to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

Where your study load is reduced due to difficulties with meeting course progress requirements, this may mean that you will need to do additional subjects in future sessions to complete your course in the time specified in your student visa.

COURSE TRANSFER

All decisions made by Decode College with regard to student transfer requests will be made in accordance with this policy and procedure, will be fair and take into account the student's individual circumstances and any other relevant factors.

1. Transferring from another registered provider

- Decode College will not knowingly enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the overseas student completing six months of his or her principal course unless one or more of the following conditions apply:
 - the releasing registered provider or the course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
 - the releasing registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the ESOS agency that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course at that registered provider;
 - the releasing registered provider has agreed to the overseas student's release and recorded the date of effect and reason for release in PRISMS;

- any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

2. Transferring to another registered provider

- For Decode College students seeking to transfer to another registered provider's course of study prior to completing six months of their principal course, the transfer request will be assessed and granted in any of the following circumstances:
 - the student will be reported because they are unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying, even after engaging with Decode College' intervention strategy to assist the overseas student in accordance with Standard 8 (Overseas student visa requirements).
 - there is evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.
 - Decode College fails to deliver the course as outlined in the student agreement.
 - there is evidence that the student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met.
 - there is evidence that the student was misled by Decode College or an education or migration agent regarding Organisation> or its course and the course is therefore unsuitable to their needs and/or study objectives.
 - an appeal (internal or external) on another matter results in a decision or recommendation to release the student.
- A transfer to another course will not be granted where:
 - The transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses.
 - The student has recently started studying the course, and the full range of support services are yet to be provided or offered to the student. In this case, the student will be requested to wait a further 4 weeks before applying for a transfer to another registered provider during which time the full range of support services will be provided to the student.
 - The student is trying to avoid being reported to DHA for failure to meet the provider's attendance or academic progress requirements.
 - There are no legitimate compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- In order for a request for transfer to be considered and a letter of release provided, students must provide a valid offer of enrolment from another registered provider.
- The outcome of the student's application for course transfer will be provided in writing within 10 working days of receipt of application.
- Where a student's application is refused, the reasons for this will be communicated plus the right to access the complaints and appeals process as outlined below.
- There is no cost in releasing students. However, where a student transfers to another registered provider, any refund of course fees, where applicable, will be paid will be in accordance with Decode College' Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures.

3. Transferring to another course offered by Decode College

- Students may transfer to another course offered by Decode College in the following circumstances:
 - Where it is considered that the course that the student wishes to transfer to;
 - better meets the study capabilities of the student; and/or

- better meets the long term goals of the student, whether these relate to future work, education or personal aspirations; and/or
 - Or, where the student claims or can provide evidence that his or her reasonable expectations about the current course are not being met.
 - A transfer to another course within Decode College will not be granted where:
 - The transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses.
 - The student has recently started studying the course, and the full range of support services are yet to be provided or offered to the student.
 - The student is trying to avoid being reported to DHA for failure to meet the provider's attendance or academic progress requirements.
 - In order for a request for transfer to be considered, students must complete an Internal Course Transfer Application Form.
 - The outcome of the student's application for course transfer will be provided in writing within 10 working days of receipt of application.
 - The cost involved in transferring to another course plus any refund of course fees paid for the student's current course will be in accordance with Decode College' Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure.
- 4. Visa advice**
- 5.** All students who are either considering a course transfer or have had their transfer request approved, will be advised that they must contact DHA to seek advice on whether a new visa is required. To find out more about visa requirements, students are advised to contact DHA on 131881 or visit the following website: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud>

6. Complaints and Appeals

- Where the decision is made to refuse a course transfer or Decode College does not respond to the request in the timeframe set out in this Policy, the student may appeal against the decision by accessing Decode College' Complaints and Appeals process within 20 days. If the appeal finds in favour of a student wishing to transfer, a letter of release will be granted.
- The refusal status will not be finalised in PRISM until the complaints and appeals process is finalised within the 20 working day period or the student withdraws from the course.

7. Records

- All records relating to course transfers will be kept for two years after the student ceases to be an enrolled student. This includes requests for release, the assessment of the request and the decision.

DEFERRAL, SUSPENSION AND CANCELLATION

1. Deferral and suspension of studies

- Requests from students for deferral and suspension of studies will only be granted in compassionate or compelling circumstances which are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies
- a traumatic experience that has impacted on the student which could include involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime. Such cases supported by police or psychologists' reports
- where Decode College is unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa

These circumstances are an example of what may be considered compassionate or compelling circumstances. However, each case will be assessed on its individual merits.

- When determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist, Decode College considers documentary evidence provided to support the claim, and stores copies of these documents in the student's file.
- A retrospective deferment or suspension may be justified if the student was unable to contact Decode College because of a circumstance such as being involved in a car accident.
- Where a student-initiated deferral or suspension of enrolment is granted, Decode College will suspend an enrolment for an agreed period of time - to a maximum of 12 months. If the deferral is required for longer than 12 months, the student's application will be re-assessed. If the suspension period has expired and the student does not return, the student's enrolment will be cancelled.

2. Provider initiated suspension or cancellation

- Decode College may suspend or cancel a student's enrolment including, but not limited to, on the basis of:
 - misbehaviour by the student (including plagiarism, collusion and cheating)
 - the student's failure to pay an amount he or she was required to pay the registered provider to undertake or continue the course as stated in the written agreement
 - a breach of course progress or attendance requirements by the overseas student, which will occur in accordance with Standard 8 (Overseas student visa requirements) and as specified in Decode College' Course Progress Policy and Procedures.
- Standards of behaviour required are outlined in the International Student Handbook.
- Where Decode College suspends or cancels a student's enrolment, before imposing a suspension or cancellation Decode College will inform the student in writing of that intention and the reasons for doing so and advise the overseas student of their right to appeal through the provider's internal complaints and appeals process, in accordance with Standard 10 (Complaints and appeals), within 20 working days.
- Under no circumstances will the suspension or cancellation of the overseas student's enrolment under Standard 9.3 cannot take effect until the internal appeals process is completed, unless the overseas student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.

3. Student-Initiated Cancellation of Studies

- Students may initiate the cancellation of their studies at any time during their course.

- Students who wish to withdraw within six months of their course to transfer to another provider will be processed as per Decode College Course Transfer Policy and Procedure.

4. Visa status

- When a deferral, suspension or cancellation action is taken under this standard, Decode College will inform the student of the need to seek advice from DHA on the potential impact on their student visa, as well as the report the change to the overseas student's enrolment under section 19 of the ESOS Act i.e. notification via PRISMS.
- Students are referred to the DHA web site at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/> or Helpline (131 881) for information and their local DHA office for advice on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon his or her visa.

5. Complaints and appeals

- Where a student accesses the Complaints and Appeals process, Decode College will not notify DET via PRISMS until the internal appeals process is complete unless the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk. Where the student chooses to access an external appeals process, DET will still be notified via PRISMS.

6. Records

- All records relating to deferrals, suspensions and cancellations will be kept on the student's file. This will include all decisions made.

CHANGE IN VISA STATUS

Deferment, suspension or cancellation of a student's visa may affect the student's visa. When a student's enrolment is deferred, suspended or cancelled, Decode College will notify the Department of Education and Training via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) of the change in enrolment status.

Students are to refer to the DHA web site at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud> or telephone 31 881 for information and their local DHA office for advice on how the potential change to enrolment status may impact upon his or her visa.

Regardless of whether the suspension of enrolment is the result of a student request for suspension or a suspension imposed by Decode College, the period of suspension of enrolment (as entered in PRISMS) will not be included in attendance monitoring calculations.

Where a suspension of enrolment is granted, Decode College will suspend an enrolment for an agreed period of time - to a maximum of 12 months. If the suspension is required for longer than 12 months, the student shall have to re-apply once the initial suspension period has expired.

If a student's enrolment is suspended for a period of 28 days or longer, the student must return home (unless special circumstances exist). Students will be referred to DHA via the DHA helpline on 131 881 regarding whether they may remain in Australia during a period of suspension of enrolment.

Decode College will always use its professional judgement to assess each student's case on its individual merits when determining whether compassionate or compelling circumstances exist.

In cases, where a student's enrolment is cancelled, the student must leave Australia, obtain enrolment in an alternative course or apply for a different visa within 28 days of cessation. If the student leaves Australia, the

student's visa will be cancelled. A student who has left Australia and wishes to return to his or her studies must apply for a new student visa.

YOUR FEEDBACK

Your feedback is important to us and assists in ensuring that our services meet your needs. We use feedback from students to contribute to our continuous improvement processes, so we are always striving to do better.

All students will be provided with a Quality Indicator Survey issued by the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) that they are required to complete. Please help us by completing the surveys that are provided to you by your trainer/assessor. Some may also be mailed or emailed to you from our office.

We also welcome feedback from you at any time by email and phone.

ACCESS TO YOUR RECORDS

You may access or obtain a copy of the records that Decode College holds about you at any time. This includes personal information and records of participation and progress.

If you want to access or obtain a copy of records, you must make a request in writing using the Access to Records Request Form outlining which records you wish to access. There is no charge to access your records.

Access to records may be provided by:

- making copies of the records held in a file
- providing a time for you to review your file
- providing access to the online portal where some records about the course can be viewed.

Amendment to records

If a student considers the information that Decode College holds about them to be incorrect, incomplete, out of date or misleading, they can request that the information be amended.

Where a record is found to be inaccurate, a correction will be made. Where a student requests that a record be amended because it is inaccurate, but the record is found to be accurate, the details of the request for amendment will be noted on the record.

NOTIFYING CHANGES

As an RTO under the VET Quality Framework and CRICOS Education Provider under the National Code, we must notify you promptly if there are any changes to our RTO, the course, or the arrangements for training and assessment.

This would include if there were any changes of ownership, and any new third party arrangements or changes to third party arrangements that relate to your enrolment, or if we were unable to provide the services you agreed to in your Student Agreement because we are no longer able to deliver the course you have enrolled in, or no longer operating as an RTO.

If this occurs, Decode College will devise a strategy to minimise the impact on you and notify you of the changes and how you will be affected as soon as practicable.

Depending on the type of change, we may send a letter to your home address; send you an email, or an SMS message.

Please make sure we always have your most current home address, email address, mobile number and emergency contact on file so we can notify you of any changes if applicable.

You can let us know of any changes to your details by using the Change of Details Form. As an international student, you are required to provide this form to us within 7 days of any change occurring,

LEGISLATION AND YOU

As a student, you have both rights and responsibilities under applicable legislation.

Education Services for Overseas Students Act

The Australian Government wants overseas students in Australia to have a safe, enjoyable and rewarding place to study. Australia's laws promote quality education and consumer protection for overseas students. These laws are known as the ESOS Framework, and they include the Education Services for Overseas (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code 2018. For more information about your rights and responsibilities under the ESOS Framework, visit the following website:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/australian-education/education-system/esos-act>

If you are unable to access this information, contact us via email or phone, and we will provide the information to you.

You also have certain rights and responsibilities under the following legislation as discussed below.

Work Health and Safety Act

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Decode College must provide a safe environment for both staff and students, as well as providing information to staff and students in relation to health and safety and welfare. Decode College has policies and procedures in place to ensure your safety, and on commencement of your course you will be provided with information about health and safety.

As a student, you also have a responsibility to follow instructions and rules and to behave in ways that are safe and do not endanger the health and safety of others. Always ensure that you:

- Immediately report hazards to your trainer/assessor.
- Seek assistance from a member of staff if you become ill or injured on campus.
- Only assist another person who is ill or injured if it is safe to do so. If you're not sure, call on a member of staff for assistance.
- Complete an incident report as required.
- Ensure you are familiar with Decode College emergency evacuation procedures and in the case of an emergency, follow the instructions given to you.
- Do not leave bags or personal belongings lying around where someone else could trip over them.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol on the premises.
- Observe basic hygiene practices such as hand washing before handling and eating food and leaving toilets and washbasins clean and tidy, etc).

Harassment, victimisation or bullying

Organisation> is committed to providing all people with an environment free from all forms of harassment, victimisation and bullying. Decode College will not tolerate any behaviour that harms, intimidates, threatens, victimises, offends, degrades or humiliates another person.

Anti-discrimination law defines harassment as any form of behaviour that you do not want, that offends, humiliates or intimidates you, and that creates a hostile environment. Examples of harassment are making fun of someone, spreading rumours, offensive jokes, ignoring someone, etc.

Victimisation is where a person is treated unfairly because they have made a discrimination complaint.

Bullying is verbal, physical, social or psychological abuse by a staff member or student. Bullying falls under health and safety legislation.

If you at any time feel that you are being harassed, victimised or bullied by a staff member or student, you should follow these steps.

If you feel that you are being harassed, victimised or bullied, ideally you should tell the person that you don't like the behaviour and ask them to stop. However, if you are not comfortable doing this, you should lodge a complaint as per Decode College Complaints and Appeals procedure and detailed in this Handbook.

Equal opportunity

The principles and practices adopted by Decode College aim to ensure, that current and prospective students, clients and other stakeholders are treated fairly and equitably in their dealings with Decode College.

All people will be treated courteously and expeditiously throughout the process of enquiry, selection and enrolment and throughout their participation in a course.

Decode College provides equity in access to the level of training and support required by each student. All students are supported in a manner that enables them to achieve their full potential and success in their training outcomes. All students are provided with opportunities to develop and successfully gain skills, knowledge and experience through education and training.

National VET Regulator Act 2011

As a student in Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector, you should expect high-quality training in your area of interest, leading to a qualification that improves your prospects of gaining the job you want or provides a pathway to further your studies.

As a Registered Training Organisation registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority, we are required to comply with the National VET Regulator Act 2011. This involves meeting a series of standards that ensure that the training and assessment and support services are provided to you in accordance with nationally mandated standards.

Student Identifiers Act 2014

Under this Act, we are required to ensure that all students have a USI. We are unable to issue a qualification of a statement of attainment for any student if we don't have a USI on file.

If you're studying nationally recognised training in Australia from 1 January 2015, you will be required to have a Unique Student Identifier (USI). Your USI links to an online account that contains all your training records and results (transcript) that you have completed from 1 January 2015 onwards. Your results from 2015 will be available in your USI account in 2016.

For students and training organisations, the main benefits of the USI are:

- Students will be able to get a complete record of their Australian-wide VET achievements from a single, secure and accurate online source.

- There will be immediate access to VET records. This means they can be quickly given to employers, other training organisations etc. as proof of VET achievements.
- It will be easier for training organisations to assess students' pre-requisites, credit transfers and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

For more information about the USI, please refer to <http://www.usi.gov.au/About/Pages/default.aspx>

PRIVACY

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. If you do not provide this information, we will be unable to process your enrolment.

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 NCVER and other bodies handle your personal information

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

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

For more information about how the NCVER will handle your personal information please refer to the NCVER's Privacy Policy at www.ncver.edu.au/privacy

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

Contact information

At any time, you may contact us 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

Please contact us using the contact details provided at the beginning of this Handbook. If you would like to view a copy of our privacy policy and associated procedures, let us know and we will provide this to you.

FEES AND REFUNDS

1. Protection of fees paid in advance

- Decode College protects the fees that are paid in advance by both domestic and international students.

For international student fee protection is ensured as follows:

- Decode College does not require international students to pay more than 50% of course fees prior to course commencement. However, Decode College provides students with the opportunity to pay more than 50% of their tuition fees prior to course commencement if they wish. Where a student chooses not to pay more than 50% upfront, the remaining amount will be collected according to an agreed payment schedule. Note; however, that where a course is less than 25 weeks, Decode College will require students to pay the full cost of the course prior to course commencement.
- Decode College pays into the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) provided by the Australian Government. In the event that Decode College is unable to deliver a course a student has paid for and does not meet the obligation to either offer a student an alternative course or pay a student a refund of the unspent prepaid tuition fees, the TPS will assist students in finding an alternative course or to get a refund if a suitable alternative is not found.

2. Fees and refund information

- Fee information relevant to a course is outlined in detail on the Student Agreement and summarised on the Course Outline as well as the RTO's website. In compliance with Clause 5.3 of the Standards, detailed fee information is provided prior to enrolment or commencement of training, whichever is first.

- For international students, fee information is always provided prior to enrolment or receipt of payment as per the requirements of the National Code 2018 Standard 2 and 3. Fee information provided to domestic and international students includes:
 - All course fees, including both tuition fees and non-tuition fees and the period to which these fees apply
 - Any additional charges that may apply and the circumstances in which they apply
 - The potential for changes to fees over the duration of the course
 - Payment options (including that international students are not required to but may choose to pay more than 50% tuition fees before their course commences)
- The Student Agreement and this International Student Handbook, which are provided prior to enrolment, includes this Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure and informs the student of their consumer rights. Students are required to sign the Student Agreement in acknowledgement of the terms and conditions of the enrolment and this policy.
- Decode College does not use direct approach marketing or telesales and therefore no cooling-off period applies to its courses.

3. Course fee inclusions

- The Student Agreement will clearly itemise all course fees, including both tuition and non-tuition fees.
- Tuition fees include:
 - All of the training and assessment required for students to achieve the qualification or course in which they are enrolling within the attempts allowed.
 - Course fees do not include required textbooks and learning materials. These are at an additional cost, as outlined in the Course Outline.
 - Issuance of one set of certification documents including the testamur (certificate) and record of results and/or a Statement of Attainment (in the case of withdrawal or partial completion).
- Non-tuition fees that apply include:
 - Additional fees that apply for re-assessment, where a student fails to achieve a satisfactory outcome after three attempts at an assessment task.
 - Re-issuance or additional copies of certification documents.
 - Late payment of tuition fees.
- Otherwise, course fees (tuition or non-tuition) do not include:
 - Textbooks and reference materials
 - Computers, laptops or tablets
 - Stationery such as paper and pens
 - Overseas Student Health Cover
 - Airport pick-ups
 - Direct debit setup, transaction and dishonour fees (where applicable).
 - Credit card payment surcharges.
- Decode College cannot guarantee that students will successfully complete the course in which they enrol regardless of whether all fees due have been paid.

4. Payments

- Payments must be made either by bank transfer or to pay by credit card or by EFTPOS.
- Students who are experiencing difficulty in paying their fees are invited to call our office to make alternative arrangements for payment during their period of difficulty.
- Debts will be referred to a debt collection agency where fees are more than 40 days past due.
- Decode College reserves the right to suspend the provision of training and/or other services until fees are brought up to date. Students with long-term outstanding accounts may be withdrawn from their course if payments have not been received and no alternative arrangements for payment have been made.
- International students who do not pay their fees will receive two warnings regarding non-payment of fees and thereafter will be reported to DET via PRISMS under student default.
- Receipts of payments made by international students will be kept for at least 2 years after the person ceases to be an accepted student.

5. Refunds for international students

- All course fees for international students include a non-refundable enrolment fee which is detailed on the Course Outline and Student Agreement. The deposit is non-refundable, except in the circumstances detailed below.
 - A full refund of any fees paid (including the deposit) will apply if Decode College is required to cancel a course before it commences due to insufficient numbers or for other unforeseen circumstances.

A. Full refunds

A full refund of any course fees paid will be provided to students in any of the following circumstances:

- If Decode College is required to cancel a course before it commences due to insufficient numbers or for other unforeseen circumstances.
- Where a course does not start on the starting date outlined in the Letter of Offer
- If a student cannot commence the course because of illness, disability, or where there is death of a close family member of the student (parent, sibling, spouse or child).
- At the discretion of Decode College' CEO or approved representative, when other special or extenuating circumstances have prevented the student from commencing their studies including political, civil or natural events.
- If an offer of a place is withdrawn by Decode College and this is not due to incorrect or incomplete information being provided by the student.

Claiming a full refund

- In any of the above situations, Decode College will automatically conduct a refund assessment of all affected students and issue the refunds due accordingly. In these cases there is no need for a student to make an individual application for a refund. Refunds will be issued within 28 business days.

B. Partial Refunds

Provider default

- Partial refunds will be paid in the event of provider default. The refund will be calculated from the day of the default as per section 7 of the Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014.
- Partial refunds will also be provided in the same manner as for provider default (as above) where Decode College fails to enter into a written agreement with a student or the Student Agreement is not compliant with the requirements of the ESOS Act or the National Code.

Student default

- If an international student is refused a visa (student default) before commencing their course, Decode College will refund the total amount of all course fees (tuition and any non-tuition fees) received for the course less whichever is the lower amount of 5% of the total amount of the fees (tuition and non-tuition) or the sum of \$500.
- If an international student is refused a visa (student default) but has already commenced their course, non-tuition fees will not be refunded. However, tuition fees will be refunded from the day of the student default as per Section 7 of the Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014.
- If a student has supplied incorrect or incomplete information and as a result, Decode College withdraws the offer prior to commencement of the course, the student will be eligible to receive a refund of all course fees paid less a 20% administration fee.
- Where a student has not met the conditions included in the letter of offer and withdraws 0 – 28 days before cause commencement, the deposit paid will be refunded less a 20% administration fee.
- Where a student withdraws from a course 0 – 28 days before the course commencement, except for the reasons set out circumstances for full refunds, 50% of the deposit paid will be refunded.
- If a student withdraws or defers their course after the course has started and they have paid for units/clusters/modules that have not been commenced. This will be calculated on a per-unit or cluster cost calculated as the course fee less administration fees of 20%, less textbook fees divided by the total number of units or clusters or modules in the course.

- ***Claiming a partial refund***

Students who withdraw from a course may seek a refund or a reduction in fees owing by making an application for a refund in writing using the Application for Refund Form. The application must include the details and reason for the request. Students who have not completed a Withdrawal Form are not eligible for consideration of a refund or reduction in fees.

- The refund assessment will be based on reviewing the services provided to the student and the costs incurred by Decode College to provide those services.
- The outcome of the refund assessment will be provided in writing to the student's registered address within 28 business days, outlining the decision and reasons for the decision along with any applicable refund or adjustment note. Refund decisions can be appealed following our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- A student not achieving the qualification or unit/s in which they enrolled due to exhausting their attempts at assessment, does not entitle the student to a refund.

C. Circumstances in which a refund will not be paid

- A student is not entitled to a refund in the following circumstances:

- Where a student is refused a visa and the reason for the refusal was because the student did not start the course at the location on the agreed starting day or the student withdrew from the course at that location or the student did not pay the fees due.
- Where Decode College terminates the student's enrolment because of a failure to comply with Decode College policies, misbehaviour or unsatisfactory course progress.

6. Recording and payment of refunds

- Refunds will be paid to the person or organisation that made the original payment.
- Refund assessments can be appealed following our Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- Records of refund assessments and issuance of refunds will be stored securely on the student's file and in our accounts keeping system.

Additional Fees and Charges

Decode College has the following of additional charges. Details are found in the written agreement that you signed at the commencement of your course.

Re-assessment All course fees include up to three (3) attempts at assessment per task. If after the third attempt, additional training and assessment will be required. This will incur the following cost per unit required to be re-assessed.	\$100
Re-issuing of testamur and statements of results All course fees include the cost for issuing of one copy of the AQF testamur and Record of Results and/or a Statement of Attainment. This fee applies to each additional copy of a certification document if required.	\$80
Recognition of Prior Learning Fees Application Fee and a charge per unit of competency assessed through RPL	\$200
Fines for late payment of Tuition Fees A late payment fine will be charged if the student fails to pay the fees by the due date.	\$100
Material Fees Fees for the supply of printed training and assessment materials	\$300 (\$75 per term)
Enrolment Fees A non-refundable fee payable upon enrolment	\$200

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

1. Nature of complaints and appeals

- Decode College responds to all allegations involving the conduct of:
 - The RTO, its trainers, assessors, and other staff.
 - Any third-party providing services on behalf of Decode College including education agents.
- Any student or client of Decode College.
- Complaints may be made in relation to any of Decode College services and activities such as:

- the application and enrolment process
- marketing information
- the quality of training and assessment provided
- training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements
- the way someone has been treated
- the actions of another student
- An appeal is a request for a decision made by Decode College to be reviewed. Decisions may have been about:
 - course admissions
 - refund assessments
 - response to a complaint
 - assessment outcomes / results
 - other general decisions made by Decode College

2. Principles of resolution

- Decode College is committed to developing a procedurally fair complaints and appeals process that is carried out free from bias, following the principles of natural justice. Through this policy and procedure, Decode College ensures that complaints and appeals:
 - Are responded to in a professional, consistent and transparent manner.
 - Are responded to promptly, fairly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality.
 - Are able to be made at no cost to the individual.
 - Are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint or appeal and take actions to prevent the issues from recurring as well as identifying any areas for improvement.
- Decode College will inform all persons or parties involved in any allegations made as well as providing them with an opportunity to present their side of the matter.
- There are no charges for students to submit, a complaint or appeal to Decode College, or to seek information or advice about doing so.
- Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws, and it does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

3. Making a complaint of appeal

- Complaints about a particular incident should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurring and appeals must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the original decision being made.
- Complaints and appeals should be made in writing using the Complaints and Appeals Form, or other written format and sent to Decode College head office attention to the Chief Executive Officer.

When making a complaint or appeal, provide as much information as possible to enable Decode College to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include:

- The issue you are complaining about or the decision you are appealing – describe what happened and how it affected you.
- Any evidence you have to support your complaint or appeal.
- Details about the steps you have already taken to resolve the issue.
- Suggestions about how the matter might be resolved.

4. Timeframes for resolution

- The complaint or appeal will be acknowledged in writing within 3 business days.
- The complaints and appeals process will commence within 10 business days of receipt of the application. Complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable or at least within 30 calendar days unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer.
- In matters where additional time is needed, the complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the reasons and will be updated weekly on the progress of the matter until such a time that the matter is resolved.
- Decode will provide the Complainant with a written statement of the outcome of the appeal, including the reasons for the outcome, and keep a written record of the complaint or appeal on the student's file.

5. Resolution of complaints and appeals

- Some or all members of the management team of Decode College will be involved in resolving complaints and appeals, as outlined in the procedures.
- Where a complaint or appeal involves another individual or organisation, they will be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations made.
- Where a third party delivering services on behalf of the RTO is involved, they will also be included in the process of resolving the complaint or appeal.
- Each party involved in the complaint or appeal may have a support person of their choice present at meetings scheduled to resolve the issue.
- In the case of an assessment appeal, an assessor who is independent of the original decision will assess the original task again. The outcome of this assessment will be the result granted for the assessment task. The complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the process and the reasons for the findings made.
- The enrolment status of a student will be handled as follows:
 - For international students, Decode College will maintain a student's enrolment throughout the internal appeals processes without notifying DET via PRISMS of a change in enrolment status. In the case of an external appeals process, it will depend on the type of appeal as to whether Decode College maintains the student's enrolment as follows:
 - If the appeal is against Decode College decision to report the student for unsatisfactory course progress or attendance, the student's enrolment will be maintained until the external process is completed and has supported or not supported Decode College decision to report.
 - If the appeal is against Decode College decision to defer, suspend or cancel a student's enrolment due to misbehaviour, Decode College will notify DET via PRISMS of a change to the student's enrolment after the outcome of the internal appeals process

6. Independent Parties

- Decode College acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant or appellant, and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter. Costs associated with independent parties to review a matter must be covered by the complainant/appellant unless the decision to include an independent party was made by Decode College.
 - For international students, the independent party is the Overseas Students Ombudsman. This service is free of charge. Where an international student is not satisfied with the outcome or conduct of the internal process, they are referred to the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO). See information under external complaint avenues.

- Decode College will provide complete cooperation with the external mediator investigating the complaint/appeal and will be bound by the recommendations arising out of this process.
- The CEO will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within twenty (20) days of being notified of the recommendations. The complainant or appellant will also be formally notified in writing of the outcome of the mediation, and any recommendations being actioned by Decode College.

7. External complaint avenues

- Complaints can also be made via the following avenues:

- National Training Complaints Hotline:

The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service for consumers to register complaints concerning vocational education and training. The service refers consumers to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction to assist with their complaint. Consumers can register a complaint with the National Training Complaints Hotline by:

- Phone: 13 38 73, Monday–Friday, from 8am to 6pm nationally.
- Email: ntch@education.gov.au

- Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):

Complainants may also complain to Decode College registering body, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). However, it should be noted that ASQA is not a consumer protection agency and cannot act as an advocate for individual students.

Please refer to the relevant webpage below before making a complaint to ASQA:

<https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints>

- The Overseas Student Ombudsman (OSO)

International students may complain to the OSO if their complaint is in relation to Decode College:

- refusing admission to a course
- course fees and refunds
- course or provider transfers
- course progress or attendance
- cancellation of enrolment
- accommodation or work arranged by your provider
- incorrect advice being given by an education agent.
- if you believe we have failed to take action or are taking too long to take some action. This might include (for example), failing to provide your results in the normal timeframe, or failing to provide services included your written agreement with Decode College.

The OSO may not be able to investigate your complaint if you have not already exhausted our formal internal complaints process as above.

Please refer to the following website if you are considering making a complaint:

<http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/making-a-complaint/overseas-students#quality-of-education-provider>

8. Records of complaints and appeals

Decode College will maintain a record of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes and reasons for the outcomes on the Complaints and Appeals Register, which will be securely stored according to the Privacy Policy and Procedures.

ISSUING OF CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

On completion of your course and payment of all relevant fees, we will issue you with a qualification (testamur/certificate) and record of results within thirty (30) days. The record of results will show the units of competency achieved in the course and corresponding results.

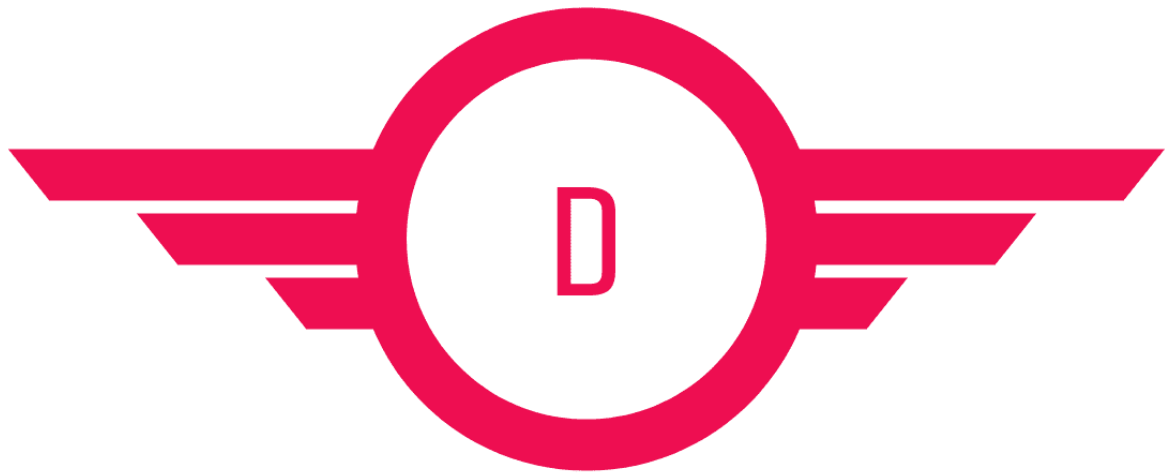
Where a student withdraws or partially completes a course, a Statement of Attainment will be issued within thirty (30) days of withdrawal as long as all relevant fees have been paid. A record of results will only be provided with a statement of attainment where requested.

Decode College reserves the right to withhold the issuance of qualifications and Statements of Attainment until all fees related to the course or qualification have been paid, except where Decode College is not permitted to do so by law.

Decode College must have a valid USI on file for the student for a qualification or Statement to be issued.

Re-Issuing Statements and Qualifications

Records of qualifications and unit achievement are kept on record for a period of at least thirty (30) years. Students can request copies of any of these statements or qualifications at any time for an additional charge. Refer to our Fees and Charges section for the current fee.



Decode College

success through endeavour