



ISSUANCE OF AQF QUALIFICATIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

This policy and procedure describes the commitment of ACE to ensure that students complete their course within the nominated duration and are issued with secure AQF certification documentation in accordance with the requirements of the training product as specified in the relevant training package or VET accredited course.

This policy is designed to ensure ACE complies with 2021 Standard Skills First Contract - Skills First Program, VET Quality Framework, AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy requirements, USI Registry requirements and the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 which states:

“Provide secure certification.” Clauses 3.1 to 3.4

“Participate in the Student Identifier scheme.” Clause 3.6

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

- Monitoring Course Progress and Attendance Policy and Procedures
- Assessment Policy and Procedures
- Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures
- Recognition of Prior Learning & Course Credit Policy and Procedures
- Records Management Policy and Procedures

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all International and Domestic learners (also referred as students or apprentice or non-apprentice) enrolled with ACE and relevant staff involved in the fifth and final phase of the student’s journey. This process focuses on the completion phase of the student’s experience with ACE, the end of their training and assessment and the issuance of their certification.

Definitions

AQF qualification	means an AQF qualification type endorsed in a training package or accredited in a VET accredited course.
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
Authenticated VET transcript	As per Student Identifiers Act 2014 means a document prepared by the Registrar that sets out information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that relates to the VET undertaken by the individual; and • that is prescribed by the regulations.
AQF certification documentation	is the set of official documents that confirms that an AQF qualification or statement of attainment has been issued to an individual.
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
ESOS	The Education Services for Overseas students Act 2000 of the Commonwealth of Australia, as amended from time to time.
Enrolment Type	means whether a particular program is being delivered as an Apprenticeship, a Traineeship, or neither an Apprenticeship nor Traineeship (‘non-Apprenticeship/Traineeship’) as specified in the Funded Courses Report and/or in Schedule 2 of the 2021 Standard VET Funding Contract Skills First Program.

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Learner	means a person being trained and/or assessed by the RTO for the purpose of issuing AQF certification documentation.
National Code	The National Code is a legislative instrument made under the Education Services for Overseas students Act 2000 and sets nationally consistent standards to support providers to deliver quality education and training to Overseas students.
Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) Logo	means the logo used nationally to signify training packages and VET accredited courses.
Record	means a written, printed, or electronic document providing evidence that activities have been performed.
Statement of Attainment	means a statement issued to a person confirming that the person has satisfied the requirements of the unit/s of competency or accredited short course specified in the statement.
Skills First Program	means the Victorian Government's program for funding individuals' Skills First Entitlement
Skills First Entitlement	means the entitlement to a government-subsidised place in training for persons who are eligible in accordance with the criteria set out in the Act or established under the Act, and reflected in the 2021 Standard VET Funding Contract Skills First Program.
Testamur	an official certification document that confirms that a qualification has been awarded to an individual
Student Identifier	student identifier means an identifier assigned to an individual by the Registrar under section 10 or 12 of Student Identifiers Act 2014. It is a unique combination of any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letters; • numbers; • symbols.
USI	A USI is your individual education number for life. It also gives you an online record of your VET training undertaken in Australia. USI is a reference number made up of ten numbers and letters.



Policy

1.0 General

- 1.1 ACE shall issue AQF (Australian Qualification Framework) certification documentation only to a learner whom it has assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product as specified in the relevant training package or VET [vocational education and training] accredited course.
- 1.2 All AQF certification documentation issued by ACE shall meet the applicable requirements of Schedules 4 and 5 of the Standards for RTOs 2015:

Schedule 4

Conditions of Use of NRT Logo

The Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) Logo is a distinguishable mark of quality for promoting and certifying national vocational education and training leading to AQF certification documentation. The NRT Logo is a registered trade mark.

The following describes a range of situations and conditions for using the NRT Logo.

Advertisements and promotional information in any medium (print, television, radio, banners, internet, etc.)

- 1.0 RTOs registered by any VET Regulator may use the NRT Logo to promote nationally recognised training provided that training is within the RTO's scope of registration.
- 2.0 Impressions must not be created that may lead an observer to conclude the NRT Logo applies to all training provided by the RTO, if this is not the case. The NRT Logo cannot be used by an RTO where the training is accredited, but is outside the scope of registration of the RTO. Where training is being promoted and does not meet the requirements stipulated in the VET Quality Framework or is outside the RTO's scope of registration, it must be made clear the NRT Logo is not associated with that training.
- 3.0 Use of the NRT Logo is only permitted where there is a direct relationship to an AQF qualification and/or unit of competency as specified within training packages or VET accredited courses.

Student information (brochures, course handbooks, prospectuses, etc.)

- 4.0 When an RTO is promoting the training it offers and wishes to use the NRT Logo, its promotional material such as brochures, handbooks and prospectuses must clearly distinguish between nationally recognised training within the scope of registration and that which is not nationally recognised.

Corporate stationery, business cards, buildings, training resources and marketing products

- 5.0 The NRT Logo must not be used on products such as corporate stationery, business cards, building signage, mouse pads, pens, satchels, packaging around products nor learning resources supporting training.

Certificates, Statements of Attainment and other testamurs

- 6.0 The NRT Logo must be depicted on all AQF certification documentation issued by the RTO. These can only be issued by an RTO when the qualification and/or unit of competency are within the RTO's scope of registration. The NRT Logo must not be depicted on other testamurs or transcripts of results.

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Schedule 5

Application of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy within the VET Sector

RTOs must meet the requirements of the AQF for issuing AQF qualifications and statements of attainment, in addition to the following requirements.

Issuing AQF Qualifications

1.0 RTOs must include the following information on the testamur, in addition to the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy:

- a. the name, RTO code and logo of the issuing organisation;
- b. the code and title of the awarded AQF qualification; and
- c. the NRT Logo in accordance with the current conditions of use contained in Schedule 4.

2.0 The following elements are to be included on the testamur as applicable:

- a. the State / Territory Training Authority logo (only where use of the logo is directed by State / Territory Training Authorities, e.g. within User Choice contracts);
- b. the industry descriptor, e.g. Engineering;
- c. the occupational or functional stream, in brackets, e.g. (Fabrication);
- d. where relevant, the words, '**achieved through Australian Apprenticeship arrangements**'; and
- e. where relevant, the words, '**these units/modules have been delivered and assessed in <insert language>** followed by a listing of the relevant units/modules.

3.0 RTOs must not include the learner's Student Identifier on the testamur consistent with the Student Identifiers Act 2014.

4.0 RTOs will:

- a. retain registers of AQF qualifications they are authorised to issue and of all AQF qualifications issued;
- b. retain records of AQF certification documentation issued for a period of 30 years; and
- c. provide reports of Records of qualifications issued to its VET Regulator on a regular basis as determined by the VET Regulator.

Issuing Statements of Attainment

1.0 RTOs must include the following information on a statement of attainment:

- a. the name, RTO Code and logo of the issuing organisation;
- b. a list of units of competency (or modules where no units of competency exist) showing their full title and the national code for each unit of competency;
- c. the authorised signatory;
- d. the NRT Logo;
- e. the issuing organisation's seal, corporate identifier or unique watermark;
- f. the words '**A statement of attainment is issued by a Registered Training Organisation when an individual has completed one or more accredited units**';

2.0 The following elements are to be included on the statement of attainment as applicable:

- a. the State/Territory Training Authority logo (only where use of the logo is directed by State/ Territory Training Authorities);
- b. the words '**These competencies form part of [code and title of qualification(s)/course(s)]**';
- c. the words, '**These competencies were attained in completion of [code] course in [full title]**'; and
- d. where relevant, the words, '**these units / modules have been delivered and assessed in <insert language>**' followed by a listing of the relevant units/modules.

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3.0 RTOs must not include the learner's Student Identifier on the statement of attainment consistent with the Student Identifiers Act 2014.

4.0 RTOs will:

- a. maintain registers of all statements of attainments issued;
- b. retain records of statements of attainment issued for a period of 30 years; and
- c. provide reports of its records of statements of attainment issued to its VET Regulator on a regular basis, as determined by the VET Regulator.

- 1.3 AQF certification documentation shall be issued to a learner within 30 calendar days of the learner being assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product if the training program in which the learner is enrolled is complete, and providing all agreed fees the learner owes to ACE have been paid.
- 1.4 Records of learner AQF certification documentation shall be maintained by ACE in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 5 and are accessible to current and past learners.
- 1.5 ACE shall meet the requirements of the Student Identifier scheme, including:
 - a. verifying with the Registrar, a Student Identifier provided to it by an individual before using that Student Identifier for any purpose;
 - b. ensuring that it will not issue AQF certification documentation to an individual without being in receipt of a verified Student Identifier for that individual, unless an exemption applies under the Student Identifiers Act 2014;
 - c. ensuring that where an exemption described in Clause 3.6 (b) of the Standards for RTOs 2015 applies, it will inform the student prior to either the completion of the enrolment or commencement of training and assessment, whichever occurs first, that the results of the training will not be accessible through the Commonwealth and will not appear on any authenticated VET transcript prepared by the Registrar; and
 - d. ensuring the security of Student Identifiers and all related documentation under its control, including information stored in its student management systems.

2.0 Providing Secure Certification

- 2.1 ACE shall have controls in place to ensure qualifications, statements of attainment and records of results are not issued unless the student has completed all assessment requirements.
- 2.2 To reduce the risk of inappropriate issuance of certification, ACE shall have a system in place to ensure that:
 - 2.2.1 certification is only issued to students that have fully demonstrated competence in all training product requirements
 - 2.2.2 evidence of this can be demonstrated
- 2.3 ACE shall ensure that it meets the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/aqf_issuance_jan2013.pdf and the requirements of Schedules 4 and 5 of the Standards for RTOs 2015, as applicable. (Schedule 4 - Conditions of Use of NRT Logo)
- 2.4 ACE shall only issue certificates from the Head Office:
 - 2.4.1 No third party may issue qualifications or statements of attainment using their own name or branding, or on behalf of ACE.
 - 2.4.2 All issuance of testamurs shall be by ACE.

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3.0 Issuing Certification

- 3.1 ACE shall issue certifications:
 - 3.1.1 In a timely manner – within 30 calendar days of the student exiting their course or the student’s final assessment being completed, providing all fees have been paid
 - 3.1.2 Directly to the student, not to another party, such as an employer
 - 3.1.3 To students who have completed all units or modules in a qualification with a testamur and a record of results
 - 3.1.4 To a student who has completed one or more units/modules (but not a full qualification) and has finished their training with ACE with a statement of attainment (a record of results may also be issued in this case)
- 3.2 ACE shall retain evidence of above (3.1).
- 3.3 ACE shall ensure current and past students can access records of certification issued to them and shall retain evidence of such.
- 3.4 In accordance with the AQF Qualifications Register Policy, ACE shall:
 - 3.4.1 maintain a register of all AQF qualifications it is authorised to issue
 - 3.4.2 maintain a register of all AQF qualifications it issues to graduates.
- 3.5 ACE shall issue AQF certification documentation when a student has completed their program of training and assessment. It shall not issue ‘interim’ documentation at any time.

4.0 Record Retention

- 4.1 ACE shall retain records of qualifications and statements of attainment issued for 30 years:
 - 4.1.1 To be able to reissue a qualification or statement of attainment during this 30-year period, regardless of the storage method used.
 - 4.1.2 To enable replacement of certification documentation; ACE shall be responsible for authenticating and verifying any replacement certification documentation.
- 4.2 ACE shall ensure that there will be no fraudulent reproduction of certifications. At a minimum, all certification documentation shall include ACE’s name, code and logo, and the issuance date.
- 4.3 If ACE ceases being an RTO, it shall provide records of qualifications and statements of attainment information to ASQA in digital form.

5.0 Participating in the Student Identified Scheme

- 5.1 ACE shall verify a student’s Unique Student Identifier (USI) at the point of initial enrolment. USIs can be created and verified using the USI Organisation Portal <https://portal.usi.gov.au/org/TermsAndConditions?ReturnUrl=%252forg%252f>
- 5.2 ACE shall only issue a qualification or statement of attainment to a student after:
 - 5.2.1 the student has provided a verified USI, or
 - 5.2.2 ACE has applied for a USI on behalf of the student
- 5.3 ACE shall report student information to the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) so that a student, who has provided a verified USI, will be able to access their records through the USI system.

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- 5.4 ACE shall have sufficient security measures in place to protect USI related records, both digital and hard-copy, from loss, damage or unauthorised access. This may include:
 - 5.4.1 storing records in locked cabinets
 - 5.4.2 restricting access to data stored on networks
 - 5.4.3 requiring strong passwords on all network-connected computers
 - 5.4.4 other security measures.
- 5.5 ACE shall create back-up copies of records and store them securely.
- 5.6 ACE shall record all qualification or statement of attainment in the Student Identifier scheme to demonstrate the requirement to store all AQF certification documentation for 30 years.
- 5.7 For students who are exempt from being required a USI under the Student Identifier Act 2014 and the National VET Data Policy, ACE shall inform the students that their assessment results will not appear on their authenticated VET transcript or be available to them through the USI system. ACE shall ensure that these students can still access their records.

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Procedures

1.0 Issuance of AQF Qualification certificates

- 1.1 A student can request for a Qualification certificate by filling out the Request for Certificate or Statement of Attainment form.
- 1.2 Qualification certificates will be issued to students when:
 - 1.2.1 they have been assessed as competent in all Units of Competency of the course they are enrolled in. Being assessed as competent means the student has successfully completed all requirements of the course or training product; and
 - 1.2.2 they have **paid all fees** owed to ACE.
- 1.3 The Qualification certificate will be issued within 30 calendar days of the student completing all required units in the Qualification after verifying the USI provided by the student.
 - 1.3.1 The Admissions Officer will **complete a Testamur and Record of Results or Statement of Attainment Issuance Checklist** before issuing any Testamur and Record of Results or Statement of Attainment for any student who has completed, withdrawn or cancelled from a course.
- 1.4 The Qualification certificate will be supported by:
 - 1.4.1 Completion Letter
 - 1.4.2 Record of Results listing the units achieved competency
- 1.5 The student is notified via email when their Qualification certificate will be available for pick-up from Head Office. The original is given to the student and a copy is placed in the Student's File with the student's signature indicating that the student has received the original document.

2.0 Issuance of Statement of Attainment

- 2.1 A student can request for a Statement of Attainment (SOA) by filling out the Request for Certificate or Statement of Attainment form.
- 2.2 Statement of Attainment will be issued to a student when they withdraw or cancel their enrolment in a Qualification or when they wish to receive a statement of all the modules or units of competencies they have successfully completed.
- 2.3 The Statement of Attainment will be issued within 30 calendar days of the student completing and achieving competency on the course, provided they have no outstanding fees owing to ACE and after verifying the USI.
- 2.4 The Admissions Officer will print the Statement of Attainment, which lists all the units the student has successfully completed and achieved competency.
- 2.5 The student is notified via email when their Statement of Attainment will be available for pick-up from Head Office. The original is given to the student and a copy is placed in the Student's File with the student's signature indicating that the student has received the original document.

3.0 Request for Replacement Testamur and Statement of Attainment

- 3.1 A student can request for a Replacement Testamur and Statement of Attainment by filling out the Request for Replacement Testamur and Statement of Attainment Form.
- 3.2 A Replacement Testamur and Statement of Attainment will be issued to a student if his or her testamur has been lost, destroyed or damaged. Charges for replacement Testamur and Record of Results or Statement of Attainment are reflected on the form.
- 3.3 The student will receive the replacement Testamur and Record of Results or Statement of Attainment within 30 days of lodging the application. If the student requires the official documentation sooner, he will have to contact ACE at info@ace.vic.edu.au or at 03 9830 1414.
- 3.4 The replacement certificate can only be issued in the name that appeared on the original.

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4.0 Quality Control Process

- 4.1 The Finance Officer reports to the CEO for any outstanding fees due to be paid by the students and remind the students to pay the amount owing so that ACE is able to issue them with their Certificate or Statement of Attainment within 30 calendar days of the student completing all required units in the Qualification after verifying the USI provided by the student.
- 4.2 At the end of each month, the Admissions Officer goes to the Student Management System and exports the Award Register for the month. Admission Officer save it in the Award Register Folder with **FILE NAME** as **AWARD REGISTER AS AT <DATE>**. The Award Register includes information on the following :-
 - Organisation
 - Students Name & Student Id
 - USI no
 - Qualification Code
 - Parchment No
 - Record date
 - Completion date
 - Type – Certificate or Statement
 - Report ability – State or National
 - Issued
 - Date Issued
 - State VIC
 - Location
 - Created by
 - Created date
- 4.3 The Admissions Officer and other staff involved checks the students' files to confirm if the database records are correct.
- 4.4 The Admissions Officer reports any discrepancies to the CEO for possible amendments on the database record.

Legislative Context

- Standards for RTOs 2015 Clauses 3.1 to 3.4 and 3.6

Related Forms / Documentation

- Request for Certificate or Statement of Attainment
- Testamur and Record of Results or Statement of Attainment Issuance Checklist
- Request for Replacement Testamur and Statement of Attainment Form
- Testamur and Record of Results, Completion Letter
- Statement of Attainment
- Award Register

Responsible Parties

The CEO, Compliance Manager, staff and students of ACE are responsible for the use and implementation of this policy.

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