



**Apex
Australia**
Vocational Education

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Emergency Contact Information

EMERGENCY CONTACT	ACTION
Police fire or ambulance	Call 000 for an immediate emergency. Give your exact location.
Apex urgent after-hours welfare notification	+61 413 844 955. For immediate danger call 000 first. This is not a clinical crisis service.
NON-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE	Student Support: support@apexaustralia.edu.au Phone: (02) 8007 6262 Visit campus Reception for accessible assistance.

Our Campuses

Campus	Location and contact
Sydney CBD	22–26 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Public contact listing: Level 3; follow your allocated floor/timetable. (02) 8007 6261
Parramatta	2 Sorrell Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 (02) 8007 6262
Melbourne	Level 7, 123 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 (02) 8007 6262

Your agreement and timetable identify the approved campus and any practical-training location for your course. Confirm changes with Admissions before travelling.

Apex Institute of Education Pty Ltd trading as Apex Australia Vocational Education

ABN 38 130 193 207 | CRICOS 03156M | RTO 91606

Website: <https://vet.apexaustralia.edu.au/>

About this handbook

Use this handbook with your accepted agreement and course information. Apex will explain material changes and provide accessible copies on request. Nothing in it excludes rights or remedies that cannot lawfully be excluded. This V5.2 interim revision retains the recorded February 2027 review due date. The controlled register records the actual approved commencement.

Table of Contents

Welcome Message.....	5
1.0 Introduction	6
2.0 Vision Mission and Values	6
3.0 Unique Student Identifier	7
4.0 Policies and Procedures.....	8
4.1 Student Discipline and Code of Conduct	8
4.2 Legislative Requirements	8
4.3 Apex Staff Responsibilities	9
4.4 Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination	10
4.5 Bullying Harassment and Sexual Harm.....	10
4.6 Language Literacy Numeracy and Digital Literacy Support	10
4.7 Flexible Learning and Reasonable Adjustments	11
4.8 Student Attendance and Participation	11
4.9 Privacy and Personal Information	12
4.10 VET Data Collection Use and Disclosure.....	12
4.11 Critical Incidents.....	13
4.12 Work Health and Safety	13
4.13 Grievances Complaints and Appeals	15
4.14 How to Make a Complaint or Appeal	16
4.15 Recognition and Course Credit.....	17
4.16 Evidence for Recognition and Credit	17
4.17 Recognition Decisions and Reduced Duration	17
4.18 Student Support and Wellbeing	18
4.19 Monitoring Course Progress.....	19
4.20 Enrolments Course Changes and Provider Transfers	21
4.21 Fees Payments and Refunds.....	23
4.22 Work Placement and Workplace Assessment.....	26
4.23 Assessment Reassessment and Academic Integrity	27

Table of Contents continued

4.24 Issuance of Qualifications and Access to Awards	29
4.25 Deferral Suspension and Cancellation	31
4.26 Changes to Course Arrangements	31
4.27 Student Input and Feedback	32
4.28 Access to Student Records	32
4.29 Contact Details and Communications	32
4.30 Security Systems and Smoke Alarms	32
4.31 Student Identification Cards	33
4.32 Personal Safety and Life in Australia	33
5.0 Training Delivery	34
5.1 Competency Based Training	34
5.2 Training Products and Course Requirements	34
5.3 Professional Staff	34
5.4 Guest Trainers and Industry Involvement	34
5.5 Flexible Delivery and Online Learning	34
5.6 Training Outcomes and Pathways	35
5.7 Excursions and Activities Away from Campus	35
5.8 Facilities Resources and Equipment	35
6.0 ELICOS	36
7.0 Location Maps and Travel	38
8.0 Emergency Evacuation Procedure	41
9.0 Contact Information and Emergency Contacts	42
10.0 Document Control	44
Appendix A Outline of Changes	45
Appendix B Policy Alignment and Release Record	48
Appendix C Official Sources	50

Welcome Message

Welcome to Apex Australia Vocational Education (Apex), RTO 91606 and CRICOS provider 03156M. Thank you for choosing Apex for your learning journey.

Our training is designed to develop practical skills, current industry knowledge and readiness for work or further study. We aim to provide an inclusive learning environment, appropriately qualified staff and accessible support. Your achievement depends on meeting the actual requirements of your course; enrolment does not guarantee a qualification, a job, a licence or a visa outcome.

Please read this handbook, keep a copy and ask Student Support about anything you do not understand. We will explain the requirements, help you access support and listen to your feedback. Tell us early if your circumstances or learning needs change so we can work with you on a practical response.

Best wishes,

Livleen Sodhi

CEO

1.0 Introduction

This handbook explains how to enrol, participate, access support, understand fees and refunds, seek review of a decision and obtain certification. It applies to Apex students, with separate rules identified for VET, ELICOS, domestic students and overseas students covered by the ESOS framework.

Read it with your written agreement, course outline, timetable and assessment information. Before you accept an offer, Apex will provide information about the actual course, costs, entry requirements, delivery location, assessment, work placement where required, support and your obligations. Ask for clarification or an accessible copy before committing. A link alone is not sufficient if you cannot access the information.

Apex operates under the 2025 RTO Outcome Standards, Compliance Standards and applicable Credential Policy for VET, and the ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2019 and National Code 2018 for relevant overseas students. ELICOS is also governed by the ELICOS Standards 2018. The 2015 RTO Standards do not govern current VET delivery.

The handbook is a student-facing summary of Apex's controlled policies. Mandatory law and non-excludable consumer rights prevail over an inconsistent policy or agreement. Apex will explain material changes affecting you as soon as practicable and will not retrospectively impose undisclosed obligations. Retain the agreement and information supplied when you accepted your offer.

Apex provides access to the current policies and forms at <https://vet.apexaustralia.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/> and through Reception. You may request a printed or accessible copy by emailing support@apexaustralia.edu.au. Acknowledging receipt of this handbook does not waive your legal rights.

2.0 Vision Mission and Values

Vision

Apex's vision is to improve continuously as an education provider, delivering quality education and helping students develop skills and knowledge for their chosen field.

Mission

Our mission is to deliver high-quality vocational education, accessible student support and informed pathways to work and further learning.

Values

- Act ethically, fairly, honestly and accurately.
- Maintain a student-centred, inclusive and culturally safe learning environment.
- Recognise individual strengths, prior learning and support needs.
- Protect financial integrity and provide accurate marketing and enrolment information.
- Listen to feedback, investigate concerns fairly and improve our services.

3.0 Unique Student Identifier

A Unique Student Identifier (USI) links nationally recognised VET undertaken in Australia to your authenticated VET transcript. Create or find your USI free of charge at <https://www.usi.gov.au/>. Do not create a duplicate identifier.

For VET, provide your USI securely to Admissions so Apex can verify that it belongs to you. Your name and other identity details must match the Registrar's records. We will help you resolve a mismatch. If you authorise Apex to apply on your behalf, we will obtain your permission, provide the required privacy notice and explain the identity evidence needed.

An offshore intending international student may enrol before obtaining a USI. You can create one after arriving in Australia using the required identity documents. Seek help before leaving Australia, because you may not be able to create one after departure. A CoE or visa application does not itself create a USI.

Apex must have a verified USI or evidence of an applicable legal exemption before issuing VET certification. Being an international student, leaving Australia or not supplying a USI does not, by itself, establish an exemption. Ask Admissions to check your circumstances. Where an exemption applies, Apex will explain in advance the effect on Commonwealth access to results and the authenticated VET transcript.

Your USI will not be printed on your testamur, statement of attainment or record of results. We restrict access to the identifier and use it only as authorised. Identity information collected solely to obtain a USI is securely destroyed when no longer needed, subject to any other lawful retention duty. ELICOS study alone is not automatically nationally recognised VET and does not itself create a VET USI requirement.

Related policies: VE-HRP05 Student Identifier Scheme Process; VE-HRP04 Issuing Qualifications; VE-STP22 Certification.

4.0 Policies and Procedures

Apex's policies explain the rights and responsibilities summarised below. Contact Student Support for the current policy, form, assistance or a private appointment. You can seek help or make a complaint without an agent's permission.

4.1 Student Discipline and Code of Conduct

Your rights

- Fair and respectful treatment, freedom from unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual harm, bullying, vilification and victimisation.
- Accurate information about your course, costs, delivery, assessment, support and obligations before enrolment.
- Training and assessment that meet the applicable training product or ELICOS curriculum, delivered by appropriately qualified staff with suitable facilities and resources.
- Access to learning and wellbeing support, reasonable adjustments, your own records and a fair complaints and appeals process.
- Clear assessment instructions, individual feedback, reasonable reassessment opportunities and impartial review of disputed decisions.
- Protection of your personal information and access to non-excludable consumer rights.

Your responsibilities

Attend scheduled classes and assessments, participate actively, meet published course requirements and engage with agreed support. Keep contact details current and notify changes within seven days. Treat people, property and equipment respectfully; follow lawful staff instructions, safety signs and emergency procedures. Provide accurate information, submit your own work and pay lawful agreed fees when due.

Do not discriminate, harass, bully, threaten, abuse, assault or victimise anyone. Do not damage or remove property, misuse systems, bring unauthorised weapons or illegal substances to campus, or attend while impaired in a way that creates a risk. Use required protective clothing and equipment. Tell staff promptly about hazards, incidents or concerns.

Fair disciplinary action

Apex will assess the evidence and seriousness of a concern, explain allegations and give you a reasonable opportunity to respond before an adverse finding. Warnings, support and proportionate corrective action may be used. Serious risks can require immediate protective action; protection is not a substitute for a fair final decision.

If Apex proposes provider-initiated suspension or cancellation for an overseas student, it will give written reasons and 20 working days to access internal appeal. The action will not take effect before the internal process is completed unless the National Code's health or wellbeing exception applies and is documented. Course-progress or reportable attendance matters have the separate safeguards in section 4.19. Apex does not cancel visas.

Related policies: VE-HRP01 Complaint and Appeal Handling; VE-STP07 Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination; VE-STP09 Deferring Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment.

4.2 Legislative Requirements

The main frameworks affecting your study include the following. Requirements apply according to the course, student circumstances and location; they are not interchangeable across sectors.

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011; the 2025 Outcome Standards and Compliance Standards; current Credential Policy; applicable training packages and accredited courses; Australian Qualifications Framework requirements.
- ESOS Act 2000, ESOS Regulations 2019, National Code 2018 as amended, the Calculation of Refund Instrument 2024, and ELICOS Standards 2018 where relevant.
- Student Identifiers Act 2014 and applicable exemption instruments; Data Provision Requirements Instrument 2020 as amended, including the 2026 data streamlining amendments, VET Information Standard and applicable national VET data policies.
- Privacy Act 1988, Australian Privacy Principles and applicable privacy, surveillance and electronic communication laws.
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010 Schedule 2, the Australian Consumer Law, and applicable state fair trading laws.
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Disability Standards for Education 2005, Racial Discrimination Act 1975, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Age Discrimination Act 2004 and Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986.
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Victoria) and applicable racial and religious vilification laws.
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2025 in NSW; Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 in Victoria, together with other applicable safety requirements.
- Fair Work Act 2009 and applicable employment instruments, including rules governing lawful vocational placements; Copyright Act 1968; Migration Act 1958 and Migration Regulations 1994 where relevant.

Official legislation is available at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/>, <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/> and <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>. Ask Student Support for help accessing a relevant document. The source register at the end of this handbook identifies key official information services.

4.3 Apex Staff Responsibilities

Apex remains responsible for its training and student services, including services delivered on its behalf by third parties. Marketing and admissions staff must provide accurate information, check course suitability and entry requirements, identify support needs and explain the agreement before accepting fees. Staff must not guarantee admission outcomes, employment, licensing, migration or visa approval.

Trainers and teachers deliver the approved program, assess individual achievement, keep accurate participation and progress records and refer emerging concerns early. Support staff coordinate accessible orientation, learning and wellbeing assistance and referral. Authorised officers maintain accurate enrolment, certification and PRISMS records and meet applicable reporting duties.

Agents must act within their authority. Apex staff and agents must not give individual immigration assistance unless lawfully authorised to do so. For visa advice, consult Home Affairs or an appropriately authorised migration professional. You can check Apex's current authorised agent list through its website or Admissions.

Contact Apex directly if an agent withholds information or payments, gives misleading advice or asks for an unexplained charge. Keep receipts and correspondence. Apex will investigate its service responsibilities; you are not required to resolve an agent complaint privately before contacting Apex.

Related policies: VE-MP01 Advertising and Marketing; VEL-STP02 Admission to Enrolment; VE-STP03 Entry Requirements; VE-STP10 Enrolment.

4.4 Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination

Apex aims to provide equitable access to education and a learning environment in which diversity is respected. Admission decisions use published, relevant requirements and verified course suitability, not assumptions about a person's disability, age, race, religion, sex or other protected characteristic.

You may voluntarily discuss a disability, health condition or other support need before enrolment or at any later time. Ask for a private conversation with Student Support. We will consult you about barriers and reasonable adjustments, explain how information will be used and limit disclosure to what is necessary and lawful.

We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and students from diverse cultural, language, religious, gender and sexuality backgrounds. Cultural safety and freedom from racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia and other unlawful vilification are part of a safe learning environment. You may seek support or report an incident without being disadvantaged for doing so.

If a requested adjustment cannot reasonably be provided, Apex will explain the reasons, consider alternatives with you and provide review options. Essential training-product and licensing requirements must still be met. An inability to provide one requested adjustment is not an automatic refusal of all support.

Related policy: VE-STP07 Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination.

4.5 Bullying Harassment and Sexual Harm

Bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, threats, stalking, intimidation and victimisation are unacceptable in classes, online interactions, placements and other Apex activities. Appropriate constructive feedback is not bullying, but its manner and context must be respectful and lawful.

If there is immediate danger, call 000. Move to a safe place if possible and contact a staff member. You may report a concern to Student Support, the Academic Manager or the RTO Manager, in person, by phone or by email. If the person you would normally contact is involved, ask for an uninvolved manager. You do not have to confront the person concerned or attempt mediation.

Apex will prioritise safety, offer support and consider proportionate interim protection. Information is shared only as needed for safety, procedural fairness and lawful action; absolute secrecy cannot be promised. You may have a support person, request an accessible communication method and seek external assistance. A criminal investigation does not automatically prevent Apex from taking appropriate protective action.

A good-faith report, participation in an investigation or request for support must not result in retaliation. Formal investigation and review follow the complaints and disciplinary procedures. Contact Student Support for specialist sexual assault, family violence or other referral options, including help checking cost and access arrangements.

4.6 Language Literacy Numeracy and Digital Literacy Support

For VET, Apex reviews your existing skills and competencies, including language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy, before enrolment. The review relates to your proposed training product, delivery mode, assessment, technology and placement requirements. It may involve discussion, evidence and an appropriate diagnostic activity. Complete it yourself; an agent or another person must not complete it for you.

Apex will explain whether the course is suitable for you, the support available and any additional preparation or alternative pathway. An English-language test alone does not establish numeracy or digital literacy. ELICOS placement follows its curriculum and language-learning requirements rather than the VET competency rules.

During study you can ask for help with reading instructions, writing, calculations, study planning, computer use, the LMS and assessment submission. Tell your trainer or Student Support early. We will discuss the assistance needed, agree

practical actions and review whether they help. If a need is beyond Apex's capacity, we will explain realistic alternatives and relevant external options.

Internal learning support and support referrals are provided without an additional support-access fee. Any separate external provider's fees, eligibility and waiting times will be explained before you agree to a booking. English preparation may be one option where appropriate; it is not an automatic substitute for assessing your individual needs.

Related policies: VEL-STP02 Admission to Enrolment; VE-STP03 Entry Requirements; VE-STP06 Student Support Services.

4.7 Flexible Learning and Reasonable Adjustments

You can request reasonable adjustments before enrolment, during training or before an assessment. A diagnosis is not required simply to ask for assistance. Where evidence is needed to decide a specific adjustment, Apex will explain what is relevant and why, and handle it confidentially.

Your trainer, assessor and Student Support will consult you about the effect of the barrier and suitable options. Examples may include accessible materials, assistive technology, breaks, an accessible venue, adjusted communication or submission arrangements and additional time. A different assessment method can be used only if it still meets the unit's evidence and assessment conditions.

Adjustments cannot remove essential competence, safety, licensing or genuine workplace-performance requirements, fabricate attendance or lower an applicable ELICOS attendance minimum. Apex will record agreed adjustments and explain any limitation and alternative. If you disagree, request review through the complaints and appeals process.

Tell us promptly if an adjustment is ineffective or your needs change. Do not assume a training adjustment automatically changes an assessment deadline, CoE duration or approved attendance schedule; obtain the appropriate written decision.

4.8 Student Attendance and Participation

Attend scheduled classes and assessments, arrive on time and participate actively. Tell Student Support or your trainer about absence as soon as possible, explain the reason and provide relevant evidence where requested. Medical or other evidence supports consideration of your circumstances; it does not convert missed hours into attendance.

For VET, Apex records attendance and participation for learning, wellbeing and course-progress support. Its internal expectation is at least 80% attendance in each teaching term. Under the existing registration position recorded in VEL-STP01, there is no specific VET attendance-reporting condition. Falling below 80% alone does not establish academic failure or permit an attendance-breach report in PRISMS. Competency must be assessed on evidence.

If a re-registration decision or other lawful condition introduces VET attendance monitoring, Apex will explain the applicable requirement, calculation period, support and reporting safeguards before applying it from its effective date. An undisclosed new benchmark will not be used retrospectively to create a breach.

For ELICOS, attendance is measured against scheduled course-contact hours for each course/CoE, not reset each term. The minimum is 80%. Apex checks actual attendance and the highest final attendance still achievable, follows up unexplained absences promptly and offers early support. Further details and the limited 70% discretion appear in section 6.0.

Unexplained or repeated absence, attendance below 90%, or five consecutive days without approval can trigger welfare contact and support. A first or escalated warning gives actual figures and recovery actions. If you believe a roll is wrong, contact Student Support promptly so the original record can be checked and any correction recorded with an audit trail.

Attendance and participation are governed by consolidated VEL-STP01 Attendance and Course Monitoring V1.2, which supersedes VE-STP19. VET course progress is addressed separately in section 4.19 and VE-STP02.

4.9 Privacy and Personal Information

Apex collects information needed to assess an application, manage enrolment, provide training and support, assess achievement, issue certification, protect safety and meet legal reporting obligations. This may include identity and contact details, education and employment history, USI, fees, results and, where relevant and lawfully collected, sensitive support information.

We explain collection purposes, required and optional information, likely recipients and relevant consequences if necessary information is not supplied. Without required identity, entry, reporting or certification information, we may be unable to finalise the relevant service. Discuss an accessible alternative with Admissions rather than sending unnecessary sensitive records.

We use and disclose information with consent where required, or where otherwise authorised or required by law. Relevant recipients can include VET regulators, NCVER, DEWR, state training authorities, the Student Identifiers Registrar, Home Affairs and ESOS/TPS authorities. Necessary service providers may process information subject to appropriate controls. An agent, parent, employer or other representative does not automatically have access to your records.

Personal information is protected through role-based access, secure storage and transfer, staff controls and appropriate retention and disposal. If an overseas disclosure is proposed, Apex will provide the required information and apply applicable privacy safeguards. We assess suspected data breaches and make notifications where legally required.

You may request access or correction through support@apexaustralia.edu.au, marked for the RTO Manager or privacy officer. We verify identity and protect other people's information. If access is lawfully limited, we will explain the reasons and review route. You may complain to Apex and, where applicable, the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner at <https://www.oaic.gov.au/>.

Related policy: VE-HRP06 Privacy and Personal Information V1.1. Read the collection notice supplied with your application and the additional VET data notice below.

4.10 VET Data Collection Use and Disclosure

Why Apex collects and uses your information

As an RTO, Apex collects personal information to process and manage enrolment, deliver VET and meet its regulatory obligations. Required information may include identity, demographics, training activity and outcomes. If necessary information is not supplied, enrolment, reporting or certification may be delayed or unavailable; ask Admissions about an alternative before withholding information you are concerned about.

Reporting and permitted disclosure

Apex may be legally required to report personal information to NCVER or to a state training authority that then reports to NCVER. The applicable Data Provision Requirements, VET Information Standard, national VET data policies, Privacy Act and Student Identifiers legislation govern this reporting. Reporting required by law is not conditional on separate student consent.

NCVER may use and disclose data for authenticated VET transcripts, VET administration, education statistics and research, surveys, data linkage and understanding the VET market. Lawful recipients can include DEWR, relevant Commonwealth and state/territory authorities, VET regulators and authorised research providers. NCVER's privacy information states that it does not intend to disclose personal information to overseas recipients.

Government VET data systems may be operated by contracted IT providers subject to privacy, security and confidentiality obligations. Those operators may use information to operate, maintain, test and improve the systems. Submitted information may be checked against other authorised systems, including the USI Registry or Australian Business Register, for validation and quality assurance.

DEWR may lawfully handle information for program administration, regulation, monitoring, evaluation, research and policy or workforce planning. Further lawful sharing may occur under the Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022 and other applicable legislation.

Notices surveys and your choices

Before or at enrolment, Apex supplies the applicable statutory VET privacy notice, including the information required by Schedule 1 of the amended Data Provision Requirements. This handbook summary does not remove the obligation to give that notice. Ask for a downloaded, printed or accessible copy if you cannot use the online material. Where a state authority handles your data, Apex will identify the relevant authority and its notice for your enrolment.

You may receive a government or NCVER survey, including through an authorised contractor. You may opt out of that survey when contacted. Survey participation is separate from mandatory training-data reporting.

At any time, contact Apex at support@apexaustralia.edu.au or (02) 8007 6262 to request access, correct information, ask about a privacy notice or complain about handling. See <https://www.ncver.edu.au/privacy> and <https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-activity-data/vet-privacy-notice> for NCVER and DEWR handling and complaint information. Ask Reception for Apex's Privacy and Personal Information Policy.

4.11 Critical Incidents

A critical incident is a serious event or threat that can cause significant physical or psychological harm, distress or danger. Examples include serious injury or death, assault, sexual violence, missing-person concerns, severe threats, disasters and serious incidents during placement or travel connected with study.

If there is an immediate emergency, call 000 first. Give the location, nature of the emergency and known hazards. Do not put yourself at risk. Alert the nearest staff member and follow emergency-service and warden instructions. Contact Apex's published after-hours number for urgent Apex welfare notification when appropriate; do not wait for an email reply in a crisis.

Apex will arrange immediate protection and assistance, notify the responsible manager, preserve relevant evidence and coordinate an incident response. Staff will consider affected students' needs, emergency and specialist services, safe communication, appropriate contact with authorised family or emergency contacts and required notifications. Adult student information is not automatically released to an agent or family member.

Apex records the incident, actions and follow-up, offers suitable support or referral and reviews continuing risks. Access to incident information is restricted. If your studies are affected, ask Student Support about adjustments, compassionate or compelling circumstances and enrolment options. Reporting a concern must not disadvantage you.

Related procedures: Critical Incidents; Student Support; Privacy; Complaints and Appeals. See section 8.0 for evacuation actions.

4.12 Work Health and Safety

Apex must provide a safe learning environment and manage physical and psychosocial risks. NSW and Victorian safety frameworks apply at their respective locations. Safety also applies to practical training, excursions, online interaction and work placements. Tell a staff member promptly about a hazard, unsafe practice, injury, near miss or wellbeing risk.

Follow inductions and lawful safety instructions. Use equipment only when authorised and trained; use guards, safe systems and required personal protective equipment. Do not bypass safeguards, interfere with alarms, obstruct exits or continue an unsafe activity. Ask for help if equipment is faulty or instructions are unclear. Report incidents and cooperate with reasonable safety action.

Campus rules

- Do not bring illegal drugs or unauthorised alcohol to campus or attend while impaired. Discuss medication-related safety concerns privately with Student Support; do not stop prescribed treatment on Apex's advice.
- Smoking and vaping are not permitted inside Apex premises or prohibited areas. Follow building and local rules.
- Do not bring weapons. Legitimate training tools, including kitchen knives, may be used only through the approved course, storage and supervision arrangements; they are not permission to carry a weapon unlawfully.
- Wear clean, appropriate clothing and enclosed footwear. Follow the course-specific uniform, safety footwear, hygiene and protective-equipment requirements for kitchens, workshops and placements. Adjustments for disability or religious needs will be considered consistently with safety.
- Silence phones and use them only as permitted for learning, emergencies or an agreed adjustment. Respect privacy; do not record others without appropriate authority.
- Use designated eating areas, dispose of rubbish safely and leave facilities clean. Do not spit, damage property or interfere with others' work. Keep personal belongings secure.

Safety concerns may require immediate protective action. A final disciplinary decision still follows procedural fairness and applicable enrolment safeguards. General property-care advice does not exclude any liability or consumer remedy that cannot lawfully be excluded.

4.13 Grievances Complaints and Appeals

You can complain about Apex's services, staff, students, agents and other third parties acting for Apex, or appeal an adverse decision. Examples include recruitment, fees and refunds, support, assessment, discrimination, privacy, placement or enrolment decisions. Internal complaints and appeals are free. You will not be disadvantaged for raising or supporting a concern in good faith.

A complaint expresses dissatisfaction and seeks a response; an appeal asks for review of a decision. You do not need an agent's permission, a special form, a payment or a compulsory informal meeting. You may use a support person or authorised representative, including an appropriate legal representative, and request language, disability or other access assistance.

Apex will use an impartial decision-maker, explain the substance of adverse material, give affected people an opportunity to respond, consider evidence fairly and give written reasons and review options. Information is shared only as needed for fairness, safety and lawful handling. Anonymous concerns are considered, although anonymity may limit what can be investigated.

For a complaint about the Academic Manager, request an uninvolved RTO Manager or CEO delegate. If the RTO Manager is involved, ask for an uninvolved reviewer appointed by the CEO. If the CEO is involved, the policy provides for an independent external reviewer without requiring the subject of the complaint to approve the outcome.

Key timeframes

Action	Timeframe and meaning
Acknowledgement	Within three working days under Apex's complaints policy. Urgent risk is addressed immediately.
Substantive assessment starts	Within ten working days after the complaint or appeal is made. An automated acknowledgement alone is not substantive assessment.
Internal outcome	As soon as practicable; Apex aims for twenty working days from receipt.
Updates	At least every ten working days while open. Explain a likely delay, actions and revised date.
General internal appeal	Normally within twenty working days after the adverse decision is notified. Late requests are considered fairly, including access or health barriers.
ESOS appeal access	Twenty working days for relevant transfer-refusal, progress/attendance and provider-initiated suspension/cancellation notices. The decision letter gives actual dates.
External advice after unsuccessful internal review	Within ten working days after the internal process concludes, normally in the outcome letter.

If a matter is likely to exceed 60 calendar days, Apex will explain the reasons, revised completion date and updates and escalate it. This is not permission to delay a straightforward case. You may seek independent review of unreasonable delay without waiting 60 days.

Working days exclude weekends and applicable public holidays at the handling campus, subject to a different statutory counting rule where required. Ask Apex to clarify a deadline immediately if it is unclear. A missed internal target does not prevent you seeking appropriate external help.

Related policy: VE-HRP01 Complaint and Appeal Handling V10.3.

4.14 How to Make a Complaint or Appeal

Step 1 Choose a safe contact route

If safe and useful, you may discuss an issue informally with the relevant staff member. This is optional. For serious misconduct, safety concerns or a conflict, you can go directly to a formal complaint. Informal discussions do not shorten a statutory appeal period.

Email support@apexaustralia.edu.au, marked for the Academic Manager for a complaint or the RTO Manager for an appeal. You may also visit Reception, telephone (02) 8007 6262 or ask any staff member for assistance. The Complaints and Appeals Form is available, but an email, letter or oral complaint recorded with staff assistance is accepted.

Step 2 Explain the issue and desired outcome

Give the decision or issue, relevant dates, available evidence, what outcome you seek and any access or safety needs. Apex will help clarify missing information. An incomplete form, inability to write in English or lack of new evidence is not automatically a reason to reject your concern.

Apex will acknowledge the matter, provide a reference or contact route, explain the reviewer and next steps and identify relevant deadlines. You may present your case with a support person. The original decision-maker may provide evidence but must not decide their own appeal.

Step 3 Receive reasons and seek review

The written outcome will explain the decision, reasons, action and review rights. Assessment appeals are considered by an appropriately qualified assessor independent of the original decision. If your concern is upheld, Apex will implement the required response and corrective action promptly; favourable overseas-student decisions or recommendations are implemented immediately as required by National Code 10.4.

If you remain dissatisfied, you may seek appropriate independent review. Apex-arranged review under its complaints policy is free to the student. Overseas students at private VET or ELICOS providers may contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman's Overseas Students service at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/> or 1300 362 072. This is separate from the National Student Ombudsman's higher-education role.

For consumer issues, contact NSW Fair Trading or Consumer Affairs Victoria as appropriate. For privacy, employment or discrimination concerns, the OAIC, Fair Work Ombudsman or relevant equality body may be appropriate. ASQA accepts information about provider compliance but is not a substitute for an individual merits or compensation process. Apex will explain the appropriate external route; external bodies may apply their own jurisdiction and time limits.

Enrolment and reporting during review

For a proposed unsatisfactory course-progress or legally reportable attendance breach, Apex follows National Code 8.13–8.14 and does not report until the applicable internal and external appeal safeguards have been satisfied, or the student does not access or withdraws from the relevant process as provided by the Code.

For provider-initiated suspension or cancellation under Standard 9, action normally waits until the internal appeal is completed; the Code's health or wellbeing exception may allow earlier action. For a transfer refusal, Apex does not finalise refusal before the required appeal-access and internal-process safeguards. Not every complaint suspends every separate statutory reporting duty.

Notify Apex promptly if you lodge an external appeal relevant to a proposed report and provide the reference or evidence of lodgement. A request to tell Apex within ten working days helps coordinate the case; it does not replace the external body's legal time limits or remove non-excludable rights.

4.15 Recognition and Course Credit

Apex offers recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credit transfer for relevant VET training products. These processes can avoid unnecessary training while preserving the integrity of the qualification. Ask Admissions or your trainer about the opportunity before enrolment or as soon as relevant prior learning is identified.

Credit transfer recognises verified equivalent formal achievement supported by AQF certification documentation or an authenticated VET transcript, subject to the training product and regulatory requirements. Holding another qualification does not automatically give credit for every unit in the new course.

RPL is assessment of your relevant prior formal, non-formal and informal learning against the current unit requirements. Work experience or a portfolio alone does not guarantee competence; further questioning, demonstration or evidence may be required. You will receive information about the process, evidence, any lawful agreed fee, support and appeal rights before proceeding.

Related policy: VE-STP11 Recognition of Prior Learning and Course Credit V8.1.

4.16 Evidence for Recognition and Credit

Provide reliable evidence that identifies you, the issuing organisation, national unit or module codes and titles, outcomes and issue details. This may include AQF certification and the associated record of results or an authenticated VET transcript shared with the required authority. Apex verifies authenticity and equivalence before granting credit.

Apex may seek your authority to verify records with an issuer or the USI service. Certified copies are not the only possible verification method. If additional evidence or a translation is needed, we will explain why and offer reasonable assistance. Do not provide another person's records or alter documents.

For RPL, relevant evidence can include work samples, employment history, supervisor information, licences, prior study, demonstrations and responses to questions. Evidence must be valid, sufficient, authentic and current. We consider your circumstances and explain gaps or further assessment rather than applying an arbitrary age rule to all evidence.

You will receive a documented decision with reasons, recognised units, any remaining requirements and appeal information. Keep the decision and your written acceptance where required. An application form helps administration but is not a waiver of your rights.

4.17 Recognition Decisions and Reduced Duration

Apply early where possible so your study plan, fees and duration can be set accurately. A request made after commencement will still be considered fairly. There is no blanket requirement that all RPL be completed within fourteen days regardless of complexity or access needs; Apex will explain the assessment plan and timing.

Credit transfer is not charged under Apex's recognition arrangements. Any RPL assessment fee must be disclosed and agreed before the service. An unsuccessful RPL outcome does not automatically remove consumer rights or justify charging for a service not supplied.

Apex will give you the written outcome and explain any effect on units, training, assessment, timetable, fees and completion. Where RPL or credit reduces an overseas student's course duration, Apex will obtain written acceptance, retain it for at least two years after you cease to be an accepted student and adjust the CoE duration and PRISMS records where required. Do not assume a provider release gives academic credit or that credit automatically changes your visa.

If a course or unit has changed, the Academic Manager will establish the correct equivalence or RPL pathway and advise you. For overseas qualifications, ask about relevant assessing authorities; Apex's academic recognition does not itself grant occupational registration or a migration skills assessment.

4.18 Student Support and Wellbeing

Student Support is your first contact for learning, digital access, disability adjustments, wellbeing, settlement and service questions. Visit Reception at your campus, phone (02) 8007 6262 or email support@apexaustralia.edu.au. Ask for a private appointment, accessible communication, interpreter assistance or a support person. A form is available but is not compulsory to ask for help.

We will explain the designated support contact, backup, campus availability and how to access trainers at orientation and through the current campus/LMS notices. You can ask for support before enrolment or at any later stage. Disclosure of a disability or personal concern is voluntary; we explain confidentiality and its safety or legal limits before requesting sensitive details.

Orientation

All new students receive an orientation appropriate to their course, campus and needs. If you miss it, contact Student Support for a catch-up. Orientation covers the course and timetable, learning systems, assessment, progress and applicable attendance rules, facilities, safety, emergency contacts, support, complaints, fees, workplace rights and life in Australia. For overseas students it also covers accommodation, health, legal services, personal safety and relevant ESOS responsibilities.

Learning and participation support

Trainers explain assessment and learning expectations and how to obtain help. Support may include study planning, LLN and digital assistance, additional explanation or practice, reasonable adjustments, reassessment planning and individual progress intervention. Tell us about difficulty early, including problems accessing the LMS, a device, internet, placement or required materials.

Wellbeing and external referral

You can discuss adjustment to Australia, homesickness, housing, financial pressure, employment exploitation, family violence, harassment, health concerns or other barriers affecting study. Staff offer educational support and appropriate referral; they do not diagnose conditions or represent Apex as a 24-hour clinical crisis service.

Internal support and referrals are provided at no extra support-access cost. External providers may have charges, eligibility rules or waiting times; Apex will explain known arrangements before booking and help identify practical alternatives. Only describe counselling as an internal service where a qualified provider is actually available. For immediate danger call 000; routine email is not continuously monitored.

Responses and follow-up

Under VE-STP20, Apex acknowledges routine contact by the next working day and aims to provide a substantive routine response within three working days. Urgent matters are triaged when identified and answered or escalated sooner, normally within one working day and no later than two where practicable; safety and statutory deadlines take priority. If more time is needed, we explain the reason and revised date.

We agree support actions and review whether they help. Wellbeing support plans are reviewed within ten working days or earlier where risk requires; referral access is followed up, with your consent, normally within five working days. Monthly check-ins and periodic activities are offered through the wellbeing strategy. Tell Student Support if help is inaccessible or ineffective; unresolved needs can be escalated to the RTO Manager.

Related documents: VE-STP06 Student Support Services V11.1; VE-OPP08 Student Wellbeing Support Strategy V1.1; VE-STP20 Student Communication V1.2; VE-STP07 Access Equity and Anti-Discrimination.

4.19 Monitoring Course Progress

Apex monitors progress throughout your course so that you can meet the learning and assessment requirements within the expected duration. You will receive your study-period dates, units due, assessment requirements, support options and the point at which progress becomes unsatisfactory before commencement, with reminders at orientation. A study period must not exceed six months.

For VET, the approved calendar defines the study periods. Courses of one year or less use a term; longer courses may use two terms only where the defined period remains within six months. There is no universal rule that every course has an identical nine-week teaching term plus three weeks of holidays. Your course calendar identifies teaching, assessment and breaks.

Understanding results

A competent unit outcome means all required evidence has been demonstrated. Task results such as Satisfactory or Not Satisfactory are different from a final unit result. Credit transfer and RPL are recorded accurately. Not Yet Competent means requirements remain outstanding; ask your trainer for the unmet criteria, support, reassessment and appeal options.

Apex's VET study-period benchmark is competency in at least 50% of the units due for completion in that period. Exactly 50% meets this period benchmark; it is not completion of the qualification. Apex checks the correct unit denominator, actual results, approved credit and any legitimately pending assessment before an adverse decision. Display rounding must not turn a result below the threshold into a passing result. Passing the period benchmark does not remove the need to complete every required unit.

Early assistance and intervention

Missed work, low participation, unsuccessful assessments, placement barriers and personal difficulties can show that assistance is needed. We do not wait for two failed periods to offer help. Your trainer refers concerns and Student Support contacts you to discuss barriers and arrange appropriate intervention, normally with a meeting within five working days of identifying the need for a formal plan, or sooner where required.

A plan records the issues, your views, support and adjustments, realistic milestones, responsibilities and review dates. It may include tutoring, study or digital help, placement assistance, additional practice, reassessment or wellbeing referral. We review it regularly, normally at least fortnightly, and change ineffective arrangements. If you cannot attend a meeting, tell us so an alternative can be arranged. A missing signature or missed meeting alone is not an academic breach.

Progress categories and final review

Category 0 reflects satisfactory progress. Category 1 identifies emerging risk. Category 2 requires formal intervention. Category 3 is a documented review with achievable conditions where continuing intervention is appropriate. Category 4 is a verified final unsatisfactory-progress determination, not simply an administrative failure to sign or pay.

A final VET determination considers the published period threshold, two consecutive unsatisfactory study periods, support delivered, remaining duration and relevant circumstances. For a course with only one study period, a final review may occur at that period's end after disclosed requirements, early intervention and recovery opportunities. Apex will verify results, adjustments, support and circumstances before a formal notice. ELICOS has its own learning-block criteria in section 6.0.

Notice appeal and reporting

If Apex proposes to report an overseas student for unsatisfactory progress, it will give written reasons, evidence, the relevant requirement and twenty working days to access internal appeal. Reporting follows National Code 8.13–8.14, including applicable external appeal safeguards. It is not automatic after a warning, a single failed task or an attendance percentage. Home Affairs determines visa consequences; seek advice promptly from Home Affairs or an authorised migration adviser about your circumstances.

Apex may extend a CoE only where National Code 8.16 permits, including compassionate or compelling circumstances, an implemented intervention strategy or approved deferral/suspension. Ask Student Support about the evidence and decision. An extension is not automatic and does not itself grant a new visa. Refer individual visa questions to Home Affairs or an authorised migration adviser.

Related documents: VE-STP02 Course Progress Monitoring and Intervention; consolidated VEL-STP01; VE-STP13 Training and Assessment; VE-HRP01 Complaints and Appeals.

4.20 Enrolments Course Changes and Provider Transfers

Before accepting an offer

Apex admits students aged 18 or over under its current admissions policies. Admissions verifies identity, age, entry qualifications, experience and English evidence, completes VET pre-enrolment suitability review including LLN and digital literacy, and identifies support needs. ELICOS language placement is assessed against its curriculum. Meeting minimum entry requirements does not guarantee a place or a visa.

You will receive the actual course code/title and currency, CRICOS details where applicable, duration and dates, mode and location, facilities, assessment, placement, licensing implications, required materials and IT, fees and payment periods, refund rules, support, third parties and enrolment-change procedures. Overseas students also receive relevant ESOS/TPS, living-cost, accommodation, health-cover and school-aged dependant information. Ask for current details specific to your course rather than relying on a general handbook or an agent's promise.

Submit the application and relevant evidence. An accessible alternative is available where needed. Apex will explain missing evidence and provide a written outcome or conditions. Applications are normally acknowledged within three working days, checked for completeness within five and decided within ten working days once complete; these are service targets, with reasons and revised dates for justified delays.

Agreement fees and CoE

Read and personally sign or otherwise validly accept the written agreement before Apex accepts course fees under its process. It sets out the course, services, fees, refunds, obligations and required contacts. Keep a complete copy and receipts. An agent's payment or acceptance is not automatically evidence of your informed acceptance.

For an eligible overseas enrolment, Apex issues the CoE through authorised processes after the necessary checks, agreement and payment. Offshore applicants commonly need a CoE to apply for a student visa; a granted visa is not a universal precondition to issuing one. A CoE alone does not establish lawful study rights. Applicants already in Australia may be asked to authorise a VEVO check. Apex cannot guarantee visa grant, migration, employment or licensing.

Internal course changes

Ask Admissions for a Change of Course Application or accessible written route. The proposed course must meet scope, availability, entry and suitability requirements. We will explain credit, support, new fees or refunds, duration and agreement/CoE changes before you accept. Changing an Apex course is different from transfer between registered providers.

Transfer restriction for overseas students

For non-school provider transfers accepted from 2 October 2026 to 30 June 2027 inclusive, the receiving provider generally must not knowingly enrol a transferring student until at least twelve months of the principal course have been completed, unless a National Code 7.1A exception applies. From 1 July 2027, the rule is scheduled to return to at least six months, subject to further amendments. School-provider transfers have a separate six-month rule and must be checked individually.

The principal course is normally the final course in a visa-linked package. Time in an earlier ELICOS or prerequisite course does not count as time completed in the principal course. A cancelled CoE, unpaid fees or a gap in study does not itself remove the restriction. Genuine completion of the principal course is different from transfer out of an unfinished course.

Exceptions include cessation of registration, a relevant sanction preventing continuation, a release recorded in PRISMS under the required process, or written government-sponsor support in the student's best interests. Admissions checks the actual rule, dates and evidence. A conditional offer to support a release request is not final acceptance in breach of Standard 7.

Requesting release from Apex

Submit a written request, a valid offer from the intended registered provider and relevant supporting evidence. You may use Apex's form or an email containing equivalent information. Apex assesses your best interests, including compassionate or compelling circumstances, course delivery not matching the agreement, unmet reasonable expectations, misleading recruitment, relevant appeal outcomes or inability to achieve progress despite intervention.

Outstanding fees, an agent's objection, refusal to use support, or a wish to study at the same or a lower AQF level is not an automatic reason to refuse release. You do not have to pay a release fee. A release decision, refund, withdrawal and visa permission are separate matters.

Apex acknowledges transfer requests within three working days and normally decides outgoing release/internal change requests within ten working days of receipt; sufficient incoming-transfer evidence is normally assessed within five working days. If evidence or a justified delay prevents a decision, we explain what is needed and a revised date rather than treating ten days as a minimum waiting period.

If Apex intends to refuse a restricted transfer, it gives written reasons and twenty working days to access internal appeal. Refusal is not finalised before the required safeguards. Approved release is recorded in PRISMS and is free. Once the restriction has ended, Apex does not impose a discretionary Standard 7 release requirement, but withdrawal, fees, records and visa responsibilities still apply.

Related policies: VEL-STP02; VE-STP03; VE-STP08 Course Transfer V10.1; VE-STP10 Enrolment V11.1; VE-STP11 RPL and Course Credit.

4.21 Fees Payments and Refunds

Understand your costs before paying

Your course outline, accepted agreement and published fee schedule must identify tuition and non-tuition fees, payment periods and due dates, required materials/equipment/IT, placement costs where applicable, optional services, replacement-document charges and any lawful variation terms. Initial certification is included in the course service. Ask Admissions for an itemised explanation before accepting an offer or additional service.

Fee labels do not override legal classification. A compulsory course charge is assessed according to what it pays for and the applicable law. Calling a charge an application, enrolment or materials fee does not automatically make it non-refundable or remove it from the statutory course-fee calculation.

Pay in Australian dollars using the official payment instructions in your agreement or verified invoice. Keep receipts. Check directly with Apex before using a changed bank account or paying an agent. If an agent has collected or withheld money, tell Apex promptly and provide the receipt and correspondence so the authority, payment history and responsibilities can be investigated. Do not assume an agent's request creates an additional Apex charge.

Apex normally sends reminders fourteen days and seven days before a due date and on the due date. A missing reminder does not alter a lawful agreed due date. Check your account and ask Accounts promptly if a charge or balance appears incorrect.

Prepaid fee protection

For domestic fee-paying VET under Apex's no-excess-prepayment model, the amount received from or on behalf of an individual for services not yet delivered in the same course must not exceed AUD1,500 at any time, including after commencement. An instalment plan does not remove that continuing limit.

For relevant overseas students, the ESOS framework and Tuition Protection Service provide tuition protection. Protected pre-commencement tuition is maintained in the required account under ESOS banking rules, subject to lawful exemptions and withdrawals, including lawful refunds. TPS does not guarantee every non-tuition cost or cover every domestic enrolment.

For an overseas course longer than 25 weeks, Apex must not receive more than 50% of total tuition before commencement unless the student or responsible fee payer genuinely chooses to pay more. You cannot be required to volunteer a higher amount. Different ESOS rules apply to courses of 25 weeks or less. Ask Accounts for your payment plan and protection arrangements.

Difficulty paying or a disputed charge

Domestic and international students can seek confidential hardship assistance or a reasonable payment-plan review. Contact Accounts through support@apexaustralia.edu.au before the due date where possible. Explain a disputed amount promptly and provide relevant evidence. Apex will consider the matter fairly and explain the outcome and review route.

Any additional administrative or late-payment charge must be disclosed, legally enforceable and reasonably justified. This handbook does not authorise an automatic unlimited AUD100 weekly penalty. A disputed charge or delay does not remove your right to access complaints, support, lawful records or a statutory refund. Appropriate debt-recovery action must respect genuine disputes and applicable law.

Non-payment may lead to lawful action under the accepted agreement. Before provider-initiated suspension/cancellation of an overseas enrolment, Apex applies written notice, twenty-working-day internal appeal access and the relevant safeguards. A debt alone is not authority for an immediate PRISMS report. Only relevant unpaid agreed training-product fees may affect initial certification under the certification rules; unrelated debts are not a blanket bar to every document.

Your refund rights

Apex will assess the actual event, default day, agreement, amounts received, services supplied and applicable law. A refund is not automatically excluded because you withdrew, changed provider, deferred, commenced a course, paid only a deposit, failed an RPL assessment, were excluded for misconduct or used an agent. Fraud allegations and visa application errors are investigated separately from any statutory entitlement.

Mandatory ESOS and consumer-law rights apply despite an inconsistent handbook, policy or agreement. Neither a general no-refund term nor a bank, processing, enrolment or other deduction may reduce a statutory refund below the amount legally required. A more favourable enforceable agreement promise remains relevant.

Overseas student refunds

Situation	Refund basis and deadline
Provider default	If Apex defaults under ESOS s46A, within 14 days after the default day it must discharge its obligation by an alternative course at Apex's expense that you accept in writing, or the required unspent-tuition refund. An offer alone is insufficient. You may decline the alternative. No application is needed to activate this duty.
Visa refusal causes failure to commence under Refund Instrument s10(2)	Refund course fees received, including tuition and non-tuition fees, less only the lesser of 5% of course fees received before the default day or AUD500. Pay within four weeks after the default day under ESOS s47E.
Visa refusal causes withdrawal or non-payment under s10(4)	Calculate the statutory tuition refund using the weekly tuition fee and weeks in the paid default period, with the prescribed rounding. Pay within four weeks after the default day under s47E. Assess any separate non-tuition entitlement under consumer law and the agreement.
Student default covered by a compliant written agreement	Apply lawful refund terms under s47D, unless a statutory exception applies. Pay a refund due under that section within four weeks after receiving your written claim.
No written agreement meeting s47B	Assess and pay the statutory refund under s47E and Refund Instrument s9 within four weeks after the default day. An absent or defective agreement is not a basis for refusing all refunds.

For the statutory weekly calculation, the weekly tuition fee is total course tuition divided by course calendar days, multiplied by seven and rounded up to a whole dollar. The paid default-period days are divided by seven and rounded up to a whole week. The relevant weekly fee multiplied by those weeks determines the refund under the applicable provision. Apex will provide the calculation and dates for your case.

If an affected course has not commenced because of provider default, refund all prepaid tuition for that course. For commenced delivery, apply the statutory unspent-tuition calculation. Processing or enrolment deductions must not reduce the required refund. If Apex cannot discharge its obligation, the TPS can assist with placement or the relevant refund process: <https://www.education.gov.au/tps>.

The visa-refusal rule depends on the refusal causing the specified default, not solely on whether the refusal letter arrived before or after commencement. Apex must assess the actual facts and relevant provision.

For packaged courses, assess each course and relevant payment separately. Starting an earlier course does not automatically forfeit fees for a later course. A deposit or partial payment remains part of the assessment. Where a lawful deferral is agreed, carrying fees forward requires clear written arrangements; it is not automatic forfeiture.

Ordinary voluntary withdrawal and domestic refunds

For ordinary overseas withdrawal outside a mandatory statutory refund pathway, refer to the accepted agreement and lawful fee schedule. Where your accepted agreement provides an advance-withdrawal deduction of 25% of tuition received and identified separate costs, Apex will apply its stated notice period and explain the services and each proposed deduction.

For domestic voluntary withdrawal more than 28 days before commencement, the contractual refund arrangement provides tuition paid less 25%. For a request 28 days or fewer before commencement, it provides tuition paid less 50%. These contractual terms apply only where legally enforceable, transparently agreed and consistent with non-excludable rights

If Apex cancels a domestic course before commencement, the student receives the promised full refund. If delivery stops after commencement, Apex will provide the remedy required by consumer law and honour any more favourable enforceable full-refund promise already made. A transfer to another course requires your informed agreement. Apex's operational payment target is fourteen calendar days after the cancellation event, without limiting an earlier legal obligation.

How to claim and receive a refund

Send a written claim to support@apexaustralia.edu.au or deliver it to Reception, marked for Admissions/Accounts. You may use the Refund Application Form, an email or a letter. Include your name, student number, affected course, event and dates, available supporting evidence and a safe contact route.

Apex will explain the decision in writing, including the calculation, amounts and lawful deductions, relevant dates, payment deadline and appeal route.

Refunds are paid in Australian dollars to the person legally entitled under the applicable provision.

You can appeal the decision under sections 4.13–4.14 and seek an appropriate external remedy. Keep your agreement, receipts, claim and decision.

4.22 Work Placement and Workplace Assessment

A workplace component is required only where your actual qualification, selected units and approved training and assessment plan require it. Before enrolment, Apex will explain the tasks, hours or service periods, location, prerequisites, supervision, assessment, costs, travel and responsibilities.

Apex is responsible for securing sufficient safe and suitable placement arrangements for enrolled students. You may nominate a host or propose current employment, but you do not carry sole responsibility for finding an essential placement. Do not start a placement or assume your existing job is approved until Apex checks and authorises the arrangement.

Before commencement, Apex checks the host, facilities, tasks, supervision, safety, accessibility, insurance and capacity to provide the required evidence. A written arrangement identifies the student, Apex and host responsibilities, dates, learning and assessment, support, incident reporting and lawful work conditions. You receive an induction and relevant Work Placement Guide.

Keep an accurate logbook of actual tasks, hours and complete service periods where required, with supervisor verification. Logbook signatures, attendance, paid employment or completion of a generic number of hours do not alone establish competence. An Apex assessor must gather and judge the required individual evidence; host feedback supports but does not replace that decision.

For relevant hospitality units, the requirements can be complete food-service or other service periods, specific contexts and practical tasks rather than a universal 300-hour placement. Your unit and placement matrix identifies what applies. Community Services and other training products have their own requirements and transition arrangements.

A placement may be unpaid only where it meets the Fair Work Act vocational-placement rules or another lawful basis. Calling ordinary work a placement does not remove employment entitlements. Ask Student Support or the Fair Work Ombudsman if concerned about pay, exploitation or unsafe duties. Visa work conditions must be checked separately; not all work labelled placement is automatically exempt from a work limit.

Report unsafe work, harassment, missing supervision or difficulty completing tasks immediately. Stop and seek assistance if an activity presents immediate danger. Apex will review the arrangement, provide support and arrange a suitable contingency where needed. A placement failure beyond your control is not automatically a student default or an extra fee.

Related policy: VE-STP21 Work Placement and Training V1.1; VE-STP13 Training and Assessment.

4.23 Assessment Reassessment and Academic Integrity

What competency assessment means

Assessment collects and evaluates evidence of your individual skills and knowledge against the current training product, including practical performance, required occasions, conditions, resources, prerequisites and any workplace requirements. A numerical score, attendance, fee payment or completion of a worksheet alone does not establish competence.

Before assessment, your trainer explains the tasks, evidence, performance expectations, conditions, due dates, submission route, support, adjustment, reassessment and appeal options. Ask for clarification before you begin. Practical tasks may be assessed progressively rather than only at the end of a unit. Use the specified submission route; contact staff promptly if access fails.

Principles and evidence

Assessment principle	What it means for you
Fairness	Your needs are considered; requirements and decisions are explained; reasonable adjustments, reassessment and appeal are available where appropriate.
Flexibility	Methods reflect the learner, context and product and recognise relevant competence regardless of how it was acquired, while retaining required evidence.
Validity	Assessment includes the knowledge and practical application needed to demonstrate the actual unit requirements.
Reliability	Clear benchmarks support consistent interpretation and decisions across assessors.

Evidence must also be valid, sufficient, authentic and current. It must address the requirements, cover enough relevant tasks and occasions, be your own work and demonstrate current competence. Apex validates assessment systematically and uses findings to improve tools and judgement. Individual outcomes remain based on evidence.

Your work and use of technology

Submit your own work and acknowledge sources and permitted contributions. Do not purchase answers, impersonate another learner, fabricate workplace records, copy another student or submit unauthorised AI-generated work as your own. Follow the task-specific instructions about tools, collaboration and generative AI; ask your assessor where unclear.

For group tasks, identify each member and their contribution. Group participation does not remove the need to demonstrate each person's competence. Apex may use questioning, observation or other lawful checks to verify authorship. A concern is investigated fairly with an opportunity to respond before an adverse finding; detection software or a declaration alone is not conclusive evidence.

Results feedback and reassessment

Your assessor records task feedback and identifies unmet criteria and further evidence needed. Final unit outcomes distinguish Competent from Not Yet Competent. Approved credit and RPL are recorded accurately. A Not Satisfactory task result is not the same as a final competency judgement.

If evidence is insufficient, Apex will explain available further learning, resubmission or reassessment, reasonable timing, support and any lawful agreed fee before a further paid service. Assessment remains competency-based; a 40% mark is not a competency standard. Any score used administratively cannot replace assessment against the unit requirements.

Previously satisfactory evidence may be retained where still valid, sufficient, authentic and current. Some integrated tasks or practical demonstrations may need to be repeated in full; the assessor explains the scope and reason. Reassessment is not automatically unavailable because an observation, role-play, trade unit or placement is involved. Nor is there an unlimited entitlement to repeated attempts without appropriate learning and conditions.

Apex will not automatically impose a fee or remove an available opportunity solely because a rigid three-day period has expired without considering the circumstances, learning needs, reasonable adjustments and agreed terms. A paid reassessment must be transparently disclosed and lawful. If a published fee or attempt rule appears inconsistent with these protections, seek RTO Manager review before payment or exclusion.

Absence extensions and late work

Tell the trainer or Student Support as early as possible if you cannot attend or submit on time. Request an extension before the due date where practicable, or as soon as reasonably possible after an unforeseen event. Explain relevant circumstances and provide proportionate evidence. A blanket seven-day advance application requirement does not prevent consideration of an unexpected illness or emergency.

Apex records the decision, reason and revised date and explains assessment, support and appeal options. Absence or late submission means evidence may be missing; it is not itself proof of incompetence. A further enrolment period or CoE extension must be academically justified and separately lawful. Staff approval for reassessment does not automatically extend a visa or permit study outside lawful arrangements.

Appeals and retention

If you disagree with a result, ask for explanation or lodge an appeal under sections 4.13–4.14. You may challenge the method, conduct or judgement and have the matter considered by a qualified independent reviewer. Reasonable access assistance is available.

Apex retains assessment submissions for at least two years after completion and, under its exit control, at least two years after withdrawal/discontinuance. Longer legal, contractual, licensing or hold requirements apply where relevant. Certification records are retained for at least thirty years. Your information is protected and accessible under the privacy and records procedures.

Related policies: VE-STP13 Training and Assessment V1.1; VE-STP05 Reassessment; VE-STP11 RPL and Course Credit; VE-HRP01 Complaints and Appeals.

4.24 Issuance of Qualifications and Access to Awards

Apex issues a testamur and record of results when you meet the full qualification requirements. If you exit after attaining some units, or complete an applicable standalone unit or short course, a statement of attainment records the achieved nationally recognised units/modules. A continuing student's interim progress may be shown in a record of results; it is not an interim qualification or statement of attainment.

Academic staff verify every required unit, approved credit/RPL, packaging, prerequisites, assessment conditions and placement before certification. Attendance, payment or holding a CoE is not proof of achievement. Apex issues only within its lawful scope and registration; third parties cannot issue Apex AQF certification on its behalf.

Timing and eligibility

Eligible certification is issued within thirty calendar days from completion of assessment where the statutory qualification/withdrawal and relevant agreed-fee conditions are met, with a verified USI or lawful exemption. Apex applies a thirty-calendar-day maximum to completed standalone units, skill sets and accredited short courses as well.

Issuance starts automatically; you do not need to apply, attend graduation, complete a survey or arrange collection to trigger it. On confirmed withdrawal, Apex initiates the statement of attainment immediately and checks the assessment/exit dates. It does not start a fresh discretionary thirty-day period where the assessment-based deadline has already passed. Apex targets fourteen calendar days after exit once eligible, subject to an earlier applicable deadline.

Only unpaid agreed fees associated with the relevant training product may affect initial issuance under the applicable rule. Unrelated debts, waived or refunded fees and amounts not lawfully payable are not blanket grounds to hold certification. Disputed fees are referred to the RTO Manager. Genuine USI or other eligibility barriers are explained and actively resolved; missing internal signatures or stationery do not extend a legal deadline. Once a later eligibility condition is met, Apex targets release within five working days.

What your documents contain and how they are sent

Your documents identify you and Apex, the actual qualification or attained units, appropriate dates and authentication information. A unique certificate number links the award to Apex's register. Qualification and statement-of-attainment wording and logo use follow the 2025 Compliance Standards and AQF requirements. Your USI is not printed on the documents.

Apex retains an exact copy before dispatch and records the issue. Documents are sent directly through a secure portal, verified email or secure post; collection requires identity verification. Release to an agent or another person requires verified authority or another lawful basis. Academic completion and any reportable early completion are recorded without waiting for collection or fee clearance.

Replacements corrections and verification

Current and former students may request access to retained certification records. For a replacement, use the replacement form or equivalent accessible written request. Verify identity, any name change and representative authority. A statutory declaration is requested only where reasonably necessary to resolve a concern; physical attendance at campus is not compulsory in every case.

A replacement reproduces the original achievement, is marked Replacement, retains the original award date and shows the actual replacement issue date. It does not substitute a newer course. A reasonable disclosed replacement fee may apply, but correcting Apex's error is free. Existing-record access is not automatically conditional on an unrelated debt or purchase of a new testamur. Verified replacements are issued within thirty calendar days after the information needed is received, subject to a lawful disclosed fee.

Apex retains certification records for at least thirty years and can authenticate them subject to privacy checks. If an error is identified, it will be corrected with a linked audit trail. Any possible invalid award or fraud is investigated fairly; revocation needs a lawful basis, written reasons, an opportunity to respond and review rights. Revocation is not a debt-recovery measure.

Related policies: VE-HRP04 Issuing Qualifications V10.2; VE-STP22 Certification V1.1; VE-HRP05 Student Identifier Scheme Process.

4.25 Deferral Suspension and Cancellation

Deferral postpones commencement. Suspension temporarily pauses study after commencement. Cancellation ends the identified enrolment. Each has different academic, fee and possible visa consequences. Contact Student Support to understand your options; a requested change is not effective merely because you stopped attending.

Student-requested changes

Submit a written request using the relevant form or equivalent accessible information, identify the course and dates and explain the reason with relevant evidence. Apex considers compassionate or compelling circumstances individually, including serious illness/injury, bereavement, major disruption, trauma, visa delay or a course-availability issue. A police or psychologist report is not automatically required in every trauma case; evidence requests must be relevant and proportionate.

Apex gives a written outcome, reasons, dates, conditions and review options, and updates the agreement, timetable or CoE where required. Students affected by a proposed extension or changed CoE should seek visa advice from Home Affairs or an authorised migration adviser.

If you wish to withdraw, tell Apex clearly in writing. We may offer support and clarify the scope of withdrawal, including any later packaged courses, but withdrawal is not dependent on Apex liking your reasons, an agent's consent or paying every disputed amount first. Academic records, refunds, transfer restrictions and visa/reporting duties are assessed separately. Do not assume that withdrawing from one course automatically cancels every later course without clarification.

Apex-initiated action

Misconduct or failure to pay an amount required under the written agreement may lead to a proposed suspension or cancellation after evidence is assessed. You receive written reasons and, for relevant overseas decisions, twenty working days to access internal appeal. A final decision must be made by the authorised decision-maker with procedural fairness and without conflict.

Under National Code Standard 9, the action normally cannot take effect until the internal process is completed. Earlier action is limited to the Code's health or wellbeing exception; Apex must have and document a genuine basis, not simply rely on debt, a vague allegation or a diagnosis. Appropriate safety support continues.

Course-progress and legally reportable attendance decisions follow the separate internal and external appeal safeguards in section 4.19 and National Code Standard 8. Apex reports the actual event through PRISMS under the relevant ESOS obligation and deadline. It does not use one event label to bypass another process or delay a separate mandatory report while an unrelated matter is investigated.

Deferral, suspension, cancellation or a report may affect a visa, but Apex does not cancel visas. Keep studying and meeting your obligations unless a lawful approved arrangement or direction says otherwise. Contact Student Support if a notice or next step is unclear.

Related policy: VE-STP09 Deferring Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment V8.1; VE-HRP01 Complaints and Appeals.

4.26 Changes to Course Arrangements

Apex will tell affected students as soon as practicable about material changes to services, ownership or third-party arrangements, timetable, location, resources or course availability. Notice explains the effect on your study, available support, options and any lawful agreement changes. The current course must remain within the approved scope and delivery arrangements.

A general statement that fees or conditions may change does not permit an unfair unilateral variation or remove an agreed or statutory remedy. Apex will honour the accepted agreement except where a lawful, fair and clearly disclosed

variation provision applies. Any required consent, refund, alternative delivery or provider-default action is addressed separately.

If a training product is superseded or deleted, Apex will explain the approved transition/teach-out arrangement, recognition of completed units, remaining study, costs and support. It will not assume equivalence of every unit or introduce a replacement course without the required approval. Ask the Academic Manager about your individual plan.

4.27 Student Input and Feedback

We invite feedback about teaching, assessment, support, resources, safety and the student experience through surveys, discussions, email and accessible feedback routes. You may request a private meeting or provide anonymous feedback; we will explain where anonymity limits follow-up.

Apex reviews feedback with staff and student information to identify improvements, allocate actions and check effectiveness. You do not need to wait for a survey to raise a concern. A formal complaint or appeal can be lodged directly under sections 4.13–4.14. Completing an exit survey is not a precondition to certification or a refund legally due.

4.28 Access to Student Records

Current and former students may ask for access to their own personal, learning and retained certification information. Email support@apexaustralia.edu.au or ask Reception. A form may help, but an accessible equivalent request is accepted. We verify identity and representative authority and protect other people's information.

We will explain the response, any lawful limitation, any permitted charge and review options. Access to existing records is not automatically conditional on paying unrelated debts or purchasing a replacement certificate. If an entry appears wrong, identify it and provide relevant evidence so Apex can investigate and correct the record with an audit trail.

Certification records are retained for at least thirty years. Other records have the applicable legal/contractual period and holds. Privacy access requests and student document requests are handled under their relevant rules; a routine administrative target does not displace a statutory duty.

4.29 Contact Details and Communications

Notify Apex within seven days of any change to your residential address, mobile number, email address or emergency contact details, and provide required initial details promptly after arrival. Use the secure student route or contact Admissions. Tell us if an agent's contact has been used in place of your own details or a communication method is unsafe.

Check your designated Apex/student email, LMS and other agreed channels regularly. We explain how to access them and obtain help at orientation. Keep a personal email and phone available as backup. Formal notices are sent using verified details and include reasons, actions, support and actual deadlines. Tell us promptly if you cannot access a notice or believe it is incorrect.

Routine requests are acknowledged by the next working day and normally receive a substantive response within three working days. Urgent safety matters are prioritised immediately. Ask Reception or the RTO Manager to follow up an unanswered or deadline-sensitive matter. Former students retain a practical contact route after a student account is closed.

Related policy: VE-STP20 Student Communication V1.2.

4.30 Security Systems and Smoke Alarms

Follow campus security procedures and displayed emergency information. CCTV or other security measures may operate in signposted areas for legitimate safety/security purposes, with privacy safeguards and restricted access. They do not give permission for unrestricted recording, audio surveillance or disclosure of student activity.

Do not interfere with alarms, detectors, exits, access controls or firefighting equipment. Report a fault, obstruction or suspicious activity promptly. Learn the evacuation route and assembly point for the actual building, floor and practical-training site you attend. Follow the local emergency plan rather than assuming every campus has identical equipment or exits.

4.31 Student Identification Cards

Apex provides a student identification card after commencement using a photo collected for that purpose. Carry it when required at campus or placement and show it to authorised staff when reasonably requested. Report loss or misuse promptly.

You may request a replacement through Student Support; a lawful disclosed replacement charge may apply. A student card is not evidence of immigration permission, occupational licensing or automatic eligibility for a transport concession. Ask the relevant transport authority about your eligibility before using a concession.

4.32 Personal Safety and Life in Australia

Keep your belongings secure, plan travel and let a trusted person know if plans change. Use well-lit routes and authorised transport and seek local advice if unfamiliar with an area. Report concerns to Student Support; call 000 for immediate danger. General advice to look after property does not remove non-excludable rights.

Use alcohol lawfully and never drive while impaired. Do not bring illegal substances to campus or misuse medication. Respect local rules about smoking, vaping and alcohol in public places. Workplace and migration consequences depend on the actual circumstances; staff cannot predict or guarantee a visa outcome.

At the beach, choose a patrolled beach, follow signs, ask lifesavers about conditions and swim between the red and yellow flags. Swim with another person, avoid alcohol before swimming and do not enter dangerous conditions. If in difficulty, stay calm, conserve energy, signal and call for help; follow lifesaver instructions.

Protect your identity and finances. Do not share passwords, bank security codes or your USI in public. Independently verify payment changes with Apex. Report suspected scams, exploitation, racism, harassment or family violence through a safe channel and ask for appropriate referral. You can seek help without first obtaining an agent's permission.

Overseas students should maintain required OSHC, understand their actual visa conditions and use official Home Affairs/VEVO information. Study must remain consistent with those conditions. Do not rely on a general work-hours statement or an agent's assurance as individual migration advice. For employment rights, including unpaid work, visit the Fair Work Ombudsman at <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>.

Ask Student Support for current accommodation options, indicative living costs, tenancy/legal services and information about schooling obligations and possible fees for dependants. Costs change and estimates are not guarantees. Keep emergency and support contacts available on your phone and in another accessible form.

5.0 Training Delivery

5.1 Competency Based Training

VET training develops the skills and knowledge required by the enrolled training product. You practise and demonstrate tasks against the published criteria. Time spent in class or a percentage mark does not alone establish competence. The amount and structure of training reflect the course and the learner's prior skills and needs.

Apex offers learning, practice, feedback and assessment through the approved plan. Ask your trainer about any gap between your experience and the planned learning. Relevant prior competence can be considered through credit or RPL; staff do not simply remove training or shorten a CoE without evidence and approval.

5.2 Training Products and Course Requirements

Your course outline and timetable identify the qualification or course, current codes and selected units, delivery and assessment requirements, duration and completion conditions. National training product information is available at <https://training.gov.au/>. Apex must be authorised to deliver the product and relevant CRICOS course/location where applicable.

Training, assessment, practical conditions, prerequisites, licensing and workplace requirements must all be met. Completion of a qualification does not automatically confer a licence, registration, job or visa benefit. If requirements change through supersession or transition, you will receive an explanation of the effect and your individual options.

5.3 Professional Staff

Apex uses sufficient appropriately qualified and current trainers, assessors and support staff for its delivery. VET trainers and assessors must meet the applicable 2025 requirements and Credential Policy and maintain vocational competence, industry currency and relevant professional development. ELICOS teachers must meet the separate applicable requirements.

Your trainer explains how and when to seek academic help. Student Support coordinates other assistance. Tell the Academic Manager or Student Support if staffing, availability or a resource problem prevents you participating or getting timely feedback.

5.4 Guest Trainers and Industry Involvement

Industry representatives and guest speakers may contribute current workplace knowledge and demonstrations. Their involvement is planned and supervised appropriately. They do not replace a required qualified assessor or become entitled to make competency judgements merely because they are an industry expert.

Apex remains responsible for course quality, safety, support and assessment when a guest, host or third party is involved. You will be told of relevant third-party delivery arrangements before enrolment and material changes affecting you. Raise concerns with Apex directly.

5.5 Flexible Delivery and Online Learning

Your approved course plan specifies classroom, practical, workplace, supported online and independent learning arrangements. There is no universal requirement that every class be split equally between lecturer-led and student-led activity. Trainers use suitable explanations, demonstrations, practice, discussion and individual/group learning to meet the actual course requirements.

For relevant overseas VET students, Apex does not deliver more than one-third of course units or equivalent by online or distance learning and ensures at least one non-online/distance unit in each study period, except where the permitted final-unit exception applies. A course cannot be delivered exclusively online/distance to those students. Full-time

overseas VET study normally includes at least twenty scheduled course-contact hours per week unless ASQA has specified otherwise. Independent homework and an LMS login are not automatically scheduled supervised contact. Approved CRICOS delivery requirements continue to apply.

An online login or an uploaded assessment is not automatically face-to-face attendance. Apex provides access, technology guidance, interaction and support suitable for online learning. Tell Student Support if device, connectivity, disability or digital-literacy barriers affect participation. Required IT and any additional costs are explained before enrolment.

ELICOS must provide at least twenty face-to-face scheduled contact hours per week; online resources supplement rather than replace that minimum. Flexible methods and reasonable adjustments must not remove practical assessment conditions, essential learning outcomes or lawful attendance requirements.

5.6 Training Outcomes and Pathways

Apex's aim is valid achievement of the enrolled training product or ELICOS learning outcomes. An AQF qualification is issued only when all applicable requirements are met. Otherwise, achieved nationally recognised units may be recorded in a statement of attainment on exit as appropriate. ELICOS completion documents are distinct from AQF qualifications.

Pathways to further study, employment or professional recognition depend on the receiving organisation's current requirements and your circumstances. Ask for evidence of any advertised pathway. Apex does not guarantee employment, a licence, a visa, permanent residence or acceptance by another provider.

5.7 Excursions and Activities Away from Campus

Your course may include relevant visits, excursions, practical activities or workplace learning. Apex will explain the purpose, learning and assessment, location, timing, travel, costs, supervision and safety requirements before the activity. Tell staff about access or support needs and seek approval before changing an arrangement.

Follow the induction, required protective-equipment rules and supervisor directions. Report incidents and concerns promptly. Where participation creates an access barrier or an activity cannot proceed safely, discuss a suitable alternative that preserves required outcomes. Optional activities must not be represented as compulsory paid services without a proper basis.

5.8 Facilities Resources and Equipment

Apex provides appropriate facilities, equipment and learning resources for the training and assessment planned, including required practical settings and access arrangements. Facilities should have suitable space, lighting, ventilation, acoustics, amenities and safe equipment. Resources are maintained, inspected and replaced or repaired where needed.

Your course information identifies compulsory textbooks, software, uniforms, tools, IT and other resources, whether supplied or purchased and any additional cost. Do not assume every course uses a commercial kitchen, workshop or the same computer arrangement. Tell staff if a required resource is missing, unsafe, inaccessible or unsuitable.

Campus computers, internet and permitted printing are for authorised learning use and are subject to access, security and availability arrangements. Printing or separately requested services may have disclosed charges. Bring a suitable device only where required or recommended for your course and protect files and passwords. Ask about support if you cannot meet a required technology arrangement.

Use only approved storage and submission routes; do not place sensitive student or workplace information on an unsecured shared device. Seek assistance with technical problems before a due date where possible. Apex's responsibility for essential resources and access does not disappear because you can bring a laptop or nominate a placement.

6.0 ELICOS

This section applies only to students in an Apex ELICOS course offered within its current CRICOS registration and approved delivery location. Your agreement and timetable identify the actual course, level, dates and campus. The original handbook's general reference to Sydney is not permission to deliver an unapproved course or location. Contact Admissions if any course or campus detail is unclear.

ELICOS is governed by its approved curriculum, the ELICOS Standards 2018 and applicable ESOS/National Code requirements. VET competency percentages, qualification packaging and USI rules must not automatically be applied to ELICOS.

Placement learning and assessment

Apex reviews your English evidence, goals and learning needs and places you at an appropriate level under the disclosed placement arrangements. Teachers explain the learning outcomes, learning-block dates, assessment tasks, proficiency criteria, feedback, support and the point at which progress becomes unsatisfactory. Diagnostic assessment helps placement and support; it is not a punitive progress decision.

Teachers monitor participation and learning each week, provide formative feedback and assess at the curriculum checkpoints. Satisfactory progress means meeting the disclosed learning outcomes and assessment/proficiency criteria with a viable pathway to completion within the CoE duration. Weekly activities or tests may contribute evidence, but one formative error or an unmarked task is not automatically final unsatisfactory progress.

Attendance

ELICOS requires at least twenty face-to-face scheduled contact hours each week. Satisfactory attendance is at least 80% of scheduled course-contact hours. The attendance period is the course/CoE, not a fresh allowance every term. Actual hours, lateness and early departure are recorded; holidays, breaks, unsupervised study and online logins are not face-to-face attendance.

Apex reviews absences promptly and monitors both current attendance and the best final attendance achievable if all remaining hours are attended. Unexplained absence, repeated missed classes, attendance below 90% or five consecutive days without approval can trigger contact and support. Warnings explain the actual calculation, available recovery and a support meeting. Do not wait for a formal warning to ask for help.

If 80% is no longer achievable, Apex checks records, evidence and support before a final decision. Under the ELICOS discretion, Apex may decide not to report an attendance breach where the student is still attending at least 70% of scheduled contact hours and gives genuine evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances. This is not an automatic entitlement or a new 70% satisfactory-attendance standard. Satisfactory course progress is not an extra statutory condition for this ELICOS discretion, but independent progress concerns are assessed separately.

Intervention appeals and completion

Apex offers timely individual support when risk emerges, including a meeting normally within five working days or earlier for short courses. The plan identifies issues, assistance, learning/attendance targets, responsibilities and review dates, normally reviewed at least fortnightly and sooner when needed. Approved absence does not turn into attendance or automatically waive an attendance minimum.

A final unsatisfactory-progress decision is made at the scheduled learning-block review after the disclosed criteria, support and permitted recovery opportunities have been considered. If a reportable attendance or progress failure is established, Apex gives written reasons and twenty working days to access internal appeal and follows the applicable external safeguards before PRISMS reporting. Home Affairs determines any visa consequence.

Completion or progression is based on the course's actual requirements. An ELICOS attendance or completion document is not an AQF VET qualification and does not automatically satisfy entry to a later VET course. Related policies: VEL-STP01 V1.2 and VEL-STP02 V1.1.

7.0 Location Maps and Travel

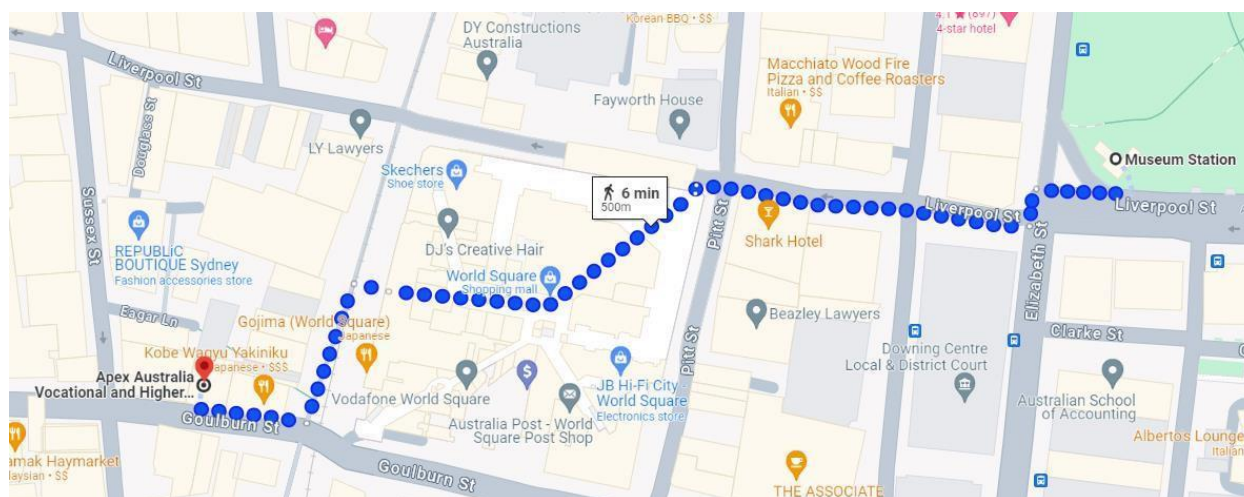
Your offer, agreement, timetable and orientation identify where you are required to attend. The illustrations below are retained from the source handbook as navigation aids; check current services, building access, your allocated floor and any updated campus notice before travelling. A map does not establish that a particular course is currently approved at that site.

Sydney CBD

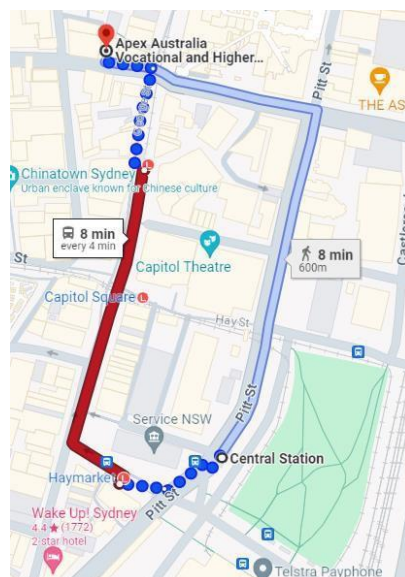
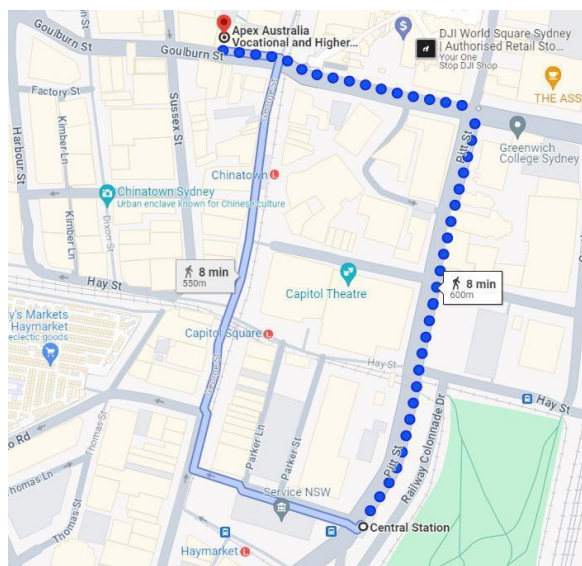
22–26 Goulburn Street, Sydney NSW 2000. The current public contact page lists Level 2; follow your allocated timetable and campus instructions for the correct floor or practical-training location. Reception: (02) 8007 6261.

Museum and Central stations and the light rail provide nearby travel options. Check live transport information rather than relying on an exact walking time in an older map.

From Museum station



From Central station — walking and light rail

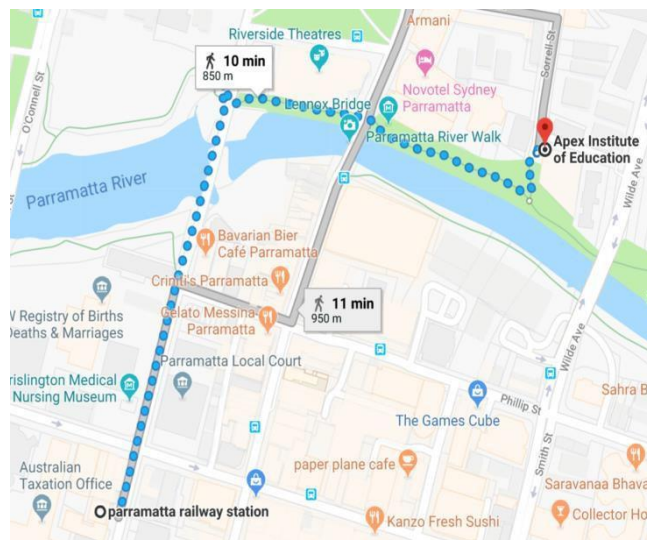
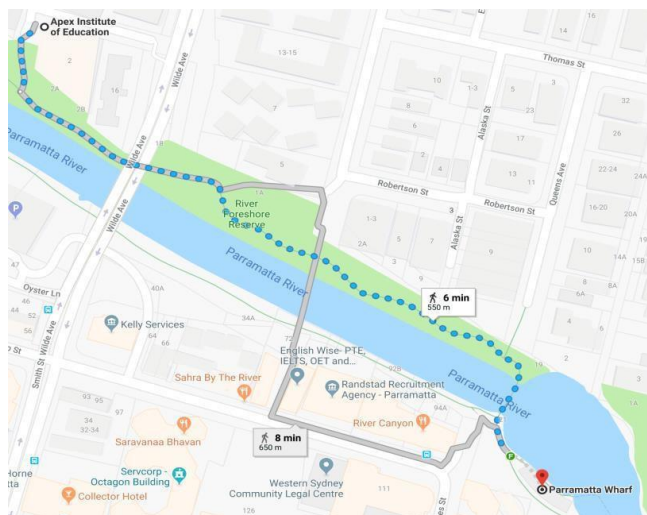


Navigation illustrations retained from the source handbook. Check current routes and your allocated location.

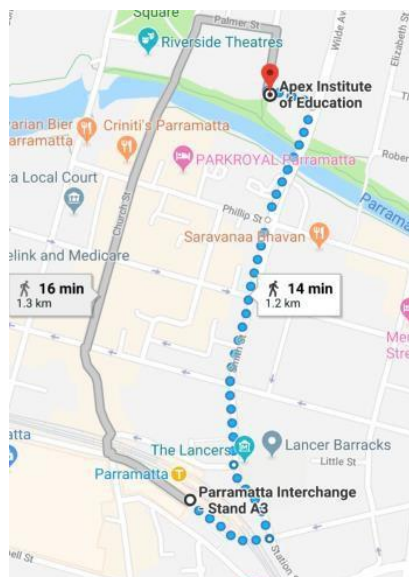
Parramatta

2 Sorrell Street, Parramatta NSW 2150. Reception: (02) 8007 6262. Check the allocated room and practical-training site in your timetable.

Parramatta station, interchange and ferry services provide travel options. Check current routes and accessible travel arrangements before leaving.



Parramatta ferry access



Source handbook illustrations; Google Maps attribution retained in the illustrations where shown. Check live services.

Melbourne

Level 7, 123 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. Contact: (02) 8007 6262. Follow your allocated campus and building instructions.

Melbourne Central and nearby tram/bus services provide travel options. Check live transport and accessible route information.

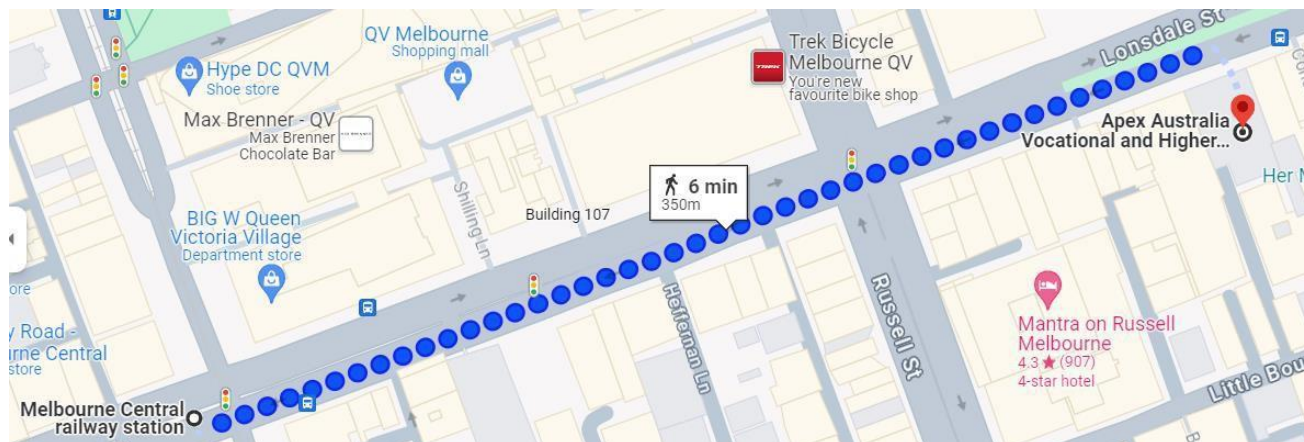


Illustration retained from the source handbook. Check current routes and building access.

Use <https://transportnsw.info/> for NSW services and <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/> for Victorian transport information, or ask Student Support for assistance. International student status or an Apex ID card does not itself establish concession eligibility.

8.0 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

If there is immediate danger, call 000 and alert nearby staff without putting yourself at risk. Follow emergency-service personnel, the building emergency plan and authorised wardens. Give the exact location and describe the emergency and hazards.

- On hearing an evacuation instruction or alarm, stop work safely and follow the warden's directions. Do not assume the alarm is a test.
- Leave by the designated safe exit and stairs. Do not use a lift during a fire evacuation unless emergency personnel direct otherwise under an approved plan.
- Do not collect belongings or re-enter a hazardous area. Move calmly and assist others only where safe.
- Go to the designated assembly point for the actual building or training site and remain with the group. Tell the warden or trainer if a person may be missing; do not return to search yourself.
- Staff check students against the available roll or visitor record. Stay available for the check and do not leave without telling the responsible staff member where safe to do so.
- Do not re-enter until emergency personnel or authorised wardens give clearance.

Tell Student Support in advance if you need assistance evacuating because of disability, injury or another access need. Apex will discuss suitable arrangements, including a personal emergency evacuation plan where appropriate. Ask staff to identify the current assembly point, first-aid location and warden for each site you attend.

After an incident, follow support and reporting instructions. Safety action does not remove confidentiality, fair treatment or access to appropriate assistance. See section 4.11 for critical-incident support.

9.0 Contact Information and Emergency Contacts

Emergency and Apex assistance

Need	Contact and action
Immediate police fire or ambulance emergency	Call 000. Give your exact location. Do not use email or wait for an Apex callback.
Apex urgent after-hours welfare notification	+61 413 844 955, retained from the source handbook. This is an Apex contact, not an emergency-service or clinical crisis line. Call 000 first for immediate danger.
Student Support and routine assistance	support@apexaustralia.edu.au; (02) 8007 6262; or campus Reception. Routine inboxes are not continuously monitored emergency channels.
General information	info@apexaustralia.edu.au; https://vet.apexaustralia.edu.au/
Admissions and enrolment	enrolments@apexaustralia.edu.au; (02) 8007 6262.
Complaints or appeals	support@apexaustralia.edu.au, marked Academic Manager for complaints or RTO Manager for appeals; an accessible alternative is available.

Health and other official services

Service	Contact or website
Healthdirect including NURSE-ON-CALL in Victoria	1800 022 222, available 24 hours for health advice; https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/ . For a life-threatening emergency call 000.
State Emergency Service storm or flood assistance	132 500; for immediate danger call 000.
Home Affairs and visa conditions	https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/ and the official VEVO service. For individual migration assistance use a lawfully authorised professional.
Fair Work Ombudsman workplace rights	https://www.fairwork.gov.au/ ; ask Student Support for referral help.
Commonwealth Ombudsman overseas students at private VET/ELICOS providers	1300 362 072; https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/ .
Consumer protection	https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/fair-trading and https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/ .
Privacy and discrimination concerns	https://www.oaic.gov.au/ ; https://humanrights.gov.au/ ; relevant NSW or Victorian equality services.
USI information and free creation	https://www.usi.gov.au/ .

Apex can help locate appropriate legal, housing, employment, health, disability, family-violence and other specialist services, including language and access assistance. Ask about costs, eligibility and waiting times before using an external service. Current campus opening hours, designated support staff and backup contacts are available through Reception, the LMS and campus notices.

Hospitals near the campus areas

These are general hospital contacts, not a substitute for 000 or a clinical assessment. Call Healthdirect if unsure where to seek non-emergency care. Confirm the appropriate service and entrance before travelling.

Area	Hospital and general contact
Parramatta and western Sydney	Westmead Hospital, Westmead; (02) 8890 5555. Official directions and services: https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/wslhd/ .
Sydney CBD area	St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, 390 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst; (02) 8382 1111; https://www.svhs.org.au/ .
Melbourne	St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, 41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy; (03) 9231 2211; https://www.svhm.org.au/ .
Melbourne Parkville	The Royal Melbourne Hospital, 300 Grattan Street, Parkville; (03) 9342 7000; https://www.thermh.org.au/ .

For local GPs, pharmacies and other services, use the Healthdirect service finder or ask Student Support. General-practice clinics must not be described as hospital emergency departments. Do not rely on an old list of bank branches, contractor numbers or government counter hours; check the current official service information.

Living near campus

Public transport, shops, food outlets and other facilities are available around the campus areas. Plan your journey using current route information and allow time for delays. Contact Student Support about accessibility, accommodation and settling into Australia. Do not assume an estimated walking time, a nearby business or a specific bank branch will remain unchanged.

10.0 Document Control

Field	Record
Document name	Student Handbook
Document code	VE-STI02
Current version	V6.0 — approved compliance revision of V5.1
Review cycle and due date	February 2027 retained from V5.1. This interim correction does not advance the next review or record a future review as completed.
Approval authority	CEO. Commencement is effective only when actual CEO authorisation is recorded in the controlled register.
Historical approval dates	May 2020; May 2022; August 2022; March 2023; February 2024; 18 April 2024; 11 March 2026, as recorded.
Department	Student Admissions
Document controller	RTO Manager
Organisation	Apex Australia Vocational Education

Revision History

Version	Date or cycle	Change summary	Author	Review due
V1.0	May 2020	New document.	CEO	May 2021
V3.1	May 2022	Draft reviewed; general information updated.	Academic Manager	May 2023
V3.2	August 2022	Draft finalised.	Academic Manager	August 2023
V3.3	March 2023	Information reviewed.	Academic Manager	January 2024
V4.0	February 2024	Formatting, legislation, ELICOS, Melbourne and control updates.	Senior Compliance and Risk Manager	February 2025
V5.0	18 April 2024	Final review and approval.	CEO	February 2025
V5.1	11 March 2026	Review and approval recorded in source.	CEO	February 2027
V6.0	October 2026	2025 Standards/ESOS update; changes and alignment controls in Appendices A–C. Actual approval to be recorded separately.	RTO Manager / CEO approval authority	February 2028

Appendix A Outline of Changes

This outline records the substantive changes from the supplied VE-STI02 Student Handbook V5.1 dated 11 March 2026. Section references are to this revised handbook. It does not record approval of another policy or retrospectively change a student's rights.

Affected sections	Change made	Basis	Alignment
Front matter; 1.0; 4.2	Replaced the 2015 framework, corrected the support email, removed blanket liability exclusion and added legal-rights protection and accessible information.	2025 Outcome/Compliance Standards; ACL; National Code 1–3.	VE-MP01; VEL-STP02; VE-STP03/10.
3.0; 4.24	Updated offshore USI timing, verification/exemptions, privacy and prohibition on printing USIs; automatic certification and accessible replacements.	Student Identifiers Act ss11,53; Compliance ss9–12.	VE-HRP05 V1.2; VE-HRP04 V10.2; VE-STP22 V1.1.
4.1; 4.4–4.5	Added fair discipline, protected-characteristic and cultural-safety safeguards, sexual-harm response, access assistance and no compulsory confrontation.	Outcome 2.4–2.8; disability/equality law; National Code 9–10.	VE-STP07 V7.1; VE-HRP01 V10.3.
4.6–4.7; 4.18; 4.20	Moved VET LLN/digital suitability review before enrolment; strengthened consultation, practical support access and reasonable adjustments.	Outcome 2.1–2.6; Disability Standards for Education; National Code 2,6.	VEL-STP02; VE-STP03; VE-STP06; wellbeing strategy.
4.8; 4.19; 6.0	Separated internal VET attendance from legally reportable attendance; retained current registration position and future-condition response. Noted VE-STP19 supersession.	National Code 8; ELICOS P1; applicable registration conditions.	VEL-STP01 V1.2; VE-STP02.
4.9–4.10; 4.28–4.30	Updated lawful disclosure, access, USI protection, data-system handling and the October 2026 VET privacy-notice requirement.	Privacy Act/APPs; Data Provision Requirements as amended by F2026L00933.	VE-HRP06 V1.1; enrolment notices require operational alignment.
4.11–4.12; 4.32; 8.0	Updated critical-incident triage, NSW/Victorian safety frameworks, training-tool distinction, accessible evacuation and proportionate safety action.	NSW WHS Act/Regulation 2025; Victorian OHS Act/Regulations; National Code 6.	Support, equity, privacy and incident procedures.
4.13–4.14	Removed compulsory forms/informal resolution and conflicting appeal periods; added impartial review, service targets and correct external routes.	Outcome 2.7–2.8; National Code 7–10.	VE-HRP01 V10.3; VE-STP20 V1.2.
4.15–4.17	Clarified RPL/credit evidence, authenticity, no blanket certified-copy or 14-day rule, written acceptance and reduced-duration reporting.	Outcome 1.6–1.7; National Code 2.3–2.5.	VE-STP11 V8.1; VEL-STP02.

Affected sections	Change made	Basis	Alignment
4.18; 4.29	Added safe, accessible support requests, response priorities, confidentiality limits, realistic referral cost/availability and follow-up.	Outcome 2.3–2.6; National Code 6.	VE-STP06 V11.1; VE-OPP08 V1.1; VE-STP20 V1.2.
4.19	Corrected exact-50% boundary, study-period definition, early intervention, evidence-based final review and separate reporting/appeal duties.	National Code 8; Outcome 1.4,2.3–2.4,2.8.	VE-STP02 source and compliance assessment; VEL-STP01.
4.20	Updated intake checks, written agreement, CoE/study-right distinction and temporary 12-month transfer restriction, then scheduled 6-month return.	National Code 2–4,7; F2026L01351 effective 2 October 2026.	VEL-STP02; VE-STP03/08/10.
4.20	Replaced automatic release refusals for debt/lower course/no support; added fair reasons, timing, free release and appeal safeguards.	National Code 7.2–7.6 and 10.	VE-STP08 V10.1; VE-HRP01.
4.21	Rebuilt statutory refund pathways, causal visa-refusal tests, total-course-fee basis, dates, payees, package treatment and no extra statutory deductions.	ESOS ss46A–46F,47A–47H; Refund Instrument 2024; ACL.	VE-STP04 review findings; unresolved source-policy clauses not adopted.
4.21	Clarified continuing domestic AUD1,500 cap, overseas voluntary prepayment and hardship; removed automatic unlimited weekly late-fee authority.	Compliance s18; ESOS ss27–31; ACL unfair-term rules.	VE-STP04 assessment; admissions and agreement controls.
4.22	Removed obsolete course-code claims and universal placement assumptions; added host approval, capacity, assessment, safety and lawful unpaid-work checks.	Outcome 1.1–1.4,1.8; Fair Work Act s12; applicable safety law.	VE-STP21 V1.1; VE-STP13 V1.1.
4.23	Updated assessment principles/evidence, integrity and AI, feedback, late work, reasonable reassessment and records; excluded blanket score/three-day rules.	Outcome 1.3–1.5; Compliance s10; disability and consumer law.	VE-STP13; VE-STP05 compliance assessment.
4.24	Aligned full/partial awards, evidence and timing, relevant-fee holds, secure dispatch, records, replacements, correction and fair revocation.	Compliance ss9–12; AQF; USI law; ESOS reporting.	VE-HRP04 V10.2; VE-STP22 V1.1.
4.25–4.26	Separated withdrawal, release, refunds and reporting; removed discretion to reject genuine withdrawal; limited unilateral changes and early suspension exceptions.	National Code 8–10; ESOS s19; ACL.	VE-STP09 V8.1; VE-STP08; complaints policy.

Affected sections	Change made	Basis	Alignment
5.0–5.8; 6.0	Removed fixed 50/50 teaching formula; clarified online/distance limits, essential resources and separate ELICOS learning/attendance rules.	Outcome 1.1–1.8; National Code 8.18–8.22; ELICOS Standards.	VE-STP13; VEL-STP01/02; support and placement policies.
7.0; 9.0	Retained navigation images; clarified allocated floors, live travel information and emergency vs routine routes. Updated public hospital/service references.	National Code 2,6; accurate information and safety controls.	Apex public contact page; source handbook; official service directories.
10.0; Appendices A–C	Advanced V5.1 to V5.2 as an interim revision; retained February 2027 review due, historical rows and original cover/logo; added alignment exceptions and release controls.	Source review cycle; governance, approval and continuous improvement.	Actual CEO approval required; no backdating or fabricated sign-off.

Appendix B Policy Alignment and Release Record

This administrative appendix identifies the sources used for alignment and the controls required for release. It is not a substitute for the student information in the main handbook.

Reviewed policy or source	Handbook sections	Alignment and qualification
VEL-STP01 V1.2	4.8,4.19,6.0	Consolidated attendance/monitoring; supersedes VE-STP19; current VET condition distinguished from ELICOS.
VEL-STP02 V1.1; VE-STP03 V5.4; VE-STP10 V11.1	3.0,4.3,4.6,4.20	Admissions, suitability, LLN/digital literacy, agreement and CoE controls.
VE-STP07 V7.1; VE-STP06 V11.1; VE-OPP08 V1.1	4.4–4.7,4.18	Equity, adjustments, support and wellbeing. Check actual strategy commencement/approval; a future review-cycle label is not evidence of approval.
VE-HRP01 V10.3; VE-STP20 V1.2	4.13–4.14,4.18,4.29	Accessible complaint/appeal routes, response priorities and decision-specific reporting safeguards.
VE-STP08 V10.1; VE-STP09 V8.1	4.20,4.25–4.26	Current transfer restriction and fair enrolment changes.
VE-STP11 V8.1; VE-STP13 V1.1; VE-STP21 V1.1	4.15–4.17,4.22–4.23,5.0	Recognition, assessment integrity, delivery and work placement.
VE-HRP04 V10.2; VE-HRP05 V1.2; VE-STP22 V1.1	3.0,4.24,4.28	USI, initial/partial awards, timing, retention and replacements.
VE-HRP06 V1.1 July 2026	4.9–4.10,4.28–4.30	Privacy/access controls aligned; October 2026 data changes require current enrolment notices and system configuration.
VE-MP01 V6.1	1.0,4.3,4.20,5.6	Accurate course/provider information and no unsupported outcome guarantees.
VE-STP04 V10.0_October 2026	4.21	Handbook applies law and mandatory rights; owner must approve corresponding policy/agreement corrections
VE-STP02 V2.2	4.19	Handbook uses clarified benchmark, early support and fair final-review safeguards. Approve aligned controlled policy and notices.
VE-STP05 V2.1	4.23	Align attempt/fee schedules and approve corrected policy; explain actual lawful included opportunities before a paid service.

Release and implementation controls

The RTO Manager must complete and retain the following evidence before publication. These are operational checks requiring Apex records, not facts established by editing the handbook. This revision does not change another policy's approval status or certify implementation.

Control	Required evidence and responsible officer
CEO approval and review cycle	Record actual authorisation and commencement, V5.2 and February 2027 review due. Do not pre-date approval or treat the review-cycle label as the approval date. CEO / RTO Manager.
Registration and delivery	Check current RTO/CRICOS scope, campus and practical sites, active ELICOS delivery and re-registration conditions. Update the VET attendance statement immediately if a new condition applies; explain it to affected students. RTO Manager / Admissions.
Contacts and safety	Confirm the after-hours number is staffed/monitored as advertised, designated support officer/backup and opening hours, campus levels and emergency plans/assembly points. Public website and historical handbook alone do not prove live coverage. RTO Manager / campus leads.
Conflicting policy text	Approve corresponding VE-STP04, VE-STP02 and VE-STP05 corrections; align agreements, fee/attempt schedules, notices, website, agent instructions and systems. Do not apply an inconsistent deduction/refusal while alignment is unresolved. CEO / RTO Manager / Accounts / Academic Manager.
VET data notices	Supply the complete current Schedule 1 privacy notice before/at enrolment, with Apex details and relevant state-authority information; provide DEWR notice access or hard copy. Verify the applicable post-1 October 2026 reporting pathway and privacy-policy/system updates. RTO Manager / Admissions / data officer.
Cohort information	Supply actual calendars, progress benchmarks, fee terms, lawful reassessment opportunities, placement requirements, resources, support availability and current course outlines before enrolment. Confirm no undisclosed obligation or unsupported guarantee. Academic Manager / Admissions.
Staff briefing and publication	Brief all relevant staff and agents; replace superseded handbook copies and links; retain the prior version and distribution evidence; explain material changes to affected current students without retrospectively worsening rights. RTO Manager.

Approval and completion evidence is maintained in Apex's controlled policy/implementation register. The editor has not fabricated signatures, approval dates, live system tests, registration conditions or third-party service availability.

Appendix C Official Sources

The references below support this revision. Use the current in-force text and applicable commencement provisions. A general web summary does not override legislation or the accepted agreement. Request an accessible or printed copy through Student Support. Response targets and administrative controls identified as Apex targets are institutional commitments, not general statutory periods.

Framework	Reference and use	Official source
2025 VET framework	Outcome Standards F2025L00354; Compliance Standards F2025L00355; current Credential Policy.	https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2025L00354/latest/text https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2025L00355/latest/text
ESOS and National Code	ESOS Act and Regulations; National Code 2018 as amended, including overseas transfer amendment F2026L01351.	https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A00757/latest/text https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2017L01182/latest/text https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2026L01351/asmade/text
Refunds and TPS	Calculation of Refund Instrument 2024 and official tuition protection information.	https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L01231/asmade/text https://www.education.gov.au/tps
ELICOS	ELICOS Standards 2018.	https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2017L01349/latest/text
VET data changes	Data Provision Requirements as amended by Data Streamlining Instrument 2026 effective 1 October 2026; statutory privacy notice and applicable reporting pathway.	https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2026L00933/asmade/text https://www.dewr.gov.au/reporting-requirements-and-data-responsibilities
USI and AQF	Student Identifiers Act/Registrar guidance and AQF issuance policies.	https://www.usi.gov.au/students/international-students-and-students-studying-overseas https://www.aqf.edu.au/framework/aqf-policies
Privacy and national data	OAIC rights and APP guidance; NCVER and DEWR privacy information.	https://www.oaic.gov.au/ https://www.ncver.edu.au/privacy https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-activity-data/vet-privacy-notice
Consumer and employment rights	Australian Consumer Law, unfair contract terms and lawful student placement guidance.	https://www.accc.gov.au/business/selling-products-and-services/contracts https://www.fairwork.gov.au/starting-employment/unpaid-work/student-placements
Safety and equality	Applicable NSW/Victorian laws and official regulator information.	https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations https://humanrights.gov.au/
External review and current contacts	Commonwealth Ombudsman overseas-student service; Apex contact/support pages; official health/hospital sources.	https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/ https://vet.apexaustralia.edu.au/contact/ https://vet.apexaustralia.edu.au/student-support-services/ https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/

