
Lismore Community College

www.acenorthcoast.com.au



Student Handbook

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1 Overview of ACE North Coast

Adult Community Education (ACE North Coast) is a not-for-profit Registered Training Organisation. Our aim is to provide quality training to the people in the North Coast region of New South Wales. ACE North Coast is governed by an elected College Council and is managed on a day-to-day basis by a number of full-time and part-time staff and casual tutors.

We provide training in both accredited and non-accredited programs and aim to deliver our programs in a flexible manner so that as many people as possible can take advantage of them.

ACE North Coast has centres in Lismore, Kyogle, Tweed Heads and Casino. We also run a number of programs in smaller communities in consultation with that community.

2 Student Rights

ACE North Coast has a diverse student and staff body. This diversity of beliefs and customs adds to the richness of our environment and we ask that you respect your fellow students and staff.

As a student of ACE North Coast, you have rights and responsibilities. This document informs students and staff of obligations and services that are provided to assist students in making the most of the opportunities provided by the College.

You have the right to:

- be treated fairly and with respect
- learn in a supportive and safe environment, free of discrimination and harassment
- have personal records kept private, subject to statutory requirements
- have access to your personal records on request
- be given information about assessment procedures at the beginning of study
- have your existing skills and knowledge recognised
- receive feedback on your academic progress
- appeal academic decisions or procedural matters
- make a complaint to or about any staff member without fear of victimisation
- have complaints dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution.

3 Student Responsibilities

3.1 Communication and interaction

When communicating and interacting with ACE North Coast staff and other students in person, by letter, fax, telephone, email, via online conferencing, or teleconferencing, you have a responsibility to:

- treat people with respect and fairness regardless of their background or culture
- show respect for others by not swearing, using obscenities or making offensive remarks

- not do anything that could offend, embarrass or threaten others
- not harass or disrupt others in the performance of their duties or studies
- avoid unacceptable behaviour i.e. aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour (including bullying or harassment)
- respect and not damage or steal property of the College or of other persons

3.2 Study

You should:

- attend class on time
- achieve satisfactory progress in your studies through participation or attendance as required
- do all assessment tasks by the due date (where a date is specified) or ask for an extension of time if there are exceptional circumstances
- do all assessment tasks and examinations honestly, without any form of cheating
- not submit and claim as your own, work derived from another source or work done by another person

3.3 Safety

When on ACE North Coast premises or any premises used by ACE North Coast, or work experience, industry or vocational placement, you have the additional responsibility to:

- follow any safety practices required, for example, wear approved clothing and protective equipment and follow directions, both written and spoken, given by ACE North Coast staff or the employer. You are entitled to challenge, respectfully, directions or decisions if they appear to be unlawful or unreasonable or endanger a person's health or safety
- not enter these premises with illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

3.4 Confidentiality

As an enrolled student of ACE North Coast, you may be required to attend practical work placements as part of your studies. During these placements, you may become familiar with information that is confidential to that workplace. You must not divulge any information that you may become aware of during a placement. Breaches of confidentiality are considered to be an act of misconduct.

3.5 College Environment

You are required to assist in maintaining serviceable facilities and equipment by:

- reporting breakage and/or faults with equipment to the teacher, or the College administration.
- leaving classrooms, workshops and laboratories neat and tidy after classes
- not using or installing unlicensed software on College computers and checking all CD's for viruses before use on College computers.

3.6 Compliance with legislation and policies

As a student of ACE North Coast you are required to abide by State and Commonwealth legislation and policies and ACE North Coast rules.

3.6.1 Safety

The *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995* applies to all staff and students of ACE North Coast. All staff and students have a responsibility to ensure that they work safely, without risk of injury to themselves or people around them. When using or working near machinery you are required to observe standard safety practices including wearing approved clothing and protective equipment. Your teacher will advise you of the safety requirements for your class. All machinery is to be used in accordance with these safety procedures.

3.6.2 Smoking

ACE North Coast prohibits you from smoking in or around ACE North Coast buildings. Smoking is permitted in designated areas outside the buildings.

3.7 Copyright

You may only copy materials in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1968*. The Act also applies to information published on the Internet. The Act requires copyright royalty payments for the reproduction of a considerable amount of published material, notably books. For study and research purposes students are allowed to copy 10% or one chapter of a book or one article per issue of a journal. More extensive reproduction may be possible.

You must comply with licences for the use of intellectual property, including software. All software loaded onto College computers or provided by the College is licensed and there is no permission to copy software unless permitted by the licence.

If you need further information about your copyright obligations please see the Australian Copyright Council website.

3.7.1 Anti-discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of perceived attributes such as race, pregnancy, gender or disability. Discrimination whether direct or indirect is unlawful and not accepted at ACE North Coast under the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1991.

3.7.2 Appropriate use of computing and electronic resources

ACE North Coast recognises that computing and electronic resources are a valuable source of learning and information relevant to educational programs. You are encouraged to make use of these resources for purposes relating to study being undertaken through ACE North Coast. ACE NORTH COAST computing and electronic resources are not to be used for purposes other than for program requirements unless otherwise noted.

4 College Responsibilities

It is the College's responsibility to provide you with a safe and supportive learning environment. The College provides a variety of support services to achieve this and it will provide you with information about the support available and how to access it.

4.1 Privacy – Student Personal Information

- (i) The College will collect information from you at enrolment for general student administration. This information may also be used for planning, communication, research, evaluation and marketing activities. Your personal information is stored securely and only authorised College staff have access to your information.
- (ii) Your personal information may be disclosed to Commonwealth and State Government Agencies.
- (iii) If you are an apprentice/trainee, your personal information, attendance details, progress and results may be disclosed to your employer.
- (iv) In accordance with the Information Privacy Principles, no further access to your enrolment information will be provided to any other organisation or persons without your consent unless authorised or required by law.

4.2 Harassment

Harassment is any form of verbal or physical behaviour that is unwanted, unwelcome and unreciprocated that makes the learning environment unpleasant, humiliating or intimidating for the person who is the target of that behaviour. If you consider that you have been harassed you should let the person know that you object to their behaviour and do not want it repeated. If you do not feel comfortable talking to the person or they continue with the behaviour, you should speak to your teacher or the ACE North Coast Principal. You can discuss the matter with any of these people without having to make a formal complaint. All discussions are confidential. You also have the right to lodge a formal complaint of misconduct against the person harassing you.

4.3 Complaints/Grievance Procedures

A grievance may arise if you believe that an incorrect decision or inappropriate behaviour has adversely affected your rights.

The grievance process is made up of formal and informal academic and non-academic appeals processes.

4.3.1 Informal appeal process

You should first try to achieve resolution of any grievance (academic or non-academic) through an informal approach to the staff member or person responsible for the action. Alternatively, you can provide feedback to the College through the College feedback mechanism. If all or part of the grievance remains unresolved, you may wish to submit a formal appeal to resolve the grievance.

4.3.2 Formal appeal process

- (i) If you have been unable to resolve your grievance through an informal process, you have the right to submit a written complaint to the College Principal. The College Principal will notify the relevant staff member of the grievance and, depending on the nature of the complaint, will decide the appropriate action to resolve the grievance. The Principal will respond to you within seven days of receiving your written complaint.

- (ii) If you consider that the response to a disciplinary or misconduct decision is unsatisfactory, you have the right to appeal to the College Appeals Committee.
- (iii) If you consider that the response to an academic decision is unsatisfactory, you have the right to appeal to the College Academic Appeals Committee.
- (iv) These committees will review the circumstances of the dispute and make a decision on the matter. Should you require a hearing, a meeting will be organised to discuss the matter.
- (v) If you still feel that the Appeals Committee decision is unsatisfactory you should contact the New South Wales Department of Education or the National Training Complaints Hotline.

4.4 Equity and Diversity

Equity is about making sure that every person can access the training information and support they need to be an active member of the community, to get a job or to be employed throughout life.

ACE North Coast offers a range of specialised services for people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australian South Sea Islander peoples, youth, and people with language, literacy and numeracy difficulties.

5 Student Information and Requirements

5.1 Delivery and Recognition

5.1.1 Delivery of Programs

Programs can be delivered in a classroom setting, in a real or simulated workplace environment, face-to-face, on-line, by distance education, flexible or blended delivery.

5.1.2 Recognition of Skills and Experience

There are several processes that allow you to have your current skills and experience recognised.

5.1.2.1 Mutual Recognition

- (i) Mutual recognition is the process that recognises qualifications or Statements of Attainment issued by another Registered Training Organisation that are the same as the competencies in the program you are enrolled in.
- (ii) To receive credit for previous study, you will need to be enrolled in the program and provide certified copies of your qualifications, Statement of Attainment or Statement of Results to the College.
- (iii) You cannot receive credit for your whole program of study, at least one competency must be achieved through normal enrolment or Recognition of Prior Learning.

5.1.2.2 Credit Transfer

- (i) Credit transfer is the process that recognises accredited study equivalent to the competencies in the program you are enrolled in.
- (ii) Because of the requirement for skills to be current, as a general rule, credit transfer may **not** be granted for competency results, which were obtained more than five years earlier, irrespective of perceived equivalency.
- (iii) You cannot receive credit for your whole program of study, at least one competency must be achieved through normal enrolment or Recognition of Prior Learning.

5.1.2.3 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- (i) Recognition of Prior Learning is the process that recognises skills and experience you currently have regardless of where and when the learning occurred. Applications for RPL are based on whole competencies.
- (ii) You can base your application on any combination of formal or informal training and education, work experience or general life experience. You will need to contact the College for information on the RPL process. To apply for Recognition of Prior Learning you will need to complete the RPL form and attach your supporting evidence.
- (iii) Unsuccessful applicants have a right to formally appeal the RPL assessment, through the College academic appeals process. You may be required to pay for the re-evaluation of assessment. If your appeal is approved and recognition is granted, the College will refund any re-evaluation charge and amend and re-issue your results at no cost to you. If your appeal is unsuccessful, you will not receive a refund and your result will remain unchanged. Any subsequent application for RPL you lodge will be treated as a new application and will be processed accordingly.

5.2 Enrolment

You can take your enrolment form directly to the College or if you are paying with a credit card, you can enrol over the phone, by fax, post or on the internet.

- (i) When enrolling you are required to:
 - Complete the enrolment form
 - pay in full (or make arrangements for a payment plan) all required enrolment (and associated) fees at the time of enrolment
 - complete your enrolment prior to commencing study.
- (ii) You must re-enrol to gain competency if resubmitted assessment items were not submitted by the due date or were unsuccessful.

5.2.1 Types of Training

5.2.1.1 Accredited Training

- (i) All qualifications and Statements of Attainment offered by ACE North Coast are nationally recognised.

- (ii) When you complete a nationally recognised qualification or statement of attainment it will be recognised by other registered training organisations across Australia.
- (iii) Choosing nationally recognised training delivered by a registered training organisation is important if you want recognition for training you have successfully completed.

5.2.1.2 Full Fee Training

Most ACE North Coast training courses involve training that is not subsidised by the Government. In this case students are charged for the full cost of training delivery.

5.2.1.3 Government Funded Training

The Government sometimes funds ACE North Coast to deliver accredited training to meet strategic and regional training priorities. When you enrol in these subsidised programs you will normally be charged an administration fee and sometimes a materials fee.

5.2.1.4 Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Apprenticeships and traineeships combine hands-on training with a paid job. You get a qualification recognised anywhere in Australia and the experience required to help you get the job you want.

5.2.1.5 Certificate Qualifications

Certificate qualifications are offered at levels I – IV and are ideal for professional development, career enhancement, work entry and re-entry to the workforce. You can enrol at a level that suits your current skills and knowledge and exit at a level that suits your goals.

5.2.1.6 Short Courses

Short courses can be either accredited or non-accredited. An accredited short course has a Statement of Attainment outcome. There are short courses in a wide range of subject areas, from information technology to languages, business and financial skills. There are also programs that develop skills such as reading, writing and maths.

5.2.1.7 Non-Accredited Training

Non-accredited training is training that has not been formally recognised by the Training Recognition Council or another accrediting body. You will not automatically receive recognition of this training from a Registered Training Organisation, however you may be able to use this training and other experience when applying for recognition of prior learning. Some of our General Course programs are examples of non-accredited training that we deliver. Frequently this training does not have any formal assessment. Programs typically run for two to three hours a week for six to eight weeks.

5.2.2 Fees & Charges

All fees and charges are listed in the College brochure available at the beginning of each term.

5.2.2.1 Payment of fees

You must pay a course fee when you enrol at an ACE North Coast College. You can arrange a payment plan if you are unable to pay the full course fee in one payment. This option needs to be discussed with one of the College Administration staff.

5.2.2.2 Refunds

- (i) Refund if the College cancels training. If we cancel the training before it starts, the College must refund the fees you paid for the cancelled training.
- (ii) Refund if enrolment is cancelled more than five days before training starts. If you cancel your enrolment at least five days before training starts, the College must refund the fees you have paid for the training after deducting an administration charge.
- (iii) Refund if enrolment is cancelled less than five days before training starts. You are not entitled to a refund if you cancel your enrolment in less than five days before the course is due to start.

5.2.2.3 Outstanding/Overdue Payments

If you have outstanding/overdue payments to the College, you may not be eligible to:

- Undertake/submit assessment
- Continue study
- Enrol into further study with the College

5.2.3 Admissions

- (i) You are required to apply for program entry by completing an application form.
- (ii) You may need to meet any/all specified pre-requisites, co-requisites and entry requirements to be eligible for consideration for program admission.

5.2.3.1 Student Assistance/Income Support

- (i) Eligibility requirements for student assistance external to the College (for example Austudy, Youth Allowance, and Abstudy) may vary across agencies (for example Centrelink and Veterans' Affairs); therefore prior to enrolment it is your responsibility to:
 - Discuss your study options with the relevant agency
 - Discuss your study requirements (for example attendance rates/study load) with the relevant agency.
- (ii) If you are receiving student assistance from another agency you should notify them immediately of any changes to your study load or student status to avoid penalties.

5.3 Absence

- (i) It is your responsibility to advise your teachers of any absence/s.

5.4 Progress of Study

- (i) You are expected to achieve satisfactory progress in your studies through the required participation/attendance. If you are having difficulty maintaining acceptable progress you should discuss the situation with your teacher as soon as possible.

5.5 Assessment

The following information is for students who are enrolled in Accredited Courses at ACE North Coast.

Our accredited courses are nationally recognised, which means you can take a Certificate or Statement of Attainment you are awarded here to any Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in Australia and you won't have to repeat the units of work you have studied with us.

The majority of programs offered by ACE North Coast incorporate competency based assessment. The purpose of assessing competency is to confirm that you can perform to the standards expected in the workplace. Assessment is defined as the process of making judgements about whether competency has been achieved. You will be given the option of providing evidence that you meet the requirements of competency through Recognition of Skills and Experience or you can undertake training and assessment against the competency.

If you don't want to be assessed, you will need to tell your tutor. If you choose not to be assessed, you won't be able to get a Certificate or Statement of Attainment. You can get a Statement of Attendance for the units of work you have attended.

The teacher will advise prior to the commencement of training how the competency is to be assessed. Assessment will generally be progressive and involve more than one assessment item for each competency. Assessment items can include, but are not limited to: projects, case studies, oral questions, assignments, portfolios, written examinations, role plays, practical demonstrations or observation of activities in the workplace or simulated work environment.

5.5.1 Assessment Items

- (i) Assessment items must be submitted to the assessor **BY THE DUE DATE** specified for a result to be recorded, unless an extension has been granted.
- (ii) Extensions will only be granted due to personal illness, or for other extenuating circumstances. Formal requests for extensions must be submitted to your teacher in writing 48 hours prior to the advertised deadline. The length of the extension is at the discretion of the teacher.
- (iii) You are responsible for:
 - Complying with the procedures for assessment item submission and collection.

- Requesting feedback and negotiating resubmission of the assessment item (if a re-evaluation is required).
 - The retention of the assessment item for a minimum period of 14 days after you receive your result unless an appeal is being lodged. In this case the items should be retained until the appeal is finished.
- (iv) To avoid plagiarism you must properly acknowledge all information sources.
- (v) If you don't submit your assessment item by the due date and you don't have an approved extension, you will receive an unsuccessful result for that assessment item. If this is the only assessment item for this unit, you will be given the result of withdrawal with participation.
- (vi) If you have submitted your assessment item by the due date, and it is assessed as requiring additional work you can request an opportunity to resubmit the item.
- (vii) If you don't resubmit your assessment item by the due date you will be given the result of 'not yet competent' for that competency and you will have to re-enrol to gain competency.

5.5.2 Assessment Feedback

- (i) You have the right to receive written feedback for an assessment item.
- (ii) You should contact your assessor if you are dissatisfied with the result of an assessment item and the feedback given.

5.5.3 Re-evaluation of Result

- (i) If you are dissatisfied with the result of an assessment item you can submit a written application for re-evaluation of the result to the College Principal or delegated officer. You must lodge your application within 14 days of notification of the result.
 - If the re-evaluation of assessment takes in excess of one hour, the delegated officer may vary the amount of the scheduled charge to be at actual cost.
- (ii) Where possible an assessor other than the original assessor should undertake the re-evaluation.
- (iii) If you are dissatisfied with the re-evaluation outcome, you have a further right to appeal to the College Academic Appeals Committee.
 - The notice of appeal should be in writing and addressed to the College Principal for referral to the Chairperson of the Academic Appeals Committee and submitted within seven days of the re-evaluation decision.
 - if the appeal is not lodged within the specified time, the result will stand and you must re-enrol in the competency.

5.5.4 Alternative Assessment

- (i) If you consider you will be disadvantaged, due to a disability or unusual circumstance, you may request an alternative assessment.

5.6 Results and Awards

5.6.1 Types of Results

5.6.1.1 Statement of Attendance

A Statement of Attendance is issued (if requested) on the successful completion of non-accredited training.

5.6.1.2 Statement of Attainment

A Statement of Attainment is issued on the successful completion of accredited training in one or more Units of Competency (but less than the number of units required under packaging rules for a full Qualification).

5.6.1.3 Certificate

A Certificate is issued on the successful completion of a full qualification based on accredited training. The back of the Certificate will list all Units of Competency successfully completed.

5.6.2 Issuing of Awards

- (i) Awards are issued to students who complete the necessary requirements. However, if a financial debt is owed to the College the award will not be issued at that time. Awards will be reissued when the debt is cleared.
- (ii) Replacement awards can be obtained to:
 - recognise a name change
 - replace a damaged award
 - Replace a lost award or
- (iii) You must include the original award with your application or a witnessed Statutory Declaration, declaring the circumstances if the original has been lost or destroyed. You will need to include a certified copy of evidence of name change if necessary.

5.6.3 Cancellation of Qualification or Statement of Attainment

- (i) The College may cancel an award if it was issued in error or it was found that the award was based on false or misleading representations.
- (ii) If the College cancels your award, you will be advised in writing.
- (iii) You must return the cancelled award to the College within 21 days of receiving written notice from the College. You have the right to appeal this decision through the College Principal.

5.7 Academic Appeals

This process is for appeals by students in relation to academic decisions or procedural matters.

For appeals against academic decisions, you should first follow the re-evaluation of result process.

5.7.1 How to lodge an Academic Appeal

- (i) If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the re-evaluation process, you have a right to appeal to the College Academic Appeals Committee:
 - The notice of appeal should be in writing addressed to the College Director for referral to the Chairperson of the Academic Appeals Committee and submitted within seven days of notification of the outcome of the re-evaluation process.
 - If the appeal is not lodged in the specified time, the result will stand and you must re-enrol in the competency.
 - In emergency circumstances, such as in cases of serious illness or injury, you must forward a medical certificate in support of a deferred appeal. The notice of appeal must be made within three working days of the concluding date shown on the medical certificate.
- (ii) If a standing member of the Academic Appeals Committee was involved in the matter of your appeal, that member will be required to stand down for the duration of your appeal.
- (iii) The decision of the Academic Appeals Committee is final.

5.8 Misconduct

Student misconduct includes student academic misconduct and behavioural misconduct.

5.8.1 Academic Misconduct – Cheating, Plagiarism and Collusion

- (i) Academic misconduct is a very serious academic offence. The penalties for academic misconduct include but are not limited to:
 - Failing the assessment item. You may, at the discretion of the College, be given the opportunity to complete supplementary assessment. Supplementary assessment will be treated as resubmitted assessment.
 - Failing the competency
 - Exclusion from the College for a specified time determined by the College.

5.8.2 Behavioural Misconduct

Behavioural misconduct is broadly defined as actions that breach the Student Responsibilities and Obligations listed in this document, or impair the reasonable freedom of other persons to pursue their studies and participate in the activities of the College.

5.8.3 How to lodge a misconduct complaint

- (i) A College employee or student may report an alleged occurrence of misconduct by forwarding a signed, written account of the incident(s) to the College Principal. You must include your postal address.
- (ii) Following receipt of advice of an act of misconduct, the Principal must advise the student in writing of the alleged incident of misconduct.
- (iii) The student has five working days to make oral or written representations regarding the alleged incident of misconduct.

- (iv) After this period, the Principal may take action including: modify or dismiss the charge; reprimand and warn the student against repetition of the breach of discipline; suspend the student from attending classes or any combination of the above.
- (v) The student must be informed of their right to appeal the decision

5.8.4 Misconduct Appeals

If you have been found guilty of misconduct you can appeal the decision or the decision process in writing to the College Principal. The College Principal will refer your appeal to the College Misconduct Appeals Committee.

- (i) A date for the College Misconduct Appeals Committee meeting will be set as quickly as possible and you will be notified of the time, date and venue in writing.
- (ii) College Misconduct Appeals Committee members will include the College Principal or delegated officer, a College staff member from an unrelated teaching area of the College and a member of the management team or delegated officer.
- (iii) You have the right to be accompanied by a representative and you may call witnesses, or you can provide a written submission instead of attending the meeting.
- (iv) If you do not attend the meeting or provide a written submission, the panel may assess the matter and where necessary impose a penalty as if you had participated.
- (v) The panel will advise you in writing of the decision within two working days of the date of the decision.
- (vi) The decision of the Misconduct Appeals Committee shall be final.

5.8.5 Contact Details

ACE North Coast

Regional Office

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