



Mercer School  
of Interior  
Design

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A DIVISION OF



AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Version 7.0

RT00109

*Education through inspiration*

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# WELCOME

Hello and welcome to Mercer School of Interior Design.

At Mercer, we focus exclusively on styling, interior design and decoration —we teach you the art, business, and essential skills necessary to prepare you for a successful career in the industry.

As the industry continues to evolve, we are committed to exposing our students to the latest insights and methods of its leading innovators, both globally and locally.

By combining a fresh look at design education with the industry's latest technology, Mercer gives each of our students the opportunity to develop their own unique aesthetic and career path.

Enjoy your studies!

*The Mercer Team*

# PHILOSOPHY

At the Mercer School of Interior Design, we approach education with a different perspective.

In addition to providing all of the essential skills for a successful career in design, we challenge our students to think beyond the latest trends by providing them with the tools to discover their own unique styles.

With an exclusive focus on interior design, decoration and styling, our nationally accredited courses and short courses are developed and taught by the industry's leading innovators. Furthermore, our studio-style spaces and small class sizes guarantee that our students receive the first-hand guidance they need for a successful future in the field.

As a flexible learning option, we have developed a state of the art, user-friendly online program, incorporating learning platforms utilised by top universities such as Yale and NYU to create a rich interactive online experience.

At Mercer, we are dedicated to creating and shaping the next wave of interior designers, decorators and stylists.

## THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook will help give you a good understanding of our policies and procedures and your rights and responsibilities as a student studying with us.

# STUDYING AT MERCER

Mercer delivers the following nationally accredited courses on Campus and Online.

## MSF40118 Certificate IV in Interior Decoration

Our Collingwood campus is in the interior design hub of Melbourne, surrounded by interior designers and showrooms. With studio-style classroom spaces, our light-filled campus is an inspiring learning environment. The campus includes computer labs in addition to an extensive and current materials library.

### CAMPUS ADDRESS

69 Cromwell Street Collingwood, 3066 Victoria.



### CONTACT PHONE

1300 22 MSID (6743)

or

+61 3 9999 1151

### OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday 9.00 am - 5.00 pm

### EMAIL

[hello@mercer.edu.au](mailto:hello@mercer.edu.au)

[studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au)

# MERCER'S RESPONSIBILITY

*As a student at Mercer, you are entitled to expect us to meet the highest levels of standards in all areas of our school.*

In recognition of this, we promise to honour the following obligations.

## **WE WILL:**

- do everything we can to make sure we understand the needs of our students, our staff and the industries in which we operate or do business with;
- do everything we can to make sure we understand your specific needs and be flexible in our approach to serving you;
- operate professionally and always conduct business in a sound, ethical and fair manner;
- employ staff who are knowledgeable, qualified, objective, experienced and act with integrity; and
- treat your information confidentially, protect your rights to privacy and ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information we hold about you.

## **EDUCATIONAL DELIVERY**

*We are committed to providing excellence in training and education. This commitment includes:*

- providing quality training and education services in the VET sector in Australia;
- meeting and striving to exceed the requirements of the Australian Skills Quality Authority;
- delivering training, assessment and consultancy services that are flexible to the needs of our students;
- producing graduates who are appropriately trained, job-ready and have the employability skills expected by the industries we serve;
- developing courses and assessment processes that meet industry demands; cater for a range of learning styles and are flexible to a diverse range of student needs;
- engaging with industry by participating in and/ or facilitating relevant professional associations, networks, focus groups and steering committees; and

- maintaining a supportive learning environment that is conducive to the success of our students and staff.

## **MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES**

*We are committed to ensuring we use industry best practice in the management of the School. To do this, we:*

- use developed and proven management principles, systems and policies to operate an efficient and effective organisation;
- are committed to quality assurance and continuous improvement, and incorporate these principles into all aspects of the school;
- regularly collect feedback and continuously use it to improve and enhance our training and assessment services, client services and management systems; and
- ensure that decision-making at the senior management level is informed by the experiences of our teachers.

## **MARKETING**

*We are committed to ensuring that:*

- we market and advertise all our qualifications, courses and other services with integrity, accuracy and professionalism, avoiding vague and ambiguous statements;
- our students are recruited in an ethical and responsible manner, and no false or misleading comparisons will be drawn with any other provider or course; and
- prospective students receive clear, accurate and appropriate information to help them make informed decisions about all/any of our courses before enrolment.

## RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

We recognise Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other RTOs under the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). You may use Qualifications and Statements of Attainment to gain credit towards programs offered by Mercer.

## ACCESS AND EQUITY

We recognise the principles of access and equity and the rights of all people to be treated in a fair and equitable manner to ensure all students and employees are treated equitably and are not subject to discrimination or harassment. We strive to provide full and equal participation for all students and staff and to foster a learning and working environment which values diversity and encourages acceptance. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments may be applied to the assessment processes to take into account the individual student's needs.

## STUDENT SELECTION

We are committed to ensuring our student selection processes are fair and equitable. We will also ensure that clear and accurate information regarding student applications, our selection processes and appropriate entry requirements are available on our website [www.mercer.edu.au](http://www.mercer.edu.au).

## FINANCIAL STANDARDS

*We are committed to ensuring that we:*

- use and maintain sound business and financial planning systems;
- maintain all our financial accounts and records to at least the standards required by all the regulatory financial authorities including ASQA and any other organisation with whom we conduct business; and
- have fair, equitable and transparent fees, charges and refund policies which are available to the public and all students before enrolment.

## LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

*We are committed to ensuring that we:*

- maintain adequate, current and appropriate insurance and registration;
- comply with all laws relevant to the operation of our school;
- allow government departments or their agents access to training records, delivery locations and staff for auditing purposes when required, in line with privacy and confidentiality principles;
- keep records of students' results for at least thirty (30) years; and
- will manage the transition from superseded Training Packages within twelve (12) months of their publication so that we only deliver currently accredited courses.
- We are responsible for providing quality training and assessment and issues AQF(Australian Quality Framework) certification documentation in compliance with the standards.

## Information available before enrolment

The following information is available to all prospective students prior to enrolment to ensure that the student can make a sound decision based on all the relevant aspects of the training they wish to undertake:

- information about, all fees and charges, assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit transfer (CT)
- the code, title and currency of the AQF qualification, skill set or VET course to which the student is to be enrolled, as published on the National Register
- the currency of the qualifications/courses in question;
- the duration of training and the assessment requirements;
- modes of delivery and delivery locations;
- fees and charges and refunds;
- entry requirements into the course;
- information specific to student contributions and responsibilities;
- student support, facilities and resources
- any training/assessment to be conducted under third party/subcontracting arrangements.

- The pre-training review process

## Getting started at Mercer

Once we process your enrolment, you will be provided with an outline of your training (known as a training plan) which will include:

- the units/competencies to be obtained;
- the time-frame for achieving these units/competencies;
- the training to be undertaken;
- the delivery modes to be employed;
- who is responsible for the delivery and/or assessment of each competency;
- information about your trainer and assessors;
- assessment details and arrangements;
- a record of any recognised prior learning (RPL) for qualifications and cross-credit hours granted prior to commencing the course. RPL involves the assessment of any existing relevant skills and/or qualifications. This crediting process may reduce the length of the course of study.
- the name of the qualification to be issued;
- any other specific requirements to be met in accordance with the particular training agreement in question.

Unit dates may change over time – your trainer will keep you and your training plan updated.

You will also undertake a Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) assessment relevant to your course. This is to identify whether you need additional support to complete your course successfully. More details are provided in this handbook.

## Pre-Training Review

A pre-training review ensures that the training and assessment strategy is designed to meet your individual needs and your workplace requirements. This information will enable Mercer to understand your training needs, your current competencies that relate to the course, the opportunity for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and to ensure that your Language, Literacy and Numeracy skills suit the training and assessment strategies.

Mercer will conduct a pre-training review for each participant. Pre-Training Review includes a documented review of:

- a copy of the student handbook;

- a detailed outline of the training program;
- the sufficiency of the information provided to the prospective student to ensure s/he can make an informed decision about future enrolment (prior to enrolment);
- the appropriateness of the course and AQF level for the individual student (prior to enrolment);
- Pre-training review form
- the student's prior learning, skills and experience that may result in Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Credit Transfer (CT) in their chosen course (prior to enrolment);
- a Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) assessment to identify student's language, literacy and numeracy skills to determine future support needs (before or after enrolment but before training commencement);
- a final training plan negotiation.

to ensure that participants are provided with high-quality training that meets their needs.

Mercer will use this review to provide you with the support you require in areas such as language, literacy and learning and assessment while ensuring you will get the maximum outcomes and benefits from the course you are enrolling in, according to your learning objectives, career aspirations and skill level.

Pre-training reviews will also ensure that all participants are enrolled in an appropriate training program and identify any special needs with their individual learning requirements. Participants who do require assistance or support with any special need, including LLN, can speak confidentially with their Trainer and Assessor. Mercer's experienced staff can discuss options for participation in training programs to assist participants in achieving competence.

## **YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*As a student at Mercer, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are designed to help your time with us to be safe, successful and enjoyable.*

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- be treated fairly and with respect by all students and staff;
- learn in a supportive environment which is free from harassment, discrimination and victimization;
- learn in a healthy and safe environment where the risks to personal health and safety are managed and minimized;
- expect that information on the School's policies; procedures and courses will be accurate, timely and consistently applied;
- have your personal details and records kept private and secure;
- have access to the information the School holds about you;
- have your complaints dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution;
- make appeals about procedural and assessment decisions;
- receive training, assessment and support services that meet your individual needs;
- be given clear and accurate information about your course, training and assessment arrangements and your progress; and
- provide feedback to the School on any matter relating to the School's activities including the delivery of our courses, administrative services, etc.

## YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- treating everyone with fairness and respect and not doing anything that could offend, embarrass or threaten anyone or their property;
- making sure you don't harass, victimize, discriminate against or disrupt others;
- respecting the opinions and backgrounds of others;
- following all safety policies and procedures as directed by staff;
- reporting any perceived safety risks as they become known;
- not bringing into the School, any articles or items that may threaten your safety or the safety of others;
- notifying the School if any of your personal or contact details change;
- conducting your studies with due personal commitment and integrity;
- ensure that you have the necessary equipment and materials for each class;
- completing all assessment tasks, learning activities and assessments honestly and without plagiarism;
- if required seek an extension for an assessment within reasonable time frame;
- notifying the School in writing in a timely manner if you will be unable to attend a timetabled class;
- making sure you meet your payment schedules for your studies as per your contract with us;
- not using social media to harass, victimize, abuse or bully other students, teachers or staff members; and
- not using social media to post negative statements or for referring to the School in a negative, slanderous or abusive manner
- to become familiar with relevant policies and the Student Handbook and comply with any learner requirements contained therein including relevant legislated requirements;
- to meet deadlines for work to be submitted;
- to submit authentic documentation (note: where the authenticity of the evidence submitted is in question, RTO reserves the right to conduct further investigation by way of interview and other appropriate means as

required);

- to submit work without plagiarising or cheating;
- to consult with RTO promptly if problems/issues arise;
- to accept joint responsibility for their own learning;
- to provide feedback to RTO on its courses and services;
- undertake all study in the manner and formats required and in the specified course timeframes;
- to adhere to RTO 's code of practice;

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

*The School has an evidence-based, outcomes-focused approach to maintaining quality practices within its operations.*

Quality is assured in all aspects of what we do, including training and assessment services, client services and the management of the School's internal operations. Feedback from internal and external stakeholders is systematically and regularly collected, collated and analysed, and the outcomes are used to monitor and improve school operations.

*The School uses the following to collect invaluable feedback from our students, staff and/or stakeholders:*

- course, client and class evaluation surveys/questionnaires;
- learner engagement and employer satisfaction surveys;
- interviews, focus groups and consultations with students, employers, industry organisations and licensing bodies;
- face to face contact between teachers and students;
- complaints and appeals;
- consultation with Student Representative Committee;
- internal audit reports and organisational self-assessments;
- staff performance appraisals and self-assessment reports;
- internal staff meetings; and
- Assessment validation.

Students and prospective students are invited to provide their feedback on any aspect of our services at any time. Feedback can be provided in person, over the phone or in writing. All feedback received is used as part of our continuous improvement cycle.

We collect and use data on the three Quality Indicators endorsed by the Data Provision Requirements of the National VET Regulator Act 2011 to gauge our performance. The three endorsed indicators are:

- learner engagement;
- employer satisfaction;

The reports we receive from these Quality Indicators help us identify:

- areas that need improvement;
- improvement targets; and
- whether the improvement plan is working.

Students and their employers (where appropriate) are asked to participate in this process by completing our learner engagement or employer satisfaction surveys. These are distributed by mail, email or through our online portal. Your completion of this survey helps us to monitor our performance and better understand your needs. It also forms an important part of our reporting to the Australian Government on how well we are doing as a registered training organisation.

## SURVEY

Student may receive survey including:

- receiving an NCVER survey;
- receiving an invitation to participate in a Department endorsed project;
- receiving an invitation to participate in the Department's annual student outcome survey; and/or
- being contacted by the Department (or persons authorised by the Department) for audit, review or investigation purposes

## TRAINING EVALUATION/ FEEDBACK – QUALITY INDICATORS

RTO surveys its learners and employers using the Quality Indicators.

Three Quality Indicators have been endorsed by the National Quality Council (NQC):



At the completion of each calendar year, the Compliance and Quality Assurance Department is required to collate all data for the year using the 'ASQA Quality Indicator Annual Summary' form.

A copy of all completed Employer Engagement surveys will be maintained for 12 months as evidence of the data collection process.

### Reporting Quality Indicators Data

All data must be reported to ASQA by the 30th June of the following calendar year, and the Compliance and Quality Assurance Department will be responsible for this reporting process.

Data must be submitted using the required forms as listed on the ASQA website – Data Provision

The Compliance and Quality Assurance Department must submit their quality indicator data reports in full to [qidata@asqa.gov.au](mailto:qidata@asqa.gov.au) by close of business on 30 June.

### Learner engagement

All students complete the 'Learner Questionnaire' form upon completion of their course of study. The 'Learner Engagement Questionnaire' will be provided to students at the completion of their studies. Student Administration will issue a copy of the survey to each student when issuing a Statement of Attainment or Qualification or prior.

All completed and returned surveys will be reviewed by the Compliance and Quality Assurance Department. The results of these surveys will be collated into reports with a summary of all responses. These reports are to be reviewed during Management Meetings.

At the completion of each calendar year, the Compliance and Quality Assurance Department is required to collate all data for the year using the 'ASQA Quality Indicator Annual Summary' form.

A copy of all completed Learner Engagement surveys will be maintained for 12 months as evidence of the data collection process.

### Employer Satisfaction

RTO must gain feedback from employers using the 'Employer Questionnaire' available from the Department of Industry ([http://industry.gov.au/skills/NationalStandards/Documents/AQTF\\_EmployerQuestionnaire.pdf](http://industry.gov.au/skills/NationalStandards/Documents/AQTF_EmployerQuestionnaire.pdf)).

The 'Employer Questionnaire' form is completed by all employers once per year. At a set date each year (currently the 1st September) all employers currently engaged with RTO shall be sent the Employer Satisfaction Survey. These surveys will be collected and collated by the Compliance and Quality Assurance Department.

All completed and returned surveys will be reviewed by the management. The results of these surveys will be collated into reports with a summary of all responses. These reports are to be reviewed during Management Meetings.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

*As a school, we are a community much like any other. This means we have clear expectations regarding the standards of conduct of everyone within our community, students and our teaching and administration staff alike.*

A breach of any of our policies may result in the School taking disciplinary action.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please make sure you notify us at [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au) of any change to your contact details including any changes to your address, email address and your mobile/phone number.

## ART MATERIALS AND COMPUTER PROGRAMS

It is a requirement for the Diploma and Certificate IV courses to purchase art materials. Kits are available to purchase online through our preferred supplier. Students are required to purchase an Adobe Creative Cloud subscription. This is available at a discounted rate for students. It is your responsibility to make sure you have the necessary equipment and software for each lesson.

The School is not responsible for loss or damage to a student's personal equipment.

## ENGAGEMENT

Campus Students will be given a timetable with class times for the term ahead. Please note that from time to time, we may need to make changes to our timetables. It is your responsibility to make sure you attend all your classes.

- Campus students are required to attend classes as per the timetable.
- Online students should participate in up to 15 hours per week through Canvas LMS.

In contravening these expectations, you may jeopardise your ability to satisfactorily complete your studies.

Online students are recommended to participate in all conference sessions. Conferences are mandatory to attend where there is an assessment to be presented.

If you are unable to participate in regular engagement with your studies due to illness or serious incident, you may apply for special consideration by completing the necessary forms and provide proof of the illness or serious incident. Special consideration may result in an extension or an opportunity to re-submit an assessment or submission.

Please also refer to the Academic Attendance section in this Handbook.

## STUDENT ID CARD - CAMPUS & ONLINE

Campus students will be given a Student ID Card within two (2) weeks of commencement. Student ID Card contains the student's Student ID number.

Online students are required to send a "passport style" photo to [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au) to obtain a student card. Cards will be posted out to the address provided at time of enrolment application within two (2) weeks of receiving the photo.

Please make sure you notify Student Care immediately if you lose your Card.

Your Student ID Card may provide you with student discounts at participating businesses that can include cinemas, travel companies and art supply shops. Please note that there is a \$25 replacement fee (up to two replacements).

## COMMUNICATION

To protect our students' information, Mercer will only communicate and provide information to the student, unless that student is under 18. Family members and third parties will not be provided student details, unless written consent is provided.

## TRANSPORT CONCESSIONS - CAMPUS

To be eligible for a transport concession card you need to be studying full-time and enrolled into one of the approved courses listed in the Approved Courses in Tertiary Institutions Register. You must also be an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident.

You can apply for a Victorian Public Transport (VPT) Student Concession Card or student pass by completing the form available for download on the PTV website [www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/fares-tickets/concessions/students/](http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/fares-tickets/concessions/students/) and then lodging the completed form at:

- premium stations;
- the MetShop on the corner of Swanston Street and Little Collins Street;
- V/Line staffed stations and ticket agents (call 136 196 for locations and opening hours); and/or
- [myki.com.au](http://myki.com.au).

Information about transport maps and timetables is available online at [www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au](http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au). Phone support is available by calling 131 638.

## SMOKING, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The campus is a non-smoking workplace. Smoking is not allowed inside the campus including classrooms and common areas. Students are not allowed to smoke within the school compound. Smoking is discouraged **within 10 meters** from the main entrance to campus.

Alcohol and drugs, or students affected by alcohol or drugs, are not permitted on campus and will lead to disciplinary proceedings. Any student using and/or distributing substances prohibited by law may be suspended or have their enrolment cancelled and be reported to the relevant authorities.

## FIRE AND FIRE DRILLS

In the event of a fire in the building or if you hear the fire alarm, please make sure you stay with your teacher and class group and follow your teacher's instructions carefully. Always follow the exit signs.

In the normal course of events, your teacher and the School's fire wardens will direct you to leave the building and assemble at a safe evacuation point outside the building. This information will be shared at orientation.

## FIRST AID

On Campus, we have a qualified First Aid officer. If you need first aid, please see a member of staff. First aid kits are kept on Campus at Cromwell Street, Collingwood. Students should notify the teacher immediately and/or ring 000 for urgent medical attention.

## MOBILE PHONE AND PERSONAL AUDIO DEVICES

The use of personal audio devices is at the discretion of the teacher managing the class but cannot be used in such a way that they disturb other students.

## FOOD AND DRINK

You are not allowed to eat or drink in any of the computer labs. You are however allowed to bring (sealable) bottled water into class, but you are personally responsible for keeping it away from all computers.

Students are expected to eat in the lunch room supplied or off campus. Please clean up after your meals. Students are encouraged to maintain the

cleanliness of the lunch room.

## DRESS CODE

We respect that dress code can be governed by different cultures that require particular standards or protocols. However, we require an appropriate standard of dress at all times.

## THE LIBRARY

The School's library includes textbooks, professional design magazines (digital and paper issue) and is complemented by an on campus design and materials library.

The design and materials library is available to online students during office hours. If you are wanting to use this facility, we would appreciate it if you contact the school either by phone 1300 226743 or by emailing [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au).

## GRADUATION

We hold a Graduation Ceremony for all eligible students once a year. Attending a Graduation Ceremony is a wonderful way to celebrate your academic achievement with your peers, family and friends. To attend a Graduation Ceremony, you will need to have successfully completed your qualification and have no outstanding fees.

## DEFERRING YOUR STUDIES

If you wish to defer from your course or term, you must notify the School in writing and provide the appropriate supporting documentation. Students may defer their studies for up to 6 months.

Please be advised that courses are subject to change and may not be available in same delivery model upon re-enrolment. Students may also be liable to incur the cost of the difference in study fees.

If course fees for that term have not been paid they immediately become due and payable. These course fees are not able to be transferred to any other course.

It is a Mercer requirement that students studying with Skills First are expected to complete the Certificate IV qualification in the intake in which they have been enrolled. Mercer will only allow transfers into another intake under special circumstances.

## WITHDRAWING FROM YOUR STUDIES

If you wish to withdraw from your course you must notify the School in writing or completing withdrawal form available on website and provide the appropriate supporting documentation.

If course fees for that term have not been paid they immediately become due and payable. These course fees are not able to be transferred to any other course.

## ACCESS, EQUITY AND ANTI DISCRIMINATION

We are committed to the fair treatment of all of our students and anyone seeking to enrol with us.

We apply access and equality principles through all of our policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of all students in our courses, to foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment and to assist students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes.

## LOCKERS

Lockers are available for campus students. A \$20 deposit applies for the issuance of a locker; the deposit will be returned upon receipt of the key to the school.

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

An important part of our commitment to providing the best possible education we can, we conduct student satisfaction surveys every term. These surveys help us measure the overall student experience including teaching and learning. They also help us measure performance in the delivery of our courses and student support services.

Participation in our surveys is optional and anonymous.

Additional surveys may be conducted from time to time should the School, or any of its accrediting bodies require further feedback from our students.

## PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Mercer is committed to the protection of privacy in compliance with the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act (2000). The Mercer Privacy Policy aims to protect the privacy of its employees, students and community in relation to the collection, protection and disclosure of personal information. Mercer collects personal information, including sensitive information, about students and parents or guardians before and during the student's enrolment. The information collected is restricted to that which is needed to satisfy Mercers' legal obligations, particularly to enable the school to discharge duty of care in areas such as public health and child protection. Personal information collected from students is treated as confidential. Students may access personal information collected about them by contacting

the School at [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au).

Access may be denied if it will have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, or where access may result in a breach of the school's duty of care to the student. Mercer will not disclose student information to third parties without written consent. Where a student is under 18 years of age, Mercer may provide information to the next of kin listed on the student's Application.

## STUDENT ACCESS OF PERSONAL RECORDS

Students are provided with the opportunity to access the personal information that we hold on them, on request. They are informed of assessment outcomes at the time assessment takes place however they may request information regarding their participation and progress at any time.

To apply for access to your records, contact [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au), advising of what records you require and the reason you require them.

## SELECTION AND ENROLMENT

The School's entry criteria and application procedures are published in course information brochures and on our website. We are committed to ensuring that all applicants are treated fairly, courteously and expeditiously throughout the selection and admission process.

## GENERAL MISCONDUCT

*We are committed to ensuring Mercer remains free of all forms of misconduct, harassment and discrimination.*

Misconduct is identified as student behaviour that intentionally disrupts or interferes with the educational, administrative or operational activities of the School, our students or our staff. Examples of misconduct might include:

- inappropriate behavior;
- disrupting a class;
- acting in a way that causes others to be fearful of their safety;
- using the School's facilities in any way that might cause harm or be illegal;
- the theft of any items belonging to other students or staff or the School;
- willful damage to other people's or the School's property or premises; and/or
- breaking any other rule or standard of behaviour that

might generally apply to student conduct.

Harassment is identified as behaviour that includes but is not necessarily limited to:

- unnecessary or inappropriate familiarity such as deliberately brushing against someone or constantly staring at them;
- unwanted physical contact such as touching or fondling;
- sexual assault;
- pressure or demands for sexual favours;
- sexual jokes or innuendos;
- offensive sexual gestures;
- unwelcome questions about someone's sex life;
- display or circulation of sexual material;
- offensive language or verbal abuse or comments, including any comments that put down or stereotype people because of their race, sexuality, pregnancy, disability, etc.;
- jokes based on race, sexuality, pregnancy, disability, etc.;
- offensive gestures based on race, sexuality, pregnancy, disability etc.; and/or
- the display or circulation of racist, discriminatory or other offensive material.

Discrimination is identified as a situation where someone feels they are being discriminated against and/or being treated less fairly than someone else. It is against the law to discriminate against someone on a number of grounds such as race, gender and disability. It is also against the law to discriminate against someone in a number of areas such as education, employment and the provision of services.

## STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

*We are committed to maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals handling system that is easily accessible. We do this by:*

- having a culture that views complaints as an opportunity to improve our organisation and

how it works;

- having a complaints handling system that is client focused;
- ensuring that complaints are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity, and in complete confidentiality;
- ensuring that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party is not discriminated against nor victimized; and
- ensuring there is a consistent response to complaints.

A complaint can be about any aspect of our school. This includes academic and non-academic matters.

RTO understands that despite all its efforts to provide satisfactory services to its students, complaints may occasionally arise that require formal resolution. Students have the opportunity to have any complaint or appeal resolved, and resolutions reached that attempt to satisfy all parties. There is no cost to the student unless the referral is made to a third party.

Complaints and appeals may be made in relation to any of the following:

- RTO, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- Any third party providing services on RTO's behalf, its trainers, assessors or other staff;
- Assessment/RPL outcome;
- Fees and refunds/re-crediting or
- A student of RTO.

Complaints may be made about any of RTO's services and activities such as:

- The application and enrolment process
- Marketing information
- The quality of training and assessment provided
- Training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements
- The way someone has been treated
- The actions of another student
- Personal safety
- Customer service and administration
- Issue of result, certificate and statement of attainment

- Learning resources
- Fees and changes
- Student amenities and facilities
- Discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Other issues that may arise

Appeals should be made to request that a decision made by RTO is reviewed. Decisions may have been about:

- Course admissions
- Refund assessments
- Response to a complaint
- Assessment outcomes/results
- Other general decisions made by RTO

## RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

In the first instance, students are always encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties informally with the person(s) concerned. If a complaint, concern or difficulty cannot be resolved informally, the appropriate next step is to lodge a formal Complaint Form. This form can be downloaded from Mercer website under the FAQ section and emailed through to [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au). If the matter still remains unresolved a student can submit an Application for appeal. The application for appeal form can be downloaded from the students LMS (Canvas) and emailed through to [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au). A student's enrolment status remains unaffected while the process of trying to resolve any complaints are under way.

## FORMAL COMPLAINTS

All formally submitted complaints are submitted to the Compliance Manager.

Once a formal complaint is received it will be entered into the Complaints and Appeals Register, a written acknowledgment will send to the complainant. This is regularly monitored by the Compliance Manager. The information to be contained and updated within the register is as follows:

- the name of the complainant
- date of the complaint

- type of complaint
- name of investigating officer/business unit assigned to deal with the complaint
- response from those involved in the allegations
- analysis of the matter
- outcome of complaint
- action recommended to address systemic issues (if any)
- time taken to investigate complaint
- complainant satisfaction with the outcome.

A student may be assisted or accompanied by a support person at any face-to-face meetings throughout the process, regardless of the nature of the issue or complaint.

The Compliance Manager will then refer the matter to the appropriate staff members or operational manager to resolve or make a decision on the complaint within 10 working days and keep the complainant informed of any decisions or outcomes concluded, or processes in place to deal with the complaint.

Where a decision is expected to take longer than 60 days, RTO will advise the student in writing of the delay and include the reasons for the delay. After that the student will be provided with weekly updates in writing of the progress of the complaint or appeal. The Compliance Manager will provide weekly updates to both complainant and appellant. If the decision is taking more than 60 days', the matter can be forwarded to an external complaint resolution organisation.

Once a decision has been reached, the Compliance Manager will inform all parties involved in writing. Where the complaint process does not find in favour of the learner, students will be notified that they have the right of appeal. To appeal a decision, RTO must receive, in writing, grounds of the appeal within 10 days of the date of the notice of the decision.

The Compliance Manager ensures that RTO will act immediately on any complaint where the complaints process results in a decision that supports the student. RTO will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative actions required and advise the student of the outcome.

Copies of all documentation, outcomes and further action required will be placed on the Complaints and Appeals Register by the Compliance Manager or representative and also in the student's file.

## GENERAL APPEALS

Where a student has appealed a decision or outcome of a formal complaint, they are required to notify RTO in writing within 20 working days of the grounds of their appeal. Any supporting documentation should also be attached to the appeal. The appeal shall be lodged through the Complaints and Appeals Committee, and they shall record the details of the appeal the Complaints and Appeals Register.

The Complaints and Appeals Committee will be notified and will seek details regarding the initial documentation of the complaint and make a decision based on the grounds of the appeal.

The student will be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decisions, and the Complaints and Appeals Register updated. The student will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify RTO if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

## ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Where a student wishes to appeal an assessment, they are required to notify their trainer in the first instance. Where appropriate the trainer may decide to re-assess the student to ensure a fair and equitable decision is gained. The trainer shall complete a written report regarding the re-assessment outlining the reasons why assessment was - or was not - granted.

If this is still not to the student's satisfaction, the student may formally lodge an appeal. They will lodge this with the Complaints and Appeals Committee, and the appeal will be entered in the Complaints and Appeals Register.

The Compliance Manager will be notified and will seek details from the trainer involved and any other relevant parties. A decision will be made regarding the appeal either indicating the assessment decision stands or details of a possible re-assessment by a third party. The third party will be another trainer appointed by RTO.

The student will be notified in writing of the outcome with reasons for the decision, and the Complaints and Appeals Register updated. The student will also be provided the option of activating the external appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The student is required to notify RTO if they wish to proceed with the external appeals process.

## External Appeals

If not satisfied with the decision in stage 2, the complainant may request that the matter be further reviewed by an external dispute resolution process, by the body appointed by RTO for that purpose.

The details of these external bodies are as follows:

LEADR Complaints, Appeals and Resolution Department  
<https://www.leadriama.org/aboutleadr/compliments-suggestions-and-complaints>

The division of the expenses associated with the mediation, e.g. mediator's fee, room hire and possibly travel expenses are to be shared equally between the RTO and the complainant.

RTO will immediately implement recommendations arising from the external review within at least 10 working days of the receipt of the recommendations.

## YOUR SAFETY & SECURITY

Although the School is located in a safe and secure public location, you are encouraged at all times to stay in well-populated areas when moving to and from the School. We are open from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday if you wish to contact the school. Classes on campus are from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

## GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

All students are required to be aware of their responsibilities under Commonwealth, State and/or Territory legislation and regulations that apply due to their participation in vocational education and training.

The following legislation, or their successors as determined by Government Legislation, applies to you during your participation in your course. If you are unsure what obligations these place on you, please contact a member of the Compliance and Academic team.

- Equal Opportunities and Discrimination;
- Higher Education Support Act;
- Occupational Health & Safety;
- Centrelink Acts and Regulations; and
- Criminal Acts and Regulations.

## UNIQUE LEARNER IDENTIFIER (USI)

A USI is required by all Australians undertaking nationally recognised training. It allows students to link to a secure online record of all qualifications gained regardless of the provider. This system was implemented by the Australian Government in 2015, so it will show student achievements from 1 January 2015 onwards.

As an RTO, Mercer cannot issue Certificates or Statements of Attainment without a USI. Therefore, it is mandatory that all students supply their USI upon enrolment.

If you do not have a USI, please visit <https://www.usi.gov.au/students/create-your-usi> for more information, and instructions on how to apply.

Your USI will help keep your training records and results together in an online account controlled by you. Each time you enrol to study with a new training organisation, your USI will be used to store your training records and results.

By having a USI you will be able to access your training records and results (or transcript) whenever you need them. For example, for a new employer or when you enrol to study at a

new training organisation. Your USI can be accessed online from your computer, tablet or smartphone and gives you access to your training records and results at your fingertips. For further information about the USI can be found at:

<http://www.usi.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

Should a USI exemption apply, the student is made aware before enrolment or training that their training results will not be accessible through the Commonwealth and will not appear on any authenticated VET transcript prepared by the USI Registrar

USI Exemptions apply according to the following criteria:

Exemption categories are:

- International students who complete all requirements for their VET qualification or VET statement of attainment outside Australia.
- An individual who has completed all the requirements for the VET qualification or VET statement of attainment before 1 January 2015.
- Students who demonstrate a genuine personal objection to being assigned a USI. This exemption can only be granted by the Student Identifiers Registrar.

# STUDENT SUPPORT

We are committed to ensuring that all our students receive adequate support to help ensure their full potential is reached. This includes ensuring that:

- the support needs of all students are assessed upon entry into a program;
- all students are aware of how to access the services they require to successfully complete their course;
- feedback is collected about our support services and that the feedback is used to improve our training services; and
- students' needs are identified upon entry into their course of study. Information to make this assessment is gathered through:
  - information provided by the student on the application and/or enrolment forms;
  - assessment of the formal language, literacy and numeracy skills gathered during interviews, formal assessment and orientation;
  - discussion with the student during their induction to the program; and
  - gathering information about each student's prior formal and informal learning and where appropriate, helping them to seek recognition for this through the RPL process.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

We recognise that everyone is different and we acknowledge that some students may therefore sometimes require additional support. If you find you require additional support during your studies, please contact your teacher or [studentcare@mercer.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercer.edu.au).

*Additional support may encompass the following:*

- learning difficulties;
- language, literacy and numeracy issues;
- disability and access issues; and
- any other issues that may affect a student's ability to achieve their training goals.

Additional support can also include issues regarding training, career pathways, opportunities, personal development opportunities, work placement and/or any other training/industry related questions.

Requests for additional support will be dealt with in confidence.

At Mercer we also offer free counselling and wellbeing support. This is also available via online conference for online students. To make an appointment please email [support@collarts.edu.au](mailto:support@collarts.edu.au) or call 1300 818 777.

## EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

### READING AND WRITING HOTLINE

[www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au](http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au)

1300 655 506

For the price of a local call anywhere in Australia, the Hotline can provide you with advice and a referral to one of 1200 providers of courses in adult literacy and numeracy.

### CENTRELINK

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

132 468

You may be eligible for funding assistance if you receive one of the following:

- Pensioner Supplement Allowance
- ABSTUDY
- AUSTUDY
- Youth Allowance

### THE VICTORIAN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

[www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au)

1300 292 153

The Commissions can resolve individual complaints about discrimination, sexual harassment and racial and religious vilification by offering a conciliation process that is confidential, impartial, free and simple.

### LEGAL AID VICTORIA

[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

1300 792 387

Victoria Legal Aid helps people with their legal problems and focuses on helping and protecting the rights of socially and economically disadvantaged Victorians. It can provide assistance in the areas criminal law, family law and some civil law matters. Legal representation is subject to policy guidelines and means tests in most cases. They have lawyers in offices in most major metropolitan and country regions.

### LIFELINE

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

u 13 11 14

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

### KIDS HELP LINE

[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

u 1800 55 1800

If you're under 18 years of age, you may consider contacting who provide access to telephone, web and email counselling.

### FAIR WORK AUSTRALIA

[www.fwa.gov.au](http://www.fwa.gov.au)

u 1300 799

675

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

### REACH OUT

[au.reachout.com](http://au.reachout.com)

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

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

*We are committed to ensuring that all our training services are of the highest quality possible and are reflective of current industry trends and employer expectations.*

*We are committed to ensuring that all our training services are of the highest quality possible and are reflective of current industry trends and employer expectations. This is achieved by ensuring that:*

- training is delivered by appropriately qualified teachers who have extensive industry experience and currency;
- all our training products meet the requirements of the appropriate Training Package or course curriculum guidelines;
- all our courses are developed in consultation with industry experts;
- feedback is collected about all our training products and services, and the feedback is systematically collated, analysed and used to improve the quality of training and education services we provide;
- training is delivered flexibly with options available to study in class or online;
- the individual learning and support needs of all students are identified upon entry into a course;
- all teachers regularly participate in validation of the units and courses they deliver;
- all units and courses are validated according to the five year validation plan, and outcomes of these exercises are used to improve our training services and products; and
- all classes are delivered according to approved and documented session plans and supporting materials.

## ACADEMIC ATTENDANCE

Campus Students are encouraged to attend all the classes identified on their timetable. Please refer to the Engagement section of this Handbook.

Mercer reserves the right to action a school based cancellation due to non-engagement.

## SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENTS

You must hand in or submit online all your assessments by their due date and time. If you need additional time to complete your assessment then you must obtain an extension from your trainer and assessor prior to the due date.

Failure to do so will mean your work cannot be assessed which in turn can lead to you failing that

assessment.

## EXTENSIONS TO ASSESSMENT DUE DATES

You must seek permission from your teacher if you need an extension to an assessment's due date. Extensions will only be granted for illness, compassionate or compelling circumstances that are generally beyond your control.

*Examples might include but not be limited to:*

- serious illness or injury;
- bereavement of family or close friends; and/or
- a traumatic experience such as involvement in or witnessing a serious accident or being the victim of or witnessing a serious crime.

Students must complete an Application for extension of time supported with relevant evidence (e.g. a doctor's certificate etc.).

## ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Students can appeal assessment decisions up to twenty (20) days after the decision has been made. Assessment appeals can be made using the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure listed in this Handbook.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

Academic progression is based on the satisfactory completion of Units of Competency each term.

Failure to achieve a satisfactory completion of Units of Competency may include a recommendation that a student:

- repeats the failed Unit of Competency;
- is required to do a reassessment or resubmission; and/or
- is required to do an additional assessment.

Students who fail a Unit of Competency are not eligible to receive the qualification. They are however allowed to complete their studies within the original time frame of the qualification and will receive a Statement of Attainment for the Units of Competency that has been achieved competent.

Statements of Attainment are nationally recognised documents and may be used to apply for CT with other VET providers.

## LEARNING SUPPORT

All students are provided with a range of learning support options and resources to help them achieve competency. This includes:

- mentoring from appropriately qualified teachers;
- classes, tutorials (online) and workshops;
- online support and exercises for some courses;
- computer and technology support; and
- referral to external support services.

## OUR TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

We believe that students learn best by doing and by gaining practical experience in real situations. Therefore, where possible, teaching practice will reflect and incorporate real work experiences and examples.

Where possible and practical, training will include scenarios, case studies or workplace practice that reflect the actual work environment and job-role requirements of the relative industry.

## OUR TEACHERS

All our teachers hold the required qualifications and experience to deliver the qualifications, the Units of Competency and the courses with which they are involved. They are also required to continue developing their teaching skills and the industry skills that relate directly to their teaching.

*Our teachers are required to:*

- ensure your work meets the requirements of the Units of Competency in a qualification;
- ensure that your work and any supporting material you submit is valid, reliable, sufficient, authentic, current and consistent;
- use their expertise to make a fair and objective assessment decision; and
- provide constructive feedback to the student.

## TEACHING PROCESS

*In general terms, teaching will be provided through:*

- classes, tutorials (online) and workshops;
- completion of exercises, case studies, class notes and reading materials; and/or
- completion of online exercises.

Students are also given constructive feedback from their teachers on the outcomes of their assessments and on opportunities for further development whenever it is identified.

Mercer offers support from teachers for campus and online students through a variety of methods: face to face, email and phone. This enables access to their teachers irrespective of mode of study. Student Care is available Monday – Friday during office hours. Contact can be made via phone or email.

## MARKING POLICY

*Our marking policy is based on:*

- the processes you used to develop and complete the project to be assessed;
- the quality of your ideas; and
- the quality of how those ideas are visualised.

Assessments are made in accordance with the rules outlined in each Training Package. Each Unit of Competency is assessed as either: Competent (C) or Not Yet Competent (NYC). Competency is only awarded after all work has been submitted and on the basis that the work being assessed achieves all the learning outcomes required for that Unit of Competency.

A submission assessed as Not Yet Satisfactory is deemed to have not yet met all the learning outcomes required for that Unit of Competency.

*Our marking processes include the collection of a range of evidence which is the basis for assessment. You may be given a range of options about the methods you wish to use, but in general terms, assessment tasks may require students to:*

- respond to oral questioning;
- provide written responses to questions, scenarios and case studies;
- be observed using their skills;
- gather a folio of evidence;
- prepare a presentation, essay and/or resource folder;
- present ideas and concepts orally;
- research a topic and/or provide a report;
- complete a workplace or practical placement logbook;
- collect, analyse and/or prepare workplace documents; and/or
- complete an online test.

## REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

Wherever possible, our teachers will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all students are treated equally in the teaching and assessment process.

*The reasonable adjustment may mean:*

- making teaching resources and methods accessible;
- adapting physical facilities, environment and/or equipment;
- making changes to the assessment arrangements; and/or
- making changes to the way evidence for assessment is gathered.

## ACADEMIC ACCESS AND EQUITY

We are committed to ensuring our students have equal and accessible opportunities to complete their studies with us.

*To support this we provide:*

- clearly set out instructions about the requirements of assessment;
- clearly defined assessment criteria;
- documented answer benchmarking guides;
- clear and easy to follow assessment recording tools;
- defined formats to be used by students to submit their assessment tasks;
- defined formats to provide students with feedback about their assessments; and
- effective assessment appeals and dispute resolution processes.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND HONESTY

We expect our students to act with academic integrity at all times and only submit work that is their own, or that has been appropriately referenced and includes acknowledgements of all texts and resource materials that have been used in the development of the work.

You are expected to know how to correctly acknowledge and cite references and resources using the Harvard system.

## PHOTOCOPYING

The copyright laws allow you to only photocopy 10% (or one chapter or one journal article) of any copyright protected item. This includes books, magazines, journal articles, web pages, sound or video recordings.

## PLAGIARISM, CHEATING AND COLLUSION

Plagiarism is defined as the taking and using of ideas and/or expressions and/or wording of another person or organisation and passing them off as one's own by failing to give the appropriate acknowledgement. This includes material from any source such as staff, students, texts, resources and the internet, whether published or unpublished.

Cheating is defined as seeking to obtain an unfair advantage in the assessment of any piece of work.

Collusion is defined as the unauthorised collaboration between students.

*Plagiarism, cheating and collusion are serious issues and are unacceptable. As a consequence, we constantly monitor student projects using a variety of methods including:*

- the comparison of work with electronic reference materials, internet resources and the work of other students;
- the use of electronic plagiarism detection software;
- the comparison of work against various academic databases; and
- other methods deemed appropriate by the School's teaching and/or management.

Any student found to have allegedly plagiarised, cheated or colluded is given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. A student found to have plagiarised, cheated or colluded will be dealt with in line with our Student Discipline Policy and Procedures.

A record of a student's involvement in alleged plagiarism, cheating or collusion is kept on the student's file. This information can be referred to if a student is facing any further allegations of academic misconduct.

*Should an incident of plagiarism, cheating or collusion be established, the consequences for the student may include one or more of the following:*

- failure of the subject or Unit of Competency;
- the need to repeat the subject or Unit of Competency;
- suspension; and/or
- cancellation of enrolment.

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) / CREDIT TRANSFERS

RPL must be applied for at the start of a course to make sure the appropriate adjustments can be made to a student's study schedule. RPL cannot be applied for after a student has begun their studies.

The RPL process will be discussed with the Applicant before finalising the enrolment. The cost of RPL is \$250 for each unit of competency, and this is discussed in detail during the initial RPL interview.

Credit Transfer can be granted for any Units of Competency that have been previously attained by another Registered Training Organisation and which:

- match Units of Competency within a course a student will be studying; or
- where Units of Competency from a preceding Training Package are seen to be equivalent as documented by the Training Package guidelines. Units of Competency that are not able to be directly matched can be used in the RPL process. This will be discussed in the initial RPL process interview.

Where Credit Transfer is granted for a Unit (or Units) of Competency that matches Units being offered by the School, there is no cost to the student.

## PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS

Workplace Integrated Learning (WIL) is available through the Practical Placement program in the final term of the Diploma. This is an optional learning experience linked with a final term assessment. The aim of the program is to provide students with additional experience to gain a better understanding of the industry.

Please note that most businesses offering Practical Placement do not expect to pay students for their time. It's essential you make yourself aware of what expectations the business may have regarding your doing work experience with them.

## PATHWAYS INTO A DEGREE

Graduating with a Diploma can provide you with a pathway into higher education — the amount of credit offered to our students is at the discretion of the higher education provider. We provide Mercer graduates of the Certificate IV in Interior Decoration and Diploma of Interior Design and Decoration with an articulation plan into the Bachelor of Arts (Interior Design) and Diploma of Arts (Interior Design) through Collarts.

## EMPLOYMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Mercer Opportunities facebook page is where we share job opportunities both locally and internationally. This includes freelance work and projects.

Our current students have access to this service and will continue on successful completion of your qualification.

Events provided by Mercer, Collarts and industry are listed on the Mercer Events facebook page and open to current students and Alumni.

## **COURSE FEES & REFUND POLICY**

## COURSE FEES

Current course fees can be found on the Mercer website <https://www.mercer.edu.au> or through the admission team members. It is wise to fully acquaint yourself with the costs of studying at Mercer, which does not just include subject fees. Please also refer to Art Materials and Computer Programs in this Handbook. A 5 day cooling off period applies. This period commences from the acceptance of the Letter of Offer.

Students will be invoiced for the course per term with these fees due by the invoiced due date. If you are unable to pay the invoiced amount by the due date or fall behind in payments on your payment plan you must contact [studentcare@mercero.edu.au](mailto:studentcare@mercero.edu.au) as soon as possible to discuss your situation. Non-payment of fees can lead to suspension from class and your Canvas account until all outstanding amounts have been paid, or cancellation of your enrolment.

In the event of multiple defaults on a payment plan, the outstanding invoice amount for the term will become due immediately.

Failure to pay your fees will result in referral to a debt collector. Any fees that are associated with debt collection may be passed on to the Student.

Mercer Management may, at their discretion, approve an extension of time for late payment of course fees. Where course fees are overdue, and no arrangement for late payment has been approved by Mercer Management you will be suspended from class and unable to return until the outstanding amount has been paid, or have your enrolment cancelled.

Mercer may refuse to mark assessments that have been submitted if student fees are not up to date. Mercer will not be able to issue any qualifications (Certificates or Statement of Attainments) until the course has been paid in full.

## REFUND POLICY

**The following refund policy applies to all Short Courses and Certificate Level Qualifications:**

- a full refund of any tuition fees paid will be applicable where written cancellation of enrolment and/or completed withdrawal form is received prior to the commencement of a program,;
- where written cancellation of enrolment is received after the commencement of the course, a student will not be entitled to a refund of any tuition paid in advance and will be required to continue with any payment plan agreement that has been entered into; and
- where a student cancels their enrolment after the commencement of the course due to an extenuating circumstance, the student can apply for Special Consideration. Email Student Care.

- If course cancelled by Mercer then you will received 100% refund of the amount you have paid for the course.

**The following refund policy applies to all VET Student Loan approved course of study:**

- Student must complete the withdrawal form available on the Mercer website.
- where written withdrawal of enrolment received on or prior to the term's Census date, a full refund of any tuition fees paid toward that term's study;
- no refund on a term's fee can be made once the Census date of that term has passed; and
- where a student cancels their enrolment after the Census date of the course due to an extenuating circumstance they can apply for Special Consideration.

## PAYMENT OF REFUNDS

Where refunds are approved, the refund payment will be paid to you within 28 days from the time the student gave written notice to cancel their enrolment. Tuition refunds are to be paid via electronic funds transfer using the authorised bank account nominated by the student on the Refund Request Form.

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Applications for special consideration need to be in writing and provide the specific reasons for Special Consideration. We will also need to be satisfied that the circumstances surrounding the application:

- was beyond the student's control; and did not make their full impact on the student until after the course commencement.

## DATE OF CANCELLATION

To withdraw from a term or course a student must give the School notice in writing. The date of withdrawal shall be the date that the School receives the notice in writing including withdrawal form.

On withdrawal from an accredited course, students will be issued with a Statement of Attainment within 30 days of withdrawal for any Units of competency that have been successfully completed during their study. If a student has outstanding fees the Statement of Attainment will be issued only once the outstanding fees have been paid in full.

## COURSE COMPLETION

On successful completion of an accredited course, students will be issued with their Qualification provided that all course fees have been paid in full. If a student has outstanding fees the qualification will be issued only once

the outstanding fees have been paid in full.

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