

CERES RTO

Policy and Procedures Manual

SCHOOL NATURE AND CLIMATE CERES



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Introduction

CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies) is a multifaceted not-for-profit community organisation with a focus on environmental education and training. The delivery of accredited and pre accredited training in horticulture and hospitality forms part of CERES' training programs. CERES Strategic Direction and CERES most recent Annual Report provide an overview of CERES vision, mission, current activities and plans for the future.

CERES is located at the corner of Roberts and Stewart Street in Brunswick East, Victoria, on the banks of the Merri Creek.

Governance and Management

CERES is an incorporated association governed by a CEO and a Board of Management. A list of current board members is available on the website. CERES RTO Operations are managed by the RTO Manager and the VET Coordinator who oversee a team of Trainers.

Supporting documentation is available upon request including:

- Certificate of Incorporation
- CERES Management Structure
- CERES Strategic Direction
- CERES Lease Agreement
- CERES Training Organisation Profile

CERES is comprised of the following entities/divisions:

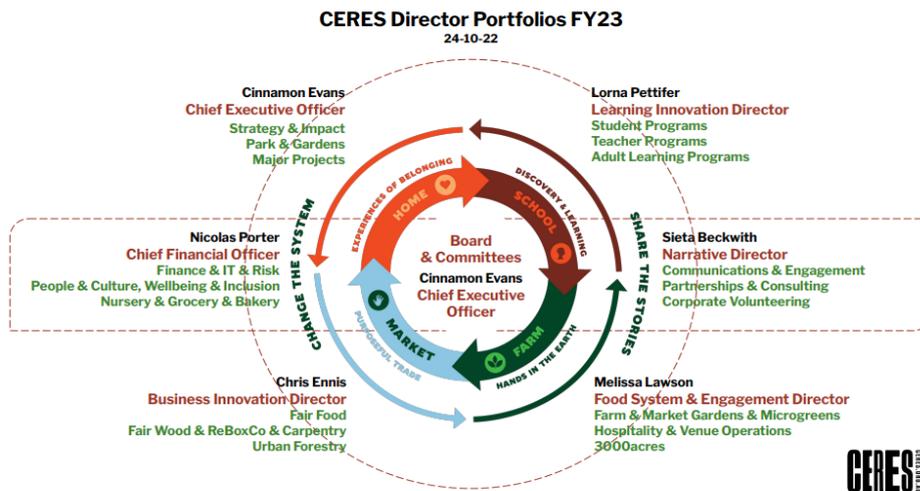
- RTO
- Adult Workshops
- Global
- Outreach
- The Merri
- The Nursery
- Propagation
- Grocery and Market
- Incursions

All CERES Employees are provided with an Employee Induction Manual on commencement. The following Policies and Procedures are RTO specific with the exception of the Code of Conduct which is contained within the Employee Induction Manual.

Trainer/Assessor relevant Policies are included in the RTO Trainer/Assessor Handbook.

Student relevant Policies are summarised in the RTO Student Handbook with full details of all Policies accessible on request.

Management & Ownership:



Ownership - Buy/lease:

CERES currently operates on land owned by Moreland City Council. CERES has signed an ongoing 20 year lease with Moreland City Council, for \$1 per annum, and this lease is due for renewal 25 May 2025.

Operations

Trading hours:

CERES School of Nature and Climate Accredited Programs are in operation throughout the year, with programs delivered Monday – Friday between 9am and 5pm. The RTO has a short closure period from just before Christmas for 2 weeks. CERES only closes for a week over this period and CERES staff are contactable over this time. If the PEO and senior staff are away at these times they have their contact details kept with CERES reception and other enterprise directors and managers that are onsite at these times. CEO creates a delegation of authority schedule during this time for directors and senior staff to be contacted if needed.



Communication channels:

Interested schools and/or organisations are able to contact CERES Adult Learning team by telephone, email, website forms, post or through our social media channels (Facebook, twitter and instagram).

Website: <https://sustainability.ceres.org.au/>

Phone and email:

03 9387 0127 - VET Coordinator - karen.mengell@ceres.org.au

03 9387 0124 - Adult Learning Manager- luisa@ceres.org.au

03 9387 0123 - Learning Innovation Director - lorna@ceres.org.au

03 9387 0100 - CERES Reception (Number shared for business) - ceres@ceres.org.au

General emails - adultlearning@ceres.org.au ; schoolofnatureandclimate@ceres.org.au

[@CERESeducation](https://www.facebook.com/CERESeducation)

<https://www.instagram.com/cereseducation/> @cereseducation

<https://twitter.com/CERESeducation> @CERESeducation

CERES Main instagram <https://www.instagram.com/ceresbrunswick/> @ceresbrunswick

CERES Main Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CERES.Environment.Park/>

Infographic shows our organisation's virtual and communications reach in FY21.

Environmental/resource impacts

CERES is an environmental organisation committed to the highest levels of sustainability and regenerative practice at all levels of operation. CERES researches and develops green technologies, is an organically certified urban farm, recycles stormwater for crop irrigation, composts all garden and food waste generated by our enterprises, and is working towards zero waste and being a carbon neutral site.



VET EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Summary

CERES School of Nature and Climate RTO is a responsible and pro-active employer committed to ensuring:

- we recruit and select, without discrimination, the right individuals for positions in our organisation in order to fulfil our aims, and
- we provide a robust employment framework that ensures it supports and fulfils its obligations to its valued employees.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of all CERES' Employment, Professional Development and Performance Management Policy which goes beyond the core CERES policies and must be adhered to by all VET staff members with responsibility for or involvement in the employment of others.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- That CERES complies with all relevant VET related commonwealth regulatory requirements.
- That VET employees are appropriately supported, protected and informed.
- That CERES, as a recruiter and employer, is appropriately protected.

Policy

General

CERES management is responsible for formulating, reviewing and overseeing the application of core recruitment and employment related policies.

The Adult Learning and RTO Manager/s are responsible for formulating, reviewing and overseeing VET specific employment, professional development and performance management policies and procedures.

Recruitment

For all new VET positions, a clear Position Description must be developed detailing:

- Key tasks/responsibilities
- Required qualifications/industry experience relevant to the qualification they are delivering
- Required satisfactory checks as appropriate
 - all CERES VET staff who work with children must hold a Working With Children Check (WWCC) or current VIT registration
 - National Police Check

All short-listed applicants must:

- Be interviewed by a minimum of 2 people
- Provide, and have checked, a minimum of 2 appropriate referees

Decisions regarding the appointment of a successful candidate must be made on merit ensuring the candidate:

- fulfills the requirements of the Position Description
- provides evidence of any required qualifications/experience
- obtains satisfactory referee/Police/Working with Children Checks

Employment

All VET employees must be provided on commencement with at minimum:

- a CERES Letter of Engagement
- a Position Description
- a Professional Development Plan/Record
- access to the Enterprise Agreement
- the RTO Trainer/Assessor Handbook
- a comprehensive induction process, including any relevant WHS considerations
- access to CERES RTO Policies

A personnel file is to be created on employment commencement which will hold:

- the employee's signed and dated current CV
- copies of all relevant qualifications signed and dated by the VET Co-ordinator or Adult Learning Manager
- a signed CERES Letter of Engagement & Position Description
- copies of current WWCC and Police Checks
- a completed Records Checklist (for Trainers/Assessors)
- a signed completed Induction checklist
- Trainer/Assessor Mapping - signed and current

Professional Development

All VET employees must ensure their necessary industry/regulatory/management knowledge and skills remain current.

All VET Trainer/Assessors must ensure their knowledge, skills and experience remain current in both:

- (a) Training and assessment, and
- (b) Vocational skills/industry knowledge

and are required to submit an annual Professional Development Plan and Report which will be reviewed at the annual Performance Management Review.

Suggested means of retaining currency for Trainers/Assessors are:

- (a) Training and Assessment: professional seminars on training/assessment, meetings with other trainers/assessors, attendance at moderation and validation meetings (compulsory and cannot be the sole way currency is maintained), membership of relevant groups or associations including online networks, upgrade of training qualifications.
- (b) Vocational skills and industry knowledge: paid or unpaid employment in the relevant industry, attendance at industry conferences/seminars/forums, meetings with current practitioners.

Performance Review

All VET employees will attend an annual performance review process during which employees are required to self-evaluate performance and be provided with feedback. This meeting will also include discussion of professional development undertaken and planned for.

All VET Trainer/Assessors will attend an annual performance review meeting with the VET Co-ordinator.

The VET Co-ordinator will attend an annual performance review meeting with the Adult Learning and RTO Manager/s.

Evidence of meetings to be dated and kept on file.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- New Employee Form
- CERES Letter of Engagement
- Employment Agreement
- CERES Trainer Position Description
- Trainer/Assessor Professional Development and Plan
- Trainer Mapping
- PD Plan/Report

Policy Adopted:

Date	V3 – October 2022
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CODE OF CONDUCT (from CERES Employee Induction Manual)

Summary

CERES' ability to provide a high quality service to its customers and maintain good relationships with its suppliers depends on employees behaving professionally, lawfully and ethically. CERES has a range of policies that provide guidance to employee behaviour. This Code details the general professional, responsible social and ethical behaviour that CERES expects from all employees.

Purpose

The purpose of this Code is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for formulating and amending the Code of Conduct.
- That CERES complies with all relevant federal and state legislative and statutory requirements.
- That all employees are appropriately supported, protected and informed.
- That CERES, as an employer, is appropriately protected.

Policy

General

CERES management is responsible for formulating, reviewing and overseeing the application of its Code of Conduct.

Internal procedures and templates relating to the Code of Conduct may be created and amended without formal management approval provided they comply with this policy.

CERES is an organisation which spans several operational areas which may be subject to differing regulations. Where there is an identified need for an addition or revision of the Code of Conduct which goes beyond that given below, Group Managers may initiate such and submit to CEO for approval.

Principles

Equality and Fairness

All employees are expected to act with fairness, honesty, integrity and openness, respecting the rights and opinions of others and treating all with equality and dignity. See ***Recruitment and Employment Policy*** and ***Harassment and Bullying and Occupational Violence Policy***.

Professionalism

Employees are expected to

- Always promote the mission and objectives of CERES in all its dealings with partners, clients and visitors.
- Undertake their duties and responsibilities with due diligence.
- Comply with the letter and spirit of policies, procedures, directives or training provided.
- Recognise their role in contributing to the well-being of colleagues and other stakeholders by abiding by all WHS&W requirements.

See ***Performance Management Policy*** and ***WHS&W Policy***.

Be responsible and scrupulous

Employees are expected to always be responsible and scrupulous with the proper use of CERES funds, property, equipment and facilities.

Respect Privacy and Confidentiality

Information obtained by CERES employees through their employment must only be used for the purposes of carrying out their duties, and not for financial or other benefit, or to take advantage of another person or organisation. Breach of this requirement may lead to summary dismissal. Confidential information includes:

- inappropriate details of any other employee or client, or,

- organisational details that are not in the public domain.

For further details, please refer to the ***Privacy, Confidentiality and Intellectual Property Policy***.

Declare any Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest arises whenever the personal, professional or business interests of an employee are potentially at odds with the best interests of CERES.

All employees are required to act in good faith towards CERES. Employees need to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest to arise and should always act in the best interests of CERES.

As individuals, employees may have private interests that from time to time conflict, or appear to conflict, with their employment with CERES. Employees should aim to avoid being put in a situation where there may be a conflict between the interests of CERES and their own personal or professional interests, or those of relatives or friends. Where such a conflict occurs or is perceived to occur, the interests of CERES will be balanced against the interests of the staff member, unless exceptional circumstances exist, and are resolved in favour of CERES.

It is impossible to define all potential areas of conflict of interest. If an employee is in doubt if a conflict exists, they should raise the matter with their Manager.

Employees must:

- declare any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest that exist on becoming employed by CERES to management.
- declare any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest that arise or are likely to arise during employment by CERES to management.
- avoid being placed in a situation where there is potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest if at all possible.

If an employee declares such an interest, CERES will review the potential areas of conflict with the employee and mutually agree on practical arrangements to resolve the situation.

Employees must disclose any other employment that might cause a conflict of interest with CERES to their Manager. Where there are external involvements that do not represent a conflict of interest, these must not affect performance or attendance whilst working at CERES. If such involvement does affect performance or attendance, it will be considered a conflict of interest.

Employees must not set up or engage in private business or undertake other employment in direct or indirect competition with CERES using knowledge and/or materials gained during the course of employment with CERES.

Engaging in other business interests during work hours will result in strong performance management action.

Failure to declare a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest or to take remedial action agreed with CERES, in a timely manner, may result in performance management proceedings including dismissal.



TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY (including RPL, Cheating and Plagiarism)

Summary

CERES is committed to designing high quality, appropriate and flexible training and assessment to fulfil both the necessary requirements of relevant training packages as well as meeting the needs of learners.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES' Training and Assessment Policy and associated procedures and must be adhered to by all RTO employees.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Training and Assessment strategies.
- That CERES complies with all relevant federal and state legislative and statutory requirements.
- That students are appropriately supported and informed.
- That CERES and its business requirements are appropriately protected.

Policy

Nature and Purpose of VET Training and Assessment

VET Training Packages are developed by industry bodies to meet industry employer needs for appropriately trained and qualified employees.

Learners undertaking qualifications or units must be trained and assessed against the necessary skills, knowledge, performance criteria and critical aspects detailed in the relevant Training Package through both practical work (on the job or simulated) and exercises undertaken in the classroom.

Delivery and Assessment Strategy and Plan

A detailed Training and Assessment Strategy and Plan is developed for each qualification/course and includes:

- An overview of the Qualification detailing:
 - Code and title of qualification
 - Training Package Code, Title and Version
 - Qualification Packaging Rules
 - Legislative requirements
 - Learning Objectives & Outcomes
 - Employment and further study Pathways
 - Target Audience and anticipated volume of learning requirements
 - Entry requirements (including LLN levels) if relevant
 - Units of Competency
- Delivery and Assessment Overview detailing:
 - Delivery Methods and breakdown of hours
 - Duration and schedule
 - Delivery and assessment staff
 - Delivery and assessment arrangements
 - Detailed Unit Delivery and Assessment mapping
 - Student Training Plan and learning support
 - Student Training & Assessment Record
 - Assessment Validation process
 - Assessment Consultation/Need
 - Delivery Resources and Infrastructure requirements
 - Assessment moderation
- Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Overview

- Evaluation
- Transition arrangements
- Review

Learning and Assessment Materials

All Learning and Assessment materials will be developed to take into account differing learning styles with input from relevant industry bodies and experienced practitioners.

All materials will be version controlled.

CERES Trainer and Assessors must use the approved organisational documentation at all times.

Adjustments may only be made to these materials with approval from the RTO Manager. Where adjustments are requested due to access and equity issues reference must be made to the relevant CERES *RTO Access and Equity Policy*.

Assessment Process

Assessment aims to determine whether the assessment candidates' skills (competencies) meet the requirements of each unit.

Some key features of assessment are:

- It is conducted by an appropriately qualified assessor, with input from a workplace supervisor where applicable.
- It employs a range of assessment tasks both practical and theoretical
- The assessment candidate will be told:
 - what timeframe they have for completion
 - what they are being assessed against, and
 - who will be conducting the assessment.
- Assessment candidates will be given written feedback on their assessments
- Candidates will be marked as Competent or Not Yet Competent and provided with TWO further opportunities to re-submit work or be re-observed.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment

Students are made aware of the option for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) via the Student Handbook in lieu of completing Class Training and Assessment.

Students who believe they are eligible for RPL may complete an RPL Application form and submit to the VET Co-ordinator with details of their relevant experience for initial discussion.

If the student proceeds with the RPL application, they will be provided with a copy of CERES RPL Process and assessed by a CERES Assessor against the unit/s on their:

- demonstrated knowledge, by way of questioning, checklist or short answer questions
- demonstrated practical skills which may be by way of appropriate 3rd party report

It is not anticipated that VETiS students will apply for RPL.

Cheating, Plagiarism and Collusion

CERES is obliged to manage and minimize occurrences of plagiarism, cheating and collusion. Plagiarism, cheating and collusion means when a student has presented someone else's work, thoughts or ideas as their own without acknowledging the source. This also includes presenting work as one's own when it has been done in conjunction with another person or people.

Student work to be submitted for assessment must be undertaken under the supervision of a CERES Trainer/Assessor and/or certified as being their own (through signed completion of a cover sheet). All work submitted must be completed in biro or typed.

Where a support person for the assessment candidate is present during an assessment, such as an aide or accompanying school teacher, they must be clearly informed that any help provided to students cannot extend to:

- Directly providing answers to students
- Substantively assisting students by providing leading questions or prompts

An Assessor who suspects or witnesses acts of plagiarism, cheating or collusion must immediately address this by speaking to the student/s (and if relevant support person/s) involved. The relevant student/s (and if relevant support person/s) must be issued with a warning and the VET Co-ordinator advised. In this event the relevant student's assessment task must then be returned to them for resubmission.

Review

All aspects of training and assessment are regularly reviewed as per the validation and review schedule in the relevant DASP.

Further to this all aspects of training and assessment will be reviewed when there is a change in:

- The Training Package/Unit
- Relevant legislation and regulations
- Learner needs
- Location of delivery
- Equipment and processes used by industry
- Operating procedures

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Delivery and Assessment Strategy and Plan
- RPL Application Form
- CERES RPL Process

Policy Adopted:

Date	V3 – January 2018
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RTO ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY

Summary

CERES is committed to enabling all learners to reach their educational potential and ensuring it's course promotion, information, enrolment processes and training and assessment arrangements support this.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES' RTO Access and Equity Policy and associated Procedures and must be adhered to by all RTO staff members.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for ensuring consideration and implementation of Access and Equity principles in all RTO processes and dealings with learners.
- That CERES complies with all relevant federal and state legislative and statutory requirements as well as the relevant Training Package guidelines.
- That students are appropriately supported and informed.
- That CERES and its business requirements are appropriately protected.

Policy

General

CERES management is responsible for formulating, reviewing and overseeing the application of access and equity related policy.

Internal procedures and templates relating to the RTO Access and Equity Policy may be created and amended without formal management approval provided they comply with this policy.

What is Access and Equity?

Access generally refers to the ability to enter training. Improving access might include improving physical access to a training venue, ensuring that selection criteria do not discriminate against clients, adapting marketing activities to encourage all clients.

Equity in this context means equality of access to, and potentially equal outcomes from training regardless of the individual's circumstances, background and identity.

CERES Objectives

CERES aims to incorporate access and equity principles and practices in key processes which affect the outcomes for students including:

- Promotion of courses
- Identification of student support needs
- Use of reasonable adjustment
- Support of identified LLN needs

Promotion of Courses

CERES will ensure that all promotional materials make clear that all individuals, irrespective of gender, ability, age, social or cultural backgrounds are welcome to apply.

Information about course participation requirements will be clearly available to the learner, or their school if the learner is from a VET in schools program, **prior** to enrolment. This may include:

- course structure and assessment
- core requirements of the course
- delivery methods
- OHS requirements
- LLN levels needed
- Reasonable adjustment information

Students and/or their schools or other support organisation will be encouraged to speak to the VET Co-ordinator or Education and Training Manager about how CERES can best support any student needs.

Identification of Student Support Needs

All individual enrolling learners are asked to attend an interview with the VET Co-ordinator and must complete:

- A LLN test.
- An enrolment form in which:
 - students are encouraged to disclose disabilities that may impact on their ability to participate in training and/or assessment
 - Asked to rate their English skills
 - provide details of any relevant support workers/organisations

All VET in school learners must complete:

- A LLN test provided by CERES, or, written advice from the school as to the measured LLN levels of the student.
- An enrolment form in which:
 - students are encouraged to disclose disabilities that may impact on their ability to participate in training and/or assessment
 - Asked to rate their English skills
 - provide details of any relevant support workers/organisations

In addition to the above contracting schools will be asked to complete and submit Student Support Needs forms for VET in school learners with identified support needs.

Reasonable Adjustment

'Reasonable Adjustment' in VET is the term applied to modifying the learning environment or making changes to the training delivery to assist a learner identified as having a disability participate fully.

We make reasonable adjustments in VET to ensure that learners with a disability have:

- The same learning opportunities as learners without a disability
- The same opportunity to perform and complete assessments as those without a disability.

Reasonable adjustment is not to give learners with a disability an advantage over others, to change course standards or outcomes, or to guarantee success.

A reasonable adjustment in training and assessment activity needs to be justifiable and uphold the integrity of the qualification.

Where a student has been identified as having a disability a decision about reasonable adjustment will be made collaboratively with the learner, trainers, appropriate supports (such as school teachers where the student is a VET in schools enrolment) and disability practitioners and recorded in the Student Action Plan and/or Assessment Candidate Declaration for the relevant unit of competency.

Reasonable adjustment can include but is not limited to:

- Customising resources and activities (so long as the changes made preserve the integrity of the qualification)
- Providing additional time
- Modifying the presentation medium
- Providing learner support
- Use of assistive/adaptive technologies

Supporting identified LLN needs

Where a student's LLN levels are identified as below the level required to successfully complete the qualification CERES may support the student to achieve the necessary LLN levels through a range of strategies such as:

- Providing examples of completed forms/templates
- Providing lists of and explaining important words/terminology
- Working with LLN support staff
- Reinforcing LLN learning through active demonstration

- Providing additional time for learners to practice
- Encouraging students to use dictionaries/spell check

Any identified LLN support needs and agreed strategies will be recorded in the Student Action Plan and/or Assessment Candidate Declaration for the relevant unit of competency.

If a Student's Support Needs cannot be accommodated

Sometimes a learner is unable to meet the inherent requirements of the course, even with reasonable adjustment or LLN support. For example, OHS requirements can preclude learners' participation in some core course activities. Where this is the case CERES will offer counselling to the learner and/or their support organisation about alternative training and career path options.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- VRQA Guidelines
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- LLN Test
- Student Needs Assessment
- Student Action Plan
- Candidates Declarations for Units of Competency

Policy Adopted:

Date	V2 02/12/17
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FEES and REFUND POLICY

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedures are transparent as well as fulfilling all necessary requirements of the VET regulatory framework.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES RTO Fees and Refunds Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Fees and Refunds policy and procedures.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- That CERES RTO ensures transparency for learners/clients.

Policy

Fees

Course fees will be calculated and charged based on realistic costs with tuition, materials and amenities amounts clearly delineated.

All interested individuals or organisations/schools will be provided with advice as to course costs prior to enrolment in the course information provided.

School Groups and VETDSS Students

Learners enrolling through schools will have their fees charged directly to schools via invoice as agreed in the DET Purchasing Contract.

Individual enrolments

Individual learners will be charged fees directly unless an agency or other body has provided a written undertaking to pay on behalf of an individual.

All individual students must pay:

- Fees, up to \$1000, a minimum of ONE week prior to commencement of the course.
- The balance of fees owing, above \$1000, is payable by the end of the 2nd week of the course.

Late/Unpaid Fees

CERES has the right to demand payment of either late fees or fees not fully paid. CERES reserves the right to legally obtain the balance of any unpaid fees and any relevant costs associated with doing so. Student qualifications/Statements of Attainment will not be issued until all fees have been paid in full.

Duplicate and Replacement Certificates and Statements of Attainment

Students requesting a duplicate Certificate or Statement of Attainment after the initial issue will be required to pay an appropriate fee.

Refunds

CERES will refund monies paid for programs and services according to the procedures and circumstances outlined below.

a) **Where CERES Cancels**

Prior to course commencement

All student/school fees paid in advance will be fully refunded or you may choose to transfer to another date, subject to availability.

Once a course has commenced

A refund of the full tuition fee, the pro rata portion of any student amenities fees, and fees for materials that have not been used prior to the date of cancellation will be made.

CERES will also endeavor to identify in consultation and agreement with individual students/schools alternate training options such as

- (a) Inviting another Training Provider to finish delivering the course on-site in lieu of CERES, OR
- (b) Transferring students to other suitable Training Providers

b) Where a School Cancels

In the event that a school withdraws students a refund of fees is subject to the terms laid out in the DET Purchasing Contract.

c) When an Individual withdraws

7 or more days prior to commencement

A request can be made in writing to the RTO Manager for either:

- A refund of full course fees less an administration fee of 10%

OR

- A transfer to another course at no cost where circumstances allow.

Less than 7 days prior to commencement no refund will be provided.

A request can be made in writing to the RTO Manager for either:

- a transfer to another course at no additional cost where circumstances allow and the student has been prevented from attending by reasons beyond their control.

OR

- in exceptional circumstances CERES may be able to offer a 12 month credit note for course fees less an administration fee of 10%*

Supporting evidence, such as a medical certificate, may be requested.

**A refund may be considered in extreme and extenuating medical circumstances as deemed appropriate by the RTO Manager.*

Timeline for refunds

All approved refunds will be issued within 30 days of approval.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Policy Adopted:

Date	V3 2022
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INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION POLICY

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our training and assessment strategies, tools and judgements fulfil both the necessary requirements of relevant qualifications and the VET regulatory framework but are also reviewed and improved in line with industry expectations.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES' Industry Engagement and Consultation Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Industry Engagement and Consultation strategies and plan.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- That CERES RTO continuously seeks to improve its practices.

Policy

CERES RTO Trainers/Assessors are selected on the basis of their industry currency and are expected to maintain their currency through:

- Employment
- Workshops/Professional Development opportunities
- industry relevant memberships
- subscriptions to relevant industry newsletters

Trainers/Assessors are consulted with regard to decisions made on program design and content.

CERES RTO Manager and VET Co-ordinator are expected to keep up to date with industry standards and issues through monitoring relevant industry bodies newsletters and briefs as well as regularly consulting with Trainers/Assessors and other industry/enterprise bodies.

CERES RTO is part of the broader CERES organisation which encompasses a range of horticulture and hospitality industries/enterprises such as The Merri Café, the Grocery Café, Tamil Feast, CERES Farm, CERES retail nursery, CERES propagation nursery. These industries/enterprises are in turn linked into broader industry groups/communities.

CERES RTO identifies from the above and external where possible appropriate industry representatives for each qualification on scope based on:

- Years of relevant experience
- Broad industry links and knowledge

and consults with them via the following mechanisms:

- Annual invitation to provide advice on proposed Training and Assessment Strategies including:
 - Choice of electives
 - Learning and assessment strategies such as length of course, types of assessments.
 - Resources to be used, such as Trainer/Assessor experience and qualifications, Learner Resources, Tools and equipment, facilities.
- Annual invitation to provide advice on Assessment Tasks including:
 - Whether they reflect current industry practice
 - Adequately assess both knowledge and skills
 - Will preserve or improve workplace standards in the industry

- On-going ad-hoc consultation to ensure our delivery provides industry relevant training

Completed surveys will be stored in the Continuous Improvement folder and all comments and recommendations made will be incorporated into the annual continuous improvement process as well as the direct development/revision of training and assessment strategies.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Industry Consultation Letter & Survey (Course specific)

Policy Adopted:

Date	V1 - January 2017
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QUALIFICATION ISSUANCE AND RECOGNITION

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our Qualification Issuance and Recognition Policy and Procedures ensure the accuracy and integrity required by the VET regulatory framework.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES RTO Qualification Issuance and Recognition Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Qualification Issuance and Recognition policy and procedures.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements under the AQTF and AQF
- That CERES RTO ensures the integrity, accuracy and currency of all records.

Policy

CERES RTO has the authority to issue VET qualifications within their scope of registration and is required to adhere to all requirements as outlined in the AQTF and AQF.

Recognition of Qualifications

CERES recognises qualifications/units issued by other RTOs through it's Credit Transfer application and assessment process.

Enrolling students are asked on the Enrolment Form and Student Needs Assessment form prior to commencement of the learning program as to whether they hold any units they wish to have recognised. Students who wish to apply for Credit Transfer must complete a Credit Transfer application form and provide:

- the original RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation qualification/statement of attainment (SoA) for sighting and/or
- provide access to their USI transcripts for qualifications/SoAs issued since 2015 where an original has been lost and you are unable to have re-issued due to the RTOs closure

CERES checks all aspects of the qualification or SoA such as inclusion of:

- The full legal name of the candidate
- The qualification/unit full titles and codes
- Issuing RTO legal and trading name, logo and provider No.
- NRT logo
- VRQA or ASQA logo
- Mark of authenticity such as embossment/use of RTO Seal
- Signed by appropriate RTO representative
- Date of issue

Where there is doubt as to the authenticity written permission will be sought from the Credit Transfer applicant to verify directly with the issuing body.

CERES retains copies of all relevant paperwork on file.

CERES does not charge for recognition of qualifications or the Credit Transfer process.

Issuing Qualifications and Statements of Attainment

CERES uses VETTRAK software to record assessment results and issue Qualifications and Statements of Attainment. VETTRAK is an AVETMISS compliant student records management system.

Assessment candidates must provide CERES with a USI and other relevant information on the Enrolment Form to record results against. All USIs are verified prior to issuing Qualifications or Statements of Attainment.

CERES only issues AQF certification documentation when a candidate has been assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product as specified. Assessment paperwork is regularly checked by the VET Co-ordinator to ensure accuracy and integrity of results provided.

Qualifications and Statements of Attainment are issued within 30 days of course/assessment completion and when all agreed fees have been paid. Qualification and Statements of Attainment certificates contain:

- The full legal name of the candidate
- The qualification/unit full titles and codes
- CERES legal and trading name, logo and provider No.
- NRT logo
- VRQA logo
- Stamped with the CERES Seal
- Signed by the Group Manager Training and Education
- Date of issue
- Certificate No.

Hard copies of Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued are held on individual student files and a Register of all Statements of Attainment and Qualifications issued is kept in our Student Management System, VETTRAK.

A statement of how to verify the authenticity of qualifications issued by CERES can be located on our website. No verbal or written assurance of authenticity will be provided to a third party without written consent from the individual.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*
- *AQF 2nd edition January 2013*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Qualification Templates in VETTRAK
- Statement of Attainment Templates in VETTRAK
- Hard Copies School and Student Files
- Credit Transfer Application Form

Policy Adopted:

Date	V2-January, 2018
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RTO RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY (including Privacy and Confidentiality, Version Control)

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our Records Management Policy and Procedures ensure the integrity, accuracy and currency of RTO records as well as fulfil all necessary requirements of the VET regulatory framework.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES RTO Records Management Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Records Management policy and procedures.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- That CERES RTO ensures the integrity, accuracy and currency of all records.
- That all RTO employees understand their responsibilities regarding privacy and confidentiality in relation to both personal and organisational information and that this understanding is demonstrated in all work practices

Policy

This Records Management Policy covers:

- Management records
- Financial records
- Student records
- Staff records
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Version Control

Management Records

All management records, including details of company incorporation, directors, CEO and senior management members, contact arrangements during holidays are overseen by CERES CEO, CERES Learning Innovation Director and the Adult Learning Manager.

The location of all financial management records is overseen by the CERES CFO and CERES Finance Manager

The location of all student and staff records, current and archived, both physical and online is recorded by the CERES Learning Innovation Director, Adult Learning Manager, RTO Manager and the VET Co-ordinator.

All management records computer backup storage and online cloud management is maintained by the CERES IT Manager.

Financial Records

A financial management system for the RTO, including the management of student fee payments and refunds, is overseen and maintained by the CERES Learning Innovation Director and CERES CFO.

This includes purchasing contracts, invoices and receipts through Xero (an online cloud based accounting management system) and internal financial budget and acquittal records. Accounts and records of services will be stored for a minimum of 7 years after purchasing contract expiry or termination.

Student Records including USIs

All student enrolment, attendance, training and assessment records, including USIs, are overseen by the RTO Manager and VET Co-ordinator.

All Training and Assessment and Attendance records are maintained by relevant Trainer/Assessors during course delivery and assessment period. The VET Co-ordinator will review these documents each school term or after each delivery of an adult unit taster or skillset to ensure the standard of records and appropriate management are maintained. .

AVETMISS compliant software (VETTRAK) is used to electronically store enrolment and assessment records. These records are stored for a minimum of 30 years and are able to be provided at no cost to the VRQA in the event that CERES ceases operations.

Hard copy student enrolment including acknowledgement of Privacy Notice and Student Declaration, attendance, training and assessment records are stored during active use and for a further minimum of 2 years post course completion, with all hard copy files kept in a lockable and secure staff only facility. Any digital footage or images that form assessment evidence are securely stored in a cloud based storage drive. CERES maintains a RTO Archived Files register.

Staff Records

Each RTO staff member, including Trainers/Assessors, has a personnel file which includes verified documentation indicating each staff members:

- Qualifications and skills (updated annually for Trainer/Assessors)
- WWCC and Police checks
- Position Description
- Professional Development

Personnel files are kept on a cloud based password protected limited access drive that is maintained by the CERES P&C Manager. Any hard copies of these qualification and personnel files are kept in a lockable and secure staff only facility.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All electronic personnel records are stored on a cloud based drive and password protected, with backup storage management systems on servers in place for additional security. These are managed and maintained by the CERES IT Manager. Any hard copy records are securely stored either in lockable cabinets in general access office spaces and/or in secured archive areas.

All enrolment forms contain a Privacy Notice which provides detail on the collection and use of data by CERES, the Victorian Department of Education and Training and the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research. Enrolment forms also include a photo permission request where an image of the student may be retained for use in promotional materials. The accompanying Student Declaration and Consent must be signed by enrolling students, or a parent/legal guardian if the student is under 18 years of age, to indicate that they have read and consent to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information in accordance with the Privacy Notice.

USIs are protected in accordance with the privacy guidelines provided by the USI Registry.

Student Handbooks and Trainer/Assessor Handbooks will include information on the privacy and confidentiality of student files including USIs.

Students who wish to access their own records may direct this request to the VET Co-ordinator who will organise access as such. Original records cannot be removed from the CERES site however copies can be made on request.

Version Control

CERES ensures the effective management of documents and printed resources, using version control and document naming protocols. Management of version control is undertaken jointly by the CERES Learning Innovation Director, Adult Learning Manager/RTO Manager and the VET Co-ordinator.

Documents that are Version Controlled include:

- All materials related to AQTF and VRQA compliance, including handbooks, policies, forms, training and assessment materials
- All marketing materials and any information provided to students, clients or employers
- Any other material the Adult Learning Manager, RTO Manager or VET Co-ordinator deems necessary to control under this policy.

Version Control registers must detail:

- the name of the document
- the date/version
- the changes and reasons for changes
- who approved the change
- where appropriate which groups/schools were provided with each version

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *Department of Education and Training Standard VET Purchasing Contract*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017*
- *Education and Training Reform Amendment Regulations 2020*
- *Health Records Act 2001*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection Guidelines*
- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*
- *Australian Privacy Principles from the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*
- *Data Provision Requirements 2012*
- *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Data Provision Requirements) Instrument 2020*
- *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Regulations 2011*
- *NCVER*
- *Student Identifiers Act and Regulations 2014*
- *Privacy Act 1988*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Version Control Administration and Policies Template
- Unit Version Control Templates
- Enrolment Form
- Staff Files/Records
- Student Handbook
- Trainer/Assessor Handbook

Policy Adopted:

Date	V4 - October, 2022
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RTO MARKETING POLICY including use of Logos and Images

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our Marketing Policy and Procedures ensure the accuracy and integrity of all our marketing of programs and complies with all aspects of the VET regulatory framework.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES RTO Marketing Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Marketing policy and procedures.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant VET and broader regulatory requirements
- That CERES RTO ensures the integrity, accuracy and currency of all marketing materials.

Policy

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring its marketing and advertising of AQF qualifications to prospective clients is ethical, accurate and consistent with its scope of registration.

Information about our courses on our website, in written materials, advertising banners, flyers, emails, handbooks or other materials that promote the services of the RTO fully disclose all relevant services and aspects of courses including fees. Services provided match the services advertised.

The NRT logo is only used to promote our training services recognized under the AQTF.

CERES details and TOID is provided on all marketing materials including our website information.

Details of our Fees and Refunds Policy is on our website and referenced in our Student Handbook.

Where images of individuals are used in CERES marketing permission has been gained via our Enrolment Form (for those over 18) or from parents/guardians on Photo Permission forms (for those under 18). Evidence of permission is retained on file.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Course Information (course specific)

Policy Adopted:

Date	V1 - 06/10/17
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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Summary

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CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our training and assessment strategies, student services and operations fulfil both the necessary requirements of relevant qualifications and the VET regulatory framework but are also continuously and systematically reviewed and improved in line with feedback from all stakeholders.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES' Continuous Improvement Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Continuous Improvement strategies and plan.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- That CERES RTO actively and systematically seeks to improve its practices and services in line with feedback from all relevant stakeholders.

Policy

CERES RTO strives to ensure our practices and services in:

- Training and Assessment
- Client Services
- Operational Management

are continuously improved through:

- a range of both formal and informal processes to obtain feedback and data from our stakeholders
- reviewing and analysing the feedback and data
- implementing and recording improvements

Below are the elements of the Continuous Improvement policy and processes CERES RTO uses.

Continuous Improvement Register

The VET Co-ordinator maintains a Continuous Improvement Register for each qualification which compiles all stakeholder feedback or relevant data to be reviewed.

Continuous Improvement Calendar

The Education and Training Manager in consultation with the VET Co-ordinator develops and monitors an annual calendar of formal meetings/consultations and evaluation processes to ensure data and feedback from our stakeholders is systematically obtained, reviewed and acted on.

Students/Assessment Candidates

The training needs of students are established via communication with Contracting Schools and completion of Student Needs Assessment Forms and CERES strives to meet these needs in our programs. See *Access and Equity Policy* for further details.

During the program students are encouraged to provide informal feedback. At the end of a program students are provided with AQTF Learner Surveys as part of our formal evaluation and asked for their formal feedback on their training and assessment experiences. The information from this is collated for QI reporting and the Annual Review and used to improve our student services.

School Representatives

The VET Co-ordinator communicates regularly with School Representatives to ensure that the program is meeting the needs of the students and school. Adjustments are made as appropriate during the course of the program.

A formal evaluation of the program is held at the end of the year with a senior School Representative. This review covers a range of areas such as:

- Course Information provided

- Enrolment Process
- Student support
- Training and Assessment materials and personnel

Validation/Moderation

An annual internal moderation and validation session is held for Trainers in each qualification course at which selected Unit Assessment Tasks and benchmarks are considered. For further details on this please refer to our Validation and Moderation Policy.

Industry Engagement/Consultation

CERES regularly consults with relevant Industry Representatives to ensure program design and tools are appropriate and reflect industry best practice. For more details please refer to our *Industry Engagement and Consultation Policy*.

Trainer/Assessor Feedback and Consultation

All Trainers/Assessors are employed with, and required to maintain, current industry experience and knowledge and are consulted in the development of our programs. Refer to our *Industry Engagement and Consultation Policy* and *VET Employment, Professional Development & Performance Management Policy*.

The VET Co-ordinator regularly communicates with Trainer/Assessors to ensure programs are progressing satisfactorily and to obtain feedback from Trainers on delivery, resources and Assessment Tools, student participation and progress.

The VET Co-ordinator also schedules formal one-on-one meetings as appropriate with Trainer/Assessors with records of such kept on the Trainer/Assessor file.

Trainer/Assessor Team Meetings are held at minimum three times a year as per the *Continuous Improvement Calendar*. Minutes are taken at these meetings

Trainer/Assessors are also asked to provide feedback on operational support and management processes and information.

Internal Audit

The VET Co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring RTO processes and programs on an on-going basis to ensure timelines and standards are met. The VET Co-ordinator also conducts an annual formal internal audit and provides a report to the RTO Manager which contributes to the formal Annual Review.

Annual Review

Each year an Annual Review is held by the Education and Training Manager and VET Co-ordinator where data and feedback is reviewed from a range of stakeholders and processes:

- Student surveys
- School Representatives feedback
- Trainer/Assessors
- Quality Indicator Data
- Conclusions arising from assessment moderation and validation
- Results of internal/external audits (*bearing in mind rectifying any identified non-compliance is not to be considered evidence of continuous improvement*)
- Records of complaints and appeals
- End of program evaluation

The feedback in turn is taken into consideration in the review of key practices and processes in Training and Assessment, Client Services and Operational Management.

Changes are implemented as deemed appropriate. Changes made to key documents such as policies, training resources, assessment materials are recorded in the appropriate Version Control Register. For further details see the *RTO Records Management Policy*.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Annual Review
- RTO Continuous Improvement Calendar
- RTO Continuous Improvement Register (Folder)
- Moderation and Validation Templates
- Internal Audit Template
- Meeting Minutes and Templates
- AQTF 2007 Learner Questionnaires

Policy Adopted:

Date	V1 – 12 October, 2017
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MODERATION & VALIDATION POLICY

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to ensuring our training and assessment strategies, tools and judgements fulfil both the necessary requirements of relevant qualifications and our regulatory framework but are also consistently reviewed and improved in line with industry expectations.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES' Moderation and Validation Policy and associated procedures and must be adhered to by all RTO employees.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of Moderation and Validation strategies and plan.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- That CERES continuously seeks to improve it's practices.

Policy

Nature and Purpose of Moderation and Validation

Moderation is a quality control process aimed at bringing assessment judgements into alignment and is generally conducted before the finalisation of results. Moderation is undertaken by Assessors with a Facilitator.

Validation involves checking the validity of both assessment practices and judgement. This involves:

- Checking assessment tools have produced valid, reliable, sufficient, current and authentic evidence that allows CERES to make reasonable judgements.
- Reviewing a statistically valid sample of the assessments and making recommendations for future improvements to the assessment tool, process and/or outcomes if applicable
- Acting upon any recommendations for future improvement

Validation may be conducted internally or externally but must be conducted by an individual or a team that holds:

- Vocational competencies and current industry skills relevant to the assessment being validated
- Current knowledge and skills in vocational teaching and learning, and
- The TAE40110 or TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Industry representatives who do not hold a Cert IV TAE40110 or TAE40116 can provide input on industry relevance of context and conditions, resources used, tasks given, judgements by the assessor but they cannot formally validate.

Moderation and Validation Strategy and Plan

All moderation and validation activities will be led by the VET Co-ordinator and/or Education and Training Manager.

An annual calendar of dates will be established and maintained ensuring that:

- moderation occurs in each qualification program at least once annually with all relevant Assessors
- validation of 20% of units in each qualification program occurs at least once annually with at minimum one CERES Assessor and where possible appropriately qualified industry representatives and/or other RTOs.

CERES Moderation and Validation templates will be used to record:

- dates of all sessions
- who participated, including signatures

- who facilitated
- comments and recommendations made

Completed forms will be stored in the Continuous Improvement folder and all comments and recommendations made will be incorporated into the annual continuous improvement process.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- Qualification Training and Assessment Strategies and Plans
- Industry Engagement and Consultation Policy and Plan

Policy Adopted:

Date	V1 - July 2017
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CERES STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFE STANDARDS (CERES WEBSITE Statement)

In line with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safety Standards) Act 2015 and the new standards (11) introduced July 1, 2022, CERES is committed to upholding the Child Safe Standards, CERES:

- Upholds itself as an organisation committed to the right to survival, protection, development, participation and empowerment of all children and young people.
- Is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, young people and children and young people from culturally diverse and/or linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children and young people with a disability.
- Has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- Has policies, procedures and training in place to support its leadership team, staff and volunteers that interact with children, young people and families.
- Is committed to involving families and communities in the organisation's efforts to keep children and young people safe.
- Is committed to regularly training and educating staff in roles that interact with children, young people and families.
- Will identify risks to child safety as early as possible and remove and or/reduce these risks.
- Will provide clear and strong governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.
- Will treat all safety concerns brought to CERES' attention seriously and consistently with CERES' policies and procedures.
- Has zero tolerance of child abuse.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

(CERES WIDE POLICY)

Every child has the right to survival, protection, development, participation and empowerment. As a child safe organisation we'll do whatever it takes to keep children safe, on track and connected to community and culture.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure all children participating in our programs and visiting our locations are appropriately supported, protected and informed.
- Ensure children, families and communities understand the protective practices put in place by CERES' representatives to keep children safe from deliberate or inadvertent harm.
- Ensure everyone, particularly staff and volunteers recognises and embraces their critical role in keeping children safe and fostering a culture of openness and participation for all children.
- Ensure diverse cultural and other perspectives are respected and recognising that such differences do not diminish a child's right to be safe or the organisation's responsibility to protect the child from harm. This applies to all children regardless of age, culture, gender or disability.

This policy applies to all CERES representatives across all work sites and in all activities we undertake.

POLICY STATEMENT

- Representatives must understand and acknowledge this policy and adhere to child safeguarding training curricula relevant to their role.
- Leaders must drive an honest, safe, two-way communication process between themselves and children, representatives, parents and communities – welcoming scrutiny, making time to listen to them and encouraging the expression of different views.
- Program staff must ensure all children, families and carers are informed about program activities, the rights and responsibilities of the people involved and have access to a support and feedback mechanism.
- Program managers must ensure the voice of the child is systematically embedded in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Specific consideration must be given to the needs of the vulnerable groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pacific children, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Program managers must ensure that every program and activity has a risk assessment that identifies and mitigates risks to child safety, including physical, emotional and online spaces.
- People managers must ensure that appropriate checks and monitoring are used to identify suitable representatives and deter unsuitable candidates and provide adequate professional supervision and development for all staff and volunteers.
- Representatives must report any actual or suspected harm to a child and ensure every decision is made within the best interests of the child.

Breaches in the policy can lead to disciplinary action including possible dismissal and criminal proceedings. Failure to meet compulsory training requirements leads to reassessment of duties until compulsory activities are complete.

Code of Conduct Effective Date: August 2022

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of CERES will:

1. Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work.
2. Treat children with respect and value their ideas and opinions.
3. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children.
4. Be professional in their actions.

No person shall:

1. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children.
2. Unlawfully discriminate against any child.
3. Engage in any activity with a child that is likely to harm them physically or emotionally.
4. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.
5. Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time.
6. Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs.
7. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
8. Arrange contact, including online contact, with children outside of CERES programs and activities.
9. Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.
10. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
11. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
12. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children.

Relevant References, other Policies, Procedures, Legislation and Regulations

- CERES Child Safety and Wellbeing Comprehensive Policy and Procedures, July,2022.

- CERES Statement of Commitment to Child Safe Standards, July 2022.
- CERES Code of Conduct; Recruitment and Employment Policy; Volunteer Management Policy; Privacy Statement, Information Security Policy, Social Media Standards and Image Policy; Performance Management Policy (includes gross misconduct); Employee Grievance and Appeals Policy; Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2018, under review 2022.
- CERES Risk Management Schedule and Plan 2022.
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) including Child Safe Standards (11) 2022
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) including model reportable conduct scheme.
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose Offences.
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) including Part XIII – organisational liability for child abuse.
- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004 (Vic).

RTO COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

Summary

CERES RTO is committed to providing an ethical and professional approach to handling complaints and appeals from participating students or organisations with a transparent, accessible and fair process.

This policy outlines the guiding principles and scope of CERES RTO Complaints and Appeals Policy and associated procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- There are clear guidelines for the development, review and implementation of RTO Complaints and Appeals policy and procedures.
- That CERES RTO complies with all relevant regulatory requirements under the VRQA, AQTF and Consumer protection legislation
- That CERES RTO provides a process of dealing with complaints or appeals that is ethical and timely.
- That CERES RTO provides an environment that encourages feedback and views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to review and improve policies and procedures and gain insight into levels of client satisfaction.

Policy

Definitions & Scope

Complaints

Complaints are defined as dissatisfaction arising from any action taken, or not taken, by CERES RTO in regard to an activity that the complainant/s, whether individual students or participating organisations, are engaged in. This may encompass complaints about the RTO services, the behaviour of Trainers/Assessors, RTO staff or other students.

Appeals

Can be made against any decision made by CERES RTO in regard to:

- Assessment outcomes
- A previously lodged grievance/complaint

Victorian Government Schools

Where the dispute is between CERES RTO and a Victorian government school the complaint or dispute will be dealt with under the terms laid out in the Standard VETIS Purchasing Contract. Individual students of Victorian Government Schools are entitled to have any complaint dealt with through the policy and procedures outlined here.

Principles

CERES RTO upholds the following principles in it's Complaints and Appeals process:

- That all complaints will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- That all parties must respect the rights and privacy of all individuals or participating organisations.
- That all parties to a complaint are afforded the opportunity to respond
- That complaints or appeals are dealt with as quickly as possible.
- That wherever possible complaints are resolved by discussion, mediation or conciliation
- That parties to a dispute have the right to bring an external party/support person to any meetings/discussions
- That a complainant will not be treated any differently to other participants
- That if a complainant is unhappy as to how their complaint is handled they have the right to appeal.
- That CERES RTO views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to review and improve policies and procedures as part of it's continuous improvement process.

Informal Complaint

CERES RTO encourages anyone with a complaint or grievance to raise this at the earliest opportunity:

- through direct discussion with the relevant staff member or learner
- referencing relevant policies and procedures
- referring the matter to a more senior staff member if required

If the complaint is not resolved at this informal stage the complainant may escalate this to a formal complaint.

Formal Complaint

All formal complaints must be lodged in writing with the VET Co-ordinator or Group Manager, Education & Training.

A formal meeting with the complainant will be scheduled within 7 days to provide the complainant with an opportunity to formally present their case. Minutes will be kept of this meeting.

A response to the complaint will be provided in writing outlining the decision and the reasons for the decision.

Records of meetings and outcomes will be kept electronically and are accessible only to the Group Manager. These records will be made available for audit purposes if required.

If the complainant is unhappy with the outcome they can lodge an appeal with CERES or contact the National Training Complaints Hotline via www.education.gov.au/NTCH or by Ph 13 38 73 option 4 or the VRQA, which is CERES RTO registering body or another agency of their choice.

Appeal

Individuals may lodge an appeal in writing to the Group Manager, Education and Training, with regard to either an assessment outcome or the outcome of a formal complaint procedure.

Assessment outcomes will be reviewed by a second appropriately qualified Assessor and the VET Co-ordinator within 14 days of the lodgement of the Appeal and the outcome of the appeal advised in writing.

Formal complaint outcomes will be reviewed by the CERES CEO or another senior CERES Group Manager within 14 days of the lodgement of the Appeal and the outcome of the appeal advised in writing.

Relevant Legislation and Regulations

State:

- *VRQA Guidelines*

Commonwealth:

- *AQTF Essential Conditions and Standards for Registered Training Organisations*

Related CERES Procedures/Templates:

- HR Policy

Policy Adopted:

Date	V1 – October, 2017
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CERES STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

When undertaking a Training Program at CERES, you have certain rights and responsibilities that you

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must follow.

At CERES, you have the right:

- To be treated fairly and with respect
- Learn in an environment free from discrimination and harassment
- To pursue your educational goals in a supportive environment
- To make a complaint about your training or service provision without fear of consequence
- To privacy and confidentiality of your personal information
- To access any information that we keep about you

With these rights, come responsibilities

At CERES, you have a responsibility:

- To treat staff and others in your training program fairly and with respect at all times
- To be punctual and regular in attendance
- To observe all WHS practices and promptly report any accidents or incidents to Trainers or supervisors
- To contribute to a supportive learning environment by turning off phones and music players during classes
- To leave training areas clean and tidy for other users, utilising recycling and composting bins
- To behave in a responsible manner by not harassing or offending fellow students, staff or members of the general public

If you repeatedly fail to comply with these responsibilities you may face disciplinary procedures and ultimately be asked to leave the program.

Disciplinary procedures:

Students whose behaviour contravenes the responsibilities outlined above will receive a minimum of one warning (written or verbal) from their Trainer. If there is no improvement in behaviour the issue will be referred to the VET Coordinator. The VET Coordinator, in consultation with the relevant school or organisation may issue further warnings. If there is still no improvement in behaviour, the student may be suspended or removed from the program. Serious breaches of the student rights and responsibilities may result in immediate suspension or removal from the program.

Students involved in disciplinary procedures will always be given the opportunity to present their view of the matter involved, and every attempt will be made to secure a fair and reasonable solution for all parties.