



Student Handbook

EARLY
CHILDHOOD

MASSAGE
THERAPY

NURSING
+HEALTH

SPORT +
FITNESS

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Acknowledgement of Country

VFA Learning acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we learn, live and work and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and work in partnership with the Wadawurrung, Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung communities to strengthen learning opportunities for all.

Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you to VFA Learning. You are now, either thinking about or have enrolled with VFA Learning, through which you will be undertaking a training program. This Student Handbook covers all aspects of being a Student at VFA Learning.

Our team are committed to providing an engaging, friendly environment for the duration of your selected course of study.

This Student Handbook aims to answer common questions about the services, training, assessment, policies and procedures of all our training locations. The VFA Learning team hopes you have a productive learning experience during your time here that is also fulfilling and fun!

It is important that you read and understand your roles and responsibilities of being a student at VFA Learning. If you still have questions after reading this Handbook, please do not hesitate to come and speak with us.

The VFA Learning team is also committed to ensuring that you will receive the training, assessment and support services that meet your individual needs. To achieve this, we need to know what your needs are. If at any point during your course, you require any assistance or support, please discuss these needs with our staff, who will do their best to help. If you have any special needs, including language and literacy, learning, mobility, visual impairment or hearing, we ask that you notify us as soon as possible, preferably at the start of the course.

This will allow us to make reasonable adjustment for any of these needs. We assure you that any information you tell us in relation to your needs will remain confidential and will only be used to support you.

If for any reason VFA Learning is unable to fulfil its agreement with you, VFA Learning will issue a full refund for any services not provided.

We wish you every success on your journey!

Acknowledgement

Before you complete your enrolment, please be sure that you have read this handbook and understand its contents. If you do not understand anything, please ask us either by calling or emailing one of our team.

By completing the enrolment process, including completing your enrolment form and paying your course fees (in full or part), you are acknowledging that you have read and understood this student handbook.

About VFA Learning

Established in 2008, VFA Learning prides itself on providing quality vocational education to the communities we serve. The first campus opened was at 78 Yarra Street, Geelong. The first course offered was in Fitness and then in 2009 we added Massage to our scope of registration. In 2009, the Narre Warren campus commences operation with our Essendon campus opening in 2011. 2012 saw VFA Learning extend our scope to offer Allied Health, Outdoor Recreation, Early Childhood and Education courses. In 2017, we closed our Essendon Fields campus, moved into the heart of Melbourne, and opened a campus in Queen Street. Growing from strength to strength, in 2018, VFA Learning added Nursing to our scope of registration and became a registered provider to overseas students. In 2017 and 2018 VFA Learning were finalists for the Victorian Government Training awards in the category of Small Training Provider of the Year Award.

We have very high completion rates and the majority of our graduates achieve employment outcomes or university placements.

Our Vision

To be a recognised leader of Vocational Education and Training in Victoria by providing a student centric learning environment that:

- Facilitates job ready graduates in the fields of Sport and Fitness, Health, Early Childhood and Education
- Provides graduates with direct pathway opportunities into Higher Education

Our Mission

VFA Learning's mission is to promote our trademark of recognition; this is by being professional in everything we do; we will achieve this by:

- **Appearance** – Our appearance is immaculate- we are always in uniform and set the standard for our students to aspire to in their professional careers
- **Customer Service** – is always of the highest standard. We strive to go beyond the student expectation and believe we have a proactive role in shaping that expectation
- **Communication**- we always communicate in an effective and efficient way be it amongst peers, in the classroom or with industry
- **Innovation**- we are innovative in our approach to education and always seek a better way of doing things. We are ahead of the game and provide ourselves on paving that way
- **Quality of work** – We approach every action with the precision and focus required for excellence – being professional means paying attention to detail in every task we perform
- **Preparation** – We take our jobs seriously and give every task the attention and effort it deserves- we do our homework
- **Punctual** – We understand time is of the essence and always ensure we do not keep others waiting.
- **Responsibility** - We hold ourselves accountable for our actions – we never blame others

Our Values

VFA Learning was founded on the four values of **Support, Credibility, Progression** and **Fun** in learning. Our Staff hold in high regard and protect the integrity of these four values. They believe that the hallmark of a great education are knowledge, preparation and experience.

Contact Information

Legal name: Victorian Fitness Academy Pty Ltd - training as VFA Learning
Trading as: VFA Learning
RTO Code: 22360
ABN: 29 125 887 309

VFA Learning a training and education division of the Angus Knight Group.
Head Office: Suite 501, 10 Bridge Street, Sydney NSW, 2000

VFA Learning operate within the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015. This is legislation under the national Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, and we are monitored by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). These standards are intended to ensure that all providers deliver consistent, high quality, vocational education and training.

As part of the Angus Knight Group, our goal is to deliver superior education services enabling a range of student cohorts to gain employment across a range of industry sectors.

Office Hours: Monday to Friday – 8:30 am-5pm
Physical Address: 78 Yarra Street Geelong, Vic 3220
Phone: (03) 5223 6800
Email: geelongreception@vfalearning.vic.edu.au
Website: vfalearning.vic.edu.au

Getting to Geelong campus:

Train Geelong Railway Station 13-minute walk
Bus Services Moorabool Street Bus Interchange 4-minute walk
Parking City of Greater Geelong, Promenade - \$6.60 8 hours (12min. walk)
Civic Centre Car Park - \$3.25 per hour (10min. walk)
Haymarket Carpark Myers Street - \$3.25 per hour, max. \$13.90 (10min. walk)
2 hr metred street parking

Flexi Learning - Practical Delivery & Assessment Locations

Flexi Learning courses whereby all theory components of the course are delivered through VFA Learning's online Learning Management System (LMS) will still require training and assessment toward the practical elements of the course.

To meet this requirement, VFA Learning will organise practical training and assessment sessions at various locations throughout Victoria. These locations vary as they will be booked by VFA Learning as a temporary session. Details including dates, times and location will be provided to the student one (1) month in advance.

Traineeships

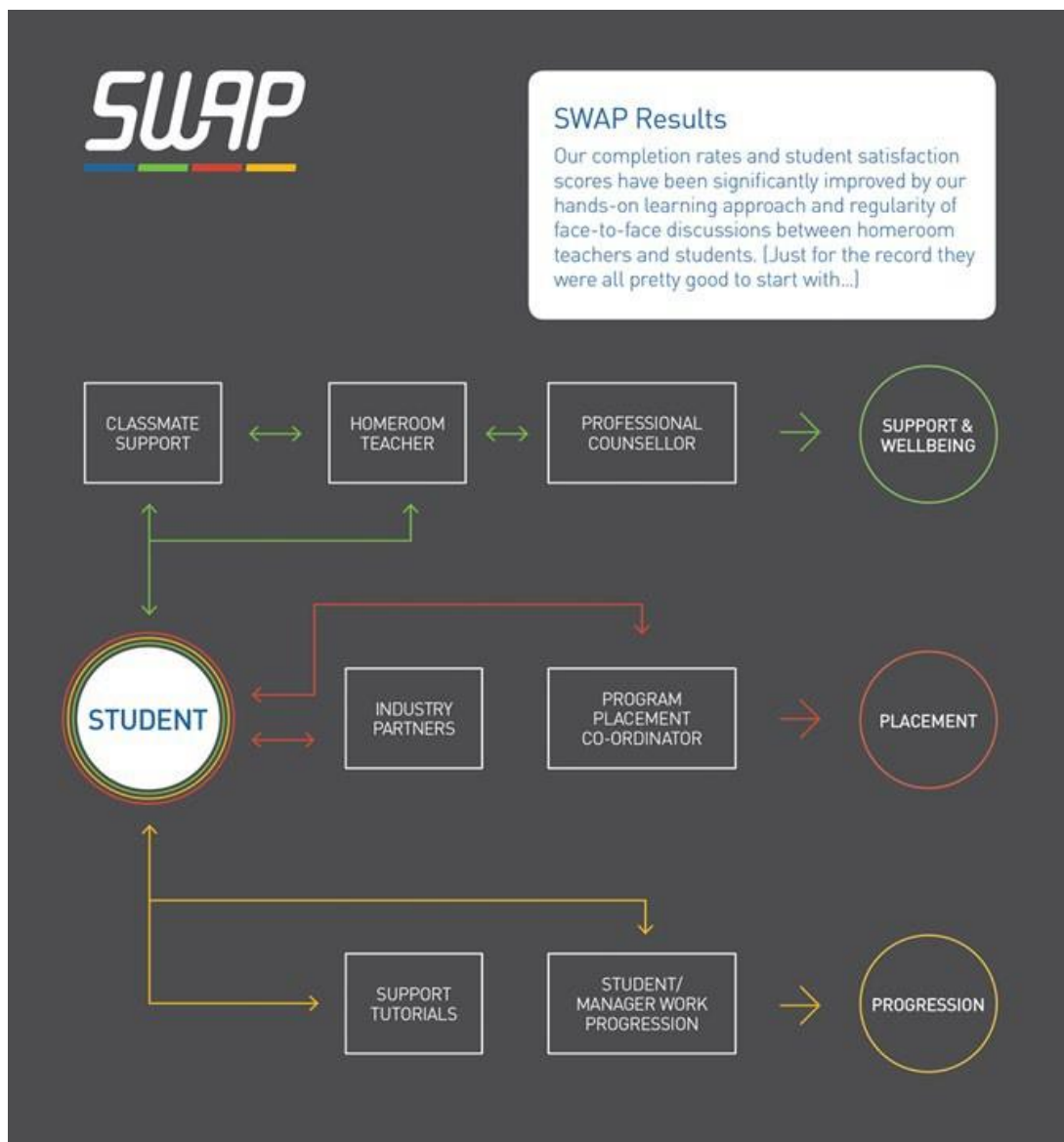
Traineeships combine on-the-job and formal training for qualifications. VFA Learning Traineeships are organised in conjunction with an industry specific employer. Students engaged in a traineeship delivery model, will gain hands-on industry experience and learn practical skills while still being supported by a qualified trainer and assessor throughout the duration of your enrolment.

The VFA Difference

VFA SWAP

VFA Learning has a unique pastoral care service called **SWAP** – Student **W**ellbeing **A**ssistance Program. This program is designed to assist you through your qualification by supporting good study habits and class attendance. The SWAP program incorporates the following services:

- Assigning a dedicated homeroom trainer to each class
- Monitoring student progress via our Online Learning Management System (LMS)
- Coordinating student practical work placements, ensuring we match each student with the most appropriate workplace/centre/facility
- Regular contact with students and employers during practical placements to ensure performance standards are being met
- Providing students with access to professional counselling via our partnership organisations like Headspace



Section 1 – Quality Business Processes

Marketing – Accurate, Clear and Ethical

VFA Learning is committed to ensuring the protection of the rights of its students as consumers and in providing accurate information in the marketplace. VFA Learning applies a systematic approach to its consumer protection strategy and has processes and systems in place for the transparency of its operations to protect its consumers.

Where advertisements and/or advertising materials refer to VFA Learning's RTO status, the products and services covered by the organisation's scope of registration are identified.

VFA Learning only advertises those Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications it is registered to issue.

Advertisements and advertising materials utilised by VFA Learning identify nationally recognised products separately from courses recognised by other bodies or without recognised status.

The names of training packages, qualifications and/or accredited courses listed in advertising materials utilised by VFA Learning comply with the names/titles as endorsed by the National Registration and Accreditation Program or recognised by the State Registration Authority.

Consumer Protection – fees paid in advance

VFA Learning acknowledges that it has a responsibility to protect the fees paid by students in advance of their training and assessment services being delivered. To meet our responsibilities VFA Learning will accept payment of no more than \$1,000 (no GST applies) from each individual Student prior to the commencement of the course.

In addition, all Students will receive an itemised invoice or Statement of Fees, which clearly outlines the fees and any additional charges that the student must pay to participate in their course. This invoice is issued as part of the application process, and it is the student's responsibility to check and clarify the invoice. Dependent on your circumstances, a VFA Learning career consultant will discuss one or more of these payment options at the time of your application:

1. fee-for-service: deposit & direct debit payment of balance (paid through *DebitSuccess*)
2. where eligible: Victorian Government subsidy and Vet Student Loan (VSL) and/or
3. where eligible: VSL & direct debit payment of balance (paid through *DebitSuccess*)

For any direct debit payments, an administration fee will apply to set up the arrangement, payable to *DebitSuccess*. Students, except for any late payment fees, incurred through *DebitSuccess* or the student's nominated bank, will incur no further fees.

DebitSuccess is an independent financial organisation engaged by VFA Learning to manage all student payment plans.

Protecting personal information

VFA Learning strictly abides by the Australian Privacy Principles and takes reasonable measures to protect the privacy of students in line with state and federal legislation.

Under the Australian Privacy Principles, you can access your personal information and may correct inaccurate or outdated information. You will have access to all information held by VFA Learning and will store and use the information appropriately and limit access to only those who have a legal reason to have access to that information, or whom the student has given permission.

You have full access to the information we hold about you. There are no fees attached to accessing your information whilst you are enrolled at VFA Learning. To commence the request, you must complete and submit a *Participant Record Request Form* to one of VFA Learning's offices.

For more information, please see the summary of our *Privacy Policy & Procedure* in this Student Handbook, our full *Privacy Policy & Procedure* on our website or please contact one of our offices.

Security of Students

VFA Learning does not run classes before 9.00am or after 9:30 pm. VFA Learning does not schedule classes for more than 8 hours per day. For Students finishing classes late at night:

- Park as close to the VFA Learning campus as possible
- Park in car parks and on streets that are well lit
- Avoid lanes and poorly lit areas
- Walk to car parks with other class members where possible
- If you are being picked up, ensure that the driver picks you up as close to your finishing time as possible
- Wait in the foyer or a well-lit area if you are waiting to be picked up
- Keep a phone on you at all times.

For Students under 18 years, and should you find yourself in a personally confronting or dangerous situation at any time during your studies, please contact our Child Safety Officer, Catherine Cross on 03 5223 6800.

Other Students requiring urgent non-academic help when outside of business hours may consider accessing the following services:

- Emergency Services (Police, Ambulance, Fire) on 000

Child Safety

VFA Learning is committed to the creating and upholding a child safe environment. The care, safety and welfare of our students is embedded throughout our policies, procedures and processes to ensure a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse.

All students under eighteen (18) years of age who are enrolled at VFA Learning have a right to feel and be safe. We support and respect all children. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all young people.

VFA Learning has appointed a Child Safety Officer to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns and provide support to other personnel. If you or another student is experiencing abuse, please contact our Child Safety Officer:

- Catherine Cross
03 5223 6800

Incidents

In the event of you having an accident or injury whilst undertaking your training, this must be reported to your trainer or supervisor immediately. Every injury or near miss should be reported, to ensure you are adequately protected should there be a recurrence of the injury, or problem arising from, or attributed to, the accident.

Complete and submit the Incident Report Form, which will be made available by your trainer or via our [website](#). Should the injury require medical treatment, advise the medical practice that the injury occurred whilst at training.

VFA Learning has policies and guidelines designed to ensure appropriate action is taken in the case of a traumatic event or the threat of such event, which causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- Serious accident, injury or illness
- Serious damage to facilities
- Serious Workplace Health and Safety risk
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Missing Student
- Students or staff lost or injured during fieldwork excursions
- Threat of widespread infection or contamination
- Disruption to operations of VFA Learning
- Deprivation of liberty, domestic violence, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse, aggravated burglary, biological or chemical weapons
- Fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms
- Natural disaster
- Death/suicide, serious injury or any threat of these

If the incident is on training premises, the first point of action is to contact emergency services; fire, ambulance or police - 000, as would be the case with other WHS matters.

Contact the Academy Academic Coordinator immediately when an incident involves serious injury, threat to life or property or death through one of the VFA Learning offices.

Should you be experiencing any personal difficulty, VFA Learning will make every attempt to accommodate your needs within our limited capacity. VFA Learning has a compassionate and understanding approach to the difficulties of our students. If your needs exceed our capacity, VFA Learning will refer you to an appropriate external agency.

Section 2 – Enrolment and Orientation

Application and Enrolment process

VFA Learning is committed to ensuring that the application and enrolment processes are fair, equitable, and consistent with workplace performance, competency level and the requirements of specified Training Packages and Approved Courses.

Dependent on the qualification, we will also review your eligibility to access a government-subsidised place, as each funded program has differing eligibility criteria. If you are not eligible, the VFA Learning team will advise you of other fee payment options, for your consideration.

We do not discriminate on grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, and political belief, family responsibility, and sexuality, social or educational background and welcome all Students.

Selection into training programs requires that students:

- Satisfy applicable funding body criterion or opting for fee-for-service arrangements
- Meet required pre-requisite qualifications and experience, including Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LL&N) skills through undertaking a Pre-Training Review
- Establish that the course meets their current and future aspirations
- Demonstrate that you are a genuine Student committed to actively participating in the course
- Agree to abide by the VFA Learning's policies, procedures and code of conduct, as outlined in this Student Handbook
- Pay initial and agreed fees and charges.

Before you enrol into a course at VFA Learning, you will receive information about:

- your tuition fees for your course
- any fees other than tuition fees that are payable for the course
- your options for paying tuition fees, including:
 - payment by the student as fees become due; and
 - a VET Student Loan as well as information about this loan arrangement, including that:
 - it is a loan from the Commonwealth; and
 - the loan will remain a personal debt until it is repaid to the Commonwealth; and
 - the loan may, until the debt is repaid, reduce a student's take-home (after-tax) wage or salary and may reduce the student's borrowing capacity; and
 - suggesting that a student may wish to seek independent financial advice before applying for a loan
- the criteria for being an eligible student for a government subsidised place and/or a VET Student Loan
- the application process including for a VET Student Loan

Induction and Orientation

All Students participate in a Course induction or orientation prior to starting their training program. Induction includes a brief review of information contained in this Handbook – **it is important that you have read this Handbook and are ready with any questions to clarify any areas of concern.**

Other information provided will include course/program structure, training facilities and resources, attendance/participation requirements and assessment procedures, as well as the additional support services we provide.

Government funded training and loans

Students (or their employers) may be eligible for funding support from the State or Commonwealth Government under a range of training support and incentive programs. Applicants for VFA Learning courses are made aware of funding opportunities and what funding the Government provides accordingly, as well as exemptions/concessions that may apply.

VFA Learning available government schemes include:

- Skills First (subsidised training offered through the Commonwealth and Vic State funding),
- VET Student Loan Program (a loan from the Commonwealth government to help you pay your tuition fees, which you will need to repay). Note: this scheme is only available for qualifications at or above Diploma level.

VET Student Loan Obligations

If you are eligible for a VET Student Loan, you have obligations that you must follow. VFA Learning provides the following information on application to all VET Student Loan approved qualifications:

- **A Course Flyer**, which provides information about entry requirements, units of study (the course outline) intakes, course delivery, assessment modes, course duration and payment options
- **An Approved Course Fact Sheet**, which provides information specific to VSL to ensure that applicants are:
 - (a) Fully informed of the tuition fees and any other fees that apply to the course
 - (b) Clear about Student responsibilities, obligations and rights should an applicant enrol in the course; and
 - (c) Clear about Student responsibilities, obligations and rights if an applicant elects to apply for a VET Student Loan.
- **VET Student Loans Information Booklet** – You **must read** this booklet thoroughly before submitting “request for Vet Student Loan Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF)” and to fully understand that:
 - VET Student Loan assistance is a loan from the Commonwealth.
 - The loan will remain as a personal obligation until it is repaid to the Commonwealth.
 - The loan may affect (by reducing) your take-home (after-tax) wage or salary until the debt is repaid and may affect your borrowing capacity until the debt is repaid to the Commonwealth.
 - You have the right to seek independent financial advice prior to applying for a VET Student Loan

- **An Electronic Commonwealth Assistance form (eCAF) for VET Student Loans** – Fact sheet which details how you can request a VET Student Loan using the eCAF and provides answers to frequently asked questions about the online system.
- **FAQs for Students completing the VET Student Loans engagement and progression form** which details how, if you access a Vet Student Loan, you must demonstrate to the Department of Education, Skills and Training that you are a genuine Student continuing with your studies.
- **VET Student Loans Ombudsman** – Fact sheet, which provides details about how you can make a complaint should you feel VFA Learning has not adequately addresses and issues you may have raised.

You can also access all VET Student Loan information directly on VFA Learning's website - <https://vfalearning.vic.edu.au/vfa-difference/vet-Student-loans/>. This includes information on tuition fees, census days and VFA Learning's policies and procedures.

Alternatively, we encourage you to visit the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) website, which provides information to students relating to VET Student Loans www.dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans/vet-information-students

It is ***your responsibility*** to ensure that you have enough funds available in your HELP Limit to cover the fee for your course. VFA Learning will invoice you directly any fees applicable to your training and assessment if you exceed your HELP limit. This may take up to 90 days post your completion of your course.

Admission refusal

Applicants refused admission to any course can submit an appeal regarding the refusal. Applicants should contact one of the VFA Learning offices directly or refer to the Complaints and Appeals process located in this Student Handbook

Working with Children Checks – Placement Students

The Victorian Government has introduced the Working with Children (WWC) Checks to help protect children less than 18 years of age from harm by preventing those who pose a risk to the safety of children from working with them, in either paid or volunteer work. The work placement provider you are allocated to may require you to obtain a working with children check, you will be advised by your Home Room Teacher if you are required to obtain a WWC.

Once you receive your WWC, please give it to your Homeroom trainer, who will ensure that a verified copy is kept on file. Your WWC comes on a card similar to a driver's licence and should be kept in your wallet.

National Police Check

All nursing students are required to undergo a Police Check at the commencement of their course. A Police Check is valid for student placements for 12 months from the date of issue. In addition to a national police records check, students who have resided overseas for more than 12 months in the past 10 years should have a police check from their country of residence (including an English translation) and/or complete a statutory declaration stating that they have never, in another country, been convicted of any crime.

Other VFA Learning qualifications that require work placement as a compulsory component of training and assessment; for some of these industries it is now a mandatory requirement to have a valid and current *National Police Check*. You may be required to undergo a *National Police Check*, at your own expense, prior to commencing work placement. If you have a record of violent or sexual crime, fraud or theft you will not be able to access the facilities and therefore would not be able to complete the qualification.

Police checks with a disclosable outcome are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Sales and in conjunction with the VFA Learning Compliance and Management Teams.

Police check application forms can be accessed [here](#) and are completed online.

Once you receive your police check, please give it to your course co-ordinator who will ensure that a verified copy is kept on file.

Credit Transfer (CT)

VFA Learning will recognise provides credit to learners for units of competency and/or modules (unless licensing or regulatory requirements prevent this) where these are evidenced by:

- AQF certification documentation issued by any other RTO or AQF authorised issuing organisation, or
- authenticated VET transcripts issued by the Registrar.

Applying credit is the recognition of the equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications previously undertaken and completed successfully by the applicant.

To apply for Credit Transfer for a course you wish to undertake at VFA Learning, you will need to complete **the Credit Transfer Application Form** and submit to VFA Learning with the required supporting certified documentation within four (4) weeks of the course commencement.

VFA Learning will conduct the necessary checks of your application and evidence before providing credit. This includes authenticating your qualification, statement of attainment or record of results, by accessing the USI transcript online or by contacting the organisation that issued the document to confirm the content is valid.

You will be required to sign an Authority to Release Training Information form to enable VFA Learning to verify the validity of the qualification or statement of attainment with the issuing RTO.

Authority to Release Training Info form is not required to be signed for internal Credit Transfers (previous studies conducted with VFA Learning) and when students provide USI transcripts.

Be aware that VFA Learning is not obliged to issue credit toward a qualification or statement of attainment that have been achieved wholly through the process of recognition of prior learning (RPL) completed at another RTO.

Where units have been issued by licensing or regulatory bodies, unit requirements may prevent the application of credit. If this affects a unit you are applying credit for, we will inform you of the requirements.

There are no fees attached to units with Credit Transfer applied. VFA Learning will deduct all fees and charges for the approved unit(s) from your overall course fees and charges.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) means that you can get recognised for the skills and knowledge that you have gained through your work and life experience, as well as training that you have completed that is outside formal training arrangements.

VFA Learning has a process that has been structured to minimise the time and cost to applicants and provides a supportive approach to students wishing to take up this option.

Generally, the process involves the gathering of evidence to support your skills and knowledge against the training pack requirements. Evidence an applicant may need to gather include:

- Resume and evidence of employment within the field
- Any previous training
- Records of practical application

The cost to Students to for the RPL process is a \$150 application fee and \$150 for each unit of competency. Final fee amounts will be advised at the time of application. The RPL process commences with the submission of the **Application for RPL Form**.

Payment of the RPL process does not guarantee you will be awarded the unit(s) you have applied to have assessed.

Learning is “the relatively permanent change in a person’s knowledge or behaviour due to experience” - *Richard E. Mayer*

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

The USI is a requirement under federal legislation - Student Identifiers Act 2014.

The USI applies to all students undertaking nationally recognised training in Australia - Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses. Current and new students will need to provide a USI and VFA Learning is unable to provide students with academic transcripts or certificate at the completion of their course without a USI.

A USI is like an account number made up of letters and numbers. An individual’s USI account will enable them access to their training records and results through a computer, tablet or even smart phone, anywhere, anytime. Individuals will also be able to see, send or print out their training records when applying for a job or further training. Each time an individual enrolls with a new training provider their USI will be required, so they can make sure their records and results are placed into their account. An individual only needs one USI number for all their training and it is theirs for life. Students and applicants can apply for a USI through the website www.usi.gov.au

Your results in your USI Account

When you have completed your studies at VFA Learning, we provide evidence of your completion to the Department of Education and Training Victoria – they send the results to National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) on a quarterly basis. NCVER then send your results to be update your USI. This can take 3 working days. The table over the page shows when you can expect to view your results in your USI Account.

Result date advised to Skills First	Result date advised to the Department of Education
Jan to end March	June - same year
April to end June	September – same year
July to end September	December – same year
October to end December	March – following year

Please note this is not the date you finish your last assessment or attend VFA Learning, this is the date on your qualification certificate or statement of attainment.

VSN - Victorian Student Number

The Victorian Student Number (VSN) is a student identification number that is assigned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to all students in government and non-government schools, and students in Vocational Education and Training Providers.

Qualifications

VFA Learning management will ensure all qualifications issued are those that are currently on its scope of registration and certify the achievement of the relevant Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and statements of attainment.

If a course is partially completed, VFA Learning will issue a Statement of Attainment, listing the units of competency successfully completed. This statement can be used as part of the Credit Transfer process should you wish to return to your studies.

Providing all fees have been paid, VFA Learning will issue an AQF certification documentation within 30 days of a student being assessed as meeting their training requirements.

“Commit yourself to lifelong learning.
The most valuable asset you’ll ever have is
your mind and what you put into it” *Brian Tracy*

Competency Based Training

As a provider of Vocational Education and Training (VET) accredited programs, VFA Learning provides competency-based training and assessment. This means that Students are assessed against industry determined competency standards that are set out in the related training package or accredited course. These competency standards (known as units of competency) describe the work tasks and knowledge, as well as the technical and employability skills that a person needs to perform a task effectively in the workplace.

Competency is assessed by comparing the prescribed units of competency with the student’s

workplace performance and their ability to apply their skills and knowledge in a range of routine and non-routine situations. The student's ability to perform in a range of situations forms part of assessment and these skills are referred to collectively as the dimensions of competency, where the student must be able to demonstrate:

- **Task skills** – completing tasks to the required standard.
- **Task Management skills** – managing several different tasks at once to complete the whole job function.
- **Contingency Management skills** – appropriately responding to problems and unforeseen events when completing a task.
- **Job/role Environment skills** – appropriately dealing with the responsibility and expectations of the work environment such as working with others, interacting with clients, and following procedures.
- **Transfer skills** – transferring the skills and knowledge to different contexts/environments.

Employability skills are those generic skills gained throughout work and life experiences that are required in most jobs by most of today's employers. Embedded into the units of competency, the employability skills are as follows:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Problem-solving
- Initiative and enterprise
- Planning and organising
- Self-management
- Learning and technology.

Flexible learning methodologies

VFA Learning recognises the principles and benefits of providing flexible approaches best suited to your individual personal learning style, job role and personal situation. Our programs are designed to maximise the opportunity for Students to access learning content and assessments. Learning methodologies offered are decided based on industry/employer consultation and enterprise training needs and are contextualised for individual enterprises and the employee's work role as required.

The following learning methods are examples of what may be used for our courses:

Self-paced, online learning - Individual logins for VFA Learning's online Learning Management System (LMS) allows Students to undertake their learning and assessments at their own pace and in their own time to fit in with their other study or work commitments.

Facilitated training sessions - Facilitated training sessions, either face-to-face workshops or group sessions are part of your course. A group setting facilitated by trainers provides opportunity for Student and trainer interactions and sharing.

Learning in the workplace – In many of VFA Learning courses, particularly, if you are undertaking a Traineeship, you will be gaining your practical work experience through on-the-job training and the employment component. Your VFA Learning Assessor will assess you in relation to your workplace activities. You may also be required to attend training sessions/workshops at your worksite or off-site. Your trainer or supervisor will advise the type and scheduling if attendance is required at training sessions.

Where there is a workplace-training component, Work Placement Logbook will be issued to you. You

and your workplace supervisor will be required to regularly complete the Log to record the learning activities you complete in the workplace. It is essential that you complete the workplace component as part of your assessment.

If you are not employed but your study program requires you to undertake compulsory or voluntary work experience to demonstrate practical skills and competence, you will be assigned or advised about suitable places in industry where you can undertake practical components of your training and assessment. This will also require recording of workplace activities into a workplace log to be considered as part of your assessment.



Competency Based Assessment

All students need to demonstrate they have acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to obtain a qualification. When a qualification is issued, it indicates a student is competent and able to carry out the tasks associated with their course to the standard required in the workplace.

We will inform you at the commencement of your course, of the types of assessment you must complete. Students are assessed in a Competency Based Training (CBT) mode and must satisfactorily complete all assessment items to be rated as competent in a unit. This will include, where applicable, all theory and practical assessments.

The rating of 'competent' is only granted to successful completion of an entire unit. Individual assessments are rated as 'satisfactory' or 'not yet satisfactory'.

There is no such thing as "fail" at VFA Learning; this word actually means **First Attempt In Learning**. A team of dedicated Trainers, Assessors and Academic Coordinators provides support throughout your course at VFA Learning.

VFA Learning utilises a range of assessment methods during its courses so that our students remain engaged, learn through assessment and have a number of opportunities to demonstrate their competence. Assessment method for each unit or cluster of units vary but may include:

- Verbal presentations
- Written question and answer assignments
- True/ false questions, multiple choice, short answer questions, and labelling diagrams.
- Group discussions
- Case studies
- Role-plays
- Assignments
- Placement Logbook for completion at the workplace
- Workplace Journal

All Assessments requirements are explained at the start of a unit of competency or cluster of units. VFA Learning provides supporting videos to help Students understand the Assessment requirements.

Assessment – Submission and re-assessment

VFA Learning have created Assessment tasks and Assessor Marking Guides for each unit of competency or cluster as applicable to ensure that the processes meet the Training Package requirements. VFA Learning conducts each Assessment in accordance with the Rules of Evidence and Principles of Assessment. All Assessments are housed in VFA Learning Management System.

Assessment of written Assessment tasks is within seven (7) working days from submission by students, except in periods of high volume, such as term commencement, high volume enrolments – such as First Aid, or cluster completion when the turnaround times are extended to ten (10) working days.

Students have three (3) attempts per assessment task. Where a task is deemed Not Satisfactory after the initial submission, the student will be provided with detailed feedback, either written or verbal and be given the opportunity to resubmit the task.

Where a task on second submission is deemed Not Satisfactory, depending on the volume of incorrect answers, the homeroom trainer will assess whether the student needs to meet with them to discuss the assessment tasks and provide guidance.

Submission Errors

VFA Learning recognises that on occasion students upload the wrong document or press the submit button prematurely. On occasions where this happens, VFA Learning will not count the reopening of an assessment task as one the three (3) attempts at assessment as described above.

Where a student assessment is deemed Not Satisfactory at their third submission and the competence in a unit or cluster cannot be achieved the student will be required meet with VFA Learning. This will be a meeting with their Homeroom trainer, Academy Academic Co-ordinator or in the case of a Nursing Student – the Head of Nursing and Health to discuss options including study break, or withdrawal from course.

“It does not matter how slowly you go
as long as you do not stop” *Confucius*

Assessment Extensions

If you need an extension to the due date for any assignment, you will need to apply directly to your Homeroom trainer by email at least three (3) days before the due date. You must provide full reasons as to why you are requesting an extension, provide your progress in completing the task, and specify the length of extension you are requiring.

Extensions are not automatic, keep working on your assessment until you hear back from your Homeroom trainer.

The following are acceptable for applying for an extension:

Serious Medical - hospitalisation, serious injury or chronic illness.

Note: temporary minor ailments such as headaches, colds and minor gastric upsets are not serious medical conditions and are unlikely to be accepted.

Compassionate – death of a close family member, significant family and relationship problems

Hardship/Trauma – sudden loss or gain of employment, severe disruption to domestic arrangements, victim of crime.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you read and understand due dates. Misreading a due date is not acceptable grounds for consideration of an extension.

Penalties for Continued Late Submissions

Students who continually miss assessment due dates will be counselled, after discussions and once agreed up with by the General Manager, these students will be placed on a Code of Conduct Contract. This is the final “chance” toward achieving competency in their remaining units.

Section 3 – Studying at VFA

Course Duration

All enrolments have a maximum duration; you will be advised during application and enrolment processes of the duration of your course. Students need to complete the course within the specified enrolment duration to avoid additional fees. Students who do not complete all units within the maximum timeframe will receive a Statement of Attainment listing the units they have completed at no additional cost. Your enrolment begins from the course commencement date.

Course Progress

VFA Learning wants to see all Students succeed. To stay on the right track and not fall behind, we encourage all Students to do the following:

- attend at the absolute minimum - 80% of classes.
- ask questions of the trainer and seek clarification on topics as needed.
- always undertake any self-study required of you, which may be on-line, in the workplace or on placement
- be disciplined in your approach to your studies - the pain of discipline is far less than the pain of regret.

Lack of Progression

As per the Student Progression Policy, where there is a documented record of unwillingness to engage in strategies to improve progression or the lack of engagement by the student to successfully progress through their course. The student progress will be reviewed by the Academy Academic Coordinator or in the case of nursing students, The Head of Nursing and Health. The review will determine whether the student can continue to undertake the course with a reasonable prospect of success. In such cases, the following will be reviewed:

- Statement from student that demonstrates why they should be allowed to continue in the course.
- Compassionate or compelling circumstances
- Circumstances of any warnings previously issued to student.
- Contractual obligations especially for those students accessing VET Student Loans where successful progression through the course is required.
- Special requirements of the course which includes:
 - Industry placement
 - Demonstrable tasks via clinic, labs or placement hours
- The relevance, nature, currency and authenticity of any evidence provided by the student to support their case.

Study Break

VFA understands that during a student's enrolment in their course, unforeseen personal experiences may require a student to withdraw or place their studies on a short break. The following information describes the process a student is required to follow if they wish to pause their studies at VFA Learning.

Please refer to our Incidental Fees table relating to Study Break fees and charges.

It is important at this stage, to explain that study breaks at an RTO, such as VFA Learning is not the same as a deferment at a university or TAFE. Universities and TAFE's have through the nature of their funding from government and their allocated student places, different processes for the study break of studies.

Places in our courses, especially nursing are highly sought after and as such, we fully encourage you to consider all your options and read the following carefully when considering placing your studies on hold.

This process only takes place after you have spoken to your Homeroom trainer and the Academy Academic Co-ordinator or in the case of a student enrolled in the Diploma of Nursing – the Head of Nursing and Health and completed the “*Break from Study Application form*”.

Please note, the granting of a study break is not automatic, we grant study breaks on a case-by-case basis and generally grant them under **evidence supported** extenuating circumstances, such as:

- Loss of employment – self or partner
- Severe and debilitating illness
- Pregnancy as per GP/ Obstetrician/Midwife instructions
- Death in the family

We will not grant a study break to any student who has been issued at any stage a written warning regarding their progression through the course or for unprofessional behaviour.

We will not grant a study break to any student who is removed from Placement for unprofessional conduct.

You can only take a break from your studies once in the lifetime of your enrolment into a qualification. You will receive confirmation from VFA Learning that your case for study break has been reviewed, evidence verified and approved. At this stage, VFA Learning will create and provide you with your “Re-entry Action Plan” which sets out the mandatory tasks you will be required to complete upon re-entering the course. It will not be a simple pick up where you left off, as many industries, particularly nursing, are now demanding that graduates are able to demonstrate currency of skill and knowledge when returning from a study break.

VFA will offer those granted a study break, the next available spot in the course intake which aligns to their agreed return dated. We will endeavour to ensure the offer place that meets with your requirements, however, **be aware; you will only receive two (2) offers**. If you cannot accept either of the dates offered, then you will be withdrawn from your course and you will be able to reapply into a future course and will undergo the full application and enrolment process.

Please note the following:

- **Diploma of Nursing qualification students**
 - **Deferral can be no longer than 6 months.**
 - **Recovery of costs for a further Placement to demonstrate currency of skills and knowledge.**

Withdrawals

Should you decide that this is not the course for you, VFA Learning has in place a student withdrawal procedure. Should you decide to withdraw, you will need to contact the Academy Academic Coordinator. As part of your withdrawal, you may be eligible to receive a refund, in line with VFA Learning's Refunds Policy in this Student Handbook.

Applications for withdrawals and cancellation must be made in writing, using the VFA Learning Application to Withdraw Form, to

- **Email:** privacy@vfalearning.vic.edu.au
- **Phone:** 03 5223 6800

Students are encouraged contact their Academy Academic Coordinator to discuss support options prior to withdrawal including study break, extra 1 to 1 support from Homeroom trainer, study advice and where applicable referral to Headspace.

Students who have withdrawn due to personal issues are encouraged to reapply when the time is right for them to recommence. You will undergo the full application and enrolment process and will be responsible to pay any increase in tuition or materials fees.

Re-Entry Process

If VFA Learning has withdrawn you for lack of course progression or unprofessional behaviour at our organisation, you cannot re-apply to re-enter your course of study.

If you had previously withdrawn from a course, you will undergo the full application and enrolment process including an interview for those enrolling in the Diploma of Nursing.

If you are granted a study break, the following explains your re-entry into the next available course including any further financial commitment.

One (1) calendar month before your study break ends, you must contact VFA Learning to discuss your Re-entry Action Plan. At this point, if this is your second offer and if you cannot commit to the end of study break date then you will be withdrawn from the course.

If the date on re-entry is acceptable, then VFA Learning will discuss and finalise the following:

- Which student cohort you will be joining
- Date of re-entry
- Time and date of re-entry interview- mandatory attendance
- If applicable – the increase in course costs
- Mandatory tasks which will demonstrate currency in your Action Plan
- Mandatory behaviours that must be demonstrated including a statutory declaration from your employer stating you were not at work when you advise VFA Learning of non-attendance at Labs and Placement due to illness – self or family member.
- For nursing students, the recovery of costs for a further Placement – regardless of whether you have previously completed this Placement.

Section 4 - Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student Rights

All students have the right to:

- be treated fairly and with respect by all students and staff.
- not be harassed, victimised or discriminated against on any basis.
- learn in a supportive environment which is free from harassment, discrimination bullying and victimisation.
- learn in a healthy and safe environment where the risks to personal health and safety are managed and minimised.
- have their personal details and records kept private and secure according to our ***Privacy and Personal Information Policy***
- access the information VFA Learning holds about them.
- have their complaints dealt with fairly, promptly, confidentially and without retribution
- make appeals about procedural and assessment decisions.
- receive training, assessment and support services that meet their individual needs.
- be given clear and accurate information about their course, training and assessment arrangements and their progress.
- access the support they need to effectively participate in their training program and
- provide feedback to VFA Learning on training, assessment and support services they receive.

Complaints and Appeals Process

Right to Make a Complaint or Appeal

VFA Learning is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable complaints and appeals handling system, which is easily accessible and free of charge. VFA Learning aims to:

- Develop a culture that views complaints and appeals as an opportunity to improve the organisation and how it works.
- Set in place a complaints and appeals handling system that is student focused and helps VFA Learning to prevent these events from recurring.
- Ensure that any complaints and appeals are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality.

You can access our full ***Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*** on our [website](#).

Complaint definition is a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable and can occur when a student has a concern about a particular issue and would like it resolved. A complaint can be formal or informal and it can be about staff, another student, services and resources.

Appeal definition is making a serious, urgent or heartfelt request and can when the student has a concern about a decision relating to an academic result and would like it investigated.

Resolving informal complaints

Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to resolve concerns or difficulties directly with the person(s) concerned. Trainers and Academic Co-ordinators are available to assist in resolving issues. Should the issue be unresolved; please see the procedure below for lodging a complaint.

Lodging a Complaint

The following must be followed when lodging a complaint:

- submit in writing to the Complaints Registrar, VFA Learning, 78 Yarra St, Geelong, 3220 using the VFA Learning Complaints and Appeals Form (available on the VFA Learning website)
- Fill out all required details on the form and attached any relevant information.
- completion of the online Complaints and Feedback Form in the VFA Learning LMS
- documented in any other written form.

Upon receipt, VFA Learning will endeavour to resolve the issue by making inquiries about the matter or may task another person to research the matter against relevant policy.

The complaint should outline when and where the incident occurred, a brief outline of the incident, any witnesses, what the complainant is expecting as part of the resolution and include copies of any supporting documentation.

The complaint will be formally acknowledged in writing within 48 hours of receipt and VFA Learning's investigation process will commence no later than 10 days after submission. Should a complaint or appeal be expected to take longer than 60 days to resolve, VFA Learning will notify the Complainant when acknowledging the complaint and of its commitment to provide regular progress reports.

Assessment Appeal Procedure

The following must be followed when lodging an appeal:

- The notice should be in writing, addressed to VFA Learning's Academic Coordinator and submitted within 14 days of notification of the outcome by the assessor.
- The notice must outline the qualification code and name as well as the code(s) and name(s) of the units which the student is seeking a review, together with an outline of their concerns as well as expected outcome.
- The notice of request for an assessment appeal must be submitted within the specified timeframe of 14 days otherwise the original result will stand.

Appealing Cancellation of Enrolment

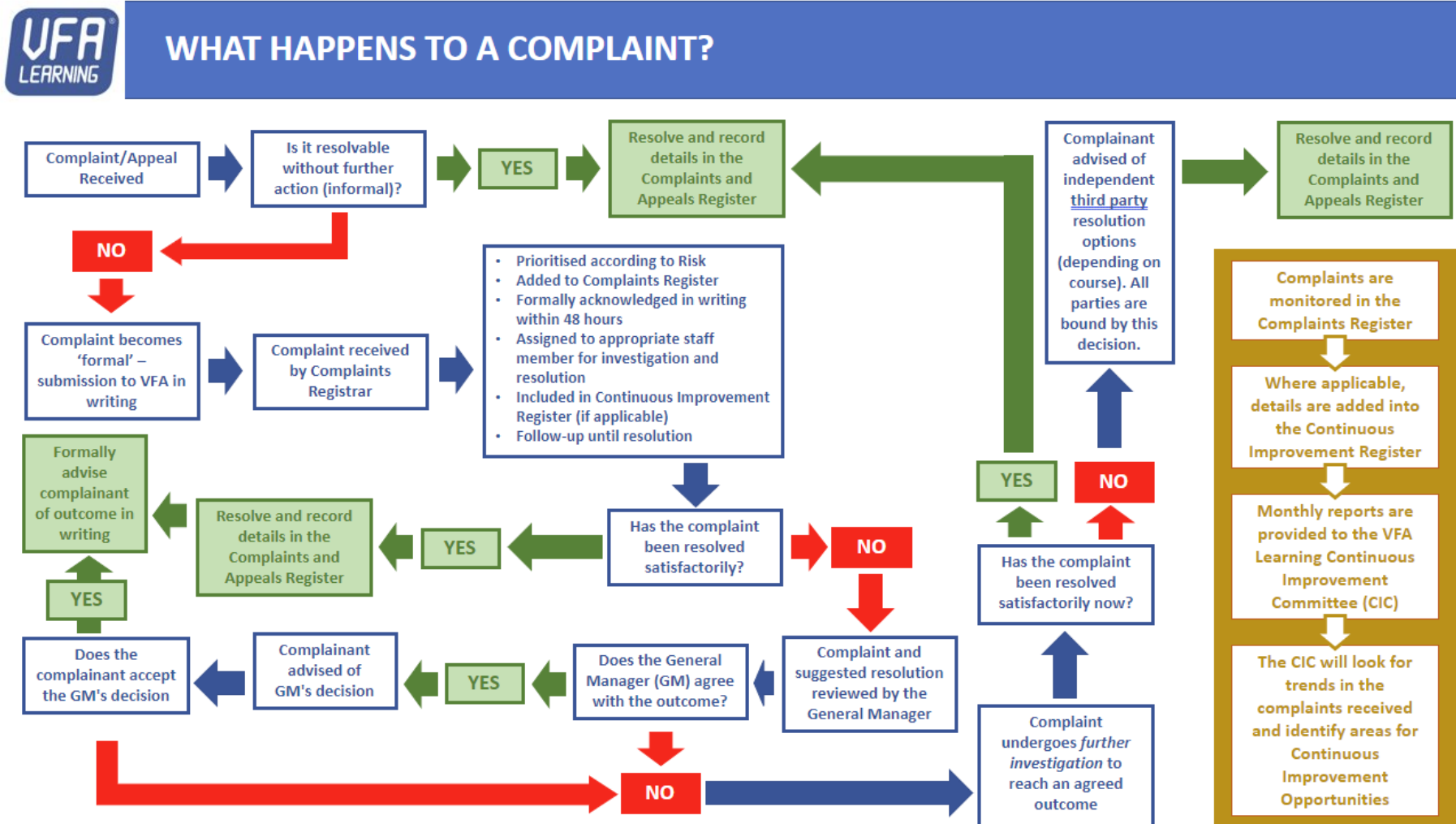
A student has the right to appeal the decision made by VFA Learning to cancel their enrolment. The Intent to Cancel Enrolment letter sent by VFA Learning provides details of how to lodge an appeal. Students can lodge the appeal up to and including the 27th day from the date on the letter.

The formal notice of a request for an enrolment appeal (the notice) is required to comply with the following requirements:

- The Complaints and Appeals Form should be completed and sent to The Complaints Registrar as per the form details within 48 hours of receiving the letter of intent to cancel enrolment.
- The appeal must outline the reasons why VFA Learning should not cancel the student's enrolment and what the student will do to ensure engagement in their studies.
- The notice of request for an assessment appeal must be submitted within 28 days otherwise the cancellation will go ahead.

Student Handbook

The following diagram is a visual representation of VFA Learning's Complaint and Appeals Process



Section 5 - Student Responsibilities

This section is about what VFA Learning **expects from you** as a Student enrolled in our organisation and in most cases representing VFA Learning during work placements or in the community. At the beginning of this handbook, we stated our organisational values of **Support, Credibility, Progression** and **Fun** in learning. We want your time at VFA Learning to reflect those values and we want you to take ownership of your journey throughout your course and live the values on which we have founded our organisation.

Please read this section **carefully** and **ensure** that you understand your obligations of being part of the VFA Learning community.

Further information on any Policy or Procedure relating to your studies at VFA Learning can be found on our [website](#).

Code of Conduct

VFA Learning's Code of Conduct supports the adult learning environment and expects students to:

- Notify VFA Learning, if they are unable to attend for any reason at least 24 hours (where possible) prior to the commencement classes, tutes, labs or placement.
- Take ownership and responsibility to identify and tell staff about any individual learning needs including any issues that may be interfering in their learning progress.
- Be honest, open and truthful in all interactions with staff, placement supervisors and others.
- Communicate with VFA Learning within described requested timeframes when answering emails or text messages.
- Approach their course with personal commitment, ethics and integrity.
- Progress steadily through their course in line with their training plan
- Maintain a high standard of acceptable and appropriate behaviour whilst undertaking educational activities including placement.
- Respect the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of the First Nation Peoples and others with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Prepare appropriately for all assessment tasks, placement/workplace visits and training sessions including labs.
- Check the assessment requirements for each subject including due dates and number of assignments and adhere to all Assessment due dates.
- Treat all members of the VFA community with fairness and respect and not do anything that could offend, embarrass or threaten others.
- Not harass, victimise, discriminate against or disrupt others or their learning environment.
- Maintain a high standard in their personal hygiene and dress code standards.
- Report any concerns or allegations of abuse of under 18's to the Child Safety Officer
- Follow all safety policies and procedures as directed by VFA Learning staff.
- Notify VFA Learning of any change in address or personal details.
- Be aware of, and comply with, VFA Learning's Policies and Procedures relevant to students.
- Conduct themselves appropriately at all times whilst a Student with VFA Learning.
- Make payments for their training within agreed timeframes as per their Statement of Fees

Attendance

It is a requirement that students attend all scheduled sessions on-campus. VFA Learning allows students a buffer of 20% **across their whole course of non-attendance**. If you fall below 80% attendance, VFA will discuss with you the process for catching up on missed classes. During this time, you will be required to meet 1 to 1 with your Homeroom trainer and complete any work missed in the dedicated Student Computer labs.

By accessing State or Federal Government funding for your qualification, you are required to continually demonstrate evidence of your participation in your course, making any catch up sessions critically important.

Placement and Nursing Labs require 100% attendance – VFA Learning has no flexibility here to allow any buffer.

It is important that you understand all facets of attendance and not just being “physically” present in a class.

Attendance does not only mean being present in a face-to-face class for the duration of class, but also means agreed engagement at self-directed learning activities, tutorial groups, online interactive classrooms, field trips, work placements, and other situations which require a physical presence by the student.

Active participation in learning involves the student’s demonstrated commitment to the learning tasks and activities. Examples of this could be engagement in and completion of online learning tasks within agreed time frames, evidence of research into a topic for online group discussions, projects, portfolios; the willingness to engage in group or trainer sessions (e.g. blogs), workplace learning activities.

Active participation in assessment may be indicated by the student’s efforts in gathering appropriate evidence and submitting and/or presenting an assessment on time and in the required format.

It is important that you commit to attending and actively participating in all course learning and assessment activities, as that is considered as reasonable engagement. VFA Learning has in place a range of ways that it collects evidence of your reasonable engagement that includes Attendance Registers.

For Students in an approved course who are supported by a VET Student Loan, there is a further government requirement that you ‘**check**’ in at regular times through the **eCAF system**. VFA Learning will remind you of the times and provide information that will support you to meet this important requirement.

Communication

Any communication received from VFA Learning or any regulator, must be actioned by you in the timeframe stipulated in the communication. Students are required to regularly check their emails and respond promptly using acceptable professional language.

Your email address will be the main source of contact. That means you will always have a printable copy of any communication, it is important to check your junk mail, if you have not been receiving any emails from VFA Learning staff.

You will receive course updates, Statement of Fees, Acceptance Letters, log in details to our Learning Management System, communication from your Homeroom trainer and Academic Co-ordinators and (where relevant) VET Student Loan FEE Notice and Commonwealth Assistance Notice, and much more.

If we find that you are not responding to our emails, or we need to contact you in a hurry, we will also attempt to contact you via the mobile phone number that you provided us with at the time of your application, which may be via a call and/or SMS. VFA Learning staff may also use social media to contact you. You must inform us in writing, and we will accept any reasonable request not to send emails to you providing it does not interfere with your commitments under your contract with VET Student Loans.

Digital Signature

A personal User ID number (ID) to use for all on-line activities located in or Online Learning Management System (LMS) will be issued at orientation. Together with your ID, the system will ask you to generate a password that acts as your digital signature to acknowledge that the work completed is authentic. When setting your Password, it is important not to use your User ID, first name or last name.

Your ID and password confirm that you, and only you, have undertaken the required study and of course, prepared and submitted the required assessments. This is important evidence for both the regulator and for Government funding purposes.

It is important that you keep your ID and password safe and confidential and do not share it with any other person, including your family members and friends.

In accordance with our **Privacy Policy** which you can find on our website, VFA Learning issues you with a system generated ID, holds your ID in a secure manner and those that need to have access to it to support you in your studies only access it. These staff are VFA Learning's IT System Administrator, together with each Academic Co-ordinators and their delegated local administrators, who hold restricted access only to IDs from their campus location, so that they may provide technical support to you.

Dress Code

While studying at VFA Learning expects students to wear neat and clean clothing and maintain acceptable personal hygiene standards. Minimum standards include the following:

- Daily showering and deodorant to be used at all times - especially when accessing gym facilities.
- No heavy or overuse of aftershave or perfume
- Closed-toe footwear must be worn at all times – no thongs or open toed shoes.
- VFA Learning Polo shirt to be worn on Placement and Clinic Days, this must be clean and laundered regularly.
- Appropriate gym attire for students studying fitness, meaning no denim or work boots.
- Massage students are required to wear black pants on clinic days.
- Nursing students are required to follow the dress code outlined within Section 9 – Additional Nursing Student information of this Student Handbook.

Gym Etiquette

Any student enrolled at VFA Learning may use the gym facilities at their campus providing they adhere to the following:

- Completion of the PARQ form, handed to a Fitness Trainer who will assess and provide.
- Appropriate attire is worn in the gym – no thongs, no open toed shoes or work boots.
- No food or cups brought into the gym.
- Water bottle and handtowel to dry of equipment after use.
- No swearing, inappropriate language or offensive music to be played.
- No inappropriate behaviour or gestures
- Appropriate hygiene standards are followed when workout is completed.

Mobile Phone Use

Out of courtesy to your Trainer and those around you, your mobile phone or any other electronic device must be turned **OFF** or on the **Do Not Disturb** setting during class, group sessions, undertaking on-the- job/workplace training and/or assessment unless you require these as part of your training.

If there is any reason why you must have your phone on, please discuss this with your Trainer.

Social Media

When participating in any Social Media Platform VFA Learning requires all students to be guided by the following organisational values whilst they are enrolled at VFA Learning:

Support – your integrity by adhering to the Student Code of Conduct and other applicable policies and procedures when posting or replying to posts on any social media platform. Support VFA Learning by letting us know at privacy@vfalearning.vic.edu.au of any compliments, criticism or unacceptable posts of our organisation.

Credibility in every online post you write. You are responsible for your actions. We encourage all students to participate in the online space. Let the VFA Marketing Team respond to negative comments or conversations. Credibility, as per the Student Code of Conduct, in the use of our IT technology at VFA Learning when posting on social media.

Smoking and Electronic Cigarettes (Vaping)

Smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes (vaping) is not permitted at VFA Learning and this is commonplace in most workplaces. Make yourself aware of the smoking-permitted areas both at our sites and at your placement sites and always adhere to these. Victorian Government Legislation states that smoking cannot be within 4 meters of any building entrance and it is unlawful to use e-cigarettes within 4 meters of a school entrance.

Drugs and Alcohol

The unlawful possession, use, purchase, or distribution of alcohol on VFA Learning property or as part of any course activity is prohibited. The unlawful possession, use, purchase, or distribution of illicit drugs, controlled substances or the misuse of prescription drugs including sharing, procuring, buying, or using in a manner different from the prescribed use, or by someone other than the person for whom it was prescribed—is prohibited on VFA Learning’s property or as part of any course activity.

Child Safety

All students who are 18 years and over have responsibilities in the protection of our younger students who attend VFA Learning. VFA has a dedicated Child Safety Officer available to discuss any concerns of alleged or actual abuse that any student has suspicions or knowledge of. It is critical that you discuss any concerns with the Child Safety Officer or if you are a member of staff you are comfortable with.

Child Safety Officer:

Catherine Cross 03 5223 6800

VFA Learning are bound by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (VIC) and the Child Safe Standards in 2016 and as such will report to the relevant authorities any allegations or actual abuse.

Placement

If your course includes Placement, the requirements will be discussed with you during the induction/ orientation day. The roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in practical placements will be outlined in your *Practical Placement Agreement*. As a student on placement, you will be required to:

- punctually attend shifts.
- adhere to dress (including ID badge) and conduct codes.
- abide by pre-placement briefing instructions.
- observe the Placement supervisor's directions.
- accept all opportunities to develop your knowledge and skills.
- maintain the Placement Logbook and attend other nominated activities.
- notify VFA Learning and Placement Provider in the event of non-attendance.
- Non-attendance must be supported by appropriate documentation, e.g. a medical certificate if the absence is related to illness.

Students are expected to:

- accept accountability for progress and diligently pursue learning opportunities.
- practice a team approach by working with others.
- behave and perform duties in a professional manner.
- exhibit a high level of personal hygiene.
- ensure safety of themselves and others
- follow all reasonable instructions from the Placement Supervisor
- adhere to legal and ethical guidelines/standards.

Practical placement is an opportunity to experience the workplace. Students should treat this opportunity in the same manner in which you would a new job.

Note: Nursing students will find further details in section 9 of this handbook.

Change of personal details

New Zealand Students must ensure that they provide any citizenship status updates to VFA Learning immediately.

If you change any of your details after enrolment, please pick up the **Change to Details form** from reception, complete and return within 48 hours.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Under *no circumstances* will VFA Learning **tolerate any form** of cheating or plagiarism. While co-operative effort and the sharing of information are encouraged, **you** must ensure your assignments and assessments are representative of **your own effort, knowledge and skills**. You must not take the work of others and present it as your own.

Cheating definition:

- Act dishonestly or unfairly to order to gain an advantage.
- Gain an advantage over or deprive of something by using unfair or deceitful methods

Examples of cheating are:

- Handing in someone else's work as your own
- Stealing and passing off another person's words or ideas and claiming them as your own
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation or idea
- Using a mobile phone or fixed device to access information, support or text during a closed book examination or other regulated assessment setting.
- Providing passwords or log-on details to a friend or family member to complete any assessment task on your behalf.

Plagiarism definition:

- an act or instance of **using or closely imitating** the language and thoughts of another author without authorisation and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author
- The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own

Examples of plagiarism are:

- Quoting from a book, website or an article without acknowledging the source.
- Downloading information from the internet without acknowledging the source.
- Copying a section of a book or article and submitting it as your own work
- Presenting as a new and original idea or produce something which was derived from an existing source – This includes the use of artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots.

If a Trainer and /or Assessor suspects that cheating or plagiarism has taken place, they will discuss the assessment submission with the student(s) involved.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that an assessor can authenticate your work, this including quoting sources where required. Where an assessor cannot authenticate a student's work further evidence will need to be provided to support the content submitted.

Our Trainers and Assessors have been teaching for many years and are yet to see an original form of cheating or plagiarism. Believe us when we tell you that it is just not worth jeopardising your enrolment at VFA Learning, your ethics, integrity or future on a "quick fix". If you are experiencing challenges toward your assessment, please reach out to your trainer and assessor.

“Integrity is doing the right thing, even when
no one is watching” CS Lewis

Procedural Fairness/Natural Justice

VFA Learning will address all cases of unacceptable behaviour according to the principles of procedural fairness/natural justice, which include the following:

- Supporting you in understanding and resolving any unacceptable behaviour(s)
- Ensuring and allowing you to be heard and put your case forward.
- When appropriate, first using informal conversational 1 to 1 processes to resolve any issues or behaviours
- Respect and uphold your privacy and confidentiality when dealing with issues or behaviours.
- Ensuring a transparent decision-making process
- Removal from the decision-making process any person, staff member or student who believes or demonstrates a conflict of interest.
- The right to appeal any outcome through the Complaints and Appeals Process

Behaviour Misconduct Levels

VFA describe the following levels or behavioural risk to ensure students have clear understanding of what behaviours are not acceptable, either on Campus or online.

Level 1- Minor misconduct

These behaviours are relevant to the First Breach of the Student Code of Conduct

- Out of uniform
- Talking over others and disruptive behaviour
- Inappropriate dress etiquette and unacceptable hygiene standards
- Continual late arrival (including after breaks), or leaving early.
- Failing to follow instructions regarding mobile phones or personal devices.

Level 2 – Moderate misconduct

These behaviours are relevant to the Second Breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

- Continued Low risk behaviours are displayed.
- Failure to progress in studies
- Spreading gossip or innuendo
- Abusive Language – including racial vilification and inappropriate sexist comments and remarks regardless of context.
- Bullying including false accusations of bullying.
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Breaching the VFA Learning or placement provider policy on smoking and vaping
- In possession of/under the influence of prohibited drugs and alcohol
- In appropriate posts/use of social media
- Damage to VFA or another student's property
- Accessing or sharing of pornographic material

Level 3 – Severe misconduct

These behaviours are relevant to the Third and Fourth Breaches of the Student Code of Conduct

- Continued displaying of behaviours from Levels 1 and 2
- Failure to comply with an issued Student Code of Conduct Contract
- Harassment of another student or member staff – please refer to section 8
- Threatening behaviour
- Physical or sexual assault
- Stalking
- Theft of VFA, staff or students' property
- Wilful damage to VFA or students' property

The following is an extract from the Breaching Student Code of Conduct Policy, which clearly describes the process VFA Learning will follow when dealing with student misconduct.

Consequences of Misconduct

Where a student breaches VFA Learning's Student Code of Conduct the following describes the actions to be taken to address any breach. It should be noted that the following is **summative** of behaviours displayed by a student and not a description of each individual breach. Students may request that a support person is present at any meeting and can appeal the outcome by accessing the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

First Breach – Verbal Warning

The students Homeroom trainer will discuss the alleged breach with the student in an informal setting and determine with the student the rectification of their behaviour. Where applicable the Homeroom trainer will issue the student with a verbal warning and file notes will be added to the student file.

Second Breach – Written Warning

A second breach is more serious and entails the Homeroom trainer and Academy Academic Coordinator or in the case of nursing students – the Head of Nursing and Health – investigate the alleged breach and then meeting with the student to discuss the breach and determine rectification. Students will be placed on a Student Code of Conduct Contract. Where applicable a written warning may be issued. **Student Written Warning Template** must be completed.

Third Breach – Final Written Warning

A third breach demonstrates that the student is unwilling to follow the Student Code of Conduct. The student **must meet** with the Academy Academic Coordinator or in the case of nursing students, The Head of Nursing and Health to discuss breach and determine rectification. Where applicable the student will be issued a final written warning, explained that their enrolment is at jeopardy and placed on a final student contract.

Where a student fails to comply with their Code of Conduct Contract – the General Manager will decide on the status of the students' enrolment.

Acute Breach

An acute breach is determined as involving dangerous or threatening behaviour by a student; this can be either physical or verbal. Staff are delegated to take whatever reasonable action deemed necessary to ensure the safety of all students and should seek immediate support of Academy Academic Coordinator. Students displaying dangerous or threatening behaviour will be asked to leave VFA Learning campus and if necessary, the Police is called to assist. The Academic Coordinators will investigate the breach and present outcomes to General Manager who will determine the status of a student's enrolment.

Section 6 – Fees, Charges and Refunds

Fees and Charges

To ensure Students and employers are well informed of all course fees and refund arrangements prior to enrolment taking place, you will be provided with all fees and charges details in pre-course documentation prior to accepting a training proposal or enrolment takes place. You will then receive at least one tax invoice or Statement of Fees, dependent on the fees payment arrangement in place with you and/or your course of study.

Irrespective of the availability and receipt of government subsidies by an employer, school, or Student, it is a requirement of VFA Learning that where course fees, enrolment fees or other charges are applicable, these must be paid by the specified due dates on the basis of a tax invoice and paid in Australian dollars.

To view the most current and up to day fee information visit the fee schedule on our [website](#).

Incidental Fees

The following are incidental fees and charges:

Item	Fee
Replacement or extra Polo Shirt	\$40.00
Replacement or extra Nursing Scrub, per item	\$35.00
Replacement nursing consumables	at cost per back
Replacement Qualification or Statement of Attainment	\$50.00 (\$30.00 concession)
Replacement Textbook	Current market price
Study Break administration fee, per unit of competency	\$50.00
Course Transfer administration fee	\$187.50
Deferral of course commencement administration fee	\$187.50
Re-enrolment fee administration fee	\$187.50
Assessment resubmission fee (post 3 rd attempt), per units per submission	\$50.00
Replacement Placement Logbooks per book	\$20.00
Retrieving of student record from archiving facility, per return	\$22.00
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): Application fee \$150, one payment	\$150.00
RPL Application per unit (min. RPL Fee is \$300 equal to 1 application and 1 unit.)	\$150.00
Cancellation fee outside 5-day cooling off period (or full course fees, if course fee is less than \$200)	\$200.00
Credit Transfer (CT) – No fees applied.	\$0.00

Nursing students only

- Non-attendance, regardless of reason, placement recovery costs will be dependent on the facility and can range cost up to \$100 per day.
- Catch up lab fees once 3 allocated have been used - \$120 per session.

**VFA Learning reserves the rights to change the above pricing without prior notice.*

Fees paid in advance

VFA Learning acknowledges that it has a responsibility to protect the fees paid by Students in advance of their training and assessment services being delivered. To meet our responsibilities VFA Learning will accept payment of no more than \$1,000 (no GST applies) from each individual Student prior to the commencement of the course.

In addition, all Students will receive an itemised invoice or Statement of Fees, which clearly outlines the fees and any additional charges that the student must pay to participate in their course. This invoice is issued as part of the application process. It is the student's responsibility to check and clarify any items. Dependent on your circumstances, a VFA Learning career consultant will discuss one or more of these payment options at the time of your application:

1. fee-for-service: deposit & direct debit payment of balance (paid through *DebitSuccess*)
2. where eligible: VIC government subsidy and VSL and/or
3. where eligible: VSL & direct debit payment of balance (paid through *DebitSuccess*)

Payment Plans Terms and Conditions

VFA Learning accepts the following methods of fees and charges payment – cheque, money order, credit card, direct debit, through a third-party credit agency, *DebitSuccess*, and direct bank transfer. Please ask one of our VFA Learning offices for further payment details including a copy of our Payment Plan Fact Sheet to assist you to select the best payment option that suits your circumstances.

However, please note that direct bank/credit card transfers are only valid where the student has previously submitted a Direct Debit Request Form through *DebitSuccess*, with this arrangement approved by VFA Learning and *DebitSuccess*.

Refunds, Withdrawals and Cancellation

In accordance with VFA Learning's Fees, Charges and Refund Policy, available in full on the website, the following applies:

- Eligibility for a refund will be assessed based on the services provided to date to the student, the costs incurred by VFA Learning and any requirements outlined by Federal and State legislation and regulations. To maintain consistent and fair decisions on refunds and fee reductions, VFA Learning maintains an internal schedule of the cost of each type of service provided and will base decisions on the total fees to be charged to a student based on this schedule. This schedule will be provided to Students on request.

Applications for withdrawals and cancellation must be made in writing, using the VFA Learning Application to Withdraw Form, to the following:

- **Email:** privacy@vfalearning.vic.edu.au
- **Phone:** 03 5223 6800
- All enrolments have a 5-day cooling off period (5 days from date of enrolment).
- Cancelling outside of the 5- day cooling off period but prior to commencement date of course will result in a cancellation fee of \$200 (or full course fee if enrolment fee is less than \$200).
- Cancelling within the first 14 calendar days of the course commencing will result in a cancellation fee of \$200 (or full course fee if enrolment fee is less than \$200). Books/ Materials must be returned (in original condition) or Student will incur full costs and no refund is applicable.

VFA Learning will ensure there is no penalty for withdrawing enrolment on or before a census day where:

- VFA learning enrolls a student in a course on the basis that some or all of the tuition fees for the course are covered fees (i.e. covered by a VET Student Loan (VSL)); and
- on or before a VSL census day for the course, the student requests in writing that VFA Learning cancels the enrolment.

For covered fees, if a student requests to be withdrawn from a VET Course of Study or VET Unit of Study after the VSL census date:

- The student will incur a VSL debt for that VET Unit of Study; and
- No refund is applicable to any fees paid up-front.
- Course fees are not transferrable to any other individual.
- All course fees will be refunded if VFA Learning cancels or postpones course commencement by more than four weeks, unless alternative arrangements can be made which are acceptable to the student. Such arrangements may include transfer of enrolment to an alternative course.
- VFA Learning will only consider applications for remitting a VSL debt after the census date where there are special circumstances. VFA Learning's *Withdrawal & Refund Policy*, available on VFA Learning's website, provides further information about special circumstances.
- It is important to know that should a student not have met their fee commitment at the time of withdrawal, the student will still be required to pay fees owing for tuition/services/material covered and delivered by VFA Learning to date. This includes in any payment plan arrangement.
- Where a student has an approved payment plan arrangement and requests to withdraw, VFA Learning will, for Students supported by a VET Student Loan:
 - PRE-census date, refund any monies paid through this payment plan arrangement, and
 - POST-census date, ensure any monies owed to VFA Learning for the previous census period will remain outstanding until the debt is repaid in full, at which time the debt will also be reduced to a zero balance for the payment plan arrangement.
- For other Students with an approved payment plan and studying an approved course where they have opted not to be supported by a VET Student Loan, VFA Learning will exercise the same census date rules and refund conditions as it applies to Students who have opted to be supported by a VET Student Loan (refer above).
- Any fee-for-service Student, who is enrolled in a certificate level qualification and non-approved VET Support Loan course, and who is cancelling outside of the first 14 calendar days of course commencement (refer Conditions of eligible refunds for Certificate level and non-approved VSL Courses below), will result in the student being held liable for the entire course fee.

Traineeships

Where tuition fees are applied to traineeship training the employer may be charged the tuition fee on behalf of the student undergoing the approved Traineeship in accordance with the Training Proposal Agreement signed between VFA Learning and the employer.

Payment of refunds

The outcome of the refund assessment will be provided by written notice to the student's registered address, within 14 days of receipt of a written application outlining the decision and reasons for the decision along with any applicable refund or adjustment notice.

A refund will be paid directly to the student or the person who made payment.

Any payment related to a *DebitSuccess* payment plan will be issued by *DebitSuccess* and not VFA Learning.

Non-payment of fees

Late fee payment may incur a penalty. Failure to pay the course fees within 14 days of the final notice by either the student or their employer may result in any or all of the following, until the full amount is paid:

- Suspension from attending/participating in the course.
- Inability to graduate and receive your Certificate or Statement of Attainment
- Report of a breach of a Training Contract (Trainees and Apprentices).

Where a student is more than 40 days overdue with payments, VFA Learning reserves the right to suspend training services until payment is made to bring fees up to date.

Recovery of outstanding fees

For overdue fees, VFA Learning will undertake the following cost recovery steps:

1. Contact the Student via phone, email or mail with a courtesy reminder of outstanding fees.
2. If there is no contact from the student, then VFA Learning will contact the student with an overdue payment reminder of the money owing and request payment.
3. If the Student still has not paid VFA Learning will contact the student with a final notice
4. If there is still no payment or response VFA Learning will make direct contact with the student to ask for payment
5. In the event that all attempts to contact the student has failed VFA Learning will use a debt collection agency to recover all costs.
6. If fees are still outstanding then VFA Learning may consider using a debt collection agency to recover the outstanding money, VFA Learning will utilise fair debt collection practices developed by Consumer Affairs. The student may also be required to pay additional fees associated with the debt collection process.

Refund Policy (VET Student Loan)

VFA Learning will repay to a student who is, or would be, entitled to VET Student Loan assistance any VET tuition fees that he or she may have paid for a VET Unit of study if the student withdraws from that unit on or before the relevant census date.

This does not apply where VET tuition assurance arrangements have been activated and the student has elected the VET course assurance option for that unit.

Where a student withdraws from a VET unit of study after the relevant census date, any refund of VET tuition fees is at the discretion of VFA Learning.

Section 7 – Support Services

Internal Support Services

Student support staff are available to help you achieve your learning objectives and successfully graduate from your course. If you are having difficulties with the course material, managing your time and commitment to your course, or any other academic related matter, do not hesitate to speak with our staff and ask for guidance.

Student support contact via the Academic Co-ordinators is provided to all Students. Our support staff will make regular contact with you, generally via email or via the telephone. The aim of this contact is to monitor your progress, assist with any learning or technical issues that may be hindering your progress, review your training plan timelines and to discuss planned activities for the next month. Our job is to help you to achieve your aspirational and career goals and our staff are part of your support mechanism – please do not hesitate to contact your trainer in the first instance if you believe that you need additional support or would like to discuss any matter that may be hindering your studies at VFA Learning,

We will also regularly monitor Students undertaking their training in the workplace. As well as scheduled training activities, trainers may conduct over-the-phone oral interviews or assessments and may schedule face-to-face workplace visits.

Reasonable Adjustments

We allow for reasonable adjustments in both our teaching and assessment and focus on flexibility and fairness whilst still maintaining validity. Adjustments may be made for Students with:

- English as a second language
- Language, literacy or numeracy needs
- Sensory diminished capacity
- Physical or intellectual disabilities

Modification or adjustments may be made to the:

- Learning materials and methods suitable to the student
- Physical environment and equipment
- Procedures for conducting assessment.
- Evidence gathering techniques.
- Number of opportunities to submit assessments and sit exams.
- Timing of assessment or exam

If you require support in any way, please contact a VFA Learning office or your trainer at any time throughout your course.

Headspace

VFA Learning have collaborated with Headspace to support Students studying at VFA Learning with help for mental health and other health issues. Headspace has offices in Geelong, Melbourne and Narre Warren. Students can access the service by calling the centre closest to them. Headspace currently have 20 offices in Melbourne, including regional Victoria.

External Support Services

Meli – Geelong students

Website: www.meli.org.au

VFA Learning have collaborated with Meli for Geelong students over the age of 26 to assist students studying at VFA Learning with help for mental health and other health issues. Please speak with your homeroom trainer who can organise a referral that is cost free. Bethany Community Support can be contacted on:

16 Ballarat Rd, Hamlyn Heights, VIC 3215

P: (03) 5278 8122

Reading and Writing Hotline

Telephone: 1300 655 506

Website: <http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au>

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 – Services Australia

Website: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/>

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

- Pensioner Supplement Allowance
- ABSTUDY *course dependent
- AUSTUDY
- Youth Allowance

Australian Apprenticeship Centres (AAC)

Telephone: 13 38 73

Website: <http://australianapprenticeships.gov.au>

Australian Apprenticeship Centres handle all matters related to traineeships and apprenticeships. If you are a trainee or apprentice, some language, literacy and numeracy courses attract government subsidies. Talk to your AAC about this now.

Lifeline Australia

Telephone: 13 11 14

Website: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

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.

Disability Resource Centre

Telephone: 9791 – 3000

Website: <http://www.drc.org.au>

Disability Rights Victoria is an advocacy organisation directed by people with a disability. They work with and on behalf of adults with a disability. They provide individual advocacy, information and support to people with a disability via our network of advocates located across Victoria. This support may include making representation on behalf of individuals with a disability, helping individuals to advocate for themselves or helping others to advocate for them.

Kids Helpline

Telephone: 1800 55 1800

Website: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Young people can contact them about all kinds of things including friendships and relationships, family issues, bullying and cyberbullying, school and study stress, gender identity, sexuality, mental health, feeling sad or upset, body issues, or because they're feeling unsafe.

For non-urgent issues, the following 24-hour or after hour support services are available:

Mental Health and Wellbeing support

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Line Victoria 1300 651 251

Beyond Blue 1300 224 636

MensLine 1300 789 978

DirectLine (Alcohol and Drugs) 1800 888 236

Family Drug and Gambling Helpline 1300 660 068

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard 1800 184 527

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Domestic and Family Violence

1800 Respect 1800 737 732

Orange Door 1300 659 467

Safe Steps 1800 015 188

Sexual Assault Crisis Line Victoria (5pm – 9am) 1800 806 292

Medical Services (not emergencies)

Nurse-on-call 1300 60 60 24

National Home Doctor Visiting Service 13 SICK or 13 7425

COVID-19 hotline (Victoria) 1800 675 398

Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26

Other services:

Department of Home Affairs - Telephone Interpreter Service 13 14 50

Vic Emergency App

Vic emergency is the best and most up-to-date resource for incidents, warnings and other weather and fire-related information in your area.

You can download the [VicEmergency App](#) (AppStore or Google Play)

Section 8 – Legislation

VFA Learning is subject to a variety of legislative and regulatory requirements as they relate to training and assessment products and services. The below listed legislation effects our operations includes but is not limited to the legislation listed below:

Australian Government Legislation	Victorian State Legislation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copyright Act 1968 2. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 3. Equal Opportunity Act 2010 4. Fair Work Act 2009 5. Freedom of Information Act 1982 6. Privacy Act 2012 7. Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) 8. Racial Discrimination Act 1975 9. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 10. National Vocational Education & Training Regulator Act 2011 11. Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) 2015 12. Australian Consumer Law (2011) 13. Student Identifiers Act 2014 14. Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electronic Transactions (VIC) Act 2000 2. Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) 3. Working With Children Act 2005 4. Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 5. Requirements for VET Student Loans– approved providers 6. Privacy and Data Protection Act 7. Disability Services Act 2006 (Vic) 8. Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 9. Drug, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1988 (Vic) 10. Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic) 11. Fair Trading Act 1999 12. Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 13. Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) 14. Mental Health Act 1986 (Vic) 15. Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) 16. Public Records Act 1973 (Vic) 17. Accident Compensation (Workcover Insurance) Act 1993 18. Vocational Education and Training Act 1990 (Vic) 19. VRQA Guidelines for VET Providers

Health and safety

Students must take care of their own health, safety, and that of their fellow workers/Students to the extent of their capability. This means you must follow all safety rules, procedures and instructions of course coordinators, trainers, workplace supervisors, and other persons involved during your training activities.

Become aware of your environment and use good ergonomic practices, especially when spending time at the computer for online learning.

Report all WHS hazards and/or incidents immediately to your trainer or supervisor.

If you have any concerns about your safety and health, or that of your fellow colleagues, you should immediately report the situation to your trainer or supervisor.

Pregnancy During Placement

Students who are on Placement can continue to work right up to 34 weeks gestation. Once you reach that 34-week threshold, if you want to continue with your placement, you must get a certificate from your GP that states:

- You can continue to study or attend placement.
- It is safe for you to complete all placement required tasks.

Please note – placement tasks and duties cannot be amended to accommodate light duties or non-safe duties during this time.

Harassment and Discrimination Free Environment

VFA Learning is required under Australian law to ensure that that we provide a workplace that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination (including victimisation and bullying) so that staff and candidates feel valued, respected and fairly treated.

Harassment can be any form of verbal or physical behaviour that is unwanted, unwelcome and unreciprocated that makes the candidate's or any other relevant person's environment unpleasant, humiliating or intimidating for the person who is the target of that behaviour.

If you consider that you have been harassed, you should let the other party know that their behaviour is objectionable and that the behaviour should not be repeated. In an instance where you do not, feel comfortable talking to the other party or that party continues with the behaviour, you should speak to your trainer immediately.

All discussions are confidential. The right to lodge a formal complaint of misconduct against the harassing person is available. All VFA Learning' staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to discrimination and harassment. No forms of harassment and unacceptable behaviour, both overtly and covertly, are not tolerated within any VFA Learning environment.

When VFA Learning management are informed of any harassment or discrimination, we have the responsibility to take immediate and appropriate action to address it. If deemed appropriate, VFA Learning management will report offences to the police.

Racial Harassment

This may occur when a person is threatened, abused, insulted or taunted in relation to their race, decent or nationality, colour, language or ethnic origin, or a racial characteristic. It may include derogatory remarks, innuendo and slur, intolerance, mimicry or mockery, displays of material prejudicial to a particular race, racial jokes, allocating least favourable jobs or singling out for unfair treatment.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is any verbal or physical sexual conduct that is unwelcome and uninvited. It may include kissing, embracing, patting, pinching, touching, leering or gestures, questions about a person's private or sexual life, requests for sexual favours, smutty jokes, phone calls, emails, facsimiles or messages, offensive noises or displays of sexually graphic or suggestive material.

Discrimination

Discrimination is identified as treating someone unfairly or unequally simply because they belong to a group or category of people. Equal opportunity laws prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, family responsibility, family status, race, religious beliefs, political conviction, gender history, impairment, age or sexual orientation.

Bullying

VFA Learning does not tolerate any form of bullying under any circumstance or in any contexts.

Bullying is unwelcomed and offensive behaviour that intimidates, humiliates and/or undermines a person or group. It is detrimental to both physical and psychological well-being. Bullying involves a persistent pattern of unreasonable behaviour over a period time and may include verbal abuse, physical assault, unjustified criticism, sarcasm, insult, spreading false or malicious rumours about someone, intentionally isolating, or ignoring another student. Any of these can take place face to face, via email, text messages to others, phone or any social media platform.

There is often confusion to the term bullying, and it is important to describe what is ***not considered bullying***:

- A single or one-off incident of negative behaviour
- Low level conflict or disagreement between students
- Reasonable actions and management by VFA Learning staff of any Code of Conduct breaches. – please read section 8

Examples of **reasonable management actions** may include:

- Setting academic or behavioural goals, standards and deadlines
- Informing student about unsatisfactory academic progress or professional behaviour when undertaken in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct
- Informing a student about unprofessional behaviour in an objective and appropriate manner

VFA Learning takes all false allegations of bullying seriously; any student found to be making false allegations after all investigations have been completed will be counselled and where applicable may face removal or suspension from VFA Learning as per the Student Code of Conduct Policy

Anti-Discrimination Legislation

The following Acts make it illegal to discriminate against people in employment based on gender identity, gender preference, sexual orientation, intersex, race, skin colour, disabilities and religious beliefs:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

Section 9 – Additional Nursing Student Information

This section describes the additional requirements for students enrolling into the Diploma of Nursing and meets VFA Learning's accreditation standards and expectations with Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC). **All other sections of this handbook remain relevant and in force.** Nursing students have additional requirements to ensure that they can apply for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

Online Resources

VFA Learning has purchased access to a nursing database for VFA Learning students, inclusive of comprehensive evidence-based content and tools. The database includes access to an extensive reach of current and relevant evidence including systematic reviews, recommended practices and evidence summaries.

In addition to the database, students will have access to an array of online resources including student site resources and online drug database.

Reassessment of Units

In addition to the assessment, information provided earlier in this handbook, to ensure the integrity of the Diploma of Nursing qualification the following processes are in place after the third unsuccessful attainment of competency in a unit:

- Due to the high-risk nature of the course, VFA Learning is very cognisant of the serious implications of failure to attain competence. After three (3) attempts, the Head of Nursing and Health and Cluster/Unit Trainer and Assessor will undertake an in-depth evaluation of whether the student is suitable to continue in the Diploma of Nursing course.

Study Outcomes

On successful completion of Diploma of Nursing qualification, students will work in accordance with Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA), [Enrolled Nurse standards for practice](#). They will follow the NMBA guidelines and position statements to deliver legally and professionally accountable and responsible nursing practice in all clinical, management, education and research domains. They must adhere to the [code of conduct for nurses](#) and [International Council of Nurses; Code of Ethics](#)

Under the supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN), graduates will be able to:

- Provide direct and indirect care.
- Engage in reflective and analytical practice, and
- Demonstrate professional and collaborative practice. Where appropriate, educate and support other (unregulated) health care workers related to the provision of care.

Graduates of this program are eligible to apply for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme administered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

Course Structure

The Diploma of Nursing is delivered over an 18-month period, where Students will be required to attend 2 days of on-campus learning (classroom and simulation lab training). In addition to the on-campus learning, mandatory online studies will consist of 1 full day of self-paced delivery, and another 1-2 days of self-directed tasks. This totals 5 days a week of study requirements.

Table.1 Example of weekly course delivery

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3 GROUP A	Day 4	Day 5
Structured ONLINE LEARNING Self-Paced Delivery (6-8hrs)	Classroom Delivery (9am to 4pm)	LAB – Group A (9am – 12pm)	Self-directed assessment work (1-1.5days)	
		Tutorial – Group A (1pm – 4pm)		

The Diploma of Nursing is delivered at the following location:

- Geelong Campus – 78 Yarra Street, Geelong Victoria 3220

Student Nurse Standards

As a registered Enrolled Nursing Student with the AHPRA, you are also required to abide by the following standards, codes and guidelines:

- NMBA Standards for Practice: Enrolled Nurses
- NMBA Code of Professional Conduct
- The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Code of ethics for nurses
- NMBA Social Media Policy

Note that failure to abide by these standards, codes and guidelines can have serious consequences and may affect your ability to complete professional placement, and the Diploma of Nursing qualification.

Mandatory Entry Requirements

For applicants to be suitable for registration as an Enrolled Nurse on completion of the Diploma of Nursing, the NMBA requires all applicants to meet the English language, literacy and numeracy requirements as specified in the [Registration Standard: English language Skills](#), prior to commencing the Diploma of Nursing program.

Applicants are also required to successfully complete the Inherent Requirements checklist. This checklist provides prospective and current students an understanding of the practical and placement demands expected of a Student Enrolled Nurse. The checklist coincides with the Inherent Requirements of the HLT54115 Diploma of Nursing program at VFA Learning. Where the student is unable to meet these expectations, they will be expected to speak to the relevant VFA Learning staff member from the Nursing team to discuss alternative course options, they may also be required to seek further medical confirmation of their abilities.

Selection

When formal evidence is provided demonstrating applicants meet the English language Skills requirements according to AHPRA requirements, then they will be required to complete the ACER Language, Literacy and Numeracy Test – displaying competence at or above Exit Level 3. Students who have undertaken an approved English language skills test (test pathway 3) and met the program entry criteria will only be required to undertake the numeracy component - Exit level 3 of the LLN Assessment.

Professional Placement

- VFA Learning will provide students with placement opportunities through our partnerships with local Hospitals/Tertiary Institutions and Residential Aged Care facilities. Students will complete a total of 440 hours of practical experience in a variety of placements locations.
- Practical placement will be monitored by our Diploma of Nursing training and assessment team in partnership with our industry providers and will involve shift work, which will require a full 8-hour day to be worked (40-hour week). Shifts may occur on weekends, although predominantly are rostered for weekdays.
 - Mental Health Placement – 2-week block in a Mental Health Facility (80 hours)
 - Aged Care Placement – 3-week block in an Aged Care Facility (120 hours)
 - Subacute Placement – 2-week block in a subacute/rehabilitation facility (80 hours)
 - Acute Placement #1 – 2-week block in an acute facility (80 hours)
 - Acute Placement #2 – 2-week block in an acute facility (80 hours)

Note: Placement locations and hours are subject to change based on availability of local placement providers

Students will be required to attend all professional placements totalling 440 hours (10 weeks) with the placements occurring throughout the course.

Immunisation Placement Requirements

The NMBA Code of Conduct states:

Nurses have a responsibility to maintain their physical and mental health to practise safely and effectively. To promote health for nursing practice, nurses must:

- a. understand and promote the principles of public health, such as health promotion activities and vaccination*

This applies to all Nursing Students at VFA Learning. No vaccination – no placement.

During professional placements, students will be required to interact with many people, some of whom may have a communicable disease. This places students at risk of acquiring one of those diseases. In addition, if they contract a communicable disease, they place clients at risk.

Immunisation is one of the most effective public health measures for the control of communicable diseases, protecting both the individual and the general community. For student protection and the protection of others, evidence of vaccination status is required for students to participate in professional placement.

If vaccinations are incomplete, students will be unable to attend placement and therefore unable to complete the course. Students will be provided with a list of vaccine requirements upon commencement of the course. Evidence of proper immunisation status must be submitted to VFA in a timely manner for students to attend placement.

For further information on recommended Immunisation for Category A Health Care Workers please refer to the Services Australia website at: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/health-professionals/immunisations-for-health-care-workers>

Inability to Attend Placement – Notification

Students are expected to provide both the Clinical Placement Coordinator and the Head of Nursing with advanced notice if they are unable to attend clinical placement. VFA Learning will do everything possible to accommodate students' schedules and avoid incurring additional student fees by facilitating the rebooking of students who provide advance notice. Rebooking clinical placements will depend on placement facility availability, as well as governing bodies' requirements, and may result in a delay in unit or course completion.

Placement type	Notification requirement
Mental Health Placement	Immediately upon enrolment in the course
Aged Care Placement	3 months advance notice required
Subacute Placement	6 months advance notice required
Acute Placement	6 months advance notice required

Recovery of Placement Costs

Placement providers charge VFA Learning a fee for students placed at their organisation. Absences by a student may result in the student needing to repeat or make-up placement hours. **The cost of this additional placement booking will be passed on to the student.** Placement fees range cost up to \$100 per day, depending on the facility. Due to minimum placement booking requirements, students may be charged for a full 1-2 weeks replacement regardless of how many days they are required to attend.

Number Of Shifts To Make Up	Total Cost Billed To Student
1 shift	\$100
10 shifts (2 weeks)	\$1000

If you are absent from Placement on two or more occasions – regardless of the reason, this also includes concurrent and non-concurrent days, you may be required to attend a meeting with VFA Learning's Head of Nursing and Health, asked to bring the Medical Certificates to discuss the absences.

At this meeting, the Head of Nursing and General Manager will determine if you are fulfilling the requirements of progression through your course and will determine if VFA Learning will continue with your enrolment.

Please be aware multiple non-attendances at Placement may put your access to a government funded place in jeopardy, as you are not fulfilling the requirements of progression through your course.

Professional Placement Eligibility

Behaving in a professional manner at all times while studying the Diploma of Nursing course is required to be eligible to go on a professional placement. You must be punctual to classes and must attend at a minimum of 80% of classes and 100% of labs. If you miss a lab session, you must present either a doctor's certificate or a statutory declaration for the absence. This is non-negotiable. You must ensure that you make up the missed session prior to placement to ensure all skills are developed and your readiness for placement is confirmed.

The following is expected of Nursing Students before professional placement takes place:

- Registration as a student nurse with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) prior to any clinical placement. This will be completed by VFA Learning
- A valid police check
- A valid Working with Children Check provided on commencement of the course.
- Verification of immunisation status in alignment with the DHHS [Immunisation guidelines for health care workers](#)
- Exhibit professional behaviours.
- Successfully completed any Placement pre-requisite.
- Successfully completed all lab sessions.
- Be up to date on all Assessment Tasks

Failure to undertake or successfully complete professional experience placements will result in the student having to make up time and VFA reserves the right to charge a fee to organise extra professional placement times. Many providers expect make-up placements to be a full week regardless of how many days were missed and you will have to accept placement wherever we can locate a place.

Code of Conduct on Professional Placement

During the placement, you will be expected to follow organisational policies and procedures, and the directions of the Clinical Facilitator and the Registered Nurse (preceptor) this includes compliance with all safety and OH&S policies and procedures, as well as other protocols that are practiced by the placement provider.

As a registered Diploma of Nursing student with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), you are also required to abide by the following standards, codes and guidelines

- NMBA Standards for Practice: Enrolled Nurses
- NMBA Code of Professional Conduct
- International Council of Nurses Code of Ethics for Nurses
- NMBA Social Media Policy

Failure to abide by these standards, codes and guidelines and follow the direction of the Placement provider will affect your ability to complete professional placement, and the Diploma of Nursing

qualification.

Attitude

To benefit from the professional placement, a positive commitment is very important. You will need to:

- Be willing to learn.
- Complete the tasks assigned to you by the Workplace Supervisor
- Listen to instructions and ask questions.
- Be polite, courteous and well-mannered with all staff members.
- Dress appropriately; and
- Abide by all workplace policies and procedures.

Breaching Placement Code of Conduct Consequences

When you are on Placement, you are representing VFA Learning and yourself. VFA Learning take any breaches of behaviour at placement seriously. We are in daily contact with placement providers and seek continual feedback regarding student behaviours at placement. If you jeopardise the relationship that VFA Learning has with a placement provider by displaying any of the following behaviours which are reported by the provider. VFA Learning will investigate, and you may be permanently removed from your course.

Any of the following or multiple behaviours are a serious breach:

- Engaging in gossip or innuendo
- Misleading the provider about start and finish times.
- Talking dismissively or unfairly about a provider's member of staff
- Non-adherence to placement policies and procedures
- Repeatedly ignoring directives given by supervisor or management
- Rudeness to staff members, clients and family members
- Swearing and use of foul language
- Consistently turning up late for shifts and from breaks

Simulated Workplace - Lab

VFA Learning has created a simulated workplace at their Geelong Campus, and it is generally known as "the LAB". Each week you will attend a 3-hour lab to practice the skills and knowledge that you have gained during the face-to-face classroom and online sessions. Labs are mandatory and as such, if you are absent from the scheduled labs then you will be required to submit the following:

- Medical certificate from your GP
- If requested by VFA, statutory declaration from your employer to state that you were not at work when scheduled for lab.

Catch Up Sessions - Lab

It is your responsibility to book catch up labs. Failure to do this will mean you will be charged for the lab regardless of the number you have missed.

Students cannot use catch up sessions as the norm, these sessions are in place to assist those who ***genuinely*** cannot make the scheduled classes. We require you to submit a medical certificate from your GP if you miss a lab due to illness.

We understand that sometimes you cannot make a scheduled lab- however, ***you cannot continually come only to catch up sessions*** – these catch-up sessions are at a great cost to VFA Learning and their purpose is to support those who genuinely cannot make the scheduled lab.

For those students who abuse this support by only attending catch up sessions – more than three (3) students will be billed \$120/catch-up lab to cover the extra teaching costs. Students be found to be abusing the catch-up lab process, will face disciplinary action, which may include the loss of their place at placement and will be charged in addition to the recovery costs of teaching staff.

Support Services for Nursing Students

Listed in this handbook are Headspace and Bethany Community services which help and support our students at VFA Learning.

Nursing students can also access the following services:

- The Nurse and Midwife support available at <https://www.nmsupport.org.au/> is an excellent free service available to all students studying to become Nurses. If you are feeling overwhelmed or need to talk to someone in confidence, please reach out to this service which is 24/7 Nationwide.
- Nursing and Midwifery Health Program, available at <https://www.nmhp.org.au>, another excellent free service available to students in the Nursing Program at VFA Learning. If you are feeling overwhelmed or need to talk to some in confidence, please reach out to this service which can arrange face to face meetings in Geelong on a monthly basis.

Dress Standards

Reasonable modifications to uniform and dress requirements will be considered upon request to the Head of Nursing and Health. Modifications requested to comply with cultural / religious beliefs will be considered providing they do not pose an occupational health and safety risk.

Following a grace period of six (6) weeks from commencement, students who, without reasonable cause, fail to comply with the policy will be required to immediately return home in their own time to change into appropriate clothing.

When working in the VFA Simulation Lab or whilst on professional placement, students must ensure that their uniform is clean, tidy, well maintained. Please note that the placement provider policy will override VFA policy whilst on placement.

The following items / types of clothing may ***not be worn in the lab under any circumstances***:

- Halter, tube, tank tops or singlets
- Jeans or Leggings, unless for agreed events such as 'Jeans for Genes Day' - Jeans must not be ripped or torn.
- Clothing that exposes areas of the body that are considered inappropriate in a professional work environment: cleavage, back, stomach, buttocks and underwear.

Uniforms

Students are provided with one VFA Learning Navy scrub top and scrub pants on commencement of the course, which must be worn during Simulated Lab sessions, and whilst on professional placements. Students can purchase additional scrub tops at their own expense. Students may wear a T-Shirt or under their scrub top however, this should not be visible below the elbows. (Navy or white is recommended).

Students may wear Navy Pants or Scrubs Pants (no leggings or tight-fitting pants) during professional placements.

Footwear requirements are to be followed at all times:

- Shoes must be supportive; rubber soled (non-slip / have good traction) and have a closed forefoot covering the toes and the whole top of the foot.
- Clogs/crocs are not considered acceptable in lab or while on placement.
- Footwear that can be wiped clean therefore canvas not recommended.
- Platform shoes and high heels can be dangerous in a health care setting and are not permitted.
- Coloured laces and work boots are not to be worn by students.

Hair

Hair may create a safety hazard or present an infection control risk (e.g. during patient contact, food handling or equipment usage) therefore:

- Hair is to be clean, neat, and well groomed.
- Moustaches and beards are not acceptable as it severely decreases mask effectiveness.
- Hair should be back off the face to avoid it interfering with performing procedures or coming into contact with the patient.
- Extremes in terms of hairstyles and hair colour are discouraged.

Body Piercings & Jewellery

Body piercings and jewellery should not be functionally restrictive, dangerous to Staff, students or patients nor likely to offend a reasonable person.

- Earrings should be small and discrete. Hoop style earrings should not be worn by students due to the risk to student safety.
- Rings must be limited to 1 plain band.
- No wrist watches or Fitbits
- Fob watches may be worn, if attached above waist height (must be able to wipe clean, eg. silicone)

Nails

- Fingernails are to be kept clean, well-manicured; with tips no longer than 0.5cm in length.
- Artificial nails including gel nails, SNS and nail polish are not to be worn in the lab or during placement.
- Please see Hand Hygiene Australia FAQ: <https://www.hha.org.au/faq/general>

Body Art (Tattoos)

- All tattoos should be covered where possible.
- If unable to cover, tattoos will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by VFA Trainer or Placement Provider.

Cosmetics

- Discrete makeup may be worn by students.
- Perfumes and after-shave lotions are not allowed, as patients and co-workers may be sensitive to strong smells.

Personal Hygiene

- Students are to ensure an appropriate level of personal hygiene including the use of deodorant / antiperspirant to minimise body odour.
- Students who smoke are to ensure their attire and breath are completely smoke free prior to recommencing work after smoking and are to comply with hand hygiene guidelines which recommend hand washing after smoking.

Identification (ID) Badges

- Students will be provided with a VFA Learning Name tag on commencement of the course, this nametag should be worn at all times (lab and placement) and attached above waist height and should be clearly visible. If a name tag becomes illegible or lost students are required to order a replacement through reception at their own expense.

Student Handbook



Contact us

Should you have further questions after having read all aspects of this Student Handbook, please visit our [website](#) or contact us directly on 03 5223 6800.

