



# STAFF MANUAL

**Effective from May 2009**

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## 1.0 WELCOME TO NOVA INSTITUTE

### FROM THE PEO



The Institute has prepared this handbook to provide you with an overview of the Institute's policies, benefits, and rules. It is intended to familiarize you with important information about the Institute, as well as provide guidelines for your employment experience with us in an effort to foster a safe and healthy work environment. Please understand that this booklet only highlights Institute policies, practices, and benefits for your personal understanding and cannot,

therefore, be construed as a legal document. It is intended to provide general information about the policies, benefits, and regulations governing the employees of the Institute, and is not intended to be an express or implied contract. The guidelines presented in this handbook are not intended to be a substitute for sound management, judgment, and discretion.

It is obviously not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. In addition, circumstances will undoubtedly require that policies, practices, and benefits described in this handbook change from time to time. Accordingly, the Institute reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any provision of this handbook from time to time as it deems necessary or appropriate in its sole discretion with or without notice to you.

No business is free from day-to-day problems, but we believe our personnel policies and practices will help resolve such problems. All of us must work together to make the Institute a viable, healthy, and profitable organisation. This is the only way we can provide a satisfactory working environment that promotes genuine concern and respect for others including all employees and our customers. If any statements in this handbook are not clear to you, please contact the PEO or his designated representative for clarification. This handbook supersedes any and all prior handbooks of the Institute.

**Vaneer Randhawa**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vaneer Randhawa".

## FROM THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION MANAGER



Congratulations on your decision to work with Nova Institute. You have taken a major step in your career to join a team of dedicated and professional staff here at Nova. Together we will strive to provide our students a meaningful and at the same time an enjoyable period in their life here in Australia.

Your manager will take you through an induction process to familiarise with facilities and job expectation. If you have any concerns at any time regarding any policy or procedure, please bring this to the attention of your manager or Campus Manager. We will try our best to resolve any issues.

Hope you have a wonderful time here at Nova. We have a Continuous Improvement Policy in place. Your timely feedback will help us to improve our systems and processes. Thank you for your feedback.

I wish you the best in your career and life here in NOVA with us.

**Satish Madaan**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Satish Madaan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a horizontal line.

## **2.0 NOVA ENVIRONMENT**

### **AMBIENCE**

International students have great expectations of Nova, particularly its services and staff. A professional looking work environment can do much to create a positive impression and give confidence in the organisation.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Nova is committed to providing an environment which serves as a model for other RTO's who may provide academic and associated services for international students.

Nova expects all staff to have a positive attitude towards working in an organisation that employs and constantly relates to people with differing cultural backgrounds and expectations.

### **HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that humiliates, offends or intimidates people. Nova Institute of technology will not tolerate harassment or intimidation of our employees on any basis prohibited by law, including race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, handicap, disability, marital status, or veteran status.

Harassments could be

1) Sexual harassment such as

- Sexually explicit or sexually suggestive posters that make people feel uncomfortable
- Making inappropriate and/or unwanted comments about other people bodies
- Talking about sex and a person in the office without that person's knowledge and/or consent

2) Non-sexual harassment which includes any kind of behaviour that

- The other person does not want and does not return
- Offends (makes one feel hurt, upset), humiliates (makes one feel stupid or embarrassed) or intimidates (makes one feel small and not important)
- Targets people because of their race (which country someone comes from), age, religion, sex or other characteristic
- 

The above includes racial taunts (teasing someone at because of the colour of their skin) and disability harassment (calling names related to a person's disability).

The Institute recognises that every employee has the right to quiet enjoyment of their workplace and learning environment.

Worksafe Victoria defines workplace bullying as repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety. Bullying and harassment are considered to be unacceptable behaviour that will not be tolerated under any circumstances and may result in disciplinary action against staff members involved.

Some examples of behaviour that could be bullying include:

- spreading malicious rumours, gossip, or innuendo that is not true
- excluding or isolating someone socially
- intimidating a person
- undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work
- physically abusing or threatening abuse
- withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information
- making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail
- intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking
- creating a feeling of uselessness
- yelling or using profanity
- criticising a person persistently or constantly
- belittling a person's opinions
- tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment
- humiliating someone through sarcasm or insults

Employees must bring any violation of this policy to the immediate attention of their manager or the Campus Manager. The Institute will thoroughly investigate all such claims with due regard for the privacy of the individuals involved. Any employee who knowingly retaliates against an employee who has reported workplace harassment or discrimination shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Nova expects all employees to behave in a professional manner and to treat each other with dignity and respect.

The PEO and managers have a responsibility to create a workplace that is free from any discrimination and harassment.

## **CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**

Accepting employment at Nova Institute of Technology implies that employees have agreed to accept the organization's philosophy, principles, policies and goals. Violations of this code may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All staff must treat all information from and about students, employees, management, work related materials as confidential and must not give names or other personal information to anyone outside Nova Institute of technology without the express permission of the individual concerned.

Employees have a responsibility to:

- represent Nova in a positive way
- promote a positive public image of international students
- perform official duties with skill, care and diligence, using authority in a fair and unbiased way
- provide service and advice to students, agents and associates in a professional way
- treat colleagues, members of the public and Nova students, staff and associates with courtesy and sensitivity to their rights, duties and aspirations
- respect the privacy of all colleagues and maintain a non-disruptive behaviour at all times
- behave at all times in a professional manner that maintains or enhances Nova's reputation
- respect confidentiality of the meeting room
- provide support and training as required/requested by new colleagues
- observe safe work practices and ensure that the workplace is free of bullying & harassment
- ensure that taking illicit drugs or intoxication does not occur at the workplace
- avoid any conflict of interest (financial or otherwise) associated with the performance of work at Nova Institute of Technology.
- behave in a professional way by not accepting gifts or favors from clients in return for an action or otherwise

## **DRESS CODE**

Personal attire plays an important role in defining the public's image of the NIT. NIT staff has a responsibility to project both confidence and professionalism. Staff can have a positive impact on clients by dressing in a professional manner.

## **EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION CHART**

NIT staff have a responsibility to understand the Emergency and Evacuation Procedures of the premises where they work and familiarise themselves with all instructions. The PEO will ensure that the Emergency Chart is displayed at strategic points in the organisation. Reading the Emergency and Evacuation Procedures is a compulsory part of the induction for each staff member. Staff must also familiarize themselves with the Emergency Chart displayed.

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Nova is committed to protecting the health and safety of employees, clients, visitors and associates. It is committed to its duty to provide and maintain as far as is practical, an environment that is safe and without risks to those who use it. This includes:

- providing and maintaining safe equipment and systems of work
- promoting a safe workplace and resolution of issues in a timely manner
- maintaining the workplace in a safe and healthy environment
- providing adequate facilities to protect the welfare of all employees
- providing information, training and supervision for all employees to enable them to perform their tasks safely
- ongoing inspection and review of the work place, work practices and procedures
- appropriate response in the event of an incident or injury to ensure an investigation is conducted to prevent a recurrence
- 

## **SECURITY**

Nova has a number of security systems/cameras in place to protect its premises.

Staff members, who are entrusted with relevant keys and passes, are not to lend keys to others without the express permission of their manager or the PEO. This is looked on very seriously and can result in disciplinary procedures against a staff member.

When a staff member resigns from Nova, all keys must be returned to the institute official.

## **DRUG FREE AND SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Nova is a non-smoking work place. The Institute also does not tolerate the presence of illegal drugs or the illegal use of legal drugs in our workplace.

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS**

Nova encourages staff to suggest changes that may enable the organization to improve the quality of its services continually. A suggested change or opportunity for improvement may become apparent from experience, a system failure, audits, or client surveys. The institute has a registry to record such requests. This is kept in a shareable folder and can be accessed by all staff. An entry can be made in the register and/or discussed with your manager. The manager will address the issue by initiating suitable action.

## **ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING TO WORK**

Each employee is important to the overall success of our operation. When you are not here, someone else must do your job. Consequently, you are expected to report to work on time at the scheduled start of the workday. Reporting to work on time means that you are ready to start work, not just arriving at work, at your scheduled starting time.

The Institute depends on its employees to be at work at the times and locations scheduled. Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The determination of excessive absenteeism will be made at the discretion of the Institute. Absence from work for three consecutive days without properly notifying your supervisor will be considered a voluntary resignation. You are required to provide documentation from your doctor to support an injury- or illness-related absence, and to ensure that you may safely return to work.

If you expect to be absent from the job for an approved reason (e.g. paid time off or a leave of absence), you should notify your manager of your upcoming absence as far in advance as possible. If you unexpectedly need to be absent from or late to work, you must contact the reception and request the manager/campus manager to be notified of the absence or tardiness. Failure to properly contact us will result in an unexcused absence for disciplinary purposes. Your attendance record is a part of your overall performance rating. Your attendance may be included during your review and may be considered for other disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **RECORDING HOURS WORKED**

You could be asked by your manager to fill in a daily/weekly time sheet. The Institute will provide you with a time sheet for reporting your hours. Only you are authorized to record your own time.

## **PAY PERIOD and PAYDAY**

The institute transfers pay fortnightly on Thursdays. Pay periods start on Monday morning and end on Friday afternoon.

## **HOLIDAYS**

The Institute observes public holidays and are declared in advance.

Full-time employees will be paid for these holidays as long as the employee was present for work on the workdays immediately before and after that holiday, or had an acceptable excuse for being absent on any such days. If a paid holiday falls within an employee's vacation period, the holiday will not be counted as a vacation day.

Part-time employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

## **EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

Upon being hired by the Institute, all new employees must serve a ninety (90) calendar day probationary period. It is especially important that you make your supervisor aware of any questions or problems you may encounter during this period. Your performance will be carefully monitored during this period. At the end of the probationary period, your performance will be reviewed, and if it has been satisfactory, you will become a Full-Time Employee. Satisfactory completion of the probationary period does not entitle you to employment for any specific term, but does entitle you to participation in many of the Institute's employee benefits programs.

For the sole purpose of determining the allowance of certain employee benefits, employees are classified as:

**Full-Time Employees** - An employee who has satisfactorily completed the probationary period and is scheduled to work an average of forty (38) hours per week on a regular and continuous basis.

**Temporary Employees** - An employee whose services are anticipated to be of limited duration falls into this classification. Temporary employees are not eligible for participation in those employee benefits programs made available for the Institute Regular Full-Time Employees, although separate benefit plans may be available for certain temporary employees assigned to work at the Institute. Such employees will be separately notified of any such programs.

## **MAINTAINING YOUR PERSONNEL RECORDS**

It is your responsibility to provide current information regarding your address, telephone number, etc. Please use the Employee Information form to note any changes in your address, phone number, emergency contact information, marital status, number of dependents, etc.

## **PERSONNEL FILES**

Employee personnel files are the property of the Institute, and do not belong to the employee. However, upon request, the Institute will provide employees with copies of performance evaluations and other performance-related documents that the employee has previously received.

## **INDUCTION**

All employees of NIT including full, part-time and casual employees are entitled to an induction into the organization, its policies and procedures, resources and all other requirements of their position.

New NIT employees will receive an appropriate and systematic induction into the organization. You and your manager should ensure that the areas in the Staff Induction Checklist are properly covered.

## **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

Employees may have their job performance reviewed on an annual basis by either their manager or by the Campus Manager of the Institute.

## **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

NIT will achieve a high standard of skill and effectiveness in all staff through valuing personal and organizational learning and teamwork, and by providing general support. Staff have the opportunity to identify own professional development needs or could be identified during performance evaluations.

Staff who attend NOVA funded training and conferences, need to be aware that: any proceedings are the property of the organisation.  
they need to act at all times in the interest of the organisation.  
a summary report is expected and needs to be submitted to their manager

All training and arrangements for such must be approved by management prior to it being undertaken, and with sufficient advance notice.  
If training is required by NOVA, staff will be given time in lieu (in other words paid for their time) and their course fees will be paid.

## **PERSONAL CALLS, VISITS AND BUSINESS**

The Institute expects the full attention of its employees while they are working. Although employees may occasionally have to take care of personal matters during the workday, employees should try to conduct such personal business either before or after the workday or during breaks or meal periods. Regardless of when any personal call is made, it should be kept short.

Employees should also limit incoming personal calls, visits, or personal transactions. The Institute's phones should be available to serve the Institute's customers, and non-business use of the phones can hurt the Institute's business. A pattern of excessive personal phone calls, personal visits, and/or private business dealings is not acceptable and may lead to disciplinary action.

## **BUSINESS EXPENSES**

Employees may occasionally incur expenses on behalf of the Institute. The Institute will reimburse employees for typical business expenses provided a valid receipt is submitted within a week of incurring such an expense.

## **INSPECTION OF PERSONAL AND INSTITUTE PROPERTY**

The Institute's employees use the property and equipment the Institute owns and provides, and may also use the Institute's materials, information, and other supplies. While employees may decorate their office workspaces with their personal possessions (such as pictures, plants, and the like), employees

must remember that property supplied by the Institute remains the property of the Institute. The Institute reserves the right to search any Institute property (e.g., personal computers, desks, lockers, or other storage areas) at any time. The Institute also reserves the right to inspect personal property (e.g., tool boxes, purses, briefcases) during the workday or as employees leave their worksites. Refusal to allow inspection may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**

The Institute considers its confidential and proprietary information, including the confidential and proprietary information of our customers, to be one of its most valuable assets. As a result, employees must carefully protect and must not disclose to any third party all confidential and proprietary information belonging to the Institute or its customers. Such protected information includes, but is not limited to, the following: matters of a technical nature, such as computer software, product sources, product research and designs; and matters of a business nature, such as customer lists, customer contact information, associate information, on-site program and resource materials, candidate and recruit lists and information, personnel information, placement information, pricing lists, training programs, contracts, sales reports, sales, financial and marketing data, systems, forms, methods, procedures, and analyses, and any other proprietary information, whether communicated orally or in documentary, computerized or other tangible form, concerning the Institute's or its customers' operations and business.

Employees should ensure that any materials containing confidential or proprietary information are filed and/or locked up before leaving their work areas each day. During the workday, employees should not leave any sensitive information lying about or unguarded.

If you have any questions about this information, consult your manager or the Institute Campus Manager.

## **3.0 COMMUNICATIONS**

### **PUBLICATIONS**

It is important that the NIT conveys the right message which reflects the organization and its vision. All literature distributed in multiple copies, such as brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, etc. will be approved by the PEO before being published.

### **MEETINGS**

Meetings are an important medium for communication at NIT. It is the responsibility of staff to attend relevant meetings and to contribute to team effectiveness.

### **INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

Staffs are given email account with Nova. E-mails would be the most common form of communication with all colleagues. However, this is not to be substituted with direct conversations with colleagues. All employees are advised to use emails wisely and confine to business related issues. It is customary to send a copy to your immediate manager on business related matters.

### **NETWORK AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES GUIDELINES**

Network and Electronic Resources, such as computers, other hardware, software, e-mail, landline and cellular telephones, fax machines and internet access, are tools that the Institute provides its employees to assist them in their work. These Network and Electronic Resources and related access systems are proprietary Institute property and subject to review or access by the Institute at any time.

All employees who use the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources must follow the guidelines below:

- Use Network and Electronic Resources for Institute business purposes only.
- Messages and communications sent via the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources are confidential and access by persons outside the Institute may initiate legal proceedings. Please consider this before sending any confidential messages or material via the Network and Electronic Resources.
- E-Mail is not a substitute for face-to-face communication. If you have a conflict with someone or need to discuss an important issue, it should be handled in person or over the telephone if a meeting is not possible.
- Remember that all of the Institute's policies apply to the use of the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources. Employees must not review or forward sexually explicit, profane or otherwise unprofessional or unlawful material through the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources.

- Passwords protecting the use of the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources are the Institute's property and will be assigned to employees as needed. Employees may not change passwords without the consent of the Institute Campus Manager. Employees must notify the Institute Campus Manager of all passwords and encryption keys assigned to or used by them, and must notify the Campus Manager of any changes to such passwords or encryption keys.
- Do not install any software or program on any Institute computer or other hardware without the express consent of your manager or the Campus Manager.
- The Institute expressly prohibits the unauthorized use, installation, copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked or patented material.
- Employees must not attempt to override or evade any program or measure installed by the Institute to protect the security or limit the use of its Network and Electronic Resources.
- Pornography is strictly forbidden and warrants immediate dismissal. Email and Internet activities in the workplace may be monitored. The System administrator is able to access everything in an organisation's network, including content of email, often after they have been deleted. Please be aware of the potentially 'non-private' nature of computer activity in the workplace. Internet and email compliance will only be scrutinised if suspected breaches occur and then will be duly investigated.

The Institute retains the right to review all communications conducted and data saved, reviewed or accessed via the Institute's Network and Electronic Resources, including Institute computers, e-mail and internet access. The Institute does not permit its non-management employees to access or use any Institute password, e-mail or internet access other than their own. Inappropriate use of Network and Electronic Resources may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. Employees should be careful to safeguard their passwords, log off their terminals when not in use and not permit others to access Institute systems.

## **4.0 RULES OF CONDUCT AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARYPROCEDURE**

There are reasonable rules of conduct which must be followed in any organisation to help a group of people work together effectively. The Institute expects each employee to present him or herself in a professional appearance and manner. If an employee is not considerate of others and does not observe reasonable work rules, disciplinary action will be taken.

Depending on the severity or frequency of the disciplinary problems, a verbal or written reprimand, suspension without pay, disciplinary probation, or discharge may be necessary. It is within the Institute's sole discretion to select the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken. Notwithstanding the availability of the various disciplinary options, the Institute reserves the right to discharge an employee at its discretion, with or without notice.

The following is not a complete list of offences for which an employee may be subject to discipline, but it is illustrative of those offences that may result in immediate discipline, up to and including dismissal, for a single offence:

- Harassment/Sexual harassment, unsolicited and unwanted verbal comments, sexual innuendo and/or sexual conduct.
- Any kind of involvement in pornography
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
- Dishonesty, including falsification of Institute-related documents, or misrepresentation of any fact.
- Fighting, disorderly conduct, horseplay, or any other behavior which is dangerous or disruptive.
- Possession of, consumption of, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages while on Institute or customer premises or on Institute business.
- Illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, possession, or use of illegal drugs or unprescribed controlled substances.
- Reporting for work with illegal drugs or unprescribed controlled substances in your body.
- Possession of weapons, firearms, ammunition, explosives, or fireworks on Institute or customer premises.
- Failure to promptly report a workplace injury or accident involving any of the Institute's employees, clients, equipment, or property.
- Wilful neglect of safety practices, rules, and policies.
- Speeding or reckless driving on Institute business.
- Commission of a crime, or other conduct which may damage the reputation of Institute.
- Use of profane language while on Institute business.
- Stealing, misappropriating, or intentionally damaging property belonging to the Institute or its customers or employees.
- Unauthorized use of the Institute's or its clients' name, logo, funds, equipment, vehicles, or property.

- Insubordination, including failure to comply with any work assignments or instructions given by any Institute personnel with the authority to do so.
- Interference with the work performance of other employees.
- Failure to cooperate with an internal investigation, including, but not limited to, investigations of violations of these work rules.
- Failure to maintain the confidentiality of trade secrets or other confidential information belonging to the Institute or its customers.
- Failure to comply with the rules of the Institute.

## **5.0 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

A grievance is considered to be a real or perceived wrong, causing resentment and regarded as grounds for complaint, or a perception of resentment or injustice at having been unfairly treated. The first step is to talk to your immediate manager. If the manager is unable to address this issue, the manager would consult higher management for advice. If the solution is unsatisfactory, the grievance could be submitted in writing to the Campus Manager or to the PEO.

The matter would be investigated and every effort will be made to resolve this in a fair and acceptable manner to all parties concerned.

## 6.0 EXTRACTS FROM NOVA POLICIES

### a. Complaints & Appeals

#### 1. Purpose

This policy and procedure describes the Nova Institute of Technology's (NIT) approach to the handling of complaints and appeals and the process to be initiated by NIT to address these.

#### 2. Related Standards

AQTF 2007 Standard 2.6 – Complaints and appeals are addressed efficiently and effectively.

National Code 2007 Standard 8

#### 3. Scope

This procedure applies to all persons enrolled with or seeking enrolment with NIT for the delivery of training and assessment services as well as those employed by, or contracted to the NIT for the delivery of training, conducting of assessments, administrative duties and/or provision of support services.

#### 4. Responsible parties

The Principle Executive Officer (PEO) is responsible for the control and issue of this procedure.

#### 5. Definitions

Complaint: Express dissatisfaction with an existing process, person, facility or service

Appeal: A formal request for reconsideration of a decision made on the basis of "Grounds for Appeal"

Grounds for Appeal: The reasons for appeal against the decision. Grounds are based on Compassionate or compelling circumstances. This means unusual or exceptional circumstances that are not part of daily life experience the following are Grounds that must be strictly addressed in an appeals process with supporting evidence provided:

- Serious illness or injury, where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes for a significant period of time
- If illness is psychological – must provide a psychologists report
- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel
- A traumatic experience which could include involvement in, or witnessing a serious accident; and witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime

The following are not unusual or exceptional circumstances and are not grounds for appeal:

- Work-related pressures
- Daily life traumas and stresses
- Relationship difficulties and break ups
- Minor illnesses i.e. non life threatening

A complaint or Appeal is deemed to be dissatisfaction with the procedures, outcomes or the quality of service provided by NIT in relation to the following processes:

- course advice and enrolment
- training delivery
- competency assessment, including skills recognition processes
- overall academic progress
- non approval of transfer
- suspension and/or cancelation of enrolment
- issue of results, certificates and/or statements of attainment
- other activities associated with the delivery of training and assessment services
- Issues associated with personal safety, equity and access to or in the training and assessment environment.

A complaint or appeal is deemed to be a formal complaint or appeal when it is made in writing to the Principal Executive Officer, or informal if directed verbally and in confidence to the General Administration Manager.

## 6. Policy Statement

This policy requires NIT to implement processes to deal with complaints in a constructive manner and to offer appeal processes where satisfactory resolution has not been achieved.

The effective handling of customer complaints is to be managed within the Quality System. All complaints are to be logged and the processes implemented to achieve resolution are to be documented. All actions/decision made in relation to the matter are also to be documented and feedback regarding the decision/resolution agreement forwarded in writing to relevant parties.

All students and staff who have dealings with NIT are to be advised of this policy and the processes available to resolve complaints. Materials/information provided on this matter must demonstrate the organisation's commitment to manage matters fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.

All reports of complaints arising through customer dissatisfaction with training and assessment products/services or relevant organisational operations are to be documented, forwarded and held by the PEO.

- NIT must ensure through the implementation of its procedures that:
- Encourage complaints and appeals are resolved informally before formalizing a complaint
- All employees/contractors and prospective students will be provided with a copy of the complaints procedure.
- All complaints and appeals are to be heard by a person independent of the incident giving rise to the complaint.
- All disputes or complaints will be handled professionally and confidentially in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution.
- All parties will have a clear understanding of the steps involved in the complaints procedure.
- Each appellant/complainant will be provided with the opportunity to present his or her case at each stage of the process.

- All complaints will be managed fairly and equitably and as efficiently as possible.
- All discussions relating to complaints, grievances and appeals are to be recorded in writing and the appellant/complainant provided with a written statement of the outcomes, including reasons for the decision.
- NIT will provide trainers and/or students with details of external authorities that they may approach with respect to their complaint if required.
- This policy provides an avenue for most complaints to be addressed. However, in some cases, alternative measures may need to be explored.
- NIT will encourage the parties to approach a complaint with an open view and attempt to resolve issues through discussion and conciliation. Where a complaint cannot be resolved through discussion and conciliation.

#### COMPLAINTS or APPEAL PROCEDURES

- The complaints procedure requires a complainant to agree to:
- Discussion with the relevant personnel about the complaint in an attempt to resolve the issue informally.
- To resolve the issue informally the first point of contact will be Student Support Officer, who will identify the relevant personnel.
- If the matter is unable to be resolved at this level, the complaint can be formalized by completing complaint/appeal form.
- Each complainant or appellant has an opportunity to formally present his or her case at minimal or no cost to him or herself.
- Each complainant or appellant has an opportunity to be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.

(International students appealing against decisions to report them to DEST have 20 working days in which to lodge their complaints) At this level the complainant should be given an opportunity to present his or her views in person to the PEO, in support of the appeal. The process commences within ten working days of the formal lodgment of the complaint or appeal. The outcome is to be reported and forwarded in writing to the complainant within seven days of the hearing.

- If the complaint is still unresolved, Principal will advise the student of his or her right to access the ACPET's external appeals process.
- All complaints that are substantiated must be dealt with within the Risk Management Policy as means to correct and improve the processes giving rise to complaints.
- Where the appeal is disallowed for international students or the student withdraw from the appeal process, if required NIT will report them to DEST through PRISMS as soon as possible.
- If the student chooses to access the registered provider's complaints and appeals processes, Nova Institute will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.
- If the internal or any external complaint handling or appeal process results in a decision that supports the student, Nova Institute will immediately implement any decision and/or corrective and preventative actions required and advise the student of the outcome and all the relevant documents will be retained in the student file

## **b. Managing Critical Incidents**

### 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy and related procedure is to assist Nova Institute of Technology (NIT) staff and students in the management of critical incidents in accordance with the ESOS National Code 6.4

### 2. Scope:

This policy/procedure applies to all international student operations of the RTO

### 3. References

ESOS National Code 6.4

### 4. Relevant Standard From Australian Quality Training Framework/ ESOS Act/NEAS

ESOS Code 6.4:

“The registered provider must have a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that covers the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.”

“Under the new NEAS Standard B2.2 (Pilot Version 1, 2006), the college must have documented policies and procedures for dealing with and following up critical incidents. A critical incident is defined as “an emergency situation where health and safety are endangered (such as fire, serious accident, etc)”.

This policy aims to cover both definitions. Further, it is anticipated that the AQTF will be modified in line with the new National Code.

### 5. Definition:

A critical incident is: Any extraordinary and unpredicted traumatic event affecting students that requires the implementation of special arrangements involving a number of areas of the institute.

- Critical incidents include but are not limited to
- Medical emergencies involving a student
- Critical illness of a student
- Student death
- Traumatic events that affect students; such as
- Sexual Assault
- Mental Health Crisis
- Drug / Alcohol Overdose
- Campus Disturbance / Riot
- Fire / Explosion with Injuries or Significant Damage
- Natural Disasters (in Australia and overseas)
- Airplane Crashes
- International Hostage Situations/ Kidnappings
- National Emergencies
- Hate/Bias Incidents

## 6. Procedure:

NIT is advised of a student critical incident. The PEO is usually the first line of contact by students, staff and Emergency Services. The PEO is available for emergencies 24 hours a day via telephone on 0411245800.

6.2 The PEO makes a decision on 'critical incident' i.e. does the event meet the critical incident definition?

If yes, the PEO convenes the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)

If no, advises on appropriate course of action.

The CIRT is chaired by the PEO and, comprises

- o General managers,
- o Program coordinators,
- o Manager of student services,
- o Manager administration, and
- o Marketing/media manager
- o Nominated trained staff member/or agency/or counsellor

The role of the CIRT is to effectively manage critical incidents with clear actions and procedures that are humane, sensitive, and responsive to the needs of students, staff and the broader NIT community. Intervention procedures may reduce the intense reactions of students and staff to an incident and assist them in returning to their normal studies and/or duties.

The operations of the CIRT involve activities prior to, during and after periods impacted upon by the critical incident, and include

- o Preparing/informing students and staff on actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident
- o Demobilisation
- o Defusing
- o Debriefing
- o Personal support
- o Media management
- o Corporate review
- o Reports and Records management

## 6.6 CIRT role in preparing students/staff for a possible critical incident

The role of the CIRT includes:

- o Informing students and staff of the role and activities of the CIRT
- o Assisting/advising on the development of positive working relationships and morale across the NIT
- o Establishing contacts with and/or developing suitably trained internal or external debriefers.
- o Assessing NIT environment for the potential for critical incidents.
- o In consultation with students and staff, developing agreed procedures for responding to critical incidents.
  - Medical emergencies involving a student
  - Critical illness of a student
  - Student death
  - Traumatic events that affect students
  - Ensuring that students/staff are familiar with these procedures

## 6.7 CIRT role in Demobilisation

Critical incidents may trigger a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms, including increased heart rate, high blood pressure and anxiety.

Demobilisation is a way of calming students and staff following a critical incident and ensuring that their immediate needs are met. A member of the CIRT, who was not involved in the incident, or affected by it, carries out the demobilisation.

A demobilisation takes place before the end of a shift or before those involved in the incident disperse. Strategies include:

- Convene a meeting for those involved as soon as possible.
- Summarise the incident and clarify uncertainties.
- Invite questions and discuss issues of concern.
- Show care and support.
- Draw up a plan of action, taking into account the needs of the students/staff.
- Make short-term arrangements for study/work responsibilities.
- Offer information on defusing and debriefing.

### **6.8 CIRT role in Defusing**

Defusing is conducted by a trained person and is designed to bring the experience of the incident to a conclusion and provide immediate personal support. The aim is to stabilise the responses of students/staff involved in the incident and allow an opportunity for them to express any immediate concerns. This step should take place within 12 hours of the incident.

Strategies include:

- Review the event.
- Clarify student/staff questions and concerns.
- Encourage student/staff to talk about what happened.
- Identify current needs.
- Offer student/staff advice, information and handouts on referrals and support agencies.
- Arrange debriefing and follow-up sessions to provide additional information about the event when available.

### **6.9 CIRT role in Debriefing**

Debriefing is usually carried out within three to seven days of the critical incident, when students and staff have had enough time to take in the experience. Debriefing is not counselling. It is a structured voluntary discussion aimed at putting an abnormal event into perspective. It offers students/staff clarity about the critical incident they have experienced and assists them to establish a process for recovery.

Debriefers help the students/staff to explore and understand a range of issues, including:

- The sequence of events
- The causes and consequences
- Each person's experience
- Any memories triggered by the incident
- Normal psychological reactions to critical incidents
- Methods to manage emotional responses resulting from a critical incident

#### 6.10 CIRT role in personal support

An immediate and primary role of the CIRT is to determine how NIT can support the individual student(s) and their families involved in the incident.

The PEO manages all agreed communications and support mechanisms with affected students and their families.

The CIRT through the manager student services arranges for particular students most closely related to the student(s) involved in the incident to receive personal support.

#### 6.10 CIRT role in Media management

All media enquiries, press releases and NIT website postings related to the critical incident are managed by the CIRT.

The PEO or marketing/media manager will be the only people approved by the CIRT to deal with communications with the media.

The CIRT has a responsibility to impress upon students and staff that there may be pressure on students/ staff to provide photos to the media. Out of respect for the students/staff and their families and to protect the integrity of NIT, no photos other than those approved by the CIRT should be released to the media

#### 6.11 CIRT role in the corporate review

A corporate review is held a few weeks after the incident. The CIRT reviews all aspects of the incident to uncover deficiencies in the handling of the incident, and provide corrective solutions. The review looks at how the incident was handled, how it could have been handled better and the effectiveness of the intervention strategies. Related NIT policies, safety regulations, safe work procedures are also reviewed.

#### 6.12 CIRT role in Reports and Records management

The General Administration Manager/Manager responsible for administration across the NIT who is a member of the CIRT has the responsibility for ensuring that

- Minutes and agendas of ongoing CIRT meetings are maintained
- A file is raised each time the CIRT is convened to deal with a specific critical incident. This file( electronic and/or hardcopy) includes but is not limited to records of;
- The incident
  - The nature of the incident
  - The people involved in the incident
  - How NIT became aware of the incident
- Student support measures;
- Communications with
  - external bodies (Police/emergency services/DEST/DIAC/OTTE/ACPET),
  - media outlets and
  - particularly members of student families;
- Reports from
  - demobilisation,
  - defusing and
  - debriefing sessions;
- Action plans;
- Corporate review report and
- Subsequent amendments to NIT policies and procedures.

## **c. Transfer Request Assessment**

### **1. Purpose**

The Institute will assess requests from students from a transfer between registered providers within the first six months of the commencement date of a student's principal course of study, through a documented student transfer request policy and procedures. A Student has the right to transfer automatically after a 6 month period if they have can provide a copy of a new COE from another Provider.

### **2. Related Standards**

ESOS 2007 Standard 7: Transfer between Registered Providers

### **3. Scope**

This Policy applies to all students enrolled at Nova Institute of Technology (NIT) and must be followed by all staff managing enrolments or admissions. Students undertaking a packaged offer of Diploma and Degree will have the Degree as their principal course. Students who are on this packaged offer, and who are still in the diploma portion of this package, are considered to have not yet completed 6 months of their principal course.

### **4. Responsible parties**

General Administration Manager is responsible for the control and issue of this procedure.

### **5. Definitions**

COE – Confirmation of Enrolment

### **6. Policy and Procedure**

It is an Australian regulatory requirement that students must complete six months of their "principal course of study" before changing or transferring between providers. A Provider such as NIT must not knowingly enroll the student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the student completing six months of his or her principal course of study except where:

- the original registered provider has ceased to be registered or the course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- the original registered provider has provided a written letter of release;
- the original registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the Australian Government or state or territory government that prevents the student from continuing his or her principal course, or
- any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

NIT will not seek to enroll a student who has not yet completed six months of their principal course of study with another registered provider.

NIT students enrolled with NIT, and who have not yet completed six months of their principal course of study will not be authorised to transfer to another registered provider unless it is deemed by NIT management to be detrimental to the student to remain at NIT. A student's Application to transfer will be judged detrimental to the student where there is;

- Transfer to a lower level of study
- Increased tuition cost, particularly in cases where deposit paid in advance to NIT are non-refundable
- Increased duration of studies in Australia
- Insufficient preparation for further studies
- Qualifications not recognized by Higher Education Providers as satisfying their entry requirements
- Level of support services provided at new provider not equivalent
- Transfer would jeopardise student's progression through a package of courses
- Within 6 months of course beginning student's may be experiencing homesickness and transfer to another provider is not likely to overcome this problem
- NIT is of the view that student is avoiding being reported to DIAC for failure to meet academic progress requirements

Students who have not yet completed six months of study of their principal course may still request a transfer for consideration.

Students who apply for release will be assessed by the General Administration Manager. Applications for transfer from a student must:

- Be in writing;
- Relate to and provide details about the student's individual circumstances;
- Provide details as to the reasons why the application should be approved.

Upon receipt of the application, the institute must consider the request within 30 working days. This period may be extended if the applicant fails to provide all relevant information/documentation, however in such instances the Institute will advise the student of the additional information/documentation required to make the decision.

If the application is successful Nova Institute will:

- provide a letter of release at no cost to the student

If the application is unsuccessful in their request to transfer prior to completing 6 months of their principal course at NIT, NIT students can appeal the decision.

An application will be refused:

- a) Unless the student has a valid enrolment offer from the receiving provider; and
- b) In cases where student is under 18 years old, unless there is written evidence that student's parent or legal guardian supports the transfer

AND written confirmation that the new provider will accept responsibility for approving a student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements.

c) The student has any outstanding fees, charges or accounts with NIT

An application will also be refused:

a) If the application is made within 3 months of the commencement of course.

b) Where the applicants transfer may jeopardise the student's progression through a package of courses.

Notwithstanding the above, an application will be accepted where: In the view of the General Administration Manager, the applicant has provided evidence of compelling and compassionate reasons for seeking the transfer. Applicants should note that it is their responsibility to provide appropriate evidence/documentation.

Applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome and all relevant documents will be retained in the student's file.

## **d. Application Enrolment and Selection**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy and related procedure in accordance with the ESOS National Code relates to the standard 2.2. This policy is in place to ensure that all individuals who gain entry into a National Accredited Program being offered at the institute have the appropriate skills and abilities they require to successfully complete their studies within the normal duration of the qualification.

### **2. Scope**

This policy/procedure applies to all international student operations of the Nova Institute.

### **3. Related Standards**

AQTF 2.4

ESOS National code 2.2

#### **Procedure**

##### **Entry Requirements**

The following outlines entry requirements for international students intending to undertake study at the institute.

##### **Entry Requirements for International students**

An English Language proficiency level of one of the below:

IELTS band score of 5.5 or equivalent internationally recognised exam result in line with the DIAC regulations

Satisfactorily completing ELICOS at Upper Intermediate level or

Completed secondary studies in your home country equivalent to an Australian Year 12 qualification from an English – language speaking country

Other entry requirements for International students include:

Academic	- Completion of senior high school or equivalent to the Australian Year 12
Regulatory	- A current and valid passport - A valid study visa that covers the duration of study for the course
Age at Commencement	The institute will not accept overseas students who would be under 18 years of age at the time of proposed commencement

### **4.1. Application and Enrolment process**

The application and enrolment process involves the following steps:

- 4.1.1. Enquiry – the prospective student makes an enquiry directly to the institute or through one of the institute’s nominated education agents.
- 4.1.2. The institute or its nominated agent supplies the prospective student with the following information:
- Detailed and up to date information on the course of interest, including course content, duration of study, commencement dates and qualifications awarded upon successful completion
  - Indicative course related fees including advice on potential for fees to change during the students course
  - The requirements for acceptance into the course including the minimum level of English language proficiency and academic requirements
  - Payment and refund policies
  - Campus locations and general description of facilities
  - Deferral, suspension and cancellation policies.
  - Referral to ESOS framework made available electronically by DEST
  - Indicative cost of living in Australia and accommodation options
  - Details on any collaborations with other training providers to provide whole or part of the course

4.1.3. Application

The prospective students complete and sign the Institute’s application form and provide originals or certified copies of the following documentation:

- Proof of English language proficiency as stated in 4.1
- Academic qualifications as stated in 4.1
- Passport
- Appropriate study visa (for onshore international students)
- Proof of health cover (for onshore international students)

4.1.4. Letter of Offer and Acceptance Agreement form:

Upon receipt of a completed application form and all the required relevant documentation, the admissions officer will ensure that all necessary entry requirements are met as per checklist for enrolment process and authorise the issuing of a Letter of Offer and an Acceptance Agreement form to the prospective student.

4.1.5. Confirmation of Enrolment

The Institute will confirm enrolment of the prospective student when all the following conditions have been met:

- The student accepts the offer, returns the signed Acceptance Agreement form to the Institute

- Student has paid the minimum balance payable as indicated on the Letter of Offer, and the Institute has confirmed receipt of this amount directly into the Institute's bank account or Bank Draft.

Upon fulfilment of the above conditions, the Institute shall issue an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE) through PRISMS, which is the official document confirming the student's enrolment into the Institute for the nominated course of study.

#### **4.2. Use of Education Agents**

The entry requirements as well as the Application and Enrolment process remain the same whether a student is recruited directly by the Institute or through a nominated Education agent.

### **5. Responsibilities**

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of the Marketing Manager to ensure that all marketing information provided to prospective students is accurate and complete as per the guidelines of this policy
- 5.2. It is the responsibility of the Marketing Manager to Monitor agents to ensure they are acting in accordance with the Application Enrolment and Selection policy of the Institute
- 5.3. It is the responsibility of the student Administrator that all entry requirements are met and makes recommendation of the enrolment.
- 5.4. It is the responsibility of any officer acting as an Admissions Officer to issue offer letters and ensure that the guidelines for entry requirements and issuing of Letters of Offer and eCOE's are strictly followed.
- 5.5. It is the responsibility of any officer acting as an Admissions Officer to ensure that all selection information is maintained

## **e. Refund**

Nova Institute of Technology reserves the right to cancel or postpone any courses prior to their scheduled commencement dates, should it be necessary. In circumstances where the course is postponed by more than four weeks a student is unable to enroll in a similar course at NIT all fees will be refunded. Refund of the fees will only be granted in accordance with the refund policy set out below.

### **Full Refund of Tuition Fees**

The Nova Institute of Technology (NIT) has a fee refund policy for situations where special circumstances exist. We will make a full refund of course fees paid in the following circumstances:

- Application for a student visa is unsuccessful

In this case NIT, reserves the right to retain an administration charge of A\$200 and where applicable, any agent's fee. A completed Refund Application form and proof of visa refusal must be sent to NIT. A full refund will be made within 28 days.

- If for any reason NIT is unable to start delivery of the course on the agreed starting date or ceases to deliver the course before it is completed

A full refund will be made within 14 days of the specified starting date or from the time the course ceases to be delivered in accordance with the refund guidelines of the ESOS Act.

### **Partial Refund**

NIT will make a partial refund of tuition fees in the following circumstances:

- If written notice of withdrawal is received from a candidate at least 28 days prior to the commencement of the term, 75% of the tuition fees are refundable, less an administration charge of A\$200 and where applicable, any agent's fee.

Or

- If written notice of withdrawal is received from a candidate less than 28 days prior to the commencement of the term, 25% of the tuition fees are refundable less an administration charge of A\$200 and where applicable, any agent's fee

### **No Fee Refund**

- If a student withdraws from, cancels or fails to attend a program or course after the start of the program, NIT will not refund any of the fees paid for that program or course semester. No refund will be issued for

monies paid to NIT for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), airport pick-up, or accommodation booking.

- Refunds for any monies received by NIT on behalf of the student for services other than tuition fees must be requested from the company delivering that service and students will be subject to the respective companies refund policies.
- In the event that an extension to the student's visa is not granted and the course has commenced a refund will not be issued to the student. A student is advised not to enroll if they believe their visa will not be extended.
- In the event that the student seeks and is granted approval by NIT to transfer to another provider prior to completion of six months study of the principal course, no refund of any course money paid in advance will be granted.
- 
- In the event that the student's enrolment is cancelled because of infringement with NIT's disciplinary Policy or breach of student visa conditions, NIT will not refund any of the fees paid.

#### **Requests for Refund of Tuition Fees**

A student who wishes to apply for a Refund of tuition fees in accordance with this Refund Policy should do so by filling a Refund Application form and submitting it to the General Administration Manager, Nova Institute of Technology, PO Box 89, Collins Street West, Melbourne 8007.

#### **Payment of Refund**

All refunds for which a student is eligible will be forwarded, within 28 days to the person who paid the fees in his or her home country, unless the student is transferring to another institution in Australia (subject to *Visa conditions*), in which case any refund may be remitted to that institution. NIT will provide the student with a statement detailing the calculation of the refund.

#### **Approvals**

All refunds must be approved by the General Administration Manager. Exemptions to any of the above mention cases may only occur where the student has extenuating or compassionate grounds as determined by the PEO. "This agreement, and the availability of complaints and appeals processes, does not remove the right of the student to take action under Australia's consumer protection laws"

## **f. Attendance Monitoring**

Nova has the set up the attendance to 80% of the scheduled contact hours for the study period of the course.

### **How is attendance monitored?**

NIT monitors attendance strictly as per The National Code requirements. Attendance is based on the contact hours attended by a student during a study period. Students who intended to be absent for more than 2 weeks and have compelling and compassionate circumstances will have to apply for deferment (Please see Deferring, suspending or cancelling a student's enrolment policy).

### **Daily Attendance Monitoring Procedure**

- The trainer marks the Attendance Roll at the beginning and end of every session.
- The student signs-off their attendance in the Attendance Roll at the end of the day.
- The trainer signs-off the Attendance Roll at the end of each day.
- The Attendance Roll is kept secured in Nova premises.
- Fortnightly Attendance Monitoring Procedure
- At the end of each fortnight, the Student administrator calculates each student's attendance and records student totals on the Attendance Spreadsheet.
- Students who have not signed (i.e. have been absent) are identified. Student Administrator generates a report of attendance based on the contact hours attended by a student.
- This is provided to the General Administrations Manager.
- The Student administrator also identifies students who have been absent for 3 consecutive timetable days.
- A First Warning letter is generated and posted to the student.
- If the student does not respond to the letter within two timetable days from the date of postage, the Student administrator notifies the General Administration Manager who takes necessary action as outlined below.
- If the student responds within the time, the Student administrator will inform the Student support officer who will organize a meeting along with the program manager and the student to identify and rectify problems.

### **Fortnightly Attendance Monitoring Procedure by General Administration Manager**

General Administration Manager reviews each student's attendance on a fortnightly basis.

- General Administration Manager checks the attendance that the Student administrator has entered at the end of every fortnight to ensure that action has been taken (i.e. warning letters have been generated and sent to students)

- Issues a Second warning letter to students who have not responded to the First Warning letter
- Reports a student who has not commenced within 14 days, to PRISMS
- If a student's attendance is less than 85%, a Student will be sent a First Warning letter and a copy of the letter is retained in the student's file.
- General Administration Manager transfers fortnightly attendance to the Student File Record Sheet.
- General Administration Manager ensures an up-to-date master electronic copy of all student attendance records is kept off-site at all times. Attendance backup occurs every week.
- If the student's attendance falls below 80%, a Second warning letter, of the intention to report, will be issued.
- If the student responds to the second warning letter within 2 days of postage, and if the attendance is above 70%, the General Administration Manager informs the Campus Manager of the situation. A decision may be made by the Campus Manager not to report student for poor attendance if the circumstances are considered valid. (See below for definition).
- If Campus Manager make a decision of reporting a student, a final letter will be issued that informs the student of the intention to report to DIAC.
- Students who need to be reported to PRISMS are done so as soon as it is practicable.
- Section 20 breach report is sent to the student by registered post.
- Individual fortnightly attendance records are backed up electronically at the end of every week and a copy made and kept off-site.

NIT will choose NOT to report an attendance is less than 80% in a study period if

- The student's attendance is at least 70%
- The student is maintaining satisfactory academic performance

Copies of all warning letters and Section 20 breach report generated by PRISMS are kept in student's folders.

### **Counseling and other support services for students at risk of low attendance**

Those students who had been issued with a First warning letter will be provided with counseling and support services. The students will be initially invited to come for a meeting with the program manager of the course and the Student Support Officer to identify problems leading to non attendance. The reasons will be assessed and if needed referred to the General Administration Manager who will recommend the best practical solution. This will be followed up to see if positive outcome has been achieved. The student support officer will maintain a log book with details of students issued with warning letters, actions taken and follow up process.

These details will also be maintained in the student's file.

## **g. Deferring, Suspending Or Cancelling Enrolment**

This can be student initiated or NIT initiated.

### **Procedure**

#### **Student initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation**

Students wishing to defer, suspend or cancel enrolment must meet one of the following conditions:

- Unavailability of the course
- Visa delay
- Students intents to be absent for more than 2 weeks
- Compassionate and compelling circumstances – these are generally beyond the control of the student and have an impact on the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include but are not limited to:
  - Serious illness or injury, where medical certificate states that the student was or will be unable to attend classes;
  - Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible death certificates should be provided);
  - Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies; or
  - Traumatic experience which could include: involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports)

#### **Deferral prior to commencement**

Students may request a deferral prior to course commencement. Student must complete "Student request to defer, suspend or cancel a course" form and submit to Admissions officer. When the deferral is processed the student will receive a revised eCOE.

#### **Suspending your enrolment**

Students wishing to suspend their enrolment must complete a "Student request to defer, suspend or cancel a course" form with all supporting documentation attached. All applications should be submitted at least 14 days prior to suspension date. The maximum suspension period is six (6) months. Approval will only be given in the limited circumstances described above. The student will receive notification in writing of the result of the request.

#### **Cancelling your enrolment**

Students wishing to cancel their enrolment must complete a "Student request to defer, suspend or cancel a course" form with all supporting documentation attached. The student will receive notification in writing of the result of the request. If the student has not completed the first six months of their principal course they must provide a letter of offer from an alternative provider therefore complying with the conditions of Standard 7 of the National Code. See policy on Transfer between Providers.

**Nova Institute initiated deferral, suspension or cancellation.**

NIT may defer commencement of a course when a course is not offered.

NIT may suspend a student enrolment for:

- misconduct – where behaviour of a student:
  - has been in serious breach of a Institute rule
  - is in breach of enrolment conditions
  - is considered to provide a threat to the well being of other students or staff

NIT may cancel a student enrolment for:

- a serious breach of a Institute rule
- breach of enrolment conditions
- where a student is considered to provide a threat to the well being of other students or staff
- serious misconduct
- failing to meet the requirements of the course progress policy
- failing to meet the requirements of the course Attendance policy (ELICOS)
- non-payment of tuition fees
- Non re-enrolment

Where suspension or cancellation is initiated by NIT, students will receive a notice of Intent to Defer, Suspend or cancel Enrolment. This notice will clearly identify that a student will be given 20 days to access the Institute's internal complaints and appeals process. When the appeals process is initiated, NIT will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal appeals process is complete. NIT reserves the right to not provide learning opportunities during this process should it be deemed appropriate.

Applicants will be informed that deferring, suspending or cancelling his or her enrolment may affect his or her student visa.

The suspension or cancellation will be notified to the Secretary of DEST via PRISMS as required under section 19 of ESOS Act where the student's enrolment is deferred, temporarily suspended or cancelled on completion of the 20 days or at the end of the appeals process if the appeal is not upheld.

All the relevant documents are kept on the student file.

## **h. Course Credit**

### **Procedure**

Prior to enrolling with NIT, a number of students may have achieved competency in the Training Packages offered by other RTOs in a number of ways through formal and informal training and educations. These 'ways' could include;

- Work experience
- General life experience and/or
- Any combination of the above

The assessment pathways in NIT provide for the recognition of competencies previously obtained. It should be remembered that Units of Competency and qualifications in the Training Packages should be recognised regardless of how, when or where they were achieved. In order to recognise prior learning of candidates, the candidates must supply evidence that indicates that the candidate is currently competent against the endorsed industry competency standards.

These could include:

- Course outlines (For courses where the candidate has been deemed competent)
- A Certificate with the relevant recognised authority logos
- Certification of hours of study
- Certified results from an institution
- Subject Outlines from previous study
- Textbooks used in the course of study
- Personal resume that can be verified
- Summary of work experience that can be verified
- Reference from former employers that can be contacted
- Testimonials from clients
- Work samples

The onus is on candidates to provide sufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements of competency that is current. When assessing prior learning, NIT shall at all times ensure that the evidence supplied is:

- Authentic
- Valid
- Reliable
- Current
- Sufficient

### **Assessor Qualifications:**

NIT Shall at all times ensure that assessors completing assessment for prior learning will have completed training and vocational competencies.

### **Course Credit Process**

NIT will recognize AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainments awarded by other Registered Training Organizations and provide students equitable arrangements for the processing and assessment of these qualifications within the AQTF guidelines.

Procedure:

a) Students are advised of Course Credit possibilities prior to enrolment and encouraged to submit documentation at that time.

- Students must submit authenticated detailed supporting documents including Course transcripts, certificates, and letters of reference.
- All international documents must have a certified English translation.

b) Course Credit processing takes a minimum of 10 working days from submission of application.

- Student to complete a Course Credit Request Form and attach copies of supporting documents. This application is to be submitted with Student administrator who forwards this to the relevant Program Manager.
- The application is screened by the Student administrator for accuracy and appropriateness of details and student's signature before it is provided to the Program Manager.
- The outcome of the application is provided to student by the Student administrator.
- If required the Student administrator records the approved Course Credit on Student Database and all relevant documents are stored in the student file.

c) Evidence of Course Credit

Applicants will need to show how they have achieved the competencies of each accreditation level and if they can satisfy the performance criteria by submitting evidence that entails,

- Validity (is the evidence relevant?)
- Sufficiency (is there enough evidence?)
- Authenticity (is the evidence a true reflection of the candidate?)
- Currency (is the evidence recent?)

Following are a few examples of the ways evidence can be provided. Applicants will need to include a variety of these in their application form.

Education and Training:

- Formal, accredited and informal training
- Copies of certificates, qualifications achieved from other courses, school or tertiary results
- Statements outlining courses and or study that have been undertaken and the learning outcomes/competencies achieved from these

Work Related Experience:

- Positions descriptions of previous held employment;
- Resume of work experience which may include reports from supervisors or managers;
- Copies of any statements, references or articles about your education, training or employment;
- Examples of relevant work samples or tasks from previous employment.

**Visa Implication**

- Where Course Credit is granted before the issue of a visa, the net course duration (as reduced by the Course Credit) is indicated on the eCOE issued.
- Where Course Credit is granted after the issue of a visa, the resulting change of course duration is reported to DIAC via PRISMS.

**Course Credit Fees**

Applicants possessing and presenting accredited Australian qualification and/or Statement of Attainment for exemptions will not be charged with the Course Credit application fees, but no matter what the extent Course Credit granted the overall course fee will not be reduced. However, applicants with overseas qualification will have to fulfill the Australian Education International AEI-NOOSR qualification recognition requirement before Course Credit application can be accepted as valid. Therefore, such recognition statement should be added to the Course Credit application.

## **i. Administration and Record Management**

### **1. Purpose**

This procedure describes the processes whereby Nova Institute of Technology (NIT) administers and manages all records and documentation relating its delivery training and assessment services.

### **2. Related Standards**

AQTF 2007 Standard 3.3, 1.4 and COR 6

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all official records created, collected and held by the NIT, and all staff employed or engaged by the NIT.

### **4. Responsible Parties**

The General Administration Manager is responsible for the control and issue of this procedure.

### **5. Definitions**

*Current files* are those files for which the training and/or assessment service is still being delivered.

*Completed files* are those files for which no further training or assessment services are to be provided to an individual under a service contract or funding agreement. *Individual student* files may include, but are not limited to, the enrolment form, copy of any training agreement or contract, signed training plan, visitation record, attendance record, record of contacts, assessment records, training materials, copies of certificates/statements of attainment issued, any notes made by the trainer/assessor about the student/trainee.

*Archived files* may include, but are not limited to, the enrolment form, copies of certificates/statements of attainment issued, assessment records, attendance records and any notes made by the trainer/assessor about the student/trainee.

### **6. Policy Statement**

The NIT recognises its responsibility to provide for the adequate management and preservation of official and prevailing community standards of best practice. This policy aims to ensure that official records created by NIT staff deemed to be of enduring evidential or informational value are preserved for future reference. It also aims to promote a consistent and coherent regime of records management processes and practices from the time of the creation of records, through to their disposal or preservation and use as archives.



## **7. Procedures**

The following procedures provide guidance for the effective management and administration of NIT records and documentation. These requirements must be met as a minimum operational activity and may be guided by their supporting processes. References are provided where the latter occurs.

### **7.1 Staff Records**

All staff of the NIT will have will have a staff file raised and maintained for the purpose of recording their:

- Position and duty statements
- Terms of contract
- Participation in induction process
- Professional development
- Staff self assessment of Capacity to deliver/assess units of competency
- Qualifications, references and awards: Original documentation must be sighted to verify the authenticity of qualifications, references and industry awards. Copies of original qualification must indicate the date sighted and by whom.
- Disciplinary action or notices of complaints may also be noted on this file.
- CVs

Staff files are held and maintained by Administration Manager.

Staff may access information on their files on request to the Administration Manager. Third party access must be cleared by the PEO and only for purposes relevant to the maintenance of records, ie to update records.

### **7.2 Student Records.**

Student records are to be raised at enrolment. These records are to be established electronically and as a hard-copy record. These records are to include, but are not restricted to

- Student identification
- Contact details including emergency contact
- Academic program and progress
- Application for enrolment form
- Copy of passport
- Evidence of English language skills
- Copy of Letter of Offer
- Evidence to support deferral
- Evidence to support reporting to DEST
- Fees Arrangements
- Applications of RPL and mutual recognition
- Letters of request for transfer to another provider

All student records are entered and maintained on the NIT database by administration.

Students may request a copy of their data profile on request and proof of identification. Third party access cannot be approved by any means other than student agreement. Enrolment forms make provision for student data access by NIT staff. All other data is to be held securely and in confidence.

### **7.3 Record Privacy and Access**

All records maintained by NIT are subject to the laws of privacy (2002). As such, it is a requirement that records be held in a secure environment, safeguarded against loss, damage or unauthorised access. Accordingly:

- Staff Files may only be accessed by the PEO.
- Student files may only be accessed by the Administration Manager for the purpose of updating those student files, or by the PEO for the purpose of reviewing training participation and progress.
- All Individuals have a right to view their own files and may do so upon request and proof of identification to administration.

Privacy and access procedures are made clear to all parties at induction. Access to a file by a third party other than as above can only be provided with the written consent of the individual.

### **7.4 Record Award Management**

The issue of awards by the NIT is governed by its scope of registration.

- General Manager (VET) is responsible for monitoring student progress.
- Students who have satisfactorily completed their full program of study are entitled to a Certificate and a Statement of Attainment. Students who withdraw or partially complete their training program are to be issued with a Statement of Attainment or transcript. These must include:
  - RTO name and TO ID
  - Full title of qualification and its national or state code
  - Name of student and student id number
  - Certificate number
  - Correct accreditation phrase according to the kind of award issued
  - If a statement of attainment, include the correct unit names and codes
  - NRT and/or VQA logo (refer to NRT logo specifications document or VQA Logo Use document)
- The General Manager (VET) verifies the student's entitlement to a certificate or statement of attainment from the student records system and prepare their issue.

- The Principal Executive Officer is to authorise the printing of AQF compliant certificates and statements of attainment for issue to each student, and act as authorised signatory in conjunction with the General Manager (VET).
- Each certificate/statement of attainment issued is to be recorded in the student file and on a qualifications register.

## **7.5 Archive Management**

### Ongoing and Up to Date Record keeping for prospective students

Nova Institute will keep records of each accepted student who is enrolled with the Institute or who has paid any course money for a course provided by the Institute.

These records consists of each accepted student's current residential address, as supplied by the student, and any other details prescribed by the regulations. Institute will retain the records for at least 2 years after the person ceases to be an accepted student. However, the records do not need to be kept up to date after the cessation.

The records of each accepted student or who has paid any course money for a course provided by the institute must include the following details:

- The amounts of course money that the student has paid to the Institute
- For an amount of course money that the student has paid to the Institute for a course:
  - whether the amount was paid for the full course or part of the course; and
  - if the amount was paid for the full course, the duration of the course; and
  - if the amount was paid for part of the course, the duration of that part of the course;
- copies of written agreements to which the Institute and student are parties;
- any amounts that:
  - have become payable, directly or indirectly, to the Institute by the student for the student to undertake a course; and
  - have not been paid.

### Ongoing and Up to Date Record keeping for enrolled students

All staff and student records are to be securely stored and protected from loss, damage or unauthorized access for a period of 30 years. To meet this requirement, the following activities are undertaken under the guidance of the General Administration Manager.

- All hard-copy records are to be stored in locked metal filing cabinets, and their access supervised by the General Administration Manager.
- All electronic records are to be maintained on the NIT database.
- All electronic records are to be backed up at the end of each day, and weekly backups stored securely off the premises.

### File Retention and Disposal

All records are to be kept for thirty years or transferred to the Office of Training and Tertiary Education should NIT ceases to operate as an RTO. This requires all records that are not required for day-to-day management or are no longer current, are to be managed as archived records. As such:

- All closed student files are to be stored with Administration for a period of twelve months in secure metal filing cabinets marked 'completed files'.
- On the twelve month anniversary of completion/closure, records are to be moved into the permanent archive for a period of thirty years.
- File contents not being transferred from the completed file to the archive are to be shredded and disposed of in an appropriate manner.
- Electronic records of all training and assessment services carried out in each calendar year are to be placed in the archive for that particular year. This includes student examinations, record/practicum logs and other assessment documents required to be held for verification.
- Record retrieval and access from archive is managed under the authority of the Administration Manager and the policies and procedures governing records security and access.

## j. Completion within the Expected Duration of Study

### 1. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy/procedure is to define the system used to monitor student course workloads to ensure completion within the duration of the CoE as per the requirements, of the National Code 2007 Standard 9.

### 2. Related Standards

ESOS standard 9 Monitoring enrolment load

### 3. Scope

This policy/procedure applies to all international student operations of the Nova Institute.

### 4. Responsible Parties

The Campus Manager is responsible for the implementation of this policy/procedure and to ensure that staff and students are aware of its application and that staff implement its requirements.

### 5. Procedure

#### 5.1 Monitoring enrolment load

- The progress of each student is monitored, recorded and assessed for each term in which they are enrolled as per *Monitoring Course Progress Policy* for the student's progress towards completion within the expected duration.
- After all results are available, the authorised staff member such as the Program Managers authorises the addition of modules that have been failed in the previous term to be added to the student's current term timetable to enable the student to complete modules within the expected duration and fulfil pre-requisite requirements.

**5.2 Under and overloading the timetable:** A student may study subjects during a non-compulsory study period or by overloading in some compulsory study periods to compensate for those study periods in which the student was studying a reduced load. Students may be permitted to enrol in less than a 'full-time' load in any study period including when:

- there are compassionate or compelling reasons for reducing the load
- the reduced load is part of the intervention strategy as per *Monitoring Course Progress Policy*
- the student has studied, or plans to study, extra units in another study period as authorised by the relevant staff member(s)
- the student has only a few units left to complete and these do not constitute a full-time load;
- pre-requisite units are not available in that study period result in the student extending their study beyond the expected duration
- CoE changes performed by Admissions
- When the student is required to repeat modules in a term or study period, Admissions staff will be notified by the Program Manager.
- Admissions generate new CoEs for extension or change of course needs. Admissions alter and generate CoEs through PRISMS.
- All alterations to an existing CoE will be monitored by the PRISMS program to ensure that no student will study beyond the expected duration and will be alerted if this is proposed by the PRISMS user.

