

## RTO consumer protection policy

### Rights and Obligations

Riverina Community College is here to meet your learning needs and welcomes your feedback regarding its products and services. The following outlines our Consumer Protection Policy and other information for students of the RTO

Riverina Community College is committed to integrated access and equity principles within all our services. All staff recognise the rights of students and provide information, advice and support that is consistent with our Code of Practice and our scope of registration as a nationally recognised training organisation.

While you are studying with us, you have the right to study in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and be treated in a fair considerate manner.

If, at any time you feel that we are not abiding by our Code of Practice then please report your complaint to your trainer, course co-ordinator or the Operation's Manager or complete our Complaints/Appeal form.

We are committed to providing a pleasant, friendly environment for the duration of your selected course of study.

### Enrolment

You must complete all required enrolment documentation, provide eligibility evidence where required and pay all required course fees before the course commences. If you feel you are eligible for a concession or exemption, proof of eligibility must be provided. If you have negotiated a payment plan with the College, this must be finalized prior to commencement of your course. (Not available for all courses).

Some programs are subject to entry requirements. You will be advised of those requirements prior to enrolment and assistance will be given to ensure you understand those requirements.

### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The recognition process allows you to apply for recognition for previous study, work, life and educational experience that match the learning outcomes of specific units within a course.

Riverina Community College recognises that current and future applicants to nationally recognised training courses, may already have skills and knowledge that satisfy some or all of the competencies in that course.

Recognition applicants will have to provide evidence to support their claim. Riverina Community College will support you through this process and provide you with a comprehensive RPL document that will outline the required evidence for each unit of competency, as well as the questions that will be asked of you by the trainer in a 'competency conversation' to confirm your knowledge and skills.

### Credit Transfer

Riverina Community College recognises Qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other Registered Training Organisations (RTO) within Australia. To apply for a direct credit transfer please speak with your trainer or the Co-ordinator at the time of enrolment or as soon as possible after enrolment.

### Complaints and Grievances

Riverina Community College is always keen to hear feedback from students about their experience. If students have concerns about the delivery of training and assessments they are encouraged initially to attempt to resolve this informally by talking with their trainer, student support officer, or Coordinator. If students are not satisfied with the outcome students have the right to be directed to the Complaint and Grievance Policy.

The organisation adopts an open policy in regards to feedback from the learner(s). Whilst positive feedback is always rewarding, it is to be expected that there may be incidents that need to be brought to the attention of the College. Where there is a dispute with a trainer, assessor or fellow learner which you cannot resolve, you should notify the Operation's Manager who will adopt the necessary procedures for resolution. All complaints and grievances will be addressed promptly, and you will be advised of progress. All complaints and/or grievances are treated with the strictest confidentiality.

Any complaint or grievance will be actioned as part of our commitment to Continuous Improvement.

The complaints process is listed below:

#### **Step 1:**

Complaints should be made using the Complaint/Appeal Form and emailed to the Operation's Manager at [ross.tinkler@RiverinaCommunityCollege.org.au](mailto:ross.tinkler@RiverinaCommunityCollege.org.au), however all complaints, whether written, oral or anonymous will be handled with sincerity, confidentiality and promptly.

#### **Step 2:**

The Operation's Manager will review the complaint and provide acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint within 2 business days. Resolution of complaints will be sought as soon as possible within a maximum of fifteen (15) business days and be handled by the Operation's Manager.

#### **Step 3:**

Once the Operation's Manager has reached a decision, all complainants will be informed of the final outcome of their complaint. Where an outcome has not been achieved within 30 working days or a significant delay in its resolution is anticipated, the complainant will be informed of the progress of their complaint in writing until a final outcome is achieved.

#### **Step 4:**

If any party is dissatisfied with the outcome provided by the Operation's Manager, they are able to lodge an appeal in writing via email to the CEO (email address provided upon request).

**Step 5:**

The CEO will review the complaint and provide their response in a formal letter detailing the outcomes from their decision to the complainant. This appeals process will take no more than thirty (30) working days (starting from the date the appeal was lodged).

Staff members who are the subject of a complaint will be supported and kept informed throughout the investigation process and advised of the final outcome. The staff member must not communicate directly with the complainant or their advocate unless directed to do so.

Feedback will be recorded and managed using the same processes as complaints to ensure continuous improvement action occurs in relation to these matters.

Complaints and feedback offered by a person who does not provide their name and contact details will still be recorded in the relevant site Complaints/Appeals Register and used for continuous improvement purposes.

Complaints data will be reported monthly by the RTO Manager and included in the Quarterly Board Report by the CEO.

If students feel matters are unresolved to their satisfaction and wish to inform a third party, they should contact one of the following:

- ASQA by referring to [www.asqa.gov.au](http://www.asqa.gov.au)
- Department of Fair Trading in their capital city

If your course is part of the NSW Department of Education and Communities funded programs you should contact their Consumer Protection Unit for Students. They can do so at: <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for---students/consumer---protection---for---students>

### Riverina Community College Obligations

Riverina Community College ensures it:

Provides the training and support necessary to allow participants to achieve competency;

- Provides a quality training and assessment experience for all participants;
- Provides a clear and accessible feedback and consumer protection system, including a designated and identified consumer protection officer;
- Maintains procedures for protecting consumers' personal information – please refer to the Privacy section of this
- handbook for further information;
- Has established, documented and accessible consumer feedback and complaints handling policies and procedures
- Provides clients with details of these pathways for resolving or escalating complaints

### Student Rights and Obligations

Riverina Community College clients have an obligation to:

- Behave in a responsible and ethical manner
- Provide accurate information to Riverina Community College

Riverina Community College clients have a right to:

- Expect that the quality of your training meets the standards, regulations and requirement set down by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and relevant government subsidy body (where applicable):
- Be informed about the collection of personal information and be able to review and correct that information; and
- Access consumer protection complaints processes

### Fee Protection

Riverina Community College does not request or accept from a prospective or current learner more than \$1,500 in prepaid fees (fees in advance).

Prepaid fees include all fees that a participant is required to pay, including enrolment fees, tuition fees, materials fees and any other fee component that is a mandatory payment for the course.

### Cooling off period

Under NSW consumer law, the consumer (student or client) is entitled to a 10 day cooling off period from the date of enrollment in order to protect their rights in making the best decision for their situation. Integrated Learning will adhere to this condition and ensure the student is informed of this by providing a copy (or access to via web) of this consumer protection policy.

### Withdrawing from the Qualification

Whilst we do not like to see students withdrawing from their qualification, it is sometimes unavoidable.

If you need to withdraw from your qualification, you must let Riverina Community College know within 14 days of your decision. If you are studying under a government traineeship it is your responsibility (or that of your employer) to advise the Australian Apprenticeship Centre as soon as possible.

### Refunds

A full refund will apply if:

- a training program has been cancelled by the College
- a student cancels more than 7 days prior to commencement

A partial refund will apply if:

- a student claims extenuating circumstances (such as accident or illness)
- the College has granted CT or RPL after enrolment and the fee recalculation is lower than the fee the student has already paid
- a student cancels less than 7 days prior to commencement

The College's full Fees, Refund and Transfer Policy is available through Reception.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of any decision you may appeal using the College's Complaints and Grievances process.

If the course has commenced the RTO will not usually refund course fees however these situations are assessed on an individual basis and the RTO will normally attempt to provide you with alternate arrangements which may include a different mode of delivery or in some cases a different training program.

### Protecting your privacy

The College keeps your information private and only collects data that relates to your training outcomes or as required for statistical analysis by government authorities such as Department of Primary Industry (DPI).

RCC is subject to audit by Commonwealth and State agencies. Access to your training file may be given to government officers from agencies such as DEC, DPI or ASQA for the purposes of these audits.

In addition, where training is being provided to a trainee through their employer, the employer is entitled to receive updates on the trainee's progress throughout the traineeship.

You are entitled to access information on your personal file at any time and can do so by making a written request to the Operations Manager. You must be able to provide adequate proof of your identity.

### Winding up arrangements

In the unlikely event that Riverina Community College was to shut down its business as an RTO, all student files would be transferred to ASQA and a statement of attainment (or qualification if the student has met the training packaging requirements) will be issued to students within 30 days of closing down.

### Related Internal Documents

- Grievance and complaints P+P
- Complaints and appeals form

### Related Legislative and Legal Documents

- National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cth.)
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 (Cth.)
- Users' Guide to the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- VET Quality Framework
- A+E and EEO principles/guidelines
- Australian Consumer Law
- Smart and Skilled Operational Guidelines 2017

**Consumer Protection Officer**

Riverina Community College has nominated 2 Consumer Protection Officers who are listed below. You are able to contact these officer at any time if you wish to discuss any part of this policy or if you have any concerns relating to you as a consumer.

Student Engagement Officer

**Rikki Moore**

[Rikki.moore@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:Rikki.moore@riverinacc.edu.au)

**02 6933 5555**

VET Officer

**Mindy Rutland**

[mindy@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:mindy@riverinacc.edu.au)

**02 6933 5555**