



Student Handbook

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Welcome to RuralBiz Training! We're delighted that we will be working with you to achieve your qualification. We are a registered training organisation regulated by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) with more than 10 years' experience in delivering quality training and assessment to Australian students. We are committed to meeting the needs of our students and industry.

RuralBiz Training delivers nationally recognised training in:

- Agriculture (including horticulture)
- Education Support

Our vision is to offer you a world class training experience that will have a positive impact on your life and work.

We do this by:

- Delivering training that is engaging, practical, innovative and relevant to students and industry
- Encouraging each student to apply their learning to real life situations
- Continually improving our business in a systematic way
- Ensuring our processes and systems are compliant with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015*.

RuralBiz Training is responsible under the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 for the quality of the training and assessment delivered in our courses and for the issuance of all AQF certificates.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Dubbo Office (Postal Address): PO Box 524, Dubbo NSW 2830
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Office hours: 8:30am – 5:00pm AEST/AEDST
Website: www.ruralbiztraining.com.au

1. QUICK ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS

This section answers some questions students ask about our flexible learning. Please read it carefully and let us know if you have any other questions. There is more information about these items in other sections of this handbook.

What's my expected course length?

RuralBiz Training is a flexible organisation because our students can start throughout the year and are able to time their studies around their work and family commitments.

However, we expect that you will complete your course within 2 years, unless there are specific requirements related to your funding, or if you have arranged with us to defer your enrolment. There is more information about course deferrals and extensions of time for units below.

What's the normal enrolment time for a unit?

The standard time for unit enrolments is 8 weeks

What's a training plan?

A training plan is a list of the units proposed for your course, where you will find a record of the start and end dates for your current units. You can access your training plan at any time through our online Student Portal. Details of how to log in and use the Student Portal are included in this handbook.

Why is there an Angel contacting me?

Every student is allocated an Angel at enrolment. This person is your supporter throughout your whole course who tracks your progress and talks to you about anything which may affect it.

What you can expect from your Angel:

- Contact from them at least once every fortnight – just to touch base and see if you need anything
- Deal with any requests you make for extensions to enrolment in a unit. Your Angel can give you an extension of time in any individual unit – you can extend your unit enrolment by up to 8 weeks i.e.16 weeks (112 days) in total. Our office will email you and your angel if there is a reason (such as funding requirements) that prevents an extension being given
- Let your trainer and our office know of difficulties that may be affecting your progress.

What your Angel expects from you:

- Keep in touch, at least fortnightly by responding to your Angel's message.
- Check your training plan in the Student Portal regularly and let the Angel know if you need an extension or deferral (explained below)
- Update your contact details in the Student Portal as needed.

If a student hasn't kept in regular contact with their Angel and reaches the end of their unit enrolment period (including any extensions) without completing the unit, the student's recorded result for that unit will be *not yet competent* and enrolment in the unit will be finalised. In this situation, if the

student then wishes to complete the unit, a new enrolment in the unit is needed and new unit fees may be charged. Of course, this student will never be you!

What is course deferral?

We recognise that unexpected events happen, which sometimes make it impossible to study for a while. You can ask for your course enrolment to be *deferred* for up to 6 months (12 months total / enrolment) to allow you time to organise your life and then return to study later.

There is more information about course deferral in this Handbook (check the Table of Contents for the relevant section).

What can I expect of my trainers?

Your trainers are your subject matter experts and assessors. Usually, they are running their own businesses as well. This gives them a very practical approach to their units, and you benefit by their industry knowledge.

As a guide, you can expect your trainer will:

- Send a short message to you within 2 days of starting their unit.
- Give you feedback within 3 days of submitting an assessment task
- Answer your messages asking for assistance within 36 hours.

Send your questions about the unit content or the assessment tasks to your trainer by clicking on the message link near their picture on each unit page in RuralBiz Online.

Can I get copies of assessment tasks I've submitted?

We strongly recommend you keep your own copy of all information or completed tasks you submit. However, we do retain assessment tasks for at least 6 months so during that period you can send an email to admin@ruralbiztraining.com.au if you have lost your copy. However, we are unlikely to be able to help when more than 6 months has passed.

What about RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning)?

You may have accumulated skills and knowledge previously, usually through working in the industry. Using our RPL process means that our assessors may be able to match these with units from your qualification, allowing you to be credited with some or all units. The range of units available by RPL is much greater than those available by training. We encourage you to look at the RPL Handbook available in the RPL section of RuralBiz Online for further details.

Please note there is no difference in costs between doing a unit by training or by RPL (unless specifically required under a current state funding contract held by RuralBiz Training).

Please contact your angel or our office if you are interested in RPL.

Does RuralBiz Training have “graduation ceremonies”?

Yes, each year we have small events in a few locations to recognise students who have completed a qualification with us during the previous 12-18 months. We often call these “community recognition days” or “award days”, and they usually consist of a short award presentation by a local MP followed by morning/afternoon tea. They are a great chance to put faces to names of people you may have talked to online!

Remember, keeping in touch with your Angel and trainer will keep you going forward.

We can solve most student problems – we just need to know what they are!



2. STUDENT PORTAL

Our Student Portal gives you online access to information we hold about you in our database.

During the enrolment process, you will receive an email which gives you the web address and login details (username and password). Please make a note of these and keep them at hand. If you lose your login details, please ask our office to resend the email.

Please make sure you log in and explore the student portal soon after enrolment. Make sure you find:

- Your details (eg address, phone, email etc) and that these are correct. You can edit these if needed.
- Your course details. Click on Courses from the top menu, and use “more” to expand so you can check the unit details. When the units are listed you will see a tab for the training schedule – this is where you will see dates to start and finish your current unit, including any changes due to extensions.

3. KEY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.1 ADMISSION

Our selection processes are fair and equitable and are consistent with access and equity principles, and Training Package requirements. Selection into our programs is based on availability of places and you:

- meeting any funding body criteria
- meeting any prerequisite qualifications and experience
- meeting our published entry requirements
- agreement to abide by our policies, procedures and code of conduct
- payment of required fees and charges

General course entry requirements

- **General education levels**
Certificate III/IV – completion of Year 10 or equivalent OR be able to demonstrate at least 1 year of relevant experience.
Diploma – completion of Year 12 or equivalent OR be able to demonstrate at least 3 years relevant experience.
Advanced Diploma – completion of Diploma or equivalent AND be able to demonstrate at least 3 years relevant experience.
- **Literacy and numeracy testing**
All students complete the Australian Core Skills Profile for Adults assessment in literacy and number during enrolment. Required minimum standards are:
Certificate III/IV – Exit level 2 in both literacy and numeracy
Diploma / Advanced Diploma – Exit level 3 in both literacy and numeracy OR provision of a certified copy of an Australian Year 12 certificate relevant to your state.

- Workplace and work placement requirements
Agriculture (including Horticulture): be actively engaged in farming/ horticulture, or have ready access to and knowledge of a farm/horticulture business which can be used for completion of assessment tasks. As a guide, your chosen farm should show these characteristics:
 - Operated as a business for profit
 - Have a commercial scale
 - Have agricultural enterprises such as commercial crops or livestock
 - Be close to where you live so you can be physically on it regularly (eg weekly)
 - Be able to provide you with details of past production, management processes, costs, prices etc. Advanced Diploma units will require access to past financial records.

If you are not part of the farm business, RuralBiz Training may require you to provide contact details for the owner or manager to confirm your access to the farm.

Education Support (not currently offered): be working in a learner/teacher support role or have ready access to a classroom environment which can be used for completion of assessment tasks. We require all education support students to provide a supervisor verified work log demonstrating at least 100 hours of workplace experience within the last 2 years.

- Computer requirements
 Have access to a computer with at least Windows 10, Word 97, Excel 97, and Adobe Reader (more recent versions of these programs are also satisfactory). If using a work computer, it is your responsibility to check with your IT Dept that you will be able to access our Moodle site (RuralBiz Online) and virtual classroom (Blackboard Collaborate) before enrolment. If using a Mac or Linux machine, please be aware that we are unable to provide any help with computer issues, and do not verify that software used will be compatible with these computers. All assessments must be submitted in Windows 7 or later compatible format.
- Access to the internet (satellite broadband or similar), use of Mozilla Firefox and Chrome internet browsers.
- Computer skills including use of the internet, email, basic word processing.
- Complete all enrolment documentation required, including providing photo ID and evidence of your citizenship / residency status.
- Provide your Unique Student Identifier (USI) or agree to us issuing one on your behalf. A video with more information about the USI is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRYaaF-B7Ho> or go to www.usi.gov.au

Enrolment procedure

Enrolling with RuralBiz Training is a chance for us to get to know each other. The steps are:

- Completion of the online enrolment form (including USI) and provision of photo ID

- Short pre-enrolment interview to answer your questions and to check on suitability of the course for you.
- Completion of the LLN assessment
- Choice of, and enrolment in, payment option
- Training plan and introduction to your Guardian Angel
- Set up of your RuralBiz Online account
- Other choices such as RPL and purchase of a headset.

Please refer to Section 5.3 of this Handbook for more information about the USI (Unique Student Identifier).

3.2 FEES

Course fees will vary according to which course you are enrolled in. Fees are generally for enrolment and tuition, course materials, texts and other services related to your training and assessment. Note that Farm Mapping software is required for the unit AHCAGB505 Develop a whole farm plan – we use Practical Systems (\$396 incl GST student discount) but please check with the trainer if you have your own mapping software as it may be suitable. Generally, course fees approximate the NSW Smart and Skilled fee schedule (including fee for service students). For programs conducted under Government subsidy programs in other states, fees are determined according to the relevant state's Fee Policy. Course fees are published on our website. Usually there is no difference in fees between units done by training and units done by recognition of prior learning (RPL).

We provide fee information on your chosen course prior to enrolment. If you have not received fee information, or if you have any questions related to fees and charges we encourage you to contact our Dubbo office for more information.

No testamur (Certificate or Statement of Attainment) will be issued unless all fees have been paid.

Fee concessions and exemptions

Some Government subsidised programs have concession fees and fee exemptions. Please refer to the information for your funding program shown on our website (www.ruralbiztraining.com.au) for further information and discuss with our staff during your pre-enrolment interview.

3.3 PAYMENT AND REFUND OF FEES AND CHARGES

Fees are payable in advance and payment may be made by cheque, direct deposit or credit card (VISA, Mastercard accepted). You will receive an invoice with your confirmation of enrolment letter, and payment is due as shown on your invoice. Please contact our office if you are having difficulty paying your fees.

Student fees may be paid using the Debitsuccess payment plan (see below).

All students have the right to the statutory cooling off period (10 days). An explanation of this is available from [Fair Trading NSW](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au).

VET Student Loans

Vet Student Loans are Australian Government loans that help eligible students pay for all or part of their tuition fees for higher level VET courses (diploma, advanced diploma) undertaken at approved providers, but cannot be used for additional study costs such as text books or accommodation.

This Commonwealth Government program allows students to access loans for courses that:

- have a high national priority
- meet industry needs
- contribute to addressing skills shortages
- lead to employment outcomes.

The program also features loan caps for course loans. This means if the course fees are above the loan cap, the student will need to pay the difference. No RuralBiz Training course fee is greater than the current course loan cap.

Please refer to our website for the list of RuralBiz Training courses in which you may use a VET Student Loan.

Students who use VET Student Loans to cover all or part of their fees incur a liability to the Commonwealth Government on the relevant census date for their enrolled unit(s) of study (published on our website www.ruralbiztraining.com.au). There are strict requirements on us as an approved VET Student Loan provider, including holding evidence about your citizenship, regularly providing information to you on the amount of your liability, and reporting to the Commonwealth. You will be required to show your continuing engagement with your course every 4 months on the Department's website (we will remind you about this).

Make sure you carefully read the VET Student Loans information booklet (www.studyassist.gov.au/helpful-resources/publications-help-booklets) and understand the requirements for eligibility and repayment of the loan. Please contact us if you have any questions about how this may apply to you.

Payment plan

Student fees may be paid in smaller, regular instalments directly from a bank account or credit card through [Debitsuccess](#) (phone: 1800 148 848). You retain control over the payments, and we do not hold bank account or credit card details. Details of this are available on our website .

Please note that Debitsuccess charges a once off \$10 establishment fee and 4% administration fee on payments.

Fee Refunds

Students in VET Student Loans eligible courses who withdraw from their enrolled unit(s) of study prior to the published census date will receive a fee refund (or in the case of VET Student Loans students, no liability will be incurred).

If a student withdraws from an enrolled unit of study AFTER the census date, NO refund is applicable. Students may be eligible for a refund (or remittance of VET Student Loan debt) if they withdraw after the census date *only* if they can demonstrate special circumstances *and* with approval from RuralBiz Training CEO.

Where a student has paid upfront for future units (i.e. those units in which the student has not yet started), a proportionate refund will be made on withdrawal. The refund amount will be equal to payment made for future units, less the cost of any materials provided by RuralBiz Training to you related to these units which are not returned unused.

If RuralBiz Training cancels or ceases to provide training, we will issue a full refund for any services not yet provided. The basis for determining “not yet provided” is based on the units of competency completed by you and which can be issued in a statement of attainment at the time the service is ceased.

As an example: A learner was enrolled in a course of 10 units with a total course fee of \$9000. The learner had paid \$1,500 up front. The course was cancelled due to trainer illness and the learner at that time had completed 1 unit of the 10 units. The learner’s enrolment would be finalised, and the learner would receive a Statement of Attainment for the one completed unit. The learner would also receive a refund of \$600 which represents the value of the training paid for but not delivered.

Please note that these fee refund conditions apply to all students.

This information is also available on our website:

<http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au/Disclaimer.htm>

Replacement of texts and training materials

Students who require replacement of issued texts, workbooks or other training materials will be liable for additional charges to cover the cost of the replacement. Where a student purchases a text, workbook or training materials and subsequently cancels the enrolment, no refund for these items is payable.

3.4 COURSE CANCELLATIONS, WITHDRAWAL OR DEFERMENT

We understand that circumstances change, and you may find you are having difficulty completing your training. We will work with you to develop a plan which will help you finish your course, but we need you to talk to us about your changed circumstances.

Deferring your studies

You may defer your studies for up to 6 months (maximum of 12 months per enrolment), provided you contact our office in advance. We will help you set the date to resume your course, and let you know of any fee implications for your deferral. If you are a government subsidised student or trainee, there may also be requirements which you must meet to retain your subsidy.

Withdrawing/cancelling your enrolment

Should you decide to cancel or withdraw from your training, you must advise us in writing (eg. by email). There may also be specific requirements for students enrolled in government subsidised training or traineeships – please contact us for advice.

If you discontinue your training without completing your chosen qualification, we will send you a Statement of Attainment for any completed Units of Competency within 30 days of your final assessment and once all outstanding fees have been paid. We will email you a finalised Training Plan and a copy of the RuralBiz online gradebook to show your results in assessment activities in unfinished units of competency.

3.5 STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

If RuralBiz Training ceases to provide a VET course in which you are enrolled, we will assist you find a similar VET course with another provider. We will pass any fees we have collected from you for units that you have not yet completed to the other provider or provide you with a refund for these units. We will also pass your training records to the other provider.

For full details of our statement of VET tuition assurance, please visit our website.

3.6 PRIVACY

RuralBiz Training collects personal information for purposes related to education or employment, government reporting requirements and requests for government fee assistance.

RuralBiz Training abides by the Australian Privacy Principles and takes reasonable measures to protect the privacy of individuals and our staff in accordance with state and federal legislation.

You can find more information at www.privacy.org.au

Records held

The records we hold include:

- information you provide on your enrolment forms
- identification details
- training / employment details
- copies of any supplied evidence as part of your RPL
- copies of certificates or qualifications
- payment information
- complaints or appeals lodged (if applicable) including reports and outcomes

We retain your photo ID (eg driver's licence or other ID provided) because we use it to confirm your identity if required. For example, this may occur during online training sessions, RPL activities, or prior to issuing a replacement copy of your certificate.

We store your information securely and will only disclose it to third parties with your written consent. You can request access to your personal information at any time by sending us a written request. We will ask for evidence of your identity before giving access, and once we have verified identify, access will be provided within 30 days. You may ask us to update your personal information.

More details are available on our website: <http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au/privacy.htm>

3.7 SOCIAL MEDIA

All students are to adhere to RuralBiz Training's social media policy shown on our website:

<http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au/Default.aspx?PageID=5743213>

4. LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

RuralBiz Training (RTO Code 90782) is responsible for the compliance of your training and assessment.

4.1 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

You have the right to:

- expect that the quality of your training meets the standards, regulations and requirements set down by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
- have your AQF certificate issued within 30 calendar days of you being assessed as meeting the requirements of your course
- be informed about the collection of your personal information and be able to review and correct it
- be informed about changes to our agreed services (eg. changes to units/qualifications, third party arrangements, ownership)
- access our consumer protection complaints process

If you are a government subsidised student, we may have additional obligations to you as a condition of the funding contract. We will inform you of these at enrolment.

As a RuralBiz Training student, you commit to:

- provide us with accurate information at all times
- behave in a responsible and ethical manner
- complete all training and assessment within time frames or as per extension granted
- ensure you maintain good access to a case study farm throughout the course, and advise us if your access changes (see further details in *Learning Environment* below)
- respond promptly to communication from your trainer, guardian angel or our administration staff
- attend all scheduled training sessions unless you have given us at least 48 hours' notice

- participate in and positively contribute to all training sessions. In our online environment, this includes giving the time to engage fully with all learning materials
- ensure each assessment submission draws on your full engagement with the learning materials and your own research to demonstrate your understanding of the questions or tasks
- use trainer feedback to carefully review and improve all your submission before resubmitting it for assessment
- treat all students and RuralBiz Training people with respect, including avoidance of inappropriate language/swearing.

Gross misconduct may result in suspension or expulsion from training and assessment.

RuralBiz Training reserves the right to amend the conditions of your enrolment at any time. If amendments are made that affect your enrolment, you will be informed 10 days prior to the changes taking effect.

4.2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our courses require you to have very good access to a commercial farm. This means that you:

- are working on the farm or can visit it regularly (eg weekly), and
- can discuss farm operations, costs and income with the manager, and
- will be able to obtain physical and production records. Advanced Diploma students are expected to have access to past financial reports.

A commercial farm is one which is operated in a business-like manner with the likelihood of making a profit in an average season. A commercial farm should have the capacity to provide a living for a farm owner/manager. We may ask for location, travel distance from your residence, current farm and production details of your chosen farm and contact details to verify information with the farm owner/manager.

You will be required to demonstrate your understanding of unit content by applying it to your farm throughout your assessment tasks. If you are unable to access the farm at any stage of your course, you will be placed on deferral for up to 3 months to provide time for you to locate and access another suitable farm business. If you are still unable to show you have suitable farm access, you will be withdrawn from your course and a Statement of Attainment for any completed units will be issued to you. You may apply to re-enrol if you then meet the existing enrolment requirements.

Most of our training is offered online, so you will need a computer and access to the internet – please refer to details in the General Course Requirements of this handbook.

You may be required to do a short introductory course to familiarise you with the online technologies we use. You are welcome to ring us for help or visit our office in Dubbo for one on one support.

We have policies, procedures and information to help create a learning environment that is safe and healthy, diverse, friendly and non-discriminatory. We encourage you to visit our website to view relevant policies and procedures.

4.3 TRAINING PLANS

We will discuss your training plan with you at enrolment. You will need to acknowledge agreement with it before enrolment is finalised. If your circumstances change, your training plan can be amended at any stage in your course, provided you still complete the qualification within the maximum time.

4.4 COURSES

RuralBiz Training offers both accredited and non-accredited training. We provide vocational education in Agriculture. Nationally Recognised Qualifications that we are registered to deliver are listed on www.training.gov.au

Further information about our courses, including costs and durations, is available from our website www.ruralbiztraining.com.au or by contacting our office.

4.5 TRAINERS/ASSESSORS

Your trainers/assessors are highly qualified and experienced industry people who are committed to best practice and helping you meet course requirements. All trainers/assessors must provide RuralBiz Training with evidence of their industry currency and participation in ongoing professional development.

4.6 COURSE RESOURCES

You will access most of your course resources through our online learning management system, RuralBiz Online. In some units, you will also be provided with hard copy materials.

Some units may require you to purchase additional textbooks or materials (eg farm mapping software). We will advise you where you may obtain these. RuralBiz Training does not give refunds for textbooks or materials you have purchased.

4.7 COURSE PROGRESS

Your Guardian Angel will monitor your progress through the course and help you to organise extensions and deferrals (see below) where appropriate. You are enrolled in course for a total period advised at enrolment (eg typically our Diploma enrolments are for 2 years) and you are expected to also monitor your own progress and commitments to ensure you will complete within this timeframe. Please note this includes any deferrals or extensions requested (see information on deferrals and extensions below).

Some specific provisions related to course progress are:

- Most units have a standard enrolment period of 8 weeks.
- Minimum standard enrolment in a unit is 4 weeks. This is designed to provide a guide to students that our units not only require reading the resources and doing the assessment but engaging in research and reflection on how the unit applies to the chosen farm.
- The standard number of units for a student to have open at any time is two.
- All non-assessable training activities are to be completed to the AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework) standard appropriate to the level of your course. These activities are designed to give you a start in your own research and reflection on the learning in a particular unit.

- Assessment quizzes require you to achieve a given mark to demonstrate a satisfactory standard. This mark, and other conditions, are given at the start of every quiz. Usually, these conditions are:
 - Must achieve a satisfactory standard (usually 80% or 90%, refer to the individual quiz instructions)
 - Maximum number of attempts = 5 with at least 30 minutes between each attempt. This time is designed for students to revisit training activities to consolidate their learning.
- If 5 quiz attempts have been completed without the satisfactory standard reached, the student must contact the Student Progress Manager and request that their access to the quiz is reset. The reset will be done no earlier than 5 business days following the last attempt to ensure the student has had time to re-engage with the learning materials and will allow a maximum of 3 further attempts. Following this no further attempts will be allowed. If the quiz is an essential component of the unit assessment this may trigger a “Not Yet Competent” result for that unit and closure of the unit. The standard tuition fee will apply should you choose to re-enrol in this unit.
- Maximum number of submissions for any single non-quiz assessment task is 3 (original, plus 2 resubmissions). If, after 3 submissions, the task is still not at a satisfactory standard, the final result may be deemed “Not Yet Competent” and the unit closed. The standard tuition fee will then apply should you choose to re-enrol in this unit.

4.8 EXTENSIONS

If you are unable to complete your assessment tasks in the allocated time, please request an extension through the Student Support section of RuralBiz Online. Extensions of up to 8 weeks total in a unit enrolment will normally be granted unless there are reasons not to do so (eg funding or training package requirements). We will advise you promptly if there is any reason that we are unable to grant an extension.

4.9 COURSE DEFERRAL

We recognise that unexpected events happen, which sometimes make it impossible to study for a while. You can ask for your course enrolment to be *deferred* for up to 6 months (maximum 12 months / enrolment) to allow you time to organise your life and then return to study later.

It is very important that you complete any current unit prior to going on course deferral. If you do not do this, you may be charged again for that unit when you return, and you may find that the unit or assessment tasks have been updated in your absence, so your previous work may not be relevant.

When your course is deferred, your enrolment is put “on ice”. This means that during the deferral period you will not hear from your angel, but our office will contact you in the last month of your deferral to arrange your return to study.

Important: there may be changes in course requirements and/or unit updates during your deferral period which may require changes to your training and assessment plans.

4.10 SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Please let us know at enrolment if you have any special needs in relation to training or assessment. For example, if you have a disability which may make it more difficult for you to complete your

assessment tasks or you have literacy or numeracy issues which interfere with your learning. We will make reasonable adjustments to our materials and tasks to facilitate your learning and assessment

We encourage you to also let your trainer know of your needs when you start each unit and remind them again prior to doing an assessment task if special consideration is needed.

4.11 ASSESSMENT

Your training will include tasks which you must complete and submit as part of an ongoing assessment process. Failure to complete these tasks, or any other agreed alternative form of assessment will result in a “not yet competent” outcome for the unit.

You will be advised of the assessment tasks and due dates when you start each unit. Information about how to access help when needed is also provided.

You will be required to attend at least one AgForum in each unit. An AgForum is a student group discussion about an issue related to agriculture. Your involvement is assessed as evidence that you meet the oral communication requirements of each unit.

Each qualification offers the following assessment pathways:

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) – assessment only process which allows people to have their existing skills and knowledge assessed against the unit of competency
- Training and assessment – complete training and assessment tasks to demonstrate your competence
- Blended pathway – mixture of RPL plus training and assessment.

RuralBiz Training offers all students the opportunity to apply for RPL at enrolment. You can also let us know if you wish to use RPL at any stage of your qualification. You will be allocated an RPL assessor who is responsible for determining the extent of RPL and applying the process. Please refer to our separate RPL Handbook for details of our RPL processes (available on request from our office).

Our assessment processes and tools meet the four principles of assessment:

1. Validity – assess the unit of competency it is meant to assess
2. Reliability – produces the same result about your competency no matter who your assessor is or when it occurs
3. Fairness – designed and conducted so that no student is disadvantaged compared to other students
4. Flexibility – reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the needs of our students.

4.12 CREDIT TRANSFER

Units of competency achieved and detailed in Statements of Attainments or Certificates issued by other Registered Training Organisations will be recognised by RuralBiz Training in a credit transfer process provided those units are equivalent to units in your course. Certified copies of Certificates or Statements of Attainment and Academic Transcripts showing nationally accredited unit codes and titles must be provided to our office in hard copy. RuralBiz Training accepts certification by people who can witness statutory declarations as shown in the [Commonwealth Statutory Declarations Regulation 1993](#) (or as amended). Students are required to complete a minimum of two (2) units by training or RPL with us per enrolment, i.e. you cannot credit transfer a whole qualification.

4.13 REFERENCING AND COPYING OF WORK

Referencing is required to acknowledge information from other sources when you are completing written tasks. If you fail to do this, you may be accused of plagiarism.

Copying another student's work is not permitted and could jeopardise your ability to complete your qualification. All work submitted requires you to agree to a declaration that it is your own work. Failure to do this may result in a "not yet competent" outcome.

4.14 COPYRIGHT

RuralBiz Training holds a statutory Education Licence administered by Copyright Agency Ltd which allows us to reproduce a wide range of materials for our students. It does not allow you to further reproduce those materials. For study and research purposes, participants can copy 10% or one chapter of a book or one article per issue of a journal (magazine). More extensive reproduction may be possible with permission from the author or publisher.

4.15 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

If you are dissatisfied with an assessment outcome or decision we make, you may appeal. If you are dissatisfied with any service we provide to you, you may make a complaint. Our complaints and appeals policy and procedures embody the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness and are designed to ensure RuralBiz Training responds effectively to any individual dissatisfied with our decisions or operations. Your complaint or appeal will be dealt with fairly and confidentially, within 60 calendar days of us receiving it (otherwise a written explanation of the delay and regular progress reports will be given to you).

To view RuralBiz Training's full general complaints and appeals policy and procedure please visit <http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au/general-complaints-and-appeals> or call us for a copy.

4.16 SUPPORT SERVICES

We offer a range of support services to optimise your success in training and assessment outcomes.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy

You will complete the Australian Core Skill Profile for Adults (reading and numeracy) at enrolment. Depending on your results, you may be referred to a specialist LLN support person to help you with written assessment. Additionally, you or your trainers may refer you to the LLN person at any time during your enrolment with us.

Guardian Angels

At enrolment, you will be allocated to a learning support person, your Guardian Angel. Your Guardian Angel will remain in contact with you throughout your course to provide additional support and encouragement.

Disability Support

RuralBiz Training will make reasonable adjustment to facilitate training and assessment for participants who advise us that they have a disability.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

A range of scholarships and support programs are available for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, visit www.indigenousscholarships.com.au or https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/programs_services/funded_other/acp/index.html

Long term Unemployed

Assistance may be available for long term unemployed from the Australian Government please visit: <https://www.jobs.gov.au/job-seekers-0>

Other Support Services

A range of services is available; contact details for some are listed below. For most services you can self-refer, or we can contact the provider on your behalf.

Reading Writing Hotline Phone: 1300 655 506 www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au	Centrelink Phone: 131021 Skills for Education and Employment Phone: 132 850	Ability Options Phone: 02 8811 1777 www.abilityoptions.org.au
Physical Disability Council of NSW Phone: 02 9552 1606 www.pdcnsw.org.au	BeyondBlue Phone: 1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au	Salvation Army Counselling Service Phone: 1300 363 622
Homeless Persons Info Line Phone 1800 234 566	Domestic Violence Crisis 24 Hours Phone: 1800 656 463	<i>Please contact us if you want help locating a suitable service.</i>

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

As an online student, you will be working in an area which you provide yourself. However, RuralBiz Training strongly encourages you to ensure you have a safe and healthy working environment for your study. We have provided a link to a WorkCover NSW publication in the Student Support section of RuralBiz Online which gives you some useful information on setting up your desk and computer to reduce fatigue and muscle strain.

If you are involved in any face to face activities with us, our trainers will remind you of the health and safety procedures to minimise risk in that location. You must follow these directions promptly and assist the trainer to protect the safety of you and others in your group.

5.1 BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

RuralBiz Training operates without bias, discrimination or harassment and we expect the same from all participants in our courses.

We do not use behaviour that is unwelcoming, demeaning, unreciprocated and/or offensive to an individual or group of people, and we require the same from you. You have the right to feel safe and

to have the opportunity to achieve your full potential in your study. If you are being harassed, seek help immediately by choosing whichever of the following options best suits you:

- tell the person they are making you uncomfortable and ask them to stop; or
- make a complaint to one of our staff in the RuralBiz Training office (02 6884 8812); or
- make a complaint to your state anti-discrimination body.

NSW: Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au

QLD: Anti-Discrimination Commission www.adcq.qld.gov.au

VIC: Vic Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

TAS: Anti-Discrimination Commissioner www.antidiscrimination.tas.gov.au

SA: Equal Opportunity Commission (SA) www.eoc.sa.gov.au

WA: Equal Opportunity Commission www.eoc.wa.gov.au

NT: NT Anti-Discrimination Commission www.adc.nt.gov.au

6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

6.1 CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS

Please use the Student Portal to regularly check and update the personal details we hold about you in our database. These include:

- Name
- Address
- Mobile / landline phone numbers
- Email address

Please refer to 1.6.1 Privacy section above for information on security of the information you provide to us.

6.2 ISSUING YOUR CERTIFICATE OR STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT

If you have successfully completed all requirements for a qualification, you will receive a Certificate which lists all units completed. If you completed a partial qualification, we will issue you a Statement of Attainment that includes the units you completed. We will issue the relevant document within 30 days of your course completion.

Any Certificates or Statements of Attainment will be put on hold until all outstanding fees and charges are paid.

Please contact RuralBiz Training if you need a replacement copy of your Certificate or Statement of Attainment. There is no charge for the first reissue, for second or subsequent reissues a \$50 administration fee will apply.

6.3 UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI)

Everyone who enrolls in nationally recognised training needs a Unique Student Identifier (USI), which will be associated with any such training you do from 1 January 2015, collating your records and results into one easily accessed online account. You will be able to check your details and print out your own training records in the future. Please read the [USI Privacy Notice](#).

We will ask you for your USI as part of the enrolment process. If you do not have one, we will create one for you, and you will receive an email advising you of your number. Please read the [USI Privacy Notice](#) for students when the RTO applies for the USI on their behalf.

If you have a genuine personal objection to applying for a USI, you may apply for an exemption from this requirement and provide us with your Notice of Exemption from the Student Identifiers Registrar. Information on how to make this application is available from:

<https://www.usi.gov.au/training-organisations/training-organisation-requirements/exemptions-individuals/how-apply>

6.4 STUDENT CARD

Students who enrol in a qualification will be provided with a student card which may be used to confirm their enrolment when seeking discounts or concessions. It is not a photo identification card.

7. STATE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

If you receive funding from your state, please read the additional information below that your state requires us to provide to our students. This information should be read in conjunction with information provided in other sections of this handbook.

7.1 NSW: INFORMATION FOR SMART & SKILLED ENROLMENTS

Students who live or work in NSW may be eligible for a course fee subsidy from the NSW Government under the Smart & Skilled funding program.

Eligibility and Fees

You can check your eligibility for Smart and Skilled funding and get an estimate of the student fee we are required to charge you at <https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/> We will advise you of your actual student fee prior to completing your enrolment.

Please let us know at enrolment if you would like to use RPL or credit transfers because this may affect your student fee. If you later decide to use RPL or credit transfers, we will adjust your fee and refund you any additional amount you paid.

Please note that you may use Smart and Skilled funding in conjunction with a Vet Student Loan (if eligible).

Fee Administration Policy:

Please go to

https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/smartandskilled/contract/fee_administration_policy.pdf to access the current fee administration policy for the NSW Smart and Skilled program

Privacy consent

We are required to obtain your consent to the NSW Dept of Industry using and disclosing your personal information to other government agencies as shown on the form below. Your consent is part of your enrolment process – please read it carefully before providing your consent as part of your enrolment process

CONSENT TO USE AND DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION TO THE NSW DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

I, _____

(First, middle and last name)

of _____

(current residential address)

With date of birth _____

understand and agree that, under the Data Provision Requirements 2012 **Kreate Pty Ltd T/as RuralBiz Training** is required to collect personal information (information or an opinion about me), collected from me, my parent or guardian, such as my name, Unique Student Identifier, date of birth, contact details, training outcomes and performance, sensitive personal information (including my ethnicity or health information) and other enrolment and training activity-related information (together **Personal Information**) and disclose that Personal Information to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (**NCVER**).

My Personal Information (including the personal information contained on my enrolment form and my training activity data) may be used or disclosed by **RuralBiz Training** for statistical, regulatory and research purposes. **RuralBiz Training** may disclose my personal information for these purposes to third parties, including:

School – if I am a secondary student undertaking VET, including a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship;

- Employer –if I am enrolled in training paid by my employer;
- Commonwealth and State or Territory government departments and authorised agencies, including the NSW Department of Industry (**Department**);
- NCVER;
- Organisations conducting student surveys; and
- Researchers.

Personal Information disclosed to NCVER may be used or disclosed for the following purposes:

- issuing a VET Statement of Attainment or VET Qualification, and populating Authenticated VET Transcripts;
- facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys;
- understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information; and
- administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.

I may receive an NCVER student survey which may be administered by an NCVER employee, agent or third party contractor. I may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.

NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose my Personal Information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988(Cth), the VET Data Policy and all NCVER policies and protocols (including those published on NCVER's website at www.ncver.edu.au).

The Department may disclose my Personal Information to other Australian government agencies, including those located in States and Territories outside New South Wales.

The above government agencies may use my Personal Information for any purpose relating to the exercise of their government functions, including but not limited to the evaluation and assessment of my training, the determination of my eligibility to receive subsidised training or for any Fee Exemptions or Concessions. My Personal Information may also be disclosed to other third parties if required by law.

I also acknowledge and agree that the Department may contact me by telephone email or post during or after I have ceased subsidised training with RuralBiz Training for the purposes of evaluating and assessing my subsidised training.

I declare that the information I have provided to the best of my knowledge is true and correct.

I consent to the collection, use and disclosure of my Personal Information in the manner outlined above.

PRINT FULL NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE** ____/____/____

Note: if under 18 years of age at the time of giving consent then the consent of their guardian is required.

PRINT FULL NAME OF GUARDIAN: _____

SIGNATURE OF GUARDIAN: _____ **DATE** ____/____/____

Course deferral or withdrawal (discontinue)

The maximum cumulative deferral allowed during your enrolment is 12 months. We will advise you of the fee implications of deferral. If you do not restart your training within the 12-month deferral period we must report you as Discontinuing and if you wish to restart, you will be treated as a new student.

Please let us know in writing (email) if you want to withdraw.

Consumer protection

In addition to having access to our complaints and appeals process described in this Handbook, you are also covered by the Smart and Skilled Consumer Protection Policy. Use this link for the Smart and Skilled Consumer Protection Strategy

https://www.training.nsw.gov.au/forms_documents/smartandskilled/contract/consumer_protection_strategy.pdf

Further information and contact details are available from:

<https://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au/for-students/consumer-protection-for-students>

7.2 QLD: INFORMATION QLD HIGHER LEVEL SKILLS ENROLMENTS

Students from Queensland enrolling in selected Certificate IV or above level courses may be eligible for a subsidy under the Higher Level Skills Program, funded by the Queensland government. Prospective students must not have or be enrolled in a Certificate IV or higher-level qualification, not including qualifications completed at school and foundations skills training.

Please read the Higher Level Skills student factsheet

<https://training.qld.gov.au/site/providers/Documents/funded/hls-student-factsheet.pdf>

For students who access a Queensland Government subsidised training place, it is a requirement that they must complete a student training and employment survey within three months of completing or discontinuing their training. Please read the Student Training and Employment factsheet <https://training.qld.gov.au/site/providers/Documents/pqs/contract/student-survey-factsheet.pdf>

Once you have completed a qualification through this program you will not be eligible for any further funding under this program.

You can find more information on the Higher Level Skills program here:

<https://training.qld.gov.au/training/incentives/highskills>