



Australian Government

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The Australian Apprenticeship Support Network Code of Conduct

July 2015

This Code applies to all Apprenticeship Network providers and their staff. It represents the minimum standards to be applied in all their dealings with employers, Australian Apprentices and other interested persons.

The aim of the Code

The aim of the Code is to ensure the delivery of high quality support services, with high standards of ethical behaviour exhibited to all parties concerned.

The Code of Conduct

In respect of employers and individuals, Apprenticeship Network providers will provide:

- accurate, current and comprehensive information and advice to employers, Australian Apprentices and other interested persons on:
 - training products and delivery options appropriate to the needs of employers, particularly current nationally endorsed Training Packages;
 - the range of employment options (e.g. full-time, part-time, school-based or through Group Training Organisations);
 - advice on the process for assessing Recognition of Prior Learning/Recognition of Current Competencies;
 - their rights and obligations under Training Contracts e.g. employers' requirements to release Australian Apprentices to attend the off-the-job training components of Training Packages or Australian Apprentices' obligations to attend work, including off-the-job training;
- Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme payments and allowances;
- Trade Support Loans information and sign-up administration;
- an employer's right to choose a Registered Training Organisation that best suits the needs and the services provided in the region; and
- industrial relations matters, which may include referral to appropriate industrial relations agencies or employer organisations;
- appropriate and relevant aptitude and assessment tools which meet Departmental Guidelines, to assist individuals find suitable training;
- provide Gateway services to individuals who seek this assistance, including prospective Australian Apprentices, employers and individuals interested in information about a non-apprenticeship VET pathway;
- the capacity to connect prospective employers with prospective apprentices, either directly, through Employment Services Providers or through links with a job placement agency;
- Australian Apprentices with connections to appropriate training to provide them with the required skills for their employer;

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- an ongoing point of contact for both employers and Australian Apprentices for the duration of the apprenticeship to help ensure successful apprenticeship completions;
- advice, pastoral care support and interventions through In-training support is to be delivered as required to assist employers and Australian Apprentices through to completion;
- advertising and information material that identifies the requirements of Australian Apprenticeships, that is consistent with all Australian Government and State legal requirements and reflects truth, accuracy and good taste; and
- a process for employers, Australian Apprentices and other interested persons to notify inadequacies or problems in the delivery of support services under the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network.

In respect of the Department of Education and Training, the Apprenticeship Network provider will:

- provide accurate and complete information in relation to claims for payment under contractual arrangements and the determining of eligibility for Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme payments and Trade Support Loans;
- comply with Australian Government fraud control and risk management requirements;
- work closely, cooperatively and openly with State and Territory Training Authorities and comply fully with State and Territory administrative and legislative requirements in relation to Australian Apprenticeships and the provision of information relating to their dealings with employers and Australian Apprentices; and
- participate completely in and support national arrangements for the promotion and growth of Australian Apprenticeships. In particular, they will reflect this in their dealings with employers, Australian Apprentices and other interested persons and organisations, including other Service Providers and Registered Training Organisations.

In adhering to the Code of Conduct, Apprenticeship Network providers must:

- be open and honest at all times;
- be respectful and courteous in their dealings with all clients;
- inform clients of their rights, obligations and entitlements;
- ensure that provision of information is current, accurate, impartial and consistent;
- ensure that advice about training options, particularly National Training Packages, best reflects the training needs of the employer and the Australian Apprentice;
- adhere to the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme Guidelines and the Trade Support Loan Guidelines when determining eligibility and processing claims for Australian Apprenticeships Incentives including Trade Support Loans;

- refrain from making false or misleading statements to employers and Australian Apprentices in relation to eligibility for both Australian Government and State and Territory Government Australian Apprenticeships Incentives;
- be easy to contact by telephone, facsimile and email during normal business hours as well as maintaining easily accessible premises;
- respond quickly and accurately to requests for information;
- treat complaints seriously, learn from them, maintain a Complaints Register and publicise the complaints handling process;
- comply with obligations under laws including (but not limited to):
 - the *Trade Support Loans Act 2014*;
 - the Australian Privacy Principles (AAPs) under the *Privacy Act 1988*;
 - the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*; and
 - the *Competition and Consumer ACT 2010*;
- not seek or accept fees, benefits or advantages either directly or indirectly from employers, Australian Apprentices or other interested persons outside the Shared Costs arrangements endorsed by the Department of Education and Training;
- make available to any interested persons, details of the controls and arrangements put in place to manage conflict of interest matters, where such conflicts exist;
- maintain up-to-date knowledge in respect of all aspects of Australian Apprenticeships, particularly Training Packages available within industry sectors;
- maintain up-to-date knowledge in respect of general VET training nationally and within the Service Provider's state or territory; and
- ensure that a positive reputation and outlook for Australian Apprenticeships is promoted to State and Territory Training Authorities, other key stakeholders and the community.

Compliance with the Code

Apprenticeship Network Providers will be bound to the Code of Conduct through their contract with the Australian Government (Department of Education and Training). Apprenticeship Network providers should display a copy of the Code and ensure that all employers, Australian Apprentices and other interested persons are fully aware of it.