



Student Handbook

Introduction

Learning Sphere Training Solutions Pty Ltd is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that is permitted by government arrangement to do vocational training (job skills related) and then to issue nationally recognised credentials. Our national code is 91718 and our registration can be verified at training.gov.au. Every RTO has to adhere to strict government quality standards (found at asqa.gov.au and aqf.edu.au) and reporting requirements. Government funded training has additional requirements to ensure the proper use of public money.

If you complete an entire course, according to the national standards, then you can be issued with a qualification, known as a certificate or diploma. If you complete a “short course” or only part of a full qualification, then you may be eligible for a Statement of Attainment (SOA) showing the units you have completed successfully.

All our trainers and assessors have the relevant industry qualifications along with additional qualifications required to deliver nationally recognised training and assessment. Our trainers and assessors also regularly participate in professional development activities to improve their skills. We will inform you if we use subcontractors.

Work health and safety along with environmental sustainability principles are integrated into all our activities. Learning Sphere Training Solutions supports the government’s commitment to dealing with the problems associated with drug and alcohol use and abuse. Our policy is to employ and train in an environment free from alcohol abuse or the use of illegal drugs. Staff may not report to work, and students may not report for training under the influence of drugs or alcohol. For a student this may mean immediate termination of your course. If necessary, we will report concerns about the safety, welfare and well-being of Training Participants to the relevant government authorities.

You may be requested to complete a survey to provide feedback on your training experience. This may be a national standard document, our internal form or another format (for example as required by Queensland state government.)

By commencing training with us, you agree to the contents of this *Handbook* including the *Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology Systems*.



Enrolment Process

First, students will be required to complete an enrolment form and provide suitable identification. Learning Sphere may then conduct a basic assessment, to establish training suitability. We will be clear and honest with you, so you can be fully informed. Learning Sphere's student enrolment policy embraces the principles of fairness, integrity, disclosure and transparency. However, a course may have minimum requirements, for example, physical ability or English literacy. Acceptance of your enrolment is conditional on our acceptance and assessment of the course entry requirements.

The privacy policy is on the enrolment form. If you change your contact telephone number or address after you enrol and before your qualification is issued, then you will need to inform us. You can also access your personal records held by us. (You will need to complete a simple form and provide necessary identification.)

Please note that if you are booked into a class and don't attend twice or more without valid cause, then we may assume you have cancelled your course. We will try and contact you to remind you of the timetable or offer assistance, but if you repeatedly cancel or don't attend sessions or we cannot contact you then we will need to assume you have cancelled your course and will commence the appropriate process.

Government funded courses may have additional requirements for your consent or for notification of enrolment. For information and eligibility for NSW Smart & Skilled subsidies, see: smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 772 104. For Queensland, see: www.skillsgateway.training.qld.gov.au. Accessing an entitlement may affect your future access to government funding.

Consumer protection and fee administration policy

Unless you have been granted an exemption, extension or are eligible for a full government subsidy, most courses have an enrolment fee that must be paid before or at the commencement of your course. This fee will be clear to you before committing to your course, but it varies depending on the course, where you live or work, and availability of government subsidies and concessions. For workplace training, fees are usually paid for you by your employer. Often, fees are paid in stages as the course progresses, so you will not normally need to pay the entire amount before commencing. If you have paid your fee but we are unable to deliver the training due to our cancelling your course, then we will refund your fee. If you stop training more than 7 days after commencing then your fee will not be refunded, unless mandated by state funding agreements or your Training Services Contract. (This includes if you have completed only part of the qualification or a lower level qualification.)

If you are experiencing difficult family or other compassionate situations, then you can contact our Administration Manager for consideration. We may be able to arrange a fortnightly or monthly payment plan. In any case, if you have questions about fees and payments then please contact our Administration Manager (who is also our Consumer Protection Officer) on 1300 296 298.

Learning Sphere has a policy to not collect fees in advance of more than \$1000 from a student prior to the commencement of the course, or not more than \$1500 in advance at any other time.

If you do not pay the agreed fees, then we may not issue your credential until these have been paid in full. Late or overdue payments may incur interest or to be forwarded to a debt collection service.

We are required to retain a record of your certification for 30 years. A reprint of your credential will incur a \$45 administration fee (+ postage, if required). Alternatively, you will be able to access your record through the USI system.

Privacy and personal information

We do not sell or provide your personal information or assessments to unauthorised persons. Digital records are stored with Wisenet (Adapt IT), Microsoft (using Australian data centres) and hard copies archived securely at our head office. More details regarding our privacy standards are found on the enrolment form. Additional privacy consents may be required if you are enrolling in a government subsidised course or if ask us to get a Unique Student Identifier (USI) for you. The national standard notice: <https://www.education.gov.au/privacy-notice-and-student-declaration>

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

All students doing accredited training need to have a USI. You can get your USI from usi.gov.au. If you want us to get the USI for you then you will need to give us the relevant identification information and USI consent form. Alternatively, you can contact the USI registrar and apply for an exemption. When you supply us with a USI then we need to verify it with usi.gov.au by using your personal details. We cannot issue a credential without verifying your USI.

If you already know how to do it—RPL and Credit Transfer (CT)

Every RTO is required to recognise the qualifications issued by another RTO, and your current skills. These qualifications or experience may exempt students from the requirement to complete portions of new courses for which they seek to enrol. We encourage prospective students to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for courses, or parts of courses, that they already know how to do. However, you will need to provide evidence that you have these skills. (Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) fits in between Recognition of Prior Learning and a Credit Transfer. We can arrange for an RCC assessment like RPL.)

If you are granted RPL or CT, then you may be eligible to receive a refund for a portion of your course fee. Refer to our RPL Process Flowchart and RPL Request documents for more details. Your trainer/assessor will assist you.

Credit Transfers (CT) from other courses

If you want a credit transfer or a similar acknowledgement from another course or qualification that you have completed, then you need to provide us with a certified copy of your original qualification. We can then evaluate if there is a direct link between your existing qualification and your current course. There are many different situations that will affect how we give you credit for your other course. There is no assessment required for credit transfer.

Further Learning: Pathways and Articulation

We can assist you to continue your learning by recommending other courses you can do either with us or with another institution. Ask our staff for details about articulation arrangements to higher qualifications (like credit transfers) that may be relevant for you. Learning Sphere does not have agreements with any higher education providers.



Giving You a Fair Go: Access and Equity

Learning Sphere puts effort into making programs and services that are good for as many people as possible. We call that “relevant, accessible, fair and inclusive.” We do this by,

- 1) promoting our services in a way that includes our diverse population and trying to include people regardless of where they live,
- 2) Ensuring that groups traditionally under-represented in education and employment can participate and achieve the same outcomes as other members of the community,
- 3) trying to get rid of other roadblocks that stop you being involved,
- 4) possibly getting outside professional help if you have special needs. Note that additional support services may require additional fees.

If you have limited English: Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assistance

Students enrolling are assessed for language, literacy and numeracy skills (LLN). If this shows that a student will have difficulty finishing the course, they may be given extra help or will be asked to attend a program to develop these skills so that they can complete the course. Please contact our Administration Manager if you require further assistance.

If you need other help: Client Support Services and Special Needs Assistance

We will provide reasonable levels of assistance to students to help them with comprehension of learning materials, access to research resources and language and literacy assistance available from our trainers. Where specialized assistance is required, we may recommend support services to you, but this will be an independent decision for you or your employer to pursue. These services may include: counselling, elementary language skills, long-term unemployment issues, cultural awareness, physical disability assistance, or other aid, for example if we notice you have an unhealthy addiction. Please contact our Administration Manager if you require assistance, if possible before you enrol.

Flexible Learning and Assessment

While the courses have specific requirements that are needed to complete, we will try and be flexible. We understand that we are all individuals with different circumstances and learning styles. Without reducing the effectiveness of your training, we will try and accommodate work commitments or personal and physical limitations. Flexibility may be considered for variables such as: alternate dates for submission of assignments, modified or changed workgroups, personalised supervision (where feasible), or special circumstances for examinations.

Where flexibility is required, or you need to repeat an assessment, these will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis to determine student needs, and options available to assist the student. In some cases, these may incur additional expense to the student, but we will always check with you first.

Deferring, Discontinuation or Withdrawal

If you need to defer your course, then please discuss this with our Administration Manager and who can explain your options (including effects on your fees) based on your individual circumstance and training contract. If you need to withdraw or discontinue your course, then please contact our Administration Manager because perhaps there is some way we can assist you to continue or complete. Otherwise, you should complete the Course Withdrawal Summary form. See the section “Consumer protection and fee administration policy” regarding refunds.

During your course, if there is a significant change regarding government regulation, our ownership, involvement of third-party organisations or qualification transition, then we will inform you through one or more of the following: your trainer, email or your workplace.

If You Are Not Happy: Complaints Procedure

Learning Sphere really want you to have a happy training experience. We wish to ensure that all our services are of a high standard and that all our customers, clients and staff are treated fairly and equally in all aspects of the business. If an issue arises, first we will have an informal discussion between those involved to assess the nature of the problem and try to resolve it. However, the following formal complaint procedure has been established to ensure that you are able to have very serious concerns addressed in a constructive and timely manner.

Complaints, including with the RTO, our staff, other students or third parties, will be finalised as soon as practicable. We will need to inform any individuals mentioned regarding the complaint involving them and give them opportunity to respond. We will have your complaint reviewed by independent person (someone not involved).

When an issue arises that needs to be addressed through a complaint procedure, you must inform a Learning Sphere representative as soon as possible of your complaint and that it needs to be addressed. This needs to be in writing, preferably using the Complaint Form (A-11) so that it is accurate. The aim is to satisfy the needs of all concerned. We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within five (5) working days and try to resolve to your complaint in writing within ten (10) working days. If required, a follow up meeting will be held to assess whether the strategies have been implemented successfully and if they have satisfactorily resolved the grievance. We will keep you informed about progress and if the matter can't be finalised within 60 days then you can expect a written explanation for the delay.

Appeals Procedure

If you feel that this process has not resolved the complaint, an Appeal Form (A-12) should be completed and forwarded to the CEO. You can appeal the outcome of the complaint, appeal against an assessment outcome, or ask for special consideration. The following Appeals Procedure has been put in place:

- Notify Learning Sphere in writing within three (3) weeks using the Appeal Form (A-12). This form should be addressed to the CEO.
- The appellant has the right to represent their own case or refer the matter to an independent third party. This may incur additional costs which will be agreed with you before proceeding.
- The relevant Learning Sphere Manager or Independent Arbitrator will provide a written statement of the appeal outcome, including reasons for the decision. We will try to do this within ten (10) working days.
- A copy of this statement will be provided to all stakeholders affected by the appeal outcome.

If you are still not happy with the quality of service or the training received and wish to take a matter further, go to the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) website ([Make a complaint—domestic students](#)). Note that ASQA will only hear a complaint where you have first been through our process and the matter is related to a regulated outcome. Or, if the matter involves a state subsidised course, to the relevant state authority (for example, in NSW go to [smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au](#)).

Please note: We are genuinely concerned with your grievances and acknowledge your right to appeal against assessment conditions and results that you believe are unjust or unfair. All complaints and appeals will be processed through a continuous improvement system to ensure that the services we provide to our customers, clients and staff are of the highest quality.

Disciplinary Procedures

Learning Sphere will not tolerate conduct that compromises its high standards of ethics, honesty, lack of consideration for fellow students, trainers or other staff, unruly behaviour, bullying or any form of abuse (physical, verbal or electronic) of others, lack of respect for the property of others or any other inappropriate conduct. Where this is found to have taken place by a student, trainer or staff member, the management of Learning Sphere will invoke disciplinary procedures.

In the case of students, depending on the severity of the event this action may include: one or more written warnings regarding the transgression, dismissal from the course and reporting the student to the Police.

Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology Systems

By commencing training with us or using devices connected to our networks you agree to these standards. Our technology systems include devices like warehouse scanning equipment and computers. It also includes our internet service and any other software including Office 365 regardless of whether you are accessing using our devices or your own. It also includes using your own devices while engaged in training with us or on our sites. We want you, our students and staff to learn and work in a safe and trusting environment. The systems are provided for your use in learning and working with us. Effective security and proper behaviour are the responsibility of everyone using our systems. If you do not follow these standards, then your training may be immediately terminated and, if necessary, we may report you to relevant authorities.

You agree to:

- Use the systems in a safe way that will not harm yourself or others, damage the equipment or the environment.
- Any equipment or devices supplied for your use is only for the purpose of the training course and is to be returned in good condition. This includes returning any access cards, keys or site identification tags.
- Allow others to access the services to do their work or training and not act in a way which might restrict others. This includes not changing system passwords or settings.
- Use the systems in a legal and ethical manner. This includes respecting the rights of others and not being involved with bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination or other offensive activity.
- Not use our systems for illegal, pornographic, gambling, MMO (massively multiplayer online) gaming, fraudulent or similar services.
- Report any misuse, loss or theft of equipment or services, any damaged system. You should also report any unauthorised access to our systems.
- Allow Learning Sphere to audit and access any data on our systems.
- Protect the privacy of yourself and others by not giving out personal details unnecessarily or sharing others personal details or images without their permission. This includes recording only with permission.
- Be careful when opening emails or similar communication, especially from unknown senders, to reduce the chances of virus' or malware accessing our systems.
- Not download or copy unauthorised material. This includes not downloading, installing or activating any software or technology without authorisation.
- Not share information, settings or personal data with those outside your training group or our organisation. This includes our copyrighted forms, documents, media and training materials.



- Not connect any additional device to our system without authorisation.
- Not do anything to harm the reputation of Learning Sphere, our staff, learners or partners.

Any IT questions or concerns can be directed to your trainer or support@learningsphere.com.au.

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and relevance of training, we cannot guarantee suitability to you or your business. We may provide information about relevant legislation or requirements by authorities, but it is your responsibility to ensure you and your businesses are compliant with any regulations. However, this disclaimer does not remove our responsibilities as a Registered Training Organisation, for example regarding authorising licences and such like.

Contacting Us

If you have any questions relating to any of our policies or procedures, please contact us:

Telephone: 1300 296 298

Email: admin@learningsphere.com.au

Website: learningsphere.com.au

