



Southern Solutions
Training

Student Handbook

Copyright Warning

This product is copyrighted to SSTS - Services Pty Limited. SSTS - Services Pty Limited owns all copyright to its products. Except as permitted by the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) or unless you have obtained the specific written permission of SSTS - Services Pty Limited, you must not:

- Reproduce or photocopy this product in whole or in part
- Publish this product in whole or in part
- Cause this product in whole or in part to be transmitted
- Store this product in whole or in part in a retrieval system including a computer
- Record this product in whole or in part either electronically or mechanically
- Resell this product in whole or in part

SSTS - Services Pty Limited is committed to developing quality resources that meet the needs of our customers. Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this book is accurate; however SSTS - Services Pty Limited accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage or injury arising from such information.

All websites referred to in this resource were accessed and deemed appropriate at time of publication.

SSTS - Services Pty Limited apologises unreservedly for any copyright infringement that may have occurred and invites copyright owners to contact us so any violation may be rectified.

Southern Solutions Training Services Pty Ltd

info@ssts.edu.au

<http://www.southernsolutions.nsw.edu.au>

Ph: 1300656321 (02) 95180640

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Our Services	4
Accredited Training programs.....	4
Non Accredited Training programs	4
Pre Enrolment.....	4
Enrolment.....	5
Fees and Charges	5
1. Protection of fees paid in advance	8
2. Fees and refund information	8
3. Inclusions in course fees.....	8
4. Late payments	8
5. Refunds	9
Your rights and responsibilities	11
Our rights and responsibilities	11
Legislative requirements.....	12
Access and Equity.....	12
Work Health and Safety Policy (WHS)	12
Harassment and Discrimination.....	12
Drug and Alcohol.....	13
Record Management and Privacy	13
Support Services.....	13
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (accredited training only).....	14
Credit Transfer (CT) (accredited training only)	15
Outcomes (accredited training only).....	15
Cheating/Plagiarism.....	15
Complaints and Appeals	17
1. Nature of complaints and appeals	17
2. Principles of resolution	17
3. Timeframes for resolution	18
4. Records of complaints and appeals	18
• Resolution of complaints and appeals	18
For students:.....	20
• Publication	20
Training and Assessment.....	23
Course Withdrawals.....	24
Issuing of Awards.....	25

Introduction

Welcome to Southern Solutions Training Services Pty Ltd (SSTS). SSTS provides excellence in training and assessment across industries, with particular emphasis on Early Childhood Education, Aged Care and Business.

SSTS has a philosophy which is committed to providing you with quality training and/or assessment and first class customer service. We are committed to assisting you in furthering your career and reaching your goals.

Our Services

SSTS delivers accredited and non-accredited training programs customised to meet your individual needs and the industry you are undertaken training.

Accredited Training programs

SSTS is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) approved by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to deliver and assess nationally recognised training. As an approved RTO SSTS must ensure compliance against the Vocational Education Training (VET) Quality Framework and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Students who undertake accredited training must complete assessment tasks. Upon completion the trainer/assessor will review the assessments to determine your competency against set standards. If deemed competent you will be issued with either a Certificate or Statement of Attainment depending upon you completing the course and being found competent in all assessment tasks by your trainer/assessor.

Non Accredited Training programs

Non-accredited training programs are generally run over shorter periods of time. Students are not required to undertake assessments unless stipulated by the course owner or set by the employer when designing the program with SSTS. For some training programs students will receive a Certificate of Attendance.

Pre Enrolment

SSTS will discuss with you or where relevant, your employer, details around the training enquiry which could include:

- the interest in the training program
- your previous skills and experience (known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL))
- an overview of suitable training options including delivery and/or assessment methods
- student support required
- feedback and reporting
- fees and charges
- eligibility for Federal/State Funding for accredited programs only

Enrolment

If you are interested in undertaking a course with SSTS contact us at info@ssts.edu.au and one of our team will send you links to our online expression of interest form and our language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) assessment.

The expression of interest link will collect arrange of you r personal information and you reasoning for looking at studying your selected course.

The LLN assessment link will ask you to answer a range of questions and scenarios and will assess your level of language literacy and numeracy.

The information in these links will then be used by our team to check your suitability for the courses and to determine if you will be eligible for a government funding.

PLEASE NOTE COMPLETION OF THESE LINKS DO NOT GUARANTEE YOU A PLACE IN YOUR CHOSEN COURSE, NOR COMMIT YOU TO STUDYING WITH SSTS.

Our team will then inform you via email within 3 business days of receiving the information in the above 2 links, the outcome of your expression interest, this email will include an enrolment form and fee details. If you are happy with the offer you will then be required to sign the enrolment form and return to us to confirm you wish to proceed with the enrolment.

If you are under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian is required to sign the Student Enrolment Form.

On occasions we will obtain the assistance of a representative from the Australian Apprenticeship Centre (AAC) to assist with the enrolment process to determine your eligibility for funding. In these circumstances you and your employer will be required to sign a legal agreement which outlines details around the training program you will undertake and all parties' commitment to the program. This agreement will be lodged with the relevant state department as record of your enrolment.

You will be involved in the negotiation of a Training Plan which outlines details around your training program and is used to track your training progress. You, your employer and SSTS will sign off on the Training Plan and a copy will be given to all parties. Throughout the training the Training Plan will be monitored and updated where required.

Fees and Charges

Accredited Training

Fees

The fees charged with SSTS will depend on the training program you are undertaking, the current government contracts SSTS has and your eligibility for Federal and/or State funding. SSTS will work with the Australian Apprenticeships Centre (AAC) in each state to assist us in determining your eligibility for Federal funding.

Where you are eligible for funding, if training has not commenced within (3) months from enrolling into the training program you will be deemed ineligible and charged at a Fee for Service (FFS) rate. All FFS rates can be found on our website.

GST

Accredited training is GST free however GST will be incurred on all other expenses and ancillary services.

Payment Terms

Non Funded Training

Fees are invoiced and must be paid in full within 30 days from receipt of invoice unless a negotiated payment plan is in place with SSTS.

If paying by instalments a third party collection service such as Ezidebit will be used to administrate the collection of fees. Any setup costs for the instalment plan and collection are the responsibility of the student.

Payment plans can be set up weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly over the duration of your course, and the instalment fee will be the total fees divided by the number of payment over the duration of your course. For example:

Course fees are \$10,000 and your course is 12 months in duration, and you would like to make weekly payments your instalments would be:

10,000 divided by 52 = \$192.31 per week for 51 weeks and \$192.19 for 1 week.

Funded Training

Student Fees (if applicable) can be paid either upfront or via instalments over the duration of your course.

If paying by instalments a third party collection service such as Ezidebit will be used to administrate the collection of fees. Any setup costs for the instalment plan and collection are the responsibility of the student.

Payment plans can be set up weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly over the duration of your course, and the instalment fee will be the total fees divided by the number of payment over the duration of your course. For example:

Course fees are \$10,000 and your course is 12 months in duration, and you would like to make weekly payments your instalments would be:

10,000 divided by 52 = \$192.31 per week for 51 weeks and \$192.19 for 1 week.

If your employer is paying for your training, they must send SSTS signed authorisation on company letterhead by an officer of authority prior to commencement of training.

Where you or your employer are having difficulties paying the fees, they can discuss payment arrangements with SSTS.

If your account exceeds our trading terms and is passed over collection, you are liable for all reasonable expenses. This includes contingent expenses such as debt collection commission and legal costs (on a full indemnity basis) incurred by SSTS for enforcement of obligations and recovery of monies due from you to SSTS. Interest on any overdue accounts will be charged and invoiced at 2% per month with associated collection costs added.

Payments to be made by direct deposit or credit card. SSTS accepts Mastercard, Visa and American Express and Diners. Refer to the Ezidebit form for specific details including charges.

Concessions/Exemption

SSTS follows the requirements under each government contract when determining any concessions or exemptions. Where you are eligible SSTS will keep a verified copy of your proof of concession or exemption.

SSTS may grant a concession on fees if we consider that collection in full would impose extreme hardship. Where this is the case you can discuss arrangements with SSTS.

Other Fees

Additional or missed sessions

Where you have missed a training/assessment session or require additional assistance, SSTS will charge an hourly rate of \$90.00 plus GST.

Additional assessment decisions

Where SSTS reviews your assessment evidence and finds you Not Yet Competent, and where submission of further assessment evidence is required on your third submission, SSTS will charge you an hourly rate of \$90.00 plus GST.

Course Materials

Where you misplace or lose your course material or award, SSTS can provide you with another copy at a cost of \$30.00 per workbook or award plus GST. Course materials remain your property and are non-refundable.

Non Accredited Training

Fees

Fees are invoiced and must be paid in full within 30 days from receipt of invoice unless a negotiated payment plan is in place with SSTS.

If paying by instalments a third party collection service such as Ezidebit will be used to administrate the collection of fees. Any setup costs for the instalment plan and collection are the responsibility of the student.

Payment plans can be set up weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly over the duration of your course, and the instalment fee will be the total fees divided by the number of payment over the duration of your course. For example:

Course fees are \$10,000 and your course is 12 months in duration, and you would like to make weekly payments your instalments would be:

10,000 divided by 52 = \$192.31 per week for 51 weeks and \$192.19 for 1 week.

Refunds

Fees and Refunds Policy and Procedure

PURPOSE	The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline SSTS's approach to managing fees and refunds and to demonstrate how fees paid in advance are protected by SSTS.
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	Operations Manager
WHEN	As required
POLICY	<p>1. Protection of fees paid in advance</p> <p>SSTS do not collect student fees in advance.</p> <p>2. Fees and refund information</p> <p>Prospective and current students are advised of the fees associated with a course on the website, and the email with their enrolment form.</p> <p>For all students, fee information is always provided prior to enrolment. Fee information provided students includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All relevant fee information, including fees that must be paid and payment terms <p>Students accessing government funding</p> <p>Students who's training is being subsidised by the Government will receive a Notification of enrolment email outlining any fees they will need to contribute and what fees the government will subsidise.</p> <p>3. Inclusions in course fees</p> <p>Unless otherwise specified, course fees include all the training and assessment required for students to achieve the qualification or course in which they are enrolling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course fees include one copy of the required text books and learning materials for each student. Any optional textbooks and materials that may be recommended but not required for a course, are not included in course fees and will be an additional cost should the student wish to purchase such materials. If textbooks are lost and need to be replaced, the student will be required to cover the cost of the replacement materials • Course fees include the issuance of a testamur and record of results and/or statement of attainment. For additional copies or re-issuing of any of these documents an additional fee is applicable. <p>4. Late payments</p> <p>Students who are experiencing difficulty in paying their fees are invited to call our office to make alternative arrangements for payment during their period of difficulty.</p> <p>Debts will be referred to a debt collection agency where fees are more than 40 days past due. SSTS reserves the right to suspend the provision of training and/or other services until fees are brought up to date. Students with long term outstanding accounts may be withdrawn from their</p>

course if payments have not been received and no alternative arrangements for payment have been made.

5. Refunds

Students who withdraw from a course and wish to seek a refund or have the amount they owe on their fees reduced, must apply to SSTS in writing, outlining the details and reason for their request. Students who have not completed a withdrawal form are not eligible for consideration of a refund or reduction in fees.

Students, eligibility for a refund will be assessed as follows:

- A. Full refund where SSTS cancels the course prior to commencement.
- B. Full refund of unspent course fees where SSTS cancels the course after commencement. The percentage of unspent course fees will be calculated based on services already provided up to the day the course stops.
- C. 70% refund where the student withdraws in writing 28 days or more prior to the course commencing.
- D. No refund of course fees where the student withdraws in writing 0 - 28 days or more prior to the course commencing.
- E. No refund where the student is excluded for misbehaviour.

8. Outcomes of refund decisions

1.1 SSTS will provide the outcome of the refund assessment in writing to the student's registered address, outlining the decision and reasons for the decision along with any applicable refund or adjustment notice within 14 business days.

1.2 Students will be advised that they may appeal the refund assessment following SSTS's Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

PROCESS

A. Invoices

- All students will be issue with an email detail the course fees.
- If student is subsidies by the Government, then the contribution from the government should be detailed too.
- If student accepts the place in the course an invoice should be raise for the course fees and email to the student along with an EZDebit form.

Keep a copy of the invoice in Xero.

B. Receiving payments

- Payments may be made by, direct bank transfer, credit card or direct debit.
- Record payments against the relevant invoice on Xero.

C. Managing overdue fees

- Send out statements monthly to students to show outstanding fees.
- Call students where payments are more than 14 days overdue.
- Any student with an invoice over 40 days past due should be referred to the debt collection agency.
- Refer to the Operations Manager about suspending training until fees are brought up to date. If training is suspended send a letter to the student advising of suspension until payment is made. Advise Trainer/Assessor.
- Where fees continue to be unpaid, refer to Operations Manager to consider withdrawal.

D. Processing refunds – provider default

- Automatically issue a refund within 14 days to students who have enrolled and paid any fee and the course is cancelled prior to commencement.
- Automatically issue a refund to students within 14 days where the course has commenced but is cancelled.
- Notify students to whom refunds are automatically issued in writing and issue refund. Record on file.
- All other students who withdraw from their course and seek a refund are to make a request for a refund in writing.
- Assess refund as per this Policy.
- Calculate the relevant refunds.
- Operation Manager or CEO approves refund assessment.
- Notify the student in writing of the outcome of the refund assessment and make payment of refund where applicable.
- For student default, process refunds within 28 days.

Keep a copy of the refund assessment on the student's file.

Your rights and responsibilities

Include:

- High quality training that recognises your individual needs and learning styles;
- Access to all SSTS programs and services regardless of educational background, gender, marital status, sexual preference, race, colour, pregnancy, national origin, ethnic or socio-economic background, physical or intellectual impairment, and religious or political affiliation
- Qualified trainers/assessors
- A healthy and safe learning environment free of any form of harassment, discrimination, drugs and alcohol
- Privacy, confidentiality and secure storage of your records
- Access to your personal records upon submission of a written letter to SSTS
- Recognition of your prior skills and knowledge
- Feedback on your training progression
- Attendance and active participation at all training and assessment sessions
- Mobile phones are turned on silent or off during training sessions
- Allow other students the opportunity to speak without feeling threatened
- Arrive on time to all training and assessment sessions and after allocated breaks
- Where assessments are required, make every attempt to prepare for and undertake and hand in the assessments tasks in the timeframes set by your trainer/assessor
- Notify SSTS of any changes to your personal details such as name, address or change to personal circumstances

Our rights and responsibilities

Include:

- To provide a safe working environment
- To notify our regulators (ASAQ, or the relevant state regulator):
 - within 21 days of any matter that affects our capacity to implement the training
 - of any failure by you to progress with your training
 - of any failure by your employer to allow you the opportunity to complete the training
 - if we are denied access by the employer to the workplace
 - if your role in the employer's business does not enable us to undertake workplace assessment of the applicable units
 - any changes in nature of the employers business that adversely affects the employer's capacity to provide the workplace facilities needed for us to assess your competence in the workplace
 - if training cannot be completed within the nominal time
 - if training cannot continue to be delivered because our circumstances have changed

Legislative requirements

Access and Equity

SSTS is committed to providing opportunities for all participants to undertake training and/or assessment regardless of their individual circumstances, background and identity.

Work Health and Safety Policy (WHS)

The employer's legal requirements of work health and safety are listed below however WHS is the responsibility of everyone.

To provide:

- a workplace that is safe to work in (including staff, visitors and contractors);
- working procedures that are safe to use;
- adequate training of staff on WHS matters;
- properly maintained and stored facilities and equipment

Refer to the Safe work Australia for details on the Model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Acts at

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/model-whs-laws/model-whs-act/pages/model-whs-act>

Prior to training SSTS undertakes a site inspection using SSTS Workplace Inspection Report or an employer's template to ensure the safety of all students and trainers/assessors.

It is your responsibility to immediately notify your trainer/assessor if you identify any WHS issues.

Harassment and Discrimination

Racial, sexual or any other kind of harassment or discrimination is against the law. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect, fairly and feel safe in the workplace emotionally and physically.

If you believe you are being harassed or discriminated, speak to your trainer/assessor or your employer. If the problem is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may lodge a formal appeal with:

- Your local State Training Authority if the issue relates to quality of training
- Anti-Discrimination Board if the issue relates to discrimination
- Consumer Affairs or other bodies as considered appropriate

Legislation that covers discrimination includes:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Workplace Relations Act 1996

Refer to the Human Rights Commission for more information at <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/>

Drug and Alcohol

Definitions

- Drugs - Any illegal, recreational or non-prescriptive substances. Medication refers to medication prescribed by a doctor

Students participating in SSTS programs must not be placed at risk in the training environment due to the effects of their or some other person's use of alcohol, drugs or any medication. Being affected by alcohol or drugs can seriously compromise the health, safety and welfare of participants and also impair an individual's ability to perform competently and professionally.

SSTS will not tolerate students:

- consuming alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs whilst in training;
- being affected by alcohol or drugs (illegal or medically prescribed) in the sense that their ability to learn safely, competently and professionally is impaired;
- to bring any illegal drugs into the training environment at any time;
- to keep, consume, manufacture, deal with or administer any illegal drugs in the training environment at any time;

It is not an offence for students to:

- bring into the training environment drugs for which that person has a specific medical prescription;
- smoke tobacco products at times and places designated by SSTS;

If you are aware of any incident involving alcohol or drugs you must immediately notify the trainer/assessor. If the trainer/assessor is under the influence of alcohol or drugs immediately notify the RTO Operations and Compliance Manager at SSTS.

Record Management and Privacy

SSTS operates in compliance with current Privacy Act of 1988 and its subsequent amendments in relation to the collection, storage and protection of all the student records in relation to training and/or assessment.

Records of participants who undertake accredited training are stored and archived according to each state contract requirements. Certificates and Statement of Attainment are stored for at least 30 years.

SSTS is required to provide the state government departments with your training activity data. These departments may use the information provided for planning, administration, policy development, program evaluation, resources allocation, reporting and/or research activities. For these and other lawful purposes, they may also disclose information to their consultants, advisers, other government agencies, professional bodies and/or other organisations. SSTS has included a declaration for you to sign on your Student Enrolment Form which authorises this release of training information.

SSTS archives your records once you have finished or withdrawn from the training program. If you need access to these records you must submit a request to SSTS in writing whereby you will be charged an administrative fee to access your information.

Support Services

SSTS aims at all times to provide a positive and rewarding learning experience for all of its students.

SSTS asks you on your Student Enrolment Form to identify if you have any learning needs and if you require any support during your training and/or assessment. If you have indicated you have a need or require support, SSTS will discuss with you the specifics of your needs and the ways in which we can assist you. This may involve:

- Scheduling additional classes
- Renegotiating your training and/or assessment timetable
- Enlarging the font size of training content and assessment
- Using a blend of delivery strategies including good amounts of visuals
- Provide handouts in an audio format
- Undertaking group exercises so that the responsibility for writing rests with more than one person
- Providing examples and models of completed tasks
- Provide documents and forms that are written and formatted in plain English
- Using clear headings, highlighting certain key words or phrases and providing explanations of all technical terms used
- Verbally undertaking assessments where writing is an issue
- Speaking clearly, concisely and not too quickly
- Giving clear instructions in a logical sequence
- Giving lots of practical examples;
- Encouraging students to ask questions
- Clarifying student's understanding of training and/or assessment
- Asking students to identify in words, what the exact problem is and how they might solve it;
- Showing students how to do calculations through step by step instructions and through examples of completed calculations;
- Helping students to work out what maths/calculations/measurements are required to complete a task
- Encouraging the use of calculators and demonstrating how to use them
- Suggesting students who have a hearing or visual impairment to sit towards the front of the class so that they can hear and see explanations and instructions clearly
- Seeking assistance from a Language, Literacy and Numeracy specialist

Where SSTS cannot assist you, we will be happy to work with you to find suitable alternatives. You are responsible for any costs which may be incurred in these circumstances.

You must ensure that you have discussed with SSTS any concerns you may have about your capacity to participate in the training program.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (accredited training only)

Recognition of Prior Learning is an assessment process that assesses the competency(s) you may have acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which you meet the requirements specified in the training package or VET accredited courses.

- formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction and is linked to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, a certificate, diploma or university degree)
- non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction, but does not lead to the attainment of an AQF qualification or statement of attainment (for example, in house professional development programs conducted by a business), and

- informal learning refers to learning that results through experience of work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (for example the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through several years as a sales representative).

If you wish to apply for RPL please immediately contact SSTS who will inform you of the next steps.

Credit Transfer (CT) (accredited training only)

Credit transfer is a process that provides you with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for units within the qualification you are undertaking, based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between the matched units within the qualifications.

Where you have in the past achieved a Nationally Recognised Qualification or Statement of Attainment for any unit that you are about to enrol into under the diploma course, please immediately email SSTS with a JP Certified copy. A Justice of the Peace (JP) can usually be found in a bank or on occasions at your local shopping centre. You must take the original and a copy to the JP for certification.

If you would like for me to check the equivalence of the units before embarking your qualification or statement certified, please email SSTS a copy and we will advise you if you are eligible for CT. Please be advised that SSTS will also verify the issuance of this award with the issuing provider.

Outcomes (accredited training only)

Your trainer/assessor will provide you with regular feedback on the outcomes of your assessment tasks throughout the training program.

The outcomes that could be achieved are:

- Competent (C) – the evidence presented met all of the standards to deem you competent
- Not yet competent (NYC) - the evidence presented suggests that you have not as yet demonstrated competency in all the standards. In this case, your trainer/assessor will discuss with you your options.

If a competency is not achieved at the initial assessment, you are given one (and one only), opportunity to submit additional paperwork. Additional submission after this are negotiated and may incur a fee. Refer to Fees and Charges section.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Definitions:

- Cheating—breaking rules to gain personal advantage
- Plagiarism—the act of taking or copying another person’s ideas, language or written work and claiming it as your own

If you are suspected of plagiarism or cheating:

- You will be informed that this is not acceptable behaviour. If employed the issue will be reported to your employer
- You will be provided with the opportunity to put your case forward to your trainer/assessor and employer if you are employed
- A discussion will occur between your trainer/assessor, SSTS management and your employer to determine further actions to be taken
- If you don't agree with decisions made you can follow the Complaints process

If SSTS determines there is cause to check if the content being submitted is authentic, the content will be submitted to the following website for confirmation—Grammarly:
<http://ed.grammarly.com/editor/view/?f=1>

If it is determined that you have plagiarised or cheated:

- You may be removed from the program
- You may be provided with the opportunity to re-do the work
- Other actions or legal consequences may be determined
- Please note that repeated actions will not be tolerated

If it is determined that you have not plagiarised or cheated:

- Your trainer/assessor and your employer will inform you
- SSTS will document and retain records of the outcomes of the issue.

Complaints and Appeals

PURPOSE	The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline Southern Solutions Training Services (SSTS)'s approach to managing dissatisfaction, formal complaints and appeals of students, clients, staff and other members of the community. It provides a transparent approach for all complaints and appeals to be addressed in a fair, efficient and confidential manner.
WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	Operations Manager
WHEN	On going
POLICY	<p>1. Nature of complaints and appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSTS responds to all allegations involving the conduct of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RTO, its trainers and assessors and other staff. • Any third party providing Services on behalf of SSTS. • Any student or client of SSTS. • Complaints may be made in relation to any of SSTS's services and activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the application and enrolment process • marketing information • the quality of training and assessment provided • training and assessment matters, including student progress, student support and assessment requirements • the way someone has been treated • the actions of another student • An appeal is a request for a decision made by SSTS to be reviewed. Decisions may have been about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course admissions • refund assessments • response to a complaint • assessment outcomes / results • other general decisions made by SSTS <p>2. Principles of resolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSTS is committed to developing a procedurally fair complaints and appeals process that is carried out free from bias, following the principles of natural justice. Through this policy and procedure, SSTS ensures that complaints and appeals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are responded to in a consistent and transparent manner. • Are responded to promptly, objectively, with sensitivity and confidentiality.

- Are able to be made at no cost to the individual.
- Are used as an opportunity to identify potential causes of the complaint or appeal and take actions to prevent the issues from recurring as well as identifying any areas for improvement.
- SSTS will inform all persons or parties involved in any allegations made as well as providing them with an opportunity to present their side of the matter.
- Nothing in this policy and procedure limits the rights of an individual to take action under Australia's Consumer Protection laws and it does not circumscribe an individual's rights to pursue other legal remedies.

3. Timeframes for resolution

Complaints and appeals will be finalised as soon as practicable or at least within 30 calendar days unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer. In matters where additional time is needed, the complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the reasons and will be updated weekly in writing on the progress of the matter until such a time that the matter is resolved.

Once a decision has been reached, the Operations Manager will notify all of the relevant parties involved of the decision and outcome which is to be concluded in writing within 15 business days from the date the complaint was first received. Within the notification of the outcome, the student will be advised that they have the right to appeal the decision made by SSTS. Students will be referred to the appeals procedure as outlined below.

4. Records of complaints and appeals

SSTS will maintain a record of all complaints and appeals and their outcomes on the *Complaints and Appeals Register*, which will be securely stored.

5. Making a complaint of appeal

- Complaints about a particular incident should be made as soon as possible after the incident occurring and appeals must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the original decision being made.
- Complaints and appeals should be made in writing and emailed to info@ssts.edu.au
When making a complaint or appeal, provide as much information as possible to enable SSTS to investigate and determine an appropriate solution. This should include:
 - The issue you are complaining about or the decision you are appealing – describe what happened and how it affected you.
 - Any evidence you have to support your complaint or appeal.
 - Details about the steps you have already taken to resolve the issue.
 - Suggestions about how the matter might be resolved.
- Your complaint or appeal will be acknowledged in writing within 3 business days and action will be taken towards addressing the complaint and appeal within 7 business days.
- **Resolution of complaints and appeals**
- Some or all members of the management team of SSTS will be involved in resolving complaints and appeals as outlined in the procedures.

- Where a complaint or appeal involves another individual or organisation, they will be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations made.
- Where a third party delivering Services on behalf of the RTO is involved, they will also be included in the process of resolving the complaint or appeal.
- Each party involved in the complaint or appeal may have a support person of their choice present at meetings scheduled to resolve the issue.
- In the case of an assessment appeal, an assessor who is independent from the original decision will assess the original task again. The outcome of this assessment will be the result granted for the assessment task.
- Complaints and appeals will be finalised within thirty (30) calendar days unless there is a significant reason for the matter to take longer. In matters where additional time is needed, the complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the reasons and will be updated weekly on the progress of the matter until such a time as the matter is resolved.
- The complainant or appellant will be advised in writing of the outcome of the process and the reasons for the findings made.
- The enrolment status of student will be handled as follows:
 - For students that choose to access this policy and procedure, SSTS will maintain the student's enrolment while the complaints and appeals process is ongoing.

Independent Parties

- SSTS acknowledges the need for an appropriate independent party to be appointed to review a matter where this is requested by the complainant or appellant and the internal processes have failed to resolve the matter. Costs associated with independent parties to review a matter must be covered by the complainant/appellant unless the decision to include an independent party was made by SSTS.
 - For domestic students, the independent party recommended by SSTS is Australian Human Rights Commission or the NSW Vocational Training Tribunal – Department of Education and Communities, however complainants and appellants are able to use their own external party at their own cost.
 - SSTS will provide complete cooperation with the external mediator investigating the complaint/appeal and will be bound by the recommendations arising out of this process.
 - The Operations Manager will ensure that any recommendations made are implemented within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the recommendations. The complainant or appellant will also be formally notified in writing of the outcome of the mediation.

External complaint avenues

- Complaints can also be made via the following avenues:
 - National Training Complaints Hotline:
The National Training Complaints Hotline is a national service for consumers to register complaints concerning vocational education and training. The service refers consumers to the appropriate agency/authority/jurisdiction to assist with their complaint. Consumers can register a complaint with the National Training Complaints Hotline by:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Phone: 13 38 73, Monday–Friday, 8am to 6pm nationally. ○ Email: ntch@education.gov.au <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA): Complainants may also complain to SSTS’s registering body, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). ASQA can investigate complaints about SSTS in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the quality of our training and assessment - our marketing and advertising practices For students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASQA may not be able to investigate complaint if you do not include evidence that you have already exhausted our formal internal complaints process as above. - If your complaint does not fall within ASQA’s jurisdiction, it may be resolved more quickly if you directly contact the agency responsible as listed on the relevant webpage below. - Please refer to the relevant webpage below before making a complaint to ASQA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Domestic students: https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint-domestic-students/before-you-make-complaint For other stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about the process and information you should provide is available here: https://www.asqa.gov.au/complaints/make-complaint-other-stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication This policy and procedure will be published in the Student Handbook and on SSTS’s website.
PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. Receive and acknowledge complaint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per policy, complaints are to be made in writing by the complainant, attention to the Operations Manager. • The Operations Manager should review all complaints upon receipt. • Acknowledge receipt of complaint in writing by sending a letter to complainant within 3 business days of receipt. • Record details of the complaint on the <i>Complaints and Appeals Register</i>. <p>Commence process of investigation within 10 business days of receiving the complaint.</p> • F. Investigate the complaint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon receiving the complaint, the matter is to be investigated to ensure all relevant information is available and it is accurate and complete. • Further details from the complainant, respondent or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face. Where the meeting is face to face, the complainant may be accompanied by a support person.

- If the matter is in relation to a third party delivering Services on behalf of the RTO, the third party should be involved in the resolution of the complaint.
- The Operations Manager will review the information and decide on an appropriate response. Where deemed necessary by the General Manager, the matter may be reviewed by other members of the management team to arrive at an appropriate resolution.

Note: The complaint must be completely resolved within 30 calendar days of receipt of the original complaint. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the complainant is to be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with updates in writing on progress on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved.

G. Advise of the outcome and update records

- Provide a written response to the complainant outlining:
 - The RTO's understanding of the complaint
 - The steps taken to investigate and resolve the complaint
 - Decisions made about resolution, with reasons for the decisions made
 - Areas that have been identified as possible causes of the complaint and improvements to be recommended
 - Their right to access the appeals process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints process.
- Update the *Complaints and Appeals Register* so it includes the outcome of the complaint.
- Update the *Continuous Improvement Register* if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome.

Keep a copy of the complaint and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant).

Appeal management

A. Receive and acknowledge appeal

- Upon receipt of a request for an appeal, acknowledge receipt of appeal in writing by sending a letter/**email** to appellant within 3 **business** days of receipt.

Record details of appeal on the *Complaints and Appeals Register*.

B. Respond to assessment appeals

- In the case of appeals against assessment decisions, the original assessment decision will be reviewed by having an assessor independent of the original decision, mark the assessment task again.
- The assessment decision made during the appeals process will be considered the actual assessment outcome for the task.

Advise the student of the outcome of the appeal in writing within 30 calendar days.

C. Respond to appeals against non-academic decisions

- Upon receiving the appeal, the matter is to be investigated to identify the original decision made and the reasons for the decision.

- Further details from the appellant, respondent, the person who made the original decision, or other involved parties may be requested during this stage. This may be in writing, over the phone, or face-to-face.
- If the matter is in relation to a third party delivering Services on behalf of the RTO, the third party should be involved in the resolution of the appeal.
- The appellant may request for an independent party (mediator) to be involved in the process. Where this is requested by the appellant, they will bear the costs associated. Additionally, SSTS may decide to call upon an independent mediator to assist to resolve the issue where a decision cannot be reached internally. This will be at SSTS's cost.
- SSTS's Management team will review all relevant information and decide on an appropriate response.

Note: The appeal must be resolved within 30 calendar days of receipt of the original appeal. If the matter is particularly complex and it is going to take longer to resolve, the appellant must be advised in writing along with reasons for the extra time. They must be provided with progress updates on a weekly basis thereafter until the matter is resolved.

D. Advise appellant of the outcome and update records

- Provide a written response to the appellant outlining:
 - The RTO's understanding of the reasons for the appeal
 - The steps taken to investigate and resolve the appeal
 - Decisions made about resolution and reasons for the decisions
 - If relevant, areas that have been identified as possible causes of the appeal and improvements to be recommended
 - Their right to, and information on, the external appeals process.
- Update the *Complaints and Appeals Register* so it includes the outcome of the appeal.
- Update the *Continuous Improvement Register* if applicable for any improvements to be made as an outcome.
- Keep a copy of the appeal and supporting documents in the Complaints file and in the student or staff file (where relevant).

Discuss the appeal and its outcome at the next management meeting.

E. Review appeals

Discuss the appeal and its outcome at the next management meeting to consider whether there are any improvements to be made to prevent recurrence.

External compliant or appeal management

A. External complaint or appeal

- If dissatisfied with the internal processes, the complainant/appellant may initiate an external complaint or appeal.
- Additionally, a complainant or appellant who has been through the internal processes may request SSTS to appoint an independent party to review the matter.
- SSTS will co-operate fully in the process of the external party to investigate and review the matter. This will include and not be limited to providing full access to the relevant student file/s

and the internal complaints records where permitted to do so by law. All staff will be instructed to cooperate in such instances and to give an accurate account of the events as they understand them.

B. Review external complaints or appeals

- In the event that the external party finds in favour of the student, immediately organise a management meeting to discuss the external process and its outcome.
- At the meeting, discuss the decision made and actions to be taken to implement the decision, including both corrective/preventative actions.
- Following the meeting immediately implement actions.

Advise the student of the outcome of the complaint or appeal and the actions taken.

Deferring and Discontinuing

If you wish to defer or discontinue your training, you must contact SSTS who will discuss with you the reasoning for the deferment or discontinuing of the course and any fee implications or refunds.

Where the reason relates to our performance, we will ensure that reasonable efforts are made to address your concerns.

We ask that in notifying us in writing by emailing us.

Please note we cannot permit a deferral of no more than 12 months from the date you notify us.

Note: All withdrawal notifications must be in writing addressed and sent to SSTS.

Training and Assessment

SSTS ensures their trainers/assessors have the necessary skills and industry knowledge to deliver quality training programs. Trainers/assessor who are delivering accredited training programs will hold the relevant qualifications and Industry currency and VET professional development.

SSTS delivers public and private training programs via a mixed mode of delivery comprising classroom, on job and online training and assessment

Upon confirmation of your enrolment into the training program, you will sent an email advising you of access to our online training system along with your login and password. You will be emailed a link to a guide with information on how to you use the system. Where you need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

You are required to read the learning resources and undertake the assessments. You trainer/assessor is on call to assist you at any time. You will be advised of the due dates for these assessments which form the theory component of your assessment. Where you cannot meet these

due dates, you must notify SSTS at least 2 weeks before the assessment due date to discuss the reason why you cannot meet this date. SSTS will look at your individual circumstances and may grant an extension. Where an extension is granted, you will be charged as per the Fees and charges section. Where you do not hand in your assessment by the due date or contact Recover within 2 weeks before the assessment due date as to why you cannot meet this date, that part of your assessment will be marked as Not Yet Competent. Note: SSTS will not accept any further submissions related to this part of your assessment

We will also organise with you, and where relevant your employer, suitable times to attend the workplace to observe you undertake various tasks relating to your program. Prior to this visit, you will be emailed documentation which informs you of the tasks that your trainer/assessor will observe you undertake. It is important that you read this documentation and start practicing these tasks in your workplace. These tasks are likely to form part of your job role. Where they do not form part of your job role, you will need to discuss with your employer how they can expose you to these tasks. Where this is not possible, please discuss this with your trainer/assessor. You are also required to complete the documentation and have this on hand when your trainer/assessor visits.

During the observation visit your trainer/assessor will also spend time with you on 1:1 basis, away from the children, to discuss the program, ask you questions and clarify any queries you may have regarding your training program. Generally observations within the workplace take around 20 mins per unit of competency. This is the skills component of your assessment.

All assessment tasks you complete as evidence of your competence must be your own work. You will be asked to sign a statement confirming that all evidence you provide is your own work. If your trainer/assessor has a concern in regards to the authenticity of your evidence the Cheating/Plagiarism process will be followed. Your trainer/assessor will review the assessments evidence to determine whether or not you have achieved competency against set standards. If you have achieved competency, your trainer/assessor will forward all documentation to SSTS and arrange an award to be issued to you. If you have not achieved competency, your trainer/assessor will discuss the following options with you:

- Complete further training
- Undertake additional assessment tasks (*additional charges may be incurred*)
- Gain more on-the-job experience

Throughout the training and at the end of the training program you will be asked to complete an Evaluation of the training. This feedback is used to improve the training program and action any issues that have been raised.

Course Withdrawals

If you withdraw from the training program you must immediately notify your employer, trainer/assessor and SSTS in writing.

Issuing of Awards

Upon completion of training SSTS will issue the following awards:

Non Accredited Training

- Where agreed, a Certificate of Attendance

Accredited Training

- Nationally Accredited Qualification - if your trainer/facilitator has deemed you competent in all assessment tasks for the whole qualification
- Nationally Accredited Statement of Attainment – if your trainer/assessor has deemed you competent in some assessment tasks for the whole qualification

All awards will be issued and posted to the address on the Student Enrolment form unless you have provided SSTS with updated contact details.