

Community Colleges Australia
Statement of Ethics regarding Vocational Education and Training
and VET FEE-HELP

12 April 2016

Endorsed by the Board of Directors of Community Colleges Australia on 12 April 2016.

Background

Community Colleges Australia (CCA) is the peak body that represents and provides services to community-owned, not-for-profit education and training providers.

Our members serve their communities by putting their students first. They are dedicated to the provision of relevant, affordable and accessible lifelong learning opportunities, including vocational education and training (VET).

As not-for-profit educational organisations, our members are part of the social fabric of the communities that they serve. Our members operate on a philosophy of collaboration and co-operation with community organisations, employers, industry, government and learners themselves.

Our members are committed to operating with integrity at all times.

Our members' high quality, supportive, flexible, individually-directed and inspirational education and training enhances their position as VET providers.

Our members also offer lifestyle programs that meet the needs of their communities, including courses that are unavailable through other public or private providers. Our members have a particularly important role to play in delivering education and training to vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians.

We recognise that our learners who pursue skills, knowledge and qualifications in specialty areas contribute to the Australian economy.

Statement on VET FEE-HELP

Our members who utilise VET FEE-HELP loans take seriously their responsibility to their students, their families, employers, the Government and the Australian taxpayer.

When providing VET FEE-HELP, we commit to putting students' interests first by being honest, providing clear pre-enrolment information and assisting students to make wise choices that will enhance their education, career opportunities and learning plans and quality of life.

When utilising VET FEE-HELP, our members will be:

- 1. Transparent and honest with prospective and current students regarding their:**
 - Fees - ensuring that tuition fees are a true representative of the fair and reasonable cost of providing the course and not in any way raising fees to take unreasonable

- advantage of the availability of VET FEE-HELP.
- Future debt and repayment obligations.
- Conditions of enrolment.
- Rights and obligations.
- Enrolment processes.
- Training arrangements.

2. Helpful and informative, counselling where necessary, so that our students choose wisely by:

- Providing clear and accurate information about courses, course requirements and expected outcomes.
- Assessing the suitability and capability of prospective students for their chosen level of study.
- Screening all students to identify those who may be at-risk of not completing their studies.
- Working carefully to support disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities in their decision-making and through their studies.
- Not allowing students to be set up for failure. Students who are identified as unlikely to succeed even with support, will instead be referred to preparatory courses and other opportunities with the view to a pathway to their educational goals.

3. Supportive of learners who may need additional assistance:

- We will identify gaps in the core skills of our learners during the enrolment process.
- Those with identified gaps will be provided with support during their studies.

4. Committed to ensuring students are advised well and aware of their rights and obligations after enrolment by:

- Providing accurate and timely information of up-coming census dates, ensuring students are aware of what that means.
- Implementing reasonable and accessible processes for withdrawal, to ensure that when students make the decision to withdraw, they can do so easily.
- Working with students who are experiencing difficult circumstances.
- Assessing any request for re-credit or remittance of debt in good faith, and with integrity and consideration for the needs of the person.

5. Co-operative and collaborative with regulators, funders, employers and partners, by:

- Maintaining strong working relationships with the Commonwealth and State Government departments.
- Participating and responding to any and all requests for information in good faith.
- Actively and willingly be involved in decision-making processes and discussions regarding reforms to VET FEE-HELP.