

Admissions policy and procedures

Australian Centre for Advanced Studies

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide persons conducting student admissions with a set of policies and procedures for admitting students to ACAS programs. Policies and procedures are integrated so that they are not separate documents. As much as possible it is written as a “how to” manual, so that it is easy to use.

ACAS is a Registered Training Organisation (no. 50392). ACAS and its member colleges are required to comply with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015 (SRTO). Training services provided to students follow policies and processes developed to meet the SRTO and related requirements. ACAS issues all qualifications and other graduation documents.

As these policies and procedures are based closely on the SRTO, you are required to comply with them. Although the SRTO does not require a written record of every instance of student admissions, some auditors require a written record, such as a tick box for each requirement. See the form.¹ Otherwise, it will be evidence against any complaint that the RTO did not provide information.

ACAS has is no specific term for “persons conducting student admissions”, although the form uses the term *Admissions officer* for brevity.

¹ Auditors could equally well use interviews to gather evidence of compliance.

Admissions

Make sure that students have full information about the course in which they are interested. The SRTO specifies a minimum, and students must have the information in Appendix A. Most of it is either on the ACAS website or in the handbook for students and prospective students.

Inform students as early as possible. In cases where the employer sends employees to an ACAS course, it will be in the first session. In other cases, it will be before they decide to apply.

The following activities are all required, but ACAS prescribes no particular order.

Note: ACAS member colleges must use the ACAS website information for compliance purposes, even if they have their own supplementary information. Dependence on supplementary information that does not meet all SRTO compliance requirements is a major cause of non-compliance.

Meet the prospective student

Meet the prospective student either individually or in a group briefing. You can refer online students to relevant documents.

Direct to the handbook

Direct prospective students to the ACAS handbook for students and prospective students. It provides general information about policies and regulations. Some is essential for applicants, and some will probably be relevant only after they have enrolled.

Provide course-specific information

Direct prospective students to the information about the particular course in which they have expressed interest.

Make sure they get the information that applies to the particular version of the course they want. The same qualification can vary according to the particular local purpose or group of students, and can vary in course length, the way it is taught, and the electives offered.

Check whether the course will meet their needs, considering their existing skills and competencies.² For example, you might find that:

- They don't really know what they want to do
- They are interested in a course that is currently too advanced or not advanced enough.
- They should ask about RPL.
- They are interested in a course but it might not suit their career goals.
- The course is the right one, but not the electives offered.

Explain Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

You are required to offer RPL to all students.³ It is usually easier to simply offer it to all prospective applicants, not only enrolled students.

² SRTO 5.1.

³ SRTO 1.12.

Fee information

If students will pay fees, make sure you disclose full fee information and any payment arrangements.

Note: You may not ask students to pre-pay more than \$1500 at any one time.⁴

Not taking the whole qualification?⁵

If the course is not a whole qualification, inform them of the number of units being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification.

Transfer credit

If the student has other AQF qualifications (or units from them), check their relevance to the units for course. (E.g. Do they fit packaging rules? Are they equivalent to required units? Could they be used as free choice electives?)

If they can be used, verify them by an email to the institution that issued them. When verified, they can be used for the students' qualification, and no fee is payable.

Assessed for suitability

Assess prospective students for suitability for the course.

1. *Prerequisites.* If the course has advertised prerequisites, check whether the prospective student meets them. Some are set in training packages and some are not.⁶
2. *Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN).* Each course requires a minimum level of language, literacy, and numeracy skills. If a course has LLN entry requirements, assess LLN skills upon entry.
3. *Suitability for RPL.* Check whether students have a prima facie case, so that students do not pay for something unattainable.⁷
4. *Determining support needs.* Some applicants might be admissible but need extra support to satisfactorily do the course. For example, they might need support for disability, LLN, study skills, or emotional needs.⁸

Assessing applicants

The person conducting admissions may assess in any way appropriate for the context for example:

- Check whether the student is already working in the environment of the qualification for which they will be trained.
- Interview supervisor
- Interview student
- Check recent written work
- Check relevant courses that the student recently completed
- Give a standard written test (E.g. For LLN, consider the test from this website: http://www.precisionconsultancy.com.au/acs_framework/)

⁴ SRTO 7.3.

⁵ SRTO 1.2. c) "... where a full qualification is not being delivered, the number of units and/or modules being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification."

⁶ Compliance with Training Package.

⁷ SRTO 1.12.

⁸ SRTO 1.7 The SRTO requires that the RTO "determine" their needs but does not necessarily to give tests. "1.7. The RTO determines the support needs of individual learners and provides access to the educational and support services necessary for the individual learner to meet the requirements of the training product as specified in training packages or VET accredited courses."

An admissions process cannot identify some kinds of special needs (e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, and epilepsy). You should ask prospective students to inform you of any special need that might adversely affect their ability to successfully participate in the course.

Trainers and assessors may make appropriate concessions for students' issues where they do not compromise the requirements of their course and the integrity, equity and fairness of assessment. Consider whether adjustments could enable them to successfully complete the training.

How much training will they need?⁹

Consider their existing skills, knowledge and the experience and the mode of delivery and give advice as needed. Does this course give the right amount of training for their ability levels? Would RPL be more suitable?

If the amount of training is not a good fit, they might get put in a group where they cannot keep up, or be forced to pay for training that progresses too slowly for them, forcing them to pay for training that gives sub-optimum benefit.

Warning: Few applicants can accurately appraise their own abilities.

Make sure that students have a Universal Student Identifier (USI)¹⁰

If students don't already have a USI, If students do not already have a USI, or don't know what it is, they can obtain one (or retrieve an existing one) from <https://www.usi.gov.au/>. Some students may need help. Under some circumstances, you may get USIs for students.

If students are exempt from the USI, inform them either before they finish enrolling or start training, whichever occurs first, that the results of their training will not be accessible through the Australian government and will not appear on any authenticated VET transcript prepared by the Registrar.¹¹ This information is also written in the student handbook.

Answer questions

Answer any questions about the course and any related information they feel they need. They must be satisfied that they understand enough about the course when they start.

Are students ready to apply?

It is imperative that applicants understand the kind of commitment they are making before they commit to the course.

Apply

Give applicants the course enrolment code for their course. Direct them to the webform on the ACAS website and to fill it in. (The course enrolment code ensures that students are enrolled in the particular course they want and that the course is current.)¹²

Pay fees

Most students pay fees to their member college, so the billing and receipting process is local.

⁹ SRTO 1.2. "... the RTO determines the amount of training they provide to each learner with regard to:

- a) the existing skills, knowledge and the experience of the learner;
- b) the mode of delivery; ... "

¹⁰ SRTO 3.6.c.

¹¹ SRTO 3.6.

¹² SRTO 1:26,27.

Other items

Induction

Admitted students often go through an induction process, depending on the program. For example:

- Full-time campus students often need more induction than distance and single-unit students.
- Students learning on the job and already in the workplace might have already done organizational induction.
- Some students need specialized WHS induction, even to be permitted into the workplace.
- For some courses, the learning activities of the first few weeks are induction.

Language, Literacy, and Numeracy (LLN)

As most of ACAS' courses are held within the work environment, students usually hold employment/ volunteers positions that require higher level of Language, Literacy and Numeracy skills than is required by our courses.

If students need to improve literacy and numeracy skills, please consider referring them to options such as those below:

- Reading Writing Hotline
<http://www.readingwritinghotline.edu.au/> 1300 655 506
- Adult Migrant Education
<https://www.education.gov.au/adult-migrant-english-program-0>
- "Read Write Now" <https://www.read-write-now.org/>

Appendix A

Standard 4. Accurate and accessible information about an RTO, its services and performance is available to inform prospective and current learners and clients.

4.1 Information, whether disseminated directly by the RTO or on its behalf, is both accurate and factual, and:

- a) accurately represents the services it provides and the training products on its scope of registration;
- b) includes its RTO Code;
- c) refers to another person or organisation in its marketing material only if the consent of that person or organisation has been obtained;
- d) uses the NRT Logo only in accordance with the conditions of use specified in Schedule 4;
- e) makes clear where a third party is recruiting prospective learners for the RTO on its behalf;
- f) distinguishes where it is delivering training and assessment on behalf of another RTO or where training and assessment is being delivered on its behalf by a third party;
- g) distinguishes between nationally recognised training and assessment leading to the issuance of AQF certification documentation from any other training or assessment delivered by the RTO;
- h) includes the code and title of any training product, as published on the National Register, referred to in that information;
- i) only advertises or markets a non-current training product while it remains on the RTO's scope of registration;
- j) only advertises or markets that a training product it delivers will enable learners to obtain a licensed or regulated outcome where this has been confirmed by the industry regulator in the jurisdiction in which it is being advertised;
- k) includes details about any VET FEE-HELP, government funded subsidy or other financial support arrangements associated with the RTO's provision of training and assessment; and
- l) does not guarantee that:
 - i) a learner will successfully complete a training product on its scope of registration; or
 - ii) a training product can be completed in a manner which does not meet the requirements of Clause 1.1 and 1.2; or
 - iii) a learner will obtain a particular employment outcome where this is outside the control of the RTO.

Admission procedure form

Instructions

1. Fill in this form as you go to show compliance with the admission procedure. A tick-box form is adequate if it is filled in and signed.
2. Some items are not applicable in some circumstances, e.g. no prerequisites, not offering partial course, no student fees, USI exempt.
3. File this form securely.

1. Give full information about the course (Cf. information on ACAS website)
2. Students informed either before deciding to apply or in first session
3. Meet the prospective student and answer questions
4. Direct them to ACAS handbook for students and prospective students
5. Direct them to course-specific information
6. Offer RPL
7. Disclose full fee information and any payment arrangements
8. Assess prospective students for suitability for the course:
 - a. Prerequisites
 - b. Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN).
 - c. Support needs
 - d. RPL

How assessments conducted:

9. Any special needs
10. How much training will they need, considering existing skills, knowledge, experience and the mode of delivery?
11. If not taking the whole qualification, inform them of the number of units being delivered as a proportion of the full qualification.
12. USI
13. Confirm whether students are ready to apply
14. Apply on webform

Cohort/student	<input type="text"/>
Admissions officer name	<input type="text"/>
Admissions officer signature	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

End of document