STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE – VET

1. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to ensure Study Group Australia Pty Limited (Registered Training Organisation: 5806, trading as Martin College, the Australian Institute of Applied Sciences, and ACPE Academy), and its Licensed Partner Organisations (all of the above from here-on collectively referred to as ‘the College’), provides students and potential students with information about the assessment process.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled within vocational education and training programmes offered by the College.

3. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Assessment - the process of collecting evidence and making judgements as to whether competency has been achieved by each student. It incorporates determining whether the collected evidence can be proven to be the work of the actual student, through electronic programmes such as Turnitin, by activities being undertaken under direct supervision, or other suitable means.

Learning Unit - a required subject into which is embedded one or more unit/s of competency or part/s thereof.

Licensed Partner Organisation - any organisation that provides services on behalf of Study Group Australia Pty Limited, including training, assessment, related educational and support services, and/or any activities related to the recruitment of prospective learners. As the Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Study Group Australia Pty Limited is responsible for ensuring all such services provided are in accordance with statutory obligations.

Responsible Officer: means the staff member or delegate with responsibility for managing the formal disciplinary process on behalf of Study Group Australia Pty Limited.

4. POLICY

Assessment for each Learning Unit involves the use of a range of assessment methods, enabling the collection of evidence on which to judge if a student can perform to the standard required in the workplace, as specified within a Training Package or Accredited Course.

Assessment methods may include: practical demonstrations, direct questioning, oral and/or written reports, assignments, role plays, case study analyses, integrated activities, written tests/quizzes of required knowledge, and submission of a portfolio of work, as appropriate to the qualification and in accordance with the requirements stated in the relevant Training Package or Accredited Course.

At the commencement of each Learning Unit, students receive a Learning Unit outline. This includes the notification of the embedded units of competency, information on what will be addressed, and assessment requirements and methods.

For a student to be awarded a Certificate, Diploma or Advanced Diploma, he/she must satisfactorily complete all Learning Units nominated as part of that qualification. Students who fail to satisfy the minimum course requirements will be issued a Statement of Attainment, listing the student’s achievement during their enrolment.

Students should arrive at least 10 minutes before the commencement of an assessment activity. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes after the official commencement time of a supervised assessment task will not be admitted into the assessment room.

Students are under strict conditions during assessments. Talking, moving around, drawing attention to oneself or distracting others will not be tolerated. The supervisor has the right to exclude from the assessment room any student who breaches these conditions.
4.1 Assessment Standards

Assessment (including Recognition of Prior Learning) must:

- comply with the assessment requirements of the relevant training package;
- include a wide range of assessment practices that are thorough and rigorous, but which allow fair judgements about student performance;
- be designed in accordance with the Principles of Assessment (refer Section 4.2 below.), and incorporate assessment judgements which follow the Rules of Evidence (Refer Section 4.3 below);
- where appropriate, be adjusted to meet the individual needs of candidates, but without impacting on the integrity of the assessment; and
- encourage and reinforce learning through the provision of meaningful and timely feedback.

4.2 Principles of Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>The individual learner’s needs are considered in the assessment process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs. The RTO informs the learner about the assessment process, and provides the learner with the opportunity to challenge the result of the assessment and be reassessed if necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by: • reflecting the learner’s needs; • assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and • drawing from a range of assessment methods and using those that are appropriate to the context, the unit of competency and associated assessment requirements, and the individual.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Validity</td>
<td>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner. Validity requires: • assessment against the unit(s) of competency and the associated assessment requirements covers the broad range of skills and knowledge that are essential to competent performance; • assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application; • assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and • judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.</td>
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<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</td>
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4.3 Rules of Evidence

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<tr>
<td>Validity</td>
<td>The assessor is assured that the learner has the skills, knowledge and attributes as described in the module or unit of competency and associated assessment requirements.</td>
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<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>The assessor is assured that the quality, quantity and relevance of the assessment evidence enables a judgement to be made of a learner’s competency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner’s own work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Currency</td>
<td>The assessor is assured that the assessment evidence demonstrates current competency. This requires the assessment evidence to be from the present or the very recent past.</td>
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1 Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, pp 24-25
4.4 Learner Obligations

A student must attempt and submit all pieces of assessment as required within each Learning Unit. If he/she does not attain the standard set for competency within every piece of assessment, he/she will be deemed to be ‘Not Yet Competent’ within that Learning Unit.

Any student who fails to submit an assessment task on the due date, and has not made prior arrangements with the trainer/assessor, will be deemed ‘Not Yet Competent’ for that piece of assessment unless appropriate documentation (such as a medical certificate) is presented.

Students receiving an assessment result of ‘Not Yet Competent’ for a written assignment or practical assessment will be eligible for a second assessment attempt after having spoken to the trainer/assessor about the issues within their first attempt. Such second attempts must be undertaken within 10 working days of the release of the original result.

If the same student does not demonstrate the standard set for competency within that supplementary assessment, then he/she will be scheduled to re-commence that Learning Unit and additional fees will be applied. (Students should refer to the College’s requirements in relation to Satisfactory Academic Progress.)

If the student is again deemed ‘Not Yet Competent’, immediate counselling will occur. Continued enrolment is dependent on the student meeting the College’s requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress.

5. FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

Depending on the Learning Unit, students may be required to undertake written tests designed to assess the knowledge required for the embedded unit/s of competency. Students will be advised in advance of this formal assessment requirement, and details provided of the date, time and location.

Students are responsible for providing writing equipment and calculators. Programmable calculators are to have their memory cleared and inspected by the supervisor prior to use during assessments. Electronic translators, Memory Sticks (USBs) and mobile phones are not permitted within assessment rooms unless directly approved by the supervisor. English to Foreign Language paper-based dictionaries must be checked by the supervisor prior to the start of the assessment time.

Students may leave the room once they have finished the assessment task. The following must be returned to the supervisor: assessment question paper, answer paper, any notepaper (scribble paper), and electronic storage devices (where applicable).

Students undertaking Online Learning must submit a Nominated Assessment Supervisor form; this is available from the College. It is the responsibility of the Nominated Assessment Supervisor to receive the assessment documents, supervise the assessment process in accordance with the instructions provided, and subsequently submit the completed assessment paper to the College.

5.1 Failure to Arrive for an Assessment

Any student who fails to arrive to complete a supervised assessment activity and does not present verifiable evidence of special circumstances to the College, must attempt that assessment within 10 working days of the release of results for that assessment or he/she will be deemed ‘Not Yet Competent’ within that Learning Unit. Details will be recorded within the student’s records.

Should the student not demonstrate the standard set for competency within that delayed assessment attempt, then he/she will be scheduled to re-commence the Learning Unit, and additional fees will be applied. (Students should refer to the College’s requirements in relation to Satisfactory Academic Progress.)

If the student is again deemed ‘Not Yet Competent’, academic counselling will occur. Continued enrolment is dependent on the student meeting the College’s requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress.

6. SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

For Learning Units that have written assignments set, these are to be completed and submitted by the scheduled due date and according to the student’s study mode.

Each student is provided with information on the requirements for the formatting of assignments. Your trainer/assessor will also provide information relating to Turnitin, an electronic system used for identifying plagiarism within written work.
To safeguard against accidental loss of assignments, it is expected that students will keep a copy of each assignment either as a soft copy (on computer) or a hard copy (printed document). In the event of loss occurring, the student will be required to submit a new copy of the assignment concerned.

7. VOCATIONAL PLACEMENT

Students enrolled within certain qualifications need to access a specialised workplace at which to undertake supervised hands-on practice with real clients. This is referred to as a ‘Vocational Placement’. Students will be advised at the time of admission whether or not this applies to their course.

The Vocational Placement Supervisor will be required to assist the student to collate evidence of competency, and to provide him/her with ample opportunities of real and simulated cases for practice and to complete the required Placement Assessment Tasks. The College trainer/assessor will be required to assess the student’s Vocational Placement to verify the attainment of the related units of competency to industry standard.

8. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

In accordance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, it is expected that a person with a disability or specific medical condition that could negatively impact on the assessment of his/her studies will be able to advise the College in regard to what adjustment(s) he/she needs to be able to demonstrate competence. If necessary, the College will seek timely advice from government agencies, support organisations or medical authorities to determine what needs to be done to accommodate the needs of the individual, or to verify that the stated condition justifies eligibility for reasonable adjustment.

In relation to assessment, reasonable adjustment activities could involve:

- modifying or providing special equipment such as special computer software and keyboard, and large screen monitors;
- provision of special assistance such as an interpreter for deaf candidates; and
- adaptation of the assessment methodologies, without impacting on the validity of the attainment of the relevant competencies. For example: allowance of extra time, varying question and response modalities (such as use of oral questioning rather than written, and audiotaped or videotaped answers instead of written answers).

This means that, wherever possible, ‘reasonable’ adjustments are made to the assessment process to meet the individual needs of candidates, but without impacting on the integrity of the assessment. (In certain cases, applicants will be required to provide third-party evidence of the stated condition to be eligible for reasonable adjustment.)

9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Students whose ability to submit or attend an assessment item is affected by sickness or other circumstances beyond their control, may be eligible for special consideration. No consideration is given when the condition or event is unrelated to the student's performance in a component of the assessment, or when it is considered not to be serious.

Circumstances that make it impracticable for the person to complete the assessment for their Learning Unit may include:

- medical circumstances, for example: an unexpected illness, a recurrence of a chronic illness, or an accident;
- compassionate circumstances, for example: death or severe illness of a close family member, severe disruption to domestic arrangements, or being a victim of crime;
- other special circumstances, for example: formal legal commitments, military service or that with a recognised emergency management service.

Students must submit a Special Consideration Form (which has been completed by all the relevant parties) and related verifiable evidence to the appropriate Course Coordinator within 3 working days after the due date of the assessment activity.

When considering the special consideration application, the Course Coordinator (or nominee) may take into account one or more of the following conditions:

- the student’s performance in other assessment tasks of the Learning Unit; and
- the circumstances, background, nature and severity of the event.
If an application for special consideration is lodged, any one of the following outcomes may ensue:

- no action is taken;
- additional assessment or a supplementary assessment is allowed;
  Additional assessment may take a different form from the original assessment. If a student is granted additional assessment, the original assessment outcome will be ignored.
- the deadline for assessment is extended; or
- the student is allowed to withdraw from the Learning Unit without being deemed ‘Not Yet Competent’.
  This is unlikely to occur after a formal assessment or final assessment has taken place.

The student will be advised in writing of the final decision regarding their application for Special Consideration within 10 working days of the lodgement of the application.

10. ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES APPEAL POLICY

Student assessment results are posted against a student's unique ID number. Each result sheet features the date of posting. This date will be recognised as that from which the official Appeal Time is calculated.

Students may appeal against their results through application to the Course Coordinator. Refer to the policy section on the College's web sites for further information on Assessment Appeals.

11. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. (Students should refer to the Standards of Conduct Policy located on the College’s websites for information on other forms of misconduct.)

11.1 Cheating

Cheating includes, but is not limited to a student:

- taking any unauthorised material or electronic device into an assessment room, irrespective of whether or not this is used by the student to assist him/her to complete that assessment;
- copying the answers from another student in an assessment or letting another student copy his/her answers in an assessment;
- sitting an assessment for another student or having another person sit an assessment on his/her behalf; and
- taking an assessment question paper from an assessment room when the instructions say not to do so.

11.2 Plagiarism

A plagiarist is someone who presents the thoughts or writings of another person as his/her own. Each student is, therefore, required to acknowledge all direct quotations (irrespective of the source), ideas, paraphrased writings and statistical information.

11.3 Collusion

Collusion includes, but is not limited to:

- working with another person to write all or part of an assignment unless the assessment’s written instruction states this is acceptable;
- using another student’s notes or research to prepare an assignment; and
- a student allowing another student access to his/her work if the other student is doing an assignment on the same topic, but has not yet submitted it, meaning the work would be of assistance to him/her.

11.4 Disruptive Behaviour during a Formal Assessment

Students are under strict conditions during formal assessments. Talking, moving around, drawing attention to oneself or distracting others will not be tolerated. The supervisor has the right to exclude from the assessment room any student who breaches these conditions.
12. **FORMAL DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

If a teacher or assessment supervisor believes a student is involved in academic misconduct:

a. the student will be immediately informed of such but, in the case of a formal assessment, be allowed to complete it providing that his/her behaviour is not disrupting other students;

b. the teacher or assessment supervisor will prepare a written report on the alleged academic misconduct and attach the report to the student’s assessment item; and

c. the matter will be referred to the Responsible Officer (Course Coordinator, Academic Leader or his/her nominee) for appropriate action, as outlined in the Disciplinary Process.

12.1 **Disciplinary Process**

When information of alleged academic misconduct is received by the Responsible Officer (Course Coordinator, Academic Leader or his/her nominee), the student will be advised in writing. This will commence the formal disciplinary process.

The written notification will inform the student that he or she:

a. has a period of 5 working days in which to make an oral and/or written response presenting his/her case to the Responsible Officer (Course Coordinator, Academic Leader or his/her nominee) regarding the alleged incident of academic misconduct, and

b. is able to appeal through the College’s *Academic Grievances and Appeals Policy*, and has 20 working days in which to do so; and

c. may invite his/her parents or a guardian or a support person to the interview/s during a disciplinary and appeal process. (The disciplinary and appeal process will continue whether or not parents or guardian or support person choose to attend the interview/s.)

Within 5 working days after this initial response period, the Responsible Officer (Course Coordinator, Academic Leader or his/her nominee) may dismiss the charge, or modify it, or submit a report to the relevant Head of College or General Manager of the Licensed Partner Organisation, recommending one or a combination of the following penalties:

a. if the academic misconduct was related to cheating, plagiarism, or collusion, then that submitted assessment be invalidated, and the assessment outcome for the Learning Unit be recorded as ‘Not Yet Competent’;
   - the student be placed on Probation;
   - the student be scheduled to re-commence that full Learning Unit, and additional fees applied;
   - if excellent attendance is maintained during the duration of the Learning Unit, the student be allowed to re-attempt the assessment components for the Learning Unit concerned (Illness covered by a medical certificate will not be exempt, unless approved by the Responsible Officer [or his/her nominee]);

b. the issuing of a reprimand and warning against any repetition of academic conduct;

c. suspension of the student from attending classes for a period not exceeding 14 days which will include any period of suspension already imposed;

d. suspension of the student from using all or some of the College’s facilities and/or services, including computing, library and kitchen facilities;

e. cancellation of the student’s contract of enrolment, including the loss of all rights to a refund of fees and to any assistance with job search.

The relevant Head of College or General Manager of the Licensed Partner Organisation will review the report and may approve or alter the penalty.

Within 5 working days of the report being submitted to the Head of College or General Manager of the Licensed Partner Organisation, the student will be provided with a written statement detailing the decision (including the potential impact on the student’s visa, if applicable), and notifying the student that he or she has 20 working days to submit an appeal in accordance with the College’s *Academic Grievances and Appeals Policy*. 
If the student submits an appeal within that 20 working day period, temporary suspension or cancellation of the student’s enrolment will not take effect until the internal appeals process is completed, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply. (These are detailed within the Academic Grievances and Appeals Policy.)

If the student does not submit an appeal during that 20 working day period, the nominated penalty will apply.

13. RECORD-KEEPING

Complete records of any academic misconduct will be retained within the College’s Student Management System. This includes copies of all related documentation, as well as a record of the recipient, and date on which that information was supplied.

14. PUBLICATION

This policy will be made available to students and prospective students by publication on the College’s websites. It is also outlined in the Student Information Handout.

14.1 Version Information

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<th>Policy Title</th>
<th>Student Assessment Policy and Procedure - VET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version Identification</td>
<td>SGA-VET-361/05/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Owner</td>
<td>Compliance Manager VET Australasia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next Review Date</td>
<td>December 2015</td>
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