



# CAIRNS

*State High*  
**The best we can be.**

# VET

# Student Handbook

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Congratulations on your decision to enrol in a nationally recognised vocational course.**

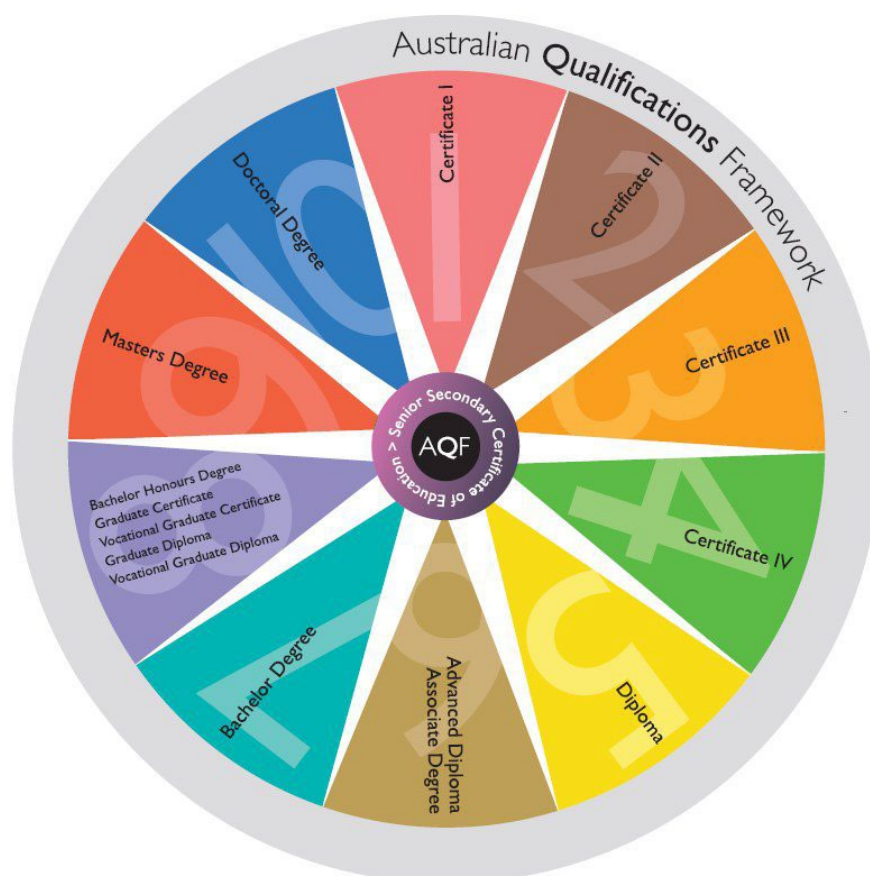
This handbook has been written to provide students with important information about the vocational education and training (VET) qualifications offered at Cairns State High School as well as your rights and responsibilities as a VET student.

Students should take the time to study this handbook carefully and ask their Trainer and Assessor if they are unsure of any details. Students should keep this handbook for reference throughout their enrolment. The contents of this handbook in many instances represents the key points of various VET policies and procedures developed by CSHS. A copy of the VET Quality Manual outlining the CSHS's VET policies and procedures can be obtained via the CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett, HOD Senior Pathways.

## **The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**

All of the VET courses offered by CSHS lead to nationally recognised qualifications – a certificate (if all of the requirements of the qualification are completed) or a statement of attainment (for those parts that are successfully completed where the full qualification is not completed). This certificate/statement of attainment will be recognised in all eight states/territories in Australia. This is because Australia has a national qualifications framework called the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). There are 14 different types of qualifications that can be obtained. These are shown in the following diagram.

## AQF QUALIFICATIONS



*Source: Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013*

Your Trainer and Assessor will provide you with information about your VET qualification/s including an overview of the specific units of competency/modules in each, assessment requirements, vocational outcomes, etc.

The following qualification available for completion at CSHS are listed on the Enrolment Agreement that you will be provided with and can also be viewed in the Subject Selection Handbook.

## **1. Student selection, enrolment and induction/orientation procedures**

Students enrolled in the VET courses at CSHS participate in the same enrolment and selection processes as other students at CSHS. Where numbers are limited for VET subjects, selection will be based on interview and/or on the order in which enrolments were received.

Cairns State High School will provide each student with information about the training, assessment and support services they will receive, and about their rights and obligations (through the VET student induction session) before enrolment on the Student Management System.

The CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett, HOD Senior Pathways and associated Trainers and Assessors will induct all VET students with this handbook.

## **2. Qualification or accredited course information**

Information pertaining to your qualification or accredited course can be sourced from course documentation provided by your Trainer and Assessor, subject specific information included in the Senior subject selection handbook (or similar document), through the VET student handbook and on the CSHS website or intranet (if applicable).

Information available to students regarding course information will include:

- Qualification or VET accredited course code and title
- Packaging rule information as per the specified Training Package or VET Accredited course
- Units of competency (code and title) to be delivered
- Entry requirements
- Fees and charges
- Course outcomes and pathways
- Work experience requirements (where applicable)
- Licensing requirements (where applicable)
- Third party or off-campus arrangements (where applicable)

## **3. Marketing and advertising of course information**

The CSHS will ensure that its marketing and advertising of AQF qualifications to prospective students is ethical, accurate and consistent with its scope of registration. In the provision of information, no false or misleading comparisons are drawn with any other training organisation or training product.

The CSHS will not advertise or market in any way VET accredited courses, qualifications or units of competency that are not on the scope of registration.

Cairns State High School will ensure it will have the appropriate human and physical resources to deliver and assess any course currently on the CSHS's scope of registration. If the CSHS loses access to these resources, the CSHS will provide students with alternative opportunities to complete the course and the related qualification.

#### **4. Legislative requirements**

The CSHS will observe all Australian, state and territory laws governing Vocational Education and Training. The CSHS will also meet all legislative requirements of the:

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#)
- [National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011](#)
- [Copyright Act 1968 \(2014\)](#)
- [Education \(Work Experience\) Act 1996](#)
- [Child Protection Act 1999](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Anti-discrimination Act 1991](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(2014\)](#)
- [Information Privacy Act 2009](#)

If students require any further information, please see the CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett.

#### **5. Fees and charges, including refund policy**

The CSHS does not charge students fees for VET services. Levies are only collected for consumable costs or other additional services such as the issuing of a replacement qualification testamur. Any fees and charges that do occur for additional services will be made known to students prior to enrolment.

Students who enrol past the commencement of the calendar year will be charged student levies at a pro-rata basis for the duration of the year. Students who leave a VET course before completion may be able to claim a refund for part of the course consumables (levy).

Fees for VET Courses provided by external training providers will be charged as per the third party arrangements with that provider.

Matters regarding payment of fees or refund of fees will be managed by the Business Manager in accordance with the principles contained in the general fee policy of the school (not specific to VET).

## **6. Student services**

Cairns State High School will establish the needs of their students, and deliver services to meet their individual needs where applicable. All students at CSHS will have involvement with some or all of the following processes, designed to establish their educational and support needs:

- SET plans
- subject selection processes
- career guidance services

The provision of educational services will be monitored to ensure the CSHS continues to cater for student needs through review of student senior education and training (SET) plans, as needed. The CSHS will also ensure that all students receive the services detailed in their agreement with CSHS.

The CSHS will continually improve student services by collecting, analysing and acting on any relevant data collection through students providing valuable feedback to the CSHS through informal and formal processes i.e. through individual student assessment feedback, course evaluation feedback, quality indicators — student engagement surveys and school-generated surveys (where applicable).

## **7. Student support, welfare and guidance services**

Students have access to a wide range of support, welfare and guidance services at this CSHS, including:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- RTO Manager
- Head of Faculty
- Trainers and Assessors
- Career Counsellor/Guidance Officer
- Learning Support Teachers

## **8. Provision for language, literacy and numeracy assistance**

If you are undertaking a VET subject, which has units of competency from a training package, you will find that basic literacy/numeracy elements have been incorporated. This should help you learn these basic literacy/numeracy components more readily, as they are being delivered and assessed in the context of an industry vocational area of your choice. If you still feel you need additional language, literacy or numeracy support, please seek further advice from the CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett.

## 9. Access and equity policy and procedure

The access and equity guidelines at Cairns State High School are designed to remove any barriers so that all students have the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge and experience through access to VET subjects.

This CSHS is inclusive of all students regardless of sex, race, impairment or any other factor. Any matter relating to access and equity will be referred to the CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett, as the designated Access and Equity Officer.

Cairns State High School has written access and equity policies documents generally as a school (not specific to VET) and all staff are aware of these. Staff and students may contact the Access and Equity Officer, who is the RTO Manager for information and/or support about the policy.

Access and equity guidelines will be implemented through the following strategies:

- The curriculum, while limited by the available human and physical resources, will provide for a choice of VET subject/s for all students
- Links with other providers, such as other RTOs will be considered where additional resources are required.
- Access to school-based apprenticeships and traineeships may be available to students
- Where possible, students will be provided with the opportunity to gain a full Certificate at AQF levels I, or II or III (where applicable)
- Access to industry specific VET programs will be available to all students regardless of sex, gender or race.
- If the CSHS loses access to either physical and or human resources, the CSHS will provide students with alternative opportunities to complete the course and the related qualification.

**Discrimination** occurs if a person treats someone differently on the basis of an attribute or characteristic such as gender, sexuality, race, pregnancy, physical or intellectual impairment, age, etc. This RTO strives to meet the needs of each student through incorporating access and equity principles and practices which acknowledge the right of all students to equality of opportunity without discrimination.

For example, the following principles apply:

1. VET curriculum areas will be adequately resourced, with teachers with the appropriate qualifications, in order to ensure students have quality outcomes.



2. VET training and assessment will be in line with industry standards to ensure quality outcomes for students. As well, a variety of training/assessment methods will be used to cater for the ways in which students learn. Students with learning difficulties or impairment will participate with an initial and annual panel meeting with their parent/guardian and relevant CSHS staff to ensure that the training and assessment provided meets their needs.
3. All students will be actively encouraged to participate in VET qualifications, irrespective of background/cultural differences.
4. Prior to participating in structured work placement, students will be provided with an induction programme that will equip them with the knowledge to recognise harassment/discrimination should it occur and to ensure they have the strategies to deal with anything like this. Appropriate support will be provided to ensure students are successful in their work placement.
5. Literacy/numeracy is integrated throughout all VET qualifications, as well as being delivered separately through your English/literacy and Maths/numeracy programme.
6. CSHS will openly value all students, irrespective of background/culture/other differences and all students will be made to feel valued through the delivery of appropriate training/assessment methods and support structures.
7. Any complaints in relation to discrimination/harassment will be treated seriously, in line with the CSHS's Complaints and appeals policy.

## 10. Flexible learning and assessment procedures

The following represent the basic VET assessment principles of this CSHS. They are designed to promote fairness and equity in assessment.

- All VET students at this CSHS will be fully informed of the VET assessment procedures and requirements and will have the right to appeal.
- Students will be given clear and timely information on assessment.
- Information given to students, on the assessment cover sheet, will include:
  - advice about the assessment methods
  - assessment procedures
  - the criteria against which they will be assessed
  - when and how they will receive feedback.
- Students will sight their profile sheet of results in each VET subject on at least two occasions throughout a two year course.
- The assessment approach chosen will cater for the language, literacy and numeracy needs of students.
- Any special geographic, financial or social needs of students will be considered in the development and conduction of the assessment.
- Reasonable adjustment will be made to the assessment strategy to ensure equity for all students, while maintaining the integrity of the assessment outcomes.
- Opportunities for feedback and review of all aspects of assessment will be provided to students.
- A clearly documented mechanism for appeal against assessment processes and decisions is available to students and is publicly available in this handbook which is stored on the intranet.

Your Trainer and Assessor will provide you with a thorough overview of the assessment requirements for your individual VET course. The following information, however, represents some general information about the VET assessment process adopted at Cairns State High School.

## 11. Competency based assessment

In order to be successful in gaining competency, students must demonstrate consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. Students must be able to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments.

In most subjects assessment tasks are completed a number of times throughout the year. Results for each assessment item will be marked on a student profile sheet (or similar document) using terms such

as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory, or working towards competence. This assists students to become competent as their skills improve.

Final records of assessment of competencies will be awarded as either:

- **C** for Competent
- **CNA** for Competency Not Awarded

### **Assessment methods**

Each Trainer and Assessor will maintain a student profile (or similar document) for each student and on completion of the program of study an exit level will be awarded, based on the principles of assessment and rules of evidence.

Elements of competency will be assessed and recorded once the Trainer and Assessor is satisfied that a student has demonstrated consistent competency in an element or unit of competency. Students may also receive assessment if they apply for and meet the requirements for, RPL.

A master record detailing students' achievements of the units of competency is maintained at the CSHS on the Student Management System

This will record all elements and units of competency achieved. This will be held by the CSHS and will be issued to the student once they complete the program of study or upon exit (in line with the QCAA Student Management data entry timelines).

## **12. Student access to accurate records policy and procedures**

Cairns State High School is committed to regularly providing student with information regarding their participation and progress.

The Trainers and Assessors must maintain accurate and current records of each student's progress towards and achievement of competencies.

Trainer and Assessors will provide access to a student's own records at least once each semester, or on request by the student. Students may also be given access to "for checking" Student Management printouts. Students will also have access to information regarding any unit achieved through their own online learning account.

### **13. Confidentiality procedure**

Information about a student, except as required by law or as required under the [VET Quality Framework](#), is not disclosed without the student's written permission and that of their parent or guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age. The CSHS will ensure that have consent from each student.

### **14. Employer contributing to learner's training and assessment**

Wherever possible CSHS will place students in workplaces that provide experience in the competencies included in their VET qualifications. This CSHS does not use assessment by work placement supervisors. Students on work placements may record their activities in a workplace experience logbook (or similar document). The work placement organiser/teacher will seek the cooperation of the workplace supervisor in the sign-off on the accuracy of the student's entries in the log. This logbook (or similar document) may be used by the assessor to support judgments of competency. Students at this CSHS will be placed in workplaces where it forms a mandatory requirement of the Training Package or Accredited course.

### **15. Complaints and appeals procedures**

The school, as an RTO, has a complaints and appeals policy specific to its RTO operations.

The Principal (as the chief executive officer) of the school RTO is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the school RTO complies with the VET Quality Framework (VQF). This includes the complaints and appeals policy and procedures.

A complaint can be made to the school RTO regarding the conduct of:

- the school RTO, its trainers, assessors or other school RTO staff
- students of the RTO
- any third parties providing services on behalf of the school RTO (if relevant).

Complaints may be made to any member of staff.

An appeal can be made to the school RTO to request a review of a decision, including assessment decisions.

Appeals should be made to the trainer/assessor in the first instance, but can also be made to Heads of Department or the RTO Manager.

The school RTO (Cairns State High School) will ensure that the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are adopted at every stage of the complaints and appeals process.

1. Any staff member can receive a complaint or appeal. Where possible, complaints are resolved immediately.
2. All complaints and appeals are heard and resolved within 60 calendar days of receipt.

If the school RTO considers that more than 60 calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint or appeal, the complainant or appellant will be informed of the reasons for the extended timeframe in writing and will be regularly updated on the progress of the matter.

3. The school RTO will maintain a secure Complaints and Appeals Register, documenting all complaints and appeals received, as well as actions taken and decisions made.
4. The school RTO will undertake a continuous improvement process that includes reviewing both the details in the Complaints and Appeals Register, and the complaints and appeals policy and procedures, and taking appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of the same problems occurring again.

#### Procedure for Complaint and Appeal

1. If a complaint relates to a report about harm or safety, refer to your school's appropriate Student Protection procedures.
2. On receipt of a verbal complaint:
  - a. Resolve the complaint if possible, documenting the complaint, its cause, actions taken and decisions made in the secure Complaints and Appeals Register.
  - b. If the complaint cannot be promptly and simply resolved, advise that an appropriate staff member will deal with the complaint, but a written record of the complaint is required.
3. To put a complaint/appeal in writing, advise the complainant/appellant that:
  - a. they may use the support of a third party in progressing the complaint/appeal
  - b. they can either put the complaint/appeal in writing themselves using the form available at S:\Common\VET Student Information or you can make a written record for them to sign.

#### In this case

- note whether the complainant/appellant wants the support of a third party
  - ensure the complainant signs and dates the form
  - identify yourself, and your role within the school RTO
  - sign and date the form yourself.
4. On receipt of a written complaint/appeal:
    - a. if the complaint/appeal is not in relation to the RTO Manager
    - b. forward it to the RTO Manager
    - c. enter it into the secure Complaints and Appeals Register.
    - d. if the complaint is in relation to the RTO Manager
    - e. forward it to the Deputy Principal responsible for the Senior School
    - f. enter it into a separate secure Complaints and Appeals Register, which is kept separate from the main Register.
    - g. send a prompt written acknowledgement to the complainant from either the RTO Manager or the Deputy Principal responsible for the Senior School, as appropriate.

5. To resolve the complaint/appeal, the RTO Manager and/or Deputy Principal:
  - a. discuss the issue/s with the staff member to whom the complaint/appeal was made
  - b. give the complainant/appellant an opportunity to present their case (they may be accompanied by other people as support or as representation)
  - c. give the relevant staff member, third party or student (as applicable) an opportunity to present their case. They also may be accompanied by other people as support or as representation.
  - d. if necessary, convene an independent panel, the Complaints and Appeals Committee, to hear the complaint/appeal.

The committee must not have had previous involvement with the complaint/appeal, and must include:

- ✓ a representative of the Principal
  - ✓ one or more representative/s of the teaching staff
  - ✓ an independent person.
  - ✓ deal with the issue/s
  - ✓ communicate the outcome/decision to all parties in writing within 60 days of receipt of the complaint/appeal
  - ✓ document the complaint/appeal — including the cause, actions taken and decisions made — in the appropriate secure Complaints and Appeals Register.
6. If the complaint/appeal is not finalised within 60 calendar days of its receipt, inform the complainant/appellant of the reasons in writing and regularly update them on the progress of the matter.
  7. If the procedures fail to resolve the issue/s, the complainant/appellant may have the outcome reviewed (on request) by an appropriate party independent of the RTO.
  8. If the complainant is still not satisfied, the Principal will refer them to the QCAA website for further information about making complaints (<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/vet/rto-registration-audits/appeals-complaints-enforcement>).
  9. The school RTO will undertake a continuous improvement process that includes:
    - a. reviewing the details in the Complaints and Appeals Register
    - b. reviewing the complaints and appeals policy and procedures
    - c. taking appropriate corrective action to eliminate or mitigate the likelihood of the same problems occurring again.

If the processes fail to resolve the complaint or appeal, a review by an independent party will be provided if requested.

## **16. Recognition arrangements for RPL**

All VET students have access to a procedure that gives **R**ecognition of **P**rior **L**earning. RPL is an assessment process that assesses an individual's level of knowledge and skills against individual or multiple units of competencies.

All applications for RPL will be responded to once a written application has been received. The CSHS RTO Manager – Ms Sarah Daggett will keep an RPL register which documents all RPL applications and their outcomes. Once the evidence has been provided to the CSHS to assess RPL, the student will be notified of the decision. Students may have access to reassessment on appeal.

### ***Recognition of prior learning procedure***

At the commencement of the school year a Student Induction will be conducted by the CSHS Manager and/or Trainer and Assessor and included in this process will be information about Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and will be further documented in the Student Handbook. Students who join a VET qualification as a late enrolment will be taken through the induction process by the CSHS Manager.

Students will be informed about:

- What RPL is;
- All students will have access to, and be offered RPL;
- The application forms used for RPL and the types of evidence that could be presented;
- The process that will be followed for RPL; and
- Appealing assessment decisions for RPL.

A VET student seeking RPL will be provided with a copy of a RPL application form by their relevant Trainer and Assessor along with receiving support and assistance to interpret the documentation and compile the evidence required.

Once the student has submitted the required evidence the Trainer and Assessor will examine the evidence provided and make an assessment judgement. If there are gaps the Trainer and Assessor will inform the student of the gaps and the required training and assessment that will need to be undertaken to address these gaps. The Trainer and Assessor will clearly document the assessment decision using the qualification specific documentation that is to be retained in accordance with the Retention of Student Records Procedure.

The Trainer and Assessor must inform the CSHS Manager of the application and result and the CSHS Manager will record this in the RPL Application Register.

## **17. Recognition of AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by another CSHS and credit transfer**

At the commencement of the school year a Student Induction will be conducted by the CSHS Manager and/or Trainer and Assessor and included in this process will be information about credit transfer and will be further documented in the Student Handbook. Students who join a VET qualification as a late enrolment will be taken through the induction process by the CSHS Manager.

Students will be informed about:

- What credit transfer is;
- What documents need to be provided for credit transfer; and
- The process of obtaining credit transfer.

All students who are entitled to credit transfer from units of competency they have achieved within the CSHS (ie. through qualifications completed in year 10 or across qualifications being undertaken at the same time) will be awarded credit transfer automatically by the CSHS. These instances will be identified by the CSHS Manager and the Student Management System (SMS) Operator and the student and relevant Trainer and Assessor will be informed by the CSHS Manager. In order to achieve this, the CSHS Manager and SMS Operator will identify all units of competency across the CSHS that are offered in multiple courses and where students will be awarded credit transfer.

When students transfer in from other schools that are an CSHS and the student has undertaken VET at the other school credit transfer will only be granted upon the student providing a Statement of Attainment or Record of Results issued by the previous CSHS (a Form S1 is not sufficient). It will be the responsibility of the student to obtain this and credit transfer will not be granted until the documented evidence has been provided. The documentation is to be provided to the CSHS Manager or SMS Operator directly. A copy of the Statement of Attainment/Record of Results will be provided to the Trainer and Assessor to store a copy with the student profile/portfolio as evidence. The SMS Operator will update SMS accordingly.

When students have undertaken qualifications through other non-school CSHSs credit transfer will be granted when the student provides the CSHS Manager or SMS Operator with a copy of the Statement of Attainment or Record of Results. This will be recorded on SMS by the SMS Operator and a copy of the documentation given to the Trainer and Assessor for storing as evidence on the student profile/portfolio.



## **18. Certification and issuing qualifications**

The CSHS must issue to students whom it has assessed as competent in accordance with the requirements of the Training package or VET accredited course, a VET qualification or VET statement of attainment (as appropriate) that meets the requirements of the Standards for CSHS.

The CSHS will ensure that through the implementation of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy:

- Students will receive the certification documentation to which they are entitled
- AQF qualifications are correctly identified in certification documentation
- AQF qualifications are protected against fraudulent issuance
- A clear distinction can be made between AQF qualifications and non-AQF qualifications
- Certification documentation is used consistently across the CSHS, and
- Students and parents/caregivers are confident that the qualifications they have been awarded are part of Australia's national qualifications framework – the AQF
- The CSHS will establish anti-fraud mechanisms by including the CSHS's own logo each document issued to ensure there is no fraudulent reproduction or use of credentials.

### ***Replacement of certification documentation***

The CSHS maintains a Register of Certification Documents issued for 30 years from the date of issue. This allows learners to request a reissue of their documentation at a later date. The CSHS ensures that this is stored in an accessible format with both electronic and hard copy records kept securely. The process for a learner, or former learner, to request a reissue of their documentation is as follows:

- All requests for a replacement qualification or statement of attainment must be in writing (email is acceptable) from the learner to the CSHS Manager;
- The request will be forwarded to the CSHS to coordinate who may request the SMS Operator to print the certification documentation;
- The CSHS will access the archived records/Register of Certification Documentation Issued to access the required information for the replacement document, or contact QCAA for a reissue;
- The replacement will identify that it is a re-issued version as well as follow all requirements for printing and issuing qualifications and statements of attainment as outlined in the checklist for certification documentation; and
- The replacement will be issued with 30 working days of receipt of the written request.

## **19. Qualification and accredited course guarantee**

The CSHS gives a guarantee to the student that the CSHS will complete the training once the student has started student in their chosen qualification or accredited course Students who enter a course after the start date have the opportunity to negotiate a package of units that will lead to a statement of attainment only. This adjustment will be reflected in the Enrolment Agreement form which will be signed by both the student and parent/guardian.

In the event of losing a specialist trainer, and the CSHS being unable to obtain a suitable replacement, the CSHS will arrange for agreed training and assessment to be completed through another CSHS if this is possible (fees may be incurred).

Prior to the transfer to another CSHS, affected students will be formally notified of the arrangements, and agreement to those arrangements, including any refund of fees will be obtained.

If an external transfer is not possible, the CSHS will gain a written agreement for a subject/course transfer within the CSHS from the student and parent/guardian.

The Student enrolment agreement form (or similar document), as well as any Subject Change Form (or similar document) used by the CSHS will include a disclaimer stating that by *'signing the form, they agree to all of the policies and procedures related to VET that are outlined in all CSHS documentation pertaining to VET'*.

When an enrolment form is received, the form is checked to ensure it has been signed by both the student and their parent/guardian.

