



# LEARNER HANDBOOK

*catalyst training & disability services acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.*

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## **Welcome**

catalyst training & disability services (catalyst) is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO number 41525). We deliver accredited training, under the Australian Qualifications Framework, to learners with Intellectual Disability or permanent cognitive impairment.

catalyst employs experienced trainers and assessors with current industry knowledge and relevant professional development. Our team of trainers are committed to ensuring that all learners are included and encouraged to achieve their maximum potential.

We acknowledge the importance of adult learning principles to deliver effective training. We encourage learners to be actively involved in their own learning and assessment processes.

We work hard to make learners feel as comfortable as possible whilst undertaking accredited courses. This handbook provides relevant information and contact details to facilitate the learning journey.

**Our Vision:**

A world where the expectations and opportunities are the same for people with disabilities.

**Our Mission:**

To provide high quality supports so that learners:

- Gain the skills and knowledge to get a job
- Develop connections and personal relationships
- Become active members of the community.

**catalyst head office and training venues**

The catalyst head office is located at 290 Manningham Rd, Templestowe Lower 3107.

Our Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Administration Team are located at the head office. The office is open between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays – phone: 9038 9292 or email: [office@catalysttds.com.au](mailto:office@catalysttds.com.au).

Training is delivered at various community training facilities across Victoria. Venues are accessible and are inspected before they are used to ensure relevant Work Health and Safety standards are met.

## **catalyst team**

Being a learner is exciting. It can also be challenging. This is why catalyst has a dedicated administration team to ensure learners have information and support they need that relate to training. Professional and confidential advice is offered, and all efforts are taken to ensure a positive learning experience. The administration team is the first point of contact when learners have questions.

**Key staff contacts are listed in the table below:**

<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Josie Prioletti 03 9038 9292 <a href="mailto:josie@catalysttraining.com.au">josie@catalysttraining.com.au</a>
<b>Business &amp; Compliance Manager</b>	Yannis Souvan 03 9038 9292 <a href="mailto:yannis@catalysttds.com.au">yannis@catalysttds.com.au</a>
<b>Administration Team</b>	Maxine Shand 03 9038 9292 <a href="mailto:office@catalysttds.com.au">office@catalysttds.com.au</a>  Susan Conduit 03 9038 9292 <a href="mailto:Administration@catalysttds.com.au">Administration@catalysttds.com.au</a>
<b>Work Placement Manager</b>	Nicole Crawford 03 9038 9292 <a href="mailto:workplacement@catalysttds.com.au">workplacement@catalysttds.com.au</a>

## Accredited courses

catalyst delivers foundation skills courses listed in the following table. All of our courses aim to build independence, community connections and employment skills.

Course No: 22567VIC	<b>Name:</b> Certificate I in Transition Education
	<b>Purpose:</b> To support learners to develop the skills to find the most appropriate option in the community - this may include employment, volunteer work or further study.
	<b>Units:</b> 6 core and 4 elective units
Course No: 22566VIC	<b>Name:</b> Certificate I in Work Education
	<b>Purpose:</b> To support learners to explore work options and access pathways to specific vocational education and training.
	<b>Units:</b> 7 core and 3 electives



Course No: 22631VIC	<b>Name:</b> Certificate II in Work Education
	<b>Purpose:</b> To support learners to further develop employment ready skills, knowledge, and behaviours.
	<b>Units:</b> 3 core, 1 Work Health & Safety, 6 elective units.

A full description of the units being offered in each course is outlined on our website [www.catalysttds.com.au](http://www.catalysttds.com.au).

The courses are offered over a six to twelve-month period and range from one to two days a week.

Learners studying Work Education will participate in vocational tasters and work placements that may be organised on other days of the week.

Learners are expected to contribute to their own learning, with projects and study required outside of classroom hours. catalyst outlines the expectations at the information sessions conducted prior to enrolment. Start and end dates and any breaks will be clearly indicated in the course timetable.

## **Enrolling in an accredited course**

### **Information Sessions**

Information sessions are held before course commencement. There is plenty of time for questions about course content, expectations of learners, the way training is delivered and by whom, the timetable (start and end dates of the course), and how learners will be assessed.

Learners will also be told about the eligibility requirements for the course/s and what evidence is required as part of enrolment.

### **Department of Education Eligibility Requirements**

The training offered by catalyst through the Skills First funding is subsidised by the Department of Education. There are strict eligibility criteria.

To be eligible learners must:

- a) Be an Australian citizen, a holder of a permanent visa or a New Zealand citizen
- b) Be living (physically) in the State of Victoria at all times while undertaking the course
- c) NOT be attending, or enrolled in, a school including any non-government, independent or Catholic school (or registered for home schooling in Victoria)
- d) Provide evidence of an intellectual disability or permanent cognitive impairment or evidence of a modified curriculum whilst at school.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Please note, that RPL is not available for the foundation level courses offered by catalyst.

## **Credit Transfer**

catalyst offers credit transfer. We accept and provide credit for units of competency where a learner can provide evidence of:

- Authenticated vocational education and training transcripts issued by the USI registrar.
- AQF certification documents issued by other Registered Training Organisations.

To apply for credit transfer, contact the Student, Trainer and Administration Manager.

## **USI - Unique Student Identifier**

All learners undertaking accredited courses need a Unique Student Identifier (USI). If a learner does not have a USI, an application can be made by visiting [www.usi.gov.au](http://www.usi.gov.au), calling 1300 857 536.

The USI:

- Creates a secure online record of recognised training and qualifications gained in Australia from all training providers
- Gives access to training records and transcripts
- Can be accessed online, anytime and anywhere
- Is free and easy to create and
- Stays with the learner for life

All learners must have a USI to complete their enrolment.

## **Pre-Training Review**

The Pre-Training Review (PTR) gives catalyst valuable information about a learner's existing skills and abilities. The PTR enables catalyst to ensure learners are enrolling in the most appropriate course and identifies individual learning needs/additional support that may be required. The PTR also gives information about a learner's preferred learning style.

The PTR is completed before course commencement. The PTR assists us to identify:

- existing educational competencies
- literacy and numeracy skills
- digital capability (as we may need to conduct training online from time to time)

## **Reasonable Adjustment**

The PTR also assists catalyst to work out any reasonable adjustments that may be needed to provide individual learners with the same opportunities for assessment as any other learner. Reasonable adjustments may include a scribe for a learner who is unable to write, additional time to understand course content and/or course content provided in different formats.

## **Individual Training Plans**

Each learner receives an individualised training plan. The Individual Training Plan outlines the course structure, hours of delivery (supervised and expected out of classroom hours),

assessment and monitoring details, venue and trainer contact details. The Individual Training Plan is sent via email to the learner's nominated email address.

### **Learner Practical Work Placements**

Practical placements provide learners with the opportunity to experience work in different industries and environments. Potential workplaces are assessed for safety and suitability. Learners are covered by the Public Liability insurance held by catalyst.

A learner who is injured may also be eligible to make a claim under the Workers' Compensation insurance held by the Department of Education & Training.

### **Enrolment**

Enrolments take place in local community settings, generally the venue where the training is to take place.

At enrolment, the enrolling officer needs to sight evidence confirming eligibility as listed above under 'Department of Education Eligibility Requirements'.

Enrolment forms are completed with individual learners.

## Course Delivery

A number of approaches to course delivery are used by catalyst trainers. Course delivery approaches may include:

- teacher led classroom delivery
- workshops
- practical exercises
- field trips, vocational tasters, practical work placements.

Training is based on competency standards that outline the skills and knowledge that is required in the workplace. Each course is designed to meet the guidelines of the relevant course curriculum developed by the Department of Education and Training (DET).

During class time, learners are expected to participate by answering questions, giving opinions, demonstrating tasks, working with others in groups, making presentations and participating in role plays.

The duration of the course specified in the course information includes all formal training. Learners are required to spend time on individual study (including self-paced learning, research, learning activities and assessment activities) in addition to the scheduled timetable. This additional work is to be completed in the learner's own time.

The trainer will provide learners with an orientation to the venue at the beginning of each course including safety information. The orientation will also provide an overview of the course to be delivered including how the training will take place, expectations of learners, how assessments will take place and the timetable. Orientation provides learners with the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

A Learner Guide for each Unit of Competency undertaken is provided. The Learner Guide gives a summary of the content of the Unit, assessment methods and gives relevant information about the topic.

## **Assessment**

Assessment of a learner's performance is undertaken in accordance with the criteria detailed in the Unit of Competency and related guidelines in the training course curriculum. The assessment process for each Unit of Competency is detailed in the Learner Guide for that Unit. The Learner Guide is provided to learners at the start of each Unit.

Assessments are designed to be:

- Valid – the assessment measures the skills it is designed to measure
- Reliable – assessment decisions are consistent across different trainers and different test locations

- Fair – the process is ethical and allows all learners the same opportunity to demonstrate their skills
- Well-constructed – assessments are clear and have context appropriate to the learner

Units of Competency within a course will always include assessment tasks. Learner assessments are marked C - Competent, or NYC – Not Yet Competent. Written feedback is given to the learner on the assessment tasks. Learners who receive a NYC for a Unit of Competency may be given the opportunity to undertake further training or practice.

A number of approaches to course assessment are used by catalyst. Assessments may be undertaken by answering questions, practical demonstrations, case studies, projects, assignments, presentations, role plays, and written tests. When completing an assessment, learners will need to answer all questions correctly to pass the assessment.

All work submitted must be the learner's own work. Acts of plagiarism, collusion and cheating are not permitted in any work completed for assessment and will result in a written warning and repeating the Unit of Competency. If learners are caught engaging in these acts a second time, they may be suspended or expelled from catalyst.



## **Withdrawing From The Course**

Sometimes learners are not able to continue attending class and need to withdraw.

### **When a student withdraws from a program**

Students need to tell catalyst in writing if they want to withdraw from a course. They can

- a) fill out a catalyst withdrawal form and give it to the trainer, or
- b) send an email to [office@catalysttds.com.au](mailto:office@catalysttds.com.au), or
- c) send a letter.

catalyst will confirm by email that the withdrawal request has been actioned.

### **When catalyst withdraws a student from a program**

Catalyst will withdraw a student based on the following:

- a) A student has not attended for 60 days and has not notified the trainer or the office that they cannot attend, or
- b) The student has not attended for more than 60 days and cannot be contacted.

Catalyst will make every effort to contact the student (and in some cases their family or carer) and if they cannot do so will withdraw the student and confirm by email that the student has been withdrawn.

## **Certificates/Statements of Attainment**

When a learner successfully completes a full certificate course, satisfying the assessment requirements of each Unit of Competency, they will be awarded a Certificate and a Record of Results.

Where a learner successfully completes some, but not all, Units of Competency from a full certificate course, they will be awarded a Statement of Attainment for the units completed.

Certificates and Statements of Attainment are issued by catalyst and are usually presented at a graduation event. Certificates and Statements of Attainment will be posted to learners who choose not, or are unable to, attend the graduation. Certificates and Statements of Attainment are issued within 30 days of the completion of the course.

### **catalyst commitment to learners**

catalyst:

- Will take all reasonable steps to ensure provision of the course once enrolment has been confirmed
- Works collaboratively with learners and provides support to facilitate the successful completion of the course within the agreed timeframe
- Offers information sessions to enable an informed choice by prospective learners and their family
- Delivers quality training and assessment in compliance with the Standards for Registered

Training Organisations and the Skills First Contract, and for the issuance of the AQF certification documentation

- Treats all learners in a fair and equitable manner regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or origin
- Engages qualified, experienced trainers and assessors who meet the requirements of the Skills First contract and the Curriculum for the course/s
- Provides a safe learning environment
- Ensures all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equity, access, and cultural awareness
- Keeps accurate records of enrolment, progress and outcomes on the student management system
- Keeps learner information confidential
- Seeks learner feedback at the end of each Unit to monitor the quality of training and outcomes
- Issues Certificates or Statements of Attainment as relevant to learners at the end of each course

## **Learner Code of Conduct**

Learners with catalyst are expected to:

- Provide the required evidence for eligibility
- Participate fully in learning and assessment activities
- Dress in an appropriate manner that suits both a classroom or work environment

- Not cheat or engage in plagiarism (presenting someone else's work as their own)
- Submit work within the specified timelines
- Follow instructions during learning and assessment activities
- Treat other learners and staff in a fair and equitable manner
- Provide feedback about the quality of the training
- Use the complaints process if unhappy or believe they have been treated unfairly
- Attend all classes, where possible
- Follow all Work Health and Safety instructions, keeping themselves and others as safe as possible

## **Learner Feedback**

catalyst has a Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure. Learners are encouraged to give feedback at the end of each Unit of Competency and course (written and verbal) – we also encourage learners to give feedback to their trainer or to the Business and Quality Manager. This feedback helps catalyst to make sure our training meets learner needs.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Information about learners will not be disclosed to a third party without their consent, except as required under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, Government Contracts or by law. catalyst complies with the National

Privacy Principles, the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment Act (2000), Data Privacy Act and the Victorian Information Privacy Act (2000).

When asking for personal information, catalyst ensures that learners are made aware of:

- catalyst contact details
- right to access personal information
- the purpose for collection of personal information
- how the information will be used and who it may be disclosed to
- any law that requires particular information to be collected
- the consequences, if any, for learners if they do not provide the information required

If a learner wishes to access their personal records they should contact the Student, Trainer & Administration Manager either verbally or in writing. A suitable time to view the learner's file and access information will be granted once identification is confirmed and validated by the Student, Trainer & Administration Manager.

Information that may be accessed includes learner progress, personal and enrolment details that has been collected by catalyst.

## **Complaints and Appeals**

Learners are able to submit a formal complaint to catalyst relating to any concern they may have (if they feel a person has acted inappropriately or treated someone unfairly, etc). Complaints can be submitted to the Student, Trainer & Administration Manager or directly to the Quality & Compliance Manager. All complaints are handled confidentially and are reviewed by the Quality & Compliance Manager.

Complainants have the right to access advice and support from independent external agencies/persons at any point of the complaint and appeals process. Complainants can access the National Training Complaints Hotline on 13 38 73 and follow the prompts.

Copies of the catalyst Complaints Policy and Procedure and the Complaints form can be obtained from the Student and Trainer Administration Manager any time.

Learners may also appeal a decision made by catalyst in regard to the outcome of an assessment. Where a learner feels they have been unfairly judged and assessed on a specified task, project or assessment they may have the assessment reviewed by submitting an appeal form. Supporting evidence, or explanations, as to why the learner feels the assessment is unfair, and why they should be given further opportunity to be assessed, must be provided.

## Access and Equity

All catalyst staff must adhere to the principles and practices of equity in education and training, treating every learner fairly and without discrimination. catalyst has procedures in place to ensure learner concerns around access and equity are dealt with immediately and appropriately.

catalyst acknowledges its legal obligations under State and Federal equal opportunity law, including:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- The Human Rights Act (Australia) 2022
- The Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- The Privacy Act 1998 (Cth)
- Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth) – Australian Consumer Law

*All legislation can be accessed at: [www.comlaw.gov.au](http://www.comlaw.gov.au)*

catalyst fosters a training environment that is fair and conducive to learning at all levels. Our training services are available to all eligible learners regardless of ethnicity,

gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual/cognitive impairment.

All catalyst staff are required to have an awareness and understanding of access and equity issues and are required to demonstrate access and equity principles in all dealings with learners and other staff.

## **Surveys and Learner Feedback**

Learners with catalyst will be given the opportunity to complete a number of surveys including:

- The National Student Outcomes Survey - an annual survey of learners who completed their vocational education and training (VET) in Australia during the previous calendar year. The survey collects information on VET learners' reasons for training, employment outcomes, satisfaction with training, and further study outcomes. The main reason for not continuing with the training is also collected for those who did not complete the course.
- An invitation to participate in the DET annual student outcome survey and/or
- Being contacted by the Department of Education and Training for audit, review or investigation purposes.



## **Work Health and Safety**

catalyst is committed to providing a safe, secure and supportive environment for all learners. Security and personal safety are important issues for everyone and rely on us all working together.

catalyst complies with all relevant Work Health and Safety legislation. Trainers will actively take steps to identify hazards that could cause harm to learners in the learning environment. Where possible, the trainers will take action to remove or control these hazards and will report the hazard to the appropriate on-site personnel at the training venue.

Where practicable, learners must take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of fellow learners. This means learners must follow all safety rules, procedures and the instructions of their trainer while attending a training session.

If a learner identifies a potential hazard, this should be reported to the trainer or the administration team who will take the appropriate action.

## **Funding of training services**

catalyst acknowledges that training services for foundation level courses are provided with funds made available by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments. The accredited course that catalyst learners are enrolling in is fully paid for (subsidized) by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments through a Skills First contract.

The subsidy applies to learners who meet the eligibility criteria for the course. **This means there is no cost to the learner.** For further information refer to the catalyst website.



## Student Support

Student support is provided by the catalyst team

**Tel:** 03 9038 9292

**Email:** [office@catalysttds.com.au](mailto:office@catalysttds.com.au)

**Address:** 290 Manningham Road, Templestowe Lower 3107

**Website:** [catalysttds.com.au](http://catalysttds.com.au)



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The training catalyst offers is accepted and recognised by industry, employers and other registered training organisation in Australia

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