



# Student Handbook

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# Welcome!

Welcome to Dog Force Australia! This Student Handbook is designed to provide you with information about the services provided by Dog Force Australia (DFA) and our approach to providing you a safe, fair and supported environment to participate in training and assessment. This Student Handbook does not provide you with specific information about any particular courses offered by DFA. You will find that information in the Course Brochure which is supplied separately.

## About Dog Force Australia

DFA is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO No. 41371) providing high-quality, bespoke training to students in Australia. DFA has modern, up to date facilities, and boasts a team of qualified and dedicated Trainers. You can find out more about DFA at the following websites:

 [www.dogforceaustralia.com.au](http://www.dogforceaustralia.com.au)

 [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au)

DFA is responsible under its registration with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) for the quality of the training and assessment being delivered in your chosen course and is also responsible for the issuance of any AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework) certification that may result based on your achievement of the course requirements.

## Our Services

DFA provides training and assessment services in a range of nationally endorsed training products related to detection dog training, canine anatomy, canine health and ill-health, canine behaviour and management, canine security control and training dog handler teams. DFA also provides a range of training services to support providers in implementing training and assessment aligned to the *Australian Standard AS 5350.1:2022 Privately contracted security and detection dogs, Part 1: Acquisition, welfare, training, deployment and retirement*, and *AS 5350.2:2022 Privately contracted security and detection dogs, Part 2: Training and certification of dogs and handlers*.

## Our Mission

*To deliver quality  
training and assessment that meets the needs of  
students and industry.*

## Our Objectives

In recognition of this Mission, our objectives are:

### People

We strive to attract, recruit and retain talented, competent and committed trainers. We promote excellent performance through leadership and professional development.

### Safety and Equality

We are committed to providing an environment that is safe, equitable and promotes a confident and productive training and assessment environment.

## **Integrity and Ethics**

We conduct ourselves in accordance with shared and agreed standards of behaviour which holds ethical conduct and integrity as our highest priorities.

## **Quality Committed**

We aspire to deliver consistent, high-quality services and apply quality systems which support training and assessment excellence.

## **Student Focused**

We thrive on providing training and assessment that is student focused and supports lifelong learning. We respect our students and strive to attract them through high quality training and assessment experiences.

## **Industry Engagement**

We recognise the value of industry engagement as the driving force in shaping our training and assessment strategies. We deliver training and assessment services which are founded on industry needs and expectations.

## **Our Trainers and Assessors**

Our Trainers and Assessors are qualified, dedicated professionals who have extensive, current industry and job role experience and qualifications in a range of specialisations. Their industry experience is continually maintained by participating in professional development activities, therefore giving our students the best practical industry experience available both within Australia and internationally.

At DFA we deliver nationally recognised training via face-to-face and practical activities. When you study with DFA, your Trainer and Assessor will always be there to assist you throughout your course.

DFA trainers and assessors are professionally qualified. Our trainers and assessors provide their training in a way that students will enjoy.

## **Finding Us**

The Dog Force Australia K9 Training Centre is located at:  
8c Parma Road, Falls Creek, NSW (approx. 2 hours south of Sydney).

## **Parking**

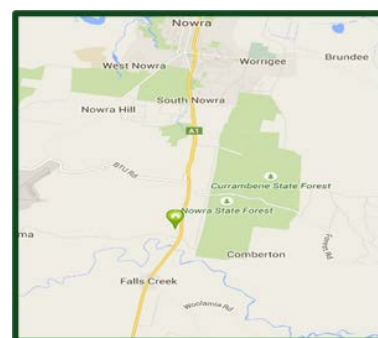
There is ample parking for students on site.

## **Public Transport**

There are no public transport options available. For those students unable to provide their own transport, DFA may be able to provide transport to and from accommodation venues wherever possible and when discussed prior to enrolment.

## **Lunch Options**

Students are advised to pack their own lunch whilst at Falls Creek as there are no meal facilities close by. Limited food outlets are available within a 10 minute drive.



## Legislative and Regulatory Responsibilities

DFA is required to operate in accordance with the law. This means we comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements. During your day-to-day work and when participating in training, you will need to be aware of the relevant legislation that may impact on your conduct and behaviour. Copies of State and Federal legislation can be found on the Internet at <https://www.legislation.gov.au> for Commonwealth and <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for New South Wales. Where you are in a different jurisdiction, you will be provided with a link to the legislation in your State or Territory.

The following legislation is a list of the Acts that DFA has recognised it has compliance responsibilities to. They also represent obligations to you as a student whilst training with DFA.

### Work Health and Safety Act 2011

The main object of this Act is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces. The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS) protects workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work or from particular types of substances or plant.

The WHS Act covers workers by providing nationally uniform work health and safety laws. This includes employees, contractors, sub-contractors, outworkers, trainees, work experience students, volunteers and employers who perform work.







The WHS Act also provides protection for the general public so that their health and safety is not placed at risk by work activities.

Section 29 of the WHS Act requires that any person at a workplace, including customers and visitors, must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions. They must also cooperate with any actions taken by the person conducting business or undertaking to comply with the WHS Act and WHS Regulations.

### Privacy Act 1988

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth.) is supported by the Australian Privacy Principles. The object of the Australian Privacy Principles is to ensure businesses and government agencies manage personal information in an open and transparent way.

Review the section within this Student Handbook that relates to privacy protection. It provides you with information about:

-  The kinds of personal information that we collect and hold;
-  How we collect and hold personal information;
-  The purposes for which we collect, hold, use and disclose personal information;
-  How an individual may access personal information about themselves that is held by us and seek the correction of such information;
-  How an individual may complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with such a complaint; and
-  Whether we are likely to disclose personal information to third parties.

## Disability Discrimination Act 1992

### Section 5 – Direct Disability Discrimination

- (1) For the purposes of this Act, a person (the **discriminator**) **discriminates** against another person (the **aggrieved person**) on the ground of a disability of the aggrieved person if, because of the disability, the discriminator treats, or proposes to treat, the aggrieved person less favourably than the discriminator would treat a person without the disability in circumstances that are not materially different.
- (2) For the purposes of this Act, a person (the discriminator) also discriminates against another person (the aggrieved person) on the ground of a disability of the aggrieved person if:
  - (a) the discriminator does not make, or proposes not to make, reasonable adjustments for the person; and
  - (b) the failure to make the reasonable adjustments has, or would have, the effect that the aggrieved person is, because of the disability, treated less favourably than a person without the disability would be treated in circumstances that are not materially different.
- (3) For the purposes of this section, circumstances are not **materially different** because of the fact that, because of the disability, the aggrieved person requires adjustments.

## Sex Discrimination Act 1984

The objects of this Act are:

- 🐾 To give effect to certain provisions of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*;
- 🐾 To eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy in the areas of work, accommodation, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services, the disposal of land, the activities of clubs and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs;
- 🐾 To eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination involving dismissal of employees on the grounds of family responsibilities;
- 🐾 To eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination involving sexual harassment in the workplace, in educational institutions and in other areas of public activity; and
- 🐾 To promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle of the equality of men and women.

## Age Discrimination Act 2004

The objects of this Act are:

- 🐾 To eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination against persons on the grounds of age in the areas of work, education, access to premises, the provision of goods, services and facilities, accommodation, the disposal of land, the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs and requests for information;
- 🐾 To ensure, as far as practicable, that everyone has the same rights to equality before the law, regardless of age, as the rest of the community;
- 🐾 To allow appropriate benefits and other assistance to be given to people of a certain age, particularly younger and older persons, in recognition of their particular circumstances;
- 🐾 To promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that people of all ages have the same fundamental rights; and
- 🐾 To respond to demographic change by:



- 🐾 Removing barriers to older people participating in society, particularly in the workforce; and
- 🐾 Changing negative stereotypes about older people.

## Racial Discrimination Act 1975

This Act gives effect to Australia's obligations under the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. Its major objectives are to:

- 🐾 Promote equality before the law for all persons, regardless of their race, colour or national or ethnic origin, and
- 🐾 Make discrimination against people on the basis of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin unlawful.

## Copyright Act 1968

Copyright is a type of property that is founded on a person's creative skill and labour. It is designed to prevent the unauthorised use by others of a work, that is, the original form in which an idea or information has been expressed by the creator.

Copyright is not a tangible thing. It is made up of a bundle of exclusive economic rights to do certain acts with an original work or other copyright subject-matter. These rights include the right to copy, publish, communicate (e.g. broadcast, make available online) and publicly perform the copyright material.

There is no general exception that allows a work to be reproduced without infringing copyright. Where a part of a work is copied, the issue is whether a substantial part of that work has been reproduced and thus an infringement has occurred. However, there is a 10% rule which applies in relation to fair dealing copying for the purposes of research or study. A reasonable portion of a work may be copied for that purpose, and a reasonable portion is deemed to be 10% of a book of more than 10 pages or 10% of the words of a work in electronic form.

## Fair Work Act 2009

The main objectives of this Act are to provide a balanced framework for cooperative and productive workplace relations that promote national economic prosperity and social inclusion for all Australians by:

- 🐾 Providing workplace relations laws that are fair to working Australians, are flexible for businesses, promote productivity and economic growth for Australia's future economic prosperity and take into account Australia's international labour obligations;
- 🐾 Ensuring a guaranteed safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum terms and conditions through the *National Employment Standards*, modern awards and national minimum wage orders; and
- 🐾 Enabling fairness and representation at work and the prevention of discrimination by recognising the right to freedom of association and the right to be represented, protecting against unfair treatment and discrimination, providing accessible and effective procedures to resolve grievances and disputes and providing effective compliance mechanisms.

## National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011

The *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth.) provides the basis for the regulation of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in Australia. The legislation provides the basis for the establishment of the National VET Regulator (ASQA) who is the registration authority for a large majority of RTOs, including DFA. A core component of this legislation is that it defines the conditions for the registration of an RTO which include:

- 🐾 Compliance with the *VET Quality Framework*;
- 🐾 Satisfying *Fit and Proper Person Requirements*;
- 🐾 Satisfying the *Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements*;
- 🐾 Notifying the National VET Regulator of important changes;
- 🐾 Cooperating with the National VET Regulator; and
- 🐾 Compliance with directions given by the National VET Regulator.

## Changes to Legislation and Enrolment

Where there are any changes to legislation or your enrolment, DFA will advise you in writing of these changes. You will be advised as soon as practicable and where possible, including how the change affects you personally.

## Equal Opportunity

DFA is committed to equal opportunity policies and principles, as they affect students and employees to ensure the elimination of discrimination and harassment.

## Rights and Responsibilities

DFA has a legal and moral obligation to provide equal opportunity in employment and a learning environment free from harassment for employees, contractors and students.

DFA is committed to providing an environment that recognises and respects the diversity of employees, contractors and students. DFA is committed to providing a work and study environment free from harassment, vilification and bullying and supports the rights of all employees, contractors and students to work and study in a safe and healthy environment free from such behaviour.

DFA will:

- 🐾 Ensure that employees, contractors and students understand that these types of actions and behaviour will not be tolerated in the work/study environment; and
- 🐾 Request that any behaviour which could be considered harassment, vilification or bullying cease immediately.

All employees, contractors and students have a role to play in eliminating harassment, vilification and bullying by not encouraging or showing support for harassment, vilification or bullying aimed at work or study colleagues. This can be achieved by:

- 🐾 Refusing to join in with these types of actions and behaviours;
- 🐾 Supporting the person in saying no to these behaviours; and
- 🐾 Acting as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint.

If an employee, contractor or student feels harassed, vilified or bullied, the employee, contractor or student is encouraged to inform the person where the behaviour is unwanted, unacceptable and/or offensive. If the employee, contractor or student feels unable to approach the person, or if the behaviour continues following their request that the behaviour cease, the CEO should be contacted.

As a student of DFA, you have the responsibility to:

- 🐾 Act to prevent harassment, discrimination and victimisation against others;
- 🐾 Respect differences among staff, other students and contractors, such as cultural and social diversity;
- 🐾 Treat people fairly, without discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- 🐾 Refuse to join in with these behaviours;
- 🐾 Support the person in saying no to these behaviours;
- 🐾 Act as a witness if the person being harassed decides to lodge a complaint.

## Discrimination

Discrimination is treating someone unfairly or harassing them because they belong to a particular group. It is against the law to discriminate against a person because of their age, sex, pregnancy, disability (*includes, past, present or possible future disability*), race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality, marital status, sexuality or gender identification.

Both direct and indirect discrimination are against the law.

- 🐾 **Direct discrimination** means treatment that is obviously unfair or unequal; and
- 🐾 **Indirect discrimination** means having a requirement that is the same for everyone but has an effect or result that is unfair to particular groups.

## Harassment, Vilification and Bullying

All employees, contractors and students have an equal opportunity to work and study. DFA will not tolerate behaviour which is of a harassing, vilifying or bullying nature.

It is against the law for employees, contractors and students to be harassed during the course of their work or study because of their sex, pregnancy, race (*including colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or religious background*), marital status, disability, sexuality, HIV/AIDS status or transgender. Federal anti-discrimination legislation applies to staff, contractors and students.

## Harassment

In general, harassment is behaviour which is unwanted and that humiliates, offends or intimidates a person, and occurs because of a person's:

- 🐾 Race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or national identity;
- 🐾 Sex;
- 🐾 Pregnancy;
- 🐾 Marital status;
- 🐾 Disability (including physical, intellectual and/or behavioural/psychiatric disability; past, current or future disability; actual or presumed disability);
- 🐾 Sexuality
- 🐾 Transgender status; and





## Age.

It is unlawful for a person to be harassed due to a relationship to or association with a person of a particular race, sex, marital status, disability, homosexuality, transgender or age.

Harassment in the work and study environment can be overt or subtle, direct or indirect. It can be verbal, non-verbal or physical. Harassment can occur when power is used incorrectly.

Harassment is not always intended. Actions and behaviour which one person finds amusing or unimportant may offend or hurt another person.







Examples of harassment include:

-  Intrusive or inappropriate questions or comments about a person's private life;
-  Unwanted written, telephone or electronic messages;
-  Promises or threats to a person; and
-  Physical violence or the threat of physical violence or coercion.

## **Vilification**

Vilification is the public act of a person which incites hatred, serious contempt for, or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons on the grounds of race, sexuality, disability, intersex status, HIV/AIDS status, or religious conviction.

Examples of circumstances and behaviour that may constitute vilification include:

-  Graffiti;
-  Speeches or statements made in public;
-  Statements or remarks in a newspaper, on radio or television;
-  Social media posts;
-  Wearing or displaying clothing with symbols, badges or slogans.
-  Comments made in a workplace, at training or at an event.

## **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour can refer to the actions or behaviours of a person to another that intimidates, degrades or humiliates the person. It may include verbal abuse, behaviour intended to punish such as isolation, exclusion from workplace activities and "ganging up". Repeated "put-downs", aggression, threats and poorly managed conflicts of opinion may be part of bullying behaviour. It can occur between people such as managers and employees or contractors, co-workers and students.

## **Sexual Harassment**

DFA will not tolerate sexual harassment in the learning or work environment.

DFA deprecates all forms of sexual harassment and seeks to ensure that the work and study environment is free from such harassment. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all persons.

Sexual harassment is unlawful. The harasser may be held liable for unlawful actions and be required to pay damages. All employees, contractors and students have the right to work and study in an environment free from sexual harassment.

### Forms of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment may take many forms. Often people do not realise that their behaviour constitutes sexual harassment, but they must be aware that behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not necessarily be acceptable to another. Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature by one person to another at work or in a work-related setting. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- 🐾 Insensitive jokes and pranks;
- 🐾 Lewd comments about appearance;
- 🐾 Unnecessary body contact;
- 🐾 Displays of sexually offensive materials, for example, calendars or posters;
- 🐾 Requests for sexual favours;
- 🐾 Speculation about a person's private life and sexual activities;
- 🐾 Threatened or actual sexual violence; and
- 🐾 Threat of dismissal, loss of opportunity and so on, for refusal of sexual favours.

### Equal Opportunity Complaints

All complaints regarding equal opportunity matters are treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.

### Consumer Protection

#### Our Guarantee to Clients

If DFA cancels or ceases to provide training, DFA must issue a full refund for any services not yet provided. The basis for determining “*services not yet provided*” is to be based on the units of competency completed by the student and which can be issued in a statement of attainment at the time the service is ceased.

As an example, a student enrolled in a course of ten (10) units of competency and paid \$1,500 up front as the total course fee. The course was cancelled due to the trainer falling ill and the student at that time had completed 4 of the 10 units. The student's enrolment would be finalised, and the student would receive a Statement of Attainment for the four (4) completed units. The student would also receive a refund of \$900 which represents that value of the training not delivered.

### Changes to Terms and Conditions

DFA reserves the right to amend the conditions of the student's enrolment at any time. If amendments are made that affect the student's enrolment the student will be informed within seven (7) days prior to changes taking effect, where possible. In some circumstances, changes may need to be implemented immediately and you will not be informed until after that change has taken place. These changes are usually required by regulators or legislation and you will be notified as soon as possible after the change has been made.

## RTO Closure

In the event that DFA ceases to operate while you are a current student, all of your results and student records will be provided to the National VET Regulator, ASQA. You will be issued with any competency that you have achieved via a Statement of Attainment and any interim or partial results and assessment in progress will also be provided to ASQA.

## Safety

DFA is committed to providing you with a safe environment in which to participate in training and assessment. We are aware under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth.) of our responsibilities to maintain a safe environment.

The following guidelines are provided as a basis for safe practice in the training environment:

- 🐾 Know and observe details of emergency response and evacuation plans;
- 🐾 Do not undertake activities which may cause injury to self or others;
- 🐾 Be responsible for your own actions;
- 🐾 No smoking at the training and assessment facilities or offices;
- 🐾 Report all potential hazards, accidents and near misses to DFA staff;
- 🐾 No consumption of alcohol within training and assessment facilities or during the conduct of training and assessment;
- 🐾 Keep training and assessment areas neat and tidy at all times;
- 🐾 Seek assistance if you volunteer to lift items, for example moving furniture in a training area; and
- 🐾 Observe hygiene standards particularly in eating and bathroom areas.

## Accidents, Injuries and Near Misses

All accidents, injuries and near misses are to be reported immediately to ensure that you receive any care required as soon as possible and to prevent any potential re-occurrence. DFA will ensure that you receive any first aid treatment as soon as possible.

## Electrical Equipment

- 🐾 Electrical equipment that is not working should be reported to DFA staff; and
- 🐾 Electrical work should only be performed by appropriately licensed or trained personnel. Students, trainers and assessors should not undertake any task related to fixing electrical equipment such as lighting or electrical training aids.

## Fire Safety

- 🐾 DFA will communicate the procedures involved in evacuation and the location of fire equipment to students at each facility for each training and assessment event; and to users of the office at least twice each year. Where training and assessment is being conducted in a client's workplace, DFA will ensure that all emergency and evacuation information is provided to students upon commencement of the course and in accordance with the work site's own legislative requirements, policies and procedures;
- 🐾 All users of a training and assessment facility need to be familiar with the location of EXITS and fire extinguishers. Users will consult available maps to determine location.

- 🐾 It is the user's responsibility to understand fire drill procedures displayed around the premises.
- 🐾 Users are asked to attend any sessions on fire safety procedures and the use of fire safety devices.

## First Aid

- 🐾 Provision for first aid facilities is available where training and assessment is delivered.
- 🐾 All accidents must be reported to staff.
- 🐾 The accident and any aid administered must be recorded by staff involved in the injury register.

## Lifting

- 🐾 Students, trainers and assessors are encouraged not to lift anything related to the training and assessment provided by DFA unless they do so voluntarily and take all responsibility for any injury caused.
- 🐾 Never attempt to lift anything that is beyond your capacity.
- 🐾 Always bend the knees and keep the back straight when picking up items.
- 🐾 If you have experienced back problems in the past do not attempt to lift heavy objects at all. Ask someone else to do it for you.

## Work and Study Areas

- 🐾 Always ensure that work areas are clean and clear of clutter so as to avoid the danger of accident by tripping or falling over.
- 🐾 Place all rubbish in the bins provided.
- 🐾 Ensure that bench spaces are left clean and tidy.
- 🐾 Do not sit or climb on any desks or tables.

## Our Expectation of You

DFA expects you to:

- 🐾 Contribute to learning in a harmonious and positive manner irrespective of gender, race, sexual preference, political affiliation, marital status, disability or religious belief.
- 🐾 Comply with the rules and regulations of DFA.
- 🐾 Be honest and respectful, which includes not falsifying work or information and not conducting yourself in any way that may cause injury or offence to others.
- 🐾 Be responsible for your own learning and development by participating actively and positively and by ensuring that you maintain progress with learning modules.
- 🐾 Monitor your own progress by ensuring that assessment deadlines are observed.
- 🐾 Utilise facilities and DFA publications with respect and honour our copyrights, and prevent our publications from being distributed to unauthorised persons.
- 🐾 Respect other students and DFA staff members and their right to privacy and confidentiality.

## The Rights and Responsibilities of Participants

Students have the right to learn in an appropriate environment that is free from any form of harassment or discrimination. Students also have the following rights and responsibilities:

- 🐾 Students have the right to expect a competent trainer and assessor who can assist them to achieve the expected course outcomes;
- 🐾 Students have the right to be reassessed if competency is not met in the first instance;
- 🐾 It is the student's responsibility to notify DFA or senior management of their workplace (where relevant), when enrolling in a course, if support is required (e.g. help with literacy, transport, access to venue etc.);
- 🐾 Students are responsible for personal possessions during class; and
- 🐾 It is every participant's responsibility to respect the rights of other participants, tutors and staff while attending a DFA course. Participants whose behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable will be asked to leave. Fees will not be refunded in this instance.

Unacceptable behaviour may include behaviours that:

- 🐾 Puts others at risk;
- 🐾 Is deemed to be disruptive;
- 🐾 Hampers others' learning; or
- 🐾 Interferes with DFA's Code of Practice.

In the unlikely event that DFA is unable to deliver the course in full, the applicant will be offered a refund of all unspent pre-paid course fees to date. The refund will be paid within 10 working days of the day on which the course ceased to be provided by DFA. Alternatively, enrolment in another suitable course by DFA may be offered at no extra cost. The applicant has the right to choose between refund of unspent pre-paid course fees or to accept a place in another course. If the applicant chooses a placement in another course the applicant will be required to sign a statement that indicates their acceptance of the placement.

## **Making the Most of your Training**

It is very important to make the most of your training opportunity. Please note it is your responsibility to do this. To optimize your own learning and successful completion, undertake to do the following:

- 🐾 Attend all training sessions and complete all required reading and learning activities;
- 🐾 Prepare well in advance of each training session;
- 🐾 Be a willing student;
- 🐾 Work with fellow learners;
- 🐾 Respect other people's opinions;
- 🐾 Ensure you have a clear understanding of the assessment requirements;
- 🐾 Take responsibility for the quality of evidence that you submit to your Trainer and Assessor;
- 🐾 Keep track of your progress;
- 🐾 Complete and submit all assessment tasks on time, using clear and concise language;
- 🐾 Be willing to contact your Trainer and Assessor if you do not understand the training activity or assessment task.

Training sessions are designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills required for each of the units of competency that each individual student is enrolled in. It is expected however that



students will undertake additional reading and research and agree to complete all self-study requirements that are articulated through the pre-enrolment information provided.

## Workplace Issues

Where DFA delivers its courses in the workplace, DFA complies with the legislative requirements and organisational policies and procedures of the workplace. The only exception to this rule is where the workplace policies and procedures contradict legislative requirements. In such instances, DFA will advise management in the workplace about the issue and cease delivery and assessment until the workplace complies with its legislative requirements.

## Not Fit for Work

Students that are not fit for work (*under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other illegal substances, or falling asleep in class*) or do not have the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will not be allowed to take part in the training course to ensure the work health and safety of staff, students and the detection dogs. Where a student is found to be 'Not Fit For Work' and the training and assessment is being undertaken within the student's workplace, DFA reserves its right to notify the employer that the student has arrived in a state that makes them unfit for work. This situation will then be managed as a workplace issue by the employer. Where such a situation occurs at the DFA facilities, the student will be advised to leave and not return until they are fit for work. There will be no refund of fees if students have missed parts of their course due to not being fit for work.

## Personal Protective Clothing

Students will need full PPE to attend the course. This includes:

- 🐾 Closed-in shoes/boots;
- 🐾 Long sleeve shirt;
- 🐾 Long trousers or overalls;
- 🐾 Safety glasses;
- 🐾 Safety gloves; and
- 🐾 Sun hat or raincoat (and any other wet weather gear) depending on the weather. When additional PPE is required, you will be notified prior to commencement of your course. If the course is on a client site, the employer/site must supply this equipment in order for the course to run.

## Dress and Hygiene Requirements

Students should be dressed in suitable work clothes or uniforms at all times. During training sessions, students are required to:

- 🐾 Have appropriate work clothes or their uniform as relevant at all times;
- 🐾 Ensure that they have all relevant PPE as required for the course (*this will be notified in the Course Information Sheet*);
- 🐾 Due to working in close proximity of others, you should maintain good personal hygiene at all times, for example:
  - 🐾 Ensuring that you maintain safe and correct hand hygiene practices to reduce the chances of transmitting illnesses and viruses such as COVID-19;
  - 🐾 Deodorant - especially after practical training such as kennel cleaning where an increase in physical activity may cause you to transpire (sweat);

- 🐾 Change of clothing or wet weather PPE to protect your clothing while cleaning kennels.

## Security

DFA does not take any responsibility for your property, therefore it is recommended not to bring any valuable items to training, or keep them safely secured in your locker.

## Mobile Phones and Two-Way Radios

All phones and radios must be turned off during training sessions unless they are required to perform the training and assessment activities, as a courtesy to the trainer and assessor and other students. The only exceptions are where their use is required for assessment, or by order of the workplace where you are undertaking work placement or delivery is being undertaken in your workplace and is a requirement of your supervisor. In an emergency where you need to be contacted (e.g. a family member is ill), please advise your Trainer and Assessor so that arrangements can be negotiated.

## Change to Personal Details

Students are required to ensure their personal details are accurately recorded with DFA as soon as possible and within seven (7) days of the change occurring. If your circumstances or details change notify us via email at [info@dogforceaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@dogforceaustralia.com.au). Where the change of personal details is related to a change of identity (e.g. name change), you will be required to provide photographic identification (e.g. a driver's licence), to confirm the change before DFA is able to process that change.

## Media Consent

DFA requests that you complete a *Media Consent Form* for the purpose of using any photos or videos that contain images or text in reference to you.

## Attendance

Attendance is recorded each day. These records are required for both learning and health and safety reasons and where required, reporting to the employer.

It is expected that students arrive to class on time and remain for the full duration. Should it be necessary for you to leave a class early, you must advise your Trainer and Assessor before the class commences. Should it be necessary for you to be absent from training, where possible you must advise the Trainer and Assessor at least 24 hours prior so that other arrangements such as self-paced learning or alternative training dates, can be made.

If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to catch up on any work missed.

## Monitoring

Attendance during your course is critical for you to get the best results. Attendance is recorded at various times throughout the day, each day of the course, regardless of whether this is in a classroom or in your place of employment. The minimum attendance requirement to achieve satisfactory performance is 90%. These records are required for both learning and health and safety reasons.

## Punctuality

As a courtesy to other learners and your Trainer and Assessor, all students must be punctual throughout the training day, including returning from breaks. Punctuality shows respect and is essential to avoid disruption to other students and the Trainer and Assessor.

## Breaks

Your trainer will advise of the timing for all breaks.

## Academic Integrity

Assessment malpractice includes cheating, collusion and plagiarism. DFA regards the integrity of assessment as critical to its professional responsibilities as an RTO but also to the detection dog industry. We focus heavily on academic integrity to ensure that any assessment is not compromised. DFA has policies and procedures in place for dealing with any suspicion of a student demonstrating a lack of, or breach of, academic assessment integrity.

## Cheating

All assessments must be 100% completed by you. Cheating or the use of another person's work or artificial intelligence (AI) programs including, but not limited to for example, ChaptGPT and subsequently submitting that work as your own, is misleading and considered to be cheating. Such conduct will not be tolerated.

## Collusion

Collusion is where you have worked with someone else to produce the same work and/or others copy your work and/or you copy theirs. It is your responsibility to ensure that other students do not have any opportunity to copy your work.

## Plagiarism

Copying from a published work including the Internet, without referencing, will not be tolerated.

This includes presentation of work which has been copied in whole or in part from another person's work or from any other source such as the Internet, published books and periodicals. This includes systematic re-wording or changing key nouns and verbs.

You must follow referencing guidelines if you take another person's idea and put it into your own words. DFA recommends the *APA Referencing System* which can be accessed for free on the University of New South Wales website at <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/how-cite-references-apa-style>.

## Unique Student Identifier

If you are studying nationally recognised training in Australia you need to have a Unique Student Identifier (USI). Your USI links to an online account that contains all your training records and results (transcript) that you have completed from 1 January 2015 onwards. Your results from 2015 onwards should be available in your USI account. For any queries related to your USI, you should see the USI website at <https://www.usi.gov.au/students>. It is important to note that if you have not provided

DFA with your current USI, DFA is compelled by law not to issue any AQF certification documentation.

When applying for a job or enrolling in further study, you will often need to provide your training records and results (transcript). One of the main benefits of the USI is the ability to provide students with easy access to their training records and results throughout their life. You can access your USI account online from your computer, tablet or smart phone anytime.

You will require a USI before enrolling in any DFA training course. It's free and easy to [create your own USI](#).

## Your Equity




DFA is committed to ensuring that the training and assessment environment is free from discrimination and harassment. All DFA staff members (*including contractors*) are aware that discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. In the event that discrimination and harassment is found to have occurred disciplinary action will be taken against any staff member who breaches this policy. Suspected criminal behaviour will be reported to police authorities immediately. Students should expect fair and friendly behaviour from DFA staff members and we apply complaint handling procedures advocated by the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).

Students who feel that they have been discriminated against or harassed should report this information to a staff member of DFA that they feel they can trust. This will initiate a complaint handling procedure which will be fair and transparent and will protect your rights as a complainant. Alternatively, if a student wishes to report an instance of discrimination or harassment to an agency external to DFA, they are advised to contact the HREOC Complaints Info-line on 1300 656 419.

## Your Privacy

As described earlier in this Student Handbook, DFA takes the privacy of students very seriously and complies with all legislative requirements. These include the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth.) and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Here's what you need to know:

-  DFA will retain personal information about you relating to your enrolment with us. This includes your personal details, your ethnicity and individual needs, and your education background. We will also retain records of your training activity and are required to do this in accordance with the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth.).
-  Your personal information is retained within our hard copy filing system and our computer systems. Your information is collected via the enrolment form and through your completion of administrative related forms and based on your training outcomes. Hard copy files are secured in lockable filing cabinets which are monitored throughout the day and secured in the evening. Electronic data retained on our computer systems is protected via secure passwords and multi-factor authentication, virus protection software and firewall protection. Our data is backed up continuously to our server which is secure.
-  DFA is required by the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cth.) to securely retain your training records for a period of thirty (30) years from the date your

enrolment has completed. The purpose of this is to enable your participation in accredited training to be recorded for future reference and to allow you to obtain a record of your outcome if required.

- 🐾 In some cases, we are required by law to make student information available to Government agencies such as the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). In all other cases, DFA will seek the written permission of the student for such disclosure. DFA will not disclose your information to any person or organisation unless we have written instructions from you to do so. If you require your records to be accessed by persons such as your employer, you will need to authorise this access.
- 🐾 You have the right to access information that DFA is retaining that relates to you. Further instructions are provided on how to access records within the section titled 'Access To Your Records'.
- 🐾 If you have any concerns about how DFA is managing your personal information, we encourage you to inform our staff and discuss your concerns. You are also encouraged to make a complaint directly to us using our internal complaint handling arrangements outlined in this handbook. Under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth.), you also have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) about the handling of your personal information. You can find more information about making a privacy complaint at the website of the OAIC located at: <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints>.

## Access To Your Records

You are entitled to have access to your records. These records include your:

- 🐾 Student File;
- 🐾 Learning and Assessment Record;
- 🐾 Administrative Records; and/or
- 🐾 AQF Certificates, including a reissuance of a Statement of Attainment or qualification which has previously been issued.

You may require these records to monitor your progress with training or simply to go back and confirm something in a previous training course. Whilst these records will be retained by DFA, you are welcome to have access anytime, just ask your Trainer and Assessor and it will be organised immediately.

You can access hard copy records and reports from our Student Management System, but only relating to you personally. You can request this access using the *Student Records Request Form*. Access to requested records during a workday will be arranged as soon as possible and wherever possible within 24 business hours. Students should note that these records cannot be taken away unless a copy is requested. Where photocopies are requested, DFA reserves the right to charge a one-off photocopy fee of \$10.00. There is no cost to simply view records at our office.

In the case of accessing a reissuance of a previously issued Statement of Attainment or Qualification certificate if you have lost or misplaced your AQF Certificate, you may obtain a reissued certificate from DFA. To obtain this, you must complete the *Student Records Request Form* and return this to the Office Manager. You may be required to provide photographic identification to confirm that you are the person seeking the requested information. The cost of \$50.00 will apply for each issued AQF

certification document. These monies must be paid in advance. Reissued AQF Certificates will be an exact duplicate of the original with the exception of small wording at the bottom of the document which identifies the certificate as reissued. AQF certificates may only be collected in person or can be posted via Registered Post. A student may also nominate another person to collect the certificate, however you must authorise this in writing and these persons must be notified to DFA beforehand and, upon arrival to collect your certificate, the person must provide photo ID to DFA staff to verify their identity.

## **Enrolment Variations**

Requests for enrolment variations are to be made in writing and can be made at any time. For variations such as a deferral of commencement or transfers to other courses, any enrolment variation is permitted without penalty up to two (2) working days before the program commencement date. Fees may be payable, contact DFA for more information.

## **Statutory Cooling Off Period**

The Standards for Registered Training Organisations require DFA to inform persons considering enrolment of their right to a statutory cooling off period. A statutory cooling off period (which is 10 days) is a period of time provided to a consumer to allow them to withdraw from a consumer agreement, where that agreement was established through unsolicited marketing or sales tactics. These include tactic such as door-to-door sales and telemarketing. A statutory cooling off period allows a consumer to withdraw from a sales agreement within ten (10) days of having received a sale contract without penalty.

It must be noted that DFA does not engage in unsolicited marketing or sales tactics and therefore a statutory cooling off period is not applicable to our students who have enrolled into a program. For refund options in other circumstances, students must refer to the DFA refund policy.

## **Student Cancellation**

Students who cancel their enrolment part way through a training program must notify DFA in writing via email or letter at the soonest opportunity. Students who cancel their enrolment after a training program has commenced will not be entitled to a refund of fees. Students are advised to consider alternative options such as requesting to suspend their enrolment and re-commencing in another scheduled training program.

## **Transfers**

Requests for transfers to alternate programs can be arranged if DFA is advised in writing more than ten (10) working days prior to the program commencement date and there is availability on the selected program. One transfer will be accepted without charge where DFA has been notified in writing at least two (2) working days prior to the scheduled commencement date and DFA does not have to travel any distance of more than 50kms to deliver the training and assessment. This reflects that in such circumstances, DFA will have likely arranged accommodation and other such things where an expense may have occurred. In such circumstances where DFA accumulates such expenses in these scenarios, the student or client will be required to reimburse to DFA the full cost of cancellation of those services. All subsequent transfers will attract an administration charge of \$55.00 (incl. GST) to cover administration costs.

## Refunds

Students, who give notice to cancel their enrolment **ten (10) business days** or more prior to the commencement of a program, will be entitled to a full refund of fees paid. This policy complies with the Australian Consumer Law required statutory cooling off period for the sale of goods and services. It is a requirement under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations that an RTO must allow the minimum statutory cooling off period applicable for the jurisdiction in which they operate. Australian Consumer Law introduced in 2010 has made this consumer protection consistent in all States and Territories.

Students who give notice to cancel their enrolment **nine (9) business days** or less prior to the commencement of a program will be entitled to a 75% refund of fees paid (*subject to the above scenario where accommodation and/or flights, etc. may have been made*). Any further amounts retained (25%) by DFA, will be charged to cover the costs of staff and resources which will have already been committed based on the student's initial intention to undertake the training and assessment. Students who cancel their enrolment after a training program has commenced will not be entitled to a refund of fees.



Where a student has purchased a text or training workbooks and subsequently cancels, DFA will not refund monies for the text.

## Making Complaints and Appeals

DFA is committed to providing a fair and transparent complaints and appeals process that includes access to an independent external body if required.

*Assessment Appeal Review Forms* will be forwarded to another independent trainer and assessor within DFA who is not involved in the original assessment process. If this also results in an unsatisfactory outcome, and the student remains unsatisfied and wishes to also appeal that decision, DFA will refer this appeal to an independent person for a final determination.

To make a complaint or an appeal, you are requested to complete one of the following forms:

-  Complaint Form; or
-  Request for Appeal of a Decision form.

These forms can be obtained by sending your request to [info@dogforceaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@dogforceaustralia.com.au).

Once you have completed the required form, you are requested to submit this to the Director of Operations, either in hard copy or electronically via the following contact details:

Dog Force Australia  
PO Box 709, Picton NSW 2571  
[info@dogforceaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@dogforceaustralia.com.au)

If you are having any difficulty accessing the required form or submitting it to us, please contact us on **0447 809 444**.

## What is a Complaint?

A complaint is negative feedback about services or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by DFA in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students and/or employers.

## What is an Appeal?

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding which might include during training and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be submitted to DFA **within twenty-eight (28) days** of the student being informed of the assessment decision or finding.

## Early Resolution of Complaints and Appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during training and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time, as they occur between the persons involved, where possible. Sometimes, it will not be possible and in these cases, you are encouraged to come forward and inform us of your concerns with the confidence that you will be treated fairly.





## Complaint and Appeals Handling

DFA applies the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- 🐾 Written records of all complaints and appeals are to be kept by DFA, including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. DFA will maintain a *Complaints and Appeals Register* to be used to record the details of the complaint and appeal and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the handling process. Records relating to complaint and/or appeal handling are stored securely to prevent access by unauthorised personnel.
- 🐾 A person making a complaint (complainant) or seeking an appeal (appellant) is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- 🐾 Each person may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- 🐾 The handling of a complaint and/or an appeal is to commence within seven (7) working days of the lodgement of the complaint and/or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- 🐾 The complainant or appellant is to be provided a written response to the complaint and/or appeal, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response must be provided to the person within fourteen (14) days of the lodgement of the complaint and/or appeal.
- 🐾 Complaints and appeals must be resolved to a final outcome within sixty (60) days of the complaint and/or appeal being initially received. Where DFA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) considers that more than sixty (60) calendar days are required to process and finalise the complaint and/or appeal, the CEO must inform the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal in writing, including reasons why more than sixty (60) calendar days are required. As a benchmark, DFA will attempt to resolve complaints and appeals as soon as possible. The timeframe to resolve a complaint or appeal within thirty (30) days is considered acceptable and in the best interests of DFA and the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal. The complainant or appellant should also be provided with regular updates to inform them



of the progress of the complaint or appeal handling. Updates should be provided at a minimum of four (4) weekly intervals.

-  DFA shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant or appellant during the handling process.
-  Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeal handling process that find in the favour of complainants and appellants are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No DFA representative will disclose information to any person without the permission of DFA's CEO. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant or appellant has given permission for this to occur. This permission should be given using the *Information Release Form*.
-  Complaints and appeals are to be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the handling process. This means that the complainant or appellant are entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The complainant or appellant is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally, the decision must be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker must take account of relevant considerations, must act for a proper purpose and must not take into account irrelevant considerations.
-  Further guidance on the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness can be accessed at the following link - [Principles of Natural Justice and Procedural Fairness](#).

## Review by an Independent Person

DFA provides the opportunity for the complainant or appellant who is not satisfied with the outcomes of the complaints and appeals handling process to seek a review by an independent person. In these circumstances, the DFA CEO will advise of an appropriate party independent of DFA to review the complaint (*and its subsequent handling*) and provide advice to DFA in regard to the recommended outcomes.


Where DFA appoints or engages an appropriate independent person to review a complaint or appeal, DFA will meet the full cost to facilitate the independent review. Where the complainant or appellant objects to this appointment and requests to engage a person or organisation they nominate to undertake the review, DFA may seek the complainant or appellant to contribute to the cost of engaging this person and undertaking the review.

Following an independent review, advice received from the independent person is to be accepted by DFA as final, advised to the complainant or appellant in writing and implemented without prejudice.

## Unresolved Complaints and Appeals

Where the complainant or appellant is not satisfied with the handling of the matter by DFA, they have the opportunity for a body that is external to DFA to review his or her complaint or appeal following the internal completion of the complaint or appeals process.

Students who are not satisfied with the process applied by DFA may refer their grievance to the following external agencies:

-  In relation to consumer protection issues, these may be referred to the Office of Fair Trading;
- or

- 🐾 In relation to the delivery of training and assessment services, these may be referred to the National Training Complaints Service via the following phone number - **13 38 73**.

## Fees and Charges

Fees are payable when a student has enrolled in a course and that enrolment has been accepted by DFA. The initial fee payment must be paid prior to commencing training or within ten (10) days of receiving an invoice from DFA. DFA may discontinue training if fees are not paid as required. Please visit our website for current course pricing.

During any enrolment at DFA, there may be a need to charge additional fees or charges. See the table below for some of our fees and charges.

Fees and Charges	Cost (incl. GST)
National Recognition/Credit Transfer Assessment	No Charge
Re-issuing a certificate, qualification or statement of attainment	\$55
Reassessment fee (upon exhaustion of 1 regular attempt)	\$300 [GST Exempt]
Receipt reprint	\$10
Other documents	\$20
Late payment fees (for each late payment)	\$55
Copies of academic reports (progress reports)	\$55
Additional copies or re-issue of Record of Results	\$55
Late marking	\$55
Shipping via Registered Post, Express Post, etc.	At Cost
Phone calls	No charge
Photocopying (per A4 page)	\$0.20
Miscellaneous printing	\$20
All late payment of fees will incur a late payment charge for each late payment	\$55
Payment plan surcharge	At Cost

## Payment Method

DFA accepts payment for fees using:

- 🐾 Credit Card;
- 🐾 Electronic Funds Transfer (account details available on request); or
- 🐾 Cheque (made payable to Dog Force Australia).

Payment in cash is discouraged.

## Replacement of Reading Pack and Training Workbooks

Students who require replacement of issued text or training workbooks will be liable for additional charges. Pricing for this will be advised at the time and will be dependent on what needs to be replaced.

## Delivery and Assessment Methods

DFA uses a variety of training and assessment methods conducive to adult learning and the principles of andragogy. Included in our delivery model is consideration of delivery and assessment methods that are inclusive of internationally recognised best practice training concepts and methods for working with detection dogs both individually and in a team with its handler.

## Flexible Delivery

DFA provides flexible delivery that is usually highly customised to client needs. We focus on recognition as much as possible and facilitating learning rather than '*teaching to you*'. Our goal is to ensure that you have a memorable and high-quality learning experience.

## Our Approach to Assessment










Assessment is an integral part of your learning if you wish to complete successfully and gain certification.

The assessment process will be explained at orientation and throughout your program. Assessors will also be available to you if you have any questions.

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgement on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standards expected in the workplace and as expressed in relevant competency standards.

Throughout the training program you will be assessed to see if you have gained the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the qualification. Your trainer/assessor is required to ensure that the assessment tasks you undertake meet the national principles of assessment and rules of evidence (see below for more information).

Various assessments tasks /activities may include (but not limited to):

-  Observation of performance;
-  Written activities;
-  Written / oral questioning;
-  Oral presentations;
-  Workplace performance;
-  Case studies;
-  Role plays/ simulations;
-  Demonstration of skills; and
-  Portfolio of evidence.

Certification will only be given to students who successfully complete all assessment requirements for a course and have provided DFA with a valid USI.

DFA is required to meet stringent quality requirements in the conduct of all assessments.

DFA has carefully constructed and developed assessment resources to meet these quality requirements, as well as be user friendly to students.

## Course Assessment

There will be assessment tasks set for each course regardless of the learning mode. Assessment activities and expectations will be explained to students and are outlined within the student assessment resources.

## Assessment Methods

At DFA assessment is conducted using a combination of Written Knowledge Assessments (including *Projects* and *Portfolios of Evidence*) and Practical Assessments.

The following provides a brief explanation of the primary assessment methods:

- 🐾 **Written Knowledge Assessment** - The student is required to provide a written response to a range of questions relating to required knowledge of the units of competency. These would generally be short answer response activities, completing case studies, writing reports or completing industry related forms and may include other questioning methods such as multiple-choice.
- 🐾 **Practical Assessment** - The assessor will conduct a number of practical assessments on techniques taught throughout the course.

## The Importance of Attendance

Attendance is a core requisite of achieving satisfactory performance. DFA expects students to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 90%. Students whose attendance is less than 90% will be identified as being 'at-risk' and a meeting will be requested by DFA to discuss the student's attendance concerns and negotiate an intervention strategy to bring the student's performance and course progress back to a satisfactory position.

## Rules of Evidence and Principles of Assessment

DFA is required to ensure that all evidence provided by students, as proof of their competency, meets the following "principles of assessment" and "rules of evidence" from the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015*.

**Table 1.8-1: Principles of Assessment**

<b>Fairness</b>	<p>The individual learner’s needs are considered in the assessment process.</p> <p>Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments are applied by the RTO to take into account the individual learner’s needs.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<p>Assessment is flexible to the individual learner by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✿ Reflecting the learner’s needs;</li> <li>✿ Assessing competencies held by the learner no matter how or where they have been acquired; and</li> <li>✿ 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.</li> </ul>
<b>Validity</b>	<p>Any assessment decision of the RTO is justified, based on the evidence of performance of the individual learner.</p> <p>Validity requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✿ 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;</li> <li>✿ Assessment of knowledge and skills is integrated with their practical application;</li> <li>✿ Assessment to be based on evidence that demonstrates that a learner could demonstrate these skills and knowledge in other similar situations; and</li> <li>✿ Judgement of competence is based on evidence of learner performance that is aligned to the unit/s of competency and associated assessment requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Reliability</b>	<p>Evidence presented for assessment is consistently interpreted and assessment results are comparable irrespective of the assessor conducting the assessment.</p>

**Table 1.8-2: Rules of Evidence**

<b>Validity</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Sufficiency</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>Authenticity</b>	<p>The assessor is assured that the evidence presented for assessment is the learner’s own work.</p>
<b>Currency</b>	<p>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.</p>

## Presentation of Assessments/ Assignments

- 🐾 All assessments will detail how an assessment is to be submitted.
- 🐾 Handwritten assessments are accepted if the assessment conditions and instructions have allowed for it, however handwriting must be clear and easy to read. Where the assessment instructions provide a requirement to submit a specific template with specific presentation requirements for example, those instructions and conditions apply and handwritten assessments will not be accepted.
- 🐾 We endeavour to assess all assessments within ten (10) working days of receipt.
- 🐾 Students are entitled to one (1) resubmission assessment. If the re-submission is still deemed 'Not Yet Competent' (NYC), students may be offered the opportunity to re-submit at a fee. No further re-submits are allowed. Students must re-enrol in the course again, paying the full course fee of the day.

## Assessment Results

Results of assessment are provided to students as soon as is practical. Assessment results are confidential at all times and will not be given to a third party, including an employer, unless a written request signed by the student is received.

## Reassessment

Students who are assessed as not yet satisfactory or not yet competent are to be provided with detailed verbal and written feedback to assist them to identify the gaps in their knowledge and skills to be addressed through further training. These students are to be provided with additional training and learning support to target their specific gaps in knowledge and/or skills and prepare them for additional assessment.

It is the policy of DFA to provide one further opportunity for additional training and reassessment at no additional cost to the student or employer. Students who require additional training and reassessment after they have exhausted their second opportunity will be required to pay a fee for additional training and reassessment. Please refer to the current fee schedule to identify the reassessment fee.

Students requiring additional learning support are to be brought to the attention of DFA management so the progress of the student can be monitored closely and additional support services can be applied well before it becomes necessary to impose an additional fee for reassessment. Where students repeatedly do not demonstrate competence following significant learning and assessment support, a student's enrolment can be varied, which may include termination, through mutual agreement.

## Student Support

DFA understands that there may be times when personal issues may affect your ability to undertake your training. DFA has identified a number of support services for students who have special needs or require additional support and assistance to undertake or complete their learning.

## Pre-Training Review and Individual Learning Plan

All students will have a *Pre-Training Review and Individual Learning Plan* that will be customised to their own individual course flow. In other words, this document follows the student from enrolment

right through to certification and includes any individual needs that you may have disclosed or that have been identified by DFA and include any recognition that has been granted and applied to your learning pathway.

## Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy (LLND) Skills

LLND skills are critical to almost all areas of work. This is particularly true in many vocations where LLND skills influence the performance of workplace tasks such as measuring, weighing and comprehending written work instructions, and updating computerised work records. These skills are also critical for successful learning.

To support this approach, DFA will:

- 🐾 Assess a student's language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills during their enrolment to ensure they have adequate skills to complete the training;
- 🐾 Support students during their study with training and assessment materials and strategies that are easily understood and suitable to the level of the workplace skills being delivered;
- 🐾 Provide clear information to students about the details of the language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills assistance available. DFA generally recommends the LLND training courses provided by TAFE. These institutes have specialist teachers to support the student's LLND development.
- 🐾 Refer students to external language, literacy and numeracy support services that are beyond the support available within DFA and where this level of support is assessed as necessary; and
- 🐾 Negotiate an extension of time to complete training programs if necessary.

Everywhere around us, technology is increasing at often alarming speeds and it can be challenging to keep up! A large part of the work that biosecurity dog handlers do is now captured online on servers, in the cloud and requires the use of the internet, emails, printers and databases.

The courses at DFA integrate the use of technology so that it aligns with industry expectations and job requirements. Generally speaking, the digital literacy requirements of our courses are not so significant that a large number of people would need additional training just to be able to use a computer. There are several methods that DFA will use to confirm that you have sufficient digital literacy skills to complete the course requirements. These include a self-assessment and pre-training review, the completion of an online LLND assessment and through monitoring your performance using technology. DFA considers that if a student can complete the LLND assessment it requires of students, then the student has sufficient digital literacy skills to enable them to complete the course. Where it is suspected that students do not have sufficient digital literacy, they will either obtain one-on-one support from the trainer and assessor where possible or, alternatively, be referred to an external service provider.

## Special Needs

Students intending to enrol for training with DFA are asked to advise us if they have any physical or other impairment (e.g. English language, literacy or numeracy difficulties, dyslexia) which may adversely affect their ability to successfully undertake training and assessment, prior to enrolment.

Students with disabilities or impairments are encouraged to discuss with the Trainer and Assessor any '*special needs*' and/or '*reasonable adjustments*' to the study environment which they consider are necessary or would assist them in the performance of their studies.

Due to Work Health and Safety legislation and the requirements of the job, the student needs to be able to, by way of example, undertake the following physical duties:

- 🐾 Clean kennels;
- 🐾 Stand for long periods of time;
- 🐾 Engage in the canine's exercise and conditioning plans;
- 🐾 Transport canines whose weight varies depending on the detector dog but may reach up to 30 kgs; and
- 🐾 Lifting, pushing and pulling in accordance with Safe Work Australia Guidelines.

The Trainer and Assessor, in collaboration with the student, will assess the potential for the student to successfully complete the training which may include flexible delivery options and reasonable adjustments to optimise the ease and benefit of the student's learning.

## Medical and Special Needs

DFA asks that you advise your Trainer and Assessor confidentially of any medical or special needs so that they can be accommodated. You will also be provided with a *Confidential Medical Information Form* and an *Emergency Contact Details Form* in the event that there is an emergency during training. These will be provided to you on Day 1 and you will be asked to return them on Day 2.

## Reasonable Adjustments

Students with disabilities are encouraged to discuss with DFA any '*reasonable adjustments*' to learning and assessment processes which they consider would be necessary or assist them in the performance of their studies.

Careful consideration will be given to any requests for reasonable adjustments, and, where reasonably practicable, such adjustments will be made. There may however be circumstances where it will not be reasonably practicable for DFA to accommodate reasonable adjustments, or where other adjustments may be more appropriate. Reasonable adjustments cannot compromise the integrity of competency based training and assessment.

## Extensions for Assessment

It is expected that all assessment tasks are handed in on the due date. Should you require additional time to complete an assessment you must communicate with your assessor and apply for an extension before the due date. Applying on the due date for an extension is unlikely to be approved unless the student can demonstrate compassionate and compelling circumstances such as being in hospital or the death of a family member.

## Course Progress

You are required to maintain satisfactory course progress at all times. This includes ensuring that you always attend and participate in all scheduled training and assessment activities, submitting assessments on time and ensuring that you participate thoroughly in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to maximise your opportunity for recognition where it assists. In the event that you do not maintain satisfactory course progress and/or it would appear that you might be at



risk of unsatisfactory course progress, DFA will request that you attend an intervention meeting so that support can be negotiated to bring you back up to satisfactory performance.

## Mentoring & Guidance

DFA can provide students with mentoring, coaching and guidance on course content, as well as effective learning and study techniques.

## Recognition of Your Existing Skills and Knowledge

In accordance with the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, DFA provides the opportunity for students to apply to have prior learning recognised toward a qualification or units of competency for which they are enrolled.

### What Is Recognition?

Recognition involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. Recognition assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a unit of competency, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, recognition encourages an individual to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes. This has benefits for the individual and industry.

Most importantly, it should be noted that recognition is simply another form of assessment. This does not necessarily mean that it is easier or quicker.

### Recognition Guidelines

The following guidelines are to be followed when an application for recognition is received:

- 🐾 Any student is entitled to apply for recognition in a course or qualification in which they are currently enrolled.
- 🐾 Students may not apply for recognition for units of competency or a qualification which are not included in DFA's scope of registration.
- 🐾 Whilst students may apply for recognition at any time, they are encouraged to apply before commencing a training program. This will reduce unnecessary training and guide the student down a more efficient path to demonstrating competence.
- 🐾 Students who are currently enrolled in a training program are eligible to apply for recognition in that program at no additional charge. There may be costs however in DFA assessing any application for recognition of prior learning.
- 🐾 Assessment via recognition is to apply the principles of assessment and the rules of evidence using an assessment only pathway. Where gaps are identified, the gaps need to be addressed before competency can be granted.
- 🐾 Recognition may only be awarded for whole units of competency.

### Forms of Evidence for Recognition

Recognition acknowledges that workplace skills and knowledge may be gained through a variety of ways including both formal and informal learning or through work-based or life experience.

Like assessment, recognition is a process whereby evidence is collected, and a judgement is made by an assessor or assessment team. The judgement is made based on evidence provided by students of the skills and knowledge that they have previously learnt through work, study, life and other experiences, and that they are currently using. It also includes evidence to confirm a student's ability to adapt prior learning or current competence to the context of the intended workplace or industry.

Forms of evidence toward recognition may include:

- 🐾 Work records;
- 🐾 Records of workplace training;
- 🐾 Assessments of current skills;
- 🐾 Assessments of current knowledge;
- 🐾 Third party reports from current and previous supervisors or managers;
- 🐾 Evidence of relevant unpaid or volunteer experience;
- 🐾 Examples of work products;
- 🐾 Observation by an assessor in the workplace;
- 🐾 Performance appraisal; and
- 🐾 Duty statements.

**Note:** *Many of these forms of evidence would not be sufficient on their own.*

When combined together with a number of evidence items, the student will start to provide a strong case for competence. DFA reserves the right to require students to undertake practical assessment activities of skills and knowledge in order to satisfy itself of a student's current competence and to authenticate and satisfy itself of the authenticity of evidence provided.

## What Is National Recognition?

National Recognition is the recognition of learning achieved through formal education and training. Under the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015*, qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any RTO are to be accepted and recognised by all other RTOs. National recognition allows a student to be awarded a unit of competency/module based on successful completion of the unit which has been previously awarded. Units of competency are also endorsed as being equivalent or not equivalent and this factor may mean that there is a gap that you will need to demonstrate evidence against where you are seeking recognition of an older unit of competency.

## Evidence Requirements

If you are seeking National Recognition, you are required to present original copies of any statements of attainment or qualifications that you are relying upon for assessment by DFA. Alternatively, where the training and assessment has been registered on the USI register, you may provide an authenticated USI transcript.

These documents will provide the detail of what units of competency you have been previously issued. You must provide satisfactory evidence that the statement of attainment or qualification is authentic, is yours and that it has been issued by an Australian RTO. Statements of attainment or qualifications should be in the correct format as outlined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

National Recognition may only be awarded for whole units of competence. Where a mapping guide identifies a partial credit, this will not be considered for National Recognition and applicants will be advised to seek recognition.

## Issuing Qualifications and Statements of Attainment

DFA will issue all AQF certification documentation (*Qualifications and Statements of Attainment*) to a student within thirty (30) calendar days of the student being assessed as meeting the requirements of the training product. To satisfy the requirements, students must complete the training program in which they are enrolled, have paid all fees the student owes to DFA, and DFA has been provided with the student's USI.

## Continuous Improvement

DFA is committed to the continuous improvement of our training and assessment services, student services and management systems. Central to this commitment is our approach to continuous improvement and the procedures we apply to achieve systematic and sustained improvement.

## Suggesting Improvements

The primary method of reporting opportunities for improvement by students is via the continuous improvement reporting procedure. This procedure allows any person to raise a *Continuous Improvement Report* for consideration by the CEO. Often these reports will be generated after an opportunity for improvement has been identified by a staff member or student. The *Continuous Improvement Report* template is available on request. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to DFA so we can improve our services in the future.

## Student Satisfaction Survey

At the completion of your training program, you will be issued with a Student Satisfaction Survey link by email. This is a nationally consistent survey tool which is designed to collect feedback from students about their experience with an RTO and in undertaking nationally recognised training. Your completion and return of this survey are important to DFA for our ongoing improvement of services and to enable us to report this information to our registering authority. Your assistance in gathering this survey data is greatly appreciated.

## Thank You for Training with Us!

DFA would like to thank you for selecting to train with us and we hope that you enjoy your learning journey.

If you find that there is an area where we could do something better, please don't hesitate to let us know. We love your feedback because it helps us provide a better learning experience for all of our students!