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1. Access and Equity Policy on Provision of Training Services

Rationale
Lifeline is committed to ensuring that Access and Equity principles are applied to all training activities. Lifeline complies with relevant Equal Opportunity Legislation and the ACT Discrimination Act 1991. RTO Designated Sites operating outside of the ACT must comply with their relevant State or Territory Legislation. All personnel are aware of, and adhere to, these principles.

Policy
In accordance with the ACT Discrimination Act 1991, no individual participant will be discriminated against (and access to courses will not be limited) on the basis of:

- Sex;
- Sexuality;
- Trans-sexuality;
- Relationship status;
- Status as a parent or carer;
- Pregnancy;
- Breastfeeding;
- Race;
- Religious or political conviction;
- Disability;
- Membership or non-membership of an association or organisation of employers or employees; and
- Age

All participants will be recruited in an ethical and responsible manner which promotes inclusiveness and is consistent with the National Training Package. The dignity and privacy of an individual will be respected at all times.

An individual may be discriminated against in the provision of courses/services if:

- It is based on a genuine occupational qualification, or requirement in relation to a particular position;
- Where the provision of courses/services requires special services and facilities the supply of which would impose unjustifiable hardship;
- It is for the purpose of carrying such courses/services for the benefit of a group which is disadvantaged or has a special need because of a prescribed attribute;
- Where a person has a criminal history which impacts on the requirements of the course/service being provided; or
- A Student requires delivery in a language other than that being offered by Lifeline in accordance with the relevant Training Package.

Lifeline acknowledges that Students come to the program with a wealth of personal knowledge and life experiences. It provides an entry point to further/ higher/ vocational education by offering accredited or non-accredited courses and culturally appropriate teaching resources that are relevant to Student needs and circumstances. It is not reliant on success or failure at school, is self-paced, negotiable and flexible. Students will be encouraged to be involved in their own feedback and the decision making processes regarding realistic goals and progress.
Students will have every opportunity to maximise their training and learning experience. Where there is perceived difficulty in achieving learning goals, discussion with the Student will be encouraged. Information will be provided about possible alternative pathways to achieve goals, options/choices to overcome barriers and ways to access a supportive network. This information will vary according to the individual needs of the Student.

Assessment is confidential and focuses on the Student’s strengths. Assessment is flexible, uses a variety of tools and includes suggestions and negotiation about future goals and development.

Lifeline provides a safe environment that enables risk-taking, the opportunity to change, is encouraging and supportive allowing regular contact with peers and personnel in familiar surroundings. Open and honest communication enables growth in self-esteem and self-concept.
2. RTO Complaints and Appeals Policy

Definition
This policy applies to complaints generated by a Student of Lifeline’s training services. A complaint may be about anything done, or not done (including assessment), by management, personnel or other Students of Lifeline, which the Student feels has been unfair or unjust. The complaint may also be about but not limited to, discrimination, harassment, or any other decision or behaviour which is thought to be unfair, unjust or upsetting.

Policy
Lifeline has a positive attitude towards complaints. Complaints give us the opportunity to develop the quality of our services and accordingly, each RTO Designated Site has a Complaints Policy which complies with the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2012.

Students are encouraged to complain when they are dissatisfied and/or would like to see further improvement in training and service delivery.

A complaint may be lodged in person or by telephone, fax, electronically or by letter. A verbal complaint may subsequently need to be made in writing to enable a full investigation. Those with special needs, such as people with limited English language or literacy skills and those with a disability will not be disadvantaged in the complaints process. The complaints process will be free of charge.

Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the outcome of the complaints will be recorded and registered in the complaints register at National Office.

Complaints will be used to inform Lifeline and RTO Designated Sites continuous improvement processes.

Principles
The following principles underpin the process for responding to complaints about VET quality.

- Principle 1 – Equitable: Complaints are considered in a transparent, objective and unbiased manner. The complaints-handling process incorporates the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

- Principle 2 – Accessible: Information about the complaints-handling process and the means to lodge a complaint is readily accessible and available on ASQA website www.asqa.gov.au

- Principle 3 – Comprehensive: The relevant circumstances and information surrounding a complaint are investigated to the level warranted by the severity of the complaint.

- Principle 4 – Responsive: Timeframes for investigating and resolving complaints will be set and monitored.

- Principle 5 – Accountable: There is appropriate national monitoring of complaints through regular reporting of complaints received and actions taken. The complaints-handling process is reviewed regularly.

- Principle 6 – Confidential: Confidentiality is maintained and anonymity preserved where requested. Complainants will be informed where this may limit the extent
to which a complaint can be investigated.

Procedure
All personnel will be equipped to respond to complaints constructively. The process for making a complaint is simple and usually involves:

- Talking to a Designated Site Trainer or Assessor;
- Talking to the Manager of the Designated Site;
- Writing a letter; and/or
- Providing feedback on an evaluation form.

Appeal Process
If a Student making a complaint is unsatisfied with the response from the Designated Site they may approach National Office with the written complaint for advice as to an appropriate way forward. The CEO or delegate of Lifeline Australia will advise whether it would be appropriate for Lifeline Australia to take any action or whether the complaint should be referred to a relevant external body – eg. the Ombudsman, a professional body such as the Australian Association of Social Workers or the Anti-Discrimination Board.

Steps to Complain
1. Approach the person concerned
Make every attempt to solve the problem with the person involved.
If the matter remains unresolved,
2. Approach the Training Manager
The Training Manager is responsible for investigating a complaint or appeal and recommending the appropriate response or action.
If the complaint is about a specific individual, the Training Manager’s response will include:

- Informing the person about whom the complaint is made and seeking their views and perspective;
- Giving consideration to the use of a mediator; and
- Informing the complainant/appellant of the outcome of the complaint in a timely manner.
If the matter remains unresolved,
3. Approach the Designated Site Manager
If you are unhappy with the response or action taken you should now direct your complaint or appeal in writing to the Designated Site Manager.

The Designated Site Manager will investigate the matter, which will include an opportunity for the Student to personally address the problem and report back to the Student in a timely manner.
Each complaint or appeal and its outcome must be recorded in writing and registered with National Office.

If agreement is not reached you may:

4. **Approach Lifeline Australia**
   Complaints must be in writing and addressed to:
   Lifeline Australia  
   PO Box 173  
   Deakin West ACT 2600  
   Senior personnel at Lifeline Australia will investigate the complaint and provide a written response in a timely manner.

If Agreement is not reached you may:

5. **Refer your complaint to the Ombudsman in your State or Territory:**

   **ACT:**  [www.ombudsman.act.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.act.gov.au)
   **NSW:**  [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au)
   **NT:**  [www.omb-hcsc.c_nt.gov.au](http://www.omb-hcsc.c_nt.gov.au)
   **TAS:**  [www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au)
   **WA:**  [www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au)
   **QLD:**  [www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.qld.gov.au)
   **VIC:**  [www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au)
   **SA:**  [www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au](http://www.trainingadvocate.sa.gov.au)
RTO Complaints & Appeals Process

Approach the person concerned
Make every attempt to solve the problem with the person involved

Approach the Training Manager
Complete the RTO Designated Site Complaint Form

Approach RTO Designated Site Manager

Approach Lifeline Australia
Complaint must be in writing and sent to National Office

Refer the complaint to
The Ombudsman in your State or Territory

Issue discussed and resolved
3. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Lifeline is committed to ensuring that all personnel enjoy equal employment opportunity (EEO). Accordingly each Designated Site has a policy which complies with all EEO legislation.

Lifeline is committed to providing a work environment in which personnel feel that they are a valued member of the organisation and that they are treated fairly, and are given recognition for their contribution to the organisation's achievements and success.

Lifeline aims to provide an environment that fosters good working relationships and will recognise the value of diversity in the workplace.

EEO applies to all aspects of employment relationships, including: recruitment, promotion, employee benefits, and conditions of employment, remuneration, transfer, discipline, training, work environment, supervision and termination of employment.

In every RTO Designated Site there must be a designated person with authority to ensure that this policy is properly implemented.
4. Harassment Policy

Lifeline fully and actively supports the rights of all Personnel and Students to work and train in an environment free from harassment. All forms of discrimination and sexual harassment are considered to be totally unacceptable. Accordingly all Designated Sites will adhere to this Harassment Policy.

Lifeline is committed to the principles and requirements of the Equal Opportunity Act and the Sex Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) and to ensuring that any and all matters relating to harassment are dealt with speedily, sensitively, equitably, confidentially and according to proper process.

Lifeline affirms the importance and contribution of a harassment free environment to effective work and training. It also acknowledges the detrimental effect such harassment can have on a person’s physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any person who displays sexual harassment against any individual. Discipline may involve a warning, counselling, demotion or dismissal depending on the circumstances.

Lifeline recognises that:

- It is the responsibility of the CEO, in cooperation with Management and personnel at the Designated Site, to take all reasonable steps to ensure personnel and Students are not subject to harassment;
- A safe and respectful environment encompasses principles and practices of both mutual care and a taking of responsibility for supporting individuals within the organisation;
- For policies on harassment to be effective, they must be properly made known to all members of the organisation together with the processes and procedures involved in implementation of policies;
- It is the right of personnel and Students to utilise diverse structures including, for example, Equal Opportunities, Commission, Unions, etc.

Even though the CEO, Management and personnel will make every effort to prevent harassment, incidents may occur which require action in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in this document.

Principles in dealing with cases of harassment:

- Rapid response;
- Assurance of confidentiality for all parties;
- Encouragement of and assistance in a self-help approach to resolution while ensuring that all avenues of action are made accessible;
- Empowerment of a person who has been subject to harassment;
- Respectful dealing of both complainant and respondent;
- An emphasis on an educative, non-punitive approach;
- Provision of information to all parties in relation to their rights and obligations;
- Established processes for resolving the incident;
- Monitoring of any resolution agreement to ensure that: the complainant is not further disadvantaged; and
- Assurance that the respondent has been respectfully and justly dealt with.
- Both parties have civil rights of appeal to the Australian Human Rights Commission.
In the case of dismissal personnel or Students may choose to utilise wrongful dismissal proceedings.
5. **Student Refund Policy**

Designated Sites must offer fair and reasonable refund arrangements for all Students undertaking training in the organisation.

The following procedure applies where Students are undertaking assessment for a qualification:

1. Conduct information interview with Assessor or group orientation.
2. Complete application form for assessment.
3. Fee is paid and Student issued with a date stamped receipt as proof of receipt of monies. All fees paid in advance are held in a separate cost centre account.
4. If withdrawing from the process a refund less 10% administration fee will be given up to two weeks after receipt of payment. All material issued must be returned.
5. A time log will be kept for each Student.
6. If a Student should withdraw from the training course under special circumstances, a part refund may be made, based on notice given and costs already incurred by the Designated Site.
7. Should a Student be asked to withdraw from the training program a part refund may be made, based on notice given and costs already incurred by the Designated Site.
6. Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Introduction
The following Policies and Procedures with regard to health, safety and the environment apply to all Lifeline training personnel and Students engaged in training activities of the RTO Designated Site.

Duty of care
Duty of care is a legal responsibility, requiring all training personnel and Students to act responsibly and work in accordance with the safety requirements set by regulations and by Lifeline. All training personnel and Students must take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others and cooperate with RTO Designated Site training personnel in their efforts to comply with health and safety requirements. All related accidents and injuries must be reported to the Training Manager or Designated Site Manager immediately.

Lifeline's operations and services comply with all legislative requirements and the organisation strives to continuously improve WH & S performance on an ongoing basis.

Lifeline’s responsibility to all training personnel and Students is to:
- Provide a safe and well maintained work area;
- Implement new WH & S requirements when introduced as well as monitoring and improving existing procedures; and
- Provide effective support and rehabilitation for training personnel who are injured whilst at work.

Lifeline training personnel should ensure:
- Work and training areas are clean, tidy and free of obstruction at all times; and
- Centre WH & S Policy is adhered to.

Policy
Lifeline supports and undertakes to comply with relevant Workplace Health and Safety Legislation and as such Designated Sites must have a Workplace Health and Safety Policy. Lifeline management and all training personnel take responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work and training environment and will ensure that business is conducted in an environmentally sound manner.

In implementing the Code of Practice detailed in the Work Health and Safety Act, Designated Sites will take all reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of training personnel and Students at each site.

Lifeline supports a specific preventive strategy for control of health and safety issues in the workplace comprising:
- Detection and assessment of problems through training personnel and team meetings; and
- Monitoring the effectiveness of changes implemented.

In fulfilling the objectives of this Policy, management is committed to regular consultation with training personnel and Students to ensure that the policy is reviewed regularly along with health and safety issues.
A summary of the relevant Worker’s Compensation Act will be displayed in the Designated Site and will contain the Designated Site’s details, including the name and address of the Designated Site’s insurer and the details of the rehabilitation policy. Lifeline training personnel will be made aware of their responsibility to comply with Work
Health and Safety Standards, regulations and relevant Codes of Practice through induction and ongoing training.

**Emergency/Evacuation Procedures**
Students will be made aware of all emergency and evacuation procedures at the first training session.
7. **RPL Procedure**

**Evidence**
Evidence must be matched with the performance criteria outlined in each element within a unit of competency in a Training Package or the module learning outcomes of a Training Program.

Some examples of evidence may include:

- Current Certificates or Academic Transcripts;
- Current peer assessment/outline of skills;
- Documentation of training courses or seminars attended;
- A Video demonstration of competency;
- A lesson/session plan;
- Course or training program developed;
- Peer evaluations or statements;
- Examples of material produced relevant to competencies;
- Examples of material produced as a part of life experience; and
- Completed appropriate RPL assessment tool.

**Steps involved with RPL**

**Group or Individual session** - Confirm the requirements for addressing the performance criteria or meeting learning outcomes. Students will be informed of:

- Application procedures;
- Process;
- Time lines;
- Support available; and
- Complaints & Appeals Procedure.

Students must compile a portfolio of materials (self-assessment) that contains written evidence which must be:

- Valid;
- Authentic;
- Sufficient;
- Current; and
- Reliable.

Verbal evidence will also be sought.

**Interviews** - The Assessor will evaluate the Portfolio of Evidence supplied by the Student. An interview will then be held to further evaluate the Student’s level of competency through their demonstrated skills. Following are the possible outcomes resulting from an evaluation of the Student’s Portfolio of Evidence:

- Status granted;
- Attend selected and/or agreed training sessions as defined by a Skills Development Strategy designed in accordance with the Student’s specific needs;
- Unit of Competency achieved; or
- Issuance of Qualifications or Statements of Attainment.
Feedback will be provided to the Student in a timely manner concerning the outcome of the assessment of their application for RPL.

**Certificates** - When a Student has successfully demonstrated competence the Student will be deemed competent in the required Units of Competency. Certification includes:

- A Statement of Attainment – Formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO that a person has achieved part of an AQF qualification; or one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed Training Package.; or

- A Qualification – Formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO that a person has satisfied all requirements of the units of competency that comprise an AQF qualification.

Once a Student has been recognised as competent, the RTO Designated Site must submit to National Office:

- A signed copy of their Record of Competency; and
- A Notification of Eligibility for a Qualification Form.

National Office will issue the Student with a certificate.
RPL Process

RTO Designated Site conducts Information Session

Student to Compile a Portfolio of Evidence

Student to Submit Portfolio of Evidence to Training Manager

Assessor Reviews Portfolio of Evidence

Student interview with Assessor

Feedback provided to Student

Skills development strategy developed

Competency achieved

Not Yet Competent

Issuance of Qualification or Statement of Attainment
8. Student Enrolment Procedure

1. Designated Sites will conduct interviews of potential Students who wish to become Lifeline Crisis Supporters. Once the Student has been accepted, an Enrolment Application is completed. Designated Sites will give the Student the Pre-enrolment Information Package. Designated Sites will enrol Students into the RTO Database. Students then enrol themselves into e-learning (Moodle) and update their RTO Database details. The census date is after Module 2. Designated Sites are responsible for advising the National Office Training Team of any Students who have withdrawn prior to the Census date for invoicing purposes.

2. Designated Sites need to fill out the Record of Competency and the Notification of Eligibility for a Qualification Form before qualifications (Certificate IV or a Statement of Attainment) can be issued.
9. Termination Procedure

Where it has been deemed that a Student’s performance or behaviour is of concern, the training manager will meet with the Student to discuss their concerns and reiterate the Student’s obligations and the expectations held regarding their behaviour and performance.

Depending on the issue and the level of concern, the Designated Site may elect to instigate one, or over time, all of the following options:

- Issue a verbal warning regarding the Students’ behaviour or performance and the possibility of termination from the course;
- Issue a written warning and/or
- Instantly dismiss the Student from the course.

It is the responsibility of the RTO Designated Site to fully document and file all processes associated with a termination of tuition procedure for future reference if required.