

Client/ Participants

# HANDBOOK

A GUIDE TO THE  
ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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## INTRODUCTION:

Adventure Resources And Promotion Services (ARAPS) and Outdoor Training College (OTC) deliver a range of different courses to people who wish to gain a qualification of further education.

Our Trainer and assessors are highly qualified and have extensive experience. We are here to support the client/ participant throughout our training programs and we hope you have an enjoyable learning experience.

## THE AUSTRALIAN QUALITY TRAINING FRAMEWORK (AQTF Standards)

You are about to consider becoming a client/ participant in the process that can result in achieving a nationally accredited qualification.

These qualifications can only be delivered to you by an organisation that has met the requirements of the Vocational Education and Accreditation Board, within their accrediting state or territory and which has the qualification within their delivery scope

These requirements are defined in the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). The Vocational Educational and Accreditation Board in each state and territory audits Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) to ensure compliance against these standards

The requirements are arranged in the AQTF Framework standards and are contained in the "Australia Quality Training Framework, Standards for Registered Training Organisations".

These standards and the auditing process are intended to provide the basis for a nationally consistent, high quality vocational education and training system.

If you have any questions regarding the AQTF, State or Territory accreditation bodies or the content of these standard please contact ARAPS, OTC or Above & Below Adventure Company who will be able to assist

## GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

### PRINCIPLES FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

All qualified assessors will have achieved competence in the National Assessment and Workplace Training Competency Standards, or equivalent. The sport and recreation industries must assume that any such qualified assessor will understand the process for conducting assessments as detailed in those standards.

The guidelines for conducting assessments should be based on the following principles:

- The assessor must ensure that the assessment is consistent with the principles of validity, equity, authenticity and sufficiency.
- The person to be assessed must understand:
  - What is to be assessed
  - How it is to be assessed
  - Where and when the assessment is to occur.
- The person being assessed must be aware of
  - Their options for re-assessment
  - The assessment appeals process.
- The assessor must provide feedback to the person being assessed, identify any missing evidence of competence and provide advice on how to overcome the skills gap.
- The assessor must record the outcome of the assessment:
  - On a document for the person being assessed, **and**
  - On the Registered Training Organisations' documentation.

## PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is used for a wide range of purposes both within a competency-based training system and related applications spanning both the workplace and training institutions. It is often a cooperative activity between training providers and the training and supervisory staff in workplaces. In many assessment arrangements, persons carrying out assessment work in close cooperation with the person being assessed.

Typical purposes or applications of assessment may include:

- Recognition of Current Competence;
- Recognition of Prior Learning;
- Monitoring progress during training;
- Evaluating performance at the completion of training;
- Statutory qualifications requirements;
- Identifying training and development needs;
- As a basis for guidance in career planning and progression;
- Industrial qualifications, eg, promotion and related issues;
- An objective benchmark for formal performance appraisal and review;
- Personal feedback on performance of workplace activities; and
- In recruitment and selection of personnel.

Usually an assessment scheme will serve a number of purposes. A package of techniques or methods is usually required to effectively achieve these purposes.

Prior to selecting a competency-based assessment process, it is most important that the purpose of the assessment is clearly identified.

A clear understanding of the purposes of the assessment by all involved will ensure a better basis for selecting, developing and using the most appropriate assessment procedures and instruments to be used.

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

All assessments conducted by us will:

Comply with the assessment guidelines defined in the relevant nationally endorsed training package. In the case of our qualifications we will ensure that the competency assessment is determined by a vocational competent assessor who holds the Workplace Training and Assessment Training Package, TAA40104 (or versions that may supersede this Training Package)

Our assessments, within our RTO will lead to the issuing of a statement of attainment or to the issuing of a qualification under the AQF where a person is assessed as competent against the National Endorsed units of competency in the applicable training package.

All of our Assessments will be:

- **Valid** – Assessment methods will be valid, that is, they will assess what they claim to assess.
- **Reliable**- Assessment procedures must be reliable, that is, they must result in consistent interpretation of evidence from the learner and from context to context.
- **Fair** – Assessment procedure will be fair, so as not disadvantage any learner.

Assessment procedure will:

- Be equitable, culturally and linguistically appropriate
- Involve procedures in which criteria for judging performance are made clear to all clients/ participants
- Employ a participatory approach
- Provide for clients/ participants to undertake assessments at appropriate times and where required in appropriate locations.

- **Flexible** - Assessment procedures will be flexible, that is, they should involve a variety of methods that depend on the circumstances surrounding the assessment. Will not disadvantage particular learners.

We will achieve this through:

- Careful design of the assessments
- Validation and moderation of the assessment materials conducted in our annual review
- An understanding of the definition and practical application of the above definitions.

## **PREPARE ASSESSMENT**

### **Establish the context of assessment**

- Discuss the purpose of assessment with the Client/ participant and confirm that it is understood.
- Obtain and explain to the Client/ participant the relevant performance measures applying to assessment (e.g., current endorsed competency standards, learning outcomes).
- Identify and explain any legal and ethical responsibilities associated with assessment to the Client/ participant.
- Explain and obtain agreement to the assessment procedure.

### **Plan evidence gathering opportunities**

- Identify opportunities to gather evidence of competence which occur as part of the workplace or training activities.
- Identify the need to gather additional evidence which may not occur as part of workplace or training activities.
- Explain to the Client/ participant what evidence will be looked at to constitute each competency.
- Select the techniques that will be used to assess the employees/learner's knowledge and skill.
- Ensure the planned approach to gathering evidence will provide sufficient, reliable, valid and fair evidence of competence.

### **Organise assessment**

- Obtain the appropriate resources. Practical assessment should preferably be conducted on-site. If on-site practical assessment is not possible off-site assessment at a mutually agreeable site could be appropriate. It can be by observation of current tasks or a demonstration via a simulated task.
- Inform the relevant people of assessment plans.
- Check that the assessment environment permits fair, valid and reliable assessment and that it is safe and accessible.
- Explain the assessment arrangements and requirements simply and clearly to the Client/ participant and confirm that it is agreed and understood.

## **CONDUCT ASSESSMENT**

### **Gather evidence**

- Gather evidence in accordance with agreed competency standards and in accordance with the assessment procedure, using specified methods and tools.
- Document the evidence gathered in accordance with the assessment procedure.
- Ensure evidence gathered is valid, reliable and consistent.

### **Make assessment decision**

- Evaluate the evidence gathered in terms of its:
  - Validity
  - Authenticity
  - Sufficiency
  - Currency
  - Consistent achievement of the specified standard.
- Make the assessment decision in accordance with the criteria specified in the assessment procedure.
- Seek guidance, if in doubt, from a more experienced assessor nominated in the assessment procedure.

### **Provide feedback and advise the result**

- Put the client/ participant at ease throughout assessment.
- Give clear and constructive feedback to the client/ participant where appropriate.
- Discuss progress with client/ participant (if appropriate).
- Discuss with the client/ participant ways of overcoming any gaps in their competency revealed by assessment and give guidance on further training opportunities, if appropriate.
- Supply the client/ participant with a record of the assessment outcome at the completion of an assessment.
- Advise and confirm with the client/ participant reassessment opportunities and/or review appeal mechanisms available where the assessment decision is challenged.

## **RECORD AND REVIEW ASSESSMENT**

### **Record assessment results**

- Record assessment results promptly and in accordance with the specified assessment procedure. Assessment results should be reported as 'Competent' or 'Not yet competent'.
- Record assessment results accurately in accordance with the specified record keeping requirements.
- Store assessment records in a secure place to ensure access by authorised people only.
- Maintain confidentiality of assessment outcomes.

### **Report on conduct of assessment**

- Record and report promptly any assessment decision disputed by the client/ participant to those nominated by the Registered Training Organisation in the assessment procedure.
- Report on the positive and negative features experienced in conducting assessments to the Registered Training Organisation and make suggestions for improving any aspect of the assessment process.
- Refine the assessment activity and tools for future use.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning / Recognition of Current Competencies (RPL or RCC)**

RPL/ RCC is available for all courses offered within Above & Below Adventure Company Pty Ltd, trading as Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training Company's scope of delivery

If students feel they have already acquired competence, either formally or informally, in a unit of competency, module or a complete qualification, they may apply for RPL / RCC

Students should contact the office for sample RPL/RCC documents that indicated the RPL /RCC requirement they may wish to apply for. If the Student feels they have enough evidence to process with the process, fees will be paid and the process continued. An RPL / RCC kit, which contains units of competency/ modules assessment requirements, types of evidence required. As requirements for RPL/RCC may differ for each course and or activity, specific details are discussed after submitting evidence and potential Gap training is instigated

All AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by other registered training organisations will be fully recognised by ARAPS and OTC

### **THE ASSESSOR'S ROLE**

The primary role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge an employees/ learner's knowledge and evidence against a set of competency standards. In essence the assessor must:

- Interpret and understand the Performance Criteria and Evidence Guides;
- Select appropriate assessment methods;
- Select and/or develop appropriate assessment materials;
- Ensure that evidence meets the Competency Standards;
- Ensure that evidence is valid, authentic, consistent, current and sufficient; and
- Make fair and objective judgments.

The training of assessors is of great importance to the successful implementation of Competency Standards in the workplace.

Assessor training, at differing levels within the Sport and Recreation Industry Training Packages is based upon the endorsed competency standards for Assessors.

### **Providing feedback**

Useful and clear feedback is of primary importance to the assessment process.

Effective feedback is:

- Constructive;
- Actionable;
- Relevant; and
- Timely

## Special needs considerations

Frequently, people with a disability experience barriers imposed not by their disability, but by some feature of the environment. An easy example to picture is that of stairs, which pose obvious barriers to people who use wheelchairs.

There are other barriers not so obvious, but the obstacles just as great. A further example in the past has seen many people with a disability disadvantaged by a strict adherence to time limits for tests. These time limits might be unreasonable due to the additional time that a person with a physical disability might take to physically complete the test, or a person who is Deaf might take to communicate via a sign language interpreter.

It is important to consider *reasonable accommodation* for Client/ participant's with a disability.

*Reasonable accommodation* can be defined as:

*Reasonable steps are taken to identify potential barriers and make appropriate modifications to facilitate opportunities for people with disabilities.*

*The essential purpose of incorporating reasonable adjustment (or accommodation) in assessment procedures is to give the person being assessed an alternative method of demonstrating **competence***

This report encouraged assessors to:

- Be aware that an adjustment might be necessary (many disabilities are invisible);
- Consider thoroughly how an adjustment might be made;
- Discuss this directly with the person being assessed;
- Consult relevant sources of advice; and
- Make arrangements for adjusting the assessment

## APPEAL AND REASSESSMENT PROCESS

A Client/ participant should receive feedback on the assessment process as soon as possible after the assessment. Feedback should include advice on how to better prepare for the assessment, suggestions on how to collect further evidence, and strategies on how to gain experience in the area being assessed. If a Client/ participant have been briefed well by their assessor on the assessment process, re-tries for assessment and appeals should be kept to a minimum.

An appeals and reassessment process is an integral part of all training and assessment pathways leading to a Statement of Attainment or Qualification under the Australian Qualifications Training Framework. The appeals and reassessment process is developed and managed by the Registered Training Organisation. As a first step, appeals should be made to and reassessments done by the Registered Training Organisation. Should this fail, responsibility rests with the State/Territory Training Authorities for the implementation of fair and impartial appeals processes. The appeals and reassessment process should be described to the Client/ participant prior to assessment taking place, as part of the explanation of the overall assessment procedure. Parties involved in the assessment have the right, under the appeals and reassessment process, to request reassessment at a later time if reasonable grounds are demonstrated for questioning the original outcome. An independent assessor who has technical competence in the standards being assessed must hear the appeal.

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

ARAPS and OTC are committed to providing a fair and enriching environment for participants, which fosters academic achievement and in which interaction between participants and training and assessment staff are based on mutual respect and fulfilment of obligations.

The intent of this process is to ensure issues are resolved in a timely, impartial and confident way that is mindful of procedural fairness and protects against victimisation.

## **Complaints Policy**

### **Introduction**

ARAPS and OTC recognise the value of complaints as an important tool in monitoring and responding to customers expectations. In order to assist ARAPS and OTC to respond appropriately, all forms of complaint need to be documented and assessed as part of an on-going process.

### **Purpose**

This policy sets out the responsibility of ARASP and OTC to:

- ✓ Recognise, promote and protect the customer's rights to complain about their dealings with ARAPS and OTC.
- ✓ Ensure an accessible and well publicised complaints procedure is in place;
- ✓ Recognise the need to be fair to both the complainant and the organisation or person complained about;
- ✓ Provide a mechanism for responding to complaints in a timely and courteous manner;
- ✓ Determine and implement remedies;
- ✓ Provide adequate resources to support the complaints management process; and
- ✓ Record, assess and review complaints on a regular basis to ensure responsiveness and on-going commitment to service improvement.

### **Definition**

*Complaints are expressions of dissatisfaction made by consumers and as such from a major source of the public's perception of services received from ARAPS and OTC.*

Complaints can be made:

By letter- either through the mail, facsimile or e-mail;

On a specific customer complaint form – see example of complaints form at bottom of the section.

Verbally – either in person or over the telephone;

Through comments and feedback on surveys, training summary responses sheets and customers feedback forms.

Complainants may be members of the general public, local government, State Government agencies, service providers and businesses or community organisations.

### **Commitment**

This policy is endorsed by the Director of Above & Below Adventure Company, ARAPS and OTC, and is to be disseminated among staff and participants. A participant's right to complain is recognised and staff will handle and forward complaints to the appropriate area as needed. All staff is empowered to provided information and advice on the complaints handling process. Complaints which are complex or require additional support will be referred upwards or to the relevant area of responsibility.

All complaints will be reviewed in a timely manner, with a view to resolving issues in a non-confrontational, non- adversarial environment.

Complaints will be documented and reviewed regularly as part of ARAPS and OTC's on-going quality assessment.

## Resources

Staff will be trained in the complaints handling process through workshops and information sessions.

The Director of ARAPS and OTC will be authorised to accumulate data on complaints and to provide information to senior staff.

## Complaints handling process

Complaints will be handled fairly and justly and in a consistent manner and with the understanding that complainants should not be disadvantaged by the complaint process. Complaints against staff will be directed to the appropriate person and all correspondence and assessments will be confidential.

Participants will be kept informed of the process of their complaint and of the final resolution. Complainants will be advised of avenues for further review of their complaint, if not satisfied with the resolution.

## Responsiveness

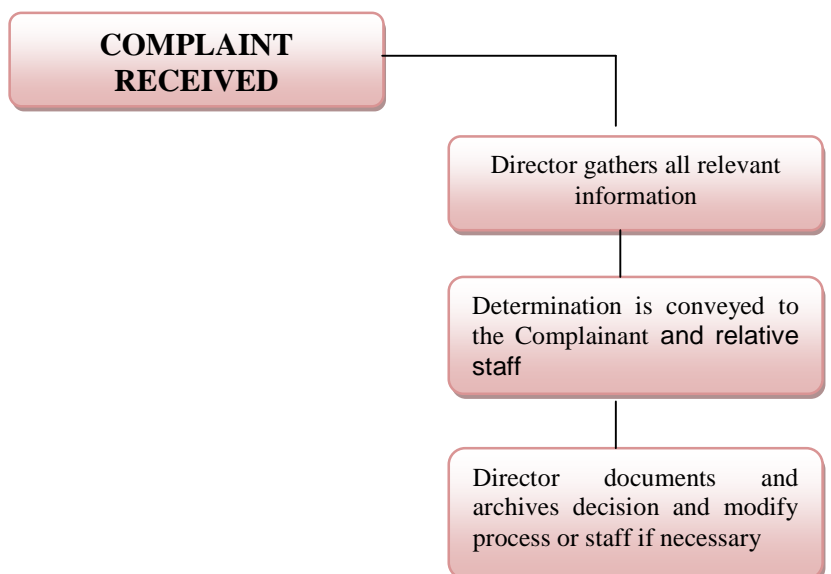
Ensuring that complaints are met in a timely and effective manner is a major factor in ensuring satisfactory outcomes. Conversely, complaints which are inadequately assessed, or where responses are set in a spirit of urgency are unlikely to be adequate. Accordingly, ARAPS will implement standard response times and procedures for dealing with complaints, which will be assessed regularly to ensure that staff and clients are satisfied with the time frames set and that sufficient time of quality outcomes has been set.

We aim to process all complaints within 10 working days.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Above & Below Adventure Company Pty Ltd trustee for the Norman family Trust, trading as ARAPS and OTC no less than every five years. In reviewing the policy the Director may call on individuals and agencies for information and advice regarding the implementation and benefits or disadvantages of the policy.

## PROCESS FLOWCHART



## Legislative and Legal Considerations

ARAPS and OTC are subject to a variety of legislation related to training and assessment as well as general business practice.

This legislation is continually being updated and our Company Director is responsible for ensuring staffs made aware of any changes to current legislation.

Current legislation is available online at: <http://www.austlii.edu.au> and <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au>

Current legislation that effects our operations includes but are not limited to:-

### Commonwealth Legislation

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Privacy Act and National Privacy Principles (2001)
- Human Right & Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Skilling Australia's Workforce Bill 2005
- Skilling Australia's Workplace (Repeal and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2005

### State based Legislation

- Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Act 2005 No 100
- NSW Anti-discrimination Act 1977
- Workers Compensation Regulation 2003
- Workplace injury Management and Workers Compensation Regulation 2002
- WorkCover Legislation Amendment Act
- Occupational Health & Safety Act (as amended 2002)
- Children and Young People Act 1998
- Copyright Act
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001

## Harassment and Discrimination Policy

ARAPS and OTC is required by under Australia law to ensure that we provide a workplace that is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination ( including victimisation and bullying), so that staff and participants feel valued, respected and are treated fairly.

We will ensure that all our staff understand their roles and responsibilities in creating such a workplace, by a process of training, communication, mentoring and by example, and we will ensure all of our staff are aware of the process and procedures for addressing any form of harassment or discrimination.

Staff and participants should be aware of the following definitions:

### **'BULLYING'**

Is unwelcome and offensive behaviour that intimidates, humiliates and or undermines a person or group? Bullying involves a persistent pattern of behaviour over a period of time and may includes verbal abuse, physical assault, unjustified criticism, sarcasm, insult, spreading false or malicious rumours about someone, isolating or ignoring a person, putting people under unnecessary pressure with overwork or impossible deadlines, and sabotaging someone's work or their ability to do their job by not providing them with vital information and resources.

### **'CONFIDENTIALITY'**

Refers to information kept in trust and divulged only to those who need to know.

### **'HARASSMENT'**

Is any unwelcome and uninvited comment or action that results in a person being intimidated, offended, humiliated or embarrassed.

### **'RACIAL HARASSMENT'**

Racial harassment occurs when a person is threatened, abused, insulted or taunted in relation to their race, descent or nationality, colour, language or ethnic origin, or a racial characteristic. It may include derogatory remarks, innuendo and slur, intolerance, mimicry or mockery, displays of material prejudicial to a particular race, racial jokes, allocating least favourable jobs or singling out for unfair treatment.

### **'SEXUAL HARASSMENT'**

Sexual harassment is any verbal or physical sexual conduct that is unwelcome and uninvited. It may include kissing, embracing, patting, pinching, touching, leering or gestures, questions about a person's private or sexual life, requests for sexual favours, smutty jokes, phone calls, emails, facsimiles or messages, offensive noises or displays of sexually graphic or suggestive material.

### **'VICTIMISATION'**

Victimisation includes any unfavourable treatment of a person as a result of their involvement in an equal opportunity complaint. Unfavourable treatment could include: adverse changes to the work environment; denial of access to resources or work.

### **Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)**

ARAPS and OTC course standard material is written and delivered in English.

ARAPS and OTC also recognise that not all people are able to read, write and perform to calculations to the same standards

ARAPS and OTC will endeavour to help where we can to accommodate anyone with difficulties with Language, Literacy and numeracy

In the event that a client/ participant needs exceeds our skills we will refer the client/ participant to an external support provider.

This could be in the form of Community Colleges etc which run and coordinate Language, Literacy and Numeracy courses.

### **Client/ Participant Support, Welfare and Guidance**

ARAPS and OTC will assist all clients/ participants who enrol in their effort to complete our Training and Assessment programmes.

In the event that a client/ participant is experiencing any difficulties with their studies we would recommend that the client/ participant should seek assistance from a Mentor or Tutoring staff

This would ensure that the full resources of ARAPS and OTC as an RTO are made available to ensure that the client/ participant achieve the required level of competency in all accredited course.

If the client/ participants need exceed our capacity we will refer them onto an appropriate external agency

### **Note:**

***The signing of our enrolment form is your acceptance and understanding of the contents of this Handbook, which outlines the rights and responsibilities as a client/ participant of Above & below Adventure Company Pty Ltd Trustee for Norman Family Trust, Trading as Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College***

## **ENROLMENT INFORMATION**

### **OFFICE HOURS**

Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College office is open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays

### **WHO CAN ENROL?**

Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College observes the requirements of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 and courses are open to all member of the public, who can fulfil all the course requirements in a safe manner. The student is to be over the age of 16 years. Please note in the interest of student learning it is a policy that children do not accompany their parents to class.

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Course information is accurate at time of publication. If details change you will be notified. Students are welcome to seek further information including details of training package modules at any time.

### **FEES**

Fees are payable on enrolment.

### **CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENT**

Enrolment confirmation and receipts are provided to all students. Course details should be checked as no further information will be provided

### **MATERIALS**

The fees shown for each course covers tuition and Assessment only. If students are required to purchase kits and or material / equipment a list will be given on the first day of the course by the tutor. These items can be purchased through Adventure Resources And Promotion Services or through any outdoor adventure store.

### **REFUND POLICY**

Refunds are only given when a course is cancelled by Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College. In such circumstances, students have the option of receiving a full refund or transferring to another course. We reserve the right to alter/cancel any of the arrangements in our brochure. Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College does not accept responsibility for charges in students personal circumstances and it is therefore important that students choose their course carefully.

### **CERTIFICATES**

Certificates and or Statements of Attainment will be issued for upon satisfactory assessment, as provided in the course information sheet. If deemed Not yet competent then and additional assessment fee may be payable.

### **RECOGNITION**

Adventure Resources And Promotion Services recognises the AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by any other RTO

### **RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL or RCC)**

RPL is available for all courses offered within Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College scope. If students feel they have already acquired competence, either formally or informally, in a unit, module or a complete qualification, they may apply for RPL. Students should contact the office for an RPL kit, which contains and RPL Application form, units / modules assessment requirements, types of evidence required and likely fees. If the assessor feels the student has a good chance of success fees will be paid and the process continued. As requirements for RPL may differ for each course / activity, specific details are discussed prior to submitting evidence.

### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Training which takes place in a training room which has adequate lighting and ventilation. Specific evacuation procedures are given at the commencement of the course. Activity specific activities will take place within the outdoor environment which has its own inherent risk factors.

### **APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

There is an appeals procedure in place. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more information.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS**

Students are required to act in a responsible manner at all times. Reasonable and appropriate dress standard should be observed for the environment in which the student is going into. Drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited

### **SMOKING**

Students are advised that smoking is not allowed in the training room area or whilst participating within the activity specific areas.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

Students are requested to turn off mobile phones during the training room area for the benefit of their fellow students. Mobile Phones must be turned off during activity specific areas as this is a safety issue within the outdoor recreation environment.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College does not accept responsibility for any damage or injury to any person or property, or the safety of their vehicles

### **STUDENT FEEDBACK**

It is extremely helpful if students are able to provide feedback that ARAPS and OTC can use in its quest for continuous improvement. Accordingly, students will be sent a Student Feedback Form at the end of each course for completion and we ask that you return it to our Office. PO BOX 749 WINDSOR NSW 2756

### **PRIVACY POLICY**

Adventure Resources And Promotion Service and Outdoor Training College understand that student are concerned about privacy issues, and we aim to maintain confidentiality of information at all times

### **CREDIT CARD DETAILS**

Credit Card details are only used for recording the specific transaction authorised by the student

### **WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK**

Child protection legislation makes it an offence for a person convicted of a serious sex offence to work with children under 18. Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College accepts students from 16 years of age and it is therefore our policy that all tutors need to complete a prohibited employment declaration before teaching. This is also a requirement of students prior to working with children

### **DISCLAIMER**

While every effort is made to ensure the information provided by our courses are correct, Adventure Resources And Promotion Services and Outdoor Training College cannot be held responsible for any necessary changes to the information