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1. WELCOME

Welcome to Empower Institute!

Congratulations on taking your first steps towards transforming your life through education.

Throughout our lives, we gain experience, knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. At Empower Institute we give you the power to take control of your study pathway. Our educators will help and guide you through the different aspects of your course.

You will be able to study at a time, pace and place to suit your needs and our educators will help to keep you on track, to make sure that you achieve each unit of study within the given timeframes.

The Empower Institute team recognises that every individual has unlimited potential to achieve. This is a very powerful mind set and we encourage all students to take advantage of this potential to transform their lives through our cutting edge and secure learning environments.

Our environment will help all students to grow confident relationships with educators and fellow students, using all experiences to achieve positive learning outcomes. Very soon, you will see the results of your resolution to transform your life through the new skills and knowledge that you will gain and the Qualification that you will earn.

From the Empower Institute team and myself, thank you for choosing to study with us. We look forward to getting to know you and working with you all the way to achieve your goals and transform your life.

Kind regards,

Andrew Hartland

Director
Empower Institute
2. ABOUT US

Empower Institute ("EI") has approval to offer a number of courses under the Vet Fee-Help loan scheme offered to eligible students by the Australian Government.

EI currently offers two Diploma programs under the Vet Fee-Help loan scheme, with plans in place to increase the current course offering in the very near future to fulfill market demand.

Current Empower Institute course offerings:
- BSB50207 Diploma of Business
- BSB51107 Diploma of Management

Full details of our courses can be found at www.empower.edu.au

The EI Team is fully committed to providing outstanding training and education. The power to change your life is in your hands. Your EI experience will give you the master-key to unlock the huge potential within you, along with all the support you will need for your journey.

Our educators are highly skilled and experienced industry professionals who are waiting to share their vast knowledge and experience with you. Your educator will walk the learning journey with you and will ensure at every step that you are gathering the tools necessary for success for whatever subsequent pathway you choose, be it a business career or further study at university.

At EI, you decide how you want to study. You can combine the flexibility of our interactive eZone online learning platform with the support and guidance of our friendly staff in our modern and innovative campus environment.

We want to empower you to transform your life through education and venture to personal and professional horizons that you never thought possible.

This student handbook will provide you with the information that you will need throughout your study with EI. From time to time we may make amendments to this handbook to ensure that it is up to date. When this happens, you will be advised of the changes.

If you have any questions about EI or our policies and procedures, please feel free to discuss with any of our friendly staff on campus:
or call us on 1300 EMPOWER (367 693)

The Empower Team
3. MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to help people to transform their lives through education, in an innovative, supportive and empowering environment.

Our Vision is to be the absolute best at what we do, encouraging and motivating our students to reach their true potential.

Our Values are Motivation, Determination, Positivity, Fulfillment and Integrity.

4. CODE OF PRACTICE

Empower Institute maintains a highly ethical, responsible and committed approach to providing high standards of vocational education and training. Our main objective is to safeguard the educational interest and welfare of students and staff, whilst maintaining training standards in line with the VET Quality Framework regulated by ASQA, the Australian Skills Quality Authority.

EI staff are fully qualified and experienced. They act professionally at all times and are dedicated to providing the highest level of skills, knowledge, training and encouragement. All our staff treat all students with respect and undertake their duties with honesty integrity and diligence, maintaining student confidentiality at all times. We conduct fair, valid and reliable competency based assessments and represent EI ethically at all times.

EI recruits students in a responsible and ethical manner and provides a safe and encouraging learning environment where all students, regardless of their background, are continually supported through their educational journey.

EI recognises the rights of all students, abides by the anti-discrimination and equal opportunity regulations and ensures all students also abide by these laws.

EI treats all students fairly, providing external advice and support when needed.

EI provides a grievance handling procedure and takes every opportunity to ensure that all grievances are resolved fairly.

EI encourages and seeks student feedback at every stage of the course which is acted on for continuous improvement.

EI strives for total student satisfaction with all aspects of training and opportunities for extending the course without additional cost are offered in certain circumstances.
5. QUALITY

Empower Institute complies with all requirements of the standards of the NVR, along with all other relevant federal and state legislation.

6. RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Empower Institute maintains a highly ethical and responsible approach in the provision of education, training services and assessment of students and with its main objective of safeguarding the educational interest and welfare of students and staff.

7. STUDENT SELECTION

Students will be selected on merit based on the published criteria. Empower Institute will ensure that throughout the process of selection and admission, applicants are treated fairly, courteously and expeditiously.

Entry requirements for each EI Vet Fee-Help enabled course are as follows:

- Basic reading and writing skills
- Be 18 years or over

EI courses are designed to assist you to enter the workforce as soon as possible after graduation with your qualification and prepare you with the necessary skills and confidence to be a productive employee from day one in your chosen career and industry.

Our courses are designed so that students of all experience levels and ability are able to benefit from our wide range of foundation, vocational and high-level skills training.

8. STUDENT ENROLMENT

Empower Institute offers course start dates every fortnight. View the Schedule of Fees and Start Dates online at www.empower.edu.au.

9. ORIENTATION

The orientation program is designed to give you important information that will help familiarise you with your campus, support services and your course. Orientation will take place over 2 half day workshops. During these workshops we will also give you your student ID and we will introduce you to eZone, which will be your learning partner while you study with EI. We will also discuss your preferred days/hours of study.
10. VET FEE-HELP

Vet Fee-Help is an Australian Government student income contingent loan scheme for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector that is part of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). Vet Fee-Help assists eligible students to pay for all or part of their VET tuition fees when studying at Empower Institute, an accredited VET provider. For further information on Vet Fee-Help, please visit our website www.empower.edu.au.

11. READING AND WRITING SKILLS

Students require basic reading and writing skills to successfully enrol in an Empower Institute course. Students who feel or know that they require additional support are encouraged to state this upon enrolment. In some cases, extra literacy courses may be recommended.

EI will attempt to meet the individual needs of all students and provide assistance in the area of literacy and numeracy.

12. EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Empower Institute continually strives to improve its course, resources, training and assessment. Throughout the duration of your course, EI staff will seek feedback regarding your training, which we hope you will take the time to consider. Your responses are then discussed at various validation and management meetings and may be used to help us to improve our practices.

13. COPYRIGHT

All marketing, training resources, course and assessment material is copyrighted to Empower Institute and may not be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of EI.

14. POLICIES

Empower Institute maintains a highly ethical and responsible approach in the provision of education, training services and assessment of all students, with its major concerns centered on safeguarding the educational interest and welfare of students and staff. With this in mind, it is important that you access, read and understand each of the policies mentioned in this handbook. All policies are available on our website www.empower.edu.au.

14.1 Refund Policy

The policy of Empower Institute is to be fair and equitable when dealing with students. The refund information found on the student enrolment form, course letters/emails and the refund policy forms a binding agreement between the student
and Empower Institute. Please refer to the Refund Policy which can be found in full on our website.

14.2 Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunity

Empower Institute applies access and equity principles across all policies and procedures to promote full and equal participation of students in its courses, to foster an environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to assist students to identify and achieve their desired outcomes.

As a VET provider, EI will treat fairly:

- All students who are, or would be, entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance under clause 43 of Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (the Act); and
- All persons seeking to enrol with EI in a VET unit of study that meets the course requirements under subclause 45(1) of Schedule 1A of the Act and who are, or would be, entitled to Vet Fee-Help assistance under clause 43 Schedule 1A of the Act.

A full version of our Fair Treatment & Equal Opportunity policy can be located on our website.

14.3 Re-crediting Vet Fee-Help Balance

If a student withdraws from a VET unit of study after census date, or has been unable to successfully complete a VET unit of study, and believes this was due to special circumstances, then the student may apply to have their Fee-Help balance re-credited for the affected units.

Please note, that the unsuccessful completion of a Unit of Study, does not constitute grounds for re-crediting a Vet Fee-Help balance.

This policy is available in full on our website

14.4 Privacy and Personal Information Policy

EI is firmly committed to protecting your privacy. In the course of our business, EI may collect information from student’s enrolment applications, either electronically or in hard copy format, including information that personally identifies individual students. EI may also record various communications between students and EI.

In collecting personal information, EI will comply with the requirements of Schedule 1A of the Higher Education Support Act 2003, the VET Provider Guidelines and the Information Privacy Principles set out in the Privacy Act 1988

All collected information is private, confidential and access is restricted to authorised personnel only. The privacy of our students is paramount. This policy is available on our website.

Students can request access to view their own records, including a print out of the computerised records held on the Empower Institute data base.
If students would like to access their personal or academic record at any time, they can do so by putting their request in writing to the National Data Administrator, outlining the reason for the request and the information required.

14.5 Academic and Non Academic Grievance Handling Policy

Empower Institute is committed to developing and maintaining an effective, timely, fair and equitable grievance handling system which is easily accessible to all complainants.

Empower Institute aims to:

- Develop a culture that views grievances as an opportunity to improve the organisation and how it works
- Put in place a grievance handling system that is client focused and helps EI to prevent grievances from occurring
- Ensure that any grievances are resolved promptly, objectively and with sensitivity and in complete confidentiality
- Ensure that the views of each complainant and respondent are respected and that any party to a grievance is not discriminated against nor victimised
- Ensure a consistent response to all grievances

A grievance can be defined as a person’s expression of dissatisfaction with any aspect of the services and activities provided by EI, including both academic and non-academic matters such as:

- The quality of education provided
- Academic issues, including student progress, assessment, curriculum and awards in a VET course of study
- Handling of personal information and access to personal records
- The way someone has been treated

These grievance procedures are designed to ensure that EI responds effectively to individual cases of dissatisfaction.

This policy is designed to cover all complainants including:

- Individuals who are or would be entitled to VET FEE-HELP assistance (Australian citizens or permanent humanitarian visa holders who are resident in Australia for the duration of a VET unit of study)
- Individuals who are not eligible for VET FEE-HELP assistance (permanent residents who are not permanent humanitarian visa holders and New Zealand citizens)

In relation to non-academic grievances, the term “complainant” applies to both current and prospective persons, seeking to enrol with EI.

These grievance procedures will be made available to complainants regardless of the location of the Empower Institute at which the grievance has arisen, the mode in which they study or their place of residence.
A full copy of the EI grievance handling policy and procedure is available on our website.

14.6 Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and orderly manner at all times when studying or attending an event at EI. It is expected that all EI educators, staff and students will be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.

EI encourages its students to act in a way that allows reasonable freedom to fellow students to pursue their studies at EI, and to participate in campus activities. EI also promotes the proper use of its facilities, its information and the property of other students or staff.

Students can be suspended from class for circumstances including but not limited to the following:

- Disruptive behavior
- Not abiding by the code of practice
- Theft from the Institute, its staff, or another student
- Bullying and harassment of any student or staff member
- Plagiarism
- Non payment of fees by the due date (where relevant)
- Non adherence to any policy or behavioral standard outlined in this handbook

14.7 Review of Enrolment

EI reserves the right to review the enrolment status of any student whose conduct or performance is not of an acceptable standard or if there is a breach of any policy stated within this handbook.

14.8 Non-Academic Misconduct & Discipline

Non-academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Behavior of a manner that tarnishes the reputation and name of EI
- Stealing property belonging to EI, its staff or students
- Damaging property belonging to EI, its staff or students
- Engage in unlawful activity on the premises of EI including any other premises used for off-site events.
- The misuse of equipment belonging to EI
- Threaten, harass, abuse, discriminate or vilify any student or employee of EI
- Disrupt and/or fail to follow reasonable directions from any EI employee
- Falsify medical certificates
- Vandalism
- Provide EI with false documents, e.g. qualifications, statements of attainment, any identifying document, references, etc.
14.9 Cheating / Plagiarism

EI regards cheating / plagiarism as a very serious offence, it will not be tolerated and can result in instant dismissal from your course. Any student found cheating or plagiarising in a particular unit of competency will be excluded from that unit and will have to repeat that unit when next offered, at the students own expense.

A second offence may be subject to instant dismissal from the course, at the Academic Manager’s discretion. Assignments, projects and essays must be the students own work.

Where it is believed that a student has cheated in this manner, in particular copying another student’s work, the assessment will be marked as a fail and the unit will need to be undertaken again at the students own expense.

Whenever the student uses the words or work of another person either by direct quotation, paraphrasing or by the use of an others ideas, the author and the source must be identified through the use of formal referencing.

Anyone who gives the impression that the ideas, work or words of another person are their own ideas, work or words, is guilty of plagiarism.

14.10 Procedures for Dealing with Cheating / Plagiarism Cases

Allegations regarding cheating and plagiarism should be referred to the Academic Manager who will investigate the matter and advise the student of the outcome. In all cases the student will be advised in writing and given fourteen days to show cause as to why a penalty should not be applied.

Students who have allegations of cheating / plagiarism proven against them, are liable to incur a penalty ranging from the award of a fail result in the unit concerned, to dismissal from EI.

14.11 Work Health & Safety (WH&S)

EI accepts and recognises the “duty of care” role necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all of its staff, students and others who enter our premises. EI adheres to all work health and safety legislation and regulations.

Staff and students are informed of the WH&S requirements and responsibilities during induction and orientation sessions. Staff and students are required to know aspects of WH&S in terms of building evacuations, fire drills, what to do in the case of hazardous material spills and other safety matters. EI aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of students and staff by implementing general WH&S procedures that are observed by all personnel and students attending any EI centre or event.
EI emphasises that WH&S is everybody’s responsibility. All personnel are briefed on WH&S procedures regularly and appropriate drills are carried out. Where outside training venues are hired, EI will ensure through contract that all WH&S policies and procedures are in place.

Students are required to understand that they have a legal responsibility to:

- Report any problem immediately to an EI staff member
- Not place themselves or others at risk of injury
- Care for and use equipment in a responsible manner
- Follow safe procedures, which includes ensuring no undue stress or risk of lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, holding or moving an object occurs
- Report hazards or injuries to your educator or any other staff member
- Use and leave a classroom or site in a safe condition. This includes ensuring that there is no food or liquid next to computers and other equipment, and that students must not handle, strike or inflict damage on any object that may cause significant damage or risk from that object.

14.12 Participate in Environmentally Sustainable Work Practices

It is every student’s responsibility to look after the environment and use work practices that help sustain the environment. We can do this by:

- Turning off light switches when not required
- Recycling waste
- Minimising water usage
- Not putting chemicals or dangerous liquids down drains
- Minimising wastage of products.

We ask every student to be aware of our environmentally sustainable work practices and policies and help keep our environment green.

14.13 Safety and Security

EI is committed to ensuring that all students and staff are safe and secure on campus grounds.

- Get to know the layout of your campus including safe paths and exits
- Report anything suspicious occurring in or around the campus
- Report threatening behavior where possible
- Do not leave valuables such as wallets or mobile phones unattended.
- Always ensure that someone is aware of your timetable and knows when to expect you in class or at home.

14.14 Emergency Evacuation Procedures

All students and staff must be aware of all emergency evacuation plans that are in place. These plans will be discussed in detail during induction and orientation sessions.
EI has emergency procedures in place which include:

- Evacuation plans are clearly visible throughout the premises
- All students are made aware of where the fire exits are located
- Regular checks of fire safety procedures by the Fire Authorities
- Fire safety and emergency procedures training and drills are a regular occurrence.
- Trained staff are nominated as First Aid Officers for Empower Institute

14.15 Smoking

EI is a smoke free zone. Smoking is not permitted inside any EI campus. Students wishing to smoke must do so outside and away from the campus. Students are requested not to stand in front of the building to smoke as it portrays an unprofessional image for EI. Students are also reminded of increasing public opposition to smoking and its potential impact on their employment opportunities.

14.16 Mobile Phones

Mobile phones must be switched to silent at all times when on campus. Important personal calls or text messages may be taken or responded to. Please be aware that mobile phones disrupt educators and other student’s concentration. Please be considerate of others at all time.

14.17 Computer Policies

All computers and printers are sensitive machines and students must ensure to take care when utilising EI equipment and technology. If any computer problems arise please notify an EI staff member immediately. Do not delete copy or move files from the computer system unless instructed by an EI staff member.

14.18 Downloading and Copyright

Please note that internet access is free to all students. All students should be courteous in relation to downloading materials. Students must not download large files, including music and videos. The internet speed becomes slow for student use when large files are downloaded. All websites accessed on EI’s network are recorded for security and policy enforcement purposes. Students must not download illegal, copyright or pornographic materials at any time. Students who do so will face academic suspension and possible expulsion from EI. The IT Department monitors file downloads across the EI network and will notify management of any abuse.

14.19 Software Copyright Policy

Software companies are entitled to take legal action against a person’s who infringes copyright law by the illegal copy and transfer of software installed onto any EI computer. Students are advised that it is against EI policy to permit any such copying.
14.20 Personal Property

EI cannot be held responsible for students' personal property. It is up to each student to look after their personal property and students should not leave valuables unattended. **EI does not provide secure storage for students.**

14.21 Drugs and Alcohol

No student or staff member will be allowed on or at any EI campus or event whilst under the influence of, or in possession of alcohol or any illegal drugs. Any student who chooses to disregard this rule may have their enrolment terminated.

EI's Drug and Alcohol Policy states that EI is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of all employees, students and other attending individuals. We recognise that alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to our goals. We have established a drug and alcohol free campus environment policy.

Our drug and alcohol free campus policy, means that alcohol will not be served or allowed to be consumed at any EI campus under any circumstances.

14.22 Prohibited Behavior

Prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:

- The use or possession of illegal drugs or other illicit mind-altering substances on EI premises is strictly prohibited
- The possession or consumption of alcohol on EI premises is strictly prohibited
- Students, employees, guests or any other attending individuals found on EI premises under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will be immediately suspended pending investigation and disciplinary action
- Students, employees, guests or any other attending individuals found on EI premises under the influence of alcohol or other drugs may be immediately suspended pending investigation and disciplinary action.

Breaches of policy in relation to alcohol and other drugs are considered serious misconduct and may result in termination of enrolment.

15. STUDENT INFORMATION

15.1 Austudy/Abstudy/Youth Allowance

Full time courses with Empower Institute are Austudy/Abstudy/Youth Allowance approved. Provided you are eligible to apply, and you fulfill the normal conditions applicable to the allowance you are applying for, you will be able to claim an Austudy/Abstudy/Youth Allowance payment. Contact Centrelink for further details on these allowances, you eligibility and for assistance in completing the necessary forms – **www.centrelink.gov.au**

15.2 Student ID Card
Each full time student attending an accredited course will be issued with an EI student ID card. The use of this card identifies you as a student. The card is essential as a means of identifying you as an EI student. The card contains an identifying bar code and on arrival and departure from campus you are required to have your card scanned by Student Services, as this is the means by which EI records and calculates your attendance on campus.

*Please be advised, that if you fail to scan out of the campus at the end of your session, your session will be calculated to only two hours. Therefore, to ensure that the correct hours are recorded against your student card, it is vital that you present the card for scanning when leaving the campus.*

If you lose or misplace your Student ID Card you will be charged a replacement fee of $15.00

All normal concessions apply to full-time students including rail and bus travel.

15.3 Change of Details

Students are required to notify EI of any change of address or contact phone number, including mobile phone numbers and email addresses. This information can be updated by the student in the Student Management System, student portal. Any information given by the student to the Institute is considered private and confidential.

15.4 Dress Code

Students should remember that personal presentation is very important to their future success. We believe that this policy works well in developing a business like attitude and in impressing future employers who visit EI. We have found that the dress code established is appropriate for the comfort or all students and staff.

Students are required to dress in clean and appropriate clothing. Students are also expected to maintain a high standard of hygiene and to avoid strong perfumes or other odours which can be uncomfortable for others.

Examples of appropriate and inappropriate clothing are listed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate</th>
<th>Inappropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainers, sandals, shoes, boots</td>
<td>Thongs, bare feet, muddy work boots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate skirts, dresses, trousers, shorts</td>
<td>Torn or tattered clothing of any kind, Mid-rift tops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual Dress</td>
<td>Singlet shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suits</td>
<td>Obscene or offensive clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance must be clean neat &amp; tidy at all times.</td>
<td>Caps or hats when inside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. LEGISLATION

Empower Institute is subject to a range of legislation relating to training and assessment as well as general business practice including matters such as your safety, privacy and privacy to name a few. There are also a number of legislative requirements that you will be made aware of throughout your course. This legislation is being continually updated and all staff are made aware of any changes through our internal improvement processes. If you want to view current legislation you can find links on the EI website.

The legislation that particularly effects your participation in Vocational Education and Training includes:

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Copyright Act 1968
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Privacy Act (2001) including the National Privacy Principles
- Skilling Australia’s Work