



## 1. Purpose

Everthought Education (ETE) and Everthought College of Construction (ECOC), also trading as Australian Institute of ICT (AICT), are committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of its RTO staff and applicant/student records. This Policy and Procedure is intended to inform all staff, students and stakeholders of ETE, ECOC, and AICT's commitment to adhering to the relevant Acts and Privacy Principles. Providing an overall framework for our privacy practices, ETE, ECOC and AICTT has developed and implements this Privacy Policy and monitors its' application throughout the RTOs' business and day to day practices.

## 2. Scope

This Policy and Procedure covers all of ETE, ECOC, and AICT's training and assessment services across all campuses and all training/academic, student services, and governance staff members.

## 3. Responsibilities

The General Manager is responsible for ensuring this Policy and Procedure is implemented. The Compliance Coordinator is responsible for ensuring this Policy and Procedure is maintained and up to date in line with scheduled revisions. Managerial staff are responsible for ensuring their teams are up-to-date with this Policy and Procedure.

## 4. Policy and Procedure

### A. ALL STUDENTS

ETE, ECOC and AICTT complies with the Privacy Act 1988 including the 13 Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) as outlined in the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012. Personal information will never be collected by unlawful or unfair means.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT manages personal information in an open and transparent way. This is evident in the implementation of practices, procedures and system as outlined in this Policy and Procedure, that ensure ETE, ECOC and AICTT's compliance with the APPs and any binding registered APP code and provide suitable procedures for ETE, ECOC and AICTT staff to be able to deal with related inquiries and complaints that may be received from time to time.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT includes the standard privacy notice in its application procedure in line with legislative requirements which advises applicants/students how their data may be supplied to and used by various departments, agencies and their representatives.



## **Australian Privacy Principle 1 – Open and transparent management of personal information**

### *Purposes for information collection, retention, use and disclosure*

ETE, ECOC and AICTT retains a record of personal information about all individuals with whom we undertake any form of business activity. ETE, ECOC and AICTT collects, holds, uses and discloses information from our applicants/students and stakeholders for a range of purposes, including but not limited to:

- providing services to clients
- managing employee and contractor teams
- promoting products and services
- conducting internal business functions and activities; and
- requirements of government stakeholders.

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), regulated by ASQA, ETE, ECOC and AICTT is required to collect, hold, use and disclose a wide range of personal and sensitive information on participants in nationally recognised training programs. This information requirement is outlined in the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 and associated legislative instruments. In particular, the legislative instruments:

- *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015; and*
- *Data Provision Requirements 2012.*

It is noted that ETE, ECOC and AICTT is also bound by various State Government Acts requiring similar information collection, use and disclosure (particularly Education Act(s) and Vocational Education & Training Act(s) relevant to state jurisdictions of ETE, ECOC and AICTT RTO operations, specifically the QLD and WA governments. In accordance with the relevant Agreements, the RTO will always comply with the relevant Government's Information Privacy Principles as if it were an agency to which the Information Privacy Principles apply.

Individuals are advised that due to these legal requirements, ETE, ECOC and AICTT discloses information held on individuals for valid purposes to a range of third party entities including Governments (Commonwealth, State and employers (where relevant)).

ETE, ECOC and AICTT will not disclose information to a person, body or agency (other than the individual concerned) unless:

- the individual concerned is made aware that information of that kind will be passed to that person, body or agency
- the individual concerned has consented to the disclosure in writing
- ETE, ECOC and AICTT believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the student or of another person including a child
- the disclosure is required or authorised by or under law, or
- the disclosure is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue.



**Kinds of personal information collected and held:**

The following types of personal information are generally collected, depending on the need for service delivery:

- contact details
- employment details
- educational background
- demographic information
- course progress and achievement information, and
- financial billing information.

The following types of sensitive information will be collected and held:

- identity details
- employee details & HR information
- complaint or issue information
- disability status & other individual needs
- indigenous status.

**How personal information is collected:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT RTO's usual approach to collecting personal information is to collect any required information directly from the individuals concerned. This may include the use of forms (such as ETE, ECOC and AICTT's enrolment form or service delivery records) and the use of web-based systems (such as online application forms, on-line study portals or internal operating systems).

**How personal information is held:**

Individual information held across systems is linked through an ETE, ECOC and AICTT allocated identification number for each individual.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT's usual approach to holding personal information includes robust storage and security measures at all times. Information on collection is:

- as soon as practical converted to electronic means
- stored in secure, password protected systems, such as in our financial system and both aXcelerate (for domestic student records) and PowerPro (for international student records), ETE, ECOC and AICTT's student management systems, and
- monitored for appropriate authorised use at all times.

Only authorised personnel are provided with login information to each system, with system access limited to only those relevant to their specific role. ETE, ECOC and AICTT's ICT systems are hosted internally with robust internal security to physical server locations and server systems access. Virus protection, backup



procedures and ongoing access monitoring procedures are in place in accordance with the company's IT policies.

Destruction of paper-based records (usually for domestic apprentices only) occurs as soon as practicable in every matter, through the use of secure external shredding and destruction services through on-site shredding, in accordance with the timelines outlined in the **Student Records Management Policy and Procedure**.

#### **Retention and Destruction of Information:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT retains and destroys documents according to the legislative requirements.

Specifically, for our RTO records, in the event of ETE, ECOC and AICTT ceasing to operate, the required personal information on record for individuals undertaking nationally recognised training would be transferred to ASQA, as required by law.

#### **Accessing and seeking correction of personal information:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT confirms all individuals have a right to request access to their personal information held and to request its correction at any time. In order to request access to personal records, individuals should contact ETE, ECOC and AICTT's General Manager via phone: 1300 656 498 and request access to their personal information – specifying what information they are seeking to access. In accordance with the RTO's **Student Records Management Policy and Procedure**, no student file or information will be permitted to be taken off-site unless required by law.

In all cases where access is requested by a third party, ETE, ECOC and AICTT will ensure that:

- parties requesting access to personal information are robustly identified and vetted
- where legally possible, the individual to whom the information relates will be contacted to confirm consent (if consent not previously provided for the matter), and
- only appropriately authorised parties, for valid purposes, will be provided access to the information.

#### **Complaints about a breach of the APPs or a binding registered APP code:**

If any individual feels that ETE, ECOC and AICTT may have breached one of the APPs, they are encouraged to lodge a formal complaint, using ETE, ECOC and AICTT's **Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure**, available on its website and including the **Complaints Lodgement Form**.

In line with the state Government's Agreements for funded initiatives, ETE, ECOC and AICTT will immediately refer any complaint to the Minister about ETE, ECOC and AICTT's treatment of personal information. It will also notify the Minister as soon as practical of any unauthorised disclosure to third parties or of any breach of the Agreement or any other funding Agreement executed under the Head Agreement in respect to personal information.



### Likely overseas disclosures

ETE, ECOC and AICTT confirms that individuals' personal information is unlikely to be disclosed to overseas recipients, for internal business activity purposes.

### Making our Privacy Policy and Procedure available

ETE, ECOC and AICTT provides its Privacy Policy and Procedure available free of charge, with all information being publicly available from the RTO link on the various RTO websites at:

<https://everthoughteducation.com.au> and <https://ecoc.edu.au>. This website information is designed to be accessible as per web publishing accessibility guidelines, to ensure access is available to individuals with special needs (such as an individual with vision impairment).

In addition, a summary of this Privacy Policy and Procedure is:

- included within ETE, ECOC and AICTT's **Student Handbooks** (in summary form with a reference to the website for access to the full Policy and Procedure)
- noted within the text or instructions at all information collection points (such as informing individuals during a telephone call of how the Policy and Procedure may be accessed, in cases where information collection is occurring), and
- available for distribution free of charge on request, as soon as possible after the request is received, including in any particular format requested by the individual as is reasonably practical.

If, in the unlikely event that this Privacy Policy and Procedure is not able to be provided in a particular format requested by an individual, we will explain the circumstances around this issue with the requester and seek to ensure that another appropriate method is provided.

### Review and Update of this Privacy Policy and Procedure:

ETE, ECOC and AICTT reviews this Privacy Policy and Procedure:

- on an ongoing basis as suggestions or issues are raised and addressed, or as Government required changes are identified
- through our internal audit processes on at least an annual basis
- as a part of any external audit of our operations that may be conducted by various government agencies as a part of our registration as an RTO or in normal business activities, and
- as a component of each and every complaint investigation process where the complaint is related to a privacy matter.

Where this Policy and Procedure is updated, changes are widely communicated to stakeholders through the internal **Quality Bulletin**, meetings, training and documentation, and externally through publishing of the policy on ETE, ECOC and AICTT's website and other relevant documentation, such as our RTO **Student Handbooks**.

**Australian Privacy Principle 2 – Anonymity and pseudonymity:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT provides individuals with the option of not identifying themselves, or of using a pseudonym, when dealing with us in relation to a particular matter, whenever practical. This includes providing options for anonymous dealings in cases of general course enquiries or other situations in which an individual's information is not required to complete a request.

Individuals may deal with ETE, ECOC and AICTT by using a name, term or descriptor that is different to the individual's actual name wherever possible. This includes using generic email addresses that do not contain an individual's actual name, or generic usernames when individuals may access a public component of our website or application forms.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT only stores and links pseudonyms to individual personal information in cases where this is required for service delivery (such as system login information) or once the individual's consent has been received.

Individuals are advised of their opportunity to deal anonymously or by pseudonym with us where these options are possible through publishing this Policy and Procedure on the RTOs' websites.

**Requiring identification:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT must require and confirm identification however when an individual confirms interest in enrolling in a nationally recognised course program (refer to the **Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure**). ETE, ECOC and AICTT is authorised by Australian law to deal only with individuals who have appropriately identified themselves. That is, it is a Condition of Registration for all RTOs under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* that we identify individuals and their specific individual needs on commencement of service delivery and collect and disclose Australian Vocational Education and Training Management of Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) data on all individuals enrolled in nationally recognised training programs.

All funded contract requirements also require the confirmation of identification when an individual confirms interest in enrolling in a funded course program (refer to **Application and Enrolment Policy and Procedure**).

Other legal requirements, as noted earlier in this Policy and Procedure, also require considerable identification arrangements.

There are also other occasions also within our service delivery where an individual may not have the option of dealing anonymously or by pseudonym, as identification is practically required for us to effectively support an individual's request or need. This includes lodgement of a complaint or appeal.



### **Australian Privacy Principle 3 – Collection of solicited personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT only collects personal information that is reasonably necessary for our business activities and in line with the various Acts and funding obligations.

We only collect sensitive information in cases where the individual consents to the sensitive information being collected and in writing, except in cases where we are required to collect this information by law, such as outlined earlier in this policy.

All information we collect is collected only by lawful and fair means.

We only collect solicited information directly from the individual concerned, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable for the personal information to only be collected in this manner.

### **Australian Privacy Principle 4 – Dealing with unsolicited personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT may from time to time receive unsolicited personal information. Where this occurs it promptly reviews the information to decide whether or not it could have collected the information for the purpose of its business activities. Where this is the case, ETE, ECOC and AICTT may hold, use and disclose the information appropriately as per the practices outlined in this Policy and Procedure.

Where ETE, ECOC and AICTT could not have collected this information (by law or for a valid business purpose) it immediately destroys or de-identifies the information (unless it would be unlawful to do so).

### **Australian Privacy Principle 5 – Notification of the collection of personal information**

Whenever ETE, ECOC and AICTT collects personal information about an individual, it takes reasonable steps to notify the individual of the details of the information collection or otherwise ensure the individual is aware of those matters. This notification occurs at or before the time of collection, or as soon as practicable afterwards.

Notifications to individuals on data collection include:

- ETE, ECOC and AICTT's identity and contact details, including the position title, telephone number and email address of a contact who handles enquiries and requests relating to privacy matters
- the facts and circumstances of collection such as the date, time, place and method of collection, and whether the information was collected from a third party, including the name of that party
- if the collection is required or authorised by law, including the name of the Australian law or other legal agreement requiring the collection
- the purpose of collection, including any primary and secondary purposes
- the consequences for the individual if all or some personal information is not collected
- other organisations or persons to which the information is usually disclosed, including naming those parties



- whether we are likely to disclose the personal information to overseas recipients, and if so, the names of the recipients and the countries in which such recipients are located
- a link to this Privacy Policy and Procedure on the websites or explain how it may be accessed
- written acceptance, as evidenced by signing of the ETE, ECOC and AICTT Privacy Notice as part of the **Application and Enrolment Form**, and
- advice that this Privacy Policy and Procedure contains information about how the individual may access and seek correction of the personal information held by us; and how to complain about a breach of the APPs, or any registered APP code, and how we will deal with such a complaint.

Personal information disclosed to the NCVER may be used or disclosed for the following purposes:

- issuing a VET Statement of Attainment or VET Qualification, and populating authenticated VET transcripts
- facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys
- understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information and
- administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.

A **Student Declaration (Privacy Notice)**, consenting to personal information disclosure to appropriate departments, agencies and their third-party representatives, is given to students to consider and sign during the ETE, ECOC and AICTT application and enrolment process.

#### **Collection from third parties:**

Where ETE, ECOC and AICTT collects personal information from another organisation, it:

- confirms whether the other organisation has provided the relevant notice above to the individual or
- confirms whether the individual was otherwise aware of these details at the time of collection, and
- if this has not occurred, it will undertake this notice to ensure the individual is fully informed of the information collection.

#### **Australian Privacy Principle 6 – Use or disclosure of personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT only uses or discloses personal information it holds about an individual for the particular primary purposes for which the information was collected, or secondary purposes in cases where:

- an individual consented to a secondary use or disclosure
- an individual would reasonably expect the secondary use or disclosure, and that is directly related to the primary purpose of collection, or
- using or disclosing the information is required or authorised by law.



**Requirement to make a written note of use or disclosure for this secondary purpose:**

If ETE, ECOC and AICTT uses or discloses personal information in accordance with an 'enforcement related activity' we will make a written note of the use or disclosure, including the following details:

- the date of the use or disclosure
- details of the personal information that was used or disclosed
- the enforcement body conducting the enforcement related activity
- if the organisation used the information, how the information was used by the organisation, and
- the basis for our reasonable belief that we were required to disclose the information.

**Australian Privacy Principle 7 – Direct marketing**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT does not use or disclose the personal information that it holds about an individual for the purpose of direct marketing, unless:

- the personal information has been collected directly from an individual, and the individual would reasonably expect their personal information to be used for the purpose of direct marketing, or
- the personal information has been collected from a third party, or from the individual directly, but the individual does not have a reasonable expectation that their personal information will be used for the purpose of direct marketing, and
- we provide a simple method for the individual to request not to receive direct marketing communications (also known as 'opting out').

On each of our direct marketing communications whenever used, ETE, ECOC and AICTT provides a prominent statement that the individual may request to opt out of future communications, and how to do so.

An individual may also request ETE, ECOC and AICTT at any stage not to use or disclose their personal information for the purpose of direct marketing. We comply with any request by an individual promptly and undertake any required actions for free.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT also, on request, notifies an individual of our source of their personal information used or disclosed for the purpose of direct marketing unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.

**Australian Privacy Principle 8 – Cross-border disclosure of personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT will rarely find itself in this situation however before any of the RTOs disclose personal information about an individual to any overseas recipient, it undertakes to take reasonable steps to ensure that the recipient does not breach any privacy matters in relation to that information.

**Australian Privacy Principle 9 – Adoption, use or disclosure of government related identifiers**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT does not adopt, use or disclose a government related identifier related to an individual except:

- in situations required by Australian law or other legal requirements



- where reasonably necessary to verify the identity of the individual
- where reasonably necessary to fulfil obligations to an agency or a State or Territory authority, or
- as prescribed by regulations.

### **Australian Privacy Principle 10 – Quality of personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT takes reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information it collects is accurate, up-to-date and complete. It also takes reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information we use or disclose is, having regard to the purpose of the use or disclosure, accurate, up-to-date, complete and relevant. This is particularly important:

- when we initially collect the personal information, and
- when we use or disclose personal information.

We take steps to ensure personal information is factually correct. In cases of an opinion, we ensure information takes into account competing facts and views and makes an informed assessment, providing it is clear this is an opinion. Information is confirmed up-to-date at the point in time to which the personal information relates.

Quality measures in place supporting these requirements include:

- internal practices, procedures and systems to audit, monitor, identify and correct poor quality personal information (including training staff in these practices, procedures and systems)
- protocols that ensure personal information is collected and recorded in a consistent format, from a primary information source when possible
- ensuring updated or new personal information is promptly added to relevant existing records
- reminding individuals to update their personal information at critical service delivery points (such as completion) when we engage with the individual
- contacting individuals to verify the quality of personal information where appropriate when it is about to be used or disclosed, particularly if there has been a lengthy period since collection, and
- checking that a third party, from whom personal information is collected (such as employers), has implemented appropriate data quality practices, procedures and systems.

### **Australian Privacy Principle 11 — Security of personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT takes active measures to consider whether it is able to retain personal information we hold, and also to ensure the security of personal information we hold. This includes reasonable steps to protect the information from misuse, interference and loss, as well as unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT destroys or de-identifies personal information held once the information is no longer needed for any purpose for which the information may be legally used or disclosed.



Access to ETE, ECOC and AICTT offices and work areas is limited to our staff only - visitors to our premises must be authorised by relevant personnel and are accompanied at all times. With regard to any information in a paper based form, ETE, ECOC and AICTT maintains storage of records in an appropriately secure place to which only authorised individuals have access.

Annual staff training is conducted with ETE, ECOC and AICTT personnel on privacy issues, and how the APPs apply to our practices, procedures and systems. Information is also included in our staff induction practices.

ETE, ECOC and AICTT conducts ongoing internal audits (at least bi-annually and as needed) of the adequacy and currency of security and access practices, procedures and systems implemented.

### **Australian Privacy Principle 12 — Access to personal information**

Where ETE, ECOC and AICTT holds personal information about an individual, ETE, ECOC and AICTT provides that individual access to the information on their request. In processing requests, we:

- ensure through confirmation of identity that the request is made by the individual concerned, or by another person who is authorised to make a request on their behalf
- respond to a request for access within 5 calendar days and when notifying our refusal to give access, including providing reasons for refusal in writing, and the complaint mechanisms available to the individual, and
- provide information access free of charge.

### **Australian Privacy Principle 13 – Correction of personal information**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT takes reasonable steps to correct personal information we hold, to ensure it is accurate, up-to-date, complete, relevant and not misleading, having regard to the purpose for which it is held. Students are advised of the importance of ensuring that ETE, ECOC and AICTT has current information about each individual, through the **Student Handbooks**.

### **Individual Requests:**

On an individual's written request (via email), ETE, ECOC and AICTT:

- corrects personal information held, and
- notifies any third parties of corrections made to personal information, if this information was previously provided to these parties.

In cases where we refuse to update personal information, ETE, ECOC and AICTT:

- gives a written notice to the individual, including the reasons for the refusal and the complaint mechanisms available to the individual
- upon request by the individual whose correction request has been refused, takes reasonable steps to associate a statement with the personal information that the individual believes it to be inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading



- responds within 14 calendar days to these requests, and
- completes all actions free of charge.

**Correcting at ETE, ECOC and AICTT's initiative:**

ETE, ECOC and AICTT take reasonable steps to correct personal information which it holds in cases where it is satisfied that the personal information held is inaccurate, out-of-date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading (that is, the information is faulty). This awareness may occur through collection of updated information, in notification from third parties or through other means.

**B. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The international student written agreement also includes the circumstances in which personal information may be disclosed, in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

**C. QLD FUNDED STUDENTS**

No additional requirements for QLD funded students.

**D. WA FUNDED STUDENTS**

No additional requirements for WA funded students.

## 5. Related Documents

- Application and Enrolment Form
- Complaints Lodgement Form
- Student Handbooks
- Written Agreement (international students)