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| **Host Employer Information Handbook**  |
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Handbook Overview

This Host Employer Information Handbook provides all the information that you will need to understand how Concept Engineering functions as a Group Training Organisation, how we support our apprentices and trainees, and how we work with you as a host employer.

Use this handbook as your first reference when you have any questions about your relationship or the operating procedures between you and Concept Engineering. If you have any questions which aren’t covered in this handbook you should reach out to your Concept Engineering Field Officer as your first contact.

Application context

This Host Employer Information Handbook will be provided to all companies which are considering becoming a host employer with Concept Engineering. This handbook is used during the recruitment process, the induction process and throughout the term of a company operating as a host employer.

This handbook will be updated periodically. When that happens, a new copy will be provided to all host employers who are working with Concept Engineering.

Intended audience / Relevant parties

* Host employers
* Supervisors working for a host employer

Related documents

CPP017 Information Handbooks Policy and Procedure

How to read this handbook

Please note that the first seven sections of this handbook, from *1. Rights and obligations* to *7. The support services to be offered by Concept Engineering*, contain the same content as those sections in INF001 Apprentice and Trainee Information Handbook. This decision has been made to:

1. Ensure that information is not miscommunicated when the handbooks are updated
2. Ensure that you, as the host employer, are aware of exactly what information has been provided to the apprentice or trainee

These sections have been reworded so that they are addressed to you, the host employer, rather than the apprentice or trainee, but the content is the same. Please read accordingly.

1. Rights and obligations
	1. Concept Engineering as the Group Training Organisation (GTO)

Concept Engineering is a Group Training Organisation (GTO). A GTO is an organisation which employs apprentices or trainees and then places them in host businesses where they will undertake work tasks as a member of that team.

A GTO provides certain advantages to an apprentice or trainee, for example, a GTO can give an apprentice or trainee the opportunity to move between different employers during their training. This will allow them to experience different worksites and gain a much more detailed understanding of the industry as a whole.

As the GTO providing your apprentices and trainees, Concept Engineering has a number of responsibilities, including:

* Maintaining the employment of the apprentice or trainee and paying them
* Ensuring that apprentices and trainees are safe in their work
* Coordinating the training the apprentice or trainee will undertake with their RTO
* Providing support to apprentice or trainee, and you, as they progress through their apprenticeship or traineeship
* Maintaining the employment of the apprentice or trainee for as long as possible during a stand-down
* Giving the apprentice or trainee, and you as the host employer, a clear process to make complaints and appeals
* Meeting the requirements of regulation and legislation

In Victoria, GTOs are registered with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The VRQA administers the Standards for Group Training Organisations 2017 (the Standards) and ensures that we provide a high-quality service to apprentices and trainees throughout their training and employment.

* 1. The Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

The Registered Training Organisation (RTO) is the organisation which will deliver and assess the qualification of the apprentice or trainee. The RTO may be a TAFE, or it may be a private company; no matter which one it is the apprentice or trainee will receive the same qualification. Concept Engineering will work with the apprentice or trainee to decide on the right RTO to meet their needs.

The RTO has a number of responsibilities, including:

* Developing a training plan which will allow the apprentice or trainee to complete their apprenticeship
* Providing the apprentice or trainee with off-the-job training against their training plan
* Providing you, the host employer, with information about what tasks the apprentice or trainee must undertake on-the-job to practice their skills
* Assessing the apprentice or trainee against their progress and signing off units of competency as they complete them
* Monitoring the progress of the apprentice or trainee and providing additional support where required
* Giving the apprentice or trainee, and you as the host employer, a clear process to make complaints and appeals

The RTO may be registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). No matter which one it is, the qualifications issued by all RTOs are the same and the apprentice or trainee can rest assured that the organisation is high-quality.

To ensure that the apprentice or trainee gets the best training experience possible Concept Engineering is very careful about which RTOs and TAFEs it works with.

* 1. The host employer

Host employers are the businesses in which an apprentice or trainee is placed to undertake their day to day work. Concept Engineering is the employer and “hires” or “places” the apprentice or trainee out on the worksites of host employers.

An apprentice or trainee may have one host employer for their entire apprenticeship or traineeship, or they may be moved between host employers. This decision will be made between the apprentice or trainee and Concept Engineering.

As the host employer, you have a number of responsibilities, including:

* Providing the apprentice or trainee with a safe workplace
* Ensuring that the apprentice or trainee understands how to do the job they are being required to do
* Keeping the work of the apprentice or trainee at the right level for the stage of their apprenticeship or traineeship
* Releasing the apprentice or trainee from work to undertake off-the-job training with their RTO
* Signing off on the competence of the apprentice or trainee when they have demonstrated it

Concept Engineering has a detailed and thorough process for evaluating and approving host employers. We only work with the best companies and we are dedicated to ensuring that al our apprentices and trainees get the best workplace experience possible.

* 1. The apprentice or trainee

Being an apprentice or trainee involves entering into a four-way agreement between:

* The apprentice or trainee
* Concept Engineering (the employer and GTO)
* The RTO (who will provide the training)
* The government of Victoria (who approve the training contract)

The difference between apprenticeships and traineeships is minor and is usually based on whether a person is learning a trade or whether they are learning more generic workplace skills. Apprenticeships are also usually longer than traineeships. For example, if a person is becoming a carpenter, they will be an apprentice, and if they are undertaking a qualification in business, they will be a trainee.

Being an apprentice or trainee can be hard work, but it is the best way to learn an industry in as much detail as possible and it presents the opportunity for a person to prove themselves as they enter the workforce.

An apprentice or trainee has a number of responsibilities, including:

* Undertaking off-the-job training as detailed in their training plan
* Completing assessment tasks as detailed in their training plan
* Asking for assistance when they require it
* Attending work as scheduled and following the instructions of their host employer

The years that a person spends as an apprentice or trainee can be some of the best of their life if they approach those years with the right attitude.

1. Employment Conditions
	1. Legislation
		1. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2009A00028>

The Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) provides a safety net of minimum entitlements, enables flexible working arrangements and fairness at work and prevents discrimination against employees.

The Fair Work allows states to refer matters to the Australian federal government to form a national workplace relations system. Before this, workplace laws were set and administered by most individual states. States kept their workplace relations powers over state and local government employees.

From: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/legislation>

Concept Engineering is the employer of all staff who work through the labour hire division and all apprentices and trainees employed by the Group Training Organisation. Because of this, Concept Engineering must abide by the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) in all its dealings with these individuals. This equally applies to all staff employed directly to work within Concept Engineering.

* + 1. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02868>

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy and breastfeeding. It also protects workers with family responsibilities and makes sexual harassment against the law.

From: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients, and members of the public.

* + 1. Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A05138>

The Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth) is one of the main statutes under which income tax is calculated. The Act is a rewrite in plain English of the prior Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.

The act governs such activities as:

* deductions for expenses incurred earning assessable income
* tax deductibility of expenditure on managing tax affairs
* the definition of "trading stock", including shares etc
* capital gains tax (CGT).
* the set of events that give rise to CGT consequences.
* liquidator declaring shares to be worthless
* gifts treated as disposals at market value.
* building allowance, treated separate from other forms of depreciation.

Concept Engineering maintains Pay as You Go (PAYG) withholding for all of its employees and remits this tax directly to the Australian Tax Office. This prevents individuals from being presented with a large tax bill at the end of the year and potentially finding themselves without the cash to pay it.

* + 1. Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> -> Victorian Law Today -> Acts, E

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) replaces the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic) and strengthens discrimination laws in Victoria by changing some key definitions, creating new responsibilities for the Commission, and strengthening the Commission’s role in helping government, business and the community identify and eliminate discrimination.

The objectives of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) are to encourage the identification and elimination of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation and their causes, and to promote and facilitate the progressive realisation of equality.

To do this the Commission will provide a timely and effective dispute resolution service and has been given tools to encourage and facilitate best practice and compliance.

It is also against the law to sexually harass someone or to victimise them for speaking up about their rights, making a complaint, helping someone else make a complaint or refusing to do something that would be contrary to the Equal Opportunity Act.

From: <https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/the-law/equal-opportunity-act>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03712>

The Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) regulates how personal information is handled. The Act defines personal information as:

*…information or an opinion, whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable.*

Common examples are an individual’s name, signature, address, telephone number, date of birth, medical records, bank account details and commentary or opinion about a person.

The Act includes thirteen Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), which apply to some private sector organisations, as well as most Australian and Norfolk Island Government agencies. These are collectively referred to as ‘APP entities’. The Privacy Act also regulates the privacy component of the consumer credit reporting system, tax file numbers, and health and medical research.

From: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy-law/privacy-act/>

Concept Engineering collects personal information about its employees, including those employed in labour hire positions and those who are apprentices and trainees employed through the Group Training Organisation. Because it collects personal information, including some which would be considered sensitive, Concept Engineering must abide by the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) as it collects, handles, stores and uses this information.

* + 1. Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A01302>

The Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) protects people from age discrimination in employment, the provision of goods and services, education and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.

From: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03366>

The Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) articulates the Australian Human Rights Commission role and responsibilities. It gives effect to Australia’s obligations under the following:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

* Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (ILO 111)
* Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
* Convention on the Rights of the Child
* Declaration of the Rights of the Child
* Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons
* Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons, and
* Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

From: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>

For more information about the Human Rights Commission read the fact sheet at: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/brochures-know-your-rights>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A04426>

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) seeks to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities.

From: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A00274>

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) promotes equality before the law for all people regardless of race, colour or national or ethnic origin. It is unlawful to discrimination against people on the basis of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

From: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/legal/legislation>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03332>

The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) replaced the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Cth). The legislation aims to improve and promote equality for both women and men in the workplace.

The principle objects of the Act are to:

* promote and improve gender equality (including equal remuneration between women and men) in employment and in the workplace
* support employers to remove barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce
* promote, amongst employers, the elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender in relation to employment matters (including in relation to family and caring responsibilities)
* foster workplace consultation between employers and employees on issues concerning gender equality in employment and in the workplace
* improve the productivity and competitiveness of Australian business through the advancement of gender equality in employment and in the workplace.

From: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/about-the-agency>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> -> Victorian Law Today -> Acts, R

The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) took effect on 1 January 2002 and prohibits behaviour that incites or encourages hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule against another person or group of people because of their race and/or religion.

The Act deals with public behaviour – not personal beliefs – and makes it against the law to make racist comments in a publication, including the Internet and email, statements at a meeting or at a public rally. It also against the law to write racist graffiti, display racist posters or stickers and engage in racist or vilifying abuse in a public place.

From: <https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/the-law/racial-and-religious-tolerance-act>

Concept Engineering is required to abide by the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic) in all its dealings with staff, including those employed through labour hire as well as apprentices and trainees, clients and members of the public.

* + 1. Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> -> Victorian Law Today -> Acts, O

NOTE: Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Workplace, or Work, Health and Safety (WHS) are identical. OHS is gradually being phased out across Australia and replaced with WHS; however, this has not occurred in Victoria as of the writing of this handbook.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) is the main workplace health and safety law in Victoria. It sets out key principles, duties and rights about OHS.

The OHS Act seeks to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees and other people at work. It also aims to ensure that the health and safety of the public is not put at risk by work activities.

WorkSafe has many functions under the OHS Act. For example, they:

* monitor and enforce compliance with the OHS Act and regulations
* make recommendations to the Minister about the OHS Act, regulations and compliance codes
* promote public awareness and discussion about occupational health, safety and welfare issues
* publish OHS statistics

WorkSafe publishes practical guidance about duties and obligations under OHS laws.

From: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>

Concept Engineering has a duty to all staff, including those employed as labour hire and those employed as apprentices and trainees, to ensure that they are protected in the workplace according to the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic). This includes when those staff are working on a site which is owned and controlled by another company.

* 1. The Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA)

An enterprise agreement is between one or more national system employers and their employees, as specified in the agreement. Enterprise agreements are negotiated by the parties through collective bargaining in good faith, primarily at the enterprise level. Under the Fair Work Act 2009, an enterprise can mean any kind of business, activity, project or undertaking.

From: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/fact-sheets/rights-and-obligations/enterprise-bargaining>

An apprentice or trainee may be working under an enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA). If they are, they will be informed about what it contains when they begin their employment with Concept Engineering. EBAs can contain all sorts of information about things such as:

* What hours an apprentice or trainee can be required to work
* What an apprentice or trainee’s rights as an employee in their industry are
* What kind of training a person must undertake to work in their industry
* Mandatory days off
* Wages to be paid

There are many EBAs and it is not practical to detail them all here. If you are interested in whether an apprentice or trainee will be covered by an EBA when they are employed by Concept Engineering be sure to ask a Field Officer to explain it to you.

* 1. Payment arrangements, including superannuation and PAYG

Concept Engineering is the employer of the apprentice or trainee and will pay their wage. They will lodge timesheets with Concept Engineering, and they may be required to lodge timesheets with their host employer as well, though their host employer will not pay their wage.

The apprentice or trainee’s wage will be detailed in their contract with Concept Engineering. Some apprentice or trainee wages increase as they move through their training and gain additional skills. If this is the case for a particular apprentice or trainee it will be described in their contract.

Concept Engineering will also pay the apprentice or trainee superannuation at the statutory rate. They will have to complete a superannuation form when they begin working with Concept Engineering telling us which superannuation fund they would like us to pay into. If the apprentice or trainee doesn’t have a superannuation fund, Concept Engineering will help them set up a new account with our preferred fund.

Each time the apprentice or trainee is paid they will have some of that pay withheld by Concept Engineering to cover Pay as You Go (PAYG) withholding. This is income tax. Concept Engineering will send this money directly to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). At the end of the year the apprentice or trainee will complete a personal tax return which may result in them receiving a refund on PAYG taxes paid during the year.

The apprentice or trainee ‘s wages, their superannuation and their PAYG withholding will all be detailed on their payslip each time they are paid.

* 1. Position descriptions

Every employee of Concept Engineering has a position description. This is a document which explains what their job is, what their key duties are and what key performance indicators they must meet in order to be satisfactorily performing their job.

They will be provided with their position description during the recruitment process and they must be sure that they fully understand it before they sign their contract.

If an apprentice or trainee has any questions about their position description, they should ask their Field Officer to explain it to them.

* 1. Probation requirements

Concept Engineering will initially employ an apprentice or trainee on a probation period. The length and terms of the probation will be detailed in their contract.

The probation period is a “getting to know you” time during employment. It lasts for a specific period of time, for example six months, and it is the period during which Concept Engineering is able to determine whether an apprentice or trainee is really as good a match for the job as we thought they were when they interviewed.

While an apprentice or trainee is on probation, they must be careful to follow all rules and instructions because their employment can be terminated if it is determined that they are not a suitable employee.

* 1. Professional behaviour, attitudes and dress code

As an employee of Concept Engineering who is being placed with a host employer, an apprentice or trainee is a sort of ambassador for the business. Apprentices and trainees are members of the Concept Engineering team and they are expected to behave accordingly.

The behaviour of an apprentice or trainee must at all times be professional. Unprofessional behaviour, for example undertaking dangerous actions, being late to work, excessive swearing, stealing items from the workplace, etc. will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

The apprentice or trainee’s attitude is important too. They must always approach their work with a positive attitude.

The apprentice or trainee must follow the workplace dress code at all times. This may include a uniform in addition to personal protective equipment (PPE) like boots, long work pants and safety goggles.

* 1. Performance management

Concept Engineering will act to manage the performance of any apprentice or trainee who is not meeting the required standard. The process is described in the CPP009 Apprentice and Trainee Performance Management Policy and Procedure.

When poor performance is reported or suspected an investigation will be undertaken. The objective is to work out whether the poor performance is due to some factor outside the apprentice or trainee’s control, for example if they have not been instructed or trained properly, or if they are being bullied. If this is the case, then Concept Engineering will act to correct this.

If there are no mitigating factors, the apprentice or trainee will be put on a performance management plan. This plan will describe what actions they are required to take to bring their performance up to an acceptable level, how long they have to take those actions, and what will happen if they do not take those actions.

Performance management ideally ends with the apprentice or trainee reaching an acceptable level of performance. If it does not it can end in official warnings or even dismissal.

* 1. Termination

An apprentice or trainee’s employment can be terminated in one of two ways:

* They decide to terminate it
* Concept Engineering decides to terminate it

If the apprentice or trainee decides to terminate their employment, their contract will tell them how much notice they must provide. When an apprentice or trainee has provided notice, they must continue working until the end of that notice period except when Concept Engineering tells them that they do not have to.

If Concept Engineering decides to terminate an apprentice or trainee’s employment this may be because of poor performance, or serious breaches of safety, or it may be because there is no work. In cases of poor performance, the apprentice or trainee will be provided with warnings and performance management prior to dismissal. If there is no work, the apprentice or trainee will be provided with at least four weeks of notice. Under circumstances where they have seriously breached the code of conduct or put someone at risk of harm they may be dismissed without notice.

No matter how an apprentice or trainee’s employment is terminated, if they have not completed their apprenticeship or traineeship it will be suspended. The apprentice or trainee will then need to find a new employer or GTO who is willing to hire them to finish their training. This can be very difficult so it’s best for an apprentice or trainee to maintain their employment with Concept Engineering.

* 1. Ongoing health and drug testing

During recruitment, an apprentice or trainee will be required to undertake health checks and drug tests. These are mandatory and if a person is not willing to take them then they will not be offered the opportunity to join the Concept Engineering team.

These tests may be repeated throughout the apprentice or trainee’s employment. They may be required to undertake alcohol testing on worksites because of a zero-tolerance policy. Refusing to take a drug, alcohol or health test can be grounds for an apprentice or trainee being dismissed from their role.

1. Recruitment of apprentices and trainees
	1. Characteristics of an apprentice or trainee

Concept Engineering is looking for the best possible recruits. The characteristics which define a quality employee are:

* Reliable; the employee can be depended upon to do what they say they will do, when they say that they will do it
* See the bigger picture; the employee is aware of the industry as a whole and not simply their own job within the industry
* Realise the value of themselves and the Concept brand; the employee recognises that they are part of a wider group and that they represent more than just themselves
* Committed; the employee understands that they are embarking on a journey which requires time and dedication
* Teachable; the employee wants to learn and is willing to expend personal time and effort to develop new skills
* Willing to go that extra bit further; the employee understands that the job market is competitive and will earn their position
* Measure twice, cut once; the employee is meticulous and measured and thinks through each action that they take

When a person applies for a job with Concept Engineering they will be evaluated against these criteria.

* 1. Pre-recruitment information

Before an apprentice or trainee is recruited, they will be provided with all relevant information. We want apprentices and trainees to make an informed decision about whether Concept Engineering is the right employer for them, and whether an apprenticeship or traineeship is the right way for them to advance their career.

The Apprentice and Trainee Information Handbook is a core part of the information they will be provided. They will also be given a position description and a contract, both of which contain crucial information about what it’s like to work with Concept Engineering.

Finally, the apprentice or trainee will be given the opportunity to talk to a Concept Engineering Field Officer and ask any questions that they want to ask. This ensures that they have every opportunity to find out all they need to know before they make their decision.

When an apprentice or trainee is offered a contract, they will be required to sign a form which declares that all this has happened. If they don’t believe that they have all the information that they need then they shouldn’t sign their contract. They should talk to their Field Officer and get the information they need first.

* 1. Screening and interview

When an apprentice or trainee applies for a position with Concept Engineering their application will be screened. Applications which are not complete may be contacted for more information or not at the discretion of the General Manager. Only applicants who match the required characteristics will be moved forward in the process.

All complete applications will be contacted by telephone for a discussion about their application, focused specifically on their interests, aspirations and skills and the expectations of Concept Engineering as the employer. The results of this discussion will be recorded and used as part of the evaluation of the applicant’s application.

Applicants who appear to be suitable when compared against the selection criteria for the position will be interviewed by a Field Officer and will be provided with the opportunity to ask questions related to the position. The results of the interview being documented by the Field Officer.

If a person is found suitable at interview, they will undertake a variety of other tests before they are offered a position.

* 1. Language, literacy and numeracy testing

Because part of undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship is studying it is important that apprentices and trainees have the right level of language, literacy, and numeracy (LLN) skill before they enter the program. Those who have difficulty reading or doing basic math will find it very difficult to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship and it isn’t fair for Concept Engineering to put them in that position.

To ensure that an apprentice or trainee has the right LLN skills they will be required to undertake an online LLN test. This test will determine what level of LLN skills they have and will let Concept Engineering decide whether they are suitable to move on to the next stage of the recruitment process.

* 1. Other tests, for example psychometrics and mechanical aptitude

There are a variety of other tests which may be applied depending on the position an apprentice or trainee is seeking and the industry in which they will work. Examples include psychometrics and mechanical aptitude tests.

Psychometric tests are undertaken to determine how people think. They come in a wide variety of different forms, but they all divide people into groups. You may have heard about the idea of being an “auditory” (listening), “visual” (watching), or “kinesthetic” (doing) learning style. This is an example of a psychometric profile. If an apprentice or trainee has to undertake psychometric testing, they will be informed about what to do and how to do it.

Mechanical aptitude tests are used to determine how naturally easy or difficult a person finds understanding machines. For example, some people can look at the mechanisms which make up a bicycle (chain, gears, pedals, wheels, etc.) and understand very quickly how they all work, and some people find it difficult to understand even when they have it explained to them. Depending on the job a person is applying for they may be required to undertake mechanical aptitude testing.

* 1. Physical capability and drug testing

Most of the jobs which Concept Engineering hires apprentices and trainees for require some level of physical ability and fitness. Applicants do not need to be athletes, but they do need to be able to move around freely and use their hands accurately. To ensure that this is true and avoid putting an apprentice or trainee in a situation where they don’t have the chance to be successful, they may have to undertake physical capability testing.

Applicants will be required to undertake drug tests. These are mandatory and if a person is not willing to take them then they will not be offered the opportunity to join the Concept Engineering team.

* 1. Reference checks

Applicants who are found to be suitable and who achieve the necessary results on all the tests will have references checked. If the applicant has worked before these will be managers or supervisors from the past. If they have not worked before these may be teachers from school, or they may be people who know the applicant from the community. Family members will not be allowed to act as references.

1. Induction and onboarding
	1. The induction system

Induction with Concept Engineering happens in a variety of stages.

Firstly, an apprentice or trainee will be inducted by Concept Engineering. Concept Engineering is their employer and has standards they must meet and procedures they must follow. The first induction is based on these standards and procedures.

Secondly, the apprentice or trainee will be inducted to their host employer’s worksite. This is important because all worksites are different and have different safety procedures. If an apprentice or trainee moves between worksites, they will be given a new induction to their new worksite.

Finally, when an apprentice or trainee begins their training, they will be inducted by their RTO.

* 1. Concept Engineering induction

All newly recruited employees will be inducted to Concept Engineering. The induction session will be guided by this information handbook.

The induction session will occur under the guidance of a Concept Engineering staff member and will contain all the information which is necessary for the apprentice or trainee to understand their responsibilities as an employee of Concept Engineering.

By providing information in multiple forms, written and verbal, and by presenting the apprentice or trainee with an opportunity to ask questions, Concept Engineering will ensure that they are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities as an employee.

The apprentice or trainee will be required to sign-off that they attended their induction session before they are placed with a host employer.

* 1. Host employer induction

As a host employer, you will provide the apprentice or trainee with an induction. This may involve an induction manual or site and job-specific DVD, or it may involve the apprentice or trainee being inducted by someone who already works in your business.

The induction will contain all the information which is necessary for the apprentice or trainee to understand the industry and the workplace where they will be placed. Safety is a critical component of the host employer induction and you must focus on it. The induction must also cover the expectations of the host employer including:

* Start times and finish times, including the time allocated to breaks
* Uniform and personal presentation
* Professional conduct
* How to deal with complaints and issues on the worksite
* Probation requirements
* How to notify and request leave (including from the RTO)
* How to fill out a timesheet

The apprentice or trainee must attend the host employer induction before they start work, and their Field Officer will contact them afterward to ensure that they received the induction and learned everything that they needed to learn. If the apprentice or trainee had difficulty understanding any of the information or if anything was not provided to them then their Field Officer will help to address that.

* 1. RTO induction

Before an apprentice or trainee commences their apprenticeship or traineeship, they will undertake a trial period with the host employer. Following the conclusion of the trial period with a host employer Concept Engineering will organise the selected RTO to conduct a sign-up and induction.

This will mark the transition from being an employee to an apprentice or trainee. The RTO takes responsibility for the induction; however, as Concept Engineering is the employer we will review and confirm the content of the induction program. The induction program will contain all the information which is necessary for the apprentice or trainee understand the training and the qualification that they will be undertaking.

After the RTO induction is complete a Field Officer will contact the apprentice or trainee and verify their understanding. If they had difficulty understanding any of the information or if anything was not provided to them, the Field Officer will help to address that.

1. Host employers
	1. Recruitment of host employers

As a GTO, Concept Engineering takes the relationship it has with its host employers very seriously. A good host employer can be the making of an apprentice or trainee, and the engagement of the host employer in the training process is one of the key factors which determines the overall quality of the training and assessment experience.

To ensure that it works with only the best host employers, Concept Engineering uses the following characteristics:

* Established; the host employer has been in the industry for a reasonable period of time, has a good reputation, and is financially stable
* Committed; the host employer can demonstrate commitment to ongoing, sustainable positions and to remaining and growing in their industry
* Innovative; the host employer is open to the implementation of new processes and follows industry developments over time
* Communicative; the host employer engages in open and transparent communication with integrity and clarity
* Safe; the host employer is Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) conscious and has established WHS policies, procedures and processes which are promoted and adhered to
* Experienced; the host employer has a staff base who are committed employees in their industry.

Concept Engineering has implemented a multi-stage host employer selection process, much like the recruitment process for employees, to ensure that we only work with the best.

* 1. Fit and proper testing for supervisors

Within the host employer there is one person who makes more difference to an apprenticeship than any other: the supervisor. The supervisor will be the individual who is responsible for overseeing the work of apprentices and trainees on a daily basis, for teaching them on-the-job, for helping them when they need it and for informing Concept Engineering and the RTO of when the apprentice or trainee is ready to move on to the next stage of their learning journey.

To ensure that all supervisors are the best possible candidates, Concept Engineering has implemented a process of evaluation. Only those who have deep and meaningful experience in the industry and who have the capability to teach and mentor are permitted to be supervisors for apprentices and trainees.

Further, all supervisors are evaluated to ensure that they are “fit and proper” for the role. This includes whether they have been:

* convicted of an indictable offence under a law of the Commonwealth or any Australian state or territory
* found by a court to have breached the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009 or previous state or Commonwealth legislation governing wages and conditions
* subject to enforcement action by the Fair Work Ombudsman
* convicted in relation to workplace safety laws in Victoria or any other Australian state or territory
* subject to enforcement action by the Victorian WorkCover Authority or the workplace safety regulatory body in other Australian states or territories such as an enforceable undertaking or a prohibition notice

All apprentices and trainees can be confident that their supervisor within the host employer is going to be top quality and that they will support the apprentice or trainee whole they learn.

* 1. Ongoing monitoring of safety

Because Concept Engineering is the apprentice or trainee’s employer, we have ultimate responsibility for their safety in the workplace. This includes when they are on placement with a host employer. To ensure that they will be safe, your business will be carefully evaluated as to the quality of its health and safety procedures before you are allowed to host an apprentice or trainee.

Throughout the duration of a placement, your worksite will be continuously monitored by your Field Officer. A key component of this monitoring is ensuring that you are maintaining your occupational health and safety obligations.

If at any point an apprentice or trainee feels that their health or safety is not secure in the worksite, they will tell us immediately so that we can undertake an investigation and take action if necessary.

* 1. Host employer support

Concept Engineering recognises that a successful apprenticeship or traineeship is a partnership between all parties, and this includes the host employer. To ensure that you are best able to maintain your responsibilities under the partnership Concept Engineering offers a range of support measures. These include:

* Ongoing regular visits to discuss the apprentice or trainee’s progress
* Professional development opportunities
* Support to develop and implement effective teaching systems
* Occupational health and safety support
* Mediation services when there is conflict

Concept Engineering is here to support everyone involved in the apprenticeship and traineeship experience, and that includes you, the host employer.

1. The Registered Training Organisation
	1. The qualifications being offered
		1. Qualifications list

As a Group Training Organisation, Concept Engineering offers the following apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities:

* UET30712 - Certificate III in ESI - Power Systems - Rail Traction
* UEE30811 - Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
* UEE41211 - Certificate IV in Electrical - Rail Signalling
* MEM30305 - Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade
* MEM30205 - Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical Trade
	+ 1. UET30712 - Certificate III in ESI - Power Systems - Rail Traction

Those gaining this qualification will be able to acquire the skills and knowledge needed for a career in the Electricity Supply Industry. The scope of this qualification covers:

Rail Traction industry such the installation, maintenance and inspection of overhead poles/structures, conductors and cables and rail traction wiring systems including associated equipment used on these structures. The installation and maintenance of the overhead traction configuration and the installation and maintenance of bonds as well as the operation of the rail traction height access equipment is also included in this job function.

From: <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/UET30712>

* + 1. UEE30811 - Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician

This qualification provides competencies to select, install, set up, test, fault find, repair and maintain electrical systems and equipment in building and premises. It includes ERAC requirements for an ‘Electrician’s licence’.

From: <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/UEE30811>

* + 1. UEE41211 - Certificate IV in Electrical - Rail Signalling

This qualification provides competencies to install, certify, fault find and maintain rail signalling equipment and systems. This includes ERAC requirements for an ‘Electrician’s licence’, performing like for like replacement, performing authorised installations and alterations, and applying emergency operational restriction. It excludes changing circuit principles, changing the design function and commissioning.

Note:

Commissioning is defined as the process to certify the signalling system to the enterprise standard. Certification is defined as the signing of certification documents by qualified, competent persons attesting to the design, product, or installation is in accordance with the specification requirements as verified by appropriate inspections and/or tests at equipment level.

From: <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/UEE41211>

* + 1. MEM30305 - Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade

This qualification covers the skills and knowledge required for employment as an Engineering Tradesperson - Fabrication within the metal, engineering, manufacturing and associated industries or other industries where Engineering Tradespersons - Fabrication work. The qualification has been specifically developed to meet the needs of apprentices in the above trade. The qualification packaging has been developed on an assumption that competency will be developed through an integrated combination of on and off-the-job learning strategies such as those delivered through a formal apprenticeship. The qualification may also be achieved through formal skills recognition assessment processes.

Job roles /employment outcomes

The Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade specifies the competencies required for employment as an Engineering Tradesperson - Fabrication including metal fabrication, forging, founding, structural steel erection, electroplating, metal spinning, metal polishing, sheet metal work, welding and the use of related computer controlled equipment.

Employment outcomes related to this qualification are found in a wide variety of manufacturing and engineering related sectors as well as Engineering Tradesperson - Fabrication roles in other industries.

Application

This qualification is designed to provide an industry recognised skills profile related to trade work as an Engineering Tradesperson - Fabrication. Skills development would usually be undertaken through an Australian Apprenticeship arrangement where the mix of on and off-the-job training would be specified in the Training Plan associated with the Contract of Training between the employer and apprentice.

Assessment of some units of competency must, where indicated, include evidence of the candidate's performance in a productive work environment where there is a sufficient range of appropriate tasks and materials to cover the scope of application of those units. All outcomes must reflect the standard of performance inherent in the job.

Occupational titles that this qualification is suitable for may vary and include metal fabrication tradesperson, boilermaker, 1st class sheet metal worker, 1st class welder, moulder, foundry tradesperson and patternmaker.

From: <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/MEM30305>

* + 1. MEM30205 - Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical Trade

This qualification covers the skills and knowledge required to work as an Engineering Tradesperson - Mechanical within metal, engineering, manufacturing and associated industries or other industries where Engineering Tradesperson - Mechanical work. The qualification has been specifically developed for apprentices in the above trade. The qualification packaging has been developed on an assumption that competency will be developed through a combination of on and off-the-job learning strategies such as those delivered through a formal apprenticeship. The qualification may also be achieved through formal skills recognition assessment processes.

Job roles /employment outcome

The Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical Trade specifies the competencies required for employment as an Engineering Tradesperson - Mechanical including the design, assembly, manufacture, installation, modification, testing, fault finding, commissioning, maintenance and service of all mechanical equipment, machinery, fluid power systems, stationary and mobile equipment, instruments, refrigeration, and the use of computer controlled machine tools.

Employment outcomes related to this qualification are found in a wide variety of manufacturing and engineering related sectors as well as Engineering Tradesperson - Mechanical roles in other industries.

Application

This qualification is designed to provide an industry recognised skills profile related to trade work as an Engineering Tradesperson - Mechanical. Skills development would be undertaken through an Australian Apprenticeship arrangement where the mix of on and off-the-job training would be specified in the Training Plan associated with the Contract of Training between the employer and apprentice.

Assessment of some units of competency must, where indicated, include evidence of the candidate's performance in a productive work environment where there is a sufficient range of appropriate tasks and materials to cover the scope of application of those units. All outcomes must reflect the standard of performance inherent in the job.

Occupational titles that this qualification is suitable for may vary and include mechanical tradesperson, fitter and turner, fitter and machinist, maintenance fitter, diesel fitter, plant mechanic, refrigeration mechanic and 1st class machinist.

From: <https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/MEM30205>

* 1. The training and assessment methodology

Training and assessment can be delivered in different ways. For example, some training programs are delivered entirely in the classroom, some are delivered entirely in the workplace and some are delivered online. An apprenticeship or traineeship is always a blend of different methodologies. The key methodologies are:

* Classroom; this involves training which is conducted in a classroom or simulated environment rather than the worksite
* Workplace; this involves training which is conducted in the workplace while actual work tasks are being undertaken
* Online; this involves training which is conducted through a learning management system on a computer
* Distance; this involves training which is undertaken using books and notes without a trainer present

The collection of methodologies which will be used for a specific apprentice or trainee depends on the qualification which they are enrolled in and the RTO which is managing their learning journey. The training plan, developed in consultation with the RTO and Concept Engineering, will detail which methodologies are to be used at which times.

* 1. Quality and breadth in the training experience

The RTO is responsible for ensuring that the training experience has quality and breadth. This means that it has to allow the apprentice or trainee to learn the things they need to learn without being overly difficult and it has to provide them with skills that they can take into different workplaces, not those which can only be used in one specific workplace.

RTOs are governed by the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015, which is law. The Standards detail the level of quality and the breadth of the training which they are to provide, and an RTO which does not meet these standards is breaking the law.

Concept Engineering follows a comprehensive process to select and quality assure RTOs with whom we work. The characteristics which we search for are:

* Connected; the RTO has strong connections with industry and memberships with appropriate industry bodies
* Experienced; the RTO has a staff base who are committed employees in their industry
* Knowledgeable; the RTO has a strong, deep knowledge about its industry and is up to date with new processes and industry developments
* Communicative; the RTO engages in open and transparent communication and reporting with integrity and clarity
* Innovative; the RTO utilises new technology in the development and rollout of its courses, including having online services
* Efficient; the RTO takes actions quickly and effectively, without prompting, when they are required.

If, at any time, an apprentice or trainee feels that the quality and breath of their training experience is not up to what they consider to be an appropriate standard, they will notify their Field Officer immediately so that we can investigate and take action if it is required.

* 1. The training plan

When a person begins their apprenticeship or traineeship, they will sign a training plan. This document is developed by the RTO and is co-signed by Concept Engineering.

The training plan details their entire apprenticeship or traineeship journey, through to their graduation. It details which units the apprentice or trainee will undertake, when they will undertake them, how much of the training is conducted using different methodologies, and how they will be assessed.

The training plan can be modified to meet specific needs. For example, if the apprentice or trainee will be rotated through multiple host employers the training plan can be altered to reflect that.

The training plan is co-created, and the apprentice or trainee is a part of the creation. They must be certain that they fully understand the training plan when it is developed, ask lots of questions about how it will work, and make sure that if they have any questions or concerns about any part of the plan they raise them.

* 1. Competency-based progression

It used to be that apprenticeships or traineeships were conducted on a “time-served” basis. An apprenticeship might take four years, for example, and there was no way to move faster than that. This has changed in Australia over the past few decades, and the system which is now used is “competency-based”.

In a competency-based system the years allocated to an apprenticeship or traineeship are considered “nominal” or “indicative”. They show the expected progression of the average person who starts the training with no knowledge or skills at all.

Some people may be able to move faster than that. Maybe they have some pre-existing skills from a previous job, or maybe they’re a really fast learner. Maybe they spend more time studying than expected. Whatever the reason, in a competency-based system an apprentice or trainee can move forward when they’re ready to move forward rather than waiting for time to tick away.

This can also apply the other way and an apprenticeship or traineeship can be slowed down if necessary. Some people can take up to ten years to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The competency-based system is law in Australia. Even though many people in the workplace still believe the old way is the best way, the new way is the way it’s done. Concept Engineering will monitor the training plan and the apprentice or trainee’s development of skills and knowledge to ensure that they progress at the rate which is right for them, rather than moving forward on a time-served basis.

* 1. RTO support

Just as Concept Engineering offers support to the apprentice or trainee, and to you as the host employer, we also offer support to the RTOs who train our apprentices and trainees. This support takes a number of forms, such as:

* Cooperation in the development of the training plan
* Assistance to plan workplace activities
* Additional monitoring beyond that undertaken by the RTO
* Workplace relations consultation and assistance

Think of Concept Engineering as being the coordinator of the apprenticeship or traineeship and offering support to everyone who is involved. That’s the role we play.

* 1. Completion of the training contract

Ask anyone who has done it and they will tell you that the day a person completes their apprenticeship or traineeship is a great day. It’s a day to be proud of, and a day to remember.

When that day comes the final sign-off and completion of the training contract involves four parties:

* The apprentice or trainee
* The RTO
* The Victorian government
* Concept Engineering

All four parties have to be confident that the apprentice or trainee is ready to take their place as a fully qualified member of their chosen field and, when they are, all four will sign to the apprentice or trainee’s competence. Once that happens the training contract is complete, they will receive the qualification and the confirmation papers for completing an apprenticeship or traineeship, and they will celebrate!

When a person has completed their qualification and are no longer an apprentice or trainee a number of options will be in front of them. They may be able to continue working with the host employer, or they may join Concept Engineering labour hire division as a worker. They may also do something else entirely. Whatever decision they make, Concept Engineering will conduct an exit interview and what the outgoing apprentice or trainee tell us will help us to improve our services for future apprentices and trainees.

1. Concept Engineering support services
	1. Literacy and numeracy support

If an apprentice or trainee requires assistance with literacy or numeracy Concept Engineering can help them. When they first begin their employment with Concept Engineering they will be tested for these skills and they will be given the opportunity to self-identify any issues which they know about. If an apprentice or trainee has a need for literacy and numeracy support Concept Engineering will put in place an additional support plan.

The additional support plan is created in agreement between the apprentice or trainee, Concept Engineering, the RTO and you, the host employer. If there are costs to the plan, for example if a tutor is required and they must be paid, this will be discussed with the apprentice or trainee and they must agree before the service begins. No service that costs the apprentice or trainee will be provided without their consent.

The RTO will also offer language, literacy and numeracy support as required by the Standards under which they operate.

* 1. Access to specialised equipment

In some cases, the apprentice or trainee might require specialised equipment. Usually this is to address a disability or some other restriction, for example people who are missing fingers might need special tools. Where this is a factor it will be discussed with the apprentice or trainee in advance, before they are able to start their apprenticeship or traineeship. The apprentice or trainee may be required to pay for these tools and equipment, there may be government support, and Concept Engineering or you as the host employer may assist. The decision will be made together.

Standard work equipment, for example boots, basic tools, safety goggles, etc. are the responsibility of the apprentice or trainee to provide.

* 1. Assistance with personal issues

If an apprentice or trainee experiences a personal issue during their apprenticeship or traineeship, for example a death in the family or a health issue, they will tell us straight away. Concept Engineering can help to plan the response, including working with the RTO and you as the host employer to ensure that the apprentice or trainee is not disadvantaged. In extreme cases, the apprenticeship or traineeship can even be suspended to provide the apprentice or trainee with several months of breathing room to deal with the issue.

* 1. Monitoring of the training program

Concept Engineering will monitor the training program every step of the way. We’ll be keeping track of where the apprentice or trainee is against their training plan and we’ll be ready to step in and assist if it looks like they’re having trouble.

If the apprentice or trainee falls behind the expected pace of progress, we will discuss it with them, the RTO, and you as the host employer. It’s not always a bad thing, the apprentice or trainee may just need a little more time and that can be OK. In a competency-based system, which is what Australia has, everyone progresses at their own pace.

We will also be watching for those who outperform or who move very quickly. If an apprentice or trainee is one of the lucky ones with natural talent or previous experience, or if they just work very hard and do well, we’ll help to move them forward at the rate which is right for them.

* 1. Monitoring of the host employer

One of Concept Engineering’s most important responsibilities is making sure that, as the host employer, you provide the apprentice or trainee with the work, training, and support that they need to progress. To ensure that this happens we constantly monitor and work with you, providing you with support where required.

* 1. Occupational health and safety support

If there is any concern whatsoever about occupational health and safety Concept Engineering is here to support the apprentice or trainee. We have well-established systems and processes to monitor them, you as the host employer, and the RTO, and to ensure that the apprentice or trainee is always safe. Concept Engineering is also the apprentice or trainee’s employer for the purposes of worker’s compensation insurance, so if they do get injured, we’ll look after them.

If an apprentice or trainee is concerned about their health and safety at all, they will contact their Field Officer immediately. Concept Engineering has an excellent health and safety record and we want to maintain it.

* 1. Movement between host employers

Sometimes it is necessary to move between host employers. This might happen when a project comes to an end, or when an apprentice or trainee progresses within their learning journey and their host employer is not ready for someone of a higher skill level. Whatever way it happens, Concept Engineering will ensure that movement between host employers is smooth and simple.

We will work with the RTO and with the old and new host employers to ensure that the apprentice or trainee knows exactly what is happening and that it doesn’t disrupt their training program. We will ensure that the apprentice or trainee gets an induction and orientation to their new host employer and we will be with them every step of the way.

* 1. Stand down provisions

“Stand down” refers to a period where an apprentice or trainee is still employed by Concept Engineering and still working on their apprenticeship or traineeship but they have no host employer.

Stand down may be unavoidable at times. Often this will be due to unexpected issues with a project, for example funding related issues, or because a host employer is experiencing undisclosed difficulties or goes into liquidation.

Stand down comes in two forms:

1. Project stand down, which occurs when a project or job is continuing but is delayed for a defined period
2. Permanent stand down, which occurs when a project or job is cancelled and there is no possibility of return

During any project stand down of up to four weeks Concept Engineering will maintain the employment of the apprentice or trainee and will provide opportunities to engage with the RTO who is undertaking the training, as well as providing opportunities to take part in other short-course style training. The time will be used to deepen and develop the skills of the apprentice or trainee.

During permanent stand down, or project stand down of more than four weeks, Concept Engineering will:

* Provide the apprentice or trainee with at least four weeks of notice of an impending suspension, in accordance with the enterprise bargaining agreement
* Attempt to find a suitable alternative placement to which the apprentice or trainee can be moved and where they can continue their training
* Provide opportunities to engage with the RTO who is undertaking the accredited training, as well as providing opportunities to take part in other short-course style training
* Maintain their employment for at least four weeks, and as long as is financially possible, past the four-week mark

If no alternative placement can be found the contract for training, and the apprentice or trainee’s employment, will be suspended until a suitable placement can be found.

* 1. Cancellation of a host employer arrangement

While it is extremely unusual, and Concept Engineering takes every effort to avoid it, sometimes a host employer will cancel their agreement and stop hosting apprentices and trainees. If this happens, taking care of the apprentice or trainee is our top priority.

The first thing that will happen is that the stand down procedure will begin. This includes us looking for a new host employer to move the apprentice or trainee to as quickly as possible. If you want to know more about what happens in cases of stand down, see the relevant section of this information handbook.

* 1. Cancellation of a training arrangement

While it is extremely rare, sometimes an RTO will cancel a training arrangement. This may happen because the RTO no longer teaches the course or because they have closed. Concept Engineering is extremely careful about the selection of partner RTOs to ensure that this doesn’t happen.

If this were ever to happen, taking care of the apprentice or trainee will be our first priority. We will arrange for another RTO to pick up the training where the previous one left off. It doesn’t have to disrupt the apprenticeship or traineeship at all.

* 1. Concept Engineering Field Officers

When you come on as a host employer, you will be given the name and contact details of your Field Officer. This person is your number one point of contact. They will probably be the one to conduct your induction and orientation and they will come and visit you and the apprentices or trainees who are placed with you regularly.

Make sure that you get to know your Field Officer and that you keep their contact details close. If you ever have any need of support, whatever the issue, your Concept Engineering Field Officer is your first call.

* 1. Issues with the RTO or host employer

If an apprentice or trainee believes that there is any issue with their RTO or their host employer, they can contact the Field Officer. The Field Officer is on the apprentice or trainee’s team, so they can be sure that the discussion will be confidential, and that the Field Officer will try to help. If there is a genuine issue, they will be able to open an investigation and correct it.

* 1. Complaints and appeals
		1. Complaints

Any apprentice or trainee, staff member, host employer or any other person or organisation has the right to lodge a complaint about Concept Engineering. A complaint may be made regarding the actions of the company, its staff members and apprentices or trainees, or about any third party or employee of a third party who is involved with the company.

Concept Engineering strongly believes in the principles of natural justice and strives for procedural fairness in the addressing of complaints at all times. To ensure that this end is achieved, complaints may be made on two different procedural levels: informal and formal.

In the first instance, a complaint should be made informally. This involves raising the issue with the other party concerned and attempting to address it directly.

Concept Engineering staff are all made aware of this approach and should be ready to discuss the concern and address it where possible. To ensure that an appropriate record of your informal complaint is kept you should email the details of your complaint, the action you have taken, and the resolution to the State Manager at vic@conceptengineering.com.au. Concept Engineering will store this information in our Complaints and Appeals Register to ensure that, if necessary, the information is available for use in a formal complaint.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be made. Your complaint should be made using the FRM025 Complaint Form. This form is available from the Concept Engineering website and should be submitted to vic@conceptengineering.com.au.

Following receipt of the complaint, an officer of Concept Engineering will contact you to discuss the matter further. Your complaint, and all associated detail, will be stored and maintained in the Complaints and Appeals Register to aid in delivering procedural fairness. You will be notified, in writing, that an investigation has been opened and is being undertaken.

The complaint will be investigated thoroughly, including undertaking interviews with all concerned individuals. Following this process, a decision will be made by the investigating officer and will be endorsed by the General Manager of Concept Engineering. This decision, once made, will be upheld unless an appeal is made and is successful.

Following the completion of the formal complaint process, if you are not satisfied, you have the right to appeal the decision. This includes the right to have the decision reviewed by a third party.

Throughout the complaints process you will be kept informed, in writing, of what is occurring and what action is being taken. If your complaint will require more than 30 days to finalise you will be notified of this in writing, including being informed of the reason why that length of time is required. You will then be regularly updated, in writing, of the progress of your complaint.

If a complaint relates to a matter which puts a national training contract for an apprentice or trainee at risk of non-completion, and if the complaint is not resolved in a manner which ensures that the contract will be completed, it will be referred to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority for mediation and assistance. Where a compliant is related to industrial relations, for example a contract dispute, it may be referred to an appropriate mediator.

The results of all complaint processes will be analysed and used to improve the operations of Concept Engineering. Nothing in this process prevents an individual from accessing their legal right to make a complaint to a third party such as the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority.

* + 1. Appeals

Any apprentice or trainee, staff member, host employer or any other person or organisation has the right to lodge an appeal against any decision which has a direct effect on them and which has been made by Concept Engineering, any staff member of the company, or any third party or employee of a third party who is involved with the company.

To ensure that procedural fairness is maintained, there is no informal appeals process. All appeals must be made using the FRM026 Appeal Form. This form is available from the Concept Engineering website and should be submitted to vic@conceptengineering.com.au.

Following receipt of the appeal, an officer of Concept Engineering will contact you to discuss the matter further. Your appeal, and all associated detail, will be stored and maintained in the Complaints and Appeals Register to aid in delivering procedural fairness. You will be notified, in writing, that an investigation has been opened and is being undertaken.

The appeal will be investigated thoroughly, including reviewing the decision-making process and interviewing all concerned individuals. This review will involve consulting with appropriately qualified decision makers who were not involved in the original decision. Following this process, the decision will be upheld or overturned by the investigating officer and this result will be endorsed by the General Manager of Concept Engineering.

If, following the appeal process, you are unsatisfied with the result, the final stage in the process is to have the appeal overseen by an independent mediator. You have the right to request this and, if made, this request will be honoured. The independent mediator must be agreed by both parties prior to being appointed, and the cost will, in the initial instance, be covered by the appellant. If the appeal is successful and the independent mediator overturns the decision, and if the decision was made by Concept Engineering or a staff member of the company, the appellant will be reimbursed for the cost of the mediator.

Throughout the appeals process you will be kept informed, in writing, of what is occurring and what action is being taken. If your appeal will require more than 30 days to finalise you will be notified of this in writing, including being informed of the reason why that length of time is required. You will then be regularly updated, in writing, of the progress of your appeal.

If an appeal relates to a matter which puts a national training contract for an apprentice or trainee at risk of non-completion, and if the appeal is not resolved in a manner which ensures that the contract will be completed, it will be referred to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority for mediation and assistance. Where an appeal is related to industrial relations, for example in the case of a contract dispute, it may be referred to an appropriate mediator.

The results of all appeal processes will be analysed and used to improve the operations of Concept Engineering.

1. The host employer agreement
	1. Terms of business

When you are first brought on as a client with Concept Engineering, you will be required to sign a host employer agreement, also referred to as a “terms of business” document. This document is a contract between your business and Concept Engineering.

* 1. Legal obligations

The terms of business include legal obligations related to apprentices and trainees. These include obligations such as:

* Providing time away from work for off-the-job training
* Ensuring that appropriate monitoring and supervision is in place for apprentices and trainees
* Cooperating when it is time to sign-off competency
* Working with the RTO to ensure the training and assessment process is sufficient
* Adhering to cost increases when competency-based progression events lead to higher wages

It is crucial that you understand your obligations as a host employer before you sign the agreement. If you do not meet your obligations you may have your agreement terminated and your apprentices and trainees withdrawn from your workplace and placed somewhere else.

* 1. Induction

All employers who sign a host employer agreement and become a partner of Concept Engineering will be provided with a formal induction. The induction will be conducted by the State Manager, or their delegate, and will involve a start-to-finish walkthrough of the host employer information handbook.

The induction must include, at a minimum, the representative of the business ownership or senior management who signed the host employer agreement and any person or persons who will act as a supervisor for apprentices and trainees.

1. The VET system
	1. The AQF

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. The AQF was introduced in 1995 to underpin the national system of qualifications in Australia encompassing higher education, vocational education and training and schools.

From: <https://www.aqf.edu.au/>

* 1. The VET Quality Framework

The vocational education and training (VET) Quality Framework is aimed at achieving greater national consistency in the way RTOs are registered and monitored and in how standards in the vocational education and training (VET) sector are enforced.

The VET Quality Framework comprises:

* the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
* the Fit and Proper Person Requirements
* the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
* the Data Provision Requirements
* the Australian Qualifications Framework.

From: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/about/australias-vet-sector/vet-quality-framework>

* 1. ASQA

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia’s vocational education and training sector.

ASQA regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.

From: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/about>

The majority of RTOs in Australia are regulated by ASQA according to the VET Quality Framework. The only RTOs which are not are those who operate wholly within Victoria or Western Australia and who do not work with international students.

* 1. VRQA

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is Victoria's education and training regulator.

[They] are an independent statutory authority that works to assure the quality of education and training in Victoria. [They] apply standards to education and training providers and accredit courses and qualifications. [They]register apprentices and trainees, approve their employers and assure all parties meet their contractual obligations.

What [they]do:

[They] register education and training providers in:

* vocational education and training (VET) (that operate in Victoria only or Victoria and Western Australia only)
* school education
* senior secondary education — both school and non-school
* overseas secondary student exchange programs.

[They] register children for home schooling in Victoria.

[They] accredit courses and register qualifications.

[They] investigate complaints against the providers registered by us.

[They] regulate apprenticeships and traineeships in Victoria.

From: <https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/aboutus/Pages/default.aspx>

Some RTOs are registered with the VRQA. Those RTOs do not operate according to the VET Quality Framework, they operate under an older version of the regulation called the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). While the AQTF is different to the VET Quality Framework the objective is the same: to ensure that all students undertaking accredited VET qualifications have the best experience and come out with the skills and knowledge they expect.

* 1. Competency-based training

Competency-based training is a method of training which develops the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to achieve competency.

Australia’s vocational education and training (VET) system is competency-based. That is, it is based on occupational skills standards which are set out in units of competency within training packages and accredited courses. This distinguishes it from Australia’s other education sectors (i.e. schools and higher education).

Competency-based training is a method of training that focuses on a learner’s ability to receive, respond to and process information in order to achieve competency. It is geared towards the attainment and demonstration of skills to meet industry-defined standards, rather than to a learner’s achievement relative to that of others.

Learner progress in a competency-based program is not time-based. As soon as a learner achieves a required competency, they can move to the next. In this way, learners can complete training in their own time and at their own pace.

Units of competency do not prescribe how people should be trained. Vocational trainers employed by registered training organisations (RTOs) use these documents to design learning programs that assist people to gain – or to demonstrate that they possess – the skills and knowledge specified in units of competency.

Competency-based assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgements about whether a person has achieved competency. It is often described as a criterion-referenced process, because it involves people being assessed against fixed criteria or pre-determined benchmarks – such as those expressed in units of competency or accredited modules.

From: <https://www.myskills.gov.au/media/1776/back-to-basics-competency-based-training.pdf>

1. Scheduling training activity
	1. Block release vs day release

As the host employer of an apprentice or trainee you are required to release the employee for a minimum amount of time to attend off-the-job training. This can be structured in different ways depending on the qualification and the RTO which is delivering it.

The two most common forms of training release are block-release and day-release.

In a block-release program, the apprentice or trainee works full time for a lengthy period, for example two or three months, and then takes a block of time, for example a week, to attend training at their RTO.

In a day release program, the apprentice or trainee works part time, for example four days a week, and then attends training at their RTO for the difference, for example one day per week.

The decision as to which of these is best is made in consultation with the apprentice or trainee, Concept Engineering, and the RTO. Not all release patterns will be available for all qualifications.

* 1. Minimum release periods

When an apprentice or trainee enters into a National Training Contract there is a minimum release period agreed. This is usually three hours per week for a full-time employee though it can be averaged over the space of some months. The minimum release period will be agreed with you when you enter into the host employer agreement and you will be required to make the apprentice or trainee available for release times.

* 1. Timetable for the training program

The timetable for the training program is set by the RTO. It is very important that you understand the timetable against which the apprentice or trainee is required to be released before you enter into the host employer agreement.

* 1. Matching work activity to training activity

Part of your role as a host employer is to ensure that the activity which the apprentice or trainee undertakes in the workplace is accurately matched to the training content they are undertaking. This means that you must be aware of the apprentice or trainee’s training plan at all times and you must be prepared to offer the apprentice or trainee work opportunities to match.

Before you enter into a host-employer agreement with Concept Engineering we will undertake a thorough job analysis to determine whether the tasks you expect the apprentice or trainee to undertake are appropriate when compared to the training program. Only when we are confident in this will we place an apprentice or trainee with your organisation.

If the way you manage your staff, including the tasks you assign, changes you must notify us immediately as it may have impacts on the ability of the apprentice or trainee to remain in your workplace.

1. Version Management

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Notes** |
| 1.0 | 20/06/2019 | First release |
| 2.0 | 28/10/2020 | Revised for language, not for content |
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