



SETTING THE STANDARD

**aicm**  
**Learning Services**

**Australian Institute of Credit Management**

# **AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF CREDIT MANAGEMENT**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2006**

This handbook is designed to inform students about  
AICM Learning Services Education and Training Programs

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## Access & Equity

### Equal Opportunity Policy and Principles

The Australian Institute of Credit Management (AICM) is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in education and employment and affirms the value of the social and cultural diversity that is reflected in its community.

The broad principles of equal opportunity are "social justice" and "diversity".

**Social justice** refers to the four elements of equity, access, participation, and basic rights.

**Diversity** refers to the three elements of social, cultural and linguistic diversity.

The broad principles are identified under five main headings:

**Equity:** That action is taken to redress disadvantage caused by unequal access to education and employment.

**Access:** That access to conditions and benefits of employment for all staff, and access to training students, is fair and equitable

**Participation:** That staff (individuals and/or groups) are directly involved in decisions affecting their work and study

**Basic rights:** That the basic rights of equal access to jobs, education and freedom from discrimination are protected. This includes receiving information about these rights and providing complaint mechanisms for redressing grievances.

**Diversity:** That the social, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the community is recognised, valued and respected.

AICM recognises that equal opportunity does not mean treating everyone the same. The commitment to equal opportunity provides the stimulus for the AICM to establish policies, programs and other mechanisms designed to ensure that equal opportunity is provided to all staff and students and that members of disadvantaged groups can gain equal access to opportunities for education and employment.

## Anti-Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination is any practice which is designated as unlawful by state or federal legislation, and which has the purpose or effect of disadvantaging individuals on the basis of their status or beliefs or on the basis of characteristics generally attributed to that status or belief.

The AICM is committed to promoting an environment where everyone is able to study and work effectively, without fear of unlawful discrimination or harassment on any of the grounds covered by the legislation with which AICM must comply. These include:

Sex or gender

Sexuality

Pregnancy

Marital status, or status as a parent or carer

Physical or intellectual disability

Race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin

Cultural differences

Age

Political beliefs

Religious conviction

Personal association with a person who is identified by any of the listed attributes

Social origin

Harassment on any of these grounds is a form of discrimination.

## Equity Objectives

To provide an educational environment which values all participants' contributions and encourages cultural and social diversity

To provide support to participants from designated equity groups to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to succeed in their educational pursuits

To mainstream access and equity objectives into the strategic, educational and administrative planning processes of the AICM

To ensure that the organisational structure and decision-making processes of the AICM reflect a commitment to student access and equity.

## Responsibilities

All employees and members of AICM have a responsibility to work individually and collectively to achieve a work and study environment in which equality of opportunity is fostered. This will assist AICM to support equal opportunity in employment and education.

## Grievance Policy and Procedures

Any complaints or grievances will be treated seriously, confidentially and dealt with promptly. Any complaint or grievance will be dealt with in an open and trusting manner and with reference to the principles of alternate dispute resolution.

### Grievance Procedure

#### *Step 1: Local Level Resolution*

The AICM encourages open communication and an environment of trust. Therefore, any client with a grievance is encouraged to firstly raise the matter directly with the other party concerned. A meeting should be requested, by the client, at which time the matter in dispute can be raised and a resolution sought.

#### *Step 2: Resolution by Course Manager*

Should the matter remain unresolved following Step 1, or should Step 1 be inappropriate, the client is encouraged to contact the Course Facilitator or Staff Supervisor. The Course Facilitator or Staff Supervisor will consider the grievance and recommend a resolution.

#### *Step 3: Resolution by AICM's Chief Executive Officer*

Should the matter remain unresolved following Step 2, or should Step 2 be inappropriate, the client is encouraged to contact the AICM's Chief Executive Officer for consideration and due intervention, as necessary, in order to reach an objective solution to the matter in dispute.

#### *Step 4: Resolution by Arbitration*

Should the matter remain unresolved following Step 3, the AICM's Chief Executive Officer may appoint an independent arbiter to review the dispute and suggest an amicable solution.

#### *Step 5: Resolution by External Authority*

Should the matter remain unresolved following Step 4, the client may seek the advice of an independent authority that is skilled in dispute resolution processes.

# Assessment Policy and Procedures

## Context and Purpose

Assessment is conducted to determine if a participant is competent and thus able to be awarded a qualification or Statement of Attainment or not yet competent.

An assessment may be conducted after the completion of a training course or as part of the AICM Recognition Program.

## Scope

AICM is registered to offer:

- Certificate III in Financial Services
- Certificate IV in Financial Services (Credit Management)
- Diploma of Financial Studies
- Graduate Diploma in Financial Services

Assessments may be conducted in relation to any of these qualifications or units of competence which comprise these qualifications.

## Rights and Responsibilities of Candidates

Candidates are to be provided with support and assistance in completing their assessments.

They must advise their assessor or AICM office promptly if they experience any difficulties or problems.

Candidates must complete the assessment process if they are seeking a qualification or a Statement of Attainment

Be provided with feedback on the assessment as to whether they are competent or not yet competent. If not yet competent, they are to be given advice on how competence may be achieved.

Be provided with feedback on future options and learning pathways a candidate may wish to undertake.

Students who submit an assessment online will also need to submit a hard copy with the authentication statement.

Students must request an extension time to complete their assessment in writing; and

Students who do not submit an assessment within 12 months of completing the training component of their course must provide evidence confirming that they have maintained the currency of their skill, knowledge and expertise.

Feedback on future options and learning pathways a candidate may wish to undertake.

## **Methods of Collecting Evidence**

All assessments must use more than one form of evidence and comply with the assessment guidelines of the relevant Training Package.

## **Mechanism for Appeals and Grievances**

Initially any grievance should be dealt with under the Grievance Policy and Procedures.

If a student is dissatisfied with an assessment outcome a second assessment may be requested provided the request for a second assessment is made in writing.

AICM will appoint an independent assessor to conduct the assessment. If the student remains dissatisfied by the outcome of the second assessment the matter will be placed before the National Professional Development Committee of the AICM Board for resolution.

The AICM assessment procedures have been designed to ensure that they are fair and equitable. If a candidate believes that they have been treated unfairly then they should raise their concerns with their assessor or the AICM National Office.

## **Fees and Cost Structures**

There is no additional charge for the conduct of assessments undertaken in conjunction with a training program. Assessments for the purposes of recognition generally are charged at 75% of the component fees.

Participants are actively encouraged to provide feedback to AICM in particular concerning:

- the assessment process
- their ability to readily obtain the necessary evidence
- their suggestions as to improvements and enhancements of the process.

## Record Keeping

Assessment records must be kept securely in the AICM National Office. The records are confidential and only available to the National Training and Marketing Manager, the National Training Coordinator, National Training Administrator, the Participants and the relevant State Training Authority. Records must be retained for 30 years.

## Recognition Policy

The AICM Recognition Policy is set out in the AICM Recognition Program located at Appendix B.

## Validation

All assessments are subject to a 10% random sampling, every six months by an independent assessor to ascertain consistency of approach, evidence and outcomes.

## Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

As part of the quality assurance process all assessment procedures and instruments are annually reviewed to determine if they are continue to be accurate, valid and appropriate. This review is informed by the feedback received from students and assessors, input from industry and reflects any changes in the Industry's Regulatory framework.

## Customisation Policy

AICM primarily utilises units drawing from the Business Services and Financial Services Training Packages. These Training Packages are designed to be generic, and as required the units have been customised to reflect the needs of the credit management industry. This customisation has been undertaken in consultation with the relevant National ITAB.

## Facilitation Policy and Procedures

### Learning Strategy and Philosophy

AICM provides a range of programs which address the needs of new credit staff, current staff who are seeking to enhance and extend their skill, abilities and career prospects, and for staff who are seeking to move into managerial and supervisory roles.

The programs are offered flexibly – participants may choose to enrol in a single component or may complete a qualification. The AICM goal is to ensure individual learning needs are addressed and ongoing learning needs are supported.

### Scope

- Certificate III in Financial Services
- Certificate III in Financial Services (Mercantile Agents)
- Certificate IV in Financial Services
- Diploma of Financial Studies
- Graduate Diploma in Financial Services

### Selection and Qualification of Facilitators

All AICM National Training Consultants must hold a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (or equivalent) and have vocational competence to at least the level being delivered.

### Record Keeping

Training records must be kept securely in the AICM National Office. The records are confidential and only available to the National Training and Marketing Manager, National Training Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, the Participants and the relevant State Training Authority. Records must be retained for 30 years.

## Student's rights and responsibilities

All students are required to:

- Behave courteously and with consideration to their fellow learners and facilitators.
- Promptly advise their National Training Consultant if they are experiencing any difficulties or problems in attending training sessions, completing assessments or of any other issues they may have. AICM provides a welfare and guidance service.
- Advise the AICM Office if they are delayed or unable to attend a training program.
- Complete attendance records.

AICM reserves the right to exclude students who do not behave courteously and with consideration to their fellow learners and facilitator(s).

It would be appreciated if all students participate in strategies to provide feedback on the training program and services.

## Supported Learning

Students who have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, or skills deficit, which may make it difficult to undertake a learning program or may require reasonable adjustment, should notify the National Office as soon as possible.

## Class Size

AICM RTO classes are limited to a maximum of 15 students. Any proposed increase in class size must be referred to the National Training and Marketing Manager.

## Venues

AICM training is provided in locations which are selected on the following criteria:-

- ease of access by public transport and private vehicle.
- conform to the NSW Occupational Health & Safety requirements.
- equipped with all necessary training equipment, for example:
  - Overhead projectors
  - Data projectors
  - Laptops
  - Whiteboard
  - VCR/DVD players/TV's/Screens

As a general principle, major hotels or office based training centres are utilised.

# Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

## Policy Statement

Quality assurance and continuous improvement underpins the operation of AICM as a Registered Training Organisation. The Australian Institute of Credit Management aims for the provision of quality services and products to AICM members and non-members. All staff involved in the AICM VET program are required to monitor and control work procedures to ensure that participants are provided with accurate and current information in a courteous and timely manner.

## Review and Evaluation of Aims and Objectives

Evaluation of the strategic training aims and objectives of AICM will be undertaken a minimum of once a year. This will allow the feedback received from industry to be effectively managed and will inform the ongoing AICM planning and review processes.

Ongoing feedback ensures that AICM is responsive to its environment and if legislative or environmental changes occur AICM is able to improve and/or reposition itself to reflect the changes.

## Fees and Charges

AICM is a non-profit organisation which has two primary goals and functions. To provide a service to members which enables them to maintain their professional knowledge and expertise. Second, to provide an educational service to members and non-members through AICM's status as an RTO.

Fees are charged for attendance at training courses. These fees vary depending on the geographical location of the program. The AICM office will provide the fee structure as required.

## Refunds

The enrolment of a substitute, advised in writing prior to the commencement of the course, will be accepted.

If any registration is cancelled between 7 and 14 days prior to commencement, a refund of 50% will be made.

There is no refund given if a cancellation is received less than 7 days before commencement.

Any courses may be cancelled by AICM if insufficient participants are registered and a full refund will be made in such cases.

## Legislative Compliance

All AICM Assessors and Facilitators are required to perform their role and functions in compliance with all relevant legislation.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following legislation:

### Commonwealth

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999
- Privacy Act 1988

### New South Wales

- Vocational, Education and Training Accreditation Act 1990.
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Disability Services Act 1993
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 1983

The AICM Privacy Policy is located at Appendix A

## AICM AND VET

AICM as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) provides access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) –education and training for work – in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

The AQTF applies across Australia to any organisation that offers qualifications and/or Statements of Attainment arising from Training Packages.

A Training Package describes the skill and knowledge needed to perform effectively in the workplace.

Training Packages are developed by industry through national Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) to meet the identified training needs of specific industries or industry sectors.

Training Packages must be supported by industry and be quality assured to gain endorsement by the National Training Quality Council (NTQC) and are then listed on the National Training Information Service (NTIS).

AICM utilises the National Financial Services Training Package and the Business Services Training Package.

A Training Package comprises two endorsed components and support materials.

### Endorsed components

The endorsed components consist of three parts

1) *Competency Standards* that specify the knowledge and skills needed for work within the scope of the Training Package. The standards provide an industry benchmark for training and assessment. They enable enterprises to accurately define particular roles and provide useful guidance for designing job classifications, workplace appraisal, and skill development. They also provide the basis for designing vocational education and training courses and assessment approaches for delivery by registered training providers off the job.

### Key Features

- Each unit of competency identifies a discrete workplace requirement
- Units incorporate underpinning knowledge and skills and encompass relevant values and attitudes, language, literacy and numeric, and occupational health and safety requirements
- Identify the key competencies at the unit or qualification level.
- Units are flexible in application but sufficiently detailed to guide registered training organisations and assessors and provide consistent outcomes.

2a) *National Qualifications* within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) are awarded when a learner has been assessed as achieving a combination of competency units that provide a meaningful outcome at an industry or enterprise level. Each qualification consists of a number of core and/or elective units of competency that industry representatives consider workers require when performing a particular job role. Where an individual achieves one or more units of competency and does not complete a qualification a Statement of Attainment is issued that recognises their achievement.

#### Key Features

- Each qualification (made up of Units of Competency) is aligned directly against the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- Within a Training Package, qualifications may range from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma and will include the national title for each qualification.
- The Qualification will have the Nationally Recognised Training logo displayed on the qualification.

2b) *A Statement of Attainment* is issued to individuals who have been assessed and deemed competent against Units of Competency. Statements of Attainment issued by one RTOs must be recognised by other RTOs. Accrual of these Statements can eventually lead to the meeting of all the requirements of a qualification.

#### Key Features

- Identify the Units of Competency for which the individual has been assessed and is deemed competent by the RTO.
- Display the Nationally Recognised Training logo.
- Identify the RTO.

3) *Assessment Guidelines* provide a framework in which accurate, reliable and valid assessment of the applicable competency standards may take place. These guidelines ensure that all assessments will be thorough, consistent, and valid. The guidelines provide an important part of the quality assurance for the issuing of qualifications.

## Training Package Support Materials

The endorsed components of the Training Package may be complemented by the development of optional learning strategies, assessment tools and professional development materials which support the endorsed components of the Training Package.

AICM has developed it's own Training Package support materials with assistance from the University of Technology, Sydney and senior credit professionals.

For further information about VET, Training Packages and the AQF a good place to commence is at the following websites.

[www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)

[www.vetab.nsw.gov.au](http://www.vetab.nsw.gov.au)

[www.aqf.edu.au](http://www.aqf.edu.au)

## APPENDIX A

### Your Privacy

AICM is committed to protecting your privacy. From 21 December 2001, AICM is bound by the National Privacy Principles as set out in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988.

The following is information the Privacy Act requires us to communicate to all members and non-members of AICM. It is recommended that you keep this information for future reference. All AICM staff and contractors must adhere to the provisions of the AICM privacy policy.

#### **Personal information held by AICM may include:**

- Name
- Address
- Telephone Number
- Email
- Facsimile Numbers
- Employer's Name
- Employer's address
- Membership of trade organisations collected with your consent.
- Qualifications

This information is required to be collected for the purpose of reporting and auditing requirements of NSW Vocational, Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) Act 1990. If this personal information is not provided, then there may be delays in responding to queries, the provision of qualification and/or Statement of Attainment or other AICM services. AICM will only collect that personal information which is necessary for its functions and activities. AICM staff must provide information concerning education and training services to people who prefer to remain anonymous. However, enrolment and participation in a training program or recognition program requires the identification of the individual.

## How AICM collects personal information

AICM will continue to collect personal information from the individual directly.

## How AICM uses your personal information

Your personal information may be used in order to:

- Provide the educational, professional and membership services you require;
- Inform you of ways the services to you could be improved;
- Research and develop our services and;
- Gain an understanding of your education and training requirements in order to provide you with better services.

Your personal information is also collected to promote and market other services which AICM believes may be of interest to you. If you do not wish to be contacted regarding other services please call AICM National Office on 02 9906 4563.

## When do we disclose your personal information

AICM may disclose personal information to government bodies such as the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) for the purpose(s) established under the NSW Vocational Education and Training Act 1990 and to contractors engaged from time to time to provide educational, professional or membership services.

AICM will only transfer information overseas with the individual's consent.

## Access, Accuracy and Secure Storage

Individuals may request and be provided with access to their personal information. All students must be advised of their rights under this policy at the commencement of a course. Requests for access should be made in writing and will, wherever possible, be granted as soon as possible. The individual making the request must be able to confirm their identity prior to the disclosure of any personal information. AICM undertakes to treat this personal information in a confidential and secure manner to maintain this information's accuracy and completeness. AICM recommends that you promptly advise of any changes in your personal information such as your name and address.

## Further information

Should you require further information concerning privacy please contact the AICM National Office 02 9906 4563. Alternatively you can write to the Privacy Officer at Suite 202, 619 Pacific Highway St Leonards NSW 2065

**APPENDIX B**

## An introduction to the AICM Recognition Program

Recognition is the term used to describe how an individual's existing skills and knowledge can be formally recognised, resulting in either a qualification or partial qualification, which would have equal standing with that of a person who undertakes a formal training program.

Recognition is often perceived to be an easier way to gain qualification. However, in reality it is usually time-consuming and is subject to the same level of rigorous assessment arising from attending a training course. This is because the Recognition Program offered by AICM Learning Services complies with: the Training Package Rules developed by industry training advisory bodies; the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) agreed to by all State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for vocational education and training; as well as the Assessment Quality Framework developed by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

There are four main recognition pathways available:

- Developing a portfolio of evidence.
- Seeking recognition of qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by another Registered Training Organisation (RTO), i.e. mutual recognition.
- Credit transfer, which is the recognition of formal training previously undertaken.
- Undertaking an assessment project.

### Pathway 1 Portfolio Of Evidence

Candidates will need to compile a portfolio of evidence which confirms their ability to meet the requirements of a particular unit of competence, i.e. to demonstrate that they fulfil the performance criteria for carrying out specific functions in the workplace.

Examples of the types of evidence that could be included are:

- Copies of reports that the candidate has prepared for management
- Copies of emails, faxes
- Copies of performance appraisals
- Supervisor reports, which acknowledge skills and abilities
- Copies of workplace awards received
- Letters of appreciation from customers

## Pathway 2 Mutual Recognition

Mutual Recognition is the recognition of qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by another Registered Training Organisation. This may be counted towards the qualification that the candidate is currently undertaking with AICM Learning Services.

Some key issues to be considered include: Training Packages Rules; the relevance to the qualification now being sought; and the currency of the qualification for which recognition is sought.

## Pathway 3 Credit Transfer

Credit transfer is defined as the recognition of formal training previously undertaken and which is deemed to be equivalent to a unit of competence. Credit transfer requires the consideration of documentation relating to a course and/or subject as supplied by the training organisation where the person completed their study.

If the training providers do not relate their course/subject to the units of competence, AICM Learning Services is required to make further inquiries as to the relationship. Candidates may also be asked to provide further information such as course outlines and copies of assessments they completed during the program. If these documents are unavailable, the candidate may be invited to complete an assessment to confirm competence (see Pathway 4).

Credit transfer for programs completed generally more than five years ago must be supported with evidence which confirms that the candidate has kept up to date in the subject area. For subjects where there is a need to constantly keep up to date, a candidate may also be requested to provide additional information to confirm the currency of their competence.

## Pathway 4 Assessment Task

Sometimes candidates who seek recognition do not have ready access to the evidence they need to confirm competence. For example, the person may have changed their employer, moved house, and/or misplaced records. When this occurs a person will still be able to access a recognition program by completing an assessment task. This will usually be supported by indirect evidence, for example a reference from their employer or testimonials from customers.

## The Recognition Process

Irrespective of the pathway chosen, candidates will be allocated an assessor, who will guide and support them through the recognition process. If required, the assessor will assist in determining which pathway would best suit the individual's needs and will develop an assessment plan with the candidate.

The process for recognition is intensive and involves a one-on-one relationship between each candidate and their AICM assessor.

For more detailed information please refer to the Publication Recognition Program.

## For Further Information

For more details and to obtain a copy of the complete Guide to the AICM Recognition Program, please contact the AICM National Office:

*Address:*

Suite 202,  
619 Pacific Highway  
ST LEONARDS NSW 2065

*Telephone:*

02 9906 4563

*Fax:*

02 9906 5686

*Email:*

[education@aicm.com.au](mailto:education@aicm.com.au)

*Web:*

[www.aicm.com.au](http://www.aicm.com.au)

## GLOSSARY

AICM	Australian Institute of Credit Management
AQF	Australian Qualification Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ISC	Industry Skills Council
NTIS	National Training Information Service
NTQC	National Training Quality Council
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
VET	Vocational Education Training