



POLICY 7

Stakeholders

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Policy Number: 7

Policy Name: Stakeholders

Purpose:

This policy outlines the generic requirements, rights and obligations of all Stakeholders at the Centre. This includes all Staff members, Students, Centre users and Visitors.

Scope:

The policy applies to all Staff.

Relationship with AQTF Standards and Conditions & Current Funding Contract:

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Relevant Records/Documents:

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Procedures

7.1 Access and equity; including discrimination and harassment

- It is the policy of this Centre that it is endeavoured to create a freely accessible and welcoming environment for every person wishing to enter here. The Centre provides education and services that are available to all persons of all age, race, gender, religion, ability or creed. The Centre does not see financial, physical, mental/personal/ disability/family or life status as a barrier to education and works with all to achieve their goals. The Centre will not tolerate discrimination by any person against another on any of the above or other grounds. This policy reflects our commitment to the Australian Democratic Principles for Education and the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.
- It is recommended that Staff be familiar with the information contained on the website www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/discrimination/
- Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another due to the person's circumstances, characteristics or beliefs. This Centre espouses equal opportunity in both recruiting and training, and does not discriminate against any of the following:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
 - People with a disability
 - People from non-English speaking backgrounds
 - Women
 - People in regionally isolated communities
 - People in transition, e.g.: Re-entering the workforce; Long term unemployed; Sole parents; with literacy/numeracy problems; those having been institutionalised
- *Direct discrimination*: Where a person, organisation or group is treated less fairly than others on the basis of stereotypical beliefs or views.
- *Indirect discrimination*: Rules, practices or policies which appear to be non-discriminatory and equal application, but operate in such a way that certain groups of people are excluded without such cause.
- *Workplace harassment*: Any behaviour which is unwelcome, offends, humiliates or intimidates a person and causes the work environment to become unpleasant.
- Persons showing discrimination against another will be asked to explain their actions. The Centre and Staff will not condone or engage in any harassing behaviour.
- The principle of this policy will be on display throughout the Centre. Also all Staff members are to be made aware of this policy upon commencing at the Centre.
- Where discrimination is seen as vilifying another person, the persons discriminated against may wish to seek redress. This should be undertaken in an official manner.
- Centre Staff and Stakeholders are to intervene in instances of discrimination WHERE APPROPRIATE AND SAFE to do so, and to report these cases where necessary. Persons who discriminate against others on a regular and aggressive manner may be asked to leave the Centre.
- The Centre ensures physical access is available to all areas including toilet facilities, by providing ramps, automatic doors etc.
- The Centre provides support and referrals where required and asked for. Centre Staff are not to provide advice and assistance in areas requiring expertise - Staff are to refer clients where necessary.
- This Centre will engender the view that all persons have equal opportunity to education. This is to be a Centre wide philosophy.
- Students will have surety of enrolment where:
 - There are places available in the course.
 - They have applied for enrolment in the required manner.
 - They have supplied accurate information.
 - They abide by the Centre policies, procedures, code of conduct etc. while undergoing training.
 - They supply the required fee. Fee payments may be negotiated where required.
 - The Centre is Companion Card registered. This is to allow a companion into classrooms (free of charge) to assist persons attending class, where needed.
- All Staff are to be given fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in relevant decision making processes and the allocation of resources and services as required to fulfil their duties and responsibilities.
- All clients will be given fair and reasonable opportunities to attend and complete training.

- Deficiencies are to be investigated to determine whether a breach or policy discrepancy exists, and if so, the impact of that breach or deficiency and how the policy should be amended to eliminate the breach or deficiency. This should be undertaken during internal reviews.
- Disciplinary actions will be taken against any employee or client. This may include termination of employment, and removal of client from training. Serious cases may constitute a criminal offence.
- All students will need to prove the ability to fill assessment requirements prior to being granted a qualification. However, this Centre maintains flexibility of assessment to give all students every opportunity to obtain results.

Harassment

- Harassment between any parties whilst on Centre grounds will not be tolerated.
- Harassment can be verbal, physical, written or online, and is the harassment of one person or group by another person or group.
- Incidents of harassment are considered serious offences by the management of the Centre and will be dealt with accordingly.
- Incidents should be noted by any observer. If this is a Staff member, they should attempt to stop the harassment where it occurs, if possible.
- The Centre Manager is available at all times for persons suffering from harassment, or observing cases of harassment. The Manager will act on these quickly and discreetly.
- Students guilty of extended harassment may have their enrolment cancelled. Staff members guilty of harassment will receive warnings, and may need to present to Committee for discipline. Other groups causing harassment will be attended to by their management systems, but if it continues and affects Centre clients or Staff, will come under Centre disciplinary action.
- Immediate action will be to discuss all matters with appropriate Staff member. If the harassment proceeds beyond this, it will be referred to Management and written actions will take place. Ultimate discipline for repeated offences will be exclusion from the Centre and/or termination of Staff member's employment.
- Disciplinary procedures from Administration in writing will include:
 - 1st and 2nd Warning Letter
 - Final Warning Letter
 - Recording of Disciplinary Meeting
 - Letter of Termination: Redundancy
 - Letter of Termination: Serious Misconduct
 - Letter of Termination: With Notice

How to manage harassment

- Tell the person to stop, that their behaviour is unacceptable and they must not do it again. By saying this the person will not interpret your silence as acceptance of the behaviour.
- If too frightened or embarrassed to say anything, advise trainer or supervisor who will deal with the matter promptly.
- If behaviour continues, inform trainer or supervisor. Make a written note of all harassment – times, dates, witnesses, what happened, what was said/done.
- Be honest with the person you are reporting to, and make sure the issue is being dealt with.

Definitions:

- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwanted touching, sexual innuendo propositions, nude pin-ups/posters, obscene phone calls, wolf whistles
- **Verbal Harassment:** Sexual comments, advances or propositions, lewd jokes or innuendos, racist comments or jokes, spreading rumours, comments or jokes about a person's disability, pregnancy, sexuality, age or religion, repeated questions about one's personal life, belittling someone's work or contribution in a meeting, threats, insults or abuse, offensive obscene language, obscene telephone class, unsolicited letters, faxes or emails.
- **Non-Verbal Harassment:** Leering (e.g. at a women's breasts), putting offensive material on notice boards, computer screens and emails, wolf whistling, nude or pornographic posters, displaying sexist or racist cartoons or literature, demoting, failing to promote or transferring someone because they refuse requests for sexual favour, following someone home from work, standing very close to someone or unnecessary leaning over them, mimicking someone with a disability, practical jokes that are unwelcome, ignoring someone, or being cold and distant with them, crude hand or body gestures.

- *Physical Harassment:* Unwelcome physical contact such as kissing, hugging, pinching, patting, touching or brushing up against a person, indecent or sexual assault or attempted assault, hitting, pushing, shoving, spitting, or throwing objects at a person, unfastening a person's attire.

7.2 AMES/AMEP/VTP

- The Centre is registered to deliver, through Adult Multicultural Education Services, migrant literacy and numeracy classes through the AMEP program.
- Registration in this program is through AMES. Trainers/Assessors must hold the relevant qualifications, such as TESOL and Cert IV TAE. AMES support the program through managing funding and providing resources and support.
- To access the program, clients need to be newly arrived, within the last 3 months, and hold an eligible visa subclass number. The list of eligible subclasses is available from AMES website.
- Eligible clients receive 510 hours of free tuition once enrolled in the program. Once enrolled they will receive a AMEP number for identification in the program.
- At the Centre, eligible clients attend class with all other ESL/migrant English students.
- Admin procedures are required for the AMEP program, including sending attendance stats to the central recording service through ARMS software on the Administrator's computer. This is done weekly by the Centre Manager, and requires password information.
- Clients are usually referred by the Federal Immigration government department upon arrival.
- Eligible clients have access to Individual Pathway Guidance/counselling through the dedicated Centre AMEP counsellor. This is pathway/career guidance ONLY; all other counselling must be referred to the correct Authorities. This type of counselling also forms part of classroom training and at this Centre is mostly attended to in this manner.
- Eligible clients requiring childcare to attend classes are able to access subsidised childcare through the AMEP scheme. They need to access their chosen childcare, then inform the Centre Staff who will apply for the subsidy for them, with the agreement of the childcare provider.
- Eligible clients also have access to a document translation service, in which they may get one eligible document translated into English free of charge. Eligible documents include Certificates, Diplomas, licenses gained in their country of origin.

AMEP Home Tutor Scheme (HTS)/Volunteer Tutor Program (VTP)

- Eligible clients are also able to access a Home Tutor Scheme program.
- This involves matching a trained Volunteer Tutor with an eligible client, so that they receive English Language Tutoring in their home.
- Care is taken by the Home Tutor Coordinator to assess prospective Tutors through:
 - HTS enrolment forms, requiring experience and qualification knowledge and 2 employment referees
 - A current police check, which the Centre can undertake for the Tutor
 - A meeting between the Tutor and the Coordinator
- Once the Tutor is selected, they must undergo an initial training session to be prepared for their role as a one-to-one Tutor of migrant adults.
- Other training is provided by the Centre and AMES during the year to all Tutors, and also 'get-togethers' are organised during the year for Volunteer Tutors to meet and discuss issues at the Centre, and also to gather in the classroom.
- Volunteer Tutors are encouraged to support classroom teaching and lessons by complementing these in the home Tutor scheme.
- Resources are available to home Tutors at the Centre.
- Where a new eligible client is referred to the Centre and wishes to join the home Tutor scheme, it is the task of the HTS Coordinator to enrol the client in the scheme, make a home visit to assess the suitability/safety of the home for Tutoring and to match the client to the most suitable home Tutor.
- As with AMEP, HTS roles are sent electronically weekly. HTS clients are allowed 1 hour per week of paid home Tutor assistance.

7.3 Centre users

- The Centre is shared with a number of other groups. These include Wonthaggi U3A, Wonthaggi Woodcrafters, Wonthaggi Community Garden and Wonthaggi Community VCAL.

- Each group pays the Centre, as lead tenant on Shire land, an agreed rental for use of the facilities. Rental to be reviewed at reasonable intervals.
- Each group enters into an agreement or MOU outlining the rights and responsibilities of both tenant and landlord. This can be reviewed by mutual agreement.
- At times the Centre may need to enter into a partnership with or contract another provider, to obtain or provide training and or assessment.
- Where the Centre is working in partnership with another provider, it is important to outline each organisations responsibilities, costs and duties PRIOR to commencing training. An MOU is essential to outline these officially.
- Where this Centre is providing assessment and awards, certificates must be of our own design and must be on our scope or registration.
- Where others are providing awards, they must have these on their own scope of registration and provide certificates of their own.
- The Centre is to fully inform students of the duties of all providers for each of their courses.

7.4 Child protection

- Whilst the Centre is an adult education facility, there is no age limit to students attending classes offered and students under 18 are welcome. Also Stakeholders cater to under-aged students:
 - Centre classes often include persons under 18
 - The Wonthaggi Community VCAL is run from this Centre, for students 15 to 18
 - The Wonthaggi Community Garden runs programs for, among others, family day-care providers with their charges.
- To best carer to students and others attending this Centre:
 - All Staff members and Coordinators are to hold 'Working with Children Check' cards, or hold current Victorian Teachers registration.
 - Where possible, parental permissions and advice should be sought for students enrolling in classes run by the Centre.
 - The 'Under 18' enrolment form and medical advice forms should be used for students in this age group, if appropriate. These include parental signatures.

7.4.2 Child Safety and Welfare

With respect to Child Safety and Wellbeing the Centre adheres to the defined standards:

- **Standard 1:** Establishment of a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
- **Standard 2:** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
- **Standard 3:** Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- **Standard 4:** Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
- **Standard 5:** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
- **Standard 6:** People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
- **Standard 7:** Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused
- **Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
- **Standard 9:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
- **Standard 10:** Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
- **Standard 11:** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

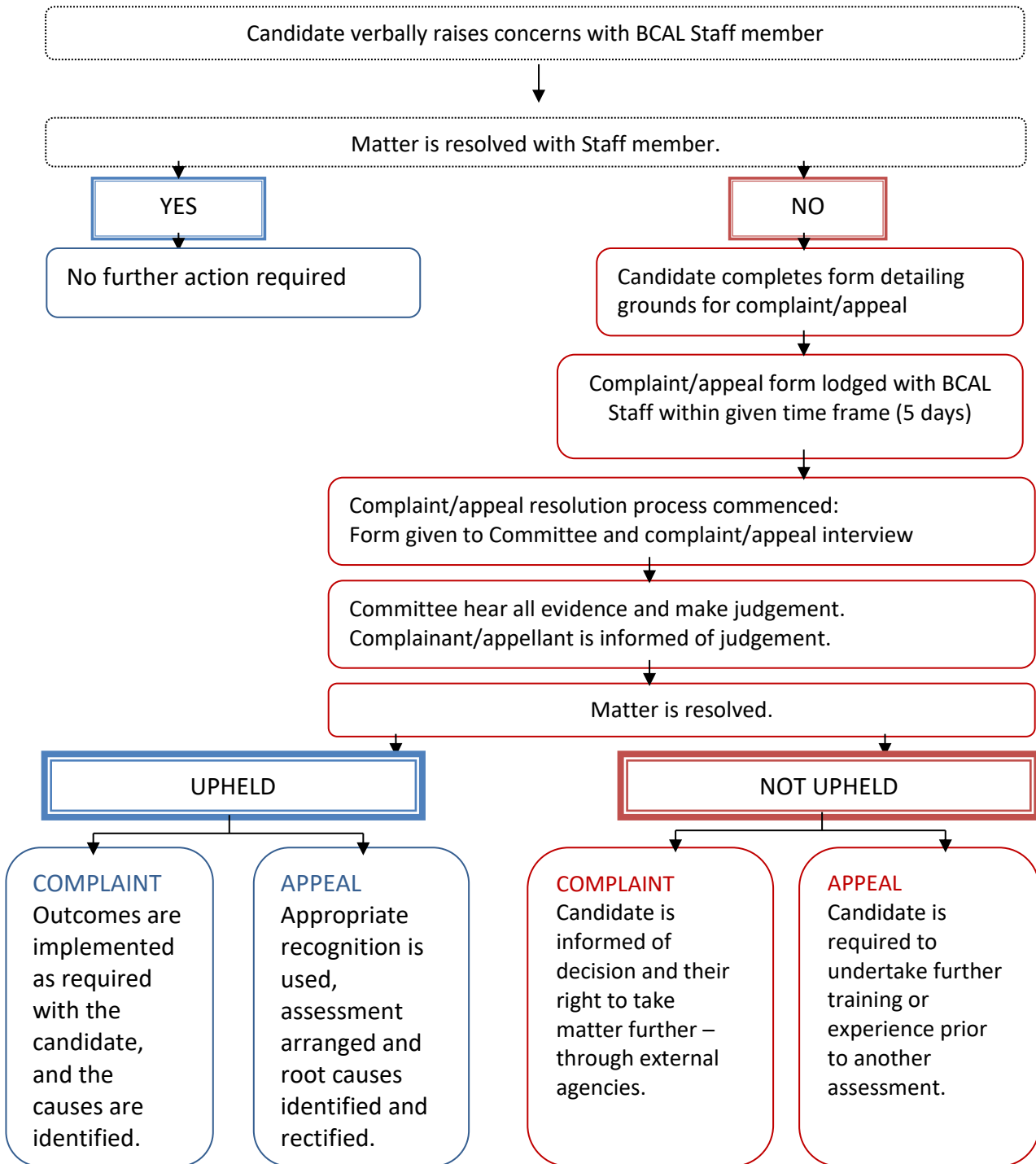
7.5 Communication/Information sharing

- Communications between all parties within and using BCAL should be open, accurate and clear and should be delivered and acted on promptly.
- Administration should ensure that formal notes, messages, correspondence etc. is passed from and to each student, Staff member, Committee member or other stakeholder as soon as possible.
- The Committee of Management must ensure that all relevant documentation pertaining to the operations of BCAL is kept as required for reporting to overseeing bodies.
- Communication with funding and industry bodies is primarily online and should be attended to regularly.
- Staff should feel they are able to approach Administration at any time to discuss their roles and responsibilities, report on any aspect within the Centre, request resources and any other issue they wish to bring to attention.
- BCAL has a number of regulatory bodies and related organisations that disseminate information regularly to all RTO's and organisations within their scope of operations. These organisations and their information media may include:
 - Insurance companies where the Centre holds policies – changes to insurance regulations, risk management documents, training opportunities
 - Victoria Government Education Department– memos and notifications regarding requirements for all RTO's, changes to regulatory requirements, notices of PD etc.
 - ACFE- Victorian Education Department Participation branch and regional Staff, monthly newsletter, PD notices, funding opportunities, regulatory requirements etc.
 - AMES – changes to Administration procedures, student management, training etc.
 - Regulatory bodies – changes to scope of registration and regulatory details
- The path that this information is delivered to the Centre varies. Most is delivered by email, some by surface mail, but in some cases the Manager is required to regularly (weekly preferably) log in and check the related website for new information.
- It is important that the information gained from all sources is checked for relevance and circulated to relevant persons immediately. Management/Administration is to undertake this, and the check with Staff that they received, read and understood the information and where relevant, understand procedures for implementing changes in their own operations if necessary.
- All Staff are also encouraged to access relevant websites and information sources regularly for updated information relevant to their area of expertise or industry.

7.6 Complaints and Appeals

- It is the policy of BCEAC that any person has a right to complain about any aspect of the Centre and its operation or appeal any decision made by the Centre. Complaints will be heard in a reasonable and fair manner by the appropriate person.
- A **complaint** is any issue brought to the attention of the Centre that requires improvement.
- An **appeal** is the process a person may undergo when they do not agree with decisions made, for example decisions made regarding assessments.
- Complaints/appeals shall be heard without prejudice or favour, and treated in the strictest confidence.
- Admin should direct persons to record more serious complaints in writing. This should then be referred to the appropriate management person or other independent person or panel.
- Admin should ensure that complaints are acted upon as soon as practicable with the appropriate person taking all actions necessary to resolve the complaint. Ultimately the Committee has the responsibility to see serious complaints through to resolution.
- All appeals against decisions should be documented and sighted by appellant.
- Complaints are seen as important feedback and should be used as an excellent opportunity for improvements to the relevant area of BCAL's operations.

Procedure: Complaint/Appeal Process Diagram



This diagram is published by the Coordinator on the Centre’s website.

7.7 Discrimination/Bullying/Harassment

- See Access and Equity policy.

7.8 Referral protocol

- BCAL acts as a hub for the community it serves, and as such provides referral to other agencies when the Centre's own activities and services cannot meet the need of its clients.
- All enquiries, no matter the nature, are to be dealt with in a professional manner.
- All enquiries are to be dealt with promptly and with strict confidentiality.
- Admin Staff is encouraged to keep themselves informed of all other services available to the community to best deal with solutions to problems arising.
- Where possible, Staff members are to provide phone numbers of the other agency they are recommending.

7.9 Stakeholder policy

- This Centre has a responsibility to our many Stakeholders. These are all persons who have any connections to this Centre. Stakeholders at this Centre are:
 - Staff members – including Volunteers
 - Committee members
 - Students/clients
 - Regulatory bodies
 - Persons hiring rooms: Community VCAL, Woodcrafters, U3A, Monash Driver Education, Wonthaggi Secondary College, Gippsland Multicultural Services, Charles Sturt University, Wonthaggi Community Garden, and others as needed.
 - Employment Agencies
 - Industry representatives: VGRA, Liquor Licensing, TVET, NTIS
 - Regulatory Bodies: ACFE, Skills Vic, AQTF – VQA
- Stakeholders are important from not just a financial viewpoint, but are also the means by which this Centre collects data on all areas of our functions: Training and Assessment, Client Services and Management and Administration.
- Information is gathered from many sources, and used to inform continuous improvement for the Centre. Information gathering is through personal interviews, reports from Stakeholders, internal & external meetings, audits, complaints and appeals and the most formal means surveys.
- Information is gathered at all times in this Centre. Our survey is available online at www.basscoastadulded.org.au, and we also use hard copy surveys for our students after most classes. Meetings are held once a month for Committee and at least every two months for Staff.

7.10 Stakeholder surveys

- Meeting Client's & Stakeholders' needs is a high priority of BCAL. Student & Stakeholder satisfaction is assessed through surveys, networking, print and electronic media, emails, seminars, internal and external meetings, comments, etc. Two of the AQTF Quality Indicators for Continuous Improvement are employer (Stakeholder) and student satisfaction, and information collected form part of continuous improvement and future planning.
- Information to inform the Centre will be collected from Students, Staff, Volunteers, Committee, room-hire Clients, other users, networks – employment, learning, industry, registering bodies, and other where relevant.
- Surveys used are created specifically for Centre clients, from information provided by various sources such as ACFE, VRQA, Industry and other relevant bodies. Changes are made to surveys each year in line with the needs of these bodies.
- Surveys are to be distributed to members of all funded and accredited classes and to several 'sample' classes across the BCAL's other curriculum offerings. 'Have your say' notices are displayed across the Centre for stakeholder comment at any time.
- Results are collated, relayed to Committee, and used in the curriculum planning, evaluation and review processes. Student surveys are also completed for collation by regulatory bodies to inform future policy.
- Other means of assessing satisfaction are via individual comments, interviews and correspondence. On a broader scale enrolment numbers and completion rates can be used to indicate performance.

- Current year survey masters are kept in the Student Survey book in the Admin area. Completed surveys are collated into a report for quality indicators reporting.
- Results arising from survey collation are then placed on Continuous Improvement form/s, which are then brought to the Committees' attention for action, monitoring and evaluation (see Continuous Improvement policy).

7.11 Wonthaggi Community Garden

- The Wonthaggi Community Garden exists at the north-west corner of this Centre. Originally created with the Centre as a partner, the garden is now an independent entity. A Memorandum of Understanding exists between this Centre and the garden as to responsibilities, insurance, facilities etc. The Garden Committee meets monthly at this Centre.
- The Centre does not assist in funding the garden, but may act as supporter or auspice for garden funding applications.
- BCAL provides the garden shed, toilet facilities, electricity and mains and tank water to garden users, as well as the site.
- The garden has a 'sign-in' book in the garden shed for all users prior to entering the garden site. Persons booking a garden patch will need to sign an agreement and sign in each time they attend the garden. If they do not sign in, they will not be covered by the Centres Public Liability insurance.
- The following is a précis of the 'patch rules' which apply to all users:
 - I have my own garden and will not go onto others gardens uninvited.
 - I will not use poisons.
 - I will try not to argue/fight with others. I will talk to Committee if I need to.
 - If I do not use my garden, I will not have it any more.
 - I must use tools safely.
 - I use the garden at my own risk. The garden Committee and land owners/lessees are not responsible to me or my family or the things I bring – in any way.
 - If there is an accident I should report it.
 - I must sign in the book when I come.
 - I must share in keeping the whole area neat – 1 hour per week.
 - I agree with these patch vows.
 - There is no drinking alcohol or taking drugs at the garden.

7.12 Wonthaggi Community VCAL

- Wonthaggi Community VCAL is a Wonthaggi Secondary School program that runs out of the school building Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the school year.
- The secondary college rent room 3, room 2, and office in the Admin building, the Art room and use the kitchen in the school building.
- The Centre charges the secondary college for monthly rental, photocopying costs and phone costs.

7.13 Wonthaggi Woodcrafters

- The Wonthaggi Woodcrafters rent space from the Centre to operate woodturning and woodcraft classes.
- They operate out of two sheds on the grounds – the 'tan' sheds.
- They pay the Centre monthly rent and electricity costs. They have a meter in the storeroom in the Administration area.

7.14 Wonthaggi U3A

- Wonthaggi U3A rent space at the Centre to run classes for people aged 55 and over.
- They operate out of the two yellow buildings on the west of the site.
- They pay a monthly rental fee.

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