Purpose
This policy is a statement of the requirement relating to personal information of a student eligible for VET FEE – HELP (VFH). The policy will apply equally to students potential and eligible for accessing VFH assistance through Royal Gurkhas Institute of Technology (RGIT) Australia.

Scope
In the course of its business, RGIT’s VFH – Privacy Policy and Procedure will be applicable from the date of approval by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIICCSRTE) of the RGIT application to offer VFH. The collected information will be either in electronic or in hard copy format from students enrolled or persons seeking to enroll with RGIT. RGIT may also record various communications with all related individuals. The policy applies to all RGIT staff and its Training Representative (where applicable) staff handling personal information of students applying for or accessing VFH assistance through RGIT.

Responsibility
The Director of Studies is responsible for the implementation of this procedure and ensuring that staff and students are made aware of its application.

Policy
RGIT takes privacy very seriously and is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals. This includes personal, health, financial and other confidential information, which is necessary for RGIT to carry out its functions. RGIT will take all reasonable steps to protect individual information from loss, misuse or unauthorised disclosure or destruction. The right to privacy is a value that is highly regarded.

RGIT students’ personal information will be collected by fair and lawful means which is necessary for the purpose of enrolment and function of RGIT and is committed to ensuring the confidentiality and security of the information provided. This policy is issued in accordance with

- The Higher Education support ACT 2003 (HESA)
- Privacy Act (2000)

When managing a student’s personal information, RGIT is required to comply with a number of different pieces of Government legislation and policy when governed the area of Privacy. These are:
- As required under Clause 23 schedule 1A of HESA, the information Privacy Principles set out in Privacy Act 2000 when managing personal information relating to VFH students under this policy; and

RGIT endeavours to balance the rights of privacy with the need to be accountable and transparent in its dealings. Certain information will not be available under freedom of information laws. This includes private information relating to another individual, RGIT’s internal working documents and material obtained in confidence. In addition, RGIT’s Document and Record Register provides a framework and instruction to staff regarding how RGIT collects, stores and uses student personal information.

RGIT and/or its Training Representative (where applicable), is collecting the personal information of students for the purpose of assessing eligibility for the HELP under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and allocating a Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN). RGIT must comply with the information privacy principles relating to information obtained by the provider for the purposes of VFH assistance and repayment of HELP loans.

Collecting and Use of Information

The personal information supplied by individuals to RGIT and/or its Training Representative (where applicable) will only be used to provide information about study opportunities, to enable efficient administration, and to maintain proper academic records. Only authorised managers and other authorised persons have access to this information. All the information collected is governed by the Privacy ACT 2000.

RGIT collects personal information for:
- Statistical purposes for use by State and Commonwealth Administration;
- Teaching purposes by RGIT;
- General student administration; and
- VET administration and regulation.

Personal information will not be collected by unlawful or unfair means.
RGIT may use personal information for the following purposes:

- Planning
- Reporting
- Communicating
- Research
- Evaluation
- Financial administration (including debt recovery)
- Auditing
- Marketing purposes
- For any other purposes where the individual has provided consent for such use.

RGIT will not use the information without taking reasonable steps to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which the information is proposed to be used, the information is accurate, up to date and complete.

**Storage and Security of Personal Information**

RGIT and/or its Training Representative (where applicable) will act lawfully and as far as is reasonable and practicable in a fair and nonintrusive way. Wherever possible, it will collect information directly from its students rather than from third parties. The members and staff will do their best to tell students if RGIT collects information about them from a third party. Information will be collected and used in accordance with the privacy principles (see below) described in the legislation, which sets standards in relation to the collection, storage, use or disclosure of individual information. When RGIT collects information it will advise of why it is being collected, and the law which requires it to be collected. RGIT will take reasonable steps to ensure that any personal information collected is relevant to the purpose for which it was collected, is up to date and complete. RGIT will take all reasonable steps to protect individual information from loss, misuse or unauthorised disclosure or destruction. To protect information from possible misuse RGIT may require that inquirers establish their identity before discussing individual information.

**Disclosure of Personal Information:**

Personal information about student(s) studying with RGIT may be shared with Australian Government and designated authorities, including the Tuition Assurance Scheme, ATO, DIICCSRTE and the Department of...
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. This information includes personal and contact details, course enrolment details and changes, and the circumstances of any suspected breach DIICCSRTE conditions. RGIT is required to provide DIICCSRTE, through the VET FEE-HELP student loan scheme, with student and training activity data. Information is required to be provided in accordance with the VET guidelines (which are available at http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2012L02569). DIICCSRTE may use the information provided for planning, administration, policy development, program evaluation, resource allocation and reporting and/or research activities. For these and other lawful purposes, DIICCSRTE may also disclose information to its consultants, advisors, other government agencies, professional bodies and/or other organisations.

RGIT will not disclose the personal information of a student, except as permitted under these policies. RGIT will not disclose personal information to a person, body or agency (other than the individual concerned) unless:

- Individual concerned has expressly or impliedly consented to the disclosure in writing; or
- The person disclosing the information believes on reasonable grounds that the disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the student or of another person; or
- The disclosure is required or authorized by or under law; or
- The disclosure is reasonable necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue, or for the protection of the interests of the government, statutory authority or statutory office – holder as an employer; or
- The student is acquiring financial assistance from the Department of Human Services (i.e. Austudy, Abstudy or Youth Allowance). Therefore a student’s personal information entailing enrolment details is expected to be disclosed to the respective agency concerned.

RGIT will disclose information for the purpose of the protection of the public revenue. RGIT will include a note of the disclosure in the record containing that information. Personal information may be shared with other institutes where students enrol or apply to enrol.

For school-based, apprentices, trainees or students who are studying with RGIT towards secondary education; personal information, attendance details, progress and results may be disclosed to the respective schools and authorities.
For students who are under the age of 18 years; personal information, attendance details, progress and results may be disclosed to respective parent(s)/guardian(s).

When RGIT releases information to a third party, it will advise the third party that they should not use the information for any purposes other than the purposes for which it was disclosed.

**Update of Personal Information**

RGIT will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that personal information recorded by RGIT is kept up to date. If a student believes that their personal information retained by RGIT is out of date or otherwise inaccurate, the student may amend personal information through RGIT student management system.

**Access to Personal Information**

RGIT policy allows students to apply for and receive personal information that RGIT holds about themselves [HESA Schedule 1A cl23] according to the above requirements. The request should be lodged in writing, addressed to the VFH Coordinator, providing full details of the students’ name, ID number and details of the specific information required.

When RGIT does not believe the record should be amended, the student may request that a notation is placed on the record giving their version of how the record should be read. A student may access their own personal information held by RGIT at no charge. Individuals will be advised of how they may access or obtain a copy of their personal information and any applicable fees within 10 days of receiving their written request. Alternatively, The Freedom of information Act 1982 provides for persons (including RGIT students) to make an application for access to information (including personal information) held by RGIT to be amended if the person believes that the information is incomplete, incorrect, out of date or misleading.

**Responsibilities**

All RGIT VFH Department staff must apply the policy consistently. The RGIT VFH Coordinator and VFH officers have responsibilities for the ongoing management of this policy. Director of Studies looks after the implementation and control of this policy.
Approval
The Chief Executive Officer of RGIT approves this Policy and Procedures

Review:
This Policy and Procedures will be reviewed by the RGIT Compliance and Operational Manager in December 2013.

Publication
This Policy and Procedures will be publicly available in the VFH section of RGIT website.

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