



ARCS

Applied Reception Customer Service Training

Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre



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Background

- ARCS was developed by PMNC in 2009 in response to change in Victorian policy initiative: *Securing Jobs for your future*
- Policy brought new focus on skills based learning, employability skills & pathways
- Built on an existing volunteer program, demonstrated need, demand and employment skills focus
- Applied for ACFE delivery support funding to develop a training framework and student contact hours to deliver the program

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Overview:

- **Target group participants:** long term unemployed, experiencing multiple barriers to education and / or employment.
- **Duration/Time:** Enrolment/completion over a 24 week period with a commitment of 6.5 hours a week (over 2 days).

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ARCS TRAINING PACKAGE BENEFITS:

- Admin & reception support model that allows Coordinator time to coordinate and plan & grow and improve NC sustainability. Week 1 model - 10 hours reception cover a week, week 20: 20-30 hours week.
- Skilled volunteers -> Improved customer service & administration efficiencies.
- Improved customer service & administration -> Higher satisfaction amongst all participants & staff using the centre.

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ARCS ADDED FEATURES :

- After establishment costs- ARCS training program can be cost neutral for Learn locals. Can be run using SCH.
- We are able to tailor the ARCS training program to suit your centres needs.

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- **Delivery model (Elwood):**
- **2736 SCH per year (\$22,435 ACFE funds). 2 courses per year. 150 hours each x 9 students = 1369 SCH per course.**
- **Each student completes av 6.5 hours a week. Usually 3.5 hours on the job training and 3 hours of classroom training and 30 minutes project work or homework over 42-44 weeks.**
- **The reception area is staffed by an on the job trainer 10.5 hours a week (usually over 3 days). She trains 3 students each day. Total of 9 students get one 3.5 on the job training session and one 3 hour classroom session each week.**

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Course elements

- Flexible training framework focused on comprehensive employability skills & life-skills development, fits into ACFE core aims.
- Weekly 3hours class-room based learning: A tailored 24 week curriculum based on detailed research, evaluation and industry consultation.
- One on one applied learning delivery with trainer at reception for 3.5 hours every week:
 - Curriculum related applied learning activities at reception with trainer/receptionist
 - Weekly learning plans and reviews by trainer.
 - Completion of a specially designed student workbook designed to reinforce learning goals in curriculum

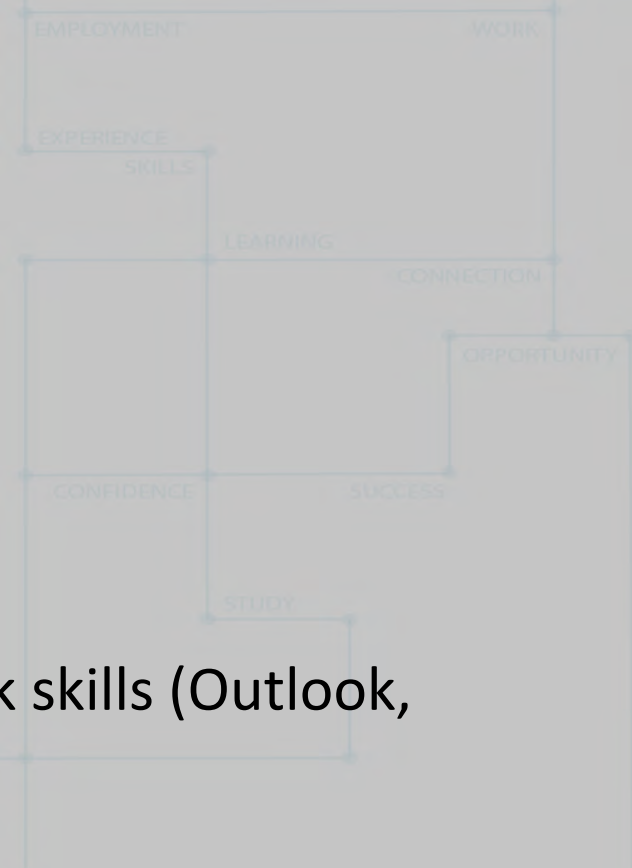
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The **core learning objectives** of this course are:

- applied learning
- self-teaching
- independent thinking
- project-based learning
- problem solving
- time management
- achieving competency in relevant IT work skills (Outlook, Windows, MS Office)



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General skills covered by the course are:

- Understanding Neighbourhood House and Learn Local sector
- word-processing
- telephone skills
- interaction with clients
- use of business technology
- workplace safety procedures
- handling correspondence
- teamwork & time management
- conflict in the workplace
- communication skills
- food handling, hygiene and catering
- work functions and forums
- responding to other community enquiries and referrals
- community engagement

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Participation Statistics

- Average of 18 students a year or 9 students per 6 months period.
- Some students complete the program in 6 months some take 12-18 months. Depends on language, learning speed. Some get jobs before completing the course.
- About 5-10 students per year start but leave within 1 month (4 sessions) they are not counted in stats, they are listed as withdrawn.
- Our graduation/exit stats over past 5 years show 40-50% of students have gone on to volunteering, employment or further training. 10-20% have gone on to further learning.

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Development & Evaluation of model

- We hired a trainer with experience in ACE course development with experience in writing training frameworks to develop the manual in consultation with staff.
- We have had 3 major reviews/updates of training manual and framework in 5 years, but we evaluate and update as a rule every year.
- Trainers participate in quarterly training and community of practice. This not only ensures ongoing skills development of trainers but also provides a space to evaluate the training manual

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Outputs of program (as identified by students)

- Students obtain interpersonal skills through real life interactions. Many of the students both reported and clearly demonstrated increased confidence in dealing with phone and face to face enquiries.
- Development of computer skills and office skills through repetition of tasks and ongoing learning
- Learning by doing resulting in retention of knowledge and skills
- Development of confidence through real life problems solving
- Development of project based and time management skills
- Success in obtaining work & volunteer work relies on having relevant work skills (and good work references) and some accredited training can provide an advantage over competitors with qualifications without relevant work skills

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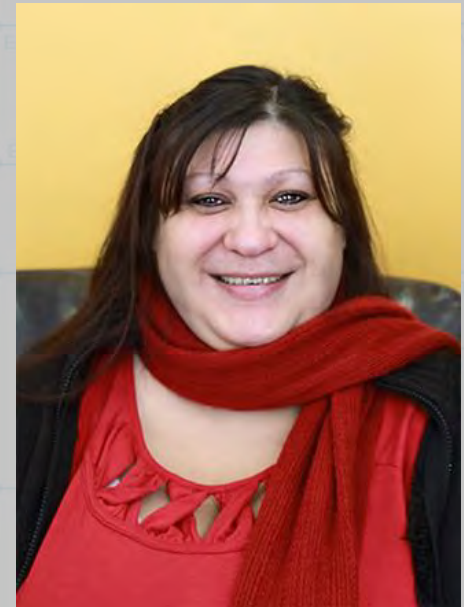


2013 Course graduate: Carla

“When I first started the Reception training course in 2013 at PMNC I had no experience nor did I have any skills. I had low self-esteem and no confidence in myself or others around me.

12 months later my skills and experience have improved drastically. Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre has helped me by giving me the opportunity, skills and motivation to be involved in the community”.

Carla has now graduated from the training course and is now employed at PMNC 3 days a week as reception/trainer training other students.



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2012 Course graduate: Genet

Genet is an asylum seeker from Ethiopia. She had been in a refugee camp for 7 years and had lost confidence in her skills and had limited English. She completed the PMNC reception training course in 2012. The skills, confidence and English she learnt enabled her to enroll in a health sciences bringing course. PMNC provided a reference for her application. She is close to completing her bridging course is now employed in that area.

“The Reception training program exceeded my expectations. I have learned how to treat customers and clients and how to solve problems presented by members of the community. I have found the Neighbourhood Centre to be a valuable resource to the community and have learned good office manners and good communication”.



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Some of our students and teachers

