

Apprentice Handbook

Updated 10/15/15, 6/13/17

VISION: To offer complete, comprehensive and growing educational programs, recognized by the leading experts in the HVACR industry as the premier online education resource for the HVACR, Building Performance, and related communities.

MISSION: Quality online education, student success, and exceptional customer services are our primary objectives. HVACR is the leading online education provider for the HVACR and Building Performance industries. We strive to continue to build and expand our services, partnerships, and credentials, and to maintain our educational quality built to national standards.

These policies will support the vision and mission of the HVACR educational programs and courses by providing guidelines and guidance for decisions relating to students.

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Welcome from the CEO



Chris Compton, CEO

Welcome students. You have made an excellent choice by learning online. The HVACR industry is changing and requires more computer skills and a higher level of knowledge and performance. Your online program will give you the exposure to computer skills and to the excellent curriculum you will need to acquire industry certifications and to be successful technicians.

Our goal is to provide exceptional customer service and high quality online education in the HVACR industry for the success of our students. I am very proud of our awesome crew who meet the professional educational needs of our students every day. I am pleased that you have joined us. Remember we are always here to assist you with your HVACRedu.net needs.

1. Where do you begin?

1.a. Registration

Within 24 hours of the time your payment is received, your welcome letter will be emailed from Student Services to you with a copy to your instructors.

1.b. Fees

For information about current prices and fees, please visit our online store.

- Your enrollment fees are normally received before registration. Additional fees may be charged if you do not complete your studies on schedule.
- You may have the option of working with a tutor who will help you complete your missing assignments and prepare for exams for a Special Tutor fee. However, these sessions must be arranged through Student Services in advance.
- If you do not participate on schedule, you may be placed on Administrative Hold (see attendance/participation section below). If you want to be reactivated, you will be charged an apprentice re-instatement fee which allows you to pick up where you left off and complete the program.

1.c. Refunds

Student enrollments are paid through a number of avenues. HVACRedu.net will work with the purchasing party for that student's enrollment. If the purchase was through an employer or through one of our partners, we will work with the paying individual who will communicate with the student. Employers and Partners will also be held to this policy. We will work with the student only if the student purchased the course or program directly through HVACRedu.net.

Withdrawal after start of a PROGRAM:

A student may request a refund after withdrawal from a PROGRAM he has started. Refunds will be issued as follows:

If the student enrolled in a PROGRAM, withdraws, and requests a refund any time during the first seven days the refund will be the program purchase price minus any textbook price (if applicable), shipping charges (if applicable), and a \$125 administrative fee.

If the student enrolled in a PROGRAM, withdraws, and requests a refund after attempting an exam OR after the first seven days from the purchase date, there will be no refund given.

Refunds will not be applied as credit toward any other enrollment. Refunds will be mailed within two weeks after the refund request has been approved.

There will be no refund for a student that uses a payment plan to purchase a program. Any remaining payments will be cancelled and not processed from the time of withdraw.

Students requesting a refund should email orders@hvacredu.net.

1.d. Textbooks

The required textbooks are listed in the Apprentice Program Description, at the end of the Master Catalog, and in the online Store. These textbooks are a required part of the program, but they are not included in the program enrollment fee. You may acquire textbooks through any third party of your choice. If you already have the textbook(s), you do not need to purchase more. If you have any questions about textbooks, please send an email to: info@hvacredu.net.

1.e. Login

Within 24 hours of your enrollment and payment processing, Student Services will email a welcome letter to you that includes your program schedule, including the list of your courses and their start and end dates. Also included is your user name and password, directions for accessing your course, and a copy of the participation policy. Keep a copy of this information as you will use it each time you login. To get started, simply follow the instructions provided. Your welcome letter also contains instructions for you to schedule your program orientation at your convenience within 10 days.

Each of your online course sections is guided by an online instructor. Even though all the course material is included in the section, you can send your instructors an email any time you have a question about the course content. Instructors are only an email away.

1.f. Orientation

Your instructor will meet with you on the phone and in a webinar setting to introduce you to HVACRedu.net's online campus. The orientation interview will cover a long list of topics, allow time for questions and answers, and help you get started learning successfully.

Before the orientation you will have an opportunity to take the Program Pre-Assessment that covers: online learning, math, and English. Your scores help us provide the learning resources and support you will need.

2. Student Issues

2.a. Attendance/Participation:

HVACRedu.net offers asynchronous learning courses, meaning students don't have to show up at a scheduled place and time. You may login from anywhere at any time of day.

In order to stay on schedule, you are required to login and participate in the learning modules 4-5 times each week totaling at least 6 hours. If circumstances prevent you from logging into the course for any period of time (2-3 days), you must email your instructor and agree to make up that time and assignments upon your return. If you need to take some time away from the course (2-3 days), please notify your instructor in advance and make arrangements to make up that time and assignments upon your return.

If you do not login for one week, you will receive an email from Student Services inquiring about your situation and offering assistance. If you do not respond to this email, after a few more days you will receive a second email from Student Services. If you do not respond to the second email, you (and your employer) can expect a phone call. Our goal is student success and we are here to provide the necessary student support.

If you fall behind schedule, or go missing you may not be able to complete the required readings, assignments, discussions, exams, and ultimately--the course--on schedule. Apprentice students may place their program on hold for a short period of time, if needed for unexpected special circumstances. The student will need to pay the reinstatement fee when they wish to return and re-enter the program on a different schedule in order to complete all the course sections.

Administrative Hold: If an apprentice student does not participate or login into one complete apprenticeship course section the student is placed on Administrative Hold. Student Services

will email an Admin Hold notification to the student at that time. The letter includes instructions on how to purchase the reinstatement fee in order to be re-activated. Once the student has purchased the reinstatement fee, he/she will be enrolled into the next available section. The missing section(s) will have to be completed at the end of the student's apprenticeship year when the section becomes available in the rotation of the schedule.

If the missing student does not respond to the Admin Hold letter, Student Services will note their status as "admin hold" on the state apprentice report and notify the student's employer, if the employer purchased the program for the student.

2.b. Resources and Support

If you experience computer difficulties (need help setting up your browser or plug-in, or experience errors or other technical problems) please contact your instructor or studentservices@hvacredu.net. We can usually help you.

We have also loaded each course with an array of student learning resources.

- You do not need to wait for your textbooks before you begin your course, we want you to begin your program on schedule and keep up with assignments and discussions. You can catch up with the reading assignments after you get your books.
- Read through each course, including the modules, thoroughly.
- Explore the Glossary and connect to all the links to other web sites included in each course.
- Participate in your course discussions.
- You are also encouraged to use the Internet to research and explore industry information that will support your career in HVACR.
- Make sure you communicate with your instructor; our faculty are experts in the field and a wealth of information.

2.c. Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is at the core of every learning community. Every student is expected to represent him or herself truthfully in the virtual learning environment. Access to HVACRedu.net is protected by a username and password. It is expected that you will protect your user name and password and not share it with any other individual.

Presenting the words, ideas, or expression of another as your own in any form is plagiarism. If you are uncertain about proper citation of sources you should ask your instructor for direction. Ignorance is no excuse. HVACRedu.net has no tolerance for cheating or plagiarism in our online learning community. No credit will be awarded to an assignment or discussion that has been proven to be plagiarized.

2.d. Communication

All of your online communications need to be composed carefully as you are part of a learning community. Please exercise the same professionalism you would on the job. Focus your comments on the course material and remember that spelling and grammar are very important. You can use a word-processor with grammar and spellcheck to write, then copy and paste it into the discussion or email.

Try not to bring conflict into the course discussion areas. You may email the instructor directly (outside the learning module) and try to resolve a situation without impacting the climate of the other students.

Use email for private messages and use the course discussion area for on-topic public messages.

2.e. Grades for Apprenticeship Program Students

The Passing Scores for each exam in the Apprenticeship Program have been established after an exhaustive review of the course content and exam questions by eighteen subject matter experts, led by a Psychometrician over several months.

Your grade for each section is made up of 70% online exam scores, and 30% discussion participation scores for a total of 100% possible. Your course section grade is the combined average of your discussion and module exam grades. Your program grade for each year is the combined average of your course section grades for that year. In order to pass each year of the apprenticeship program, you must earn the following grades:

Year 1 – 75% or higher

Year 2 – 75% or higher

Year 3 -- 75% or higher

Year 4 -- 80% or higher

Exams (70% of your course grade):

Exams may only be taken once. Make sure you are prepared before you begin an exam. Also, make sure you have enough undisturbed time to complete the exam before you begin. At the end of each learning module, you will take an online Module exam that contains 20 questions. Midterm exams (when used) contain 25 questions. Final exams are made up of 25 questions randomly selected from the previous module exams. Your scores are final and automatically populate in your grade book. You will receive immediate feedback on your exam, giving you an opportunity to learn from your mistakes or review for the final.

Please remember, Website Resources links are provided to you as additional, supplemental materials to enhance your learning experience. They are intended to be suggestions to encourage your personal exploration of the Web, to find sites that support your course subject matter. Unless specifically stated in your module, the materials presented in these links are not a graded part of your required course content.

Exam Retakes:

Students are expected to be diligent in their studies and preparation prior to taking exams. Exams can be reset only for two reasons:

- 1) if a student experienced technical problems during an exam

Students may email their instructor with a request to re-set an exam explaining the reasons. Instructors will re-set a technical problem exam if they verify that the student could not complete the exam.

- 2) if a student completes a course with a failing grade

The instructor will reset a module exam for the student to retake.

The instructor will continue to mentor the student and reset additional module exam(s) until the student reaches a passing score for the course.

Course Discussions (30% of your course grade):

The hub of participation is the Discussion Forum. The Discussion Forum provides space for a host of activities such as freewheeling two-way conversations and focused discussions. You are required to participate. You will be graded based on the following criteria:

Two postings minimum—Response to Instructor’s posting - are each worth 35 points maximum. In order to earn the full 35 points, postings must be consistently insightful, meaningful, and/or substantive and must prompt on-topic participation from others.

Two postings minimum—Responses to other students’ Postings—each is worth 15 points maximum. In order to earn the full 15 points, postings must be consistently insightful, meaningful, and/or substantive and prompt on-topic participation from others, or provide an accurate summary.

A-LEVEL PARTICIPATION (90-100 points)

The participant posts consistently insightful, meaningful, and/or substantive comments and questions that prompt on-topic participation; and posts meaningful peer reviews.

B-LEVEL PARTICIPATION (80-90 points)

The participant usually participates in postings and peer reviews and provides substantive responses, but not always.

C-LEVEL PARTICIPATION (70-80 points)

The participant participates marginally, and postings are not very clear or are weak.

D/F-LEVEL PARTICIPATION (below 70 points)

The participant either frequently attempts to draw the discussion off-topic or fails to participate in a meaningful way.

Your instructor will grade your participation each week and post the grades within 48 hours of the end of the week. Except for the last week, when instructors allow a one week grace period to turn in late work.

Late Discussion Postings and Assignments: Instructors will accept late postings and assignments only for one week after the end of a course. You must email your instructor in advance to let him know you will be submitting late work. During that week, postings and assignments will have a penalty of 20% applied to the grade. That means the maximum grade you can earn for a late posting or assignment is 80%. If you submit a discussion posting or assignment after the one week grace period, you will not receive any credit or a grade for that assignment.

View Your Grades: The Module Exams, Midterm Exams, and Final Exams are automatically populated into your Grade Book. Your instructor will enter your discussion grades into your Grade Book within two weeks of the end of each course in your program. You have access to view your Grade Book any time and monitor your progress through the program.

Program Completion:

Passing: If you earned a passing score, and submitted the required end of course surveys, congratulations on a job well done! Student Services will email a certificate of completion to you. You may use this certificate to show your employer. You may also send a copy to your state office of apprenticeship verifying your successful related training completion for the year.

If circumstances prove that you did not successfully complete the coursework for which a certificate or transcript was issued, (for example another individual completed the online courses, or the grades were tampered with to give the appearance of successful completion, or any other circumstance) the Student Services Director will write a letter to you and all parties to whom the certificate or transcript was issued, explaining that the certificate or transcript has been cancelled and is not valid.

If You Failed: Students may purchase the 30 day Apprentice Special Tutor when they have:

- 1) Failed a section and need to complete missing discussion post(s), or
- 2) Failed their apprenticeship year (final grade below 75% for Year 1-3 and final grade below 80% for Year 4) and need to complete missing or low exams and/or missing discussion post(s).

The Apprentice Tutor allows the student access to their apprenticeship section(s) for 30 days. During that time, the student has access to the Live Faculty who is available to answer questions, provide support, and grade discussion posts. The Live Faculty can also reset exams during a 30 day tutor session after the year's course schedule is complete if the student did not achieve a passing score. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor once they have made a post to a discussion question and request a grade. The late post(s) will be graded with a 20% late penalty for a maximum of 80% earned during the tutor session. The Apprentice Tutor may be purchased as many times as necessary in order for the student to complete the year with a passing score.

2.f. Student Surveys

We need your feedback. It is essential that we know about your experience at different points in your program by administering surveys. You are required to complete the short survey at the end of each course section. Remember to follow good communications guidelines and know that your comments are used to evaluate and improve the Faculty's performance, the administration's performance, and to improve the program curriculum.

Also, after you complete your year's apprenticeship program, we will send your employer a survey asking for his/her feedback about the effectiveness of your online related training program through HVACRedu.net and your participation in it. We want to know that what you learned online is evident in your performance on the job.

2.g. Equity/Disability Guidelines

Students have the right to equitable access to education without regard to race, age, creed, color, political and religious beliefs, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, socioeconomic status, health status, or the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability. Students can expect an online learning environment free of prejudice. High expectations for performance and results will be held for all students in order that they may achieve their highest potential.

If you have the need for special assistance, please contact your instructor who will forward that information on to the HVACRedu.net administrator. We will make every effort to supply directions to help you meet your accommodation needs.

2.h. Safety

Because our courses are web-based, we do not have to concern ourselves with classroom safety. However, industry safety is emphasized in each and every course. Your life and health, and that of your co-workers, may be at risk if you do not practice all the industry safety guidelines. If you have a question about safety, it is always better to ask first.

2.i. Student Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Although HVACRedu.net is not required under the law to adhere to FERPA because we do not

receive funds from the U.S. Department of Education, we still follow FERPA guidelines as closely as reasonably practical.

Student grades, letters of evaluation, attendance records, and private communications may be treated as business materials by the administrators of HVACReducaton.net and may be released to parties who have a vested interest in the student performance (workforce training program administrators, employer/supervisors, state office of apprenticeship, etc.) only by administrators for legitimate academic/employment purposes, or if there are reasonable grounds for believing that releasing such information will be beneficial to the student or will prevent harm to the student or to others.

The FERPA allows schools to disclose any information from a students' education record, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Also, FERPA states that schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. If students wish to have directory information withheld for any reason, they must submit a written request to Student Services upon enrollment or as early as possible.

3. Student Complaints

3.a. Complaint Guidelines

If you have any sort of issue, question, concern, or complaint we encourage you to send us an email to studentservices@hvacredu.net. Our mission includes our dedication to student success and our policy is to respond to student emails within 24 hours, on regular business days. If you have a concern that cannot wait for an email response, we encourage you to use our toll free Student Services number (888-655-4822 and enter 1117) for immediate assistance. The email contacts and phone number can be found on our web site.

We Recommend the Following Course of Action:

- 1) Email the instructor of your course first. If the instructor is not able to resolve the question or issue immediately, the instructor will contact one of the administrators and stay in contact with you.
- 2) If the instructor does not satisfactorily respond to or resolve your question or issue, you are encouraged to email studentservices@hvacredu.net or call student services to reach an administrator.
- 3) If you so choose, you may also email or call any of the administrators.

If your issue cannot be immediately resolved, it may require the collaborative resolution of more than one department. Administrators may research the issue and meet to discuss and develop an appropriate response. This meeting may be via group emails, or conference calls and will be conducted within one week of your complaint.

You will be contacted via email or phone with the response. If the response involves action from more than one department, you may receive emails or phone calls from each department involved in the response.

Appeals Process:

If you are not satisfied with the response, you may contact the CEO, Chris Compton directly via email (ccompton@hvacredunet.net) or telephone (888-655-4822 and enter 1116). The CEO will conduct an inquiry into all aspects of the stated complaint or concern and may engage all the administrators and faculty closest to the situation. The CEO may interview the student again or ask for additional information from the student via email or telephone. The CEO will make a decision and communicate it to all involved via email within two weeks of the appeal notice. The CEO's response will be final.