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Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your inquiry into the **Certificate IV in Embalming (SIF 40213) Course**. **Mortuary & Funeral Educators (MFE)** has prepared this letter to assist you with questions you may have concerning this course, and should you have further inquiries, please feel free to call us at any time during normal business hours.

## Introduction:

Mortuary science-embalming education has been available in Australia for many years, beginning with short tutorials in the late 1800s. Since that time, embalming education has evolved into the competency level of Certificate IV, which began in September 1997.

With the introduction of the *Funeral Services Training Package* in July 2002, the Certificate IV in Embalming has taken on a more structured appearance, whilst still retaining its foundation of theoretical course components running in tandem with its practical application.

**Mortuary & Funeral Educators** has also designed the Certificate IV in Embalming to be delivered in two different formats, either as a Lecture Based Learning Course, using 6-4 day training blocks of lecture and embalming laboratories in conjunction with distance learning, or to be delivered as a Distance Learning Course only. Both formats deliver the same amount of course components, and when completed to specific assessment values, both formats result in the same certification being achieved. (However, the Lecture Based Learning Course is the preferred course for enhanced study)

*New initiatives in 2018 include an comprehensive website with student access to online resource (on its way!), as well as intensive 1/2 day workshops with guest presenters open to current and past students.*

## What is the difference between distance learning and the lecture based learning course?

### Lecture Based Learning Course:

- Entry is subject to completion of the Pre-Admission Requirements
- Entry into the course will be determined by:
  - Having a minimum of 6 students
    - With a minimum of 6 students to start the course, students are not disadvantaged by having to wait until a higher minimum number of entrants are available
- You will need an embalming mentor/supervisor to assist you with the practical components of the course
- You will need a properly equipped mortuary to learn the practical components of the course
- You will have to attend 6 blocks of 4 day lecture/mortuary intensive learning (Thursday – Sunday)
- You will have to be assessed as competent in 22 units
  - To achieve a Certificate IV in Embalming these include 19 core units & 3 elective units
- You will have access to your principal course instructor at any time (subject to his/her own work schedule), either by telephone, mobile, fax or email.
- You will have approximately 18 months to complete the theoretical components of the course, but this may vary depending on how the course is structured.
  - Due to the time structure of this particular course, the submission of assignments and semester examinations have stringent due dates for group learning
- **MFE** normally allow 36 months to complete the mandatory 30 embalming case studies required to complete the course
  - However, an extension can be arranged under certain conditions
- When all of the above requirements for this course have been completed, you will then be assessed by embalming two cases (one autopsy and one non-autopsied case) in front of an MFE Assessor.

#### ***Location of training:***

Lecture based training will be conducted over 6 x 4 day blocks (Thursday - Sunday) in Melbourne at 214 Lorimer Street, Port Melbourne for theory sessions and 7 Droop Street, Footscray for practical sessions (in embalming laboratory).

Students are required to organize their own travel and accommodation arrangements for the sessions. Travel to and from Melbourne, including accommodation and transfers are at the student's own expense.

#### **Distance Learning Course:**

- Entry is subject to completion of the Pre-Admission Requirements

- Entry into the distance-learning course is at any time in agreement with MFE Administrator
- There are no formal lectures
  - Therefore students are not required to attend regionally-based lectures and embalming laboratories delivered by the principal instructor of the course
- You will need an embalming mentor/supervisor to assist you with the practical components of the course
- You will need a properly equipped mortuary to learn the practical components of the course
- You will have to be assessed as competent in 22 units
- You will have access to your principal course instructor at any time (subject to his/her own work schedule), either by telephone, mobile, fax or email.
- It is suggested that 24 months should be sufficient to complete the theoretical components of the Distance Learning Course. However, in the past some students have completed the theoretical components in a shorter time.
- **MFE** normally allow 36 months to complete the mandatory 30 embalming case studies required to complete the course
  - However, an extension can be arranged under certain conditions
- When all of the above requirements for this course have been completed, you will then be assessed by embalming two cases (one autopsy and one non-autopsied case) in front of an MFE Assessor.

## What are the pre-requisites for enrolment?

### You will need work experience

You will need to complete two weeks of work experience at a funeral company, with emphasis being placed on working in a mortuary equipped for embalming, viewing different levels of deceased preparation, including embalming, under the direction of a qualified embalmer. A letter from the funeral company involved must validate this work experience.

### You will need to be employed in funeral service

Be currently working in funeral service (full time, casual) with a funeral company that has a mortuary equipped for embalming and has on its staff (or readily available) a qualified embalmer who will act as your embalming mentor/supervisor.

OR

Have written guaranty and verifiable access to a funeral company with a qualified mortuary, and have access to a qualified embalmer to act as your embalming mentor/supervisor

OR

Have been accepted into a state approved, new apprenticeship/traineeship at a funeral home, which has a qualified mortuary and has access to a qualified embalmer to act as your embalming mentor/supervisor.

### You will need an embalming mentor/supervisor

Regardless of the method of instruction you must have an embalming mentor/supervisor, who holds a qualification from a recognized training organization. The embalming mentor works closely with the principal instructor of the course, guiding you through the practical components of the course as it relates to your theoretical components. The embalming mentor also acts as the second assessor, assessing your skills as you progress through the course.

*You must have an embalming mentor/supervisor ready to take that responsibility before MFE can accept you into this course.*

### Practical Study

The more time you spend studying the practical components of embalming the more proficient you will become in the craft of embalming. It is recommended that you spend a minimum of 40 hours per month working with your embalming mentor/supervisor in the mortuary. This is recommended for both the Lecture Based Learning and Distance Courses.

### You will need a mortuary equipped for embalming to work in

As you may be aware, not every funeral home's mortuary has the equipment, chemicals, compounds and sundries to be able to embalm, and for those of you who are not currently working in a funeral home that can handle embalming, finding one that can accommodate your training needs in this area may be difficult and you will be unable to commence until that arrangement has been made. For some of you, the fact of having to travel to a distant location for your practical embalming training may not be too appealing. However, your overall training within this course demands the availability of not only an embalming mentor/supervisor, it also demands the use of a suitable mortuary.

We have known former students that have travelled long distances to complete the practical embalming components of their course in the allotted period of time, so we know that it can be done.

### You must provide us with your Unique Student Identifier (USI)

As part of our enrolment process, you must provide your Unique Student Identifier (USI) prior to receiving course access. From 1 January, MFE is prevented from issuing a student with a nationally recognized qualification, statement of attainment if the

student does not have a USI. Prospective students may apply for a USI directly by clicking on the website link below:

<https://www.usi.gov.au/students/create-your-usi>

## How much work is involved?

There are 22 units, each one having a minimum of one written assignment due by a specific date. For those students who have chosen to take this course as distance learning, the submission date for each assignment would not be as strictly controlled as for those students taking this course in the lecture based format.

Assignments are to be written using the student resource material for that course component in conjunction with the required textbook. Each completed assignment would then be forwarded onto **MFE** for marking and assessment, and then returned to the student along with a written statement of the assessment.

### You will need to sit three semester examinations

You will need to sit three semester examinations over the time frame of the course. Each semester examination will cover a specific amount of course components that the student has completed assignments for.

Semester examinations will be taken under proper exam conditions (e.g. an invigilator present, no textbooks or any other student resource materials allowed).

Each completed semester examination would then be forwarded onto **MFE** for marking and assessment, with a written statement of assessment being sent to the student. Every semester examination that is submitted to **MFE** for assessment will be kept in the student's education file, and will not be returned to the student.

### You will need to sit a final theoretical examination covering all of the "embalming" components

At the completion of all course components, and only after you have been marked competent in all of the same, you will need to sit a final theoretical examination.

As with the three semester examinations, the final theoretical examination will be taken under proper exam conditions (e.g. an invigilator present, no textbooks or any other student resource materials allowed).

The final theoretical examination would then be forwarded onto **MFE** for marking and assessment, with a written statement of assessment being sent to the student. The final theoretical examination that is submitted to **MFE** for assessment will be kept in the student's education file, and will not be returned to the student.

### **The marking system used by Mortuary and Funeral Educators for the theoretical course components**

95 – 100%	= High Distinction (HD)
85 – 94%	= Distinction (D)
75 – 84%	= Credit (C)
65 - 74%	= Pass (P)
0 - 64%	= Not Yet Competent (NYC)

**The practical components of the course are judged as being either competent or not yet competent.**

### **You will be expected to complete the “Basic Mortuary Skills Checklist” and submit to MFE**

With the assistance of your embalming mentor/supervisor, you will be expected to complete a series of mortuary preparation processes early on in the course. These preparation processes make up the tasks that lead up to the point of arterial embalming, and will be covered in many of the core units.

As you become proficient in each process, your embalming mentor/supervisor will mark off and date each process as being competent. You will then be responsible for sending this checklist onto us for submission into your student file. The due date for the Basic Mortuary Checklist will be given to you. It is due once, generally around five months after the commencement of the course.

### **You will be expected to make entries into your “Student Log Book” and submit it to MFE for three assessments.**

The Student Log Book is a continuous record of your practical embalming competencies and is your responsibility to keep up to date and hand in for assessment. Although the Student Log Book is designed to cover many preparation and embalming protocols, several of them may not be completed by the time the course is finished (e.g. you may not come across a deceased who has died by electrocution within the first 24 months of your training).

Most of the processes are duplicated, so that your competencies in those areas are displayed and observed by your embalming mentor/supervisor on several occasions. As you become proficient in each process, your embalming mentor/supervisor will sign-off each process as being performed competently.

The Student Log Book will be submitted by students at these times:

- First time – approximately 2 months after the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester

- Second time – approximately 2 months after the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester
- Third time – upon the completion of the 30<sup>th</sup> case.

### You will be expected to complete 30 Embalming Case Studies

As discussed earlier in this document, the Certificate IV in Embalming requires that the theoretical components progress in tandem with the practical embalming training. Therefore, you will be expected to complete 30 embalming case studies prior to completing this course. Each embalming case study is the complete embalming of a deceased person, embalming the case on your own with no outside physical or verbal assistance from your embalming mentor/supervisor. Although not allowed to assist you in any way, your embalming mentor/supervisor must be in the preparation room at the time of each case study.

The parameters of each case study are as follows:

- each case study is to be embalmed thoroughly, as per overseas repatriation standards, using sufficient chemicals, compounds and any other equipment necessary to uphold such a standard
- each case study will involve the submission of a Case Study Report, written by the student and containing all information concerning the embalming process, including but no limited to:
  - details of the case
  - condition of the case
  - chemicals, compounds used to embalm the case, including amounts and ratios for the arterial and cavity treatments
  - any cosmetic or restoration work performed
  - a detailed verbal account of the overall embalming process, including any comments made about the case by family or friends
  - time elements involved
  - comments about the case from your embalming mentor/supervisor
  - signatures of both the student and the embalming mentor/supervisor
- the 30 embalming case studies are to be broken down as follows:
  - 10 embalming case studies of autopsied cases
  - 20 embalming case studies of non-autopsied cases studies

Your embalming mentor/supervisor will be the one who will decide when you are competent enough to start working on your 30 case studies. Generally, you will have been embalming cases on your own for a short period of time before your embalming mentor/supervisor feels you are ready to start your case studies. Once you have seen the Student Log Book, you will understand how closely each process to be marked off coincides with these 30 embalming case studies.

You will not be allowed to take your “practical embalming examination” until all 30 embalming case studies have been completed, and submitted to **MFE** for evaluation



and competency. Your embalming mentor/supervisor and the principal instructor from **MFE** will make the decision as to whether or not you are ready to take this practical embalming examination.

The time limitation for the completion of all 30 embalming case studies will be 36 months after commencing the course, unless circumstances beyond your control have been proven to the principal instructor and an extension of time has been granted.



## How much is the Course going to cost me?

Traineeships/apprenticeships may be available in some states for the Certificate IV in Embalming to those who qualify. To determine your qualifications, contact your nearest state department of education.

### The Course Fee Schedule 2018:

MFE has made every effort to keep the costs for certificate courses to a minimum:

#### Lecture Based Course Workshops

TBA – later 2018

Course Fee 20 installments of \$525.00

*Includes enrolment fee, embalming consumables, morning tea, lunch & afternoon tea on lecture days at Port Melbourne*

- *first installment is non-refundable as it includes the enrolment fee*
- *does not include textbooks (approximate cost \$450.00), personal protective equipment or embalming consumables.*

#### **All fees are GST inclusive**

*Lecture based training will be conducted over 4 day blocks, [Thursday – Sunday in Melbourne, at Port Melbourne for theory sessions and Footscray for practical sessions (in embalming laboratory).*

MFE requires students to attend every session.

Please note that each student needs to be employed in funeral service or made appropriate arrangements approved by MFE and organized a mentor/supervisor.

#### Distance Learning Courses

Next Course: Dates upon application

Course Fee 20 installments of \$525.00\*

- *First installment is non-refundable as it includes enrollment fee.*
- *Does not include textbooks (approximate cost \$450.00), personal protective equipment or embalming consumables*

**\*Practical Examinations take place in Melbourne, however Examiners can be flown to your facility at your expense. (costs would include: transport and accommodation for 1 person)**

## Payment for Course Fees & Textbooks:

MFE will accept cash, bank cheques, credit cards, eftpos, or direct debit for course fees. (preferably Direct Debit)

### TEXTBOOKS:

There are currently two primary textbooks that are used in conjunction with the student's resource materials for most of the course components within the Certificate IV in Embalming.

These textbooks are mandatory for taking the course and have been used not only to formulate most of the student's resources; they have also been used to formulate many of the questions found in various assignments, semester examinations and the final theoretical examination. The best study method for a student to use would be to thoroughly understand the student resource material for each component and cross-reference that to the recommended reading.

- **Embalming – History, Theory & Practice**
  - Robert G. Mayer, Author
  - McGraw-Hill Health Professions Division –Publisher
  
- **Mosby's Medical, Nursing & Allied Health Dictionary**
  - Elsevier/Reed – Publisher

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A Third textbook, although out of print is also highly recommended for students:

- **Anatomy for Funeral Service**
  - Professional Training Schools Inc. –Publisher

A new addition to the course & highly recommended for students is:

- **Funeral Home Customer Service a-z**
  - Alan D.Wolfelt, PhD.
  - Companion Press

*The following Textbook, also out of print, is listed as a recommendation for students, and although it is not mandatory for the course, many sections of the course were written using this textbook as a reference:*

- **The Principles and Practice of Embalming**
  - Clarence G.Strub, L.E. & L.G. Frederick, L.E.-L.F.D., Authors
  - Professional Training Schools, Inc - Publisher

*(Books are available to purchase from MFE)*

# SIF40213 Certificate IV in Embalming

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*MFE students must complete seventeen (19) core units from the following list:*

## **CORE UNITS**

SIFXIND002	Work effectively in the funeral services industry
SIFXIND003	Deal with grief responses
SIFEMWK001	Encoffin deceased persons
SIFEMWK005	Cleanse & disinfect deceased bodies
SIFEMWK006	Set facial features
SIFEMWK007	Treat the abdominal & thoracic cavities
SIFEMWK008	Dress the deceased & apply cosmetics
SIFEMWK009	Apply anatomy & physiology principles to embalming
SIFEMWK010	Restore minor body damage
SIFEMWK011	Treat the head & body after autopsies
SIFEMWK012	Restore & set eyes after eye donations
SIFEMWKO13	Determine embalming requirements
SIFEMWK014	Perform arterial embalming of natural cases
SIFEMWK015	Perform embalming of autopsied cases
SIFEMWK016	Treat complex ante mortem cases
SIFEMWK017	Treat complex post mortem cases
SIFEMWK018	Supervise mortuary operations
SIFXWHS001	Follow mortuary work health & safety procedures
SIFXWHS004	Implement & monitor infection & contamination control practices

**&**

*MFE students select three (3) units from the following list:*

## **ELECTIVE UNITS ON OFFER**

### **Marketing & Public Relations**

SIFXMPRO02	Make presentations to community groups
SIFXPRO03	Prepare & conduct tours



### **Mortuary Work & Embalming**

- \*SIFEMWK004 Coordinate mortuary operations
- \*SIFEMWK019 Design a mortuary

### **Work Health & Safety**

- \*SIFEWHS002 Review & develop mortuary work health & safety policies & procedures

## **FUTURE ELECTIVE UNITS TO BE OFFERED**

### **Working In Industry**

- SIFND003A Participate in industry networks

### **Marketing & Public Relations**

- SIFMPR004A Develop marketing strategies & activities

### **Management & Leadership**

- SIFMGT003A Supervise staff
- SIFMGT001A Coordinate a team

*\* preferred electives for Embalming qualification but not pre-requisites*

## Does recognition for Prior Learning have any benefit for me?

**YES! Mortuary and Funeral Educators** is committed to the requirements of the *Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)* concerning their benchmarks for fair and equitable assessment and **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)**.

The competencies in the Funeral Service Training Package may be attained in a number of ways:

- formal and informal training and education
- work experience
- general life experience, and/or
- any combination of the above

At the time of enrolment each student will be sent an **RPL** package of information that outlines the process to go through prior to any **RPL** being given. Included in this package will be key competencies and key learning outcomes for each course component within the certificate course. The student will be asked to compare his/her past education and work experiences with those competencies and learning outcomes to determine if she/he is eligible for **RPL**. Once all the paperwork and interviews have been conducted between the student and our educator and upon successful completion of the **RPL** process, **MFE** will mark this as being judged competent.

**RPL** is an important part of the admission process for every student, and the student is advised from the very beginning to take advantage of past and prior education and work experience towards his/her overall qualification.

We want you to enjoy your educational journey with us as much as we will enjoy having you learn and grow within the context of funeral service, and this journey will be a more positive one if you have as much information concerning the course as possible.

**An enrolment pack is available upon request.**

We sincerely hope this letter has been informative for you. Again, if we can be of any assistance, please call our office or email us.



Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Priscilla', is positioned below the word 'Respectfully,'.

Priscilla Nelson Feaver  
MFE Administrator

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