

POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY

1 Purpose and Scope

Purpose

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a. Identify the responsibilities international applicants and enrolled students who require an Australian student visa to study at ACPE have in order to maintain visa compliance.
- b. Describe how ACPE will support international applicants and students as required under the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code), the Tuition Protection Service Framework, and associated legislation.

The College is required to provide adequate support services to international students to help them adjust to study and live in Australia. The requirement to deliver these services to international students studying on a student visa is set out in Standard 6 of the National Code 2018. The College provides these services to all students domestic or international and regardless of the visa on which the student may be studying.

Scope

- All international students
- Student Learning Support Staff
- Student Services Staff
- Academic Staff

This policy applies to people who intend to, or are, studying in Australia on student visas, and to the staff who support them in maintaining visa compliance

2 Policy Statement

This sets out the College's policy for support of international applicants and current students who require an Australian student visa to temporarily reside in Australia for study purposes and the associated responsibilities these students have.

3 Australian Student Visa Requirements

ACPE-enrolled international students studying onshore on a student visa are required to have an appropriate and valid visa from the Department of Home Affairs.

The College will provide a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), required for application of a student visa, only to applicants who are deemed to be genuine in their desire to study a course at ACPE and who meet the course entry requirements.

The College will provide a CoE for course packaging purposes to applicants who are deemed to be genuine in their desire to study a course at the College and who meet the course entry requirements for a lower qualification where there is clear progression to a higher course at ACPE.

The lower level course/s in the package must be studied at ACPE or at a second provider with which ACPE has a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.

3.1 Written Agreement

Under Australian law, international students intending to enrol in a course in Australia must enter into a written agreement with the course provider.

ACPE's written agreement includes information about:

- The course in which a student is enrolled
- Tuition fees which apply, including the number and length of each relevant teaching period to complete the course
- Non-tuition fees which apply
- Refund entitlements
- Course requirements, including English proficiency requirements
- Student support services available to the student
- The Tuition Protection Service (TPS)
- Students Responsibilities

3.2 Compliance with Student Visa Requirements

During their enrolment at ACPE, international students are expected to ensure that they comply with all conditions of their student visa. ACPE monitors student compliance and is required to inform the Department of Home Affairs of any breaches.

As per the conditions of a student visa, the student has the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that ACPE is informed within 7 days of arriving in Australia of their Australian address and contact details.
- To ensure that ACPE is informed within seven days of any change of address or contact information in emergency situations.
- Maintaining valid enrolment and satisfactory academic progress.

3.3 Student Details

Students are required to inform and update the College of their personal or emergency contact details (or any change) while studying at the College.

These details will be updated by the Registrar's Office on the same day the information is received.

3.4 Academic Progress

International students at ACPE must maintain academic progress, as outlined in the relevant policy. Under ESOS legislation, the College is required to inform the Department of Home Affairs if a student visa holder is in breach of their academic progress requirements. This may result in the cancellation of a student visa.

3.5 Current CoE

International students enrolled at ACPE must have a current CoE for the course in which they are enrolled. If the CoE initially granted expires prior to completion of their course they must apply to the College for a new one at least 7 working days prior to expiry. Students risk not having a new CoE granted where they have not completed their course by the expected time (e.g. as a result of taking intermission (leave) without approval or due to unsatisfactory course progression).

4 Payment of Fees and Living Cost Requirements

4.1 Fee Deadlines

It is a condition of a student visa that international students in Australia are required to have sufficient funds to pay tuition fees and living expenses. Failure to pay for tuition fees by the published deadlines may result in ACPE discontinuing the enrolment of an international student and notifying the Department of Home Affairs. This could result in the cancellation of the student's visa.

ACPE will issue CoEs to prospective students only after the tuition fees for the first semester (or relevant teaching period) of enrolment have been paid. ACPE is not a residential campus.

4.2 Overseas Health Insurance Cover

All student visa holders are required to have Australian Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). ACPE will not issue a CoE before evidence of the OSHC has been provided or an agreement for ACPE to arrange OSHC on behalf of the student.

4.3 Tuition Protection Service (TPS)

In the event that the College ceases to provide a course in which an international student is enrolled, the College will meet its obligations by either refunding unused prepaid tuition fees, or assisting the students to find a place in a suitable alternative course at the College or with another accredited provider. If ACPE is not able to meet this obligation, international students may access the TPS (<https://tps.gov.au/StaticContent/Get/ProviderRights>)

5 Enrolment Requirements

5.1 Study Load

International students are expected to be enrolled in a full time study load of 24 credit points or equivalent per study period. It is a requirement that international students maintain a study load which will enable them to complete their course within the specified course duration stipulated on the CoE. This is monitored by the Registrar's Office.

International students may not self-select to enrol in a reduced load which will impact the expected completion date of their course. The College may consider permitting a reduced load in circumstances in which:

- there are compassionate or compelling reasons for reducing the load (e.g. personal or family illness impacting on the student's ability to attend classes and supported by a medical certificate or other valid evidence);
- the reduced load is part of ACPE's intervention strategy in relation to academic progression;
- the student has studied, or plans to study, extra units in another teaching period because of unit offerings;
- the student has only a few units left to complete and these do not constitute a full-time load;
- pre-requisite unit offerings limit the units available to the student in a particular teaching period.

Approval will not be granted for a reduced academic load when it is requested on the grounds that the student is unable to pay tuition fees for the load required in a given teaching period.

Where a student is unable to pay tuition fees for the units in which he/she is required to enrol,

a period of suspension (intermission from studies) will be required. Where intermission is taken for financial reasons students should leave Australia and return to their home for the duration of the leave. Failure to do so could be in breach of visa conditions. It is the responsibility of students to check with the Department of Home Affairs the impact taking leave from their studies will have on their visa.

5.2 Online Study Mode

International students may not be enrolled exclusively in online units in any one semester and may not complete more than 33% of their course in online mode.

5.3 Academic Performance

International students maintain satisfactory course progress. Under ESOS legislation, the College is required to inform the Department of Home Affairs, through the Provider and International Students Management System (PRISMS), if a student visa holder is in breach of course progress requirements. Visa cancellation may result.

For more information, refer to the *Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment Policy*.

5.4 Change of Course

The College is required to inform the Department of Home Affairs, through PRISMS, of any change of course or course duration by an international student. Student visa conditions require the written approval of the College to change from one course to another and a new CoE will need to be issued.

For more information, see *International Student Transfer Between Education Providers Policy*.

6 Student Support

- The College makes a range of services available to international students to assist them to transition to life and study in Australia, and to ensure their mental and physical wellbeing. Policies specific to these students are communicated in an additional orientation session.
- The College has student advisor who students can contact by telephone or email or arrange to meet with in person. If a student has an enquiry regarding an academic matter, students can arrange to meet with academic staff in line with the *Student Consultation Policy*.
- ACPE has sufficient student support personnel to meet the standards of enrolled overseas students. All College staff who interact directly with international students must have a sound understanding of the College's obligations under the ESOS framework, and the

potential implications for students that may arise from these obligations. Annual training on this framework and obligations will be provided to all relevant staff.

- The College has a Student Counsellor (Registered Psychologist) on campus fortnightly to provide students with a voluntary and confidential counselling service. The Student Counsellor can assist when personal, family, culture shock or other related issues are impacting on the students' wellbeing or quality of life. This service is free of charge to students.
- In cases of disability or health conditions that may impact upon study, ACPE provides appropriate services to students with disabilities. Particular advice and/or services may be provided by an individual with specialist expertise. More information is provided in the *Diversity and Equity Policy*.
- In cases where students may require English language assistance of their enrolled course, students should contact the Student Learning Services team to ensure appropriate support is provided and ability to gain reasonable adjustments where necessary. Adequate support will be provided irrespective of the international student's place of study or the mode of study of the course at no additional cost.
- Other services provided to students include academic support services; tutoring support and career services.
- In cases where students may be identified as having unsatisfactory course progress as required by the *Course Duration and Academic Progression Policy – International Students*, students will be required to meet with their Head of Department, Director, Student Services and Campus Wellbeing, and International Student Liaison Officer to discuss progression options and enter into an agreed Intervention Strategy to ensure progress within the visa requirements is maintained. Where unsatisfactory course progress continues, students will continue to be supported; however, may after substantial support being offered be identified under the relevant policy as in breach of visa conditions and notified of the College's intention to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs for unsatisfactory progress.
- In any of the circumstances outlined above, the College may require the student to enter into an Intervention Strategy agreement to ensure appropriate support mechanisms are documented and agreed to by both parties. This will be at the discretion of the Head of Department and Director, Student Services and Campus Wellbeing.
- Students should consult the *Remissions of Financial Liability due to Special Circumstances Policy* if they are seeking remission of fees due to any of the above circumstances.

Complaints and Appeals

If students wish to complain or appeal against a decision or action made by the College they may do so in line with the *Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Critical Incident and Emergency Services

ACPE has procedures in place that outline the way in which emergencies and critical incidents that could affect international students' ability to undertake or complete a course are dealt with. For more information, including emergency and critical incident contacts, please refer to the *Critical Incident Policy and Procedure*.

7 Point of Contact

The ACPE Registrar is designated as the official point of contact for international students.

8 Definitions

- **Confirmation of Enrolment (COE)** - A document, provided electronically, issued by the College to intending international students, which must accompany their application for a student visa. It confirms the international student's eligibility to enrol in a particular course.
- **ESOS** – Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and related regulations and amendments. A legislative framework, administered by the Australian Government, addressing the responsibility of education institutions towards overseas students.
- **International student:** a person (whether within or outside Australia) who holds a student visa (an “overseas student” in the ESOS legislative framework).
- **National Code** – National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students. Nationally consistent standards under the ESOS Act, for registered providers who deliver education services.
- **Student** – an individual person who is formally enrolled to study at the College. The individual person is that who appears on the College's documents such as enrolment, admission and payment documents, and who is assigned an individual student ID.
- **Unsatisfactory Course Progress** – failing 50% or more of subjects attempted in a semester.

9 Related Documents

- Course Duration and Academic Progression Policy – International Students
- Grievances, Complaints and Appeals Policy

- Remission of Financial Viability due to Special Circumstances Policy
- Special Consideration Policy
- Critical Incident Policy

Related Legislation:

- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015
- Migration Regulations 1994

10 Policy Administration

| Policy Name & Code: | | | International Students Support Services Policy (POL-32) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| Policy Owner: | | | Director, Student Services and Campus Wellbeing |
| Approval Authority: | | | Board of Directors, ACPE |
| Next Review: | | | September 2023 |
| Approval Date | Effective Date | Version | Summary of changes |
| 10 Aug 17 | 11 Aug 17 | 1 | Policy harmonised and approved on 10 Aug 2017 by Executive Director. |
| 11 Jun19 | 15 Aug 19 | 2 | <p>Revision date: 18 May 2019</p> <p>Policy format updated in line with new ACPE template for policy and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy content reviewed to reflect current College's practices and ensure compliance with the ESOS Act 2000 and National Code 2018 (Standard 6). • Policy updated to include references to the <i>Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment Policy – International Students</i>, the <i>International Student Transfer Policy</i>, and the Migration Regulations 1994. • 'Point of Contact' section added. • 'Definitions' section updated to include CoE and International Students definitions. <p>Further review: 10 Aug 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy title changed from International Student Services to International Students Support Services. • Student Services section updated to ensure ACPE has sufficient staff to support overseas students. Section also updated to include Critical Incident and Emergency Services sections. • Related Documents section updated to include the ACPE Critical Incident Policy. |

Unless otherwise indicated, this policy will still apply beyond the review date.