

## Student Support Services Policy & Procedure

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### 1. Policy

- 1.1 This policy and procedure applies to international students on a student visa or any other visa with valid study rights) who are enrolled at The Centre of Excellence.
- 1.2 The Centre of Excellence is committed to the principle of maximising the outcomes and achievements of students.
- 1.3 The Centre of Excellence implements an effective Student support policy and procedure to support students in successfully completing their course within the scheduled duration.
- 1.4 The Centre of Excellence monitors student's course progress and provides reasonable support.
- 1.5 The Centre of Excellence monitors attendance and provides reasonable support.
- 1.6 The Centre of Excellence will provide access to academic, English language and personal/ welfare support services to all students.
- 1.7 By continuously and systematically monitoring students' academic progress/ attendance and adopting an early intervention strategy, students are given every opportunity and the required support services to achieve their learning outcomes.
- 1.8 An intervention strategy refers to assisting students at risk of not meeting course requirements during and at the end of a study period.
- 1.9 The Centre of Excellence will provide students with information to inform them of the support services available in a timely manner.
- 1.10 The Centre of Excellence encourages learners with special needs to undertake its training courses.
- 1.11 Reasonable adjustment refers to measures or actions taken to making appropriate adjustments to assessment processes whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment outcome.
- 1.12 Students are required to attend scheduled classes. However, where special circumstances make this impossible the student is required to notify The Centre of Excellence via e-mail or telephone. Where applicable, a medical certificate may be requested to verify reason for non-attendance.
- 1.13 If a student misses a scheduled theory/ practical class/ workshop, it is his or her responsibility to:
  - inform The Centre of Excellence of the absence in advance if known
  - contact their trainer and obtain any materials/ work from the session missed
  - follow-up on work missed as a result of being absent
  - obtain assessment information presented in sessions in his/her absence
  - inform his/her employer of the absence (if undertaking workplace delivery/ work placement)
- 1.14 The Centre of Excellence does not charge students a fee for accessing the internal support services or arranging access to external support services identified in this policy and procedure. External support services may charge the student to access their services. E.g. an external welfare counsellor.
- 1.15 The Director of Services is responsible for implementing this policy and reviewing its effectiveness.
- 1.16 This policy will be implemented in compliance with the requirements of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Standard 5 and the National code of practice 2018 Standards 6, 8, 9 and 10.

### 2. Student support services information

- 2.1 Course progress & attendance monitoring, student support services information and contacts are provided to all students via the International student handbook.
- 2.2 International students can have access to the International student handbook pre-enrolment from the website. The handbook includes information on services, courses, rights and responsibilities.
- 2.3 The enrolment process is outlined in the International student handbook. Students are encouraged to seek assistance with any part of this process and to contact The Centre of Excellence with questions.
- 2.4 All students are provided with an orientation pre-course commencement. The International student handbook is reviewed during orientation. Students complete the orientation checklist.
- 2.5 Students are encouraged to contact their trainer or other staff at any time during their course if they have any questions, or issues or are experiencing difficulties impacting their studies.
- 2.6 Students are also provided access to their trainers outside of class time if they require academic, attendance, course progress advice. Each class is provided with their trainer(s) email addresses. Students can also arrange times to meet their trainer to access study support in the first instance.

The Student support officer is also available to facilitate students accessing academic support and advice.

- 2.7 Students who are experiencing personal/welfare issues that are affecting their attendance and/ or course progress can contact the Student support officer at any time during their course. The Student support officer will attempt to assist the student where feasible by:
  - Providing information on what types of support are available, the contact person and how to access the support
  - Providing students with an opportunity to access staff and outline their issue
  - Provide advice to students on how to address the issue
  - Support the student in dealing with the issue
- 2.8 The Student support officer can provide advice and support to international students on the follow types of matters:
  - Finding a job and accommodation and related matters
  - Traveling to or from the College
  - Finding cultural foods
  - Provide students support and advice to International students on how to adjust to living and studying in Australia
  - Course and career progress
  - Applying for future courses
  - College administrative processes
  - Recreational activities
  - Accessing support services
  - Accessing legal services, emergency and routine health services
  - Opening a bank account
  - Overseas Student Health Cover
  - Completing forms and other documentation
  - Understanding and accessing The Centre of Excellence support services/ processes e.g. Complaints and appeals process.
  - Course progress and Attendance matters
  - Accessing information on employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.

2.9 The Student support officer can also provide and/ or arrange English language/ academic support and advice to all students including but not limited to:

- Study support,
- English language support
- Managing study load
- Helping students adjust to the learning and assessment system
- Homework issues
- Reviewing learner materials with the student
- Liaising with trainers to arrange the provision of support e.g. extra tuition, materials, exercises, amendments to timetables
- Arranging access to supplementary reference materials
- Arranging for supplementary exercises to develop understanding
- Arranging access to computers
- Arranging access to modified resources
- Liaising with assessors to provide opportunities to re-attempt assessments
- Liaising with assessors for assessment deadlines to be adjusted
- Providing guidance with organisation/time management skills
- Negotiating a plan with the student to enable completion of tasks
- Arranging for the course duration to be extended
- Arranging catch up classes during non-scheduled class time and/ or holidays
- Arranging adjustments to the students' timetable and/ or course schedule
- Providing opportunities to undertake additional units to catch up
- Providing guidance with organisation/ time management skills
- Negotiating a plan with the student to enable completion of tasks
- Providing and/ or arranging English language support
- Referral to external support services

2.10 Any student who is experiencing personal/ welfare issues that require counselling can access The Centre of Excellence external welfare counsellor. The Student support officer or Academic Coordinator can arrange this.

2.11 Psychology Melbourne will provide student welfare services to The Centre of Excellence students who are referred from The Centre of Excellence. The Centre of Excellence will liaise with the student and Psychology Melbourne to facilitate the arrangement and provision of counselling services.

2.12 Psychology Melbourne will provide counselling for personal/ welfare issues where it has been identified by the student and/ or The Centre of Excellence that the student requires access to counselling services.

2.13 Psychology Melbourne can provide personal/ welfare counselling, support and advice to students including but not limited to:

- If the student is encountering anxiety/ depression or displaying symptoms of mental health issues
- If the student is experiencing significant difficulties with adjusting to Australia and/ or life without their family support network
- If the student has personal issues around relationships, or issues with members of their family that are subsequently negatively impacting the student.
- If the student has issues with drugs or alcohol or some other form of dependency.

- Other types of personal welfare issues that require access to a counsellor
- 2.14 If Psychology Melbourne is not able to provide sufficient support to fully address a particular issue, they will be able to refer students to an appropriate service. Again, The Centre of Excellence will liaise with the student, Psychology Melbourne and support service to facilitate the arrangement and provision of a particular service.
  - 2.15 The Centre of Excellence will pay for the cost of the counselling services provided by Psychology Melbourne.

### 3. Students with specific learning needs

- 3.1 The Centre of Excellence provides access and equity to students with specific learning needs.
- 3.2 The Centre of Excellence assesses student learning needs during enrolment.
- 3.3 The Centre of Excellence assesses the information supplied during the enrolment process to identify student learning needs and assess whether the course applied for is suitable in addressing the learner's needs.
- 3.4 If specific learner needs are identified during the Enrolment process, an assessment of whether The Centre of Excellence can internally support these needs is made and if appropriate learning support mechanisms are implemented. Further investigation may be required at this stage.
- 3.5 If The Centre of Excellence cannot internally support the specific learner needs identified during the Enrolment process then the student may be referred to an external organisation for support. If the external organisation can support the student to successfully complete their course then arrangements are negotiated, documented and implemented.
- 3.6 The nature of some learning needs may require the student to access external support services and then on satisfactorily addressing their learner needs, re-apply for the course. E.g. where specific language, literacy and numeracy issues are identified during the enrolment process or the student does not satisfy the entry requirements due to their learner needs. E.g. low English proficiency levels.
- 3.7 Learning support arrangements are negotiated, documented, implemented and reviewed to ascertain the effectiveness of the arrangements in supporting the student's needs. Remedial action will be negotiated and implemented where appropriate.
- 3.8 As special needs extend to more than physical or learning difficulties, our trainers also consider the best approach when dealing with candidates with needs such as low literacy, lack of confidence or non-English speaking background.
- 3.9 The Centre of Excellence trainers take special needs into consideration from the planning stage onwards and adopt particular delivery and assessment methods as appropriate. Depending on any specification given in the standards, the trainer may be able to accept alternative evidence from a candidate with special needs.
- 3.10 The Centre of Excellence staff contact other RTO's or our RTO consultant or external support services for assistance and guidance, as required.
- 3.11 In making arrangements for students with special learning needs all meeting minutes, support arrangements, advice and amended delivery/ assessment material is stored in the student file.  
  
Course delivery methodologies, equipment, materials and resources may be amended or new ones sourced to cater for individuals' specific learner needs.
- 3.12 The Centre of Excellence management works with trainers/ assessors and external industry specialists (if required) to customise teaching and assessment resources, materials and equipment to address students specific learning needs.
- 3.13 The Centre of Excellence interacts with the industry to keep abreast of current industry practice. The Centre of Excellence has forums and mechanisms to process information received and implements actions to maintain currency of practice. This extends to identifying current industry practices, resources, equipment and materials to appropriately support students with specific learning needs.
- 3.14 The Centre of Excellence staff contact other RTO's or our RTO consultant or external support services for assistance and guidance, as required.
- 3.15 In making arrangements for students with special learning needs all meeting minutes, support arrangements, advice and amended delivery/ assessment material is stored in the student file.
- 3.16 The student is kept fully informed of the process at all times by the Academic Coordinator.

#### 4. Monitoring course progress

- 4.1 The Centre of Excellence monitors course progress and intervenes to support students complete their course within the scheduled duration.
- 4.2 Trainers/ assessors regularly discuss course progress with students on an individual basis.
- 4.3 Trainers/ assessors provide written feedback to students about their assessment tasks within two weeks of submission of tasks.
- 4.4 All students are provided access to any of the support services identified in this policy and procedure to support them in successfully completing the course within the scheduled duration.
- 4.5 International students' course progress is monitored regularly during and at the end of each study period.
- 4.6 International students identified as 'at risk' or 'at high risk' of not achieving satisfactory course progress are supported in accordance with the Course progress policy and procedure.

#### 5. Monitoring attendance

- 5.1 It is a requirement for all students to attend all scheduled classes at the times indicated.
- 5.2 Training staff record student attendance at each session. The Centre of Excellence records, monitors and supports students to attend all classes.
- 5.3 International students with attendance patterns that impact their course progress are identified, counselled and placed on an intervention strategy in accordance with the Course progress policy and procedure.
- 5.4 All students are provided access to any of the support services identified in this policy and procedure to support them successfully completing the course within the scheduled duration.

#### 6. Monitoring participation

- 6.1 A student participates by completing learning activities, course work, self-directed/ independent study activities and assessment tasks. Training staff monitor student participation.
- 6.2 Where relevant, The Centre of Excellence trainers will monitor students' participation through submitting learning, formative and summative assessment tasks.
- 6.2 It is a requirement for students to participate in their course.
- 6.3 The Centre of Excellence monitors students' participation and provides appropriate support to ensure successful completion within the scheduled course duration.

#### 7. Intervention strategies

- 7.1 Students are sent a letter informing them of being identified as 'at risk' of failing to complete their course within the scheduled duration and/ or being 'at risk' of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress.
- 7.2 Intervention meetings are arranged. The purpose of the intervention meeting is to identify the underlying reasons for the unsatisfactory course progress and initiate corrective action.
- 7.3 Intervention action is initiated at this meeting. An intervention plan is negotiated, agreed and documented.
- 7.4 Depending on the underlying reasons affecting the student's course progress, English language and/ or academic and/ or personal/ welfare support services will be offered.
- 7.5 Intervention strategies are implemented in accordance with the Course progress, Completion within scheduled duration and Defer, suspend and cancel enrolment policies and procedures.

#### 8. Academic/ English language intervention support

- 8.1 If the underlying reasons for a student's unsatisfactory course progress are in relation to academic/ English language issues, The Centre of Excellence will attempt to assist the student where feasible by providing access to the support services identified in clause 2.9 of this policy and procedure.

- 8.2 If the student has academic/ English language issues that The Centre of Excellence staff cannot address then the student may be referred to external organisations for assistance where feasible.
- 8.3 Academic/ English language intervention strategies are implemented in accordance with the Course progress policy and Monitoring attendance policy and procedure.

#### 9. Personal/ welfare intervention support

- 9.1 If the underlying reasons for a student's unsatisfactory course progress relate to personal/ welfare issues, The Centre of Excellence will refer the student to the Student support officer or the external welfare counsellor.
- 9.2 If the student has personal issues that do not require counselling support services, the Student support officer will provide support to the student. E.g. provide accommodation advice, settling into Melbourne, advice on how to find a job, accessing health care.
- 9.3 If the student has personal / welfare issues that require access to a counselor, The Centre of Excellence will arrange for the student to visit the external student support counsellor – Psychology Melbourne <https://www.psychologymelbourne.com.au>.
- 9.4 Personal/ welfare intervention strategies are implemented in accordance with the Course progress and/ or monitoring attendance policy and procedure.
- 9.5 Students are encouraged to report any issues that impacts their learning, safety or personal welfare while attending the College. The College will support the student address the issue and/ or take action to prevent the student's wellbeing being impacted by the issue. Students can report issue in person to the Academic Coordinator or via email.
- 9.6 Students should contact the nearest member of staff if:
- feel threatened or unsafe at any time
  - have concerns about someone else's behaviour
  - are worried about someone harming themselves or someone else
  - receive unwanted attention or communications
- 9.7 Students must not approach another person who is concerning you with their behaviour. Contact the nearest member of staff.
- 9.8 Members of staff who are approached by a student regarding a safety matter must immediately report the situation to the Director of Studies or CEO. The CEO or Director of Studies will implement action to protect the safety of students and staff.
- 9.8 Students are also entitled to lodge a complaint about any issue impacting their learning, safety or personal welfare while attending the College. Complaints can be lodged in accordance with the Student Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure. Copies of the Student Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure and form can be accessed via email.

#### 10. Reporting international students to (Department of Home Affairs) DHA

- 10.1 The purpose of this, the Course progress and Monitoring Attendance policies and procedures are to support international students to maintain satisfactory course progress and successfully complete their course within the scheduled duration.
- 10.2 The Centre of Excellence and international students are required to comply with the National code of practice 2018 part B standard 8. Students who do not maintain satisfactory course progress be reported to the DHA/ DoE in accordance with these legislative requirements.
- 10.3 Within 10 working days of the completion of a study period the Academic Coordinator will review the course progress of international students and identify those students who have failed 50% or more units of competence in two consecutive study periods.
- 10.4 International students who have failed (deemed NYC) in 50% or more units of competence in two consecutive study periods are reported to the Department of Home Affairs (DHA)/ Department of Education (DoE) in accordance with the Course progress policy and procedure.

- 10.5 Compassionate and compelling circumstances are considered when implementing the Monitoring Attendance and Course progress policies and procedures.

## 11. Pathway advice and support

- 11.1 International students who do not attain the level of English proficiency to satisfy The Centre of Excellence or other provider's course entry requirements are provided advice on how to achieve the required level. This will include details on course English language entry requirements and an approximate number of weeks to study English language to address these requirements. (it should be noted that the number of weeks can vary with student aptitude and commitment).
- 11.2 Advice is provided to students on further study pathways from courses and possible employment opportunities. The Centre of Excellence will never provide students guarantees of securing employment or study opportunities post course completion. (unless formal articulation arrangements are in place between The Centre of Excellence and another Australian Vocational Education & Training or Higher education provider).
- 11.3 If a student wishes to gain education and employment pathway advice for courses not on The Centre of Excellence Scope of registration the Student support officer will liaise with an education provider who delivers the relevant course/s and facilitate the student accessing the required information.

## 12 Recreational activities

- 12.1 The Centre of Excellence arranges sports/ recreational activities for students throughout the year.
- 12.2 Examples of sports and recreational activities may include:
- Sports events – Tennis, cricket, AFL, Melbourne Cup
  - Festivals – Local street music, arts and food festivals
  - Trips to local attractions e.g. Victoria Market, Federation square, museums, galleries
  - Tour of Melbourne CBD and surrounds
  - Movies – in College and/ or at the cinema
  - Arranging sports activities – swimming, tennis, badminton, cricket, soccer
  - Cultural food nights in The Centre of Excellence
- 12.3 A list of activities is produced and displayed on the notice boards at the training facility.
- 12.4 Students are made aware of the availability of activities during orientation.
- 12.5 The Student support officer prepares the activities schedule and are the point of contact for students.
- 12.6 Attendance at most events is free apart from those that require an entrance fee to be paid e.g. attending sporting events.

## 13 Accommodation services

- 13.1 The Centre of Excellence assists students to find accommodation suitable for their requirements prior to their arrival in Melbourne by providing information in the International student handbook.
- 13.2 Information on types of accommodation and approximate costs is provided along with contact details.
- 13.3 Students encountering issues with their accommodation and/ or requiring support finding alternative accommodation post arrival can contact the Student support officer.
- 13.4 The Student support officer is able to refer students to appropriate accommodation services and are available to discuss any issues or concerns a student may have with their current accommodation arrangements.
- 13.5 All students are encouraged to have accommodation organised prior to arrival in Australia.
- 13.6 No fee is charged for accommodation support. External organisations accessed by students may charge a fee for their services.

**Documents to be employed when implementing this policy and procedure:**

- International student handbook
- Orientation documentation
- Training and assessment materials
- Training and assessment strategies
- Staff induction documentation
- Marketing materials
- Meeting agendas & minutes
- Intervention recording form
- Training and assessment policy & procedure
- Enrolment policy & procedure
- Access & equity policy and procedure
- Complaints and appeals policy and procedure
- Critical incident policy and procedure
- Course progress policy and procedure
- Monitoring Attendance policy and procedure
- Completion within scheduled duration policy and procedure
- Defer, suspend or cancel policy and procedure
- Student files
- Education agent documentation