

STUDENT SUPPORT AND SERVICES POLICY

Approving authority	Academic Board (AB)
Purpose	This policy has been developed to ensure that the necessary services, staff and resources are maintained to support students, consistent with the values of the Institute, in achieving their learning goals and achieving satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.
Responsible Officer	Academic Dean and Head of Student Services (currently the Student Service & Administration Coordinator)
Next scheduled review	November 2028
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated documents	Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure Academic Progress Policy and Procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Academic Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure Assessment Policy and Procedure Critical Incident Policy and Procedure Completion within Expected Duration Policy and Procedure Credit Transfer and Articulation Policy and Procedure Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling a Student's Enrolment Policy and Procedure Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure English Language Support Policy Professional staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure Social Media (Students) Policy and Procedure Special Consideration Policy and Procedure Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure Student Consultation Policy and Procedure Student Feedback Policy and Procedure Student Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy and Procedure (Student) Student Support and Services Procedure Emergency Management plan

1. PRINCIPLES

The Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as the “Institute”) seeks to provide the necessary services, staff and resources to support students in achieving their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.

The Institute provides support to students to assist all students in achieving their full potential. The Institute offers comprehensive support services to help all new students to adjust to studying and for international students to adjust to living in Australia.

This is consistent with the Mission and Values of the Institute, the Threshold Standards and the National Code, which specifies that providers are responsible for providing access to certain services to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of their overseas students.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Institute staff and all current and prospective students.

3. DEFINITIONS

Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)

The Confirmation of Enrolment (also called a CoE) is an official statement from the Institute via PRISMS that lists the student’s details, course and the start and end dates of the course.

The Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) is an official document issued to international students by universities and other education providers in Australia. It confirms that the student has accepted a place in a course and has paid required tuition fees and Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). The COE is required by the Department of Home Affairs for the purpose of issuing a student visa.

Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student’s course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend class;
- bereavement for the death of close family members such as parents or grandparents (documented evidence must be provided);
- serious illness, accident or family incident which requires immediate travel which has impacted the student’s studies;
- the inability to begin study on the course commencement date stated on the CoE due to delay in receiving a student visa if relevant;
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their immediate travel and this has impacted on the student’s studies;
- a traumatic experience supported by police or psychologist’s reports which could include but is not limited to:

- involvement in or witnessing of an accident; or
 - a crime committed against the student; or
 - the student being a witness to a crime and this has impacted on the student.
- where the Institute was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit.

Notes:

- *misreading the examination timetable, examination anxiety or returning home will not be accepted as Compassionate and Compelling circumstances;*
- *religious or faith-based issues are not in themselves grounds for special consideration. However, they may be used in support of an application that meets the Compassionate and Compelling circumstances set out above.*

Critical Incident

A critical incident is defined as ‘a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury’. It includes but is not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm. Non-life-threatening events can be classed as critical incidents.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- Critical illness/serious injuries/medical emergencies involving a student or staff;
- unexpected Student/staff death;
- missing students;
- severe oral, written or psychological aggression;
- Traumatic events/threat/allegation that affect students;
 - Sexual assault
 - Physical and/or sexual abuse
 - Domestic violence
 - Mental Health Crisis
 - Drug/alcohol abuse
- natural disaster
- riot; fire/explosion with injuries or significant damage on campus;
- campus disturbance/riot

Off-Campus Students

Students who are studying online or externally.

Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS)

Means the Provider Registration and International Students Management System (the electronic system that holds CRICOS and the electronic confirmation of enrolment).

4. POLICY

- 4.1 The Institute is committed to providing appropriate and sufficient support services to students to give them every opportunity to achieve their learning goals, to achieve satisfactory progress towards

meeting the learning outcomes of the course and, for overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia.

- 4.2 Support will be tailored as much as possible to meet individual and cohort needs.
- 4.3 The Institute offers either directly or through a third-party numerous support options for students to assist in successful completion of their unit/units of study. Support provided includes:
- Arrival, orientation and transition
 - General and Social
 - IT
 - Living and Accommodation
 - Academic and Learning, including assessment guides and academic literacy workshops
 - Library services
 - Tailored support for students with special needs
 - Tailored support for students at risk of making unsatisfactory academic progress
 - Safety, Health and Wellbeing, including mental health
 - Specific support during emergency crisis and critical incidents
 - Liaison and Advocacy
- 4.4 The Institute ensures that students receive the services detailed in their agreements, including academic and welfare support services.
- 4.5 The Institute provides a safe environment for all students, both on campus and online. Amenities, facilities and infrastructure on campus are accessible to all students, including those with special accessibility needs.
- 4.6 The Institute ensures that all students are provided with a comprehensive and current orientation program that is tailored to the needs of the student cohort and provides access to information about:
- Living and studying in Australia, including safety on campus and while living in Australia
 - Course requirements
 - Available support services and how to access such services
- 4.7 The Institute will publish this policy as well as more information regarding support for student on its website and other internal sites as deemed appropriate. Students are also advised that information on student support and how to access the support services is also available in the ***Student Handbook*** and Student Learning System (Moodle).
- 4.8 The Institute is committed to offering timely and reasonable support to students, irrespective of their place or mode of study, at no additional cost to them. All students who request support will have their needs considered individually, taking into account their specific context and all student difficulties are taken seriously. The nature and extent of support provided will be informed by the needs of individual student and overall student cohort, requirements of the course and modes of study.
- 4.9 Domestic students who request access to support services before the census date for their unit of study will be informed, at the time they make that request, that the census date is the date they will incur a FEE-HELP debt. The Institute will make specific effort to ensure support is available to

students in a timely manner, and if practical to do so, before the census date. Staff who provide the support services will be informed of the census dates published on Moodle.

- 4.10 The Institute will make specific efforts to ensure the wellbeing of students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups as set out in the *Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure*.
- 4.11 The *Critical Incident Policy and Procedure* is in place to assist staff and students to manage critical incidents.
- 4.12 The Institute ensures that there are sufficient staff, in addition to academic staff, to support and advise overseas students who request assistance. The Institute designates the Head of Student Services, who is supported by the Student Services team, to be the official point of contact for overseas students. The Student Services team are provided with access to up-to-date details of the Institute's support services.
- 4.13 The Institute is committed to regularly reviewing the appropriateness and adequacy of the services provided to the students.
- 4.14 The provision of student support is a joint responsibility of Student Services staff and the Academic staff.
- 4.15 All staff who interact directly with overseas students must be made aware of the Institute's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from these obligations as set out in the *Academic Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure* and *Professional Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure*.

Academic Support and Students at Risk

- 4.16 The *Academic Progress Policy and Procedure* sets out how the Institute identifies, assess, support and manages Students 'at risk' of unsatisfactory course progress.
- 4.17 The Institute will communicate with students identified as at risk to ensure that they are aware of support available to assist them in successfully completing their units/units of study.

Analysis of Student Need and Review of Student Support

- 4.18 The Institute is committed to the provision of student support staff (FTE)/student ratio of 1:200.
- 4.19 While objective number such as staff/student ratios are useful as indicators of the student experience, these are not definitive. Student feedback will be used as a measure to review the adequacy and quality of student support.
- 4.20 The Institute will survey students to collect feedback about student support services as set out in the *Student Feedback Policy and Procedure*.

Student records

- 4.21 Student support records will be maintained as set out in the Records Management Policy and Procedure.

Reporting and Monitoring

- 4.22 The Education Committee and the Academic Board will receive reports that include analysis of student feedback about the Institute's support services as set out in the ***Student Feedback Policy and Procedure***.
- 4.23 An annual report on the Institute's **Support for Students** must be presented to the Academic Board at the end of each year as it is required before 1 March the subsequent year. The Support for Students Report is provided to the Department of Education against the Support for Students Policy reporting requirements in subsection 49B(1) of the *Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023*.
- The report is due for submission to the department on or before 1 March annually.
 - The reporting period is from 1 January to 31 December annually.
 - De-identified responses must be provided.
 - Qualitative responses must be provided. A higher education provider may include quantitative information where applicable.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks the policy will be:

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team (EMT) on development or review, prior to approval by Governing Board, or the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every 5 years from the date of approval (if not earlier).
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requirement(s) and/or other legislation/regulations.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed Responsible officer(s) of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Bond University, Student Support Policy, 2020 ([COR401_0.pdf \(bond.edu.au\)](#))
- Federation University, Student Support and Orientation for International Students Guidelines, June 2023 ([Student Support and Orientation for International Students Guidelines \(federation.edu.au\)](#))
- Melbourne Institute of Technology, Student Welfare and Support Policy and Procedure, 2019 ([StudentWelfareAndSupportPolicyAndProcedure-202107.pdf \(mit.edu.au\)](#))

- Sydney Institute of Higher Education, Student Welfare Policy, 2020 ([student-welfare-policy-8672.pdf \(sydneyinstitute.edu.au\)](#))
- University of Divinity, Student Support Policy, 2022 ([Student-Support-Services-Policy.pdf \(divinity.edu.au\)](#))
- University of Southern Queensland, Student Advice, Student Welfare and Pastoral Support Policy and Procedure, 2021 ([Student Advice, Student Welfare and Pastoral Support Policy and Procedure - University of Southern Queensland \(usq.edu.au\)](#))
- UTS, Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy, 2023, and ESOS Compliance Policy, 2022 ([Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy | University of Technology Sydney \(uts.edu.au\)](#) and [ESOS Compliance Policy | University of Technology Sydney \(uts.edu.au\)](#))
- TEQSA, Guidance note: Wellbeing and safety, Version 1.2, 2018
- TEQSA, Good Practice Note: Improving retention and completion of students in Australian higher education, 2020 ([Good Practice Note: Improving retention and completion of students in Australian higher education \(teqsa.gov.au\)](#))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	January 2014	Initial issue	AB
2.0	June 2018	Internal review	AB
2.1	July 2022	Internal review – minor amendments	EMT
3.0	April 2023	Internal review	AB
4.0	September 2023	Internal review	AB
5.0	May 2024	To meet new Support for students policy requirements under section 19-43 of HESA	AB
5.1	August 2025	Internal Review – Organisational changes and minor edits	AB
5.2	November 2025	Internal Review – Minor changes to reflect current services	AB
5.3	February 2026	Internal Review to remove under 18 student obligations after change in policy	EMT

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
Related legislation/ regulation/standard		Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code) Standards 6 and 8 Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2023 (HEP Guidelines)	