

## **POL-ENR-05 Overseas Student Support Services Policy**

### **GOVERNANCE**

National Code 2018 – Standard 6

ELICOS standards 2018

### **PURPOSE**

To support all overseas students to enable them to maximise the opportunity to achieve their expected learning outcomes through the provision of quality training and support services and orientation.

To achieve this, this policy aims to provide a framework for supporting students in adjusting to study and life in Australia, and to maintain satisfactory progress towards meeting all learning outcomes.

This policy outlines support services available to overseas students as well as how student information on these services is disseminated and how students may access them

### **SCOPE**

All students who study at Ironwood Institute will be provided with the appropriate support from Student Support Officers in relation to study, academic issues, accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

- Ironwood Institute will support the overseas student in adjusting to study and life in Adelaide, South Australia by giving the overseas student information on or access to an age and culturally appropriate orientation program.
- Ironwood Institute will ensure that it has sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the enrolled overseas students. In determining the sufficient level of staff, Ironwood Institute takes into consideration the number of overseas students enrolled, the types of courses being offered and the likely needs of the overseas students.
- Ironwood Institute will also ensure its staff members who interact directly with overseas students are aware of their obligations under the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.
- Ironwood Institute will designate the Student Services and Administration Officer as the official point of contact for overseas students.
- Ironwood Institute will ensure its staff members, who interact directly with overseas students, are aware of the Institute's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.
- Ironwood Institute will give relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to overseas students who request assistance in relation to the services and programs, at no additional cost to the overseas student.
- Ironwood Institute will offer reasonable support to overseas students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the overseas student's place of study or the mode of study of the course, at no additional cost to the overseas student.

- Ironwood Institute will facilitate access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of the course, mode of study and the learning needs of overseas student cohorts.
- Ironwood Institute will have and implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm.
- The Student Support team must update the student management system for each enquiry and all documentation is to be filed in the student's file.
- The Student Support team must ensure that any written response to a student enquiry is documented. Verbal responses will not be accepted as a suitable practice by Ironwood Institute staff.
- Ironwood Institute will maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by Ironwood Institute for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student.
- Ironwood Institute will:
  - take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety.
  - provide information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents.
  - provide overseas students with or refer them to (including electronically) general information on safety.

### Student Welfare

- The Institute will assist students in adjusting to study and life in Australia and achieving their learning goals.
- A Student support is on staff and available at times reasonable for students to access regardless of which shift (day or evening) they are studying at the Institute.
- The Institute ensures that students' personal and cultural backgrounds are considered and wherever possible, accommodated with compassion and understanding.
- The Institute ensures that no student is discriminated against.
- If at any time any staff or even students bring up a reasonable concern about the wellbeing of a student, then the Student support will be informed and may seek to set up a time to counsel the student.
- The Institute will maintain student support staff numbers appropriate to our enrolments.
- The Institute provides an orientation program for all students on their first day at school. This program introduces all student services, both academic and those relating to the students' general welfare.
- Teachers are required to recommend any students that are struggling academically or in terms of their attitude to class to either the Director of Studies or Student support services.
- In many instances, the underlying cause behind a student's lack of academic progress is related to personal issues which may include but is not limited to emotional stress, gambling habits, living arrangements or a physical ailment.
- In these cases, the student services officer seeks to understand the nature of the student's welfare issues.
- If the Student Services Officer feels that the issues can be dealt with easily without the need of specialist external providers such as psychologists, then they seek to do so. These are considered to be "minor issues".
- Where the problems are beyond the capacity of the Student Services Officer to consult with the student, then they are considered to be "significant issues" and the student is referred to the appropriate specialist.
- Student services are not qualified or responsible for students' personal problems, but they do have a duty of care to monitor the student's success in dealing with those issues while they are enrolled at the school.

- In addition to their introduction at the student orientation and the student handbook, the school can refer students to the following services: legal services, emergency and health services, facilities and resources, and complaints and appeals.
- Whenever student services feel that students would benefit from seeking specialist help, those referrals are provided by the Institute to the student at no extra charge.
- The Student Support Officer will maintain up-to-date details of all of the registered providers' contact details for referrals.
- Any time a student is referred to an external provider, the Student Welfare Officer sets a time to follow up with the student and also uses this as a way to monitor the performance of the external specialist.

### Orientation programs

Ironwood Institute offers to its overseas students, support services to help them adjust to study and life in Australia, achieve their learning goals and maintain satisfactory progress in their learning, as Ironwood Institute recognizes that Australia may be a new environment for students, with different laws, culture, and customs.

Ironwood Institute offers an age and culturally appropriate orientation program to its newly enrolled students to help them familiarize with Ironwood's expectations, rules, and facilities, and to introduce the social and cultural norms which overseas students need to be aware of while in Australia. This includes making the program available to late arrivals or overseas students who begin at different entry points.

Ironwood Institute may use verbal and written or electronic formats to deliver information, so that overseas students can both listen and take away material they can refer to later. Orientation is provided to each student at no additional charge to the student.

The orientation program covers the following areas:

- Personal security and safety
- Critical incidents and how they are handled
- Etiquette and laws such as smoking regulations
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Student identification, ISI, Metrocard
- Student portal
- Useful apps for international students
- Fairwork ombudsman
- Get help work desk
- Student accommodation
- Australian currency, banking, and shopping
- Driving rules and licensing, including penalties for drink driving
- Beach safety
- Student code of conduct
- Legal information services
- Library services
- Emergency and health services
- Facilities and resources
- Important dates such as term/study period/semester, breaks and public holiday date
- Complaints and appeals
- Overseas student visa conditions
- Course progress and intervention
- Assessment requirements

- Course deferral, suspension cancel or withdrawn
- Student support services
- Language, literacy, numeracy (LLN)
- Introduction to student contact officer

#### LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

- Students/agents are asked to let the Institute know about any learning difficulties or disabilities on their application form.
- The school does not discriminate against students with learning difficulties or disabilities and will always seek to support students in their learning outcomes.
- Where students don't disclose learning difficulties or disabilities, these usually become obvious to teachers and teachers are to let the Director of Studies and Student Welfare Officer's know.
- As a part of the form, the teacher and the relevant staff devise strategies to help the student succeed as much as is practical.
- The Director of Studies and/or the Student Welfare Officer are to monitor the student's progress on an ongoing basis.

#### Access to educational and support services

Ironwood Institute will provide ongoing access to a range of services, either by providing the service in-house, providing the relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to overseas students who request assistance in relation to the services and programs. While Ironwood does not charge any fee for providing the service or for referrals, the external service provider may charge for the services. Therefore, it is important for overseas students to know if the service provided by third party is paid or free of charge.

Ironwood Institute systematically identifies student support needs and develops strategies to make support available where gaps are identified. Ironwood Institute will offer reasonable support to overseas students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes, irrespective of the overseas student's place of study or the mode of study of the course.

Services may include but are not limited to the following:

- Pre-enrolment materials
- Career services or referrals
- Study support and study skills programs, English, and academic support services, tutoring support
- Language, literacy, and numeracy (LLN) programs or referrals to these programs
- Equipment, resources and/or programs to increase access for learners with disabilities and other learners in accordance with access and equity
- Learning resource centres
- Counselling or mediation services or referrals to these services
- Flexible scheduling and delivery of training and assessment
- Information and communication technology support
- Learning materials in alternative formats
- Contextualised learner and assessment programs
- Housing and tenancy services.
- Financial support services; and
- Health and disability services

### Critical incidents

The National Code defines a critical incident as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear, or injury'. This does not include serious academic misconduct.

Ironwood Institute has a documented policy and procedure for managing critical incidents that could affect an overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to the following incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm.

- missing students.
- severe verbal or psychological aggression.
- death,
- serious injury or any threat of these.
- natural disaster.
- issues such as domestic violence, physical, sexual, or other abuse; and
- other non-life-threatening events.

The policy includes procedures to follow in the event of a critical incident, and includes contact information for the police, the Department of Home Affairs, the overseas student's family, and any other relevant organisations that may be able to assist in such a situation, for example community organisations or phone counselling services.

Ironwood Institute will take appropriate steps to immediately address the critical incident and maintain Information Privacy Principles and legislation and other regulatory requirements.

Ironwood Institute will maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by Ironwood Institute for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student under the ESOS Act.

Refer to the Ironwood Institute Critical Incident policy and procedures for detailed information.

### Provision of Information

Assistance shall be provided to all students, regardless of a student's place of study, to access study support and welfare-related services, both at orientation and throughout their time as a student.

- Electronic methods of disseminating such information include the Ironwood Institute website, emails, SMS.
- Written formats methods of disseminating such information include the student handbook, noticeboard, newsletters or a wallet-sized card with useful numbers.
- Students have the right to privacy and as such all staff, policies and practices must consciously safeguard the student's privacy and confidentiality to satisfy the Privacy Act.

### Safety and personal security

Ironwood Institute is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure a safe, secure, and beneficial environment is maintained for overseas students, both on campus and at practical training.

Detailed information will be provided to all overseas students about how to seek assistance for, and to report any incidents (including critical incidents), which may significantly impact upon their wellbeing.

Ironwood Institute will provide overseas students with general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia or refer them to such information as appropriate (including electronically).

## ACCOMMODATION

- The Institute does not facilitate any homestay arrangements directly however can provide general advice and information about accommodation options
- The Institute requires students to indicate their living arrangements prior to the date of commencement and inform the Institute of any change of their address within one week.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**CEO/Delegate** - for overall responsibility

**Student Support Officer** - Day to day responsibility for the management of student welfare support services.

Ironwood Institute support team available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 52 weeks a year.

Navtej Bal	CEO	+61 8 8227 0300	+61 433 316 132
Hank Duyverman	Director of Studies/ Student Support	+61 8 8227 0300	+61 401 767 872

## RELATED LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
- The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018, known as 'the National Code 2018'
- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- ELICOS Standards 2018

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