Australian Leading Institute of Technology

RTO Code: 45156

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No.3.1.5: Student Support & Welfare Services Policy and Procedure

This policy relates to:	
Registration Manager	Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)
Conditions of Registration	VET Quality Framework (VQF)
Codes and Standards	ESOS National Code 2018 – Standard: 2.1.10; 5.3; 5.3.1; 5.3.4; 6.1; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6; 7.3.2; 10.2.4; Standards for RTOs 2015 – Standard: 1.3(b); 1.3(c); 1.3(d); 1.7;
Legislation or other requirements	National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2012

Purpose

This policy has been developed and implemented to ensure that ALIT is committed to provide care and support for students, and to promote a positive learning environment for all.

Objective

ALIT will ensure that all students feel safe and supported and contribute in a positive manner to the ALIT community.

Scope

This policy will apply to all current, prospective and previous students, staff and other ALIT stakeholders.

Policy

Overseas student support services

- ALIT must support the overseas student in adjusting to study and life in Australia by giving the overseas student information on or access to an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that provides information about:

    o support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia

    o English language and study assistance programs

    o emergency and health services

    o ALIT's facilities and resources

    o complaints and appeals processes

    o requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate

    o the support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia

    o services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman.

- ALIT must give relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to overseas students who require assistance in relation to services and programs, at no additional cost to the student

- ALIT must facilitate access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of the course, mode of study and the learning needs of overseas student cohorts, including having and implementing documented processes for supporting and maintaining contact with overseas students undertaking online or distance units of study.

- ALIT must designate a member or members of its staff to be the official point of contact for its overseas students. The student contact officer or officers must have access to up-to-date details of the ALIT's support services.

- ALIT must have sufficient student support personnel to meet the needs of the overseas students enrolled

- ALIT must ensure its staff members who interact directly with overseas students are aware of the ALIT's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.

- The ALIT must implement a documented process for managing critical incidents that could affect the student's ability to undertake or complete a course. Incidents may include but are not limited to physical and psychological harm.

  o ALIT must maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the ALIT for a at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student

- ALIT must:

  o 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

  o Provide information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts their wellbeing, including critical incidents

  o Provide overseas students with or refer them to (including electronically) general information on safety or awareness relevant to life in Australia.

Students under the age of 18 – ALIT currently do not enrol students under the age of 18 years of age.

Where ALIT enrols a student, who is under 18 years of age, it must meet the Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation or other regulatory requirements relating to child welfare and protection appropriate to the jurisdiction(s) in which it operates.

ALIT must ensure students under 18 years of age are given age and culturally appropriate information on:
- who to contact in emergency situations, including contact numbers of a nominated staff member and/or service provider to the ALIT.
- seeking assistance and reporting any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse.

Where ALIT takes on responsibility under relevant regulations for approving the accommodation, support, and general welfare arrangements (but not including guardianship, which is a legal relationship not able to be created or entered into by the ALIT) for a student under the age of 18, the ALIT must:

- present the dates for which ALIT accepts responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements and advise Department of Human Affairs (DOHA), which is responsible for administering the Migration Regulations, of the dates in the form required by that department
- ensure any adults involved in or providing accommodation and welfare arrangements to the student have all working with children clearances (or equivalent) appropriate to the jurisdiction(s) in which ALIT operates
- have and implement documented processes for verifying that the student's accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and needs:
  - prior to the accommodation being approved
  - at least every six months thereafter
- have a process implemented in their policies for managing emergency situations and situations where welfare arrangements are disrupted for students under 18 years
- maintain current records of the student's contact details, including the contact details of the student's parent(s), legal guardian or any adult nominated for responsibility of the student's welfare
- advise Department of Human Affairs (DOHA) in the form required by that department:
  - as soon as practicable if the student will be cared for by a parent or nominated relative approved by Department of Human Affairs (DOHA) and a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) is no longer required
  - within 24 hours if the ALIT is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements
- have documented processes for selecting, screening and monitoring any third parties engaged by the ALIT to organise and assess welfare and accommodation arrangements

Where or if the ALIT is no longer able to approve the welfare arrangements of a student, the ALIT must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the student's parents or legal guardians are notified immediately.

If the ALIT is unable to contact a student and has concerns for the student's welfare, the ALIT must make all reasonable efforts to locate the student, including notifying the police and any other relevant Commonwealth, state or territory agencies as soon as practicable.

In the case that the ALIT undertakes the responsibility (under the Migration Regulations) for approving welfare arrangements, and the ALIT suspends or cancels the enrolment of the international student, the ALIT must continue to approve the welfare arrangements for that student until any of the following applies:

- the student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another ALIT
- care of the student by a parent or nominated relative is approved by Immigration
- the student leaves Australia
- the ALIT has notified Immigration that it is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements or that it has taken the required action after not being able to contact the student

In the case that the ALIT enrols a student under 18 years of age who has existing welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider, the receiving ALIT must:

- negotiate the transfer date for welfare arrangements with the releasing ALIT to ensure there is no gap
- inform the student of their visa obligation to maintain their current welfare arrangements until the transfer date, or have alternate arrangements approved or return to their home country until the new approved welfare arrangements take effect

Guidelines
General

- The services will be documented in the Student Handbook which is made available to every student during the Orientation Program. Students will be asked to sign the Student Orientation Attendance Form at that time.

- Student Services are designed to help all students, but particularly international students who are living and studying in Australia.

- The Student Services Officer (SSO) is always available for students to provide guidance and advice on both academic and personal issues. The SSO may also refer students to other professional and confidential advisory services in specialist areas such as legal, private counselling and support agencies.

Types of Service available

- Student Support Services/ Welfare Officer provide services which address the mental, physical, social and spiritual well-being of students. These services may include, through direct provision or referral, information/advice about: accommodation, counselling, crisis services, disabilities and equity issues, financial matters, legal issues, medical issues, mental health, peer mentoring,

programs promoting social interaction, religious and spiritual matters, and stress management. *Note: cancelling and mental health related concerns will be directed to relevant third parties.*

- A dedicated SSO will communicate effectively with a wide range of people utilising a non-judgmental attitude and will deal with conflict in stressful situations with a commitment to human rights and social justice.

- Counselling services and other external referrals will be arranged if deemed appropriate by the Student Support Officer. There is no fee attached to this welfare support and referral service. Any cost charged by the external services will be paid by the students.

- All the support services also discussed and explained in the orientation session. All the student must attain the orientation session.

Meeting Course Requirements and Attendance Requirements

- ALIT provides best-practice student academic support and intervention to optimise achievement of learning outcomes as well as satisfy the provisions of Standard 8 of the *ESOS National Code 2018*.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Support

- All students are provided with an LLN test at the beginning of any course at ALIT. If a student is found to need additional literacy and numeracy (LLN) support or if the LLN deficiency clearly inhibits the student's ability to complete their course, they may be advised to defer their course and to enrol in a suitable English course, and after successful completion, to resume their original course of studies.

- SIT provide LLN support as required based in the LLN test. LLN support will be provided by the SIT trainers.

- If ALIT cannot provide a course suitable to properly assist the student, he/she will be referred to an organisation that can assist in improving their skills. On attaining proficiency, they may then resume or reapply to ALIT.

Reasonable Adjustment

- The Disability Discrimination Act uses the principle of reasonable adjustment, which is also called reasonable accommodation, to ensure that people with disabilities are treated equally. This means that 'reasonable adjustments' must be made wherever possible to meet the needs of a student with a disability.

- ALIT acknowledges the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005, and its obligation as an education and training provider to support the rights of students with a disability to participate in educational courses and programs on the same basis as students without a disability.

- Students who wish to apply for adjustments to teaching or assessment methods on the basis of a disability should contact the CEO and bring supporting documents for consideration of disability (e.g. a letter from your treating professional).

- Reasonable adjustments to training and assessment methods are made using the following principles:
    - Students with disabilities are subject to the standard rules and policy on assessment and teaching methods, and assessment is only varied where a student can demonstrate with appropriate documentation that he/she is disadvantaged because of disability.

    - The nature of reasonable adjustments are such that they are designed to minimise the disadvantage experienced by students with disabilities, rather than provide students with a competitive advantage.

    - Any adjustments to assessment for a student with a disability are to be made in such a way as to ensure that the fundamental nature of the assessment remains the same i.e. student with disabilities are still required to demonstrate a pre-determined level of ability in relation to essential competency requirements.

        The Student Services Officers will have access to the latest ESOS framework updates and changes. ALIT will ensure that the SSO and all the staff members who are involved with the students are aware of ALIT's obligations under the ESOS Framework and the

potential implications for students arising from the exercise of these obligations are made aware during the Induction and will be asked to confirm their knowledge of ESOS by signing off on the induction checklist.

Student Hardship

The requirements of study may present some students with hardship, due to economic, social, or other difficulties. Where genuine hardship exists, a student may seek permission to review their workload or other related matters.

To make a request, a student will be required to provide a letter to the Student Support Officer describing the reason for their hardship. It is essential to include evidence supporting a claim of hardship, for example:

- Financial hardship: Financial documents, pay slips or bank statements which indicate financial status;
- Medical grounds: Medical certificates stating nature of condition, duration;
- Family Situation: Doctor or Counsellor's report or recommendation, external community/welfare agency recommendation

Student Support Officer shall review the request and where necessary arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss the issues and provide the required support through internal or external referrals and advice.

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