

Student Welfare and Accommodation (Under 18) Policy

Introduction

This policy is current as of 15 June 2015.

Scope

This policy is applicable to Kaplan Higher Education Pty Ltd, trading as Murdoch Institute of Technology ('School') and applies in relation to:

- any domestic students who are under the age of 18; and
- any international students under the age of 18 who are not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative (as defined by the National Code 2007).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide guidance when making decisions concerning students who are under the age of 18;
- ensure appropriate arrangements are made to protect the personal safety and social wellbeing of international students in accordance with the National Code 2007; and
- ensure that all relevant legislation is adhered to for international and domestic students under the age of 18.

Principles

The School takes special care and interest in the welfare of students who are under 18. Staff are expected to make themselves aware of all students attending the School who are younger than 18 years of age, so that the extra level of care that is required for these minor students is provided.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth), the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 established under the TEQSA Act, and Provider Course Accreditation Standards.

This policy has also been developed to meet the requirements of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* ('the National Code 2007').

Accommodation for international students (under 18)

Where an international student, under the age of 18, will not be living within the care of a parent or nominated relative (as defined by the National Code 2007) in Australia, then the School must approve the student's welfare arrangements in accordance with this policy.

An international student, under the age of 18, may choose one of the following approved accommodation options:

- the care of a parent or nominated relative (as defined by the National Code 2007)
- one of the School's approved accommodation provider(s), or
- the care of an authorised local individual nominated and approved by the student's parent or guardian and screened and approved by the School.

The School has entered agreements with certain accommodation service providers, ensuring appropriate welfare and accommodation arrangements can be made available for these international students. These provider(s) have been screened and selected by the School on the basis of their capacity to safely manage the welfare needs of students and to ensure the suitability of the accommodation and the other residents being accommodated (if any).

In addition, the School will only approve accommodation arrangements for an international student with an authorised local individual who meets the criteria set out below.

Where the School has approved accommodation arrangements for an international student it will inform the Australian Government for immigration purposes by submitting a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW). The CAAW will:

- (a) confirm the School's approval of the student's welfare and accommodation arrangements; and
- (b) nominate the date(s) for which the School has given its approval for the accommodation and welfare arrangements (generally covering the period of the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) plus 7 days or until the student turns 18), outside of which the School will not be responsible for the student's welfare needs.

No CAAW will be provided where the student will be cared for in Australia by their parent or nominated relative (as defined by the National Code 2007) or where the student has not taken up one of the approved accommodation and welfare arrangements set out in this policy.

Procedures for approving international student (under 18) welfare and accommodation arrangements

The School undertakes the following in relation to the welfare and accommodation needs of international students who are under 18, not being cared for in Australia by a parent or nominated relative (as defined by the National Code 2007):

- Determine, during enrolment, the student's accommodation and welfare arrangements and whether or not the student will need accommodation to be approved by the School (i.e. the student will not be staying with a parent or nominated relative). This should also include ensuring that the student's agent (where applicable) and their parent(s) or guardian(s) are made aware of this policy and a copy is provided to them.
- If the student needs accommodation to be approved by the School, they are referred to the School's approved accommodation service provider(s).

- If the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) request that the student be in the care of a non-relative in Australia, then parent(s) or guardian(s) must return to the School a signed accommodation consent form to confirm their nomination of the local authorised individual and their approval for their son or daughter to be in that person's care while they are in Australia.
- Any individual who will be entrusted with the care of an international student, or who will be living in the same residence as the student, while they are in Australia, who is not the student's parent or nominated relative (as defined by the National Code), must meet the following criteria:
 - the person must be over the age of 21;
 - the person must be eligible to remain in Australia (under a valid visa or other permanent residency or citizenship status) until the student turns 18 or until the care arrangements end or the student's visa expires (whichever comes first); and
 - a Working with Children Check or national police certificate must have been undertaken in relation to the person and a copy provided to the School showing no adverse results against the individual.

The person caring for these international students must:

- accept all responsibility for the student's well-being and welfare, and agree to act as the primary carer for the student in Australia, and ensure that the student resides with them, until the student reaches the age of 18. This must be confirmed by the person signing the relevant consent and agreement form(s) provided by the School;
 - agree to maintain contact with the School and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) on a regular basis. The person must immediately contact the School if the student is unable to attend class or does not return home each day for an unknown reason;
 - follow all reasonable and lawful directions from the School in relation to the student and their accommodation;
 - allow the School to visit the dwellings to ensure that the School is satisfied with the accommodation arrangements; and
 - inform the School within 48 hours if any of their contact details change.
- Inform the Australian Government, using the CAAW, that the School has approved the student's accommodation and welfare arrangements and nominate the date(s) for which the School has accepted responsibility for these arrangements.
 - Determine whether or not the relevant student will be accompanied upon their arrival into Australia by a parent or nominated relative (as defined under the National Code 2007). If this is not the case, the School will arrange for the student to be met at the airport and accompanied to their accommodation. Students should note there will be costs involved with airport transfers arranged by the School.

The School will initially visit the accommodation being provided by an authorised local individual, and periodically visit the accommodation being provided by its approved accommodation service provider(s). These visits are to ensure that the living standard is acceptable and safe, that the person(s) responsible for the living arrangements are appropriate and to provide information regarding this policy and the responsibilities of those caring for these students. All visits are recorded by the School together with the copies of the parental/guardian consents.

Procedures for managing approved international student (under 18) welfare and accommodation arrangements

International students, under the age of 18, must behave in an appropriate manner at all times during their stay in Australia, following the rules set by the household or provider in which they are accommodated.

When:

- (a) the student turns 18;
- (b) the student changes their living arrangements before they turn 18 (with the School's prior approval); or
- (c) the School no longer approves the student's accommodation arrangements (such as where the student continually refuses to maintain the approved accommodation arrangements, the student has left Australia, the student cannot be found (see below for further details) or the student has transferred to another provider who has approved their welfare and accommodation arrangements),

then the Australian Government must be informed for immigration purposes, using the proforma letter(s) in PRISMS, within 7 days.

If a student is missing from their approved accommodation and cannot be contacted by the School for longer than 48 hours without reason, then the School's Critical Incident Policy will be instituted. This will include informing the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and notifying the Police if necessary.

If the School becomes aware that an international student, who is under 18, is not properly being cared for in their accommodation arrangements approved by the School, then it will intervene by recommending to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) that an alternative suitable accommodation arrangement should be taken up within 48 hours. The School will arrange emergency accommodation for the student if required.

If the student does not take up the School's recommendation for alternative accommodation within 3-5 working days, then a letter of intention to report for non-approval of welfare and living arrangement will be sent to the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

If the student has not changed their accommodation arrangements within 1 week, the School's approval of the accommodation will be withdrawn and the Australian Government will be informed accordingly. This may affect the ongoing validity of the student's visa and rights to stay in Australia.

Welfare arrangements for students (under 18)

To ensure that all students who are under the age of 18 are managed appropriately, the School will identify all students who are under 18 before the commencement of each trimester. Their names, contact details of parent(s), guardian(s), accommodation provider (if applicable) and authorised local individuals caring for these students (if relevant) will be recorded on the School's student database. This will assist the School to monitor the attendance and academic achievement of those students, and their welfare and accommodation arrangements.

All under 18 students and caregivers will be provided with a 24 hour contact telephone number in case of emergency.

Teacher support

The School provides the following academic support for students who are under 18:

- Assign each student to a Student Support Officer, who takes responsibility for conducting an initial meeting with the student and any regular ongoing meetings with the students, and reporting

appropriately to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), and the School's academic team, on the student's academic progress.

- Should the allocated Student Support Officer not be available, then meetings will be managed by a nominated academic staff member or the student services team.

At the commencement of each study period, all teachers are informed about which student(s) in their class is under 18 years of age. Teachers of these students are to meet with each other and relevant academic and operational managers once a fortnight (or as required) to go through the list of minor students and discuss any matters regarding the student(s) welfare that needs attention.

The School will ensure that staff who teach minors have an understanding of pedagogical and/or adult learning principles relevant to the student cohort being taught. Teachers will regularly monitor, evaluate and report on under 18 student's achievement through methods such as:

- providing students with feedback on their performance
- engaging in ongoing communication with parents/caregivers/guardians about student achievement and progress
- making judgements of student achievement in relation to expected standards
- administer prescribed system assessments, and
- using student performance information to plan future learning programs.

Ongoing communication throughout the teaching year is critical to ensure that parent(s), guardian(s) and local carers of under age students are informed of the student's progress. This also provides an opportunity for parent(s) or guardian(s) to inform the School of any developments at home which may impact the student's progression and experience at the School. Teachers can report informally in a variety of ways including:

- interim reporting to academic coordinators
- teacher discussions
- telephone discussions between parent(s) or guardian(s) and teachers and informal encounters and discussions
- letters, email and other forms of correspondence from teachers and/or the School to advise parent(s) or guardian(s) about successes or concerns
- student-directed reporting, in which students show how their knowledge, skills and understandings have developed through discussions or presentations of key achievements, and
- responses to requests from parent(s) or guardian(s) for additional information.

Orientation

The School provides support to the student's orientation needs by:

- hosting an under 18s information session during orientation week, discussing with them the obligations of their accommodation provider (if applicable), the School's obligations and responsibilities towards them, and their own obligations towards the School and their accommodation provider (if relevant).
- organising for each student to visit the Student Support Officer each fortnight.

Fortnightly meetings

- These are compulsory one-on-one meetings every fortnight between the Student Support Officer and the student for at least 10 minutes.
- At the meeting, areas of student welfare that may be covered include accommodation, their general health and welfare, their general behaviour, their attendance, their relationships (if impacting on the student's welfare or progress), their contact with their parents. The meetings should also confirm that the student's address and contact details are current on the School's database.
- The student should be encouraged to discuss anything about their welfare/living arrangements/health that is a concern to them.
- Records of these meetings and any serious issues are noted on the student's record. If the meeting is conducted by the Student Support Officer, any issue must be reported to the Student Services Manager or Academic Coordinator for appropriate follow up.
- After each meeting, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) are provided with an update on the outcomes of the meeting, and any issues of importance that have been raised or discussed during the meeting.
- Students who miss these meetings will be contacted and reminded about the importance of maintaining this contact with the School. If further meetings are missed, this may be reported to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) who may wish to intervene.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following the School's policies:

- Access and Equity Policy
- Attendance policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Critical Incident policy
- Management of International Students policy

Responsible Officer

The responsible officer for the implementation and relevant training of this policy is the Vice President, Academic.

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VP, Academic on behalf of the Academic Board				
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1.1	Quality & Standards Group	Renaming of policy from U18 Student Management. Amended to clarify responsibilities and procedures. Format and wording changes to align across all businesses	15.06.2015	15.06.2015