

# Student Welfare and Accommodation (Under 18) Policy

## 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 of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 ('the National Code 2018')).

## 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 relevant legislation relating to child welfare and protection.

## Principles

The School takes special care and interest in the welfare of students who are under 18. Staff are expected to identify all students under 18 years of age, so that an extra level of care is provided for these minor students.

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) 2015 established under the TEQSA Act, Provider Course Accreditation Standards and the National Code.

## Accommodation for International Students (under 18)

Where an international student, under the age of 18, will not be living with a parent or nominated relative in Australia, then the School must approve the student's welfare arrangements in accordance with this policy.

International students, under the age of 18, may choose one of the following approved accommodation options:

1. the care of a parent or nominated relative who travels to Australia to provide welfare for the student for the duration of their study
2. one of the School's approved accommodation providers, or
3. the care of an authorised local individual nominated and approved by the student's parent or guardian and endorsed by the School.

The School has entered agreements with certain accommodation service providers to ensure appropriate welfare and accommodation arrangements are available for students. These provider(s) have been screened by the

School based on their capacity to safely manage the welfare needs of students and the suitability of the accommodation they provide.

Where the School assumes responsibility for an under 18, international student's welfare and accommodation arrangements, it will inform the Australian Government of the arrangements by submitting a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare Letter (CAAW). A CAAW is only issued where a student will **not** be living with their parent or nominated relative. However, the School is committed to its duty of care and will monitor the student's welfare under the procedures below and will contact the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) if they became aware the student is not being well looked after under other welfare arrangements listed above.

The CAAW:

- (a) confirms the School's approval of the student's welfare and accommodation arrangements; and
- (b) nominates 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).

The School is not responsible for the student's welfare needs past this period, i.e. once a student turns 18 or 7 days after the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) with the provider ends, whichever occurs first.

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

Where the School assumes responsibility for the welfare and accommodation needs of an international student under 18, the School will:

- Determine, by enrolment time, 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 includes ensuring the student's agent (where applicable) and their parent(s) or guardian(s) are made aware of and provided a copy of this policy.
- If the student needs accommodation arranged by the School, they are referred to the School's approved accommodation service providers.
- 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 confirming 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, 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, 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 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(s) caring for the international student(s) 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. 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 person(s) responsible for a student's living arrangements are appropriate and to provide information regarding this policy and the responsibilities of those caring for these students. Details of such accommodation visits and outcomes are recorded on the student's record including the signed accommodation consent form from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

### **Procedures for managing international students (under 18)'s School approved welfare and accommodation arrangements**

The Australian Government must be informed via PRISMS within 7 days if any of the following occurs:

- (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,
  - has left Australia,
  - cannot be found (see below for further details), or
  - has transferred to another provider who has approved their welfare and accommodation arrangements).

Further, 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 be taken up within 48 hours from becoming aware of the suitability issues. 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 5 working days, then a letter of intention to report for non-approval of welfare and living arrangements will be sent to the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

If the student fails to change their accommodation arrangements within 7 working days, the School's approval of the accommodation will be withdrawn and the Australian Government will be informed accordingly. This may affect the student's visa and rights to stay in Australia.

## Welfare Arrangements for Students (under 18)

To ensure that all students under the age of 18 are supported appropriately, the School will identify all under 18 students before the commencement of each trimester. Their names and contact details of parent(s), guardian(s), accommodation providers (if applicable) and authorised local individuals caring for these students (if relevant) will also be recorded on the student's record.

All under 18 students and their caregivers, where applicable will be provided with a 24 hour contact telephone number in case of emergency. The contact number can also be used in seeking assistance in the case of actual or alleged abuse.

### Academic Support

All teaching and Administration staff at MIT are required to have a valid Working with Children Check. The School provides the following additional academic support for students who are under 18:

- At the commencement of each study period, all teachers are informed about which student(s) in their class is under 18 years of age. The School will ensure that all staff have an understanding of pedagogical 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;
  - teacher discussions;
  - interim reporting to academic managers;
  - making judgements of student achievement in relation to expected standards; and
  - using student performance information to plan future learning programs.

### Pastoral Support

Each student is assigned to a Student Support Officer, who takes responsibility for conducting an initial meeting with the student and any regular ongoing meetings with the students.

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

The student Support Officer will:

- provide pastoral support to the student
- reporting appropriately to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s)
- responds to requests from parent(s) or guardian(s) for additional information
- communications will be sent from the generic email address

## Orientation

At orientation, the School provides additional support to under 18s by:

- having an under 18s information session during the first week where the School outlines its support services and relevant School and student obligations and responsibilities.
- organising for each student to visit the Student Support Officer Monthly and attending a monthly under 18 group session.

## Meetings

- Under 18 students are obliged to attend a compulsory one-on-one meeting held monthly between the Student Support Officer and the student.
- At the meeting, student welfare issues including accommodation, health and welfare, general behaviour, attendance, relationships (if impacting on the student's welfare or academic progress) may be covered. The student's current address and contact details are also confirmed at such meetings.
- The student should be encouraged to discuss anything about their welfare/living arrangements/health that is a concern to them.
- Records of these meetings are noted on the student's record and any serious issues reported to the Student Services Manager or Academic Coordinator for appropriate follow up.
- In some instances, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may be provided with updates about these meetings, e.g. where issues are identified or to communicate exemplary student performance to their parents.
- Students who miss these meetings will be contacted and reminded about the importance of meeting with the School. If further meetings are missed, this may also be reported to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

## Related Policies

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

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

## Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

<b>Policy Category</b>	Corporate Legal			
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	General Counsel			
<b>Implementation Officer</b>	College Director			
<b>Review Date</b>	December 2020			
<b>Approved by</b>				
General Counsel				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authored by</b>	<b>Brief Description of the changes</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>

1.0	Quality & Standards Group	Unpacking of one document into existing document	01.01.2014	01.01.2014
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
1.2	Academic Quality and Governance Team	Policy revised for currency. Information restructured to promote coherency and clarifications made as to when a CAAW is required	05.12.2017	20.12.2017
1.3	Academic Quality and Governance Team	Policy revised for currency, including updating to the Department of Home Affairs and National Code	07.03.2018	28.03.2018