Information For Students Policy

Version number	1
Approved by	Corporate Governance Board
Date of approval	13/11/2017

Purpose

Undertaking a higher education program is a significant financial investment with substantial implications for a student's professional and personal life. It is thus important that all prospective and current students have access to up-to-date information on all matters relating to studying with the Sydney Institute of Higher Education (**SI**) before and during their time at SI. This information is essential to student decision-making and awareness of the options available to them.

This policy defines SI's approach to facilitating student access to a range of information as listed in the policy, outlines the different mediums through which information will be communicated, and establishes the process of periodically reviewing and updating information.

Scope

All staff with student-facing responsibilities, and those responsible for reviewing and approving any official communications with students.

Principles

All individuals considering enrolling in one of SI's higher education programs are entitled to full access to detailed, up-to-date information about SI and its operations. This information will enable prospective students to make informed decisions regarding their options for study.

This information must also be made available to students in a timely manner.

SI will not omit any relevant information that may affect decision-making by prospective and current students.

Representation of, and information about, matters relating to studying at SI will be:

- Current and accurate at all times
- Publicly available where appropriate
- Consistent across all mediums and platforms
- Of sufficient depth to allow students to make an informed decision about undertaking a program of study at SI
- Consistent with the accreditation status of SI programs with any external bodies.

SI will not disseminate any misleading or false information. It will ensure that third parties involved in promoting SI do not provide misleading or false information.

SI will ensure that information is effectively distributed to students from underrepresented and/or disadvantaged groups regarding the range of services available to them at SI. This will include the following:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Students who are part or full-time carers
- Students with disabilities
- Students experiencing mental or physical health concerns
- Mature-age students
- Students who are single parents
- International students
- Students for whom English is a second language.

Procedures

Information available to students

SI will ensure that students have access to the information listed below prior to enrolment, with sufficient time to enable informed decision-making about enrolling in a SI program.

Information must be written in clear, plain English, and fully accessible to students, including students with specific accessibility needs.

Definitions of ambiguous or specialised terms must be provided to ensure that students fully understand the information provided.

Program and units of study

Information provided must include:

- Program design
- Any pre-requisites
- Assumed knowledge
- When and where programs and units are offered
- Application dates
- Arrangements for recognition of prior learning
- Standing credit transfer arrangements
- Pathways to employment
- Eligibility for registration to practice (if applicable).

Credit transfer arrangements

SI must ensure that credit transfer and recognition for prior learning arrangements are clearly communicated, including the programs of study and qualifications for which credit may be gained, and the terms and conditions that apply.

Outcomes associated with programs

SI will ensure that the outcomes of a program, either explicit or implied, are not misleading or false.

SI will clearly state the potential and most likely pathways for graduates of each higher education program offering, however will never guarantee:

- particular employment and career outcomes
- migration outcomes
- acceptance into another course for which the relevant SI program is a prerequisite.

Planning studies and participation

The information must include:

- key contact points
- advice about orientation and induction
- delivery arrangements
- technical requirements (e.g. operating systems and browsers on laptops for accessing IT resources at SI)
- timetables
- access to learning resources
- avenues to participate in decision-making at SI.

Student obligations

The information must include:

- *Student Code of Conduct*
- Financial obligations to SI as an enrolled student, including student loan information and tuition assurance information for both domestic and international students
- Important deadlines
- Policies for withdrawal from offers, acceptance and enrolment, and refunds of fees
- Policies for deferral, change of enrolment, and leave of absence
- Obligations of international students (e.g. following the conditions of their study visa)
- Misconduct and disciplinary procedures including suspension and exclusion.

Policies and procedures

Prospective students must be informed of how to access current SI policies and procedures that impact students.

SI must facilitate full access by ensuring policies are available online as per the *Public Information Policy*.

Student support services

Prospective students must be informed of the range of support services that will be available to them during their studies at SI, and how and when to access them. This must include points of contact in an emergency.

Complaints and appeals

Prospective students must be informed of the complaints and appeals process established internally to SI as well as external avenues for complaint and appeal. This must include an explanation of how students can participate and utilise advocacy services.

Policies regarding complaints and appeals processes for students must be freely available on the SI website.

When any student enquires about how to make a complaint or appeal, staff must freely refer students with no questions asked to the website for the current approved policies and procedures for complaints and appeals.

International student information

The information must include:

- Indicative costs of living and studying in Australia
- Accommodation options
- Arrangements for health care and the requirement for Overseas Student Health Cover
- Obligation to send school-aged dependents to school in Australia and fees incurred.

Notice of changes

Students must be given six months notice of changes to fees and associated costs of studying at SI, as well as any significant changes to programs or study conditions.

Methods of communication

Website

Selected information will be made publicly available in line with the *Public Information Policy* and at the discretion of the *Executive Management Team*.

Information that is not publicly available will be communicated to students via alternative means outlined below.

Student Enquiries

Administration and student support staff must be trained to answer questions and refer students to both SI services and external services such as legal advice, accommodation support, welfare services, counselling, and health and emergency services. Refer also to the *Student Enquiries Policy*.

Marketing Materials

Marketing and promotional materials will provide accurate information about SI and direct students to other sources of information about SI. Refer to the *Marketing to Prospective Students Policy*.

Education Agents

Education agents will provide accurate information to international students who are considering

enrolling in a program at SI. For more information refer to the *Education Agents Policy*.

Student Handbook

SI's student handbook provides students with the following information at a minimum:

- Program-specific information including structure and learning outcomes
- How to find current individual unit outlines with detail about assessment requirements and reading lists
- Contact information for teaching staff
- Contact information for the Program Director
- Information on academic and wellbeing support services offered at SI.

On-campus

Posters and notices clearly visible on campus will communicate promotions and essential information such as emergencies and evacuation procedures.

Orientation Program

The Orientation Program aims to support student transition to studying at SI. All new students are expected to attend.

Refer to the *Orientation Program Policy* concerning the SI Orientation Program.

Student Portal

The student portal, accessible only by current students, will include the following information at a minimum:

- Assessment and examination information
- Program details
- Enrolment tools
- Contact information for staff
- Fee and invoice information for students
- Information about accessing academic and wellbeing support services
- Accessing the learning management system and library resources.

Student email

SI will send important updates, requests, and other necessary information to students via their student email.

International Students

Specific efforts will be made to ensure that international students have access to the necessary information. A specific section or time for communicating necessary information to international students will be included in:

- Student handbooks

- The SI website
- Orientation programs
- Student portal
- Offer of Enrolment and Welcome Letter.

Maintaining accuracy

In order to maintain accuracy and consistency, various positions and bodies are responsible for reviewing the information provided to students every six months.

Information regarding academic matters must be reviewed by the *Learning and Teaching Committee*.

Information regarding financial and student obligations and liability must be reviewed by the Student Administration Coordinator, Finance Manager, and President.

Information regarding equity, access and student support must be reviewed by the Student Counselling and Wellbeing Officer.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The *Corporate Governance Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to Provost, *Academic Board* and Marketing and Communications Coordinator.

The *Corporate Governance Board* will review all periodic reports, in accordance with the *Compliance Calendar*, from relevant committees and staff members.

Additionally, the *Corporate Governance Board* will review all relevant student complaints, concerns raised by staff members, and instances of student or staff misconduct on an ongoing basis.

Based on these monitoring activities, the *Academic Board* or Dean must provide a report to the *Corporate Governance Board*, in accordance with *Compliance Calendar*, and ensure that findings are taken into account in planning, quality assurance and improvement processes.

Definitions

International student: an individual enrolled in a program at SI who is not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, or an Australian Permanent Resident, and has been granted a student visa by the Department of Home Affairs to study full-time in Australia.

Orientation: an on-campus scheduled program of activities prior to the beginning of each term that provides students with opportunities to meet staff and other students, tour the campus, enrol in academic workshops and seminars, engage in social activities, learn more about SI and the services on offer, learn more about their rights and responsibilities as students, and access other important information.

Prospective student: an individual who is interested in enrolling in a SI program.

Student handbook: a document produced for student use that serves as an important resource for students throughout their time at SI. The student handbook is available on the SI website and contains program information and contact details for student support services, identifies student policies and procedures.

Student portal: the online login access point for SI students to access the learning management system, student email and library resources.

Review schedule

This policy will be reviewed by the *Corporate Governance Board* every three years.

Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:
1	Corporate Governance Board	13/11/2017		13/11/2020

Related Documents		
➡	🗋	<u>Education Agents Policy</u>
➡	🗋	<u>Marketing to Prospective Students Policy</u>
➡	🗋	<u>Orientation Program Policy</u>
➡	🗋	<u>Public Information Policy</u>
➡	🗋	<u>Student Enquiries Policy</u>
➡	🗋	<u>Student Handbook</u>