Orientation Program Policy

Orientation Program Policy

Version No.	4
Approved by	Corporate Governance Board
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Purpose

Sydney Institute of Higher Education (**SI**) recognises that Orientation Programs are essential to the successful transition of students into new programs. They allow new students to familiarise themselves with SI, receive information regarding services, facilities and expectations, and confidently commence their study.

This *Orientation Program Policy* has been developed so that students are adequately prepared in all aspects for their education at SI. It outlines the planning process and the minimum required information that will be communicated during the Orientation Program. It further outlines the attendance requirement for orientation and the process for review and improvement of Orientation Programs.

This program shall be made available to late arrivals and international students who begin at different entry points. The Orientation Program and its takeaway materials are available on the Learning Management System (**LMS**) so that students can refer to the Orientation Program materials at a later time.

Scope

This policy applies to all students of SI, as well as the relevant academic and student-facing support staff.

Principles

SI acknowledges that the transition to a new higher education program can be challenging for students. Thus, it is committed to supporting each student in their transition to studying at SI to allow them the best chance to participate fully in their education from the beginning.

Attendance of the Orientation Program is compulsory for all newly-enrolled students.

The Orientation Program aims to equip students with the tools they require to succeed at SI, including information and social connections.

Each Orientation Program will be tailored to the needs of the relevant cohort, with particular attention

given to international students.

All information provided to students during orientation will be up-to-date, accurate, and consistent with all other information disseminated by SI.

Procedures

Planning

Planning for orientation will begin when new enrolment numbers are finalised. Planning will occur as follows:

- Welcome packages containing instructions to register for orientation will be mailed to students generally 6 weeks before the beginning of the Orientation Program.
- The Dean, seeking advice and assistance from other staff members as necessary, will plan the Orientation Program with close reference to the composition of the incoming student cohort (e.g. ratio of international to domestic students).
- Program Director will plan academic preparation sessions for their incoming students.

Content

The Orientation Program consists of various 'sessions' that cover the areas outlined below.

President's Welcome:

Formal congratulation on enrolment and welcome by the SI President.

General Orientation Sessions:

Orientation sessions for all students will cover the following information

- The behaviours expected as a condition of students' enrolment, as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- Important dates
- Academic Calendar 2020-2021
- Key locations on campus (including key locations in the event of emergency)
- Learning and Teaching Resources
- Health, security and safety on campus and online
- Internal and external complaints and appeals processes
- Any relevant legal services
- Key Staff contact details

Additionally, the Orientation Program will include:

- General question time
- Social activities
- A tour of the facilities including the library

Orientation Sessions for International students

The following information will be covered (at minimum):

- Key locations off-campus
- Australian culture and customs
- How to access emergency and health services
- General information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia (for example beach safety, etiquette and laws concerning smoking in Australia)
- Support and welfare services to assist international students with studying and living in Australia as well as assisting with incidents that impacts on the students' wellbeing are available at no additional costs. For more information please refer to the following plan and policies:
- *International Student Services Policy*
- *Student Counselling Policy*
- *Student Welfare Policy*
- *Student Counselling and Wellbeing Plan*
- English support for international students

SI will offer the following at no additional costs in order to help improve the English skills of international students, and particularly academic language skills to aid the learning of their program material:

- Student-led conversational English programs
- English Language Support classes and workshops
- Academic Skills classes and workshops
- For more information please refer to the Academic Support Policy and the Academic Support Plan.

Information about program progress and attendance for international students:

Attendance of the Orientation Program is compulsory for all newly-enrolled students.

This program shall be made available to late arrivals and international students who begin at different entry points.

SI has documented policies and processes for monitoring attendance for international students for the sole purpose of identifying, notifying and assisting international students who may be at risk of not meeting program progression requirements. SI will monitor program progression regularly and implement an intervention strategy to assist an international student not making satisfactory program progress.

Should an international student fall into the at-risk category, the procedures in the *Students at Risk and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy* will apply, however, additional assistance will be provided with regard to visa issues that the international student may encounter as a result of their at-risk categorisation.

Other information for international students

- Cost of living in Australia
- Accommodation support services including housing and tenancy services
- Work rights and conditions; resolving workplace issues and contact details for Fair Work

Ombudsman
- Visa conditions and maintaining compliance as a visa holder and contact details for Department of Home Affairs (DoHA)
- The official point of contact for international student is the International Student Support Advisor. Contact phone number [awaiting allocation]; Email address [awaiting allocation]. The International Student Support Advisor will have access to up-to-date details of SI's support services and will be available to assist students seven days a week, either by face-to-face meeting or remotely.

Staff members who have direct interaction with international students and the Executive Management Team have undertaken ESOS Training and are aware of their obligations under the ESOS framework. Please refer to the *ESOS Legislative Framework Awareness Training, dated 27 February 2020.*

Staff members will also ensure international students are aware of the ESOS framework in accordance with Standard 2.1g of the National Code.

Academic Preparation Sessions

Each Program Director at SI is expected to compile a session on academic preparation for their students. This will cover:

- Key learning outcomes
- Software and materials required for the program
- Ideas for study techniques
- Time for general questions

Additionally, for information technology programs at SI, students will be required to undertake a Mathematics Knowledge Assessment (**MKA**). The MKA will challenge students on the required mathematics knowledge needed to be successful in that program. The MKA does not form part of their assessment. For students who do not successfully meet the knowledge requirements, they must undertake a compulsory intensive mathematics bridging course to be held during the Orientation Week. The mathematics bridging course will be supplemented with online resources for further self-study.

Student Access to Further Information

SI will ensure that students know where they can find further information.

Students will be advised that Student Administration and student support staff are equipped to provide timely and accurate information on any matters relating to their studies at SI, as well as refer students to external legal, counselling, accommodation, and welfare services.

Additionally, students will be directed to the resources detailed in the *Information for Students Policy.*

Attendance

Orientation Programs attendance is compulsory in the first year, with at least two sessions running throughout each year (preceding each term).

Online Delivery of SI Programs

In response to COVID-19, SIHE will make flexible timetables to accommodate face-to-face delivery and/or online delivery of the Orientation Program until further notice. SIHE aims to continue to deliver a high-quality educational experience and exceptional student engagement through interactive online and face-to-face delivery.

Where required, all SIHE programs are available in an online delivery mode where face-to-face delivery is not possible. This decision is to ensure the safety of SIHE staff and students as well as the wider community and is made in accordance with the current government health advice and regulations.

Improvement

At the conclusion of the orientation week, all students who attended will be emailed a short survey. The results of this survey will be analysed and used to improve Orientation Programs in subsequent terms.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The *Academic Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Dean working with the Provost to facilitate the Orientation Program.

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.

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.

Review schedule

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

Version History				
Version No	Approved by	Approval Date	Revision Notes	Next Review Date
1	Corporate Governance Board	5/02/2018		5/2/2021

2	Corporate Governance Board	17/09/2020	Revised to include online delivery of the program	17/09/2023
3	Corporate Governance Board	02/02/2021	No change. Periodic Review.	02/02/2024
4	Corporate Governance Board	7/12/2021	Inclusion of MKA	28/11/2024

Related Documents

➡	📄	Academic Support Policy
➡	📄	Anti-Discrimination Policy
➡	📄	Disability Support Policy
➡	📄	Information For Students Policy
➡	📄	International Student Services Policy
➡	📄	IT Resources and Online Conduct Policy
➡	📄	Student Welfare Policy
➡	📄	Sexual Harassment and Assault Policy
➡	📄	Academic Support Plan