

# International Student Services Policy

Version number	6
Approved by	Corporate Governance Board; Academic Board
Date of approval	26/03/2021

## Purpose

Central to Sydney Institute of Higher Education (SIHE)'s approach to providing higher education is the belief that all students should have equal access and opportunity to succeed in their programs, and that education offered must be tailored to SIHE's specific higher education cohort. Ongoing academic and non-academic support for students is integral to ensuring this access and opportunity.

SIHE has identified that international students face unique challenges for the duration of their studies and often require targeted support services to assist them in progressing through their programs. This *International Student Services Policy* outlines the principles guiding the establishment of international student services at SIHE. It details the information that will be available to international students prior to enrolment, the range of support services that SIHE will provide, and SIHE's approach to monitoring international students' program progression.

## Scope

This policy applies to all international students, both current and prospective, as well as positions and bodies internal to SIHE who are involved in providing support and advice to international students.

## Principles

This policy complies with the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) 2000*.

SIHE is dedicated to ensuring that all students have equal access and opportunity to succeed in a program at SIHE, regardless of background. SIHE recognises that providing academic and non-academic support services, targeted to the cohort, is key to facilitating this access and opportunity.

International students must be provided information about the options available to support them through study in a new country.

SIHE must allow informed student decision-making about accessing measures to address issues that impact on their ability to participate fully in education.

Through international student services, SIHE strives to create a comfortable and supportive learning and teaching environment for international students.

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# Procedures

## *Information to international students*

Prior to enrolment or visa application, all international students must be given comprehensive, up-to-date, and accessible information as per the *Information for Students Policy*. This includes a formal letter of offer outlining the specific nature of the arrangement with the student and attaches all terms and conditions of enrolment.

Following the completion of the enrolment process, students will be issued information about attending new student orientation, and a student handbook with more specific information about student support services.

International students will also receive advice and support during the visa application and program application processes. For more information, see the *Education Agents Policy*.

## *Support services*

SIHE offers a range of academic and non-academic support services which will be available at no additional charge to international students.

These services include:

- Academic and English language support
- Program advice
- Counselling
- Practical advice regarding essential services: accommodation, health, postage, banking, transport.
- Disability support
- Workshops designed to help with transitioning to Australia
- Complaints and appeals processes.

Additionally, Student Administration staff may also refer international students to more appropriate external support services at no extra cost, such as:

- Employment assistance
- Crisis and trauma assistance
- Emergency and health services
- Legal and advocacy services
- Visa advice
- Generalised tax advice
- Mentoring programs.

International students will be given information on how to access support services and resources via orientation sessions and the *Student Handbook*. SIHE staff must also give timely and accurate advice on SIHE support resources on request.

These services will be designed to cater to each student cohort, and SIHE will collect feedback via

student feedback surveys to ascertain their effectiveness.

All professional staff are trained to be aware of the rights and specific needs of international students. The [International Student Support Advisor](#) acts as the primary point of contact for international students and ensures that all support services are readily accessible.

### ***Arrival***

SIHE will establish a service that allows international students to arrange transport to pick them up and drop them off at a destination of their choice upon arrival in Australia. The availability of this service will be made clear in the material provided at the new student orientation program, as well as on SIHE's website; if international students wish to utilise this transport service, they must contact SIHE prior to their arrival in Australia.

### ***Orientation***

Whilst all students of SIHE undergo orientation, international students will receive additional information regarding Australian culture and the locale surrounding SIHE.

International students will be instructed on how to access emergency services in Australia, as well as general safety and health tips for living and studying in Australia.

International students will also be briefed on the variety of academic and non-academic support services available to them as outlined above.

For more information, refer to the *Orientation Program Policy*.

### ***English language support***

Whilst SIHE enforces strict English standard entry requirements (refer to the *English Language Entry Requirements Policy*) for international enrolments, it must nonetheless be acknowledged that at times, due to the complexity of program content, English language support is necessary in order to ensure that international students are able to make the most of their educational experience.

SIHE will offer the following 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*.

### ***Online Delivery of SIHE programs including classes and workshops***

In response to COVID-19, SIHE will make flexible timetables to accommodate face-to-face teaching and/or online delivery for classes and workshops 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 learning.

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.

### ***Program progression***

SIHE understands that international students face can face unique challenges when it comes to program progression compared to domestic students. As such, student services will review the array of support services available to international students, and make improvements where possible.

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.

## **Policy Implementation and Monitoring**

The *Academic Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the International Student Support Advisor.

## **Definitions**

**Academic Board:** the SIHE governing body responsible for academic oversight, including SIHE learning and teaching environment and practices, program development and approval, workforce planning, research and scholarship, and academic policies and procedures. The *Academic Board* advises the *Corporate Governance Board* on academic matters.

**Academic language skills:** Written and verbal communication skills that students must develop in order to engage with academic texts and ideas, and fulfil the requirements of assessment tasks.

**Corporate Governance Board:** The SIHE governing body responsible for the oversight of all SIHE operations, including the direction-setting, quality assurance, monitoring, and improvement of academic and non-academic operations. It delegates responsibility for academic matters to the *Academic Board*.

**Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000 (ESOS Act):** Australian federal legislation establishing legislative requirements and standards for the quality assurance of education and training institutions offering programs to international students who are in Australia on a student visa.

**International student:** An individual enrolled in a program who has been granted a student visa by the Department of Home Affairs to study full-time in Australia.

**Non-academic support services:** Services provided by SIHE that are designed to assist students with non-academic issues that affect their studies, such as counselling and accommodation support. Includes referrals to external services where appropriate.

## Review Schedule

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

























Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:
1	<i>Corporate Governance Board</i>	04/09/2017		
2	<i>Corporate Governance Board</i>	16/10/2017		
3	<i>Academic Board</i>	25/10/2017		25/10/2020
4	<i>Corporate Governance Board</i>	05/02/2018		05/02/2021
5	<i>Corporate Governance Board, Academic Board</i>	17/09/2020		17/09/2023
6	<i>Corporate Governance Board, Academic Board</i>	26/03/2021	No change. Periodic Review.	26/03/2024

End of document: "International Student Services Policy"

Document ID: 8617, Revision No : (10), Created : January 6, 2020 12:04 pm, By : Nigel Finch, Last updated : August 11, 2022 1:53 pm, Next Review by : Nigel, Review Scheduled For : March 26, 2024

Produced & Printed : Thursday 24th of August 2023 05:42:36 AM "Sydney Institute of Higher Education ABN 49 618 742 813 TEQSA PRV14323 CRICOS 03866C"

### Related Documents

		<a href="#">Academic Support Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Education Agents Policy</a>
		<a href="#">English Language Entry Requirements Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Information For Students Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Orientation Program Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Student Counselling Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Student Feedback Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Student Welfare Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Students at Risk and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Equity and Diversity Policy</a>
		<a href="#">Student Handbook</a>
		<a href="#">International Student Support Advisor</a>