

Education Agents Policy and Procedure

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Approved by	Corporate Governance Board
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Purpose

Education Agents play a key role in recruiting international students and marketing Sydney Institute of Higher Education (SIHE)'s higher education offerings.

SIHE values its reputation as a higher education provider and acknowledges its responsibility to ensure all methods of representation- internally and by third parties- are ethical and maintain SIHE's integrity. As such, SIHE carefully selects Education Agents who align and maintain these values.

Education Agents who represent SIHE must demonstrate the following standards:

- a comprehensive understanding of students' requirements, Australian culture, and Australia's education system in general.
- a thorough knowledge of the nature of SIHE's programs, policies, and requirements in particular, honesty, integrity and the highest ethical standards.

This Policy and Procedure is designed to ensure that these standards are maintained, in compliance with all legislative and regulatory requirements.

Scope

This policy applies to SIHE staff and Education Agents who are representing SIHE.

Principles

Responsibilities

The *Corporate Governance Board* is responsible for overseeing the academic integrity of SIHE, its reputation and public representation. This includes the representation of SIHE through an Education Agent and approval of *Marketing Agent Agreements*.

Education Agents must take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interests with their responsibilities for representing SIHE. It is expected that Education Agents represent SIHE act honestly and in good faith, and in the best interest of the student.

The Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications or their delegate will provide Education Agents with appropriate education on SIHE Programs, Policies, and Procedures. However, Education Agents are

responsible for staying current with relevant legislation and regulations regarding international higher education in Australia.

Selection Criteria

Education Agents who wish to enter into a *Marketing Agent Agreements* with SIHE must be from a reputable organisation and meet the following criteria:

- a demonstrated record of fiscal viability
- a demonstrated record of ethical practice and integrity
- a thorough understanding of the Australian international education system and the *ESOS Act*
- a sound understanding of SIHE's Programs and entry requirement
- a signed and current *Marketing Agent Agreement* with SIHE

Monitoring

SIHE will use thorough, open and transparent evaluative methodologies to monitor the performance of all Education Agents, with the objective of ensuring professional behaviour and positive outcomes. The typical monitoring cycle will happen on a six-month rotation, however SIHE reserves the right to monitor more frequently if necessary. More detailed information on the Monitoring process can be found under the Procedure section of this Policy and Procedure.

Termination

A *Marketing Agent Agreement* may be terminated in circumstances where:

- SIHE has reasonable grounds for believing that an agent may have engaged in unprofessional conduct.
- the agent has not met their required performance standards.
- the agent has misrepresented SIHE.
- the agent has not been complaint with relevant legislation or regulators.
- an agent has not been compliant with their *Marketing Agent Agreement*.

In situations where a *Marketing Agent Agreement* has been terminated because of unethical practice, the Agent will be paid commission arising from all fee payments made prior to the termination of the contract, and commission will cease to be paid in relation to all subsequent fee payments by the students they represented.

In situations where SIHE decides not to renew a *Marketing Agent Agreement* for reasons other than unethical practice, the Agent will be paid commission arising been terminated because of form all past and future fee payments made in relation to all courses for which current CoEs have been issued.

Procedure

Appointment

Education Agents may be appointed to represent SIHE either by directly submitting an *Agent Application Form* or by submitting an application after being approached by SIHE.

All Agents interested in an appointment with SIHE must:

- submit a completed *Agent Application Form*. The application must be answered completely and honestly, and include at least two (2) referees, and all required supporting documentation.
- the Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications or their delegate will record the details of the application and make a provisional assessment on the suitability of the Education Agent.
- the provided referees will be sent *SIHE's Marketing Agent Reference form*, and the completed responses will be assessed by the Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications.
- the Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications and the CEO will make a final assessment to determine the suitability as an SIHE Education Agent and communicate the outcome to the Agent.
- the CEO will report agent application outcomes to the *Corporate Governance Board*.
- the CEO will complete the *Marketing Agent Agreement*, including the Agent's Tier and send it to the Agent.
- if the Agent accepts the contract they will sign and return the contract to the CEO or their delegate.
- SIHE must record the details of all Agent's who sign a contract into the Education Agent database (PRISMS) and publishes them on the SIHE website.

Contract

All Education Agents who are formally representing SIHE are bound by the obligations outlined in their *Marketing Agent Agreement*. All contracts will be renewable annually.

The *Marketing Agent Agreement* must be signed by the CEO or their delegate.

The contract outlines:

- the responsibilities of the Agent, including agreeing to not misrepresent any aspect of the SIHE and its offerings
- Agent acknowledgement of and agreement to comply with, and maintain knowledge of, the *ESOS Act*
- SIHE processes used to monitor the education agent's activities and performance
- the suspension and termination conditions of the contract

Training of Education Agents

Authorised Education Agents will receive comprehensive training regarding SIHE's programs, requirements and Australian legislative and regulatory requirements for higher education students, domestic and international. Education Agents will be given access to SIHE marketing and promotional materials to be used in student recruitment upon commencement of agreement.

The Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications will update Agents on any changes to SIHE's Programs, regulatory requirements, or marketing and promotional materials, as needed, to ensure the information provided to prospective students is an accurate representation of SIHE and, its programs, and graduate outcomes.

In addition, agents are required to provide on request evidence that their staff have undertaken the Education Agent Training Program (details of which can be found at <http://www.pieronline.org/eatc>).

Monitoring of Education Agents

SIHE will monitor the performance of Education Agents to ensure compliance with the terms of the *Marketing Agent Agreement*.

The General Manager, Customer Experience will conduct bi-annual reviews to monitor Education Agent's performance against the benchmarks established in their contract.

An informal mid-year review will be used to identify Agents who are not meeting their performance benchmarks. Agents not meeting performance benchmarks will be notified of the outcome of the review in writing. SIHE will provide training to these Agents to assist in identified areas of concern.

The end-of-year formal review will be used as an assessment of the Agent's performance against the benchmarks and terms and conditions of their *Marketing Agent Agreement*. The outcome of the review will determine if the Agent Contract will be renewed and will establish the Agent's commission tier for the following year.

The benchmarks used in both the informal and formal Agent reviews will comprise any and all of the following:

- Commencing student numbers
- Student lifetime value
- Visa grant rate
- Student retention rate
- Student progression
- Other qualitative factors such as administrative errors or delays in processing applications on the part of the agent

SIHE may at its discretion conduct surveys with students and / or parents of students, and spot checks on agent activity. Face-to-face or teleconference meetings may be requested to discuss issues relating to the performance of an agent against the agreed benchmarks.

SIHE will also consider any information received from SIHE staff, legislative or regulatory bodies relating to the Agent's conduct.

All information pertaining to Agent reviews will be stored on the Agent database.

Complaints

SIHE is responsible for the conduct of its contracted Education Agents and will thus accept complaints and grievances regarding Education Agents through the channels established in the *Complaints and Appeals Policy*.

Renewal of Authorised Marketing Agent Agreement

Upon completion of the formal annual review, the CEO and Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications are satisfied that the Agent fulfilled the obligations outlined in their contract and have professionally and ethically represented SIHE to prospective students, the Education Agent will be eligible for contract renewal.

The CEO or their delegate will prepare and send a new *Marketing Agent Agreement*, updated to reflect any changed in legislation or regulatory requirements, to the Agent.

The procedure will then proceed in the same manner as outlined in the '**Contract**' section of this Procedure.

Termination of Authorised Marketing Agent Agreement

Should SIHE become aware of an Education Agent not acting in accordance with their contract, including unethical practices or behaviours, SIHE will immediately terminate the employment contract of an education agent.

Incidents of this nature may include, but are not limited to:

- when an agent is found to have breached the *ESOS Act*
- upon discovery of unethical conduct or misrepresentation by education agents

When an Education Agent is terminated they will be notified in writing, and must immediately cease to represent SIHE or use any marketing material provided by SIHE.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

The *Corporate Governance Board* delegates responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy to the Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications.

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

Related documents

- *Education Services for Overseas Student Act 2000*.

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		
2	Corporate Governance Board	29/07/2020	Process for monitoring agents	29/07/2023
3	Corporate Governance Board	26/03/2021	No change. Periodic Review.	26/03/2024
















4	Corporate Governance Board	4/9/2023	Revisions made to agent performance and processes for monitoring agent performance, based on new agent agreements and agent monitoring practices at SIHE.	4/9/2026
5	Corporate Governance Board	31/10/2023	Revisions made to include procedure and identify clear process for agent management.	31/10/2026

End of document: "Education Agents Policy and Procedure"

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Related Documents

		English Language Entry Requirements Policy
		Information For Students Policy - retired
		Marketing to Prospective Students Policy
		Complaints and Appeals Policy
		Third Party Arrangements Policy
		Agent Agreement
		Academic Board - Terms of Reference
		Corporate Governance Board - Terms of Reference
		Head of Recruitment, Marketing & Communications