

Overseas Student Support Services Policy

Scope:

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015, The ESOS Framework including the ESOS ACT 2000 as amended and National Code 2018 Standard 6.

Introduction

The PGA of Australia Institute (PGAI) has an obligation to support students to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course. The support services and orientation program we offer overseas student focused.

The PGAI has a Critical Incident Policy to ensure the interests of all students and their families are managed appropriately in certain circumstances that would be considered distressing and upsetting for all students and/or family member.

The PGAI take all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus and advise all students and staff on actions they can do to enhance their personal security and safety. The PGAI informs all students about how to seek assistance for and report an incident that significantly impacts on their well-being, including critical incidents.

Student Assistance

The PGAI has a range of services including formal and informal counselling services, academic assistance, and Student Contact Officers (SCO). These services are provided at no additional cost to overseas students. If it is necessary to refer an overseas student to an external support service e.g. medical practitioner, the PGAI does not charge for the referral.

Overseas students are made aware of these services and provided with afterhours contact details for SCOs at orientation.

Students are provided with a list of phone numbers for a number of external service providers, ranging from phone counselling to alcohol and drug services as well as a comprehensive guide to all community and social services in Melbourne as per the following link : <https://www.mycommunitydirectory.com.au/Victoria/Melbourne>

Arrival Services

Commencing international students may have access to arrival services which may include:

- Arrangement for temporary accommodation by request (chargeable to the student);
- A greeting service including assistance in using public transport, opening bank accounts and purchasing a car, these are provided both pre and post orientation (at no charge to the student).

Orientation and Enrolment Program

The PGAI will assist overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia via a number of mechanisms, including through the provision of an age and culturally appropriate orientation program that includes information on:

- Support services available to assist overseas students to help them adjust to study and life in Australia
- English language and study assistance programs
- Any relevant legal services
- Emergency and health services including emergency phone numbers
- PGAI facilities and resources
- Complaints and appeals policy and procedure outlined
- Requirements for course progress
- Support services available for overseas students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia
- Services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve work place issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman
- The designated member or members of staff to be the official point of contact for overseas students.
- Program outline
- Overseas students' rights and responsibilities
- Overseas students visa obligations

We also provide a Student Handbook with information and web linked resources coverings topics such things as:

- Alcohol and Drug Information
- Pregnancy Support Australia
- Dept of Community Services
- Beyond Blue
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Interpreting Services
- Legal advice and guidance
- Local Embassies or Consular Representatives
- Poison information Centre
- Medical providers (bulk billing)
- Lifeline
- ASQA
- Overseas Student Ombudsman

Orientation is compulsory for all new students and students are required to sign an orientation roll as evidence of attendance and receipt of documents and other orientation documents. These services are provided to the student at no cost.

Student Contact Officers

The National Code 2018 requires the PGAI to designate members of staff to be the official point of contact for students. Student Services & Administration, PGAI Training Contractor and PGAI Senior Manager have been designated with specific responsibility for the provision and coordination of support services to overseas students. These services include counselling to assist students to adjust to study and life in Australia, including any academic or attendance problems.

Overseas students are made aware of these services during the orientation program and are provided with contact details for all designated staff members. All staff members at the PGAI that interact with overseas students are familiar with the PGAI's obligations under the ESOS framework and the National Code 2018 and have current QLD Working with Children Blue Cards.

All PGAI staff is expected to successfully complete the Isana online National Code 2018 tutorial. All student contact personnel is aware of and has access to up-to-date details of the PGAI support services. For academic support with overseas student's studies the contact person is the Student Support and Administration Officer.

Sufficient Student Support Personnel

The National Code 2018 requires that the PGAI have sufficient support personnel to meet the needs of its students.

Students are informed at orientation and provided the contact numbers and email addresses for:

- PGAI Senior Manager
- Student Services and Administration Support
- PGAI Trainer
- PGAI Training Coordinator

The PGAI offers reasonable support to overseas students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the overseas person's place of study. The overseas students have access to the learning platform the eHub 24 hours per day, here overseas students will find all their learning materials, a student discussion board where they can communicate with other students and all their assessment materials. If students felt as though they need more support, they can make an appointment to see the Student Support and Administration Officer Monday – Friday. If a student is studying online the PGAI Training Specialist can be contacted business hours via phone or email to support students in their studies.

Critical Incident Policy

The National Code 2018 specifies that the PGAI must have a documented critical incident policy together with procedures that cover the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.

PGAI has a general policy and procedure on critical incidents, which applies to incidents involving staff and domestic and international students. The PGAI realises and accepts that in most cases overseas students do not have close family available to care and

provide support to them in Australia. In a critical incident involving overseas students, PGAI will respond in a practiced and timely way with support or referral and that regular information is relayed to families overseas and that ongoing support is provided to a student in need. All critical incidents are comprehensively recorded and maintained.

Definition of a Critical Incident:

A traumatic event, which is likely to cause extreme physical and/or emotional distress involving the PGAI, its staff and/or students.

Traumatic Event: a traumatic event is not limited to, but could include:

- Missing student
- Any fatality or serious injury
- A serious traffic collision
- Murder or suicide
- Physical / sexual assault or domestic violence
- Severe verbal or psychological aggression
- Fire
- Explosion or bomb threat
- A hold up or attempted robbery
- Serious threats of violence
- Storms or natural disasters, and
- Drug or alcohol abuse.

Academic Support

The PGAI facilitates access to learning support services, for all modes of study, consistent with the requirements of the course and the learning needs of the overseas student. Students are monitored very closely to ensure their progress does not fall behind. Trainers and assessors/Student Services make regular contact with students as per Standard 8 of the National Code 2018 Overseas Student Visa Requirement.

Overview of Responsibilities

The PGAI will support and care for all overseas students during their period of study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of their course of study, and underpin this with documented critical incident management procedures.

In order to ensure critical incidents are managed effectively, the responsibilities for critical incident management are as follows:

Strategic Management - The Senior Manager of the PGAI manages the broad organisational response, the continuity of business operations and contingencies, and the recovery and review phases.

Operational Management - Any appointed staff member under the leadership of the Senior Manager will manage the incident scene until the arrival of relevant personnel / emergency service. The Student Services & Administration has been delegated by the Senior Manager and is responsible for the day-to-day management of this policy. The procedures to be followed are outlined in our Critical Incident Policy document.

Compliance Information to Staff and others

The National Code 2018 provides that the PGAI must ensure that its staff members that interact directly with overseas students are aware of their obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations.

Staff members are made aware of their obligations in the following ways:

- At staff induction
- Compulsory successfully completing the Isana Online Tutorial on the national Code 2018
- Policies and Procedures
- Internal Audits
- External Audits
- Training sessions, informal and formal.

Education Agents

PGAI takes all reasonable measures to ensure that the education agents it engages are ethical, professional and have a working knowledge of:

- a) The National Code 2018,
- b) The ESOS Act, and
- c) PGAI 's products and services

PGAI will not recruit or maintain a relationship with any education agent who is unethical, dishonest, or does not adhere to the principles of the agreement.

This policy applies to all international education agents, or their employees engaged by PGA I, on any basis and at all times, as per Standard 4 of the National Code 2018.