



Student Handbook 2025

Sydney Metropolitan Group Pty Ltd

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Acknowledgment

We, the Sydney Metropolitan English Institute (SMEI) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We honour the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this tool/resource.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sydney Metropolitan English Institute (SMEI): an Overview

Welcome to Sydney Metropolitan Group Pty Ltd, trading as Sydney Metropolitan English Institute, in short SMEI, or simply, the Institute or College.

SMEI offers culturally sensitive, job oriented, and career supportive English courses, viz. General English (GE) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to international students in Australia.

SMEI is founded by academics and education professionals who have demonstrated a passion for education services for international students in Australia. Intercultural competence, inclusion, and empowerment in and through education are some of the values upheld by SMEI's founders. Its founders are passionate about providing quality focussed English education, that encapsulates a combination of practical and theory-based learning opportunities for students. It aims to assist students to achieve their learning and career goals in the most innovative, positive, and supportive environment. This philosophy, combined with the expertise and mechanisms to deliver it, will enable the Institute to evolve into a leading English education provider, offering a diverse range of work and further education pathways to aspiring international students.

SMEI is operating at Sydney CBD, a vibrant city only 5 minutes walk from the Town Hall station. It will be a student-focussed Institute providing specialised programs to meet students' needs, preparing them for university and VET education, and also for professional growth. With the increasing demand for overseas education and an increase in students' expectations, competition in the VET and Higher Education sector is increasing. Considering the competitive scenario as well as the opportunities, the SMEI management team has identified several marketing strategies to provide future growth opportunities for the Institute.

In order to drive informed decision-making and formulate suitable strategies for future business success, the internal and external environments of the Institute are assessed to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that are important to the achievement of its business objectives. Through its commitment to academic excellence, sound financial and marketing strategy and adherence to organisational compliance obligations, including the ESOS Act, National Code 2018, and associated legislation, regulation, standards, and codes, SMEI aspires to be a leading ELICOS Institute in Australia.

Philosophy: The philosophy of the Institute is the development of individuals who value and enjoy the practice of the English language and are able to apply it in a range of personal, educational, and professional settings that helps advance their career and skills.

Mission: Sydney Metropolitan Group Pty Ltd (SydneyMet or Sydney Metropolitan English Institute, SMEI) is committed to providing quality English language teaching in a safe, fun, and culturally enriching environment.

SMEI's mission is to achieve excellence in English education for international students so as to make them job-ready and/or further study ready, while developing itself as an intellectual platform for the community by providing knowledge and skills and catering sensitively to needs of the diverse cultural groups and diaspora that are growing steadily in Australia.

Values:

- *Quality:* our courses, personnel, and resources will be organised to ensure a high quality of education.
- *Integrity:* we practice our specialty with honesty, openness, and integrity. We exercise candour with our clients and stakeholders.
- *Global mindset:* we value the global community, believe in the benefits of international relationships, and in the power of the English language in facilitating international friendship.

- *Diversity*: we respect people of all backgrounds; we value heritage seek inclusiveness in our pursuit of our business.

Goals: The Institute aims at providing students from a broad range of backgrounds and disciplines with concepts, frameworks, and analytical skills to enable them to operate confidently and effectively in a global environment.

SMEI will attract and retain students to help them achieve their educational and career goals regardless of their background or heritage. We will provide a stimulating environment that promotes and supports learner engagement utilising appropriate systems and techniques.

The goals of the Institute in its formative year is to become an ELICOS Institute and for SMEI to register for the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (“CRICOS”). Beyond these foundation goals, the Institute has a range of other goals it plans to achieve. These are set out below:

- Further operationalise the Institute’s corporate governance mechanisms development.
- Successfully complete the registration process with the national regulator.
- Recruit teaching and administrative staff.
- Open the Institute campus in preparation for prospective regulatory approval.
- On registration, promote the Institute courses to a network of Institute agents with target market locations in China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Russia and domestically.
- Commence teaching operations on prospective regulatory approval.
- Ensure quality systems are implemented, monitored, and refined.
- Support the learning process and provide prompt, efficient, and effective student support services through the learning personal support systems.
- Provide a stimulating and engaging environment for teaching and assessment staff to excel, develop, and enhance their discharge of knowledge and experience.
- Utilise the initial student feedback to further enhance operations and the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment to progress the Institute to the next stage in its evolution.

1.2 Institute Location

We are located at 432-434 Kent Street Sydney, NSW 2000 Australia. Telephone number - +61 2 9744 1356; Email – info@smei.nsw.edu.au; website – www.smei.nsw.edu.au.

1.3 About this handbook

This handbook contains useful information about studying at our Institute, about Sydney as a city and about ways to make your learning as rewarding, fun and useful as possible.

This information booklet is designed to provide you with information about the services provided by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute and its approach to providing you a safe, fair and supported environment to participate in training and assessment. See the Resources page on the website for full versions of the policies and procedures and various forms.

This Handbook does not provide you with specific information about a particular course offered by SMEI. This information is contained in the Course Brochure supplied separately.

Information in this handbook is a summary of its policies and procedures and current at the time of its publication. If anything is not clear or you wish to read a full details of our policies, please check our website – www.smei.nsw.edu.au, or speak to our staff.

2 STUDY AT SMEI

2.1 Institute facilities

The Institute is centrally located with access to a range of services. It is close to public transport, shopping, and various workplaces, and combines the convenience of centrality with a calm learning environment in which to study.

The Institute is equipped with the following facilities:

- Campus-wide Wi-Fi
- Study and lecture rooms equipped with whiteboards and audio-visual equipment
- Open plan areas for student engagement and relaxation
- Dedicated space for the Institute library
- Student study and meeting rooms
- Kitchen and food heating facilities
- Multiple charging stations for laptops and mobile devices

While parking is not available for students at the Institute, several paid parking stations exist within a short walking distance from the Institute. Several motorcycle parking spaces around the Institute are also available for a fee and are managed by private car parks. Some car parks also provide bicycle security facilities for a fee. The Institute does not have bicycle racks or parking spaces available.

2.2 Our Classrooms and Facilities

SMEI has well equipped classrooms with audio-visual equipment and a range of learning facilities including:

- Student Lounge: students can relax, sit back, access the internet from their devices or re-heat food, and make coffee and tea in the lounge.
- The library houses a range of textbooks used in each subject during the term.
- Free Wi-Fi Internet Access: the Institute has free access to Wi-Fi facilities for students. On enrolment, you will receive a password to use to log into the Wi-Fi port with your laptop, mobile, or tablet.

2.3 Classroom Rules

The following lists represents the class etiquette and rules in all classes running at the Institute:

- Students need to arrive to class punctually.
- Students need to have suitable writing instruments a note pad and any required learning materials when attending class.
- Class etiquette dictates that students do not speak during a class, except when required to, and do not cause any disruptions to class operations.
- Mobile phones need to be switched off or positioned in silent, non-vibrate mode.
- Sessions run in the English language and all communications in class should be conveyed in English.
- Students need to maintain a professional degree of cleanliness and presentation both in the classroom and with regard to their person.

2.4 Duration of Study

Students must complete their course within the duration specified in their Letter of Offer and Student Written Agreement. Extension of the duration of study may be approved by the Institute only under exceptional circumstances such as:

- Illness where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend classes
- Exceptional circumstances of a family or personal nature or other nature that make it unreasonable to expect the student to be able to commence or complete their studies, in the view of the Institute. These may include natural

disasters, war, and severe illness of a direct family member needing the student's support, death, or unforeseen family financial difficulties. These are subject to the view of the Institute.

For students who defer the commencement of their study, a Deferral Fee may apply.

2.5 Delivery of Courses

Students are required to undertake 20 hours face to face or blended study per week during terms. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute courses are structured to ensure the delivery and assessment process is both rigorous and relevant.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute adopts a Course Progress Policy and attendance is monitored actively. Students are provided with some resources and access to a library.

Students will receive all the teaching for which they have enrolled. To be awarded a completion certificate, all assignments must be completed to a satisfactory level and submitted in accordance with instructions and within timeframes prescribed. Students are advised of the specific requirements to receive a certificate for the course as part of the enrolment and when course delivery commences.

The Institute delivers the course 100% on campus at its premises and does not partner with any other provider in the delivery of the course.

2.6 Term System and Study Load

The Institute's teaching is organised in the block of 12 weeks, which equals to the duration of one level of either GE or EAP. Within the 12 weeks period, the Institute adopts a three modules system; Module A, Module B and Module C; each having 4 weeks. International students who are already in Australia will have a flexibility of studying only one Module, or more.

International students must undertake a full study load per term. Only in exceptional circumstances may international students be enrolled in less than or more than a one hundred (100%) percent study load. Changes to the study load must be approved by the Institute in advance.

Exceptional circumstances include:

- The Institute approves a reduction in the number of courses the student is taking due to ill health as recommended by a professional health practitioner.
- Where the Institute has devised an Intervention Strategy due to a student's lack of course progress that prevents the student from undertaking a full study load

2.7 Course Progress

Under the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 of the ESOS Act 2000, international students are required to maintain satisfactory course progress in order to successfully complete their program within the duration specified in the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) letter. An education provider can only extend the expected duration of study in limited circumstances, through issuing a new CoE letter.

Satisfactory course progress is defined as a student successfully completing all required subjects in their program in order to achieve the certificate. A student who is identified as falling behind in successful assignment completion will be managed via a range of intervention strategies.

An intervention strategy is an individual student plan developed by the Academic Director aimed at improving the academic progress and attendance of a student. Intervention strategies may include additional learning support, counselling, training to develop study habits or adjustment to study program. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute

will do everything we can to assist students who want to learn and progress. If the intervention strategies do not result in an improvement, Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will notify the student in writing of its intention to make a report to the Department of Education and of their right to access the complaints and appeals processes within 20 days. This report may result in the cancellation of the student visa by the Department of Home Affairs.

2.8 Student Wellbeing

Student life is not always easy and the Institute understands some of the personal pressures that can engulf students when being away from home, especially for the first time. The Institute has a Student Counsellor who is available on campus. This professional can help you with personal matters that may affect your studies or your well-being in general. These may include but are not limited to, relationships, family issues, financial concerns, health concerns or simply feeling homesick. It is a good idea to speak with the counsellor early on if you are facing personal challenges. The service is confidential and the counsellor is able to liaise with academic staff and with the Student Academic Support Officer on your behalf, should this be required.

2.9 Course Timetable and Holidays

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute has a timetable in place for study which includes suitable mid-term breaks and holidays for students undertaking courses, so students are not permitted to have additional holidays. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute closes on all official Federal and state Public Holidays. Please check it out at www.smei.nsw.edu.au.

2.10 Student Support Services

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute students are provided with academic and non-academic support to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of their chosen course of study.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute provides students with access to a range of learning resources. The Institute provides a range of student support services including the following through Student Academic Support, the Student Counsellor and Student Services.

- Student Academic Support office working full time at the Institute
- Student Counsellor
- Free library seminars on academic writing and reading skills
- Free class revision tutorials

Other services provided to students include:

- Understanding Australian culture, customs and social norms
- Advice on disability support
- Motivation and goal setting
- Coping with change
- Balancing commitments
- Handling stress

Further, Student Services provide students with the skills to write CV's and prepare university application summaries. The service includes:

- Advice on career development
- Interview skills
- CV writing

Students can contact Student Services or the library or Student Academic Support services directly to access these free services.

2.11 Student counselling

It is important that students have access to a range of support mechanisms during their study. If students require assistance or counselling related to study or personal difficulties, they should speak initially with their trainer or to the Student Services Officer.

The Student Support Officer can suggest access to the specialised support for those who may need further external help. All discussions regarding this are in the strictest of confidence.

External Counselling and Wellbeing Support Services

As a student and staff at SMEI, you can access a range of counselling support and services. If you are experiencing difficulties and would like to connect with somebody, the college has an agreement with **Converge International** to have access to different types of counselling and coaching services.

SMEI would like to ensure that you feel confident to utilise this free and confidential service, whenever you need it – whether it is for a simple chat or urgent support.

You can contact Converge International:

1300 687 327 (AU); or +61 3 8620 5300 (Int); ally@convergeintl.com.au; www.convergeinternational.com.au.

2.12 Change of Address or Contact Details

Students **must** notify Sydney Metropolitan English Institute of changes to their contact details, address, email address (if any), mobile phone number (if any) within 5 business/working days as maintaining current student contact details are a condition of an Australian student visa.

In cases where Sydney Metropolitan English Institute issues either the warning(s) or intention to report letter, the student is accountable for current address and contact details. Failure to provide current details may impact on student visa status particularly when the student fails to respond to Institute communication and is reported on PRISMS.

2.13 Student Card

In order to obtain a student card, students must go to reception to take a photo for Student Identification, which will be ready within 5 business/working days. Students must carry the Sydney Metropolitan English Institute student card at all times when on Sydney Metropolitan English Institute campus.

The Sydney Metropolitan English Institute student card can be used as a concession card at museums, theatres, cinemas etc. If a student loses a student card and requires a replacement, a fee will be charged as per published fees.

2.14 Termination

Students wishing to terminate their course earlier than the course completion date must complete the Sydney Metropolitan English Institute termination form stating the reason with the attached evidence and attend an interview with the Academic Director. Attached evidence includes but is not limited to a one-way airline ticket, Letter of Offer from a new provider, CoE, etc.

If a student requests termination of a principle course of study within the first six months, the student must apply for a letter of release which will only be granted in accord with the conditions in the National Code of Practice. If a student fails to inform Sydney Metropolitan English Institute that they have terminated their studies, an intervention will be initiated and failure to respond will result in reporting on PRISMS.

2.14 Student Feedback

We place emphasis on the views and opinions of our students. Every term, the Institute will request students to complete a quality survey of its operations, teaching, learning and overall quality levels. The library will also conduct surveys of student experience with regard to the use of its resources.

Feedback from these surveys, which are confidential, will be used to enhance the Institute services. The results of all surveys are viewed by Institute management, so your views are taken with the utmost of respect.

Surveys are conducted once a term, at the end of the term, by providing students with a hard copy or a soft copy of the feedback form and allowing up to one (1) week of time to complete the form. The form may also be posted online via a link or may be conducted using third party software applications, but with regard to student privacy.

2.15 Results and certificates

On completing the teaching program with SMEI, you will receive a completion certificate. ELICOS certificates are formatted to a uniform standard to ensure they are valid documents and will be instantly recognised throughout Australia. A certificate of attainment issued by SMEI will be accompanied by a transcript which will detail the units issued within the certificate.

3 IMPORTANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Student Code of Conduct

Students at the Institute are expected to display good conduct and respectful behaviour. The student code of conduct includes the following:

- Students are responsible and accountable education citizens with respect for Institute rules, social etiquette, and polite conduct. To this end, students exercise courtesy, mutual respect, and emotional intelligence in their dealings with others.
- Ethical standards and benchmarks are the hallmarks of young and aspiring professionals. Institute students behave ethically, morally, and in a socially responsible way with regard to their actions, dealing with Institute property and how they convey themselves from an ethically sound position. Cheating, plagiarism, and innuendo are forms of unacceptable behaviour that students refrain from and discourage.
- Respect for the feelings, beliefs, and values of others signifies tolerance, respect for diversity and confidence. Students will respect the views and opinions and beliefs of others and will not make statements, gestures, or implied communications that disrespect any culture, belief system, or heritage.
- Common taste and decency in one's dealings and in the items that students carry, wear or display are attributes of successful learners. These attributes are encouraged and students are not permitted to exhibit, carry, display, or otherwise cause to be visible any offensive material.
- The art of speaking and listening is used by the world's foremost professionals in all their dealings. The Institute encourages and nurtures active listening principles and the art of respectful, clear, well-toned speech. Students are encouraged to speak professionally and to listen carefully to colleagues, peers, contacts, and staff, prior to responding. Responses and discussions should be purposeful, concise, and clear.
- Presentation through attire is an important first impression for professionals. The Institute does not have a specific uniform but recommends smart, professional attire be worn by students. Clean, ironed and reflective of a professional future, attire should be in line with maintaining a positive image. The Institute disallows attire that lacks taste, is offensive or revealing.
- Respect for the rules and regulations of the Institute, upholding them, and discouraging others from breaking them are standards of conduct that are expected of all our students.
- Social responsibility, empathy for the less fortunate, and social enterprise are encouraged at the Institute with students expected to be part of their local community and to use knowledge to enhance the well-being of society.

3.2 Admissions Procedure

The admissions process adopted by the Institute is based on the merit of the application provided by the student. An important factor in deciding to admit a student into a course at the Institute is their ability to complete the English language program they are applying for, their current academic and English language achievements and their desired career or further study outcomes after completing the English language course. Below are some important factors to consider when applying to study at the Institute. The Institute will determine the right level of English course placement based on its placement test, existing English exam results, or a combination of these (Note that RPL does not apply to the ELICOS courses the Institute runs).

- The Institute's Student Services will administer all applications and will be responsible for monitoring any conditions of offer.
- All applications will be reviewed by the Institute and all evidentiary documents will be cited prior to an offer of admission been made to the intending student.
- A Letter of Offer must be authorised by and signed by the Principal Executive Officer (PEO) or their authorised officer.
- The Institute may withdraw or cancel an offer if the student provides incomplete or incorrect or false and misleading information.
- In all cases the intending student has the right to appeal such a decision by accessing the Institute Appeals and Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- An intending student who has accepted an offer of admission to the Institute, but has failed to complete the enrolment process stated in the Letter of Offer by the due date specified therein will attain a "Failure to Enrol" status.

- An intending student may request a review of the admissions decision using the Institute Appeals and Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- Intending students should complete the admission application form provided on the Institute web site or in hard copy or through an agent.
- All documentation sent with the application as evidence should be in original form or as a certified copy.
- All documents must be in the English language or translated by a certified translator and stamped with a signifying sign that includes the translator's details and their registration number/s.
- Applications that are not accompanied by original or certified documents will have a special condition inserted in the Letter of Offer indicating that acceptance and the issuance of a Conformation of Enrolment (CoE) can only take place once the required (original or certified) documents are received by the Institute and are in good order.
- Clear and legible copies of documents are required for the application to be assessed.
- Student Services (enrolment) staff at the Institute will check the completeness of documents and assess the equivalency and authenticity of the qualifications provided.
- The Academic Manager or a delegate along with Student Services staff will determine if the applicant meets the requirements of the course.
- If the student applying for admission is an overseas student already studying in Australia, Student Services will check that the applicant has completed at least six (6) months of studies of their primary course of study before processing the application.
- If the student has not yet completed six (6) months, Student Services will check if one (1) of the following is correct before processing the application:
 - The student has a valid release letter from the original institution
 - The student's course from the original institution is no longer registered or is discontinued
- Applicants holding qualifications from overseas which are not in English must have them translated by an authorised translator
- NAATI (www.natti.com.au) translators or other authorised translators are accepted by the Institute as translators of these documents.
- Applicants must provide the certified translation along with certified copies of originals with the application
- Letters of Offer must be on the Institute letterhead and must be approved and signed by the Principal Executive Officer (PEO) or their authorised officer. If there are special conditions attached to the offer, these will be stated on the Letter of Offer
- Payment methods of fees include bank transfer to the Institute's nominated bank account
- Other payment methods may be agreed to by the Institute from time to time.
- If a student accepts an offer of a place at the Institute, they must complete the Acceptance Form and return it to Student Services or the Authorised Staff Member shown on the Letter of Offer. The offer must be unconditional before the student can make payment. For example, if the offer is conditional on providing certified true copies of transcripts or evidence of relevant work experience, these will need to be submitted first with the Acceptance Form.

For further details, please check the relevant policies and procedures.

3.3 Student Progress and Intervention Strategies

Students must satisfy both attendance requirements and course progress requirements to be able to demonstrate satisfactory course progress. The Institute takes student progress seriously given its central role in ensuring students achieve consistent progress in their study. Each course has a range of assessments during the term. The criteria to which a student's progress is applied are:

- Completion of assessments (lodged on time, success in passing the assessment)
- Student attendance: the student must attend at least eighty (80%) percent of the lessons.

Students who do not show satisfactory progress due to one or both of the progress criteria will be contacted in the first instance by the academic staff member delivering the unit. If progress is not achieved, the academic staff member will refer the student to the Student Academic Support Officer, who will organise a Study Plan for the student. The student may have to attend compulsory classes or undertake homework or other activities to enable

them to return to acceptable course progress levels. This may also include completing a declaration regarding course attendance.

Where a student has been assessed as not achieving satisfactory attendance, the Institute will notify the student of its intention to report the student. The written notice will inform the student that he or she is able to access the Institute complaints and appeals process and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.

Some of the ways in which the Institute may support the student when undertaking an Intervention Strategy are:

- Counselling
- Attending extra tutorials
- Attending one on one sessions with a teacher
- Attending additional group classes
- Appointment of a student mentor
- Attending language support sessions
- Completing a declaration of attendance reform
- Agreeing to a specific Study Plan
- Agreeing to specific study achievement milestones
- Other academic measures as deemed necessary by the Institute

The steps the Institute takes when undertaking the Intervention Strategy include:

- Contacting the student to ascertain the reasons for the lack of course progress
- Discussing the course, its learning outcomes, its future learning topics and being candid about the direction of the course versus the student's own goals and if they have changed
- In most cases, a Study Plan will be agreed with the student and signed by both the student and the Student Academic Support Officer or the authorised Institute officer. This step is taken if it is ascertained that the course goals, direction and future units continue to be aligned with the student's goals and future direction in English language learning.
- The Study Plan will outline specific steps to be taken by the student and those that the Institute will do to improve student performance and re-align it to the course progress requirements.
- The Study Plan will be implemented and monitored for progress. This may lead to weekly meetings or more regular meetings with the Student Academic Support Officer or other authorised Institute officer and with the English language teacher.

Intervention strategies may further be escalated if change is not forthcoming and instances of escalation are taken seriously by the Institute. In the event that avenues to support the student have not led to the required result, the Institute may write to the student informing them of a potential breach in their Student Visa conditions, due to a lack of course progress. This may be escalated further where the Institute may report the student to the Department of Home Affairs as required by law.

The best way to avoid falling behind in studies is to contact the academic staff member teaching you the subject and to speak with the Student Academic Support Officer early in the term if you are experiencing difficulties.

3.4 Assessments

The basis of the Institute's assessment strategy is to provide English language students with a means to demonstrate necessary knowledge and skills to perform at the required level in English. Formative assessments are those that take place as part of in class activities, while, summative assessments refer to assessments that test the student's knowledge accumulated through the entire study period.

Most of the assessments used at the Institute take the form of:

- Speaking
- Presenting
- Reading
- Textbook exercises

- Excursion reports
- Watching, listening and summarising exercises
- Assignments
- Essay
- Case Study
- Report
- Analysis
- Group activity
- Quiz
- Test
- Exam
- Site visit reports
- Reviews of tests
- Topical debates

3.5 Attendance

In the normal circumstances, students are required to attend at least eighty (80%) of their scheduled classes. The attendance policy forms part of the course progress requirements for the Institute, which also requires the student to make course progress. Students who attend less than eighty (80%) percent of their classes will be contacted by the lecturer or tutor in the first instance to discuss reasons for absence, followed by formal contact from Student Services.

In the event absence continues, the matter may be referred to the Student Academic Support Officer, the Student Counsellor, and/or other Institute authorised officers for purposes of contacting the student and devising an Intervention Strategy.

The Institute places weight on the attendance of classes and believes that a strong correlation exists between class attendance and academic performance. Our policy is that students must satisfy both the attendance (at least 80%) requirement and the course progress requirement (completing and passing assessments) in order to be considered as making satisfactory progress.

Students who do not abide by the terms of an Intervention Strategy, Study Plan, and/or other course progress requirements may be sent a letter informing them of the Institute's intent to report a lack of course progress to the Department of Home Affairs. This may subsequently lead to the Institute contacting the Department to report the student.

Students experiencing challenging personal circumstances that may have led to absenteeism are encouraged to contact the Student Counsellor as soon as practical to discuss their specific case.

The Institute will identify and offer support to those at risk of not meeting course progress or attendance requirements and will only extend the duration of an overseas student's enrolment in certain circumstances and advise them of potential impacts on their student visa.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic continuing, the Institute is counting the attendance in different forms such as online learning, zoom meetings, phone conversation of course materials etc.

3.6 Monitoring Attendance and Course Progress

The Institute will issue the expected duration of study specified on the overseas student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). That duration will not exceed the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registered duration for the course. The Institute must ensure that students are able to complete the course within the expected duration specified on the CoE.

3.7 Intervention Strategies for Students at Risk

The Institute will assist students through an intervention strategy if they are not achieving satisfactory course progress. The intervention strategy will identify, notify and assist those students who have been absent for more than **five (5) consecutive days** without approval, or who are at risk of not meeting attendance requirements before the student's attendance drops below 80 percent.

The Institute will keep records of all contact and counselling made with students who have been absent for more than five consecutive days or where the student is at risk of not attending at least 80 percent of the course contact hours. These records are kept in the Student File.

3.8 Reporting of Non-Attendance or Lack of Course Progress

The Institute is required, by law, to report students who do not meet course progress or attendance requirements. However, we must give the student a written notice of our intention to report. We will also advise the student of their right to access our internal complaints and appeals process within **20 working days**.

3.9 Extending Course Duration in Only Special Circumstances

The Institute can only extend the student's enrolment if we have assessed that there are compassionate or compelling circumstances and there is evidence to support this assessment. We must also have either started or will start implementing an intervention strategy for the student who is at risk of not meeting course progress requirements, or if an approved deferral or suspension of the overseas student's enrolment has occurred.

3.10 Student Leave of Absence

If the student is unable to attend classes for an extended period of time (longer than one week), they must complete a Student Leave of Absence Form with supporting documentation pertaining to the reason for your absence. The Institute will assess your application and provide you with written advice regarding its outcome within two (2) weeks of the form being received by the Institute.

Leave of Absence generally relates to compelling or compassionate reasons or for reasons outside the control of the student. In all cases documented evidence will be required and the Institute may request audience with the student.

3.11 Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment (Student Requested)

Students wishing to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment must meet one (1) of the following conditions:

- The student has been delayed due to a visa not being issued.
- There are compassionate or compelling circumstances affecting the student that is beyond their control such as serious illness, death of a close or direct family member, major political upheaval, natural disaster or a traumatic experience.
- In all cases, the student must provide documented evidence and the Institute will assess their application based on evidence.

A written decision will be provided to the student within fourteen (14) days from the date of receiving an application for deferment, suspension, or cancellation of course.

The period of suspension or deferment shall not exceed six (6) months and approval will only be forthcoming in the limited circumstances described above.

If the student wishes to cancel their enrolment, they must complete a Notice of Withdrawal Form with supporting documentation. If the student has not completed the first six (6) months of their study at the Institute, they must provide a letter of offer from an alternative provider in order to comply with the conditions of the National Code.

3.12 Deferment, Suspension or Cancellation of Enrolment (Institute-Initiated)

The Institute may suspend a student's enrolment for serious reasons that, in the Institute's view, constitute an offence deserving of a suspension. This may include misconduct or misbehavior, which manifests itself in one or more of the following behaviours or actions:

- Stealing from the Institute or a peer
- A serious breach of Institute rules
- A failure to comply with reasonable requests from an Institute employee or contractor
- A threat whether direct or indirect to staff, peers or others
- A breach of enrolment conditions
- Offensive conduct
- Failing to meet the requirements of the course progress policy
- Non-payment of tuition fees when they are due
- Cheating, plagiarism or other forms of misconduct that are considered, by the Institute, to be serious or repetitive in nature
- Other serious incidents or events the Institute deems as being in contrast to its code of conduct and the philosophy of professional conduct

If the Institute instigates a deferment, suspension or cancellation of enrolment action, it will write to the student indicating its intentions. The letter will clearly state that the student has twenty (20) days to access the Institute's appeals process if the student wishes for an appeal to occur. If the appeals process is initiated, the Institute will maintain the student's enrolment until the internal appeals process is concluded.

If the student is suspended, deferred or their enrolment is cancelled, a notification of this will be sent to the Department of Home Affairs. This will occur on completion of twenty (20) working days of the conclusion of the appeals process if the appeal is not upheld.

In all cases, the student will be afforded natural justice and will be provided with an opportunity to explain, clarify and defend their view to the Institute. The Institute believes in fairness and equity in all its dealings and will afford the student every chance to defend their position.

3.13 Process for Transferring to Another Provider

Under the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 of the ESOS Act 2000, international students are restricted from transferring between education providers prior to completing six months of their principal course of study, unless they are given a release from their principal course or can demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will only consider giving a release to a student who has a valid enrolment offer from another registered education provider. Students must also complete an Application to Transfer between Registered Providers form. If granted, a release will be issued at no cost to the student.

All requests for a transfer are recorded on PRISMS including the reasons for refusal of release.

Where a release is not granted, the student will be advised in writing providing the reasons for refusal. The student may access the Institute's complaints and appeals process within 20 working days if they want a review of the decision. Applications for transfer from Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will be assessed and replied to within 5 working days.

Students applying to transfer to another provider must use the following process:

- The student must go to reception to fill in the Termination Request Form
- Students must complete all sections, in particular, the reason and circumstances for the transfer to another provider with documentary evidence
- Students who have NOT completed six months of their principal course MUST NOT provide a Confirmation of

Enrolment from another provider as evidence.

- The student must then make an appointment to meet with the Academic Director to discuss the transfer request
- The Academic Director will discuss the circumstances that constitute reasonable grounds for refusal or acceptance of the student's request including when a transfer may be considered detrimental to the students.
- Assessing and replying to the student transfer request will be completed within 5 business/working days unless insufficient evidence has been submitted with the application.
- In straightforward requests, students will be provided with an immediate signature from the Academic Director during the interview either accepting or rejecting the transfer and termination letter request.
- In cases where other evidence needs to be provided and considered, all requirements will be noted.
- In all cases, students who have not had their termination request approved may access Sydney Metropolitan English Institute's grievance and appeals process within 20 days

Evidence will be retained on the student file.

3.13 Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Information, ideas etc. quoted or paraphrased from another source, must be acknowledged with "quotation marks" around the relevant words/ sentences or ideas and cited at the end of the document. Sources of information, ideas etc. must be provided in alphabetical order by author's surname (including author's full name, name of document/ book/ internet etc. and year and place of publishing) or may be included in brackets in the text.

Students who assist others to have access to their assignment material will be deemed as equally guilty of plagiarism.

3.14 Cheating and Plagiarism

The Institute is founded on the principles of professional conduct, ethical behaviour, and respect for achievement. This philosophical position is represented in our view of cheating and plagiarism. The Institute does not tolerate any form of cheating and uses forms with every assessment requiring the student to declare that their work is free from cheating or plagiarism.

Academic integrity means being honest in academic work and taking responsibility for learning the conventions of learning. Academic honesty is a fundamental principle in teaching and learning at the Institute. The Institute awards due credit for honest academic work and penalises academic misconduct and all forms of cheating or plagiarism. Academic misconduct includes copying the work of others, plagiarism, and all forms of cheating.

It is important that students familiarise themselves with their responsibilities in relation to Academic Integrity and if you have any questions direct them to your teacher or the Student Academic Support Officer.

Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Both forms of plagiarism are unacceptable and constitute a serious violation of trust in you as a student and undermine the learning process.

Intentional plagiarism is deliberately using materials attributed to another person without referencing the author. Unintentional plagiarism may occur if you do not understand appropriate ways of acknowledging sourced reference materials. If you are unsure, you should consult your teacher. The Student Academic Support Officer is also able to assist you in this regard and is available every day of the week for consultation.

Cheating is any attempt to gain an unfair advantage over other students. This may include copying, plagiarism, communicating with anyone other than supervisors during an examination, and use of concealed notes in an exam. Cheating will result in a fail grade for the unit you are studying. Students found to be cheating will be referred to the Student Counsellor for academic counselling.

Academic misconduct includes the submission of work that has been prepared or assisted by a third party such as a purchase from an online system or paying a friend to complete the work. This form of academic misconduct will also lead to a fail grade for the unit and referral of the student to the Student Counsellor.

3.15 Payment of Fees

SMEI ELICOS course fees are \$300 per week. There are other one-off fees such as enrolment/application fees (\$200) (non-refundable) and material fees (\$100). Please check the details on fees on our website or in the policy.

Fees are normally paid in advance on a term by term basis on enrolment. The payment cycle occurs prior to the course commencing and the Institute will notify you of the exact date by which payment must be made each term, but this is generally no later than one (1) to two (2) weeks prior to the start of the term.

Payment can be made via bank transfer to the Institute bank account and may not be made in cash.

If payment is not received by the due date, the student's enrolment will be cancelled effective from the due date.

In the event that the student has undertaken study, they will remain liable for any unpaid, outstanding debts.

From time to time, we may change our fees. If this occurs, new prices will be published on our web site. The tuition fees and other fees may change from one term to the next and would generally increase over time. Students will be subject to the fees applicable to their program at the time of enrolment.

Please refer to the Schedule of Fees and Charges for the details on fees and how to pay them.

3.16 Payment Deadline Extension in Exceptional Circumstances

Students who have encountered exceptional circumstances, which could not reasonably have been foreseen, as deemed reasonable by the Institute, may, at the Institute's sole discretion, apply to Student Services for a payment extension. The granting of the extension or payment in installments will be at the sole discretion of the Institute and will generally apply to extraordinary circumstances.

If an extension is approved, a revised due date for payment will be determined by the Institute and advised to the student in writing. If payment by an installment plan is approved, the Institute will also inform the student in writing of the number, amount, and due date of installments.

If payment is not received by the due date, the student's enrolment will be cancelled effective as at the due date.

In the event that the student has undertaken study, they will remain liable for any unpaid, outstanding debts.

3.17 Rights of international students and intending international students in refunds

One of the many rights of an international student or intending international student is a refund of various fees. Refunds can occur in a range of circumstances including, but not limited to:

- Where the institute defaults by, for example, failing to start providing the course to the student at the location on the agreed starting date or where it ceases after the course starts, but before the course is completed and the student has not withdrawn from the course before the default day. This is referred to as "Provider Default".
- Where the overseas student or intending overseas student defaults. This is referred to as "Student Default" and could occur in a range of situations. For example, if the course starts at the location on the agreed starting day, but the student does not start the course on that day and has not previously withdrawn, or the student withdraws from the course at the location either before or after the agreed starting day, or the institute refuses to provide or continue to providing the course to the student at the location because of one or more of the following:

- The student failed to pay an amount payable to the institute
- The student breached a condition of her or her visa

3.18 Student Refund Policy

A full refund of fees will be paid when one of the following occurs:

- An offer of enrolment if withdrawn by the Institute except where the offer was made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information being supplied by the applicant
- The Institute is unable to provide the course or unit which the student is enrolled in
- The student is not permitted to enrol due to unit requirements, such as completing a pre-requisite test, not being satisfied.

A student must make an application for a refund by completing a Request for a Student Refund form and submitting it to Student Services. Refund applications will be reviewed and are subject to the Institute's approval.

The Institute has a refund policy designed to provide international students and intending international students with fair rules for claiming a refund. The various situations under which a refund applies, the amount of refund, and the methods through which refunds are managed are summarised below.

The Australian education system is designed to ensure the rights of international students and intending international students are protected. Both legislation and internal systems at the Institute help protect international students or intending international students in a range of ways. One of these protection measures includes a refund policy. Refunds occur in a range of circumstances as shown below and are intended to provide a balance between the rights of the student and the legitimate commercial rights of the Institute. Our full refund policy is also available online.

The table below illustrates the refund reasons and refund amounts that explain how the Institute applies refunds to international students in compliance with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS Act) and the requirements of Standard 3 of the National Code. The refund policy does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws.

Reasons for Refund of Course Fees Paid	Refund Payable
If your visa application is rejected by the Australian Department of Immigration, and you have not yet commenced the course, you will need to attach proof of this in the form of the letter of rejection and contact the college to notify them of this prior to the course commencing	100% of the fees are refundable and payable to you within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee (equivalent to enrolment fees which is NOT refundable).
Visa application unsuccessful (proof required as above), but student has commenced studies	100% of the fees are refundable and payable to you within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees is NOT refundable.
Visa application delayed by circumstances beyond the student's control, thus not enabling the student to begin the course on time. This requires documented evidence.	100% of the fees are refundable and payable to you within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees, is NOT refundable.
The student does not meet the Minimum Entry Requirements or other conditions set out in the Letter of Offer	100% of the fees are refundable and payable to you within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees, is NOT refundable.

Student default as defined in the Act	Refund according to the Act refund calculations
Provider default	Refund according to the Act and its calculations and generally 100% of unused fees
Student provides misleading or false information	Refund according to calculations in the Act. The result of the misleading information needs to be noted. For example, whether the misleading (or false) information may lead to a visa rejection or may lead to an institute refusing the student enrolment. The refund could range from 100% minus \$200 of administration fees to 100% minus \$200 minus spent monies through attendance of course.
Withdrawal from the course prior to commencement (10 weeks or more prior to the starting date of the course) (70 or more calendar days)	100% of the fees are refundable and payable to you within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees, is NOT refundable.
Withdrawal from the course prior to commencement (between 4 and 10 weeks prior to the starting date of the course) (29 to 69 calendar days)	80% of the fees are refundable and payable within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees is NOT refundable.
Withdrawal from the course prior to commencement (less than 4 weeks prior to the starting date of the course) (1 to 28 calendar days)	50% of the fees are refundable and payable within 28 days. \$200 as an administration fee, which does not form part of the course fees, is NOT refundable.
Withdrawal by the student after commencement	No refund
Withdrawal by the student at any time due to compassionate or compelling reasons outside the control of the student, supported by written evidence and as determined by the college	An administration fee of \$200 will be charged to the student. A refund of any remaining weeks of tuition paid for but not studied will be made to the student if the circumstance is deemed by the college as compassionate or compelling.
Special circumstances where the student is not able to travel to Australia, not due to a visa rejection, but due to compelling or compassionate reasons outside the control of the student, supported by written evidence and as determined by the college.	100% refund
Late arrival to a course and student has been granted a visa	No refund
Student expelled from the college for breaching college policies after commencing a course	No refund
Breach of student visa conditions, visa cancellation or failure to comply with enrolment conditions	No refund
Accommodation or home stay fee (if booked via the college)	A placement fee (booking fee) is not refundable. Any bond amount agreed in your contract is not refundable, but all other fees prepaid by the student are refundable. In special circumstances

	outside the control of the student, the bond fee may also be refunded subject to college determination, if booked through the college.
Airport pickup	In the event of a student being refused a visa, any prepaid airport pick up fees will be 100% refunded to the student if those services were organised by the college. In other cases, an administration fee of \$30 will not be refunded to the student and the remaining prepaid amount for airport pick up will be refunded to the student.

3.19 Overseas Student Health Cover Refunds

Where a student leaves Australia before the expiry date of their student visa, a partial refund may be available from the insurer. Claims must be presented to the insurer directly using the appropriate insurer forms with proof of exit from Australia. If you have taken out OSHC (health insurance) through a private provider, you will need to contact that provider directly regarding their refunds.

3.20 Disclosure of Information

Information about students will not be provided to any other third party without the prior written consent of the student with the exception of relevant government departments when the information will be provided with or without the consent of the student. A copy of the information shared with a third party will be kept on the student's file. Information about a student from the student:

- Students have access to all information kept on their file upon written request.
- Email requests from students for documents will not be processed. Students must write a formal letter with their signature for verification then the information/ documents will be processed.
- Information about a student from a third party
 - Information requests about students from a third party will be denied unless there is written consent from the student.
 - Information about students will not be provided to any other third party without the prior written consent of the student with the exception of government departments when the information will be provided with or without the consent of the student.

In all cases, conditions of the Privacy Act 1988, Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), will be followed and adhered to by staff members and students at Sydney Metropolitan English Institute.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is required to securely retain your personal details for a period of 30 years from the date your enrolment has completed. The purpose of this is to enable your study to be recorded for future reference and to allow you to obtain a record of your outcome if required.

In some cases, we are required by law to make student information available to Government agencies such as the Australian Skills Quality Authority. In all other cases Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will seek the written permission of the student for such disclosure. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will not disclose your information to any person or organisation unless we have written instructions from you to do so. If you require your records to be accessed by a person, you need to authorise this access otherwise this access will be denied.

If you have concerns about how Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is managing your personal information, we encourage you to inform our staff and discuss your concerns. You may also make a complaint directly to us using our internal complaint handling arrangements outlined in this handbook. Under the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) you

also have the right to make a complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) about the handling of your personal information. You can find more information about making a privacy complaint at the website of the OAIC located at: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints>.

3.21 Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination and harassment involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of 'difference'. These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age, marital status, or economic status.

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that humiliates, offends, or intimidates people. Harassment is bullying conduct that is neither appropriate nor relevant. This includes words as well as acts, pictures, and images and creating a hostile or threatening atmosphere. The effect is to make a person feel insulted, offended, intimidated, and unable to work effectively or, ultimately safely. Examples of bullying behaviour include excessive criticism, publicly insulting or shaming an individual and making threats.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute ensures that any reported cases of discrimination, harassment, or bullying are handled in a confidential sensitive manner to protect the integrity and rights of any participants. In cases where the allegation is proven with concrete evidence, the student or staff member risks termination.

3.21 Complaints and Appeals

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is committed to providing a fair complaints and appeals process. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute recognises that a complaint and an appeal are different and therefore require a different process for responding to each.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is generally negative feedback about services, other students or staff which has not been resolved locally. A complaint may be received by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute in any form and does not need to be formally documented by the complainant in order to be acted on. Complaints may be made by any person but are generally made by students.

The complaint may be about the student's dealings with Sydney Metropolitan English Institute's education agents or any related party it has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services

What is an appeal?

An appeal is an application by a student for reconsideration of an unfavourable decision or finding during learning and/or assessment. An appeal must be made in writing and specify the particulars of the decision or finding in dispute. Appeals must be lodged within 28 days of the decision or finding is informed to the student.

Early resolution of complaints and appeals

In all cases, issues that arise during learning and assessment that are the source of frustration or are in dispute should be resolved at the time they occur between the persons involved.

Complaint and appeals handling

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute undertakes to apply the following principles to its complaints and appeals handling:

- A written record of all complaints and appeals is to be kept by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute including all details of lodgement, response, and resolution.
- A complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case **at no cost**.

- Each complainant or person lodging an appeal may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- The handling of a complaint or appeal is to commence within 10 working days of the lodgement of the complaint or appeal and all reasonable measures are taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable.
- The complainant or person lodging an appeal is to be provided a written statement of the outcome, including details of the reasons for the outcome.
- Sydney Metropolitan English Institute shall maintain the enrolment of the complainant, or person lodging an appeal during the complaint or appeals process.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint or appeals process that find in the favour of the student shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints and appeals are to be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Sydney Metropolitan English Institute representative is to disclose information to any person without the permission of Sydney Metropolitan English Institute Principal Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the complainant has given permission for this to occur.
- Complaints and appeals are to be considered on the basis of procedural fairness and lead to opportunities for improvement through a report to the PEO.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute considers that it would be extremely unlikely that complaints and appeals are not able to be resolved quickly within Sydney Metropolitan English Institute's internal structures.

3.22 Complaints and Appeals Handling Procedure

Matters that cannot be resolved at the time they occur should be referred to Sydney Metropolitan English Institute Principal Executive Officer for review. The following procedure is to be followed when a complaint form is received:

- A complaint or appeal may be received in any form (written, verbal) although persons seeking to make a complaint are recommended to complete the complaint form or request for an appeal of a decision which are available on the Sydney Metropolitan English Institute website.
- Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will respond to any complaint or appeal the overseas student makes regarding his or her dealings with Sydney Metropolitan English Institute itself, its education agents or any related party it has an arrangement with to deliver the overseas student's course or related services
- A person who makes a complaint or an appeal will be provided a written acknowledgement as soon as possible and not later than 24 hours from the time the complaint or the appeal is received. This acknowledgement is intended to provide the person assurance that Sydney Metropolitan English Institute had received the complaint or the appeal and will review the relevant issues and provide a response. The acknowledgement will inform the person that they will receive a written response within 14 days.
- There is no time limitation on a person who is seeking to make a complaint. An appeal however must be made within 28 days of the person being informed of the decision or finding of which they intend to appeal.
- Written records of all complaints / appeals are kept by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute including all details of lodgement, response and resolution. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will maintain a complaints / appeals register to be used to record the details of the complaint / appeal and to maintain a chronological journal of events during the handling process. Records relating to complaint / appeal handling are stored securely to prevent access to unauthorised personnel.
- A person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is provided an opportunity to formally present his or her case at no cost.
- Each person may be accompanied and/or assisted by a support person at any relevant meeting.
- Where a complaint or appeal is made about or involves allegations about another person, Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is obliged to inform this person about this complaint/appeal or allegation and provide them the opportunity to respond and present information in response to the issues raised. This may be achieved through direct meetings or meeting via an electronic means. Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will maintain a detailed record of these meetings in the form of a record of conversation. At all times information will be handled sensitively and treated in confidence. Persons involved in a dispute or complaint are expected to treat each other with respect and conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

- The handling of a complaint / appeal will commence within seven (7) working days of the lodgement of the complaint / appeal and all reasonable measures will be taken to finalise the process as soon as practicable. The handling of the complaint/ appeal will be conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner.
- The person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is provided a written response to the complaint / appeal, including details of the reasons for the outcome. A written response will be provided to the person within fourteen (14) days of the lodgement of the complaint / appeal.
- If the complaint is not upheld, Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will advise the overseas student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review. The Institute will give the overseas student the contact details of an appropriate external complaints handling and appeals body.
- Sydney Metropolitan English Institute will attempt to resolve complaints / appeals as soon as possible. A timeframe to resolve a complaint / appeal within thirty (30) days is considered acceptable and in the best interest of Sydney Metropolitan English Institute and the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal. A person making a complaint or seeking an appeal will be provided with regular updates to inform them of the progress of the complaint / appeal handling. Updates will be provided to the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal at a minimum of two (2) weekly intervals.
- Decisions or outcomes of the complaint / appeal handling process that find in the favour of the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal shall be implemented immediately.
- Complaints / appeals will be handled in the strictest of confidence. No Sydney Metropolitan English Institute representative will disclose information to any person without the permission of Sydney Metropolitan English Institute Principal Executive Officer. A decision to release information to third parties can only be made after the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal has given permission for this to occur. This permission is to be given using the Information Release Form.
- Complaints / appeals will be considered and handled to ensure the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness are applied at every stage of the handling process. This means that the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is entitled to be heard with access to all relevant information and with the right of reply. The person making a complaint or seeking an appeal is entitled to have their complaint heard by a person that is without bias and may not be affected by the decision. Finally, the decision will be made based on logical evidence and the decision-maker will take account of relevant considerations and will act for a proper purpose and will not consider irrelevant considerations.

3.23 Review by an independent person

- Sydney Metropolitan English Institute provides the opportunity for the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal who is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaints and appeals handling process to seek a review by an independent person.
- Before a person seeks a review by an independent person, they are requested to first allow Sydney Metropolitan English Institute to fully consider the nature of the complaint or appeal and to fully respond to the person in writing. If after this has occurred, the person is not satisfied with the outcome, they can then seek a review by an independent person.
- To request a review by an independent person, the complainant or the person making an appeal should inform the Administration Manager of their request who will initiate the process with the Principal Executive Officer.
- In these circumstances the Sydney Metropolitan English Institute Principal Executive Officer will advise of an appropriate party independent of Sydney Metropolitan English Institute to review the complaint, and its subsequent handling, and to provide advice to Sydney Metropolitan English Institute in regard to the recommended outcomes.
- SMEI will meet all normal costs associated with a third party review. There will be no cost to the student.
- Following an independent review, advice received from the independent person will be accepted by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute as final, advised to the person making a complaint or seeking an appeal in writing and implemented promptly and without prejudice.
- Where a complaint is received by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute and the Principal Executive Officer feels that they may be biased or there is a perception of bias, then the complaint will be referred directly to an independent third-party for consideration and response as outlined below.

If the complaint relates to administrative or procedural matters, the student may refer the complaint to the Commonwealth Ombudsman at <https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>

For complaints about purely academic matters, SMEI employs the **Resolution Institute**, the national association of dispute resolvers, as an appropriate third party. Head Office details as follows:

- Address: Level 1, 13 Bridge Street Sydney NSW
- Phone: (+61 2) 9251 3366
- Free call: 1800 651 650
- Email: infoaus@resolution.institute
- Website: www.resolution.institute

SMEI will accept decisions by the Resolution Institute as final, advise the person making a complaint in writing and implement the decision without prejudice.

The following external agencies are also relevant points of referral the person may consider:

- In relation to consumer related issues, the person may refer their complaint to the **Office of Fair Trading**.
- In relation to matters relating to privacy, the person may refer their complaint to the **Office of the Australian Information Commissioner** via the following details: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/individuals/how-do-i-make-a-privacy-complaint> or call on 1300 363 992

3.24 Critical Incidents

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for staff and students. This policy underpins our approach to respond to critical incidents that may occur and impact on the people both studying and working at Sydney Metropolitan English Institute. We are particularly mindful of our responsibility to support our students from overseas who do not have access to a normal support network.

A Critical Incident: is any sudden or progressive development (event) that requires immediate attention and decisive action to prevent / minimise any negative impact on the health and welfare of one or more individuals. Critical incidents may include (but are not limited to) events such as:

- Death/suicide;
- Serious accident or injury;
- Death or serious illness of a student's family or friends overseas (in their homeland);
- Removing an individual's liberty under duress, threats of violence, assault, rape/sexual assault, aggravated burglary, biological or chemical weapons found/present;
- Fire, bomb, explosion, gas/chemical hazards, discharge of firearms;
- Threat of widespread infection or contamination;
- Civil unrest;
- Serious damage to essential facilities and or extreme disruption to operations at Sydney Metropolitan English Institute; and
- Information which has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of Sydney Metropolitan English Institute in the media and/or wider community.

Staff Responsibility

In the first instance, the designated officer is any member of the staff who is witness to /or receives the information which triggers the critical incident. If possible, the PEO is to be immediately called to the situation to assume control. In all cases the procedure below is to be followed (i.e. Critical Incident Procedure):

- The Designated Officer is to assess the situation and consider any apparent risks to their own safety and those present.
- Where the Designated Officer considers a critical incident involving threat to life or/ and triggering an emergency situation is occurring the Designated Officer is to contact Emergency Services by dialling 000 immediately and being put through to the appropriate service. See Accompanying contact numbers.
- Provided there is no threat to personal safety in doing so, the Designated Officer is to take steps to minimise

further damage or injury. This may involve organising willing bystanders to provide support.

- The Academic Director or most senior staff member available is to assume responsibility for assessing the incident and forming a Critical Incident Team if deemed necessary.
- As soon as practical the Academic Director or the most senior staff member available is to prepare a Critical Incident Initial Report outlining details re: the type of incident, the exact location and details of any person or persons who might be injured, or in distress and in need of counselling or at risk. Where persons affected include current students, a copy of the Student Written Agreement should accompany the report.
- The Academic Director and Critical Incident Team/other staff members, will review the situation, set priorities, allocate tasks/responsibilities and coordinate an immediate response including communications (to staff, students, families of those involved, helpers, and the media).
- Where a staff member has assumed management of the critical incident, this person will consult with and/or take instruction from the Academic Director as necessary.
- The Critical Incident Team will organise ongoing response/follow up (including staff briefing, counselling, review and reporting) as part of the process.
- The Critical Incident Team will organise a de-briefing session to evaluate response procedures and make recommendations for ongoing actions if required.
- The Critical Incident Team will produce a final report and make recommendations about handling any future critical incidents. Revision of this procedure may be part of that report.

Tasks and Responsibilities

The Academic Director or most senior staff member available will:

- Head the Critical Incident Team;
- Liaise with emergency services;
- Liaise with Diplomatic Post/Embassy/Consulate;
- Provide notification of critical incident to most Senior Staff Member;
- Liaise with immediate family members or guardians if appropriate;
- Convene Critical Incident Team;
- Formulate and execute critical incident plan; and
- Organise debriefing, counselling and follow-up.

Informing the Police

The police must investigate all sudden unexpected death. Police actions include:

- Reporting the death to the Coroner;
- Notifying Next of Kin;
- Obtaining official identification of the deceased (this must be done by a person who has known the individual for at least the past year); and
- Conducting investigations (interviewing witnesses or others involved).

Notifying Next of Kin

Once death/injury has been confirmed, the initial contact with next of kin / significant others needs to be considered carefully. The following questions may be helpful:

- What is the appropriate manner of contact?
- What were the circumstances of the tragedy?

Ongoing support

Maintain contact with those who may need ongoing support, often at times and in locations outside of the normal class routine. The following should be considered:

- Consideration should be given to personal contact with victims and those affected by the incident outside of

normal hours. Family and friends are a priority. The Critical Incident Team will assess those affected by the incident and make referrals for counselling and/or advice to agencies outside of those normally used.

- Appropriate cultural responses may be put in place, interpreters may be provided, and overseas authorities, such as embassies and legations, notified.
- Where appropriate, staff and students may need to be directed to seek professional counselling. Counselling of staff and students will be a priority for incidents where trauma may be experienced. Special Leave will be considered where necessary.
- There may be a need to issue a written statement to staff and students, within the guidelines of the Privacy Act 1988 and Australian Privacy Principles to inform them of the incident.
- There may be a need to identify others who may be affected by the incident to provide re-assurance and minimise distress.

It is important to return to normality as soon as possible. The Academic Director should meet with staff at the end of the working day to debrief staff and assist in the recovery process.

3.25 Emergency Evacuation Procedures

During the event of an emergency that requires the evacuation of any Sydney Metropolitan English Institute campus, all students should follow the instruction of their trainer and the fire safety warden. At all times, the class **MUST** stay together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the staff and students.

Once students have evacuated the building, they must proceed to the designated area so that the attendance sheets can be checked to ensure that all students have left the building. Students must stay with their trainer till the building is safe to re-enter or they have been dismissed.

Emergency exits are signposted with diagrams located in classrooms, hallways and other areas that indicate the appropriate exit to use and the meeting place. These procedures may be updated from time to time.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute agrees to abide by the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to protect the health, safety and welfare of staff and students through the provision of safe learning environments and equipment.

Emergency Procedure is as follows:

- Fire alarm sounds and the class prepare to evacuate immediately
- Students must line up ready and not waste time collecting belongings
- Floor warden (with red or yellow hard hat) will give the signal to the trainer to evacuate with the class clearly pointing out the evacuation pathway
- Trainer and students proceed to the designated assembly area using the fire stairs only (no lifts to be used in fire emergencies)
- Attendance will be taken at the assembly area to ensure that all students and staff are present and no one left on campus
- Wait in the assembly area to receive further instructions and do not leave until told to do so by the Chief Warden.

3.26 Partnerships with Other Institutions

The Institute does not currently have partnerships with other institutions.

4 EDUCATIONAL LEGISLATION YOU SHOULD READ

4.1 Education Services for Overseas Students Framework in Australia

Australia provides rigorous protection for international students through the [Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) legislation](#), which requires institutions that provide education to international students, to meet nationally consistent standards in education delivery, facilities and services. Breaches of the Act are treated seriously, and the penalties can be significant.

All institutions wanting to deliver courses to international students in Australia must be registered with the [Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students \(CRICOS\)](#) and meet special registration conditions.

The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182> provides nationally consistent standards for the conduct of registered providers and the registration of their courses.

The standards set out specifications and procedures to ensure that registered providers of education and training courses can clearly understand and comply with their obligations under the National Code.

4.2 Tuition Fee Protection

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is required to apply the Student Tuition Protection Service (TPS) through the Commonwealth managed fund known as Overseas Student Assurance Fund (OSTF). The Fund was established to protect the interests of overseas students on student visas or intending overseas students, who are studying or about to study in Australia.

Information that explains your rights as a student studying in Australia under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 can be found on the Study in Australia website:
<http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/australian-education/education-system/esos-act>

4.3 PRISMS

The Provider Registration and International Students Management System (PRISMS) is a secure computer system that is the information source for CRICOS.

Education institutions and their courses are listed on PRISMS, as is each student studying in Australia on a student visa. That is because of this system interfaces with the Department of Home Affairs (DIBP) data.

Through PRISMS education institutions notify DIBP of each student's enrolment in a course. This should occur before the student applies for a student visa to study in Australia. The enrolment information generates an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) as evidence of enrolment in a registered, full-time course. This eCoE is a key requirement for DIBP to issue a student visa.

Education providers also use PRISMS to notify DIBP of students who may have breached the terms of their student visa.

4.4 Student rights

The ESOS framework protects student rights, including:

- The right to receive, before enrolling, current and accurate information about the courses, fees, modes of study and other information from a provider and the provider's agent

- The requirement to sign a written agreement with the provider before or as fees are paid, setting out the services to be provided, fees payable and information about refunds of course money. A copy of the written agreement will be kept by the student and SMEI.
- The right to get the education you paid for. The ESOS framework includes consumer protection that will allow students to be placed in another course if the provider is unable to teach the course.
- The right to know:
 - How to use the provider's student support services.
 - Who the contact officer is for overseas students
 - How to apply for course credit.
 - How to apply for enrolment deferment, enrolment suspension or cancellation.
 - The provider's requirements for satisfactory progress in the courses of study.
 - How attendance will be monitored.
 - How to use the provider's complaints and appeals process.

The student responsibilities include:

- Satisfy the student visa condition.
- Maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the period of the stay.
- Meet the terms of the written agreement with the provider.
- Inform the provider of any change of address.
- Maintain satisfactory course progress.

4.6 Conditions of Your Visa

All international students applying to enter a course being offered by Sydney Metropolitan English Institute must:

- Be over the age of 18
- Demonstrate some English ability
- Have completed an equivalent secondary schooling level of a High School Certificate where necessary
- Be a genuine temporary entrant
- Demonstrate financial capacity
- Hold Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)
- Meet the health requirements
- Be of good character

Refer to the below link to know the conditions of your visa in detail.

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500>

Under the simplified student visa framework arrangements introduced in July 2016 streamlined evidentiary requirements apply and the student visa applicant may be able to satisfy the Department of Home Affairs and Border Protection of their financial capacity and English language proficiency by declaration only. This is dependent on the level of risk rating of each student visa application which is determined by taking into account the risk rating allocated to the country from where the student originates combined with the risk rating allocated to Sydney Metropolitan English Institute as a provider on the CRICOS register. The easiest way to determine the evidence required to satisfy the visa requirements is for the prospective international student to utilise the Document Checklist Tool provided with the Student Visa requirements page [Click Here](#).

All students, regardless of the financial capacity and English language proficiency will continue to have to meet all other core visa criteria, such as the Genuine Temporary Entrant requirement and health and character criteria.

4.7 Permission to Work Arrangements

If you have been granted your student visa, you may receive permission to work with your visa grant. This will also apply to any family member travelling with you on your student visa. You are not allowed to work until your course has started and you can work up to 20 hours a week while your course is in session (not counting any work undertaken as a registered component of your course of study). However, you can work unlimited hours during scheduled course breaks. Your family members are not allowed to work until you begin the scheduled course. Family members are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week at all times after your course has commenced.

Further information about student visa conditions can be found at the Department of Home Affairs and Border

Protection: Meet the following Student Visa requirements – [Click Here](#)

4.8 Fair Work Ombudsman

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), is an independent statutory agency of the Government of Australia that serves as the central point of contact for free advice and information on the Australian national workplace relations system. The Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman also investigates workplace complaints and enforces compliance with national workplace laws.

The Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman offers employers and employees free information and advice on pay, conditions, and workplace rights and obligations under the national workplace relations system.

The Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman operates the Fair Work Infoline for workplace relations queries on 13 13 94.

Complaints - Those in the national workplace relations system can make a complaint to FWO regarding underpayment of wages, conditions (such as annual leave), workplace rights and discrimination in the workplace.

The Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman will make a decision about the best course of action to resolve the complaint. FWO might decide:

- that the matter is outside of their jurisdiction and refer the person somewhere else
- that there hasn't been a breach of Commonwealth workplace laws
- that mediation is the best way to resolve the issues
- to conduct a formal investigation
- to conduct an audit.

An investigation looks at employment records and documents to find out the facts of a workplace complaint and to decide if relevant parties have complied with Commonwealth workplace laws.

If, as a consumer (not as a student), you think you have been unfairly treated by NSW **government agencies**, you can file a complaint to the NSW Ombudsman who deals with complaints about government organisations in NSW. They provide a free service and are independent and impartial.

The NSW ombudsman
9286 1000
1800 451 524 (Toll Free)
Opening hours 9.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday.
www.ombudsman.gov.au

For matters relating to your rights as a worker or with issues of employment or pay, the Fair Work Ombudsman provides a confidential and free service and can be contacted on <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/> or 02 6120 8989.

Commonwealth Ombudsman (as a student rather than as a consumer)

The Commonwealth Ombudsman (**abbreviated to COB in this document**) (<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>) investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education and training in Australia.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman does not take complaints about public universities.

The Institute is a private education provider, so in the event that you are not satisfied with the Institute's internal procedures for handling a grievance or an issue you have raised, and you wish to complain about this to someone outside of the Institute, the Commonwealth Ombudsman is the correct channel for this to occur.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be reached on 1300 362 072 and is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can also be contacted via email on ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au or Suite 2, level 16 580 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

The COB's web site is www.ombudsman.gov.au

The Commonwealth Ombudsman investigates complaints about:

- Refusing admission to a course
- Fees and refunds
- Course or provider transfers
- Course progress or attendance
- Cancellation of enrolment
- Accommodation or work arranged by a provider
- A provider not doing something or taking too long to do something
- Incorrect advice given by an education agent who has an agreement with a private provider

The COB treats all information with privacy and respect.

The COB cannot make decisions about academic merit. For example, if a provider has decided that a student has not met the course progress or attendance requirements, the COB cannot make a new decision about this. Instead the COB may look at whether the education provider followed the rules properly in making its decision and that the student was treated fairly.

In some cases, the COB may decide not to investigate a complaint. This might be because:

- A student has not complained to the education provider first
- Another organisation is better able to help

The COB's service is free and confidential, and the COB is also independent.

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute is required to operate in accordance with the laws of Australia. This means we comply with the requirements of legislative and regulatory requirements. The following legislation is a list of the Acts that Sydney Metropolitan English Institute has recognised for which it has compliance responsibilities.

4.9 Australia's System for Education and Student Rights

The Australian education systems places significant emphasis on the quality of education and seeks to protect domestic and international students and assure the quality of educational delivery. Before accepting an offer to study with the Institute, international students should familiarise themselves with the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework, a guide as to how education providers, such as this Institute, need to provide services to international students.

The framework is well-explained on the Australian Education International web site at:

<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/Regulatoryinformation.aspx>

The Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment regulates the education and training sector in Australia with regard to the provision of services to international students. The focus of this regulation is to ensure a quality education service is provided to the international student and sets minimum standards for that quality. This is to ensure providers adhere to high levels of professional and academic conduct.

The government in Australia has legislated a national approach to registering providers so that the quality of education and the care for students is at the highest levels possible.

4.10 Reporting Systems for International Students

The Institute is required to provide study (course) related information to a range of government departments including the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education, Skills and Employment among others. It also needs to provide information to other national regulators and/or to industry bodies including the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) (www.asqa.gov.au). This means that data such as course progress, attendance and/or other data may be shared with these parties by way of reporting or other means.

4.11 ESOS Act

Before accepting an offer to study at the Institute, international students should be familiar with the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework. A simple explanation of the framework is shown at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/Regulatoryinformation.aspx>

Information about the National Code 2018 can be found at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/National-Code-2018-Factsheets-.aspx>

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Skills and Employment, Skills and Employment is responsible for the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). Only education institutions registered under the ESOS Act and listed on CRICOS can enrol overseas students to study in Australia on a student visa. Government agencies (such as the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency for higher education, and the Australian Skills Quality Authority for vocational education) regulate the education and training sectors involvement with overseas students studying in Australia on student visas. They do this through the Education Services for Overseas Students legislative framework (ESOS). This protects Australia's reputation for delivering quality education services and the interests of overseas students, by setting minimum standards and providing tuition and financial assurance.

The legislation mandates a nationally consistent approach to registering education providers so that the quality of the tuition, and care of students, remains high. The professionalism and integrity of the industry is further strengthened by the ESOS legislations interface with Home Affairs law. This imposes visa related reporting requirements on both students and providers.

Students can seek other external reviews of appeals by seeking assistance from agencies such as the Ombudsman (<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students>), or from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (www.accc.gov.au) for consumer issues. The Fair Work Ombudsman also provides a channel of information or appeal for work-related matters (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>)

4.12 Department of Home Affairs and Visa Conditions

International Students are required to observe certain conditions pertaining to their Student Visa. It is important that students understand their obligations in this regard including what the visa allows and disallows the student to do.

The Institute is required to report breaches of visa conditions to the Department of Home Affairs, so it is important for the student, when in doubt, to contact the Department for information, guidance and responses.

Some important things for students to consider as they relate to the student visa are:

- The student must notify the Institute of their address and contact details within seven (7) days of arriving in Australia.
- The student must update the Institute on changes to their address and contact details within seven (7) days of the change occurring.
- Students must be enrolled in full time study with the Institute.
- Students are permitted to work 20 hours a week
- Students must maintain satisfactory course progress.
- Students must have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) throughout the term of their student visa.
- Students are responsible for renewing their visa prior to its expiry.

The Department of Home Affairs web site is www.homeaffairs.gov.au

The Department's phone number is 131 881

Obtaining a Student Visa for International Students, its Changes and Requirements

On receipt of your Confirmation of Enrolment, you may commence your application for a Student Visa. If you reside outside of Australia, applications for Student Visas are made with the nearest relevant Australian Embassy, High Commission or other representative office in your home country.

Details of overseas offices are available at www.dfat.gov.au/missions

The Institute recommends you visit the Department of Home Affairs web site (www.homeaffairs.gov.au) for comprehensive information about applying for a Student Visa. There are different requirements for students from different countries and you can find the most up to date information on the Department of Home Affairs web site.

Students are responsible for obtaining a visa that permits them to study in Australia and ensuring it is current for the duration of their course.

Students who already have a Student Visa and are living in Australia will have to renew their Student Visa at the Department of Home Affairs.

The student will need to advise the Department of any changes to their course or institution at which they are studying.

Students must ensure that they renew their visa before its expiry date.

Should students gain permanent residency (PR) during the course of study, they cannot remain enrolled as an International Student. In some cases, the student may need to re-apply for admission to the Institute as an Australian student.

4.13 Understanding the Student Visa Conditions

The Student Visa is a class of visa designed for international students wishing to study in Australia. It is granted to genuine students seeking to study in Australia.

The Student Visa is managed by the Department of Home Affairs.

The visa grant letter issued to the student will contain important information. This includes the visa conditions, which are an essential element of the visa that the student must always comply with.

The letter may contain information such as:

- Applicant type (e.g. Main Applicant)
- Visa class (e.g. Student- Temporary- Class TU)
- Client Name
- Date of Birth
- Client ID
- Visa Grant Number
- Visa Grant Date
- Passport Number
- Initial Stay Date
- Must Not Arrive After (Date)
- Stay Period
- Travel Facility
- Visa Conditions

The visa conditions may include a range of items such as:

- Work limitation
- Meet course requirements
- Maintain health insurance
- Must maintain eligibility
- Maintain education for dependents
- Less than 18 approve welfare (for children under 18 years of age)
- Inform provider of address
- Several other conditions may be imposed by the Department of Home Affairs

The visa conditions are usually shown on the visa label or other documents or both.

A wealth of useful information and examples are available on the Department of Home Affairs web site which is listed below. The phone number for the Department is also listed for convenience.

www.homeaffairs.gov.au and Phone 131 881

4.14 Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) Information

Only international students who intend to study onshore in Australia on a student visa require a CoE. These students must hold a valid CoE at all times. Even if your visa is still valid, you still need a valid CoE.

If the student CoE finishes or is cancelled before your student visa expires, your visa may be at risk of being cancelled.

If you complete your course before the end date on your CoE and you do not intend to study another course, you cannot remain in Australia on a student visa. Your student visa is only valid as long as you continue studying.

If you finish your study on time and your CoE finishes naturally, you can stay in Australia until your visa expires.

The CoE cannot be extended except in very specific and unique circumstances. These include not being able to complete your studies on time due to compassionate or compelling circumstances or where the Institute is implementing an intervention strategy for students who are at risk of unsatisfactory academic progress or in the case of the Institute-approved deferment. These cases are rare and require a great deal of evidentiary support, so it is best to assume that the CoE is not generally extendable.

If a student has under-enrolled in a term and has not made up the units in a subsequent term, it is unlikely that they will be issued a new CoE.

If the student wishes to use their CoE to apply for a new student visa, the CoE must be used to apply for the new visa within forty five (45) days of the date the CoE is issued, otherwise it will expire. The visa application must also be lodged prior to the course start date.

The Department of Home Affairs will never ask you to make payment by cash or credit card directly to staff in the field. All payments are processed via the Department web site or through its offices. Beware of scams requesting you to make payment to an individual in the field or by sending a text message to your mobile or a link via email for you to pay money.

4.15 Working in Australia

International students will need to refer to their visa requirements for information on working conditions and eligibility.

International student studying in Australia on a Student Visa are generally (students top check their visa conditions) able to work part time and do not need to apply for a work visa. Student visa holders are permitted to work up to forty (40) hours per fortnight (a fortnight is two weeks) during the term and unlimited hours during term breaks. This is subject to any Student Visa conditions.

More information is available on www.homeaffairs.gov.au.

4.16 Student Visas

Students will need to hold the correct visa to study in Australia. For information on student visas, please visit the Department of Home Affairs web site on www.homeaffairs.gov.au

4.17 Further Information for Students on the ESOS Act

Early Completion of Course

If the student completes the course earlier than the expected course completion date on their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), the Institute will report this early completion to the Department of Home Affairs, as required by law.

Early completion is defined as one (1) term (or more) earlier than the expected completion (end) date on the CoE.

When an international student has completed their course, and before the student visa expires, the student must:

- Enrol in another CRICOS registered course, or
- Enrol with another education provider, or
- Depart Australia immediately, unless they have been granted permission to stay by the Department of Home Affairs.

During your day-to-day work and when participating in studies, you will need to be aware of the relevant legislation (Acts of Parliament) that may impact on you.

While Sydney Metropolitan English Institute has an obligation to meet certain requirements of these Acts, you also should make yourself fully aware of the legislation that affects you.

Copies of State and Federal legislation can be found on the Internet at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/ (State) and www.comlaw.gov.au (Federal).

Following is a summary of the legislation that will generally apply to your day-to-day work and studies.

4.18 Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act 2011

The main object of this Act is to provide for a balanced and nationally consistent framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces by protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health, safety and welfare through the elimination or minimisation of risks arising from work or from particular types of substances or plant.

The WHS Act covers most workers in Australia who are protected by nationally uniform work health and safety laws. This includes employees, contractors, sub-contractors, outworkers, trainees, work experience students, volunteers and employers who perform work.

The WHS Act also provides protection for the general public so that their health and safety is not placed at risk by work activities.

Duties of other persons at the workplace (section 29). Any person at a workplace, including customers and visitors, must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions. They must also cooperate with any actions taken by the person conducting business or undertaking to comply with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation.

4.19 Privacy Act 1988

An organisation must not collect personal information unless the information is necessary for one or more of its functions or activities.

An organisation must not use or disclose personal information about an individual for a purpose (the secondary purpose) other than the primary purpose of collection unless:

- a) both of the following apply:
 - the secondary purpose is related to the primary purpose of collection and, if the personal information is sensitive information, directly related to the primary purpose of collection;
 - the individual would reasonably expect the organisation to use or disclose the information for the secondary purpose; or
- b) the individual has consented to the use or disclosure

4.20 Anti-Discrimination Act 1991

The main purpose of the Act is to promote equality of opportunity for everyone by protecting them from unfair discrimination in certain areas of activity, including work, education and accommodation. Anti-Discrimination applies to a person's race, religion, colour, sex, physical and/or mental capacity.

4.21 Disability Discrimination Act 1992

A person discriminates against another person on the grounds of a disability if, because of the person's disability,

they treat or propose to treat the person with a disability less favourably than, in circumstances that are the same or are not materially different, they treat or would treat a person without the disability. Circumstances in which a person treats or would treat another person with a disability are not materially different because of the fact that different accommodation or services may be required by the person with a disability.

4.22 Sex Discrimination Act 1984

The purposes of the Act are to

- to eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination against persons on the ground of sex, marital status, pregnancy or potential pregnancy in the areas of work, accommodation, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services, the disposal of land, the activities of clubs and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs; and
- to eliminate, so far as possible, discrimination involving dismissal of employees on the ground of family responsibilities; and
- to eliminate, so far as is possible, discrimination involving sexual harassment in the workplace, in educational institutions and in other areas of public activity; and
- to promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle of the equality of men and women.

4.23 Copyright Act 1968

Copyright is a type of property that is founded on a person's creative skill and labour. It is designed to prevent the unauthorised use by others of a work, that is, the original form in which an idea or information has been expressed by the creator.

Copyright is not a tangible thing. It is made up of a bundle of exclusive economic rights to do certain acts with an original work or other copyright subject-matter. These rights include the right to copy, publish, communicate (e.g. broadcast, make available online) and publicly perform the copyright material.

There is no general exception that allows a work to be reproduced without infringing copyright. Where a part of a work is copied, the issue is whether a substantial part of that work has been reproduced and thus an infringement has occurred.

However, there is a 10% rule which applies in relation to fair dealing copying for the purposes of research or study. A reasonable portion of a work may be copied for that purpose, and a reasonable portion is deemed to be 10% of a book of more than 10 pages or 10% of the words of a work in electronic form.

4.24 Industrial Relations Act 1999

The main objectives of this Act are to provide a framework for industrial relations that supports economic prosperity and social justice by:

- Providing for rights and responsibilities that ensure economic advancement and social justice for all employees and employers;
- Ensuring equal remuneration for men and women employees for work of equal or comparable value;
- Ensuring wages and employment conditions provide fair standards in relation to living standards prevailing in the community;
- Promoting and facilitating job growth, skills acquisition and vocational training through apprenticeships, traineeships and labour market programs.

4.25 Fair Work Act 2009

The main objectives of this Act are to provide a balanced framework for cooperative and productive workplace relations that promotes national economic prosperity and social inclusion for all Australians by:

- Providing workplace relations laws that are fair to working Australians, are flexible for businesses, promote productivity and economic growth for Australia's future economic prosperity and take into account Australia's international labour obligations;
- Ensuring a guaranteed safety net of fair, relevant and enforceable minimum terms and conditions through the

- National Employment Standards, modern awards and national minimum wage orders;
- Enabling fairness and representation at work and the prevention of discrimination by recognising the right to freedom of association and the right to be represented, protecting against unfair treatment and discrimination, providing accessible and effective procedures to resolve grievances and disputes and providing effective compliance mechanisms.

You can find more information about your workplace rights for all visa holders working in Australia at the following link: [Click Here](#)

5 LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

5.1 Welcome to Australia

The Institute extends a warm welcome to you to Australia, one of the world's most advanced, friendly and liveable countries.

Studying in Australia is an experience that will create memories, successes and new perspectives. Embarking on a trip of learning and development is the start of a new phase in life and of many good friendships.

The Institute and its staff welcome you to Australia and wish you a successful and meaningful time here. We hope you will enjoy your course, learn from it and apply it in your professionally selected field.

Australia occupies 5% of the world's surface and is the sixth (6th) largest country in the world. The population size of Australia is around 23 million, which makes it one of the less populated countries of the world due to its large size.

Australia has several States and Territories. The Institute is located in the state of New South Wales (NSW for short) with Sydney as the Capital City of NSW. The Capital City of Australia is Canberra, located to the south of NSW. Canberra is based in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Other states include Victoria (the capital city is Melbourne), Queensland (the capital city is Brisbane), South Australia (the capital city is Adelaide), Western Australia (the capital city is Perth), the Northern Territory (the capital city is Darwin) and Tasmania (the capital city is Hobart).

5.1 Life in Sydney

Life in Sydney as a student is an intriguing and rewarding experience. Sydney is one of the most liveable and beautiful cities in the world with a diversity of natural beauty. Sydney is also Australia's commercial capital with some of the country's largest businesses and enterprises based in the Sydney Central Business District (CBD).

Cultural, arts and night life in Sydney are exciting and diverse. With a plethora of restaurants, clubs, museums and cultural icons, the city provides ample opportunity for internal tourism and exploration.

The section below provides information on a range of items of interest that will be useful to you in your journey arriving into, living and studying in, and travelling from Sydney.

5.2 Pre-Arrival Information

Travelling to another city or another country to study is a big step in the life of most aspiring students. The feeling of having to leave home and friends to study in a different place can feel challenging. However, this exceptional step in your life as an adult, a professional and a human being will hopefully be the start of some of the best experiences and best learning of your life. Education opens up our minds, so we hope you will enjoy your trip, both the short trip of arriving to Sydney and the long trip of studying here. Below are some basic pointers that will help you in pre-arrival preparations.

- Ensure you have the right visa for study in Australia and that your passport is valid and that you don't forget it.
- Pack lightly as many of the items you believe may not be available in Sydney are sold here. Sydney is a multi-cultural and diverse city with a range of products, foods and items sold. Please remember that food, meat, agricultural products, plant parts and any other prohibited items are not allowed into Australia.
- Ensure that you have your plane ticket, all forms of required identification, correspondence with the Institute and any certificate of enrolment or registration from the Institute.

- Make sure you write down all important phone numbers, addresses and details in a notebook as mobile phones or other devices can be unreliable. You don't want to lose touch of the important contacts and of your friends' and families' numbers in case your electronic device malfunctions.
- Carry a small amount of cash in Australian dollars (\$500 to \$900) for expenses that you may need to incur in the first few days of your stay before all your banking registrations are complete. If you have a credit card, make sure this will function in Australia by contacting your bank in your home city prior to travelling to Australia.
- For emergencies, the Australian number for police, fire services and ambulance is 000 (zero zero zero).
- Make sure you have a pen or pencil in your handbag in case you need to write down details, take directions or write a note in your notebook.
- Finally, make sure you check the Department of Home Affairs web site (www.homeaffairs.gov.au) for updates on travel requirements, things that you are allowed to carry into Australia and other important information.

5.3 Cost of Living

It is estimated that the costs of living come around \$29,710 AUD per year plus **tuition fees** and **insurance** to live in Australia. There is an additional living cost of \$10,394 AUD per year for a student's spouse and a further \$4,449 AUD per year per child.

If you include any school-age children in your application, add schooling costs of at least \$13,502 AUD per year for each child. Costs vary between states, territories and schools in Australia – you are responsible for finding out how much the child's schooling will cost.

Accommodation varies from \$300 to \$900 per week depending on location and type of accommodation.

Food and groceries bill for one student can vary from \$80–\$250 a week.

Public transport costs are capped at \$55 per week in Sydney.

Entertainment & lifestyle costs will be at least \$100 depending on preferences.

On a student visa students are permitted to work up to 48 hours per fortnight during study periods. During non-study periods such as timetabled breaks, students may work additional hours. Student working rights are intended to add to student income rather than be the main supporting factor.

- <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500#HowTo>
- <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/life-in-australia/living-and-education-costs>
- <https://costofliving.studyaustralia.gov.au/>

To work, students need a Tax File Number (TFN). To apply for a TFN students can undertake any of the following:

Online Application:

- Go to www.ato.gov.au and apply online
- Go to 'For Individuals' and click 'Apply for a Tax File Number'
- Go to applying for a TFN and click 'Online individual tax file number registration (Nat4157)'
- Go to 'Apply for Tax File Number'
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and click 'next'
- Follow the instructions until you are finished
- Appointment: Call 13 2861 to make an appointment

Visit: visit the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) 100 Market Street Centrepont Tower, Sydney

NB: International students will need a passport number and an Australian address.

5.4 Schooling for dependents

In Australia children must attend school from five years of age until the completion of Year 10. Young people that have completed Year 10 must participate in full-time education, training or employment, (at least 25 hours per week) or a combination of these activities until they reach 17 years of age.

If you have school age dependents you will need to make arrangements for your children to enter school in Australia. Students from countries around the world enroll in New South Wales government, independent and private schools every year. NSW government schools are recognised for their excellent quality education programs.

You can choose from a wide range of schools close to where you will be living. The New South Wales government provide:

- An excellent, world-class standard of education from the largest education provider in Australia
- The opportunity to study alongside Australian students in a friendly, safe, multicultural environment
- A wide range of subjects, sporting and creative arts programs, leadership programs
- Professional, university trained teachers
- An environment that encourages students to express themselves, develop independent learning skills and to interact in the classroom and in the community
- Intensive English Language support for students of non-English speaking background

To assist you to locate a school suitable for your needs, the following web-links will provide a wealth of information about schooling options: Public Schools: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school>

If the student is accompanied by children aged between 5 and 18 years of age, they must attend an Australian school.

Some schools in Australia are public and some are private. In either case, the student needs to take into account the cost of schooling when considering studying in Australia.

Costs for school uniforms, books, stationary and other costs could range from AU\$2,000 to \$12,000 a year per school student. Public school costs can range from AU\$14,000 to AU\$20,000 a year per school student whereas the cost of private schooling are significantly higher.

International Student Program:

<http://www.decinternational.nsw.edu.au/study/schools>

Further information about living in Australia is available at the Department of Home Affairs:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/English/Live-in-Australia>

The Department also published The *Beginning a Life in Australia* booklet. This publication is filled with helpful information and is recommended reading. The booklet is available online at:

https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/support-subsite/files/life-in-australia/lia_english_full.pdf

It is recommended that you view the booklet on a computer as it contains links to many websites that provide additional information.

5.5 Your safety

Sydney Metropolitan English Institute has a responsibility to meet its duty of care to staff, students and visitors by providing facilities and a safe and healthy learning environment in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Living away from home in Australia and in a different environment can sometimes cause problems that may affect your personal safety and wellbeing.

The following are some of those situations that may cause problems and some advice on how to avoid them.

5.6 Electricity in Australia

Main voltage in Australia is 240 volts (50 HZ). Students from most of Asia, Africa and Europe should have appliances that work on the same voltage as that in Australia. Notable exceptions to this are Japan, Canada and the United States. Appliances used in countries with a different voltage should not be used in Australia without a Voltage Converter. The plugs in Australia have two metal flat pins shaped like a "V" and some may have a third flat pin in the

centre. If the appliance you are using utilises a different plug you will need to use an Australia-compliant Power Adaptor.

5.7 Weather in Sydney

Summer in Sydney starts in December and ends in February with a daily maximum temperature of around 25 degrees Celsius (77 degrees Fahrenheit) and a minimum temperature of around 18 degrees Celsius (65 degrees Fahrenheit). Autumn runs from March to May and winter is from June to August. Temperatures range from 23 degrees Celsius to 8 degrees Celsius during this time. Spring starts in September and ends in November with temperatures ranging from 23 to 11 degrees Celsius.

Rainfall in Australia is between 77mm (3.0 inches) and 128 mm (5.0 inches) per month and there are between 9 and 12 days of rain per month depending on the season.

The number of hours of sunshine per day range from 5.0 hours to 7.7 hours with the month of November being the day with the longest number of hours of sunshine.

For more information about Sydney's weather visit www.sydney.com.au.

The following is a list of some important phone numbers that students may find useful:

Emergency - Police / Ambulance / Fire	000
Department of Home Affairs (DIBP)	131 881
Medibank (OHSC)	134 148
BUPA (OSHC)	1800 888 942
Legal Aid NSW helps people with their legal problems Help over the phone Call Law Access NSW to get started Find information Factsheets and resources are available to help you with your problem Get advice from a lawyer Free face-to-face advice provided on most legal issues	1300 888 529
Help at court Lawyers are available to assist you at many courts and tribunals across NSW	
Lifeline Crisis Support Free 24-hour help	13 11 14
Beyond Blue – anxiety and depression Free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1300 22 4636
George Street Medical Centre 333-339 George St, Sydney NSW 2000	(02) 9231 3211
Sydney Premier Medical & Health Centre 309 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000	(02) 8964 8677
Sydney Dental Hospital 2 Chalmers Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010	(02) 9293 3200
St Vincent's Hospital Sydney 390 Victoria St, Darlinghurst NSW 2010	(02) 8382 1111
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital 50 Missenden Rd, Camperdown NSW 2050	(02) 9515 6111
Public Transport Information Line	131 500
Lifeline Counselling Service (telephone counselling)	131 114

Translating and Interpreting Service (24 hours)	131 450
Taxis Combined	133 300

Consulates: To find a country's consulate address and details:

- Internet: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/foreign-embassies/foreign-embassies-and-consulates-in-australia>
- Yellow Pages under 'Consulates and Legations'

5.8 What to do in Sydney

Students can experience many activities including but not limited to music, art, opera, sport or outdoor activities, students will find something to suit their interests. For information on what to do and what's happening in and around Sydney refer to the following:

Daily Newspapers

Sydney Morning Herald: Metro guide every Friday

www.smh.com.au

The Daily Telegraph: "7 Days" every Thursday

Free publications

Beat Magazine - Music, concerts etc.

Sydney: The Official Guide – Tourist information booklet *Can be found outside newsagents, in music/video stores and tourist information centres etc*

Websites

www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/whats_on.asp

Ticketek

For tickets to upcoming sporting matches, shows, musicals, concerts & other major events Ph: 9266 4800

Website: www.ticketek.com.au

Cinema

On Tuesday nights most movies are half price and cinema details can be found in the newspaper's entertainment section or on the cinema's website:

Hoyts: www.hoyts.com.au

Village: www.village.com.au

Greater Union: www.greaterunion.com.au

Halftix

201 Sussex Street, City - specialises in discount ticketing Website:

www.halftix.com.au Ph: 9279 0855

Sightseeing

The following is a list of some of the most popular sightseeing destinations in Sydney

Sydney Opera House	www.sydneyoperahouse.com.au
The Rocks	www.therocks.com.au
Darling Harbour	www.darlingharbour.com
Chinatown	www.chinatown.com.au

Art Gallery of NSW	www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au
Queen Victoria Building	www.qvb.com.au
Sydney Aquarium	www.sydneyaquarium.com.au
Bondi Beach	www.gobondi.com
Taronga Zoo	www.zoo.nsw.gov.au

5.9 Rental Accommodation

Rent can be one of the largest costs of staying in a city like Sydney. Here are several tips to help you rent accommodation in Sydney.

Have a written rental contract with detailed terms signed by both parties. Read the terms carefully and seek help from a friend or ask for advice if you are unsure of the terms of the contract.

In NSW, no more than four weeks' rent as a bond is allowed to be charged by the landlord. For more details about rental bonds, visit: www.tenants.org.au

The phone number for Tenants is 133 220 and their opening hours are 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. No more than two weeks' rent in advance is allowed to be charge by the landlord.

Inspecting the Premises

Before you rent, make sure you inspect the apartment, room or house you are renting. Do not agree to pay money for a place you have not inspected as there may be rental scams that you should be cautious of.

Before you move in, do a careful housing condition check and it is better to sign an inspection report with the landlord, and even take photos as references in case future disputes arise.

When you move out, make notes on the inspection report and take photos of everything again, and even have a trusted friend as a witness to prevent further issues after leaving.

Please be sure you and your landlord agree on the bills you are paying on electricity, gas, internet, water usage, etc. and clarify the responsibility in writing. Water sewerage charges cannot be charged.

Read your tenancy contract beforehand in terms of termination. A notice period is normally needed, or you will end up paying more after you move out or have an amount deducted from your bond.

For more information or inquiries when you have a rental problem, please call NSW Fair Trading: 13 32 20 Redfern Legal Service: 9698 7277; Legal Aid: 1300 888 529

5.10 Homestay Accommodation

Several companies provide homestay accommodation in Sydney. This means that the student would be staying with an Australian family, which provides opportunities for understanding Australian culture, the Australian way of life and the English language.

Home stay options are varied and can range from Shared Houses and Apartments where students live together in a shared house, to Furnished Houses and Apartments which provide for greater comfort as they are equipped with a range of household furniture and appliance items.

Some organisations providing these services are:

Oz Homestay; www.ozhomestay.com.au; Phone (02) 8765 9063

Iglu Student Accommodation; www.iglu.com.au; Phone (02) 8024 8600

2Stay Accommodation; www.2stay.com.au; Phone (02) 8005 1299

campusboard; www.campusboard.com.au

Many students share apartments or may decide to live on their own. It is important to arrive in Sydney earlier than the course start date to allow you time to locate suitable accommodation, see apartments and meet with landlords or prospective house mates before the term starts.

The web sites below are a good place to look for interim accommodation until you find the unit or place you prefer to stay in over the longer term.

- www.wakeup.com.au
- www.glenferriellodge.com
- www.domain.com.au
- www.realestate.com.au
- www.unilodge.com.au

5.11 Banking and Money

There are a number of banks in Australia. You may go to different banks to compare their services and choose one that most suits your circumstances. It is free to open an account and there is normally no account fee for a student account.

When opening a bank account, most banks require to see your visa and ID, passport or driver's license, and proof of address if you have one.

Once the account is opened you will receive a bankcard which you can use to pay for things by EFTPOS or withdraw money from your account via an Automated Teller Machine (ATM). All banks have online banking will provide you with online banking details that enable you to log onto your online bank account and do online transfers, balance checking and other transactions.

ATMs are located around Australia at most shopping malls, many convenience stores and a lot of bars and clubs, and they generally have multi-language display.

Using the ATMs that are provided by your own bank is generally free up to a certain number of transactions, but if the ATM is from another bank a transaction fee of around \$2.00 may be charged for your use of the ATM.

5.12 Superannuation (Super)

Superannuation is money saved during a person's working life so that they have an income to live when retired.

Normally, super cannot be used until a person retires, or is leaving Australian permanently.

Employers will usually put money into a super fund account for the worker. This is called "super guarantee" (<https://www.ato.gov.au/rates/key-superannuation-rates-and-thresholds/?page=23>) and there are laws about how much super an employer must pay. A worker can also add their own money into their super account.

It is important that the super fund has the workers Tax File Number (TFN). This will make it easier to find any possibly lost super in the future.

For more information about superannuation call the Australian Tax Office on 13 10 20 or visit their web site on www.ato.gov.au/yoursuper.

5.13 Airport Pickup

Several organisations provide fee for service airport pick up with prices that can range from \$100 to \$300 for a pick up from the airport to the City. This is also referred to as a transfer service. Examples include 2Stay who can be contacted on support@cozzystay.com.au.

Other airport pick up services include shuttle buses from the airport to the City, which can cost from \$15 to \$45 per person. Examples of these are shown below.

www.skybus.com.au

www.redy2go.com.au

www.2airport.com.au

www.hoangdoexpress.com.au

5.14 Alcohol and Water Safety

Swimming is a fun and healthy pass time activity that may millions of people enjoy in Australia. However, it is important to be safe around water and particularly so if one has had an alcoholic drink. Drinking and swimming do not align, so it is important to make sure that safety is adhered to at all times.

The Royal Life Saving Society of Australia (Royal Life Saving for short) has developed a number of fact sheets on water safety issues in Australia. Please contact Royal Life Saving or visit their web site to obtain copies of these fact sheets and read them before swimming.

Phone 1300 737 763

www.keepwatch.com.au

Flooding is one of most common natural disasters in Australia and is a dangerous event. Flooding and flood water can increase one's risk of drowning, so it is important to not cross flooded waterways in motor vehicles, walking or riding through the water. Royal Life Saving have a fact sheet about flooding (Fact Sheet No. 25), which provides useful tips on keeping safe. It is available on www.keepwatch.com.au and more information is also obtainable by phone on 1300 737 763.

3 OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

6.1 Health Cover and Health Providers

Ambulance Cover

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) policies may have gaps or limitations in ambulance cover so please be sure to check with your insurance provider "non-emergency" situations to prevent you from paying uncovered bills which can be hundreds of dollars.

Hospitals

Please check with your OSHC provider where their agreement hospitals are so when you need to go to a hospital in a non-emergency situation, you will be accepted with OSHC. Some public hospitals and all private hospitals will not be accepted for expense claims in your OSHC.

Health Clinic Hours

Most medical clinics are not open seven days or have 24-hour service, so you may need to check the clinic hours online in advance, especially if you need a medical certificate. In non-emergency situations, you can call Healthdirect for advice on the number below.

1800 022 222

Mental Health

If you feel like things are getting too hard to handle, take time out for yourself, talk to your friends and family, or seek counselling services from the Institute.

Free support is also provided by institutions such as Beyond Blue and Lifeline.

Beyond blue's web site is www.beyondblue.org.au and their phone number is 1300 224 636.

Lifeline's web site is www.lifeline.org.au and their phone number is 13 11 14.

The New South Wales Government, through the Department of Health, also have a transcultural mental health centre. Its web site is: <https://www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre>

The phone number of the centre is (02) 9912 3851

OVHC Health Insurance

Individuals living in Australia on a Temporary Visa need Overseas Visitors Health Cover (OVHC). The OVHC is a mandatory requirement of all holders of a temporary resident visa as determined by the Australian Government, through the Department of Home Affairs and Citizenship. Overseas visitors who do not maintain their OVHC are at risk of having their visa cancelled. Normally, OVHC provides coverage for:

- In hospital medical treatment
- Prescription medicines
- Surgically implanted prostheses
- Emergency ambulance transport

The exact coverage is determined by the type of insurance policy and the company with whom it is taken out from. Several companies provide OVHC insurance. You should seek to identify the best deal and the most appropriate form of insurance coverage for your situation, so make sure you speak with more than one company before you make a decision. Examples of insurance companies include:

Allianz Insurance

www.ovhcallianzassistance.com.au

Phone 1300 727 193

6.2 City of Sydney Services

There are six youth programs delivered by the City of Sydney which deliver recreational, educational and vocational programs including activities such as hiking cooking and the like. For more details see www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Sydney is a vibrant city with ample things to do across all seasons. A particularly interesting Sydney attraction that can be visited all year round is the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

The Art Gallery houses an impressive collection of Australian and international works of art and is conveniently located within walking distance from the Sydney CBD.

The Galleries phone number is 1800 679 278 and its web site is www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au.

The Museum of Contemporary Art at 140 George Street, The Rocks, is also an exceptional venue with a range of modern art works. Free guided tours are available at the Museum and there are always interesting and innovative exhibitions to see.

The Museum's phone number is (02) 9245 2416 and its web site is www.mca.com.au

The network of Recreation and Learning Centres hosts activities ranging from fitness, sports, and martial arts to art classes, youth programs and children's services. These centres include Ultimo Community Centre, Pyrmont Community Centre, Pine Street Creative Arts Centre in Chippendale, King George V Recreation Centre in The Rocks and Juanita Nielsen Community Centre in Woolloomooloo.

The web site to visit is www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

6.3 Driving in Australia

Driving in Australia is on the left hand side and drivers should use the left lane of the road unless overtaking. The speed limits in most urban streets and roads is 50km per hour. In school zones that operate during school terms, the speed is 40km per hour. Some parts of the city and particularly busy streets may also be speed limited to 40km per hour or even less.

Wearing a seatbelt for the driver and any passengers is compulsory in Australia as is the use of child seats for children.

The vehicle you are driving must be registered and must have at least Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance for it to be able to be driven on the road.

6.4 Taxation in Australia

To work in Australia, students need a Tax File Number (TFN). This can be obtained from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) by visiting their web site or calling them.

There is also a Translating and Interpreting Service phone number the ATO provides. This is 03 9203 4027.

www.ato.gov.au

Phone 13 18 81

For information on how to protect your TFN and avoid identity crime visit www.ato.gov.au/identitycrime.

If you are an Australian resident for tax purposes and invest in Australia you should advise your Australian payer of your residency status and current overseas address, so they do not withhold tax at a higher rate. To find out more, visit www.ato.gov.au/internationaltax

For information on your eligibility to claim family tax benefits and advising the Department of Human Services of your TFN, visit www.humanservices.gov.au.

6.5 Australian Consumer Law

Find out what your legal rights are when you are shopping or purchasing a service at: www.consumerlaw.gov.au

In Australia, every person has the right to be protected from unfair business practices. The various offices of fair trading and consumer affairs are state government agencies that resolve disputes between consumers and businesses on issues such as:

- Shopping
- Refunds
- Renting
- Cars
- Buying and selling property
- Home building
- Product safety
- Scams
- Other items

There is also a **Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO)** for problems with phone cards or mobile phone services. The TIO's number is 1800 062 058 and the TIO web site is www.tio.com.au.

The **Tenant's Union** provides local tenancy advice and advocacy services and can be contacted on 1800 251 101 or via the union's web site on www.tenants.org.au.

For **gym membership** issues, please note that gyms are not allowed to ask a customer to pay for a membership of more than twelve (12) months at a time. For complaints regarding gyms, please contact Fitness Australia on 1300 211 311 or www.fitness.org.au.

Travel insurance issues and concerns can be raised with the **Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS)** on 1300 780 808 or on www.fos.org.au.

If you suspect a **scam** (a trick or fraud when a person pays money, but gets nothing in return or the person receives something that is worth far less than what the consumer paid), please contact SCAMwatch on 1300 795 995 or www.scamwatch.gov.au. The web site also contains a list of the latest scams.

6.6 Australian Human Rights commission

The Australian Human Rights Commission deals with any complaint that arises from discrimination against people, due to their race, colour, descent, or ethnic/ national origin. If you want to make a complaint visit www.humanrights.gov.au

6.7 Australian Tax Office

Provides you with information about application for a Tax File Number (TFN), payment related issues and tax issues.
www.ato.gov.au

6.8 Consumer and Business Services (and Tenancy Advice)

This department assists you to know your rights and obligations when buying products and services, as well as when you think you may have been deceived out of your money.

Phone 13 32 20

Web site: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

6.9 Department of Home Affairs

This department provides you with detailed information regarding visa enquiries and detailed policies and information.

www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

It assists you to locate your country's embassy in Australia.

www.dfat.gov.au

6.10 Emergency for Ambulance, Police and Fire

Please call 000 for emergent situations to ask for Ambulance, Police and Fire Rescue services. Please state which service you need and your location with the street number and name.

6.11 Fair Work Ombudsman

Helps you sort out issues with your employer when you are being treated discriminately at work or are working in bad conditions. www.fairwork.gov.au

6.12 Healthdirect Australia

Is a free helpline assisting you with non-urgent illnesses when the doctor is not open. Phone 1800 022 222

6.13 Legal Aid

You can receive free assistance on issues of legal rights, either face to face or over the phone. Tel - 1300 888 529; www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

6.14 Lifeline

A crisis support hotline if you need mental health support from someone. Phone 13 11 14; www.lifeline.org.au

6.15 Migrant Resource Centre

For any issue you may have while living in Australia, you may contact the centre for support services. (02) 9663 3922

6.16 NSW ombudsman

Deals with the complaints about the dissatisfactory treatment from NSW government agencies, community service providers or their employees. (02) 9286 1000 www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

6.17 Commonwealth Ombudsman (COB)

For overseas students who have complaints about private education and training in Australia, the COB is able to assist. 1300 362 072; www.ombudsman.gov.au

6.18 Police (Non-Emergency Enquiries)

The number and websites are for non-urgent use of police assistance, as well as finding out safety information. 13 44 44; www.police.nsw.gov.au

6.19 Redfern Legal Centre

It is an independent, non-profit community centre that promotes social justice and human rights, with free legal advice, referral and casework to NSW international students. (02) 9698 7277; www.rlc.org.au/our-services/international-students

Free Legal Advice for International Students Covers:

- Accommodation legal issues
- Job, money issues, car accidents and fines
- Discrimination, domestic violence and family law
- Complaints about the Institute

How problems such as those above can affect the Student Visa. Appointments can be made in person or via electronic communications.

6.20 Study in Australia

Contains general information on studying in Australia. www.studyinaustralia.gov.au

6.21 Transport Info Line (Public Transport Services)

Provides information about trains, buses and trams, including timetables and ticketing information.

Public transport may include a bus, train, tram or ferry. Most Australian states have introduced new ticketing systems in the form of smartcards to provide an easy and convenient way of travelling on public transport. The smartcards are reusable and replace paper tickets. Some examples are:

New South Wales, Opal Card, www.opal.com.au

13 15 00

Taxi Services

Legion Cabs 13 14 51

Silver Service 13 31 00

Yellow Cabs 13 19 24

6.22 Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

The ESOS Act 2000 and the National Code 2018 protect the interests of students coming to Australia to study. In addition to a range of protections, these laws provide students with tuition fee assurance and also provide a nationally consistent approach to the approval of providers on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

The following web site provides further information about these laws and the right of international students. www.education.gov.au

6.23 No Smoking Policy

The entire Institute is smoke free and smokers must locate designated smoking areas outside of the building to smoke pursuant to local government regulations.

6.24 Fire Evacuation

The Institute has a fire evacuation plan and fire and floor wardens. Signs showing emergency fire exits and the names of floor and fire wardens are displayed on each floor.

6.25 First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located at reception and the Institute displays the names of the two first aid officers at the Institute on the student notice board and behind the reception desk.

6.26 Currency Converter

Should you require a currency converter, the following web site is a useful tool. <https://finance.yahoo.com/>

6.27 Destination Guides and Social Events

A wide array of destinations and social events as well as places of interest are available on the following web site should students be interested in these. The Institute also occasionally organises a range of social events that are announced via the Institute notice board. www.lonelyplanet.com

Information provided in this publication is current at the date of publication, and may be subject to change without prior notice (Date: 9 March 2020).

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