



## Policy - Student Support Services

### Purpose

The National Code 2018 requires Registered Providers to:

- Assist overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia and have an age and culturally appropriate orientation programs that help overseas students to access the information and services they require.
- Offer reasonable support to overseas students to enable them to achieve expected learning outcomes regardless of the overseas student's place of study or the mode of study of the course, at no additional cost to the overseas student. [S6.3]
- Have a critical incident management policy; that is, implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student's ability to undertake or complete a course, such as but not limited to incidents that may cause physical or psychological harm.[S6.8]
- Maintain a written record of any critical incident and remedial action taken by the registered provider for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student. [S6.8]
- Ensure there are sufficient student support personnel, in addition to academic staff, to support and advise overseas students who request assistance; to meet the needs of the overseas students enrolled with the registered provider. [S6.6]

This policy and associated procedure outlines how Lawson College Australia ensures:

- All students are provided with information about the support services available to them and are aware of how to access them
- International students are supported to adjust to life and study in Australia
- Students are supported to achieve their learning goals and achieve satisfactory course progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of their chosen course.

### Scope

This procedure applies to all students studying at Lawson College Australia and all staff employed by Lawson College Australia.

In the event of Distance (e.g. online) learning being implemented for on-shore ELICOS and VET courses, due to Government, Regulatory Authorities and Public Health Official requirements (for example, Social Distancing due to COVID-19), Lawson College Australia has in place Cloud Learning @ Lawson.

*NOTE: Lawson College Australia is not obliged to meet or respond in any form (phone, email etc) to any request received from the agent, lawyer or similar seeking personal information which may be perceived to have a conflict of interest or any commercial interest whatsoever. Any disclosure of personal information to a third party would be governed under Lawson College Australia's Privacy Policy.*

### Definitions

<b>ASQA</b>	The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector - regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.
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<b>Cloud Learning @ Lawson</b>	The online method of delivery enabling structured formal learning that emulates the classroom environment using a learning management system (LMS), Moodle, that allows face to face interaction between the trainer and students and participation in various training and assessment activities. These activities can be synchronous (where the students and trainer participate at the same time) or asynchronous (where students and trainers are not necessarily expected to participate in sessions at the same time). Some of the interactive tools used may include videoconferencing applications (Big Blue Button, Zoom), chat rooms, white board, messaging etc. For any avoidance of doubt, Cloud Learning @ Lawson, may be offered to on-shore international students where classroom-based learning cannot be practically delivered due to extenuating/ exceptional circumstances (e.g. Government/Regulatory Authorities directives during the COVID-19 pandemic).
<b>Course</b>	A full-time registered Course offered by Lawson College Australia and registered in accordance with the requirements of the ESOS Act. Also known as <i>Program</i>
<b>CRICOS</b>	Commonwealth Register for Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
<b>Critical Incident</b>  NB: A critical incident <b>does not</b> include serious academic misconduct	A critical incident is defined in the National Code as “a traumatic event or the threat of such (within or outside Australia) which causes extreme stress, fear or injury”. Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Missing students</li> <li>◆ Severe verbal or psychological aggression</li> <li>◆ Death, serious injury or any threat of these</li> <li>◆ Natural disaster</li> <li>◆ Issues such as domestic violence, sexual assault, drug or alcohol abuse; and</li> <li>◆ Other non-life-threatening events.</li> </ul>
<b>DoHA</b>	Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) brings together Australia’s federal law enforcement, national and transport security, criminal justice, emergency management, multicultural affairs and immigration and border-related functions, working together to keep Australia safe. <a href="https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au">https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au</a>
<b>ESOS Act</b>	Educational Services for Overseas Students Act as amended from time to time.
<b>International Student</b>	A person holding an Australian student visa and defined as an ‘Overseas Student’ in the ESOS Act. May also be referred to as a candidate.
<b>ISANA</b>	ISANA is the representative body for professionals in Australia and New Zealand who work in international student services, advocacy, teaching and policy development in international education.
<b>Learning Management System (LMS)</b>	An LMS provides a learning space online. Lawson College Australia uses the LMS Moodle, which enables students and staff to access course materials, submit assessments, gain feedback, communicate, see grades and much more all by logging in to their very own online account. See also Cloud Learning @ Lawson.
<b>National Code</b>	The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
<b>Orientation program</b>	A formal program that helps familiarise overseas student with the Registered Provider’s expectations, rules and facilities, and introduce the social and cultural norms which overseas students need to be aware of while in Australia.
<b>OSHC</b>	Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC): All international students in Australia must comply with visa condition 8501: They must maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance during their stay in Australia. In practice, this means that all overseas students and their accompanying family members must hold OSHC which is valid for their entire stay in Australia on a student visa. (OSO Factsheet: <a href="http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0025/88324/Factsheet_student_OSHC-links-fixed.pdf">http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0025/88324/Factsheet_student_OSHC-links-fixed.pdf</a> )
<b>Registrar</b>	A <b>registrar</b> is an official in an academic institution (consisting of a college, university or secondary school) who handles student records
<b>Scheduled course contact hours</b>	The hours for which students enrolled in the course are scheduled to attend classes, course-related information sessions (orientation program), supervised study sessions, mandatory and supervised work-based training and examinations (if applicable).
<b>Social Distancing</b>	Social Distancing, also referred to as Physical Distancing, is a term applied to certain actions that are taken by Government, Regulatory Authorities, and Public Health Officials to stop or slow down the spread of a highly contagious disease (for example COVID-19). <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/physical-distancing-for-coronavirus-covid-19">https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others-from-coronavirus-covid-19/physical-distancing-for-coronavirus-covid-19</a>
<b>Staff: Student ratio</b>	A staff to student ratio can vary from sector to sector, institution to institution. At present there is no formal determination for this ratio. <a href="http://www.isana.org.au/?s=ratios">http://www.isana.org.au/?s=ratios</a>
<b>Student</b>	A student who is enrolled at Lawson College Australia and includes both prospective students and enrolled students who are ‘overseas students’ as defined in the National Code and hold a student visa as defined by the ESOS Act, and to students of Lawson College Australia who do not hold student visas and are studying off-shore; but does not include domestic students.

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<b>Student Handbook</b>	Written provision of relevant information relating to student studies including administration and enrolment processes, policies and procedures and an overview of services and facilities.
<b>Student Support Services</b>	Student <b>support services</b> are designed to help <b>students</b> succeed at Lawson College Australia. Students can take advantage of a range of personal, academic and social <b>support services</b>
<b>Support Person</b>	A friend or relative of a student who can provide support, if needed. Please note Agents of any kind, Lawyers or anyone who has a perceived commercial interest are not permitted to attend as a Support Person, as they are considered to have a conflict of interest. A Lawson College Australia Student Support Officer will be available if the student does not have someone who can attend with them and they require support. <i>Lawson College Australia is not obliged to meet or respond in any form (phone, email etc) to any request received from the agent, lawyer or similar seeking personal information which may be perceived to have a conflict of interest or any commercial interest whatsoever. Any disclosure of personal information to a third party would be governed under Lawson College Australia's Privacy Policy.</i>
<b>Training Package</b>	A Training Package is an integrated set of nationally endorsed competency standards, assessment guidelines and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications for a specific industry, industry sector or enterprise.
<b>Written agreement</b>	A written agreement under Australian law, is in regard to acceptance of an offer of a course and must be in the form of a written agreement. This is the document that the student signs when they enrol with an education provider. In the written agreement, providers must give detailed information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the course enrolled in</li> <li>• payment plan for tuition fees including the number and length of each study period</li> <li>• any non-tuition fees</li> <li>• refund entitlements in different situations</li> <li>• course requirements including minimum English language</li> <li>• requirements on attendance and making satisfactory progress; that is, that they must participate in scheduled classes in accordance with course timetables to make satisfactory course progress, and if they don't satisfactorily progress in their course, they will be in breach of a condition of their visa.</li> <li>• that ASQA may, at any time, require a training provider to implement policies and procedures to monitor minimum attendance requirements and if students don't meet these requirements, they will be in breach of their visa</li> <li>• any services that can support student safety, and</li> <li>• that the DoHA may cancel a student's visa if they fail to maintain their enrolment</li> </ul> <a href="https://www.asqa.gov.au/news-publications/publications/fact-sheets/overseas-student-attendance">https://www.asqa.gov.au/news-publications/publications/fact-sheets/overseas-student-attendance</a> July 2019)

[S = related ESOS Standard]

## Policy

### 1. Approach to student support

- 1.1 Lawson College Australia offers training and assessment from its two premises in Dandenong. In the event of distance (for example, online) learning being implemented for on-shore ELICOS and VET courses due to Social Distancing requirements, Lawson College Australia has in place Cloud Learning @ Lawson.
- 1.2 All students are over the age of 18 years.
- 1.3 Lawson College Australia is committed to ensuring that all students receive support to adjust to life and study in Australia.
- 1.4 Lawson College Australia takes all reasonable steps to provide a safe environment on campus or premises and advise overseas students and staff on actions they can take to enhance their personal security and safety. [S6.9.1]
- 1.5 Lawson College Australia provides information to overseas students about how to seek assistance for, and report, an incident that significantly impacts on their wellbeing, including critical incidents. [S6.9.2]
  - Students are advised that the Emergency Services (threat to life of property) phone is Triple Zero '000' and/or '112' from a digital mobile phone.
- 1.6 Lawson College Australia provides overseas students with, or refer them to (including electronically), general information on safety and awareness relevant to life in Australia [S6.9.3], such as beach safety or etiquette and laws concerning smoking in Australia.

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- 1.7 Lawson College Australia ensures its staff members who interact directly with overseas students are aware of Lawson College Australia's obligations under the ESOS framework and the potential implications for overseas students arising from the exercise of these obligations. [S6.7]
- 1.6 The learning and support needs of all students is assessed upon entry into their course. Information to make this assessment is gathered through:
- ◆ Information provided by the student on the application and/or enrolment forms.
  - ◆ Discussion with the student during their induction/orientation to the course about how to access the support services (for example, Designated Contact Officer, Student Welfare Support Officer and Learning Skills Advisor). See Section 3: Accessing Support Services of this *Policy – Student Support Services*.
  - ◆ Feedback is collected throughout the student cycle, including Lawson College Australia's provision of support services to improve services and experience.
- 1.7 Lawson College Australia facilitates access to learning support services consistent with the requirements of the course studied and the learning needs to overseas student cohorts. [S6.4]
- 1.8 All support services information will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is current and accurate.
- 1.9 Sufficient academic and student support staff to student ratio is in place and is guided by ISANA:
- a. Current Lawson College Australia staff/student ratios:
    - 1:25 Training staff to student ratio (CHC: Community Health Services Training Package course offered at Lawson College Australia); and 1:30 (BSB: Business Services Training Package courses offered at Lawson College Australia); and
    - 1:100 Support services staff to student ratio.
- 1.10 Lawson College Australia will give relevant information or provide referrals as appropriate to overseas students who request assistance in relation to the services and programs set out in ESOS Standard 6.1 (outlined in Section 2: Orientation program for students of this *Policy – Student Support Services*), at no additional cost to the overseas student. [S6.2]

## 2. Orientation program for students

- 2.1 Student Support Services (Welfare Support and Learning Skills) orientation programs will be **compulsory** (see Scheduled course contact hours in Definitions) for all overseas students.
- 2.2 The orientation program provides information about:
- ◆ The member of staff who is the designated point of contact for overseas students 24 hours per day, and their contact details; the student contact staff have access to up-to-date details of Lawson College Australia's support services [S6.5]
  - ◆ Internal and external support services available to help them adjust to study and life in Australia. [S6.1.1] This includes the support services available to assist students with general or personal circumstances that are adversely affecting their education in Australia [S6.1.8]
  - ◆ English language and study assistance programs [S6.1.2]
  - ◆ Relevant legal services [S6.1.3]
  - ◆ Emergency and health services [S6.1.4]
  - ◆ Lawson College Australia's facilities and resources [S6.1.5]
  - ◆ Lawson College Australia's policies and procedures including complaints and appeals processes, critical incidents, monitoring course progress and intervention strategies [S6.1.6]
  - ◆ Requirements for course attendance and progress, as appropriate [S6.1.7]
  - ◆ Student visa conditions relating to course progress and attendance and the requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress and attendance
  - ◆ Services students can access for information on their employment rights and conditions, and how to resolve workplace issues, such as through the Fair Work Ombudsman [S6.1.9]

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- ◆ Safety and awareness including beach safety, tuberculosis (TB), and etiquette and laws, for example smoking in Australia.
- 2.3 The orientation program will be presented using a series of PowerPoints that summarise key points. Students will be provided access to these PowerPoints via the Learning Management System (Moodle).
  - 2.4 Overseas students also have access to Lawson College Australia's Overseas Student Handbook and relevant sections of their 'Written Agreement'.
  - 2.5 The orientation programs will be reviewed annually to ensure that the information provided is correct and that it meets student needs.

### 3. Accessing support services

3.1 Lawson College Australia Student Support Services are available:

- Monday to Friday: 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.
- Appointments can be made with either the Welfare Support Officer and/or the Learning Skills Advisor by emailing: [support@lawsoncollege.edu.au](mailto:support@lawsoncollege.edu.au)
- Emergency 24 hours access to the designated Lawson College Australia contact staff is by mobile phone: 0438592747
- In the event that a meeting/s is required this will be arranged in compliance with prevailing social distancing protocols
- Please note, a support person for the student in a meeting must meet the following criteria:  
A friend or relative of a student who can provide support, if needed. Please note Agents of any kind, Lawyers or anyone who has a perceived commercial interest are not permitted to attend as a Support Person, as they are considered to have a conflict of interest. A Lawson College Australia Student Support Officer will be available if the student does not have someone who can attend with them and they require support.

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3.2 Lawson College Australia provides the following services, at no additional cost to the student

- English language and study assistance services, and tutoring support

3.3 If requested, students will be referred without charge to any of the following services and advised that these services may charge fees for their service:

- Study skills centres
- Counselling and mental health support
- Career services
- Housing and tenancy services
- Financial support services; and
- Health and disability services.

3.4 Overseas students in Australia are required (visa condition) to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the entire duration of their study in Australia. The OSHC must cover for visits to the doctor, some hospital treatment, limited pharmaceuticals, **and** ambulance cover. As all overseas students are required to have OSHC which includes ambulance cover, Lawson College Australia will not be liable for costs incurred should ambulance services be required.

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#### 4. Learning support

4.1 All overseas students are provided with a range of learning support options and resources to help them achieve satisfactory course progress. This includes:

- ◆ Availability of one on one support from the trainer/assessor
- ◆ Support from the trainer/assessor before, during and/or after classes
- ◆ Receiving English language support for international students
- ◆ Providing extra time to complete tasks if required.
- ◆ Tutorial support assistance
- ◆ Computer and technology support.
- ◆ Referral to external support services without charge

#### 5. Critical incident management – See Lawson College Australia’s - Policy – Critical Incident

5.1 Overview:

- The National Code requires a Registered Provider to have and implement a documented policy and process for managing critical incidents that could affect the overseas student’s ability to undertake or complete a course. [S6.8]
- The Lawson College Australia **Policy - Critical Incident** together with procedures cover the action to be taken in the event of a critical incident, required follow-up to the incident, and records of the incident and action taken.
- Written records of any critical incident and remedial action taken by Lawson College Australia will be maintained for at least two years after the overseas student ceases to be an accepted student. [S6.8]
- Lawson College Australia is committed to ensuring that:
  - Risk reduction measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a critical incident.
  - Appropriate training and information resources are provided to staff and students.
  - Appropriate actions are taken in the event of a critical incident or potential critical incident and that these actions maximize the safety of staff and students.
  - A designated officer and critical incident team manages critical incidents
  - Appropriate post incident procedures are followed such as support and counselling services.
  - An evaluation of the response to the critical incident is undertaken and that procedures are updated where improvements are identified. Staff and students will be encouraged to provide suggestions to assist this process.
  - Critical Incident Policy should be read in conjunction with Lawson College Australia Policy – Privacy.

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V 1.0	18/09/2013	GRMC	N/A	Initial
V 2.0	18/09/2015	GRMC	Minor	Editing and formatting
V 3.0	17/01/2018	CEO	Major	Reviewed and updated in relation to Standard 4 ESOS 2018
V 4.0	30/09/2019	CEO	Major	Major review of document
V 4.1	2/09/2020	CEO	Minor	Amended 1.1 (online/distance learning in exceptional circumstances)
V 4.2	9/09/2020	QACC/ CEO	Minor	Added content to Scope Added definitions: Cloud Learning @ Lawson, LMS, Social Distancing, Student, Support Person, Added last two dot points in 3.1 Updated all references to Lawson and/or LCA (as applicable) to Lawson College Australia

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